DESIGNING EFFECTIVE & INNOVATIVE PUBLIC POLICY IN A COMPLEX ENVIRONMENT

HC Coombs Policy Forum Public Policy Conference
23 November 2015

Crawford School of Public Policy
ANU College of Asia & the Pacific
INTRODUCTION

The HC Coombs Policy Forum Public Policy Conference will explore emerging ideas and good practice in dealing with complex public policy issues. It will provide an opportunity for participants to hear from leading global and Australian thinkers and practitioners, including a keynote address from Professor Cass Sunstein of Harvard University.

The environment in which policy makers are working is complex and uncertain but the Australian government has an ambitious reform agenda, including for regulatory reform. The conference will explore the ways in which recent research can help in the development of more effective public policy.

The objectives of the conference are:

> Introduce participants to new ideas, approaches and techniques that can improve Australian public policy
> Explore the insights offered by behavioural economics and other policy innovations for specific Australian policy challenges
> Deepen collaboration between the public sector, business, academia and civil society

As well as looking at new research and its potential, the conference will also consider lessons from recent history and long-running debates in public policy.

In addition to the plenary sessions, a series of interactive concurrent workshops will allow participants to explore particular themes and policy topics in greater depth. The conference will use case-studies from current and past policy experience to illuminate the discussion.
Cass Sunstein
Cass R. Sunstein is currently the Robert Walmsley University Professor at Harvard. From 2009 to 2012, he was Administrator of the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. He is the founder and director of the Program on Behavioral Economics and Public Policy at Harvard Law School. Mr. Sunstein has testified before congressional committees on many subjects, and he has been involved in constitution-making and law reform activities in a number of nations. Professor Sunstein is author of many articles and books, including Republic.com (2001), Risk and Reason (2002), Why Societies Need Dissent (2003), The Second Bill of Rights (2004), Laws of Fear: Beyond the Precautionary Principle (2005), Worst-Case Scenarios (2001), Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness (with Richard H. Thaler, 2008), Simpler: The Future of Government (2013) and most recently Why Nudge? (2014) and Conspiracy Theories and Other Dangerous Ideas (2014). He is now working on group decision-making and various projects on the idea of liberty.

Lam Chuan Leong
Lam Chuan Leong is currently a Practice Professor at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, Singapore. Prior to this, Chuan Leong has been the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of National Development, the Ministry for Trade and Industry, and the Ministry of Communications and Information. From 1981 to 1984, he served as Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister of Singapore. He has also been an Ambassador-at-Large with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Chairman of the National Science and Technology Board, the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore, and the Competition Commission of Singapore. His key areas of interest and expertise are in the application of market analysis and micro-economics, particularly in regard to sectoral regulation of monopolies, externality pricing, particularly in the field of transport policy and market efficiency. He has been involved in the privatisation of key government sectors such as the utilities and telecoms sectors in Singapore and also the structuring and use of Public Private Partnership projects such as the Sports Hub. He is also closely involved with the evolution of competition policy and law in Singapore as the inaugural Chairman of the Competition Commission of Singapore. As previous Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Trade and Industry, he is familiar with the economic development and international trade policies of Singapore.

Michael Hiscox
Michael J. Hiscox is the Clarence Dillon Professor of International Affairs at Harvard University and the Founding Member of Harvard Behavioural Insights Group. He is also Director of the STAR (Sustainability Transparency Accountability Research) Lab at the US Studies Centre in the University of Sydney. He received his B. Econ. (First Class Honours) from the University of Sydney in 1989 and his Ph.D in Government from Harvard University in 1997. He was Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of California, San Diego, from 1997 to 2001. From 2001 until 2006 he was the John L. Loeb Associate Professor of the Social Sciences at Harvard University.

Nava Ashraf
Nava Ashraf is an Associate Professor in the Negotiations, Organizations, and Markets Unit at Harvard Business School. Dr Ashraf’s research combines psychology and economics, using both lab and field experiments to test insights from behavioural economics in the context of global development in Africa, Latin America, and South East Asia. She also conducts research on questions of intra-household decision-making in the areas of finance and fertility. Her research is published in leading journals including the American Economic Review, the Quarterly Journal of Economics and the Journal of Economic Perspectives. Her recent field experiments have been carried out jointly with the Ministries of Health and Education in Zambia in the areas of health services delivery and educational investment.

Benjamin Castleman
Benjamin Castleman is an Assistant Professor of Education and Public Policy at the University of Virginia and is the Faculty Director of the University of Virginia-US Army Partnership on the Educational Trajectories of Soldiers and their Dependents. Dr Castleman’s research applies insights from behavioural economics and social psychology to improve college access and success for low-income and non-traditional students. He has conducted several randomized trials to investigate innovative strategies to help students and their families navigate complex educational decisions. Dr Castleman has presented about his research at The White House Summit on Expanding College Opportunity and in testimony before Congress. He was one of the winners (with the college success organization Bottom Line) of the 2014 Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy/White House Office of Science and Technology Policy competition for low-cost randomized controlled trials in public policy. He is also the author of The 160 Character Solution: How Text Messaging and Other Behavioural Strategies Can Improve Education.
Monday 23 November 2015  
Hotel Realm, 18 National Circuit, Canberra

**08:15-09:00**  
Conference registration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Speakers</th>
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| 09:00-09:05 Welcome address | Ian Young  
Vice Chancellor, The Australian National University |
| 09:05-09:15 Opening address (TBC) | Malcolm Turnbull MP (TBC)  
Prime Minister of Australia |

**09:15-10:30**  
**Keynote address**  
**Behavioural Public Policy: evidence and reflections from the US and beyond**

In his keynote address, Professor Sunstein will share his experience of applying behavioural insights to public policy. He will set out some key lessons from his direct experience in the US and from where behavioural insights have been applied in other countries. He will consider how behavioural insights fit in the bigger picture of regulatory reform and suggest challenges for the future of behavioural public policy, with some thoughts on their application in the Australian context.

Cass Sunstein  
Robert Walmsley University Professor;  
Founder and Director of the Program on Behavioural Economics and Public Policy, Harvard Law School, Harvard University

**10:30-11:00**  
Networking break

**11:00-12:30**  
**Plenary session 1**  
**Advancing Public Policy: the new, the old and the yet-to-come**

How public policy development and delivery has evolved over recent decades? What have been the most important lessons and what are the emerging themes that will shape future public policy? How ‘behavioural public policy’ and other innovation might improve public policy in the context of dealing with complexity and uncertainty? What are the limits and potential of behavioural insights in advancing regulatory reform?

Cass Sunstein  
Robert Walmsley University Professor;  
Founder and Director of the Program on Behavioural Economics and Public Policy, Harvard Law School, Harvard University

Lam Chuan Leong  
Practice Professor, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, Singapore

Michael Hiscox  
Clarence Dillon Professor of International Affairs, Department of Government; Harvard University; Founding member of Harvard University Behavioural Insights Group

**12:30-13:30**  
Networking lunch

**13:30-15:00**  
**Plenary session 2**  
**Co-production of public policy**

**Behavioural insights to improve access to education and student success**

Nava Ashraf  
Associate Professor in the Negotiations, Organisations and Markets Unit, Harvard Business School

Benjamin L Castleman  
Assistant Professor of Education and Public Policy, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Concurrent workshops</th>
<th>Speakers</th>
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<td>15:00-15:30</td>
<td>Networking break</td>
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<td>15:30-17:00</td>
<td><strong>Concurrent workshop 1</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Good governance and inter-agency working amidst complexity</strong>&lt;br&gt;What is the importance of methods of governance and the processes of policy-making, decision-making and delivery? What are the challenges of inter-agency working and, of multi-level governance? How does citizen engagement shape governance approaches? How does innovative governance models, such as ‘experimental governance’ work? What are the implications of behavioural insights for governance models?</td>
<td>Speakers to be confirmed</td>
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<td><strong>Concurrent workshop 2</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>The power of ‘choice architecture’</strong>&lt;br&gt;What does the concept of ‘choice architecture’ bring to policy-making? How has its application led to improvements in policy outcomes? How can choice overload and decision-fatigue be ameliorated? How might the reform of ‘defaults’ be extended in the future? This session will consider the concept of ‘choice architecture’ and explore case-studies where shaping the choice architecture has led to improvements in policy outcomes. Presenters will explore how public choice overload and decision-fatigue can be ameliorated. The role of defaults will be considered and how the reform of defaults might be extended in the future.</td>
<td>Speakers to be confirmed</td>
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<td><strong>Concurrent workshop 3</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Good regulation: lessons from recent regulatory reform</strong>&lt;br&gt;What have we learnt from recent regulatory reform about what makes ‘good’ regulation? How has the government’s relationship with the market changed? How does the application of ‘market design’ improve desired policy outcomes? The sessions will consider how/whether the government’s relationship with the market has changed and developed. One focus of this will be ‘market design’ – a policy framework for how governments influence markets to produce desired policy outcomes.</td>
<td>Speakers to be confirmed</td>
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<td><strong>Concurrent workshop 4</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Collecting and making better use of data</strong>&lt;br&gt;How can we improve the collection and use of data in policy? How do we realise the potential of big data and new data analytics? How does government use administrative data to improve policy and service delivery?</td>
<td>Speakers to be confirmed</td>
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Concurrent workshop 5

**Evidence-based policy in a complex, uncertain world**

What is the future potential of evidence-based policy? How do we improve our evidence base and how we better use evidence to improve decision-making and policy outcomes? What are the limits of evidence-based policy, particularly in the context of a complexity and uncertainty

Speakers to be confirmed

Concurrent workshop 6

**The science and art of policy evaluation/or evaluation innovations**

How are methods of evaluation changing? What innovations are taking place? What role might policy experiments play in future and what is the potential and risks of extending Randomised Control Trials?

Speakers to be confirmed

Concurrent workshop 7 *

**Applying behavioural insights to global development**

What are the successful examples of applying BI in developing countries? What are the difficulties that are likely to occur when applying BI and running RCTs in another country? What opportunities do low cost technologies present in this space?

* Capped at 15 delegates

Nava Ashraf  
Associate Professor in the Negotiations, Organisations and Markets Unit, Harvard Business School

Concurrent workshop 8*

**160-character solutions: improving education outcomes through simplified Information, personalised prompts, and effective delivery channels**

What communications strategies do schools and education agencies currently use to engage students and families or inform them about opportunities? How could we innovate on content of these communications and the channels through which they are delivered to maximise student responsiveness and engagement? What behavioural barriers might students and families encounter accessing high-quality schools in Australia? What types of evidence-based strategies can policy makers and educators employ to help students and families make active and informed decisions in education, and pursue programs and opportunities that are well-suited to each student's personal abilities, circumstances, and interests?

* Capped at 15 delegates

Benjamin L Castleman  
Assistant Professor of Education and Public Policy, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

17:00-18:00 Networking drinks

End of Conference
GENERAL INFORMATION

Conference venue
Hotel Realm
National Ballroom
18 National Circuit, Canberra, ACT 2600
T 02 6163 1888

Conference management
Conference Logistics, a leading professional conference organiser with over 20 years experience, is the official event manager of the HC Coombs Policy Forum Behavioural Insights Conference.

Conference Logistics will assist with any specific and practical needs you may have, in particular about administrative arrangements and logistics in Canberra.

For the Conference's international and interstate participants in particular, Conference Logistics should be your first point of contact before booking any flights and accommodation.

T 02 6281 6624
E conference@conlog.com.au
W www.conferencelogistics.com.au

Conference organiser
HC Coombs Policy Forum
ANU Crawford School of Public Policy

The H.C. Coombs Policy Forum at The Australian National University is a formal institutional portal with which the University engages with groups and individuals interested in the development of effective public policy in Australia.

The Forum’s mission is to improve the outcomes of public policy in Australia by helping to inform its development with the research and insights of scholarship.

Reflecting the breadth of the ANU’s research, and of ‘Nugget’ Coombs’ own interests, the Forum engages with all areas of public policy, international as well as domestic.

Mr Allan Gyngell AO
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Registration

Registration fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Registration fee (GST inclusive)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Government (Federal, State and Local)</td>
<td>$750.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>$750.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education and research</td>
<td>$550.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civil society / NGO</td>
<td>$550.00</td>
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The registration fee includes:
> Admission to all sessions
> Admission to all networking sessions including lunch
> Conference bag, program and name badge

How to register:
Online at conlog.eventsair.com/coombsforum/register
Enquiry:
Conference Logistics
T 02 6281 6624

Important note: Delegates are strongly encouraged to register and book their place as early as possible to avoid disappointment.
Crawford School is Australia’s leading public policy school, with world-class of expertise and experience in economics, political science, environmental management and development, and on the key Asia Pacific countries, especially China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam and Indonesia. It is The Australian National University’s focal point in contributing to national public policy research, education and public debate.

Crawford School’s location in the national capital, alongside the Parliament and Government, together with The Australian National University’s reputation for excellence in research, education and public policy development, means that Crawford School enjoys strong relationships with all levels of government. Its graduate and executive educational programs have trained the region’s leaders for several decades, while its research has had a direct and demonstrated impact on national policymaking.

The Australian National University is a world-leading university in Australia’s capital city, Canberra. Our location points to our unique history, ties to the Australian Government and special standing as a resource for the Australian people. Our focus on research as an asset, and an approach to education, ensures our graduates are in demand the world over for their abilities to understand, and apply vision and creativity to addressing complex contemporary challenges.

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