

Call for Papers

6/08/2011

Converging and Conflicting Trends in the Public Administration of the US, Europe, and Germany

Hosted by the *German Research Institute for Public Administration (GRIP) Speyer, Germany* and the *School of Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA) of the University of Indiana* to be held at *The German University of Administrative Sciences (DHV) Speyer, Germany* 19-20 July 2012

Conference Theme

Public administrations in the US and Europe are facing extraordinary domestic problems (e.g. unemployment, unaffordable social security and public health systems, crumbling infrastructures) and severe global challenges (e.g. international terrorism, financial crises, ecological degradation and climate change). There are three trends in the ways that public administrations are trying to cope with these problems: privatization of public tasks and services, increasingly detailed government regulation of markets and social activities, and adherence to the status quo.

In order to promote research and discussion regarding these trends and the future of public administration the GRIP and SPEA invite proposals for papers falling into the following general themes:

Administrative Theory and State Paradigms

At some level the conflicting trends mentioned above are rooted in theoretical and philosophical ideas which provide the empirical foundation and normative justification of administrative structures, processes, and policies. Which theoretical concepts and approaches best capture and explain these conflicting empirical trends? How do these concepts and approaches help us to understand public administration; how do they guide our policy options and our lines of scientific enquiry? Which similarities and differences exist between US and European developments in public administration? In addition, the empirical trends are paralleled by the competing values of democracy, social equity, effectiveness and efficiency. Different state paradigms are advocated to provide orientation: e.g. enabling state, ensuring state, collaborative state. Do such paradigms offer adequate guidance for the future?

Multi-level Governance

This conference theme will explore multi-level governance in federal and non-federal systems, including issues such as multi-level reform, intergovernmental relations, policy networks, and comparative local government. Recently, multi-level (i.e., intergovernmental, international, intersectoral) governance issues

have been thrust to the forefront of public administration in both the U.S. and Europe. There is recognition among both practitioners and scholars that managing through networks has become a standard component of public administration. However, a knowledge base that explains this phenomenon has only recently developed. The field is still in need of research that can provide theoretical and practical guidance to those operating in networks of governmental and non-government actors. In particular, what should the exact configuration of these networks be? What would be most efficient and yet also the most democratically legitimate?

Market and the Regulatory State

The fact that markets might need regulation is again on the agenda, in part due to the recent difficulties in the international financial markets, but also due to market failures in other sectors such as energy and water provision. Regulation and regulatory quality, different regulatory regimes and modi, as well as the interaction of the actors involved, are therefore important issues for researchers and policymakers to discuss – even more so as the need for and the design of sector-specific regulations often are extremely controversial given the heterogeneity of interests among the different groups involved in or affected by regulations. These and related issues are a concern in numerous sectors which could be explored under this theme, including: environmental regulation, energy markets, transportation and aviation policies, telecommunication and information policy, innovation policy, and financial markets. What is the best blend of state-led and market-mechanism solutions for resolving market failures and regulating these sectors? How do we ensure such solutions do not lead to over-regulation and possibly smother the markets?

Society and the Regulatory State

The scope of regulatory policy is not limited to perceived market failures in finance and environmental concerns. Reforms in immigration, for instance, have been a significant issue of debate in both Europe and the United States. Similarly, budgetary strains due to entitlement spending have drawn new scrutiny to public pensions and labor regulations. This theme will explore these and other areas such as social protection (social & health policy; pension systems; etc), comparative cultural policy, public sector risk management, and education policy. How can reforms in these areas be delivered in the face of vested special interest groups, both in terms of improving long-run trends while simultaneously managing risks? At the same time, how can we ensure that social protection does not conflict with individual rights and individual choice?

Non-profit and Civic Engagement, Participation

According to many scholars, we are currently witnessing an increasing role for non-profit and civil society actors in the public sphere. As this sector continues to expand, non-profits around the globe have begun to take an active role in the provision of normally public services, whether through deliberate contracting relationships, collaborative management, public private partnerships, or by gap-filling, particularly in developing countries. At the same time the roles of civil society and voluntary associations have increased, as they are thought to be a crucial component for government performance, participatory manage-

ment and democratic governance. Yet however desirable these may be, how efficient and effective are these arrangements? Does public participation in policy making and implementation improve results? What is, should be, and can be the role of these third-sector actors in public management? Given their new roles, how should non-profit management evolve?

Administrative Modernization and Performance Management

This theme addresses the approaches, trajectories and effects of current modernization processes in European and American administrative organizations at different levels of government and in different policy sectors. These contemporary modernization attempts need to be considered in light of the old, classic conflict between administration and politics, between bureaucracy and democratic legitimacy. A particular emphasis has recently been placed on the strategies of performance measurement, benchmarking and target steering in public administration. But while often touted as effective tools, could their over-use lead to endless oversight? Thus it is of particular importance that evaluations and impact assessments of these reform attempts be made and their modernization effects analyzed. But also here we must ask, evaluated by whom and according to what criteria? What should a reform impact and how large must the effect be if it is to be judged as a success?

Human Resource Management and Ethics Management

Public Choice concepts and concepts from New Economic Institutionalism, such as Agency Theory, have seen their influence on human resource management increase dramatically over the last decades. However, their implementation was often based on rather crude assumptions about the nature of man. Over time, the drawbacks of incentive mechanisms based on only monetary incentives and the neglect of the role of intrinsic motivation has become increasingly obvious. While this has broad implications, especially in an age of austerity and personnel flight to the private sector, the need for a balance between monetary and intrinsic motivation is most obvious in anti-corruption efforts. Furthermore, the difference between manufacturing workers and knowledge-based service workers has become a central topic in personnel economics and human resource management. What is the most appropriate personnel management technique to deal with these changes? Is it NPM, Neo-Weberian, or Public Value based? Do we need an ethics management system? How do we increase public service motivation and performance incentives while minimizing costs, maximizing recruitment and retention, and maintaining ethical standards? How do different civil service systems handle these issues? What role can leadership and learning play in human resource management?

New Administrative Tasks

This theme focuses on emerging tasks and responsibilities for public administrators in the European Union, the United States, and other developed market economies. A particular emphasis is placed on strategic and tactical administrative responses to challenges resulting from economic globalization, demographic trends in industrialized countries, global poverty and inter-state inequality, climate changes, heightened security risks, and financial and fiscal crises. Meeting these challenges requires difficult choices. How can administrations fulfill their current tasks while also meeting these new requirements

with the same, limited amount of resources? How many resources are we willing to invest in preparing for high-impact low-frequency events, whether manmade or natural in origin? How many short-term sacrifices are we willing to make for long-term trends (e.g. demographic)? To what extent can individual states manage these tasks alone, or do they require international cooperation and rules? How can we balance the larger issues of security versus liberty?

Programmatic Information

The conference will consist of multiple concurrently running panels. There will also be two keynote addresses and an expert roundtable discussion as well as several social gatherings. It is planned to publish selected papers from the conference in a special journal issue or edited volume. Free accommodation will be provided for conference participants presenting a paper.

Submitting a Proposal

We invite all proposals fitting generally into any of the above themes. The preferred theme should be indicated in the proposal and in the subject line of the submission email. The research may be of either a theoretical or empirical nature. We particularly welcome comparative approaches including comparisons of Europe and/or the US with other countries/regions or discussions of European and/or American policy towards other countries/regions.

Proposals up to 600 words in length should be sent by 30 November 2011 to gripspea@foev-speyer.de. For any questions please feel free to contact Prof. Eberhard Bohne at GRIP (bohne@foev-speyer.de) or Prof. Sergio Fernandez at SPEA (sefernan@indiana.edu). Notification of acceptance will be made by 31 January 2012. Final papers are to be submitted by 01 June 2012.

We look forward to receiving your proposals and to welcoming you to Speyer, Germany for what promises to be a stimulating and enjoyable conference.

For further information and updates see: <http://www.foev-speyer.de/spea>