P10 / Governing Complex Problems: Issues of Uncertainty, Time, Scale and Transformation

Topic : POLICY DESIGN, POLICY ANALYSIS, EXPERTISE AND EVALUATION

Chair : Margot Hurlbert (University of Regina)

Second Chair : Cheryl Camillo (Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, University of Regina)

Third Chair : Murray Fulton (Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, University of Saskatchewan)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Although one of the oldest activities of the human race, governance has never been more complex or difficult (Dahlstrom et al. 2011). Governance arrangements effectively determine how decisions are made in society, how resources are distributed, which problems are solved and how, and, to some extent, how various voices are heard. Definitions of governance vary, but many refer to formal and informal rules, the interactions among formal and informal institutions, the political, legal, social, economic and administrative institutions that develop, manage, and distribute societal goods (water, health services, employment benefits, recognize some human rights, and not others) involving public, private, and civil society organizations that practice and implement norms, programmes, regulations, and laws.

21st Century problems are increasingly complex, wicked problems that defy complete definitions, for which there is not always one definite, accepted, immediate or ultimate solution. Often one problem is a symptom of another problem (Rittel and Weber, 1973). Uncertainty, unknown unknowns, and residual risk (the threat remaining after all efforts to identify and eliminate risk have been made) can be a barrier to evidence based policy and decision making. Normative judgments can be involved in these determinations. Risks may vary along spatial scales in relation to both human and natural systems with differing vulnerability and exposure in different areas and communities; Risks may vary in relation to current and future risks (with some events being slow onset, or chronic (drought and migration), some conflicts being covert, and other acute shocks or conflicts (extreme events of fire, flood, or security). Risks may cascade through sectors, regions, countries (such as the financial collapse of 2008, or potential for multi-bread basket failures as a result of ENSO events of drought, civil war) and there will be winners and losers both within and between countries.

The working hypothesis of governance research is that some governance arrangements are better than others at solving the problems facing a society. Traditional governance distinctions have focussed on formal and largely binary institutional structures—e.g., bicameralism versus unicameralism; presidential verses parliamentarism; proportional representation versus plurality. For governance theorists, these macro distinctions are important but no longer sufficient.A new set of distinctions have been including adaptive governance, collaborative cross-scale governance (Bodin 2017), inclusive governance, polycentric governance, multi-level, or global governance. They have been developed in close proximity to the complex problems of risk and uncertainty that they are intended to address. How best to respond to complex problems, what are the best governance arrangements, how these governance arrangements can be assessed and measured, becomes pressing social, academic and political questions. Do specific governance frameworks apply depending on the nature, sector, magnitude or some other feature of the complex problems, or depending on the demands of the citizenry?

Do measures of good governance align with the framework of governance? Are measures of good governance, including procedural, capacity, output measures, or dimensions of corruption, economic, political, democratic, or representative best in relation to the nature of the complex problem? How best can the frameworks and the measures be studied and analyzed?

This panel will explore theoretically and empirically what are the best frameworks of governance, and how governance might be studied, and evaluated.

CALL FOR PAPERS

We welcome submissions of papers that explore theoretically and empirically the best frameworks of governance, in the context of social and policy problems from a variety of sectors, countries, and contexts.

Implicit in the determination of the best frameworks is a consideration of the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of the framework, and how this informs the methodology of how one or several frameworks of governance might be studied and assessed. What methods can be used in studying and assessing governance and what methods specifically for studying governance in the context of complex social and political problems in the context of issues of risk (varying over time, scale and level of government) and uncertainty. How might governance be measured and evaluated and what indicators might best inform decision makers about whether good governance has been achieved, or improvements are required? Ultimately how can a solutions space be creating to address complex problems and achieve transformation required to address them?

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Session 1Complex problems and natural resources

Thursday, June 27th 08:00 to 10:00 (MB S1.105)

An institutional anlaysis method for addressing uncertainty and complex problems

Margot Hurlbert (University of Regina)

Governing Complex Problems: Using Indicators to Improve Water Governance and Adaptation in the Great Lakes and Rio Grande-Bravo Regions

Carolyn Johns (Toronto Metropolitan University)

Debora VanNijnatten (Wilfrid Laurier University)

Explaining the barriers of forward-looking decisions in water governance: public-private interaction around a Dutch water pumping station

Wieke Pot

Multi-level and democratic governance, to co-produce 21st century public policies

Pierre Bauby (European institutions)

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Session 2Democracy and Trust in the 21st C

Thursday, June 27th 10:30 to 12:30 (MB S1.105)

Designing Effective Anti-Corruption Policies for Combating Corruption and Restoring Public Trust in Governance of Anti-Corruption Institutions: An Empirical Analysis

Dr. Biswajit Bandyopadhyay (Independent Researcher)

Government Reputation Index as a tool for measurement and improvement of municipal public policies.

Joanna Margarita Moreno Manzo (Municipal Planning Institute, Morelia)

José Cesar Lenin Navarro Chávez (ININEE, Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo)

Governing Complex Problems: Institutational Facilitation of Communication and Engagement After Decision-Making

Cheryl Camillo (Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, University of Regina)