It has been a busy year for the Graduate School of Government.

We have three new staff members – Dr Joanne Kelly has joined the Academic staff and Ann-Maree Ormiston and Richard Prekodravac have joined the administrative staff.

Ann-Maree has joined as my administrative assistant and receptionist. Richard has also joined the GSG, taking over from Sally-Ann Williams role with all student matters of the GSG. Students should contact Richard in the first instance in relation to their interests in the GDPA program and any aspects of student enrolment.

Leanne Howie continues as the GSG Executive Officer who aside for being responsible for senior administrative issues is a key member of staff in developing the GSG International focus into South-East Asia and Africa.

Early in the year we successfully completed a Ministerial Offices Induction Program. The program was developed in co-operation with the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, and involved speakers from both the political and administrative arms of government.

Richard Fisher, the University of Sydney’s General Counsel, has been appointed an Adjunct Professor. He was formerly a partner at Blake Dawson Waldron and a consultant for the Asia Development Bank.

The GSG was called upon to brief a range of visiting delegates about up-to-date developments in the Australian public sector, including the China Central Party School, Zuhai Senior Civil Servants, Korean Local Government Officials, China Executive Leadership Academy, Pakistan National Management College and Zuhai Municipal government.

In August I also participated in the Chartered Secretaries Australia Annual Public Sector Update in Sydney. I briefed those attending on recent developments in commonwealth-state relations and the national reform agenda.

The GSG is now located in Sydney’s Faculty of Economics and Business and looks forward to working with the Faculty as they further develop their executive education programs tailored for both the private and public sectors.

Alumni and Practitioner Networking Function

The Graduate School of Government’s Alumni and Practitioner Networking function will be held on the 12 November 2007 hosted by Deloitte. The function is an opportunity for current and former students to meet with teaching staff and mentors from industry and public sector.

Professor Geoff Gallop
Ministerial Offices Induction Program

The Graduate School of Government in conjunction with the Department of Premier and Cabinet, has successfully completed an induction program for Ministerial Chiefs of Staff and Policy Officers.

The program was based around the theme that Ministerial Offices has become an important political institution which needed to operate in a professional and ethical way.

The perspectives of both insiders and outsiders were considered as where the various relationships between Ministerial Offices and the other parts of the system of government.

Guest speakers included former Ministers Dr Andrew Refshauge and Michael Egan, Premier’s Chief of Staff Mike Kaiser, former WA Premier’s Chief of Staff Sean Walsh, and senior public servants Robyn Kruk, Col Gellatly, Warwick Watkins, Michael Coutts-Trotter, Lisa Corbyn, Alex Smith, Leigh Sanderson and Brad Fitzmaurice.

International student perspective

Phindi Molopyane was the Graduate School of Government’s first student from South Africa. Sponsored by the AusAID Australian Development Scholarship program, Phindi successfully completed the Master of Public Administration in June. International students undertake an Internship within the Masters program. Phindi writes on her experience in the GSG and her internship at Marrickville Council

In this article I will provide a snapshot of what I learned from my Master of Public Administration degree. When I started my degree I was excited to learn about Australian Public Administration. My lecturers made my learning experience very interesting in the sense that they invited a number of government officials to talk about Australian public service issues. This was good for example, if the lecturer in the morning was lecturing on Public Private Partnerships (PPPs), then the speaker in the afternoon would provide practical experience of the PPPs in Australia.

In contrast in South Africa the culture of teaching is different in the sense that universities do not invite government officials to talk about their experiences. I enjoyed all my lectures and when I return home I will introduce some of the policies that my department might benchmark. For example, I will be assisting in shaping up the policy on PPPs, managing my office budget with the knowledge I acquired from Dr Kelly’s lectures and ensuring that I am practicing good leadership in my office. I think all these issues are possible to implement because my department’s main objective is to develop policies for Local and Provincial departments.

Moreover, I had an opportunity to attend my internship at Marrickville Council. I was based at Corporate Planning division. I enjoyed working at Marrickville Council for a month. I went to Marrickville to learn their methods of engaging their communities in their plans. The most important issue that I learned at the council is that communities are the ears, eyes and voices for the government in planning and decision making. Therefore, Marrickville consulted with their communities on their draft plans in order to make sound decisions. However, in South Africa we have a different system of community consultation, as we often do not consult communities for our draft plans.

With the knowledge I have acquired from my studies, I would like to thank the Graduate School of Government, Marrickville Council and AusAID for opening their doors and allowing international students to learn their ways. I would also like to thank Dr Michael Paton from the Faculty of Economics and Business for his assistance, patience and understanding.
Essay: Dilemmas for Public Managers: how robust is the authority to implement policy?
Prof Ian Marsh

Democracy is perhaps the crowning achievement of western culture. But in Australia voter cynicism, disaffection and distrust is at an all time high. How has democratic governance sunk so low?

There are several contending explanations. The most common involves leadership. But leaders work within a framework of constraints. They are never the Promethean figures presented to the public. They must campaign within the incentives inherent in the present structure of politics.

Explanations based on leadership only go a little way. Above all, a focus on leadership disregards a deep, indeed fundamental, structural problem. This concerns the widening gap between the formal political system and the citizens whom it serves. The political and policy making system gains legitimacy and authority from public confidence. This is its license to act more or less boldly, and more or less adaptively. This license is sustained, refreshed and renewed in the daily rituals of politics.

In other words, political leadership mostly works within boundaries set by public opinion. Sometimes leaders must confront their publics, but mostly they work by persuasion. To do this, the formal system needs the structural capability to undertake two key tasks. First, it needs capacities to prepare its publics for emerging issues and contingencies. The real challenges arising in global economic engagement, public education, health and transport need to be recognised and articulated. Since these latter services are directly experienced on a routine basis by most citizens, sham rhetoric only encourages cynicism. Second, the formal system needs capacities to listen and learn, and to engage reciprocally, if necessary over an extended time period, with its many publics. By such means public opinion can be progressively prepared for the many contemporary policy challenges.

In both respects however, the present formal structure of politics is profoundly ill-equipped. These critical tasks were once mediated in important ways by mass party organisations. Party brands once had the power to cue citizen opinion. Party organizations were once mass based, mobilising large number of citizens through direct memberships. Party conferences once debated an actual agenda of emerging strategic issues. All these capabilities have gone.

They have been jettisoned for good reason. Australian society no longer divides only along class lines. Occupations have varied, diminishing the structural sources of collective loyalties. Education has extended the number of independently minded citizens. The extended workforce participation of women has shifted the pattern and scope of the demand for public services. New concerns like environmentalism, ethnic and indigenous rights now claim a place on the public agenda. Economic globalisation has profoundly transformed the domestic role of the state. Education, skills development, climate change and population aging all pose new challenges to the public agenda, to say nothing of the bread and butter issues associated with transport, health, education services and utilities.

In the face particularly of economic globalisation and the change to a more pluralized and differentiated society, the mass parties have rightly jettisoned their former mobilising and linkage roles. They now mostly sing from the same broad song sheet. And they have now rather become campaigning organisations.

But the resulting vacuum has not been filled by new political infrastructure to link the formal political and policy making system to the community. It has rather been filled by an expanded role for the media. However news bites are no substitute for more sustaining engagements. Over the long haul, the thin gruel of news bites feeds public cynicism. The daily media has of course an exceedingly important information task. But it is singularly ill-equipped to provide a setting for the progressive exchanges and sustained engagements that are involved in developing an informed public opinion.

Parliament is perhaps the one institution whose deliberations might also contribute to public education, and whose processes might facilitate community engagement. But the rituals of parliament are now almost wholly dysfunctional. They derive from the mass party era when two rival teams faced each other with significantly varied programs. These days differences mostly concern approach and the detail of measures, not the grand designs. Public exposure of these differences is far from the fare of the daily parliamentary jousts.

The NSW state plan, recently promulgated, like that adopted in nearly every other state, gestures to the problem of a representation gap. It seeks to introduce a direction and purpose to public debate that reflects the broad (but tacit) consensus between the major parties. But it is primarily a bureaucratic and executive document. As in other states, it has achieved little impact on broader public opinion.

The challenge of closing the gap between citizens and the formal system is surely much more profound. The habits and routines of the two party system are deeply embedded in parliamentary, executive and administrative routines. Think of the role of question time or of confidence motions, the mostly irrelevant

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Geoff Gallop

Many would have seen Geoff on *Difference of Opinion* (ABC-TV) debating Australia’s industrial relations system. This has been one of many media appearances, including regular political and social commentary on Geraldine Doogue’s *Saturday Extra* (ABC-Radio National) and in the Higher Education Supplement of The Australian newspaper.

Throughout the year Geoff has been invited to give a number of keynote addresses and public lectures, including Local Government Professionals Annual Conference (February 2007), Sydney University Fabian Society – the Inaugural Gough Whitlam Lecture (March 2007), Key Directions Public Lecture, University of Sydney (June 2007), Sydney University Higher Education Policy and Research Colloquium Series (July 2007), 2007 Planning Conference Sydney (August 2007), Banksia Club, Murdoch University (August 2007), and Australian Institute of Management, Brisbane (August 2007).

He has also participated in two ANZSOG Courses in Wellington, New Zealand and Sydney.

This year Geoff was appointed Deputy Chair of the COAG Reform Council and to the Advisory Board of the Greater Metropolitan Clinical Task Force (NSW Health).

Joanne Kelly

Joanne Kelly’s appointment to the GSG this year added to the School’s research profile and expertise.

Joanne began the year by conducting a five-country study for the International Monetary Fund which examined *how governments build institutions to manage the politics and processes of expenditure review*. This work has led the IMF to offer Joanne a visiting scholarship.

“Shaping the Strategic Centre”, was awarded a $100,000 research grant by ANZSOG to study the changing ways governments pursue strategic objectives and shape policy, their environment and ‘whole of government’ actions; in collaboration with Tom Bentley (Victoria Department of Premier and Cabinet) and Richard Norman (University of Victoria, New Zealand).

Throughout 2007, Joanne presented research at academic conferences and practitioner workshops including the OECD's annual meeting on accrual budgeting and finance in Paris (March); presented the keynote address at UK Treasury (March); visited the New Zealand treasury and presented research on international experiences in Expenditure Review and Reallocation (May); in June Joanne was an invited expert at the annual meeting of OECD Senior budget officials in Turkey (May-June); presented a paper of SE Asian Senior Budget Officials in China (July).

Last year Joanne was re-elected to the Council of the Institute of Public Administration Australia (NSW) for another two-year term; she continues to work as an Academic Advisor to the Treasury Board of Canada.

Ian Marsh

Ian has recently completed a manuscript, *Globalisation, Public Opinion and the State in Western Europe and East and Southeast Asia*, to be published by Routledge. The project was a collaboration with Takashi Inoguchi at Tokyo University and Jean Blondel of the European University Institute, Florence.

In April, Ian visited Ireland and Denmark in connection with an ARC funded project on the governance of innovation. This is in preparation of a book with Len Seabrooke and Ove Pedersen on this topic – comparing four countries: Australia, Ireland, Denmark and Sweden.

Ian visited New Zealand in connection with an ARC funded study of the democracy gap in Britain, Australia and New Zealand.

Ian was awarded a grant by University of Sydney to compare community mobilisation and local politics in six state electoral districts, and in conjunction with Ben Spies-Butcher, he completed a report on the proposed purchaser-provider structure for the disability employment network.

Ian was also appointed as a director of New Republic – an organisation established to explore ways to strengthen Australia’s political system and also ways to build public understanding of the options.
RJ Chambers Memorial Research Lecture
2 August 2007
Professor Irvine Lapsley on New Public Management

The lecture honours the memory of Raymond John Chambers - the first full-time lecturer in accounting and appointed Sydney University’s foundation chair of accounting in 1960.

The speaker, Irvine Lapsley, is Professor of Accounting and Director of the Institute of Public Sector Accounting Research at the University of Edinburgh. His address titled “New Public Management: The Cruellest Invention of the Human Spirit” throws a dark shadow on the outcomes achieved by the various management techniques and practices falling within the ambit of New Public Management (NPM).

Professor Lapsley’s discussion focused on selective examples of failures in the implementation of particular NPM strategies in the UK. He elaborated on poor practices and outcomes in relation to (i) public sector employment of management consultants, (ii) technological change initiatives and (iii) risk management processes, without conceding there have been any gains. The audience responded emphatically in defence of NPM to redress the balance.

While focusing entirely on the failures of NPM, the lecture was nevertheless an engaging one, perhaps best thought of as a set of ‘cautionary tales’.

The examples were not from Australia but the lessons apply: the public sector needs to become smarter in the way it uses management consultants and to gain better value from them. Technological change must integrate technical with policy reforms. Risk management and audit functions must avoid a ‘tick-box mentality’ and compliance orientation. In short, the lesson is to foster thoughtful and strategic managers who maintain a balance between revolutionary zeal and internal capacity building.

NPM, described in this lecture as the cruellest invention of the human spirit, could also be thought of as exemplifying some of the failures of the human spirit - irrational expectations and overestimations of the power of new ideas, new models and new processes, inappropriately and hurriedly applied.

Ian Marsh is ANZSOG Professor of Government at the University of Sydney. This article draws on a recent monograph (with David Yencken): Into the Future: The Neglect of the Long Term in Australian Politics (Melbourne: Black Inc). This article had originally appeared in The Australian prior to the NSW State Election.
Join the Alumni and Practitioners Network

The GSG continues to support all former students through the Alumni and Practitioners Network. The Network is a life long community that connects students, mentors and teaching staff throughout the government, industry and education sectors.

Through this network students and Alumni have had the opportunity to take part in the university’s contribution to public debate though talks, conferences and presentations. Local and international speakers have been a part of the debate on government and public sector issues. Speakers have included:

Prof Malcolm Sparrow, John F Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University on Regulation in Public Administration, presented by the GSG in conjunction with ANZSOG.

Prof Alan Dupont, Centre for International Security Studies, University of Sydney, on New Security Challenges, presented by the Research Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences.

Prof Geoff Gallop, Graduate School of Government on Where is Government Going? Research Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences.

Prof Irvine Lapsley, Institute of Public Sector Accounting Research, University of Edinburgh on New Public Management for the RJ Chambers Memorial Lecture.

Register and Update Online

Former students can become a part of the GSG Alumni and Practitioners Network by registering your details online at the University of Sydney Alumni Web portal. To ensure current Alumni don’t lose contact, the portal can also be used to update your details as well.

http://www.usyd.edu.au/alumni/

Upcoming Events


GSG will invite all former students, mentors and well-wishers to this important networking event.

Applications for 2008 Graduate Diploma in Public Administration

The GSG is currently accepting applications to admission for the Graduate Diploma for 2008. Check the GSG website for details on the program and download both the brochure and an application form.


Upcoming Dates in GSG

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