Master of Arts in Policy Studies Graduate Research Conference

May 11, 2012

Presentation Abstracts *(by alpha)*

Mike Barta

With Internet use increasingly being a definitional part of full participation in professional and personal life digital accessibility has been an issue of growing significance. Since nearly the inception of "the web" there have been initiatives to address the accessibility of web content. These initiatives have been poorly coordinated and have met with limited success.

I argue that the progress made has been limited by the structure of the historical approach, which has focused narrowly on normative guidance. Since the nature of digital accessibility does not allow for instrumentally rational solutions the guidance produced has been inconsistent and immeasurable. To be effective in governing accessibility we must draw on established patterns from both the management and information assurance disciplines for ways of governing where instrumental rationality is not possible.

I show that an effective approach to the issue must include: a shift in regulatory approach from prescriptive findings to a process focus; the development of an accredited accessibility professional; and an accepted body of 'best practices' for various technical domains. Finally I show that this triad constitutes a 'hermeneutic cycle' creating legitimacy for the idea that accessibility is not someone else's problem but a required aspect of being professional. By constructing the profession of accessibility we construct inaccessible as unprofessional. In brief effective governance of digital accessibility requires that we construct a perception of rudeness for inaccessible content.

Kristopher Dane

There is a growing threat to corporate and personal information from cyber criminals. Although governments have been focused on the problem of information security for decades, the rising private dependence on data both for personal use and corporate use has led to an increase in opportunities for cyber-criminals to benefit from illegal access to that data. While governments struggle to coordinate international efforts to control cyber-crime, corporations have responded through the creation of new positions dedicated to the protection of information. In addition, scholars are increasingly looking at the costs of e-commerce programs to corporations such as the impact of new web-based initiatives and data loss incidents on stock price. Recognizing that the risk posed by data loss is multifaceted, this study digs deeper into the relationship between data loss incidents and stock price impact by exploring the question of whether the stock price impact of a corporate data breach differs depending on the nature of the breach. This study will benefit corporations who are trying to decide which risks they should mitigate with scarce resources, scholars who are interested in how the market responds to data breach

incidents, and legislators who are considering legislation to address potential market failures around data breaches.

Dylan Dentremont

The practice of late hiring has detrimental and disruptive effects on school district and state finances, teacher morale, and student outcomes. While there are many direct and indirect causes of late hiring, a majority of principals surveyed state that collectively-bargained transfer deadlines for incumbent teachers play a significant role in preventing them from making sure all teachers are hired on-time. While this may be an important perception from hiring principals, there is a dearth of empirical evidence to support this claim. The author hopes to empirically examine the relationship between mandated hiring/transfer deadlines and late hiring among Washington State school districts for the 2009 school year.

Kiley Faherty

In recent years, increasingly higher stakeholder expectations in the energy sector coupled with an aging electric power grid has led to a growing focus on our nation's approach to energy management and grid modernization. A number of states have adopted or proposed laws, regulations, and voluntary or mandatory requirements regarding smart grid. The Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, Title XIII, promotes the development and implementation of smart grid and establishes a national policy for grid modernization; this is supported by the disbursement of almost $4.5 billion of ARRA funding.

This research project investigates whether states receiving ARRA funding are adopting policies that align with the objectives defined by Title XIII, Sec. 1301 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA). I address this question with a policy analysis of the five states that have received the largest amounts of ARRA funding. Because state-level smart grid policies are relatively new and vary greatly state-to-state, I focus on the policies that are most common and easiest to identify: distributed generation and net metering, Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) deployment plans, AMI data privacy and security, and energy efficiency.

Ashley Hamilton

As a policy studies graduate student, my focus has been education policy. In brief, my research is on the effectiveness of the Navigation 101 (Nav101) program instituted by the Washington state Workforce board in collaboration with the Office of the Superintendent. For Washington state legislators and education administrators, Navigation 101 is viewed as a means to combat a seemingly resistant dropout rate despite other measures invoked following the "No Child Left Behind" act. Through student-led meetings and other exercises meant to engender empowerment, Navigation 101 elements are viewed as "beacon of hope".

Joe Lang

In 2006 Massachusetts passed unprecedented health care reform legislation in an effort to extend health insurance coverage to nearly all residents of the state. The health care reform legislation has lowered the number of uninsured residents in the state however the cost of health care has continued to grow. Rising costs threaten the stability of the state's landmark 2006 health care law. According to Special Committee reports, per capita health care spending in Massachusetts is projected to increase 70 percent from more than $10,000 in 2010 to nearly $18,000 in 2020 (Associated Press, 2011). A promising solution to rising national health care spending is controlling costs by utilizing a bundle payment system. This would eliminate the inefficiencies of the current multi-tiered fee for services system. By defining specific acute medical conditions and establishing cost values a through a mathematical formula, analysis shows a benefit of utilizing a bundled payment approach versus a fee-for-service approach. These benefits are realized as both financial savings and improvements in quality of care.

Julianna Mandler

Water conservation has become a very important issue, especially in the last decade. With droughts becoming more of a "norm" rather than an infrequent event, growing populations, and many other circumstances that threaten water supply, cities and states must begin to think about more seriously about their future water supplies. In Washington State, in 2003, the Legislature passed the Municipal Water Law that required all municipal water suppliers to use water more efficiently to ensure that future water demands of the state are met. In 2007, the Water Use Efficiency Rule (WUE), as part of the Municipal Water Law, came into effect which required municipal water suppliers to implement demand-side water conservation goals while also reducing water system leakage to less than 10%. The rule also mandates a public forum open to all consumers in their service area to establish at least one of water savings goal (demand-side). The objective of this study is to understand if there is a causal relationship between voluntary over compliance to the WUE and factors that may influence over compliance. The factors examined in the paper will include demographics, regional programs or partnerships with other municipalities, the size of the system, and geographical location.

Paula Matano

Community Care Organizations (CCO's) are becoming more and more prevalent in both federal and state level health care reforms. CCO's are focused on bringing together multiple agencies within a community that are involved in the health of an individual, from hospitals to homeless shelters, and coordinating collaboration so that the decreased funding can provide greater benefits. In Lane County, Oregon, United Way began a community health coalition in 2006 called 100% Access. This coalition has successfully brought together 50 organizations and created medical access programs, community health workers, and financial assistance programs to help put people into medical homes and get them the care they need. This capstone does a qualitative study of those bridges of collaboration, and how the existence of the coalition has impacted the organizations willingness to collaborate together in order to

better the access and care of Lane County residents. As the legislative environment in Oregon evolves towards CCO's, understanding 100% Access' successes will be an important resource for recreating the collaborative environment found in Lane County.

BJ Myers

The application of contract police models has created a need for better data on effectiveness, so that decision makers can make informed decisions about who provides police services for a community. Most of the literature on contract police services deals with the efficiency of the program versus independent municipal police department. This study examines the equality of service provided between the two service models: independent municipal police departments and contracted police services provided by local sheriff's departments. The study uses statistical analysis of arrest rates for Washington State independent municipal police departments and contracted police services.

Vy Nguyen

To address a community economic development issue, in 2011 a Neighborhood Block Grant from the City of Seattle's Office of Economic Development was awarded to two community planning/development organizations in Seattle's International District, SCIDpda and InterIm. Coming on as a research partner in July 2011, I have incorporated an observational field work element to my study in seeking ways to understand and recommend meaningful and fully participatory efforts for local economic development in Seattle's Little Saigon.

Little Saigon is a historically immigrant/refugee community of Vietnamese business owners. Despite being seen as a cultural hub by many in the Seattle region, the neighborhood continually faces challenges in building a cohesive, resilient community with a clear voice, agenda, and agency in the policies and/or developments that impact both Little Saigon as a business district or as a cultural hub for the Seattle area Vietnamese-American community. In light of the multiple large-scale urban infrastructure projects that will literally change the landscape of Little Saigon, attention has been turned at how to engage the neighborhood and community with current developments such as the First Hill Streetcar, Yesler Terrace Re-Development Plan, as well as other urban planning changes.

Through being a presence in the neighborhood, attending community events, observing developments and both formal/informal conversations with local organizers, businesses, or previous researchers, I have uncovered that all previous study into economic development of Little Saigon has only focused on the businesses. My capstone asks the question of the role of community building and development and social capital as a means of community-based economic development and planning, particularly in an ethnic neighborhood. Through exploration of these issues, I hope my research assists with current community economic development efforts underway that impact Little Saigon.

Cynthia Reese

Public agencies and/or local governments often contract with external firms for services to provide public goods or services. When this happens, the agency or government office is responsible for determining that the work meets performance standards and yet is cost-effective. For years, professional services were contracted through a competitive bid process. However, since federal law was passed in 1972 and similar laws have passed in most states, professional consultant services are procured through a qualifications-based selection (QBS) process. This proposal begins with a review of literature discussions of the challenges of provision of public goods. The literature review serves as the backdrop for an analysis of existing QBS procurement practices among public entities in Washington State.

Timothy Ruppell

Red light violations occur when an automobile enters an intersection during the red phase of a traffic light, increasing the likelihood of an accident. The relevant statistics are surprisingly varied, however, when a question of deaths, injuries, etc., ought to be relatively straight forward. More muddled are the reported results of Red Light Camera (RLC) implementation. RLCs are a form of automated traffic enforcement as systems have become more cost effective. The literature may indicate a decrease in all accidents at RLC intersections, an increase in rear-end collisions and a decrease in right angle crashes, or an increase in both, though a more consistent improvement over time has also been indicated.

In 2004, Washington State permitted RLCs, more than a dozen communities implementing them by 2012. Redmond installed 4 cameras in 2010, experienced public opposition which brought an initiative to the ballot in order to ban RLC usage, fought the initiative successfully in court, then removed the cameras anyway by early 2012 citing an increase in accidents and a "lack of public understanding". An examination of Redmond's data supports the claim that the cameras appeared to have accompanied greater accident rates. The city generated enough to offset the cost of additional accidents, however.

Analysis of data from surrounding communities with RLC systems, such as Renton, indicate that the city may have been able to expect a positive change in effect over time, though these cities also did not see an initial increase in accidents, and even that data is limited in scope. The largest, most complete set of prior manipulated data comes from Chicago, where we find a trend of increasing violations, however, in the first two to three years, followed by a slow decline in the subsequent three or four. If Redmond had persisted with RLC usage, the trend may have reversed itself, and a panopticon effect taken hold. Alternatives include changing yellow light timing.