

T01P07 / Policy-Making in a Context of Contested Paradigms

Topic : T01 / Policy Process Theories

Chair : Grace Skogstad (University of Toronto)

Second Chair : Matt Wilder (University of Toronto)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

The concept of policy paradigms is one of the most widely used in the policy literature. Amenable to both rationalist and constructivist lenses on policy-making, policy paradigms exist at the nexus between policy ideas in the abstract and the actionable ideas that guide policy formulation and implementation. Policy paradigms constitute guiding logics upon which policy-makers draw in all stages of the policy process. Questions remain, however, concerning the role played by policy paradigms when paradigms are contested. When actors are faced with numerous and incommensurate interpretations of policy issues, the predictability and stability normally associated with policy paradigms gives way to considerable uncertainty. Although variables likely to determine policy outcomes in the absence of paradigmatic consensus have been identified in the literature (e.g., influence, resources, legitimacy, lesson drawing and anomalies), a standard approach to analyzing policy-making in contexts of paradigmatic contestation has yet to be developed. The aim of this panel is to explore the dynamics of policy-making when paradigms are contested in an effort to gain a more systematic understanding of the role played by policy paradigms when they are not decisive in determining the course of policy-making. As policy-making has become more open, consultative and trans-jurisdictional, it is expected that paradigms are increasingly contested and/or not decisive.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The concept of policy paradigms is one of the most widely used in the policy literature. Policy paradigms constitute guiding logics upon which policy-makers draw in all stages of the policy process. Questions remain, however, concerning the role played by policy paradigms when paradigms are contested. When actors are faced with numerous and incommensurate interpretations of policy issues, the predictability and stability normally associated with policy paradigms gives way to considerable uncertainty. Although variables likely to determine policy outcomes in the absence of paradigmatic consensus have been identified in the literature (e.g., influence, resources, legitimacy, lesson drawing and anomalies), a standard approach to analyzing policy-making in contexts of paradigmatic contestation has yet to be developed. The aim of this panel is to explore the dynamics of policy-making when paradigms are contested in an effort to gain a more systematic understanding of the role played by policy paradigms when they are not decisive in determining the course of policy-making. Papers are invited which contribute to the theoretical and conceptual debates which populate the literature on policy paradigms. Papers may explore empirical cases in which policy paradigms are contested, and investigate if and how policy-paradigms matter when there is lack of consensus among policy-makers as to what the operative paradigm is or should be.

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Session 1

Thursday, June 29th 13:30 to 15:30 (Block B 2 - 1)

Discussants

Grace Skogstad (University of Toronto)

Matt Wilder (University of Toronto)

Paradigm Contestation Between Hegemonic and Alternative Energy Policy Paradigms: The Case of Biofuels in the US and EU

Grace Skogstad (University of Toronto)

Matt Wilder (University of Toronto)

One Step forward, two Steps back? Digital Transformation as a Contested Policy Paradigm

Julia Schwanholz (Georg-August-Universität Göttingen)

Tobias Jakobi (Georg-August University Goettingen, Institute for Political Science)

The Advantage of Paradigmatic Contestation? How the European Commission ‘sold’ CAP Reform

Gerry Alons (Radboud University of Nijmegen)

Policy Experimentation as a Theory of Change in Context of Contested Paradigms. The Case of Drug Policy in Latin America

Luis Rivera Velez (Center for Mexican and Central American Studies CEMCA)

The “‘other’ side of the feminist debate”: Contested paradigms in family violence policy in New Zealand

Rachel Simon-Kumar (The University of Auckland)