

Fulbright

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

Newsletter FSPPM Fall 2021

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From the Editorial Board

Dear beloved readers,

The past few months were a trying period for our country when number of COVID-19 cases in Southern cities hiked up. Under mass lockdown measures, HCMC, a once bustling metropolis, was dormant during the epidemic peak while frontier workers focused their best efforts in caring for affected persons. In such dire situation, we know our leadership and expertise is more needed than ever.

In July, we kicked off virtual webinar series for admission events to motivate more brilliant young leaders to join us building a better society. Demo Classes by our senior faculty offered prospective candidates a chance to participate in flag-ship courses and see for themselves the critical and open academic environment at Fulbright. The curriculum of these demo classes are rooted in fundamental principles of economics, law and governance and delivered through

real cases of COVID-19. For current MPP students, illustrious guest speakers, for example former U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam, Ted Osious and C-Suite executive from Standard Chartered Bank, Mr. Nirukt Sapru accepted our invitation to share with MPP students their leadership experiences during their service for public and private success.

As we move on from the bleak situation of COVID-19 in our country, we hope our readers agree with us that serving public interests is a worthy calling for not only policy makers but also all citizens. We wish you have a good time exploring how initiatives are pushed forward at Fulbright for public values in this issue.

Yours truly,

Editorial Board

Highlights

Virtual Demo Class by FSPPM Senior Faculty Members

The virtual demo class on Microeconomics 2 in the series of policy webinars and admission events was conducted by Dr. Le Thai Ha – Research Director of FSPPM with more than 120 participants. With the subject “Consumer Welfare and Policy Analysis” looking at COVID-19 pandemic from the social policy perspective, Dr. Le Thai Ha analyzed the impact and effectiveness of government subsidy programs, focusing on the contradiction between the concept of welfare economics and institutional problems. From these analyses, Dr. Ha emphasized the importance of the design of support programs on citizens’ welfare and cost-effectiveness for the government.

The webinar on the topic of “Bluezone – Individual rights during the pandemic” was presented by A/Prof. Pham Duy Nghia – MPP Director. The demo class attracted around 100 participants. The presentation was delivered through a specific case study on Decision No. 2666 of the Ministry of Health. A/Prof. Pham Duy Nghia and students engaged in lively discussions about legal and policy aspects of individual rights and how to protect personal privacy during the digital era and privacy threats in a volatile world.

The webinar conducted by Mr. Nguyen Xuan Thanh – FSPPM’s Lecturer attracted nearly 300 participants. Vietnam is experiencing the 4th wave of COVID-19 with the rapid spread of the virus along with the record number of infected cases and deaths. It is noteworthy that this epidemic broke out in large cities and industrial zones with high population and labor density. Nguyen Xuan Thanh’s presentations gave learners an overview of the impact of the current epidemic on the Vietnamese economy. In his session, the presenter clarified current growth dynamics of Vietnam’s economy, the impacts of mass social lockdowns during the 4th wave of outbreak on economic activities, and the policy to re-open the economy.



Inaugural issue of Fulbright Review of Economics and Policy (FREP)

In September, the inaugural issue of Fulbright Review of Economics and Policy (FREP), an international journal has been published on the platform of Emerald Publishing. FREP is a peer-reviewed, open-access international scientific research journal, hosted by Fulbright School of Public Policy and Management (FSPPM) and sponsored by Fulbright University Vietnam (FUV). The journal aims to promote publications that employ rigorous analytical tools and advocate for evidence-based policy.

Link to the journal’s inaugural issue can be found at:
<https://www.emerald.com/insight/publication/issn/2635-0173/vol/1/iss/1>

MPP 2023 Admission Results

From numerous of applications to the MPP program, after intensive interviews and application screening, 85 new students in 2023 cohort have successfully been admitted to the program in both concentrations. New entrants are currently assuming various management and leadership positions in different organizations including SOEs, local and central government bodies, private corporations, universities and research institutions, etc. Particularly, in an effort to offer younger generations enhanced access to research opportunities, for the first time, fresh graduates with excellent academic performance are eligible to apply to MPP program and 7 successful candidates are going to enrol in 2023 class (Policy Analysis concentration).



Outreach

FSPPM has provided local government with outreach programs to develop research, training, consulting, and partnership activities. In this quarter, FSPPM's outreach team continues putting effort into three important research projects, below are key projects activities in Quarter 3/2021:



Natural Capital Management Project

Fulbright School of Public Policy and Management has received a five-year programmatic grant of US\$1 million from two companies, Galaxy Studio and Dragon Capital to launch “Natural Capital Management” Program. The grant will enable the university to advance research, hold dialogues on policy responses, offer executive education programs and classes on Natural Capital Management issues.

The Mekong River Delta region, and Vietnam, today is facing the ever-changing conditions and impacts of multiple pressing issues. Rapid economic development at the expense of the environment

has resulted in serious environmental pollution. It is of utmost importance to identify the most serious challenges facing the region, analyze, and communicate them to the public, policy makers, and other stakeholders to take proper actions.

For the first annual topic of the 5-year plan, the gift will propel the Fulbright School of Public Policy and Management (FSPPM) to address critical issues and policy responses in the Mekong River Delta region. Specifically, FSPPM will advance their research on the following key priorities: agriculture transformation, energy, air pollution and public health, climate change, flooding, regional infrastructure, and transboundary cooperation.



UNDP – CPII Project

In July the project established an Evaluation Council to select digital initiatives from provinces for further development. Three outstanding initiatives from Tay Ninh, Vinh Phuc and Quang Ninh were selected for sponsorship. In addition, the Council also selected one typical individual initiative to award the certificate of recognition. In August and September, the project team completed necessary forms, worked closely with the relevant departments in 03 awarded provinces to clarify and develop full and qualified proposals for UNDP.

In parallel, the second main activity is to develop and complete a syllabus for digital competency training program. Using in-depth online interviews and questionnaire survey, the project team consulted with leaders of relevant agencies in 03 provinces: Thua Thien Hue, Ha Giang and Quang Ninh to collect their opinions on the current status and their specific needs on digital training, as well as their assessment about the appropriateness of modules proposed in syllabus.

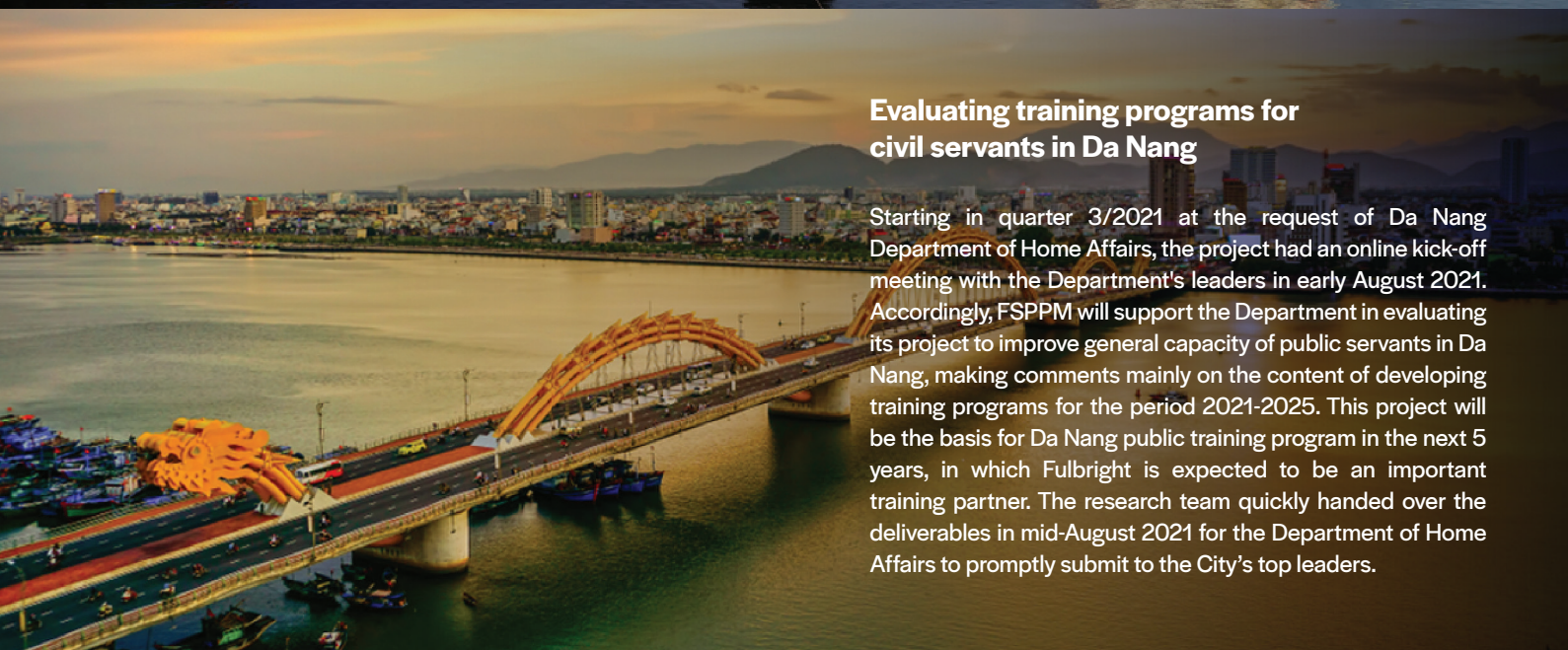
Hai Phong Development Strategy

In July, FSPPM received a request of research from the Department of Planning and Investment (DPI) of Hai Phong City. After examining provincial current status and international experiences, the group held an online preliminary report with DPI Hai Phong, recorded their feedbacks, and discussed next steps to be implemented, including reporting to the City's top leaders in October 2021 and field trip plan afterward. At the end of September 2021, the group had several intensive online working meetings with about 20 local departments/sectors in Hai Phong, in order to collect their feedback on the City's current situation and development potential, also cross-check with statements which the research team had collected while doing table research based on secondary data and information.



Evaluating training programs for civil servants in Da Nang

Starting in quarter 3/2021 at the request of Da Nang Department of Home Affairs, the project had an online kick-off meeting with the Department's leaders in early August 2021. Accordingly, FSPPM will support the Department in evaluating its project to improve general capacity of public servants in Da Nang, making comments mainly on the content of developing training programs for the period 2021-2025. This project will be the basis for Da Nang public training program in the next 5 years, in which Fulbright is expected to be an important training partner. The research team quickly handed over the deliverables in mid-August 2021 for the Department of Home Affairs to promptly submit to the City's top leaders.





Policy Seminars and Conference

The webinar on “Policy Responses for A Sustainable Post-COVID-19 Recovery” to prepare for the second issue of the Fulbright Review of Economics and Policy (FREPP), an international journal published on the platform of Emerald Publishing was hosted by Dr. Le Thai Ha – Research Director of FSPPM. The workshop has 14 presentations from scholars, academics, and researchers from overseas universities and institutions based in Asia-Pacific and Europe. The topics of presentations cover a wide range of issues in the fields of economics, governance, sociology, and sustainable development.

The first workshop on “Pandemia: Readiness, Remediation, and Recovery” was co-organized between FSPPM and Undergraduate faculty members of Fulbright University. This first workshop has kicked off the series of workshops on “Grand Challenge Themes” that will be held every month.

Dr. Le Thai Ha, FSPPM Director of Research, was invited to moderate the second session on “Prospects and Solutions” in the Conference “Prospects of Economic Cooperation between Vietnam and The United States of America” on 20 August 2021, co-organized by Fulbright University Vietnam and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA).

Also in the same conference, Mr. Nguyen Xuan Thanh participated a panel discussion, engaging in vibrant dialogues addressing the current economic cooperation between the two nations, discussed issues facing the bilateral relations, and proposed solutions to promote better economic cooperation between the United States and Vietnam in the future.

Dr. Le Thai Ha with Bui Manh Tien (Research Assistant to FSPPM Dean) and Chu Duc Manh (FSPPM Teaching Assistant) represented FSPPM to participate in DevLab-Duke Center for International Development (DCID)-Duke University’s joint workshop series with three leading universities/research centers in Vietnam. The workshop series was held on a weekly basis with the goal is to share feedback on work in progress, as well as to expand our research networks for potential future collaborations.

A/Prof. Pham Duy Nghia, Director of MPP, participated and delivered two discussion papers on (i) Supreme People Court Case Law Committee case law on land disputes and (ii) HCM Political Academy Conference on Revising Land Policy: Public Land Use in Vietnam. These two cases will be used in Law and Public Policy Courses for MPP2023.



Guest Speakers

As part of the Negotiation course, Professor Joseph A. Massey – President of Global Reach (US), Inc., was invited as a guest speaker to talk with MPP22 students and faculty about the story of negotiations between the US and Japan or China, at the White House and the lessons learned from the actual work.

Under the invitation of Mr. Nguyen Xuan Thanh – Lecturer of Leadership in the Public Sector, Ambassador Ted Osius explained what “nothing is impossible” meant for a leader using the context of the meeting between U.S. President Barack Obama and Vietnamese General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong at the White House.

Mr. Nirukt Sapru, former CEO of Standard Chartered Bank Vietnam, was invited as a leadership guest speaker under the curriculum of Leadership in the Public Sector to discuss with the class his 12 leadership lessons drawn from his experience of leading a global bank in Southeast Asia and South Asia.

New and Updates

Research

During this quarter, 3 journal articles conducted by Dr. Le Thai Ha, all of which are available online:

- *"Dynamic limit order placement activities and their effects on stock market quality"* (co-author with Le, Anh Tu, Liu, Wai-Mun, and Fong, Kingsley Y), *Annals of Operations Research (SI)* (ABDC: A, SSCI).

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10479-021-04282-y>

- *"The energy-growth nexus revisited: An analysis on different types of energy"*, (co-author Boubaker, Sabri and Nguyen, Canh,) *Journal of Environmental Management (SCI, ABDC: A, Scopus Q1)*.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvman.2021.113351>

- *"The historic oil price crash during the Covid-19 pandemic: What are the causes?"* (co-author Le Anh Tu & Le Ha-Chi), *Research in International Business and Finance (SSCI, Scopus Q1)*.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ribaf.2021.101489>

Last but not least, Dr. Le Viet Phu, FSPPM lecturer, submitted a paper *"Nonlinear temperature response of electricity loads and implication for power development policies in Vietnam. Energy and Buildings, 2021"*.



FSA and Student Activities

Two MPP22 students – Nguyen Phuong Dung (PA) and Vu Hai Truong (LM) have been chosen as the recipient of the Community Change-maker Scholarship for the 2020-2021 academic year with the scholarship award of VND 50,000,000. This scholarship is made possible through the generosity of Temasek - a global investment company headquartered in Singapore. The aim of this scholarship is serving Vietnam society and contributing to betterment of the broader community. Hence, the criteria selections were based on both the merit of the applicant and the strength of their Project Proposal. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds or whose projects support disadvantaged communities are prioritized.

FSPPM faculty continued to support local effort to fight against Covid-19 pandemic which wreaked havoc in HCMC from Jun to Oct by working with FUV to mobilize the donation of 5 ambulance vehicles to hospitals in HCMC and provide support to disadvantaged population and healthcare workers by delivering foods, oxygen, and other necessities during lockdown.

Webinars are organized for FSA members from other countries like Denmark, Ireland, Singapore, Australia, and New Zealand to share their experience of COVID in these countries.

Upcoming events

October 2021 New MPP2023 cohort admitted

The virtual Convocation Ceremony - a joint ceremony for both the Undergraduate Class of 2025 and the Master in Public Policy Class of 2023 will take place on October 17 to welcome new students.

Later in 2021 Commencement Ceremony for MPP2021

The Commencement Ceremony is planned to take place in Quarter 4/2021 to celebrate the graduation of 44 MPP students (19 LM, and 25 PA) of the class 2021.

