

NEWSLETTER FSPPM

SPRING 2024

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Dear FSPPM Community,

As we transition into the vibrant bloom of spring, we reflect on the enriching endeavors and transformative dialogues that have animated our school over the past quarter. It is with great pleasure that we present to you the highlights of our activities, engagements, and scholarly pursuits that have shaped the dynamic landscape of public policy and management.

Let's begin by sharing the highlight of our school this quarter. FSPPM hosted the World Bank: DGA project - Digital Government Academy Initiative in Da Nang, bringing together leaders from across Vietnam to discuss "Leading Public Asset Governance in the Digital Era." Additionally, in collaboration with Nordic Embassies, FSPPM celebrated Nordic Day, providing insights into labor market dynamics and steering Vietnam towards innovative strategies for workforce development and economic resilience.

Enriching our academic landscape, distinguished guest lecturers including Dr. Nguyen Dinh Cung, Dr. Ly Xuan Hai, and Dr. Vu Dang Minh expanded our intellectual horizons. Their astute analyses of public investment, financial management, and human resource management deepened

our understanding of policy challenges and solutions. As our seminars and workshops unfolded throughout the quarter, themes of innovation, adaptation and governance, from exploring geospatial intelligence to dissecting corruption scandals, each event catalyzed spirited discussions, contributing to our collective understanding of pressing policy issues.

In celebrating the achievements of our students and alumni, such as Doan Quoc Dung and Tran Pham Xuan Linh, who excelled in the 2024 NASPAA Student Simulation Competition organized in Cairo, Egypt, we recognize the tangible impact of our educational endeavors. Their success exemplifies our commitment to nurturing exemplary leadership and policy acumen.

As we conclude, we express sincere thanks to our faculty, staff, students, alumni, and esteemed partners for their steadfast support and dedication. We trust you find this newsletter engaging. Looking forward, we remain committed to advancing excellence and effecting positive change in public policy and management in the future.

Warm regards,

The Editorial Board

»» HIGHLIGHTS



One of the most highlighted activities in this quarter was the World Bank: DGA project - Digital Government Academy Initiative: Executive Policy Workshop on “Leading Public Asset Governance in Digital Era” in Da Nang hosted by FSPPM on 16-17 March. Participants at the workshop included Vice Chairman Bui Xuan Cuong of the HCMC People’s Committee, Ms. Vo Thi Trung Trinh, the Director of the Centre for Digital Transformation of HCMC, and other government leaders from HCMC, Da Nang, Thua Thien Hue, and Dong Thap. The Executive Policy Workshop took place over 1.5 days, consisting of 6 sessions of presentations and discussions, including (i) Innovation and Digital Government Transformation: People, Process, and Leadership, (ii) Adaptive Leadership for Public Sector in the Digital Era, (iii) Data Driven Leadership – Why data and data governance are critical to sound decision-making, (iv) Transforming Infrastructure Management: Current Status, Solutions, and Expectations, (v) Case study discussion, and (vi) Round table discussion on Opportunities and Challenges for Localities in the Digital era.



Another highlighted activity in this quarter was The Nordic Day event co-organized by FSPPM and the Nordic Embassies in Vietnam (Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden) on 20 March 2024. On the theme of “Adapting Vietnam’s Labour Market - Lessons Learned from the Nordic Region and Implications for Vietnam”, the event aimed to gather speakers from the Nordic countries to share their experiences and expertise on various topics, including vocational training and skill development, workplace dialogue and decent work, innovation and increased productivity, and social welfare systems.

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Guest lectures



Dr. Ly Xuan Hai - Chairman of the Board of Directors of Bao Loc Silk Joint Stock Company - gave lecture on topic “Planning budgets and managing finances within a business” on 28 February. With over 20 years of leadership and management experience in the fields of finance, banking, and corporate sectors, Mr. Ly Xuan Hai shared insights on the strategic management process and financial budgeting and planning. The lecture emphasized the importance of corporate governance structure, helping students reassess decision-making processes and strategy execution in operational management, closely linked with effective financial budgeting and management.



On 02 March, the guest lecture “The current practices of human resource management in public sector organizations” was delivered by Dr. Vu Dang Minh - Head of Office - Ministry of Internal Affairs – introduced the latest updates on human resource management issues in the current public sector, focusing on the new salary reform regime (expected from July 1, 2024) and the development of the civil service workforce in general.

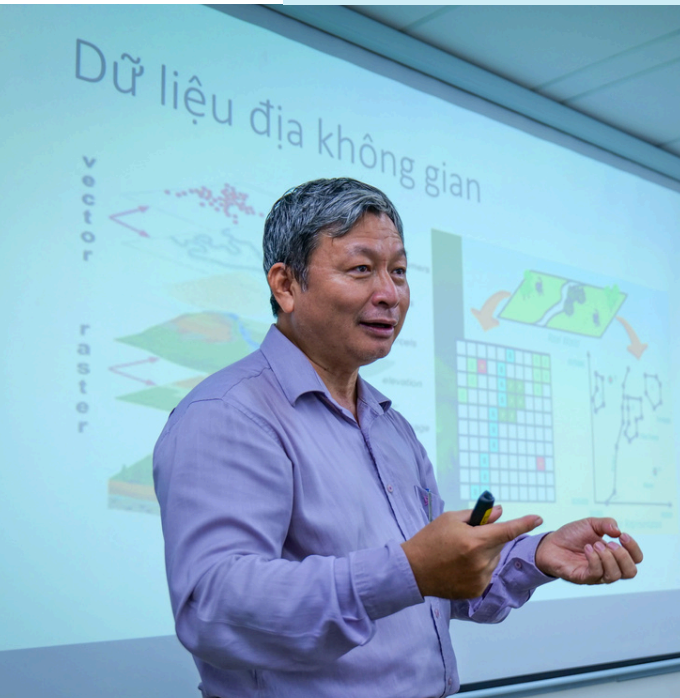
On 21 March, Dr. Nguyen Dinh Cung – former Director of the Central Institute for Economic Management (CIEM) gave a lecture namely “Public Investment in Vietnam”. In the lecture, Dr. Nguyen Dinh Cung discussed the present situation, the pressing problems, and potential solutions for public investment in Vietnam. Accordingly, he shared insights as well as hands-on research experience about government investment management across a period from 2009-2012. Given those experiences, Dr. Cung highlighted pressing issues regarding inefficient and waste investment in the public sector. Moreover, the lecturer emphasized relative legal problems such as the broad definition of government investment and the lack of regional investment plans. Finally, Dr. Cung delivered his predictions about trends and reform in this field.



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Events, Seminars & Workshops



On 12 January, the public seminar on Geospatial Intelligence (GEOINT) for Smart City Management was conducted by A/Prof. Dr. Le Trung Chon – Acting Director of Research Institute for Sustainable Development, Ho Chi Minh City University of Natural Resources and Environment. The objective of the workshop was to introduce smart urbanization, geospatial intelligence, and emphasize the role of geospatial data in smart urban management from awareness, design, and construction of geospatial data, analysis, and decision support in smart urban management and operation through a pilot implementation project in District 12, Ho Chi Minh City. In addition, the speaker also provided a brief overview of geospatial intelligence applications in agriculture, resource management, and the environment.

On 19 January, the public seminar on “The largest corruption scandal: Why and How” presented by A/Prof. Pham Duy Nghia, MPP Director of FSPPM, attracted more than 400 participants both in person and online. On November 9, 2022, Resolution No. 27-NQ/TW was issued, defining the priorities for establishing a socialist rule-of-law state, emphasizing adherence to the law, checks on power, and advancing judicial reform.

At the same time, an increasing number of large-scale cases, with unprecedented complexity, have emerged, posing significant challenges to the ongoing legal and judicial reforms in our country. Within the framework of a Public Policy School, researching and discussing policy issues in Vietnam, major cases related to Alibaba Joint Stock Company, Viet A Joint Stock Company, and Van Thinh Phat Group can serve as indicators, prompting discussions about the institutional reform that has been and is currently taking place. Are these cases sustainable achievements, paving the way for deeper, more pervasive, and inclusive judicial reforms on the path to controlling power and building a rule-of-law state in our country?



A/Prof. Pham Duy Nghia's talk introduced Law & Development, a perspective on the role and emergence of legal institutions in a developing country like Vietnam.

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Events, Seminars & Workshops



On 1 March, with valuable diplomatic support from the Vietnamese Embassy in Laos, the FSPPM delegation successfully arranged a meeting with representatives of the Laos' Ministry of Education and Sports. The team met with Mr. Sisamut Saenbouttaraj, Deputy Director General of the Department of International Cooperation, representative of Department of Higher Education, and Department of Student Affairs to introduce Fulbright University Vietnam and the MUSP program, as well as to provide progress updates.



The meeting was successful, and both parties agreed to take more collaborative actions to ensure the success of this scholarship program, especially this last-year opportunity.

Following the visit, on 2 March, a scholarship information event with demo class hosted by Dr. Vu Thanh Tu Anh, was organized at Crown Plaza Vientiane.

On 5 March, a public seminar on “The 2nd Doi Moi Underway: The Political System Renovation and the Future of Vietnam’s Economic Development” was conducted by Kim Yong Kyun, Associate Professor at the Political Science & International Relations Department, SNU. In this lecture, A/Prof. Kim Yong Kyun articulated the central arguments underpinning his book project concerning the political economy of Vietnam's economic development.



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Projects, Research and Policy Dialogue activities



During the Quarter 4, 2023, the TARA team Project submitted a paper on “Evolving pathways towards water security in the Vietnamese Mekong Delta: An adaptive management perspective”, joint with Tran Anh Thong et al.

Abstract:

The interplay of climate change, upstream hydropower development, and state-led water engineering interventions for agricultural production makes a substantial contribution to the transformation of waterscapes and water scarcity in the Vietnamese Mekong Delta.

This study aims to examine how these dynamics are linked to the paradigm shift in water management in An Giang and Ben Tre, the two water-scarce provinces in the delta. The analysis reveals that the evolving pathways from food security and demands for rice export towards water security present the salient evidence of adaptive water management that gives priority to water retention. This, however, raises a doubt whether this ad-hoc solution could effectively address the presently acute conditions of water scarcity and water security over the long term. Achieving water security in the delta should be grounded upon the holistic understandings/interventions into transboundary and in-situ climate-development complexities while harmonizing water management-livelihood contestations across ecological zones.

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Projects, Research and Policy Dialogue activities



Dr. Ha Quang Hung has submitted for reviewing a book chapter on “Water governance and transboundary data sharing in the lower Mekong region. A case study of Yali Hydropower Dam, Vietnam” (a Springer book chapter”).

Abstract:

In recent years, the economic growth has led to massive urban sprawl, intensive agricultural production, and environmental degradation and losses in Vietnam. In the Lower Mekong Basin (i.e., a part of Central Highland of Vietnam), agricultural production, urban growth, unsustainable resources (water and soil) management, and industrial activities are the potential polluters to the regional environment. To regulate the human interferences on the environment, environmental taxes and fees based on the ‘polluter pays principles’ (PPP) are the key for environmental protection. But PPP’s efficiencies are dependent on the ability to track the pollutants and polluters using spaceborne/airborne monitoring sensors, ground stations, and field sampling. In the rural and mountainous areas in Vietnam, the monitoring networks and data are scarce despite efforts to invest in the environmental monitoring system for years. In this research, we examined the use of bio-optical models (i.e., ocean color (OC) and Case 2 Regional Coast Color (C2RCC) methods) and remotely sensed analyses (i.e., Landsat 5, 7, 8 & 9 data) for the case of the environmental incidents in the Yali hydropower dam, Chu Pa, Gia Lai, Vietnam in 2022 and 2009. The research’s outputs emphasized the need to revise the approach for environmental monitoring and environmental protection in Viet Nam and transboundary data sharing for water governance in the Mekong Region.



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Student & Alumni Activities



On 24 February, representing the MPP students, Doan Quoc Dung (MPP24-LM student) excellently won the First Prize, and Tran Pham Xuan Linh (MPP24-PA student) achieved the Third Prize in the 2024 NASPAA Student Simulation Competition held in Egypt. The theme of this year's simulation competition is "Host Nations". Given the hypothetical scenario of one of the four nations experiencing war,

resulting in a large influx of refugees fleeing to the remaining three nations, the competition consisted of 5 rounds (1 draft round and 4 official rounds). In the roles of leaders of the four governments, the teams had to design and implement fair and effective public policies. The team that ensured the best balance of multiple factors (ensuring budget, ensuring the interests of domestic citizens, while fulfilling obligations and commitments to neighboring countries, etc.) emerged as the winning team.

This year's competition took place at 13 global venues, including 8 locations in the United States, 4 locations outside the U.S. (Hungary, Bangladesh, Brazil, & Egypt), and 1 online venue, connecting students from over 100 universities worldwide.



UPCOMING EVENTS



April

Workshop “Policy for Zero-Emission Vehicles (ZEV): International Experience for Vietnam” under the scope of ZEV Project




May

Information days in Ho Chi Minh City (04/05) and Hanoi (18/05)



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