



CSIP RESEARCH FORUM

Science, technology and innovation policy is essential in shaping our future. Translating the narrative into clear options, strategies and outcomes is necessary, but far from simple.

Wednesday, Nov. 6
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

U of S location: Canada Room,
101 Diefenbaker Building

U of R location: CB330, College Avenue
Campus

Policy advice in the post-truth era: What role now for evidence-informed policy analysis?

PRESENTED BY: Jeremy Rayner, JSGS Professor and CSIP Director

In policy schools, policy analysis has traditionally been taught as a largely technical exercise that consists of devising and comparing options to address a given problem. The analyst must always be prepared for the technically optimal solution to be rejected for political reasons, but her role is clear: to speak truth to power. Recently, however, policy analysis has been forced to confront an increasingly polarized political context, in which alternative facts, fake news and wilful ignorance have flourished, threatening to undermine the distinction between subjective opinions and verifiably objective facts on which technical policy analysis depends. I will assess a number of responses to the challenge of policy advice in the age of “truthiness” and argue that this phenomenon is neither new nor especially destructive. However, it does indicate that the teaching of policy analysis should pay more attention to the context in which advice is given and the recent revival of the idea of policy advisory systems suggests how this could be done.

The Centre for the Study of Science and Innovation Policy (CSIP) invites all students, faculty and researchers interested in the study of science, technology and innovation policy to participate in a bi-weekly research forum.

