

UMassAmherst | School of Public Policy

Challenges in public policy

Alasdair Roberts
Professor and Director
School of Public Policy
University of Massachusetts Amherst

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About UMass Amherst

UMass Amherst is one of the major public research universities in America. Nestled in idyllic Amherst, Massachusetts, the campus is consistently ranked among the top public research universities in the nation, and offers a rich cultural environment in a rural setting close to major urban centers.

The School of Public Policy is tied for second place among public affairs programs in Massachusetts and is the top-ranked program at a public university in the state and the second-ranked public-university program in New England. It ranks in the top five public affairs programs overall in New England.

<https://www.umass.edu/spp/>

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Alasdair S. Roberts

Director, School of Public Policy, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Biographical note Books Monographs, chapters & articles Video & audio

Books

Strategies for Governing: Reinventing Public Administration for a Dangerous Century. ISBN: 9781501714405. Cornell University Press, December 2019.
[Purchase on Amazon](#). Excerpt [here](#). [Buyer and discount from the Press](#).

Description from the Press: "With the fields of public administration and public management suffering a crisis of relevance, Alasdair Roberts offers a provocative assessment of their shortfalls. The two fields, he finds, no longer address urgent questions of governance in a turbulent and dangerous world. *Strategies for Governing* offers a new path forward for research, teaching, and practice. Leaders of states, Roberts says, are constantly reinventing strategies for governing. Experts in public administration must give advice on the design as well as execution of strategies that effective, robust and principled. *Strategies for Governing* challenges us to reinvigorate public administration and public management, preparing the fields for the challenges of the twenty-first century."

Recommended — *Choice*, October 2020.

2021 Book Award, Section on Public Administration Research, American Society for Public Administration.

www.aroberts.us

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The field of public policy analysis

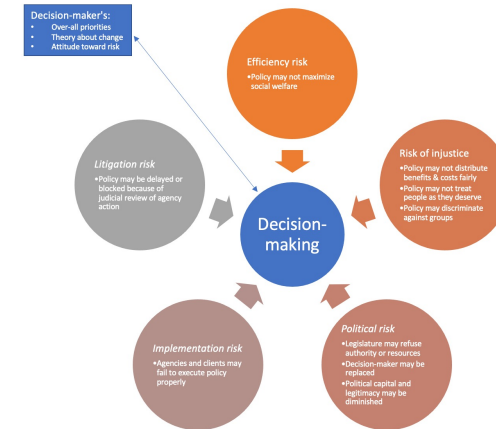
- A scholarly field like political science and economics
 - Departments and schools of public policy or public administration (like SPP)
 - Courses and textbooks in public policy analysis
 - Showing to solve policy problems
 - Degrees: MPP, MPA, PhD in Public Policy
- A professional field as well
 - Policy analysts work in government agencies, for elected officials, for advocacy groups, and for businesses
- Emerged in late 1960s and early 1970s
- How differs from other disciplines?
 - Action-oriented, prescriptive
- Difference between advocacy/mobilization?
 - Dispassionate analysis

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The craft of policy analysis

- How do we find the best way to solve a public problem?
- Steps:
 - Define the problem
 - Define “policy options”
 - Define criteria for evaluation
 - Evaluate options
 - Choose the best option
- Policy analysis as a radical project
 - Rejecting tradition, authority, peer pressure

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Policy challenges in this century

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demography <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Urbanization – Young and old populations – Cross-border migration – Internal migration • Economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Economic integration – Economic inclusion – Land and labor market reform • Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Automation and jobs – Social media and politics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geopolitics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Rise of China • Climate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Changing weather patterns – Extreme weather events • Social justice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Respect and equality • These policy challenges are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Complex – Interconnected – Dangerous: “fatal synergies” |
|--|---|

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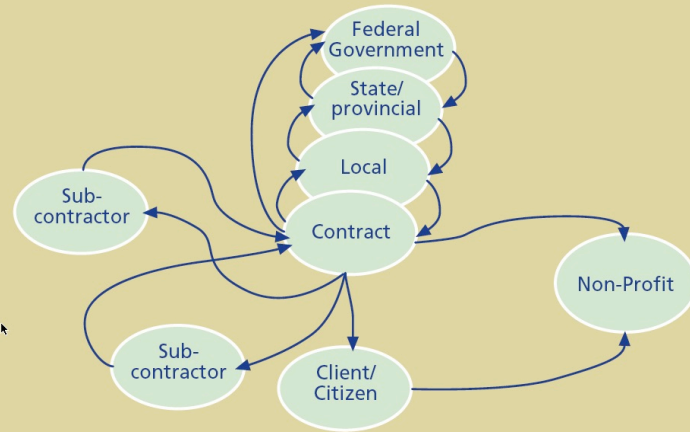
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Getting things done: Problems of federalism and liberalization

- India's governmental structure
 - Central government
 - 28 states and 8 union territories
 - 4,449 urban local government bodies
 - 262,834 rural urban local government bodies
 - 298 centrally-controlled PSEs
- Emphasis on market-friendly policies:
 - Regulating and cooperating with markets to provide key services

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Figure 2. The Networked Government Organizational Chart



Source: Deloitte Research

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Getting things done: the democratic challenge

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evidence very strongly suggests that economic growth is more a matter of a friendlier economic climate than of a harsher political system.

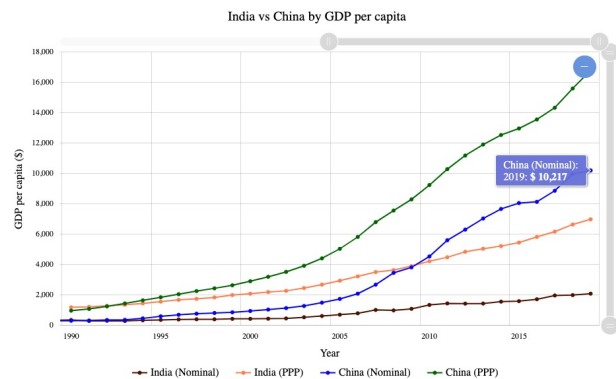
ing economic security. Quite often economic insecurity can result from the lack of democratic rights and liberties. Indeed, the working of democracy and of political rights can even help to prevent famines and other economic disasters. Authoritarian rulers, who are themselves rarely affected by famines (or other such economic calamities), tend to lack the incentive to take timely preventive measures. Democratic governments, in contrast, have to win elections and face public criticism, and have strong incentives to undertake measures to avert famines and other such catastrophes. It is not surprising that no famine has ever taken place in the history of the world in a functioning democracy—be it economically rich (as in contemporary Western Europe or North America) or relatively poor (as in postindependence

Sen, Amartya (1999). *Development as Freedom*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

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May 18, 2021

WORLD | Coronavirus World Map: Tracking the Global Outbreak

	▼ TOTAL DEATHS	PER 100,000	DAILY AVG. IN LAST 7 DAYS	PER 100,000	WEEKLY CASES PER CAPITA
					FEWER MORE
United States >	585,957	177	612.6	0.18	Jan. 22 May 17
Brazil >	436,537	207	1,901.1	0.90	
India >	278,719	20	4,103.9	0.30	
Mexico >	220,493	173	200.6	0.16	
Mainland China	4,636	<1	—	—	

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The task for students of public policy

- How do we build a world in which people
 - Can live in physical safety?
 - Have access to education, healthcare, and other services they need to thrive?
 - Are treated with respect and equality?
 - Can participate in the government of their country through democratic processes?

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