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THE GLOBALIZATION OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION

This article is reprised from a piece I wrote in 1992 that described how public affairs education is organized in higher education. I demonstrated some of the characteristics of public policy analysis and then described some of the key features of a postgraduate program that educates students for public service. In part III of the article I point out that postgraduate public affairs education has expanded globally with many new programs on all continents. Nevertheless, I point out that there are still several gaps in public affairs programs and suggest some of the key conceptual issues that still need to be developed if postgraduate public affairs education is to have conceptual and practical value for professionals who work on the design, implementation and evaluation of public policy.

INTRODUCTION

From January to June 1992 I was a Fulbright Scholar at Budapest University of Economic Sciences, formerly called Karl Marx University, and now known as Corvinus University. The university was still in its post-communist adjustment period. The Centre for Public Affairs Studies, as it was called at the time, was in its infancy. In addition to teaching a seminar in public policy analysis, I advised the faculty informally on a number of issues such as building a library, course syllabi, teaching methods and the value of professional associations. What I did not realize at the time was that I was also observing, and participating in, the globalization of public affairs education. On the 60th anniversary of the founding of the university I find it instructive to return to my Fulbright Scholar days when the university was grappling with the legacy of the past and the extended birth pangs of the then new regime. In the first part of this essay I will reprise an article I wrote during the spring of 1992 that sketched out the rudiments of public policy analysis and tried to make the case for a school or department of public policy within a large university. [Straussman 1993] The purpose of this first and second parts of the essay is to illustrate the then relatively new field of public policy. In the third part of the essay I will show how public policy education has been expanding rapidly around the world, and what lessons we might draw from this trend.

PART I

Public policy analysis as a field of professional education has a brief history. In the United States, postgraduate education in public policy and management began over four decades ago. Several universities initiated programs of study that were (and still are) designed to prepare students for analytical and managerial positions in governmental organizations, or organizations that have substantial interaction with gov-

ernment.[1] Graduates of these programs can be found in the budget and finance agencies of central and local governments, evaluation offices of government departments, the support staffs of legislatures, institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, non-governmental organizations and organizations in the private sector that work with and for government.[2]

The study of public policy (as distinguished from its practice) is as old as the study of politics. Since politics is about the organization power relationships in society and the distributional consequences of those relationships, public policy analysis is the assessment of the "products" of politics. Political philosophers have been pronouncing judgments about the means and ends of politics for centuries; therefore, a cynic of intellectual fashion would observe that policy analysis is simply a new term for an old practice.

Appraisals of the ends of political action have never been limited to reflective post hoc judgments but have also included prescriptions, or what we can call "advice giving." The archetypical political philosopher who reflects this tradition is Niccolo Machiavelli whose recommendations in The Prince are legendary. Machiavelli was a precursor of contemporary policy analysts in three fundamental ways. First, he envisioned a relationship between his intellectual work and the world around him in an active way. His task was to study social phenomena, draw conclusions from them and offer advice (based on the conclusions) to those who held political authority. Second, Machiavelli cautioned that the advice giver must be judicious in choosing what to give advice about. In modern parlance we can say that not all subjects require policy analytic intervention. (In a contemporary context, the parameters of such intervention are created by the definition of what constitutes public problems and therefore legitimate subjects for policy analysis.) Third, analysis is shaped by social values. To put it another way, since policy analysis tries to organize inquiry on contemporary public issues so that it may be useable (if not ultimately useful), it is necessarily prescriptive. The relationship between values and analysis is reciprocal since values shape and guide analysis. At the same time, analysis can shape social values.

These three features of policy analysis distinguish it from the traditional social science disciplines and have ramifications for how the professional education of policy analysts should be organized in universities. To illustrate this I will synthesize the essentials of policy analytic education with reference to four public issues. Next, I will offer some advice about the structure of policy analysis in a university setting

1 Public administration, a close cousin of policy analysis began as a professional field of post graduate study approximately 90 years ago in the United States. Some of the American public policy programs include: Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University; LBJ School of Public Affairs, University of Texas; Ford School of Public Policy Studies, University of Michigan; Goldman School of Public Policy, University of California, Berkeley. Some of the public administration programs in the United States reorganized their curricula to be more compatible with the new policy schools. A good example is the program in public administration of The Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University

2 At many public policy programs in the United States, the percentage of graduates who begin their careers in government has actually declined. Correspondingly, graduates have been increasingly interested in working for non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

based on my experience as a faculty member and a dean of a college of public affairs and policy.

POLICY ANALYSIS AS A CRAFT

Policy analysis is a craft.[3] The practice of policy analysis includes the interaction among skills, judgment and perhaps most important, creativity. Like all crafts, skills improve with practice. There is no better way to learn policy analysis than by doing it. Professional programs in the United States use various methods to inculcate in their students the craft of policy analysis through case examples, historical analogies and hypothetical decision-forcing exercises. The overarching purpose is to build a repertoire of skills through the practice of policy analysis. Consider the following example that focuses on the case for government intervention around the issue of social justice - who should be eligible for government funding of organ transplants?[4]

The State of Arizona in the United States faced a problem. The state legislature decided that since it was unable to make Solomon-like decisions concerning which organ transplants to finance through the state's health plan (and who shall receive the transplants), it would cease funding all transplant operations. Shortly after the legislature made this decision a poor, 43 year old, woman – who was denied a liver transplant under the new ruling – died. The woman's death was well publicized in the media in Arizona.

The story should quickly provoke the question: what criteria ought to be used in public decisions concerning the financing of organ transplants? Is there an argument for such financing? The answer depends on the operational definition of distributive justice and a subsequent case for government intervention. Strict market equity would allow the price mechanism to allocate scarce organs which would obviously skew recipients toward the high end of wealth distribution. Assume, instead, that the government officials believe that life and death should not be entirely left to the market place. The role of policy analysis now surfaces for we can ask the basic question: what criteria should be used to allocate government-subsidized organ transplants?

Any realistic analysis has to consider at least the following factors:

- types of transplants that will be covered;
- costs allowable for transplants that will be covered;
- probability of success as a condition of coverage;
- expected "return" on the government's investment.

Students are often uncomfortable with this policy case and claim that they do not want to play God. Nevertheless, as soon as they realize that there are more claims for transplants than available organs (and available funds to pay for them), choices cannot be avoided. Since students do not want to leave decisions to "arbitrary" criteria they begin the discussion. Asking the question, "Should an alcoholic be given a liver

3 For a description of policy analysis as a craft see Wildavsky [1979] chapter 16.
4 This case appears in Gomez-Ibanez - Kalt [1990] pp. 110–124.

transplant?" will usually get them started! Some will answer in the affirmative. This is easily followed with a second question. Suppose you are reasonably sure that the alcoholic will continue to drink and will eventually need a second liver transplant. Eventually students will see that economic analysis can sharpen some of the issues in this policy area. In particular, they apply crude cost-benefit tests to compare different candidates for transplants. For instance, they weigh the cost of a particular transplant against the cost of maintaining the person with government financed medical care. They also value the benefits of a successful transplant for a family wage earner by conceptualizing the future benefit stream of earnings and the likelihood that such earnings will keep the family off the public dole.

When I introduced the case method of instruction and assigned this case on funding organ transplants to a seminar at Budapest University of Economic Sciences in spring 1992, one student suggested that appropriate reading in social philosophy should be required as background for the case analysis. I responded that it would be fine to read social philosophy; however, it was doubtful that the members of the Arizona legislature did such reading in preparation for their funding decisions. This was a trite response; nevertheless, the simple point is that policy analysis draws on several intellectual disciplines but the disciplines are not neatly compartmentalized in real policy settings. An appreciation of alternative theories of social justice may inform the political debate, but it is neither necessary nor sufficient in order to make choices. Another way of putting it is that more information is (usually) better than less information. But policy decisions are rarely made with complete information - even life and death choices like allocating organ transplants.

DEFINING THE POLICY ISSUE: THE CASE OF HEROIN USE[5]

Definitions of policy "problems" shape their solutions. A good exercise is to ask why heroin use is a public problem. We can begin by distinguishing supply versus demand dimensions of heroin use. In countries where heroin use is a policy issue, the drug is tightly regulated and not legally available. Restricted supply creates scarcity and the accompanying high price charged to heroin users. These high prices generate various incentives for poppy seed growers, international organized crime networks and street dealers. Since scarcity affects price the linkage between heroin use and crime is easily deduced since addicts are prone to criminal acts (such as robbery and burglary) to support their expensive habit. Demand factors are different. Policy makers who emphasize the demand side of heroin use try to understand the sociological, psychological and economic reasons why some people become heroin users.

Our analysis now moves to the policy interventions that may affect supply and/or demand. On the supply side, governments may try to enforce border police operations to reduce supply. Given the incentives to drug dealers and realistic cost estimates of policing, it quickly becomes apparent that border control would be an inef-

5 The case is taken from Moore [1976].

fective supply-oriented strategy. Similar arguments apply to the option to use vigorous enforcement to discourage growers because the economic benefits to growers are so large.

One supply-oriented proposal often discussed is legalization. The case for legalization is based on two arguments. First, people do many things that are harmful to themselves but require no government intervention. This "freedom of individual choice" perspective assumes that if all harmful effects are restricted to the individual, the case for the prohibition of drugs is no stronger than the case for the prohibition of other "vices" such as alcohol or tobacco. Moreover, some advocates of decriminalization argue that economic incentives would be removed from the heroin market since users would be able to purchase the drug legally. Addicts would no longer have to commit crimes to support their habit since heroin would be affordable.

Whatever the merits of legalization, it has not achieved political acceptability. Since supply-oriented strategies are of questionable effectiveness, strategies tend to focus on the reduction of demand for heroin. For the sake of brevity, let us say that these strategies fall into one of two broad categories: (1) educational programs that teach about the harmful effects of heroin use ("Say no to drugs.") and (2) quality of life interventions that reduce the conditions that presumably give rise to heroin use. Both are long term (particularly the latter strategy) and require continual political reinforcement to have any significant probability of success.

This excursion into the area of heroin use as a policy issue is intended to illustrate one main point. Definitions of problems shape the strategies chosen to solve public problems. There is a natural inclination to define problems quickly and narrowly. Elected officials, who operate within short time horizons, will usually prefer a solution that promises visible results in time for the next election. This is not a cynical observation; rather, it reflects the political realities which shape policy formulation. Nevertheless, while strategies are ultimately chosen by political authorities, part of the advice giving dimension of policy analysis is to help political leaders to define public problems in ways that will increase the likelihood that they can be solved.

EVALUATING ALTERNATIVES

It takes no great insight, rather merely casual observation, to learn that public transportation in Budapest is not accessible to many people with physical disabilities. The same can be said for public buildings. Imagine that accessibility becomes a public policy priority and, for our purposes, let us focus only on public transportation for illustration. It is not impossible to calculate the cost of making the transit system accessible to those with physical disabilities. Suffice it to say here that it will be very expensive to redesign metro stations, put special lifts on trams and buses, and install ramps where necessary.

What are the alternatives (other than the status quo)? If we define the policy issue in terms of the mobility of the handicapped then one option is to provide eligible persons with taxi service financed from public funds. The administrative

details of this proposal would include the determination of who is eligible, the amount of the benefit (that is, the total amount of payment to be made per eligible recipient over a fiscal year), the method of payment (probably a voucher or some kind) and some regulations concerning the taxis. Assume, for the sake of argument, that this is a viable option. Any careful cost analysis will surely conclude that this option is less costly than the option to make the transit system in Budapest accessible.

The taxi option (and similar "call a ride" vehicles that respond to individual requests for transportation service) ignores an important dimension of the policy issue. Let us imagine that physically disabled do not merely want increased mobility. Rather, they want to be integrated into society as much as possible to reduce the stigma associated with disabilities. Notice that now the less costly taxi alternative is problematical because it works against this second objective. In fact, the second option perpetuates segregation in transportation. Is the segregation argument relevant to the analysis? One could try to answer this question on a philosophical level and advance arguments about accessibility as an entitlement. Alternatively, one could estimate the political influence of interest groups representing disabled persons as a factor in the policy equation. What, at first, looks like a straightforward cost-benefit comparison of alternatives turns out to be a bit more complicated because there are multiple and often competing objectives which have to be "balanced" when developing new programs.

MULTIDIMENSIONAL CRITERIA IN THE ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES

The above example points out that policy is usually evaluated against multiple criteria. This is a deceptively simple point since it is understood in principle but difficult to apply in real policy contexts. To illustrate, consider the criteria used to compare alternative programs to provide social aid to low income persons. The criteria would include the following: the determination of who is eligible to receive aid, the amount of money that would be given to eligible recipients, the form that the benefit takes (cash, vouchers, in-kind benefits), the extent of stigma that is associated with the program, the administrative ease in implementing the program, total program cost and political feasibility. This last criterion refers to the likelihood that any given alternative would actually be accepted by the political authorities.

Even a casual glance at this list should indicate that some of the criteria are inherently incompatible with one another. For example, if the benefit level is high then the total program cost will also high unless eligibility criteria are stringent. If the program is costly then this condition will conflict with other political goals such as a desire to maintain budgetary discipline. Similarly, high benefit levels will, at some point, affect the work effort of recipients (when the benefits approach the expected wage level). The administrative ease of implementing income support programs is improved when the benefit is cash. Cash benefits also eliminate much of the stigma associated with poor relief programs. Yet, if stigma is minimal people not eligible for programs may try to obtain benefits. This would increase administrative errors and the total program cost. On the other hand, if considerable stigma is asso-

ciated with the program, some people in need of government benefits will choose to do without them thereby reducing the effectiveness of the program.

The tensions among criteria are inherent in any comparison of alternatives. The task of policy analysts is to identify the criteria that should be used to compare alternatives and estimate, to the extent possible, the likely consequences of choosing one alternative versus another. Naturally the "weights" given to some criteria versus others would depend, in part, on the social values that frame policy areas.

IMPLEMENTATION AS A DIMENSION OF POLICY ANALYSIS

There is ample evidence to show that well intentioned programs fail when there is little or no consideration given (in advance) to their implementation. The example of income support for low income persons illustrates this point.

Assume that eligibility is determined by local government case workers who are supposed to administer central government means test rules. Ideally, in the spirit of Max Weber, there should be no variation across case workers and local governments in the administration of the program. Eligibility criteria should be applied without regard for persons. This is unlikely to happen in practice. Government workers will differ in their understanding of the rules and therefore apply them differently. Workers also have different preconceptions and hold different values. Furthermore, their experience and competence vary. Perhaps most important, in doing their jobs workers exercise discretion (which creates variation among individual workers). Since discretion in "face-to-face" government activities such as education, social casework, and police is integral to the service, discretion is not only inevitable but should be encouraged.

Let us now look at the example of drug addiction as an implementation problem. Suppose the issue is framed in such a way that the policy intervention concentrates on the rehabilitation of drug addicts. Assume that there are no specialists in drug addiction in the government agency responsible for rehabilitation. Should the manager hire new staff? Should the manager contract with other organizations that could provide the new services? Here are some criteria that should be considered when making the decision:

- cost
- monitoring the activities
- availability of professionals who can be hired
- choice of contractors

The manager would outline the positive and negative features of each implementation alternative using the above criteria. For example, hiring staff allows the manager to choose personnel directly. On the negative side, the manager may not have adequate appreciation of the qualities necessary for the position. A positive feature of contracting is that the manager does not have to spend time choosing competent personnel. The contractor does it; however, the manager obviously loses control over the selection process.

History may help in this decision. If the manager reflects about past "social diseases" he will come to the conclusion that they have generally lasted a long time.

Putting this fact in the pro and con "balance sheet," the manager will recognize that one of the positive features of contracting - the ability to terminate a program when it is no longer needed - is not a compelling reason to choose the contracting option in the drug addiction case. Once government decides to tackle this social disease, it will be involved with drug rehabilitation for a long time.

Implementation strategies evolve. They cannot be static because politics shift policy priorities. In a representative democracy such shifts may initiate or be responsive to changing social values. Returning to our drug addiction example, even when the saliency of the issue changes, the policy analyst should keep a programmatic focus on the broad goals - reducing dependency on drugs, changing addicts' opportunity structure and improving the health of drug users. To put it another way, there is a delicate balance between serving those who hold legitimate political authority and advancing the craft of policy analysis through professional competence.

Like all crafts, policy analysis requires basic knowledge and skills. The essential skills are embedded in the case illustrations described in the previous section. First, students in policy programs learn to be comfortable with data. Arguments about organ transplants or the effectiveness of alternative strategies to reduce the consumption of illicit drugs require some data analysis. This means that at least basic statistical techniques and methods of quantitative inquiry are essential. Second, the tools used to evaluate programmatic and policy options require knowledge of economics (particularly microeconomics). Social scientists often bristle at the "intellectual imperialism" of the discipline of economics and its immodest practitioners. Yet it cannot be denied that economics shapes the analysis in all of the illustrations described above. Recall that in the transplant case above, any reasoned analysis would include the benefits of providing one type of transplant versus another, as well as the assessment of tradeoffs across individuals (for a particular transplant). Similarly, the analysis of alternative drug reduction strategies would include estimates of the "price elasticity" of the drugs in question.

Since policies cannot be divorced from their institutional settings, organizational and political analysis is a third important component of public policy and management education. The drug addiction illustration shows why this component is important. Recall that strong arguments, resting on sound economic reasoning, have been made for the legalization of addictive drugs such as heroin. Nevertheless, the case for legalization has not been taken seriously. Why not? The answer is simple. Elected officials do not want to select an alternative that looks like defeatism. They do not want to risk being accused of being "morally bankrupt" by their opponent in the next election. Other political arguments could surely be offered to illustrate why a seemingly reasonable economic alternative fails the test of political feasibility. Political and organizational analysis teaches policy and management students that they must identify the relevant actors in the decision context, the motivations of the actors, and the resources that they bring to the environment. While these concepts may lack precision, they are no less important than the tools of economics in policy analysis. Students and future practitioners who ignore political feasibility will learn that their analysis is similarly ignored.

Since policies are implemented by organizations, a fourth component of public policy education is management. Management is sometimes thought to be the "soft"

side of public policy education - less amenable to quantitative specification and analysis. Even worse, some faculty believe that management can be learned "on-the-job" and is undeserving of formal education. It is always interesting to hear former students say that what they do most often in their professional roles is not economic and statistical analysis. Rather, they work in groups; they negotiate with superiors and subordinates; they manage budgets, information and people; they take part in the design and implementation of organizational strategy. Together these items form much of the content of public management. Teaching this content as part of the policy curriculum prepares students for the challenges (and frustrations) of government.

PART II

Now that the main content areas of policy analysis and management have been identified, the next task is to locate them in a university. Universities are organized into departments and schools. Public policy is not so organizationally tidy. The social science disciplines have developed extensive vocabularies, formal and informal modes of inquiry and professional norms which guide (and regulate) individual and institutional behavior. Included in the latter (at least in the United States, but certainly in other countries as well) are rules governing publication procedures, prestige rankings of publishing outlets for scientific work, and status attributes of individuals, institutes and universities. More generally, scientific work that advances theory (however defined) is more prestigious than work that is "applied."

Academics who study and teach public policy are often renegades from their own disciplines. They are uncomfortable with the norms and fashions that guide their disciplines and often feel some detachment from them. Their intellectual curiosity traverses disciplines and they are rarely motivated by methods alone. Rather, academics genuinely interested in policy often have specific interests in policy areas such as health, education, defense, public welfare and environment. There is a normative dimension to their substantive interest and, on occasion, they would like to have some impact on real programs and policies.

Capturing the renegade spirit is one of the best ways to build a public policy and management program. To do this it is important to bring faculty together who share the professional values listed above. This is accomplished by creating an institutional home - whether it is called a department, a school, or an institute.[6] Professional policy and management education thrives when faculty members are committed to the educational, research and service missions embedded in the field of public policy. The commitment is strengthened when faculty with similar values have primary appointments in a policy and management department, school or institute. In this way faculty members are not torn by values associated with professional educa-

6 The comments that follow are obviously drawn from my own experiences in higher education in the United States. I realize that some of my suggestions may not be feasible in Hungary given the current fiscal and political conditions in higher education. I still believe that they represent the best prospects for successful policy and management education in the long run.

tion and the disciplinary values from which they are retreating. Similarly, establishing a separate organizational unit in the university helps to reduce the possibility of second-class status which afflicts faculty who are branded as "too practical" or "too applied." Establishing a separate department, school or institute also recognizes the essential reality that professional education requires activities that do not neatly fit into the traditional incentive systems of disciplinary departments. These include applied policy reports for government agencies, advice giving to parliamentary committees and other political bodies, and government service. This last activity provides the policy and management academic with a way to test theory against practice. It also provides the scholar with an opportunity to formulate research in a way that bridges the gap between phenomena that is both theoretically challenging and grounded in policy reality.

PART III

The sections above were written sixteen years ago. Much has changed in the academic world of public policy. For starters, programs have mushroomed all over the world. Postgraduate public policy programs now exist throughout Europe, Asia and parts of the former Soviet Union. The diversity of these programs are illustrated, first, by the various degree names - Master of Public Administration, Master of Public Management, Master of Public Affairs, Master of Public Policy, to name just the most common ones. Although the foci vary across the programs, most try to provide the knowledge and skills to postgraduate students who either currently work, or would like to work in government, nongovernmental organizations or the intersection of the private and public sectors. Having watched and participated in this explosion of postgraduate public affairs education over the past thirty years, I will now reflect on what I see as some of the major issues in this field.

THE MARKET FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS EDUCATION

There has been a world wide expansion of postgraduate public affairs programs. More recently, several programs seek postgraduate students from either a region or even from the global market place. Examples are Bocconi University in Milan, Italy, the Korea Development Institute in Seoul, Korea, the Lew Kwan Yew School of Public Policy in Singapore and the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin, Germany. (There are many others.) There are several features of these programs:

- language of instruction is English;
- curricula are similar across the programs and based on the American "model" of public affairs education;
- students are generally young with only a few years of work experience;
- size of programs range between 25 and 80 students;
- programs are intended to raise the international profile of the respective schools;
- faculty are expected to compete in the international public affairs intellectual marketplace.

By almost any type of measure it is clear that the number of postgraduate public affairs programs has been growing steadily over the past decade or more. A look at the curricula in the newer public policy programs is instructive. The curricula are heavily influenced by the evolution of public policy programs in the United States. Most programs require some economics, usually applied microeconomics concepts with applications to the public and non-profit sectors. Second, most programs require statistical and methods training. The purpose is to produce students who can apply simple analytical techniques and, perhaps more important, be smart consumers of reports that employ statistical methods. Programs generally require some management content and there is often attention to the political context of public policy. Programs vary beyond these core competencies based on faculty strengths and interests, especially with respect to different public policy specializations. Location also influences program content. For example, the Lew Kwan Yew School of Public Policy in Singapore naturally uses cases and readings that focus on Asia. Programs in Europe obviously deal with regional issues, multi-level governance and the politics and practices of the European Union. Despite variations in degree names and some differences in emphasis, there is quite a bit of overlap across the programs. One should, however, not see this as convergence or homogenization but, rather, reflective of the way that the field as developed over the past three decades.

The world-wide expansion of postgraduate public affairs education also has a curious side effect. Whereas the Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree is well branded, public affairs degrees are not and the very fact that the degree names vary causes some confusion in the educational market place. Furthermore, other degrees offer content that makes it credible to claim that if someone is interested in serving others through government or non-governmental organizations, one could do that by earning a law degree, MBA or Master of Social Work (MSW) degree, to name just a few. Some may not see this as a problem, but educational administrators need to realize that universities operate in a competitive environment and, as in any competitive environment, it is important to distinguish your brand. Academics and university administrators may find this tact rather crass but programs that try to achieve a regional or global reach have to operate with the understanding that they are in a competitive environment. It is unlikely that the world-wide demand for postgraduate public affairs education will grow without limit. Many programs around the world may also soon find that the lack of branding, coupled with the encroachment of other degree programs, will combine to create a natural limit to continued expansion. Whether this will be a problem for specific programs depends on the organizational and budgetary characteristics of their respective university environments.

OLD BATTLES NEVER END

Public affairs faculties in the United States have continually faced criticisms from the social science disciplines. While I alluded to this issue above, let me add an additional observation. In many universities, faculties and schools of public affairs in the

United States are still not accorded the respect that their cousins in economics, political science, sociology and management receive. This is reflected in personnel decisions such as tenure and promotion, and salary, especially in the case of economics faculty who will, on average, earn more in an economics department compared to a school or department of public policy. The reason for this, quite simply, is that the interdisciplinary work of public policy is not respected for its own sake and traditional scholars tend to dismiss it as not theoretical and/or not grounded in a long disciplinary tradition like law or political science. Some policy schools have dealt with this reality quite simply by requiring faculty to have a tenure home in a disciplinary department. The best example of this approach is the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University.

While this problem has abated in the United States as evidenced by the strong reputations of many schools of public policy, the problem is being replayed on the global stage in many universities around the world. Without mentioning specific universities, some faculties of law, economics and political science remain skeptical and, in some cases, even hostile to postgraduate public affairs education. I recall learning about one proposal in a European university to put a fledgling public affairs program in the faculty of law - a sure "kiss of death" for the program. If the United States provides a lesson on this broad issue, it is that it takes time to get legitimacy, and the best way to do it is the old fashioned way - through high quality research and the visibility that comes from research that receives international attention.

TIME TO REVISIT THE CURRICULUM?[7]

The postgraduate public affairs curricula, certainly in the United States, is largely a product of the 1970's and, to the extent that it is replicated elsewhere, it suffers from some disconnect between its content and the contemporary political and economic realities that make up the national and global agendas. This comment does not damn the entire curriculum of postgraduate public affairs education. Much of the subject matter remains relevant, especially the economics, statistics and quantitative methods parts of the curriculum. But politics and management, both elements of most programs continues to be problematical because of a lack of consensus about the core concepts that should be embedded in programs. As I see it, the politics and management components of public affairs programs need to respond to the following broad trends:

1. Internationalization of public affairs education

The following trends that require adjustments to the current curriculum:

- need for descriptive content that covers significant events in the world (such as the importance of China in the global economy and China's role in world politics). Here I am simply referring to the acknowledgement of significant

7 This section is taken from Straussman [2006].

events and trends beyond our borders that any intelligent public policy student should know about. Staying with my China example, even if one believes that a reliance on the US setting for a policy process course is justifiable, we should at least consider themes, scenarios and simulations that acknowledge global interconnectedness in areas such as trade, migration and immigration, and foreign and defense policy.

- Global forces have an impact on such "traditional" aspects of organizations such as the composition of the labor force which, in turn, has an impact on subjects such as diversity which, in my view, is discussed in ways that are terribly out of date. One can extend this well beyond my human resources example.
- Internationalization, at a much higher level, forces us to continually assess the deductive power of our generalizations and, secondly, appraise prescriptions in terms of how far and wide they can travel. Prescriptions about what is effective are dependent on history, culture, and legal and political conditions. This requires faculty who teach management and policy processes courses to be both knowledgeable about more countries and regions but also more nimble when trying to generalize. Traditional content such as fiscal decentralization, governance and civil society, accountability and transparency - to take just a few examples - are all enriched theoretically and conceptually by enlarging the geographical scope of the discussion.
- Some subjects that are either taken for granted or are simply not germane to the US context are live issues elsewhere and should be addressed as appropriate. Examples include the privatization of state-owned enterprises, deregulation, the marketization of government services, rule of law, transparency and accountability.

2. Managing across sectors

The relationships among sectors have certainly been observed for several years now. We have a series of terms to capture this dimension of public management - decentralization, "third party" government, privatization, networks, to name a few. Putting these together it asks the question: How do we teach management content when civil service and the delivery of government services have been substantially transformed?

For starters, we do not acknowledge the substantial importance of the private sector. There is ample evidence about the interconnectedness across the sectors and students in public affairs programs need to know about the myriad and complex relationships embodied in this interconnectedness. Syllabuses once again leave much to be desired. I would go so far as to say that, reviewing syllabuses only, one could even come to the erroneous conclusion that there is no such thing as a private sector! Public affairs faculty who teach in the management, politics, and policy process areas surely have their list of subjects that are worthy of coverage. Here are some (in no particular order) that may be worthy of consideration:

- implementation of government programs by organizations in the non-profit and/or private sector;
- innovation and its transferability across sectors;
- policy design with substantial involvement from the private sector;

- classic and new governance challenges as a by-product of the interrelationships among the sectors.

This last bullet is intentional since the word "governance" is increasingly used to cover up a multiple of theoretical, conceptual and empirical lacunae. We use the term quite a bit now without genuine consensus on what it means. For starters, any credible use of the term would need to incorporate the interconnectedness among the sectors. Putting the word "democratic" in front of it makes clarity worse, save for bi-lateral donors who have a foreign policy agenda to pursue.

3. Collaborative Management

In public affairs schools we have inculcated group assignments and projects into courses as a way to simulate the working world where teams prevail over individual work assignments. Keeping aside whether we really know what we are doing in assigning and evaluating groups, the essence of these exercises is to simulate the world of work inside an organization - usually a government bureaucracy. Following from the section above, it now seems that collaborative management is the approach that facilitates boundary spanning across the sectors. Is this really part of a new skill set? It depends who you ask. To the extent that we can sketch interorganizational arrangements and cross-sector linkages that produce value, pulling such arrangements (or networks) off requires negotiating skills of the sort not generally at the center of the public affairs curriculum.

This is partly about the problems associated with "many hands." The problems include who's in charge, policy coherence, myriad challenges during implementation, and the classic issues of transparency and accountability-to name a few. Here, pedagogical tools, chiefly cases, lag behind reality. The provocative article by Chetkovich and Kirp [2001] about the limitations of cases in public management education makes the point that the "lone ranger" quality of at least the ten Kennedy School cases they critiqued minimized institutional and interorganizational dimensions of public management and, instead, glorified a "hero-centered model of social and organizational change". Collaborative management, alternatively, is really a by-product of networked government which, in turn, raises the importance of the concept of governance, which in turn, elevates the centrality of accountability. There is certainly a plethora of writing on one or more or these italicized words. But the syllabuses do not link them well, nor develop a coherent portrait of the world in the 21st century that capture the essential meaning of these concepts, integrates them, and shows how an understanding of them is indispensable for students who are preparing for public service, whether they will work in, for or with government.

4. Being reflective yet evidence-based

I am not a big fan of small group "psychobabble"-based reflection. And, there is a limit to how many times we can ask students to Myers-Briggs themselves. That said, we need to find better ways to teach and learn experientially. We need to learn how to manage small groups and we need to learn how to manage in situations where there is little or no formal authority. We need to do better at teaching students about small groups and we need to teach people about themselves.

In social services and mental health, professionals talk about designing interventions based on "evidence-based practice." The term is self-explanatory yet, if we are guilty of anything in public affairs education it is the "flavor of the month" syndrome. In the past few years it has all been about networks. This year you cannot say enough about performance. But who truly remembers zero-base budgeting (ZBB) and management by objectives (MBO)? (It can be said, in some defense of management fads that come and go, that they frequently leave something behind. For example, the internal quest for performance - laudable on its own terms - is certainly connected to the more elaborate systems that have come and gone such as ZBB, MBO and total quality management.) We do, of course, want our courses to be theoretically and conceptually rich, and empirically defensible. Yet, it is so easy to elevate an airport management book to more than it truly is, so one caution is to be careful not to mistake an old (discredited) idea for a new one.

CONCLUSION: THE END OF AMERICAN DOMINANCE?

Postgraduate public affairs education provides an interesting case of the globalization of higher education. At one level it is quite remarkable that a field of professional education that began in the United States almost four decades ago has grown so rapidly around the world as evidenced by the proliferation of postgraduate programs. One by-product of this growth is that many programs in the United States are scurrying to develop formal linkages with many of the new programs, especially in Europe and Asia. Some of these arrangements involve double degree programs, faculty exchanges and research consortia. At the risk of sounding like an American chauvinist, let me suggest that it is premature to assume that US dominance in postgraduate public affairs education, and graduate education in general, is in decline. Graduate education in the United States is still first rate and there continues to be a healthy global demand for doctoral education in particular. Research productivity of academics in US programs is high relative to other countries. The norms and expectations of the research enterprise in public affairs have been shaped by faculties in the United States over several decades and it is not necessarily bad that many of the attributes of postgraduate public affairs education, developed in the United States, are being emulated around the world.

The challenge for public affairs education everywhere is to stay relevant amidst the changes in political economies, governance, and transnational and global issues that occur so rapidly that it is difficult to stay on top of them. Being relevant while simultaneously being intellectually rigorous is the perennial challenge for public affairs education. If universities are to serve the societies they are part of, it is in their interest to nurture high quality public affairs education.

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