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A Role in Supporting Decisions

Hiroya Masuda, Visiting Professor, Graduate School of Public Policy

About 30 years ago, I was wandering this campus as a first year law student. As was the case with those around me, the natural course for me seemed to be to take the national public service examination after which I chose a career in the Ministry of Construction, accumulating valuable practical experience through postings with the Chiba Prefectural Police and the Ibaraki Prefectural Office. In 1995, I ran for Governor of Iwate Prefecture and spent the next 12 years leading a Governor's life before moving on to accept a national cabinet position. The experiences gained from playing a support role as a central government official to serve top decision makers and later playing a leadership role in central and regional policy making helped me to understand the mechanisms of governance.

I didn't really have a clear plan to guide me in my career path. Although it was on my own accord that I decided to choose a career in public service and eventually to run for governor, I dare say in hindsight that my father's career subconsciously influenced my decisions. My father went from a rural middle school in Iwate to Kyoto where he eventually graduated from Kyoto University. After graduation, he acted as an official in the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry before going on to spend three terms as a member of the House of Councillors. Having also worked with municipal bodies, his career path and mine are remarkably similar. In university, my father was suspended from attending his studies due to his involvement as a leader of student activities related to the Takigawa Incident (he was later re-instated). My father never spoke directly about this to me but I remember being surprised at coming across my father's name in an Iwanami book addressing the Takigawa Incident. I remember my father being always immersed in reading books from morning to night. Thanks to that, I was brought up surrounded by collections of books; and so, from

a relatively early age, I developed a close affinity to reading.

I have few memories of heart to heart discussions between father and son and the path I chose was completely through my own volition but nevertheless, from a career in the public service to a career in politics. It now seems that observing my father's journey has subconsciously had its influence on me.

In recent years, significant generational change is afoot. The public sector is no longer a domain solely for bureaucrats, and active participation of NPOs and the private sector is encouraged. Sweeping changes are also anticipated in how central and regional policymaking is carried out, as well as how public policy in general is conceptualised. While all this is transpiring, all of you who are students are likely feeling a degree of angst over choices you have to make regarding your future career paths. In any case, somehow a decision has to be made.

I hope to pass along some of my cherished experiences and to do what I can to help support the process of turning out a sizable cadre of capable individuals. Also, as you begin to contemplate your future career paths, I wish to lend support to you even if only in a small way.



From 1995, served three terms as Governor of Iwate Prefecture.
In 2007, inaugurated as Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications.
Currently, an advisor to the Nomura Research Institute.

Commencement of a New International Program “Master of Public Policy, International Program” Starts in October 2010

Kotoko Ogawa, International Student Advisor

In October 2010, the University of Tokyo's Graduate School of Public Policy (GraSPP) will launch a new international degree program “Master of Public Policy, International Program (MPP/IP)”. It is a two-year master program designed to nurture a global perspective in public policy professionals who aspire to play a role on the international policy stage.

The principal language of instruction will be in English. The curriculum has been developed to align with similar programs offered through top class international partner universities with the ultimate goal of working toward the introduction of double degree programs. The program embraces an Asian focus infused into the rich array of tailor-made courses. Economic support has been put in place for deserving overseas students, especially those from the Asian region through scholarships provided by the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.



Application submission period:

For those also applying for World Bank or Asian Development Bank scholarships: 1 November 2009 to 11 December 2009
For all other applicants: 1 November 2009 to 29 January 2010

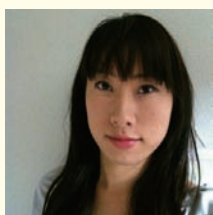
MPP/IP Web-site (in English) <http://www.pp.u-tokyo.ac.jp/en/mppip/index.htm>

MPP/IP Pamphlet (PDF) <http://www.pp.u-tokyo.ac.jp/en/mppip/documents/MPPIP-Pamphlet.pdf>

Graduate School Course Report No. 9

Maritime Industry Policy

Course Facilitator: Associate Professor, Tomoharu Hase



Eri Himoro

(Public Administration Division, 2nd Year)

Maritime Industry Policy is a course which aims to broaden understanding about the maritime industry and policy issues related to this field. The course methodically addresses a broad array of policy issues in areas such as ocean transport, foreign and domestic vessel cargo regulations, port policy, maritime personnel policies, governance of maritime leisure activities and compensation policies related to marine pollution. The course also provides opportunities to learn first-hand about the realities of the maritime industry from guest speakers who work in the industry. During the past summer term, we were treated to lectures from a variety of individuals from Nippon Express, Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, Shin Nihonkai Ferry and

Mitsui & Co., Ltd. All of these lectures were designed to ferret out problems and identify solutions to issues facing the maritime industry from an insider's perspective producing insights to issues. These types of activities contribute significantly to providing a more comprehensive understanding of issues related to the maritime industry.

The course facilitator, Professor Hase comes to academia after a career with the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism. Each class he provided us with scrupulously prepared, valuable course materials. Thanks to his wealth of experience as a practitioner, the collection of materials that he hand-picked combined to produce a splendid study guide that included key definitions related to maritime industry policies currently in force and current issues. As the course progressed, so too did the amount of cumulative knowledge and experience gleaned by the students thanks to Professor Hase's measured yet passionate facilitation of the course.

The course aims to fit in with the *raison d'être* of the interdisciplinary program, UT Ocean Alliance, which is to address problems confronting the marine environment from various perspectives. I feel that this course accomplished this by providing students with a diversity of social science perspectives that in the end equipped students with a practical educational foundation in this field.

— You are going to work for an NGO, aren't you?

Currently, I work part-time once a week with Solidarity Network with Migrants Japan (SMJ)*, and when there is something special that needs attention, I come in to help. Next year, I will shift to full-time. SMJ is a countrywide network of NGOs that cooperate to help resolve human rights issues, provide support for essential services (medical treatment and legal matters) and help empower foreigners living and working in Japan. It was featured in the issue 125 (August 15, 2009) of *Big Issue Japan*. SMJ's key strength is the wealth of knowledge and diverse capabilities harnessed throughout a collaborative network comprised of regular people as well as activists, lawyers and researchers. In individual NGOs, if they lack vital information or a requisite skill, the ability to have an impact breaks down; but with an NGO coalition, the power of the network can be tapped to find the most appropriate person to offer advice and support.

— What prompted you to join GraSPP?

I had aspirations to continue on to graduate studies since I was an undergraduate at Washington College, Maryland. I feel that in order to play a role on the international stage, a master's degree as well as a specialisation are indispensable assets. I initially considered enrolling in law school but in the end I chose public policy because beyond the foundations of law I wanted to study about the mechanics of systematically evaluating present day problems.

During my days as an undergraduate student, I had the opportunity to visit a number of countries as a volunteer or intern in conjunction with my field of study which was International Studies. These experiences taught me that locally based root of human rights and democracy is the foremost importance for society. As I thought more about this, I realised that a strong civil society was an essential part of the process. At the same time, a government and its public policies are essential. However, there are situations where the interests of the state and civil society are not necessarily compatible. To that end, my aspiration is to become a public policy specialist who plays a bridging role between these two elements.

Globally, Japan has a certain degree of influence and political power but to fully capitalise on this attribute, I felt I should join a Japanese graduate school that would allow me to gain a deep understanding of Japanese administrative practice. Moreover, I felt I also wanted to enrol in a Japanese graduate school of public policy to build a personal network in Japan.

— What courses did you find interesting?

"UN Security Council and Conflict Resolution" taught by Prof. Shinichi Kitaoka and Prof. Hiroshi Matsuura (former Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Japan to the UN). All the reading assignments were primary resources. Also there was "Case Study (International Conflict)" that was taught by Prof. Kiichi Fujiwara. Due to my keen interest in International Relations, I initially felt that I had enough knowledge in this field but this course was extremely challenging and there was lots to learn in the class. I thought it was both interesting and rewarding.

Through group work, I made a number of good friends. Students in the Graduate School of Public Policy share a great deal in common such as our shared value for public interest, not for personal wealth.

— Is there anything about the Graduate School of Public Policy that you feel is lacking?

At GraSPP, I cannot think of anything that especially needs improvement but I do have a request in regard to the law library. At Washington College, we were encouraged to visit at least two overseas universities as exchange students. In my case, I went to Rhodes University in South Africa, Bosphorus University in Turkey and the London School of Economics and Political Science in the UK. The extensive wealth of literature and specialized journals in the LSE library really stood out. Moreover, the materials could all be borrowed (albeit with a fee for late returns). At the University of Tokyo law library, GraSPP students can reference the books in the library but they cannot borrow them. Also, there is a huge difference between the databases at LSE and the University of Tokyo. It is vital for us to be able to access the most recent research of leading international scholars.

*The homepage for SMJ is: <http://www.jca.apc.org/migrant-net/English/English.html>
(Interview and text by editor)



Ms. Yukiko Omagari

International Public Policy Division, 2nd Year

Student Interview

Reflections on three years of “Risk Management and Public Policy”

Professor **Makoto Saito**, Faculty of Economics, Hitotsubashi University

For the past three years I have served as Visiting Professor in the “Risk Management and Public Policy” course sponsored by Sampo Japan Insurance Inc. Although I was drawn into the enterprise without any idea of the objectives of the series, I feel that the success of the lectures comes down to having been bestowed the flexibility to change the contents as the need arose.

My main task was to arrange for guest speakers. Although each term we were blessed with very appealing guest lecturers, two terms in particular stand out in my memory. I felt that the lecture held in the summer of 2007 was more like a high level research workshop than a lecture. The focus was risk management pertaining to soil contamination, earthquakes and nuclear power generation and the lecture was blessed through continuous input from practitioners who were grappling with these issues in their work places. It turned out to be a significant opportunity for us to comprehensively discuss these issues with researchers and bureaucrats.

However, for the graduate students that were in attendance, it may have been a bit difficult to grasp the discussion due to the high level of discourse.

The lecture held in the summer of 2008 focused on the legal side of risk management. We were graced by lectures given by legal experts specializing in environmental laws and regulations. Amidst this lively discussion between legal experts, I was particularly struck by the presentation on legal fundamentals given by Prof. Cass Sunstein who has since become famous for his book entitled *Nudge* (Yale University Press, 2008). I think it must have been a rewarding event for all.

Corporate sponsored lectures of this type inevitably have a focus which tends to favor applied issues, but my frank impression from this series of lectures is that the scholarly approach taken to investigating the present day problems related to risk management uncovered a number of issues that merit further research.

Topical News

The i2ta Project (leader: Visiting Professor Tatsujiro Suzuki) held a workshop entitled “Envisioning society under the latest technology” from 1 pm to 3:30 pm on November 3. Participants in the workshop were given an opportunity to consider the influence that the latest technology will have on our lives. The event is part of Science Agora 2009 which is held at the National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation.

Project Researcher, Ayako Furuya



Editor's Postscript

The student interviews keep getting more and more enjoyable to conduct. It seems as if all of our students have colorful backgrounds and aren't afraid to share their thoughts. In addition to some serious discussions, there are occasional unexpected stories of love blossoming as well as advice sessions on life. It is a shame that these cannot all be included in the interviews. (But at the same time I love to keep these secrets to myself.)

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