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UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

DIGITAL GOVERNMENT II
WEEK 8: REVIEW & EMERGING DIRECTIONS IN DG RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

Apr 21, 2009

tonight's plan and announcements

- admin, other stuff:
  final paper consultations
  due date, submission procedures, etc.
- wrap up from last time re: limits and potentials of DG strategies in developing country settings
- course feedback and evaluations
- final paper group check-in, updates, etc.
- lecture / discussion
  - 533 review
  - emerging directions in DG research and practice (tech, institutional, & global trends)
- individual consults, feedback on DG final papers

Discussion: Distinctive limits and potentials of e-gov in developing country settings

- 3 of the most significant **barriers** or **limits** to effective e-gov implementation in developing country settings are:
  - Multiple language / dialects not represented online
  - In multi linguistic countries, schools are teaching those languages
  - Context of the program in a new setting. There's no one size fits all
  - Unstable government or one that is not looking out for its citizens
  - Informal interactions between government and people (patron/client)
  - Literacy rates
- 3 of the most promising or significant **opportunities** for e-gov implementation in developing country settings are:
  - Using mobile device instead of pcs
  - Sidestep "leapfrog" traditional evolution of e-government. There can be a clean slate beginning.
  - Access to key documents that generally would be difficult to obtain
  - Eliminate fraud and corruption. Increase trust in the government in the people it represents

Final paper proposals:
peer review and feedback

- **Country studies** – Maria Stamboulidis, Greg Russo, Michael Perry
- **Institutional change: diplomacy and immigration** – Sharon Knieper, Bei Li, Lidiya Prorochuk
- **Institutional change: projects and information flow** – Elizabeth Bedford, Josh Gerrish, Bryan Birchmeier
- **Website evaluation: municipal (1)** – Emily Hamstra, Amy Stilgenbauer, Chris Zbrozek
- **Website evaluation (2): state and federal** – Todd Baker, Meredith Raymond, Hannah Wald
- **Participation & citizen engagement** – Jessica Jones, Emily Puckett, Nealie McBean
- **E-gov & web 2.0** – Travis August, Ben Worrel, Chris Kypreos
- **Post-colonialism & development** – Karen Kennedy, Chris Blakely, Andy Vargo

Some USEFUL QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER…

- What is the argument, question, or research claim being explored or tested?
- What empirical site(s) / case(s) is the paper exploring?
- What methods is the paper deploying?
- What sources, theories, frameworks, or literature is the paper drawing on?
- How 'doable' is the proposed project, given constraints of time and page limits? Does the proposal need to be re-scoped?
- What is the wider significance of this case / question, etc.? (Why should we care about this?)
- ** *Suggestions re: additional sources, focusing, clarification, structure, etc.* **

REVIEW: What can participation do? How can participation fail?

- Participation promotes citizens' active public spirit and moral character;
- Participation educates citizens about democratic ideals and procedures;
- Participation provides 'psychic rewards,' e.g. feelings of community belonging;
- Participation legitimates and eases implementation of public decisions;
- Participation protects citizens' freedoms;
- Participation empowers citizens vis-à-vis existing power structures;
- Participation improves the range and quality of decision-relevant information.
- Citizens lack technical competence and/or public spiritedness;
- Participation is expensive, slow, and cumbersome vis-à-vis efficience of expert decision-making;
- Participatory exercises tend to be dominated by narrow interest groups;
- Participation may require skills, money, and time that most citizens lack;
- Participation can be disruptive and increase rather than reduce entrenched political conflict;
- Participation can breed polarization or extremsism.

REVIEW: Rethinking government: from 'hierarchy' to 'networks,' 'structures' to 'flows' (** *the role of information* **)

Table of comparison between Weberian and Virtual bureaucracies removed.

Available online at (p. 44): www.fgdc.gov/library/whitepapers-reports/sponsored-reports/URISA-3CTF-2002-04_Report(April05).pdf

- Intra-, inter- and extra-organizational networks, partnerships, 'virtual agencies', social capital, etc.
- Disentangling DG from the New Public Management (cf. Dunleavy et. al.'s concept of 'Digital Era Governance')

REVIEW: The political economy of government IT

Dunleavey et. al.'s comparative country survey suggests three rough positions or strategies for the management of government IT expertise:

1. **Core competence model** (where capacity to develop and manage government IT systems is retained substantially or primarily in-house);
2. **Intelligent customer model** (where governments out-source most or all IT functions to private firms, retaining only capacity to act as 'intelligent customer' in the evaluation and negotiation of bids);
3. **Hybrid model** (where substantial portions of government IT are outsourced when conditions are favorable, but governments retain substantial capacity and may opt for in-house provision under particular conditions and services)

REVIEW: **Explaining** eGov performance and adoption

Factors shaping / constraining eGov development:

- Bureaucratic / administrative contexts and histories (agency-specific, government-wide (e.g. NPM), etc.)
- Budgetary resources (incl. the "two systems" problem)
- Patterns of bureaucratic fragmentation and competition
- Patterns of public / private sector expertise
- Leadership and conflict (partisan, interest group, political and administrative, etc.)
- Broader policy frameworks (privacy, accessibility, IP, Freedom of Information, etc.)
- Contextual factors: IT infrastructure, access, and literacy
- Contextual factors: histories and perceptions of the state / public authority

LOOKING FORWARD: Current and Emerging Topics in DG Research

(International Conference on Digital Government Research, HICSS-Digital Government Track, American Political Science Association, etc.; *Journal of Information Technology and Politics*, *Government Information Quarterly*, *Public Administration Review*, etc.)

- DG design and applications
- DG standards and interoperability
- DG evaluation, comparisons, rankings, etc.
- IT and institutional / organizational change (ethnography, network analysis, etc.)
- IT and participatory governance
- IT and public deliberation

LOOKING FORWARD: New Directions in DG Practice (DG in 2012? 2015? 2020?)

- **Tech trends** *(mobile/ambient computing, ubiquitous broadband, web 2.0,* ***others****?)*
- **Institutional trends** *(networked governance, virtual agencies, the late/post NPM era, new models of participation and accountability,* ***others****?)*
- **Global trends** *(alternative paths / priorities for DG development, 'leapfrogging,' global convergence / divergence, DG and the 'governance agenda', DG and democratic transitions,* ***others****?)*