

CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY & THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

APPLIED DECISION MODELING SEMINAR SERIES

Presents

Speaker: *Marv Mandell, Professor of Public Policy and Chair, Department of Public Policy, University of Maryland, Baltimore County*

Topic: *Social Experimentation and Public Policymaking*

Date & Time: *Thursday, February 26, 2004, 3:30 – 5 PM*

Place: *2503 Hamburg Hall, Carnegie Mellon University*

There will be a reception following the talk from 5:00 – 5:45 PM in the Heinz School Faculty Lounge, 2103 Hamburg Hall.

Abstract:

While social experimentation has now become commonplace, knowledge concerning the connection between social experiments on the one hand and policy making on the other remains elusive. Given the considerable cost of social experimentation and its role as a primary tool in policy analysis, it seems appropriate to ask whether doing such studies is in fact worthwhile. Doing so requires answering two fundamental questions: are social experiments actually used in making public policy and, if they are, how are they used? This talk, based on the recently published book of the same name, will discuss the results of a series of case studies that provide insight into three key issues that enable one to answer the two questions posed above. The first of these is the decision of whether or not to conduct social experiments; the second is the impacts of findings from social experiments on policy deliberations, and the third is the influence of various factors on the use of experimental results. I conclude by identifying ways in which the social gains from experimentation can be increased, as well as considering the implications of what we have learned from studying social experiments for other forms of policy research.

Biography:

Marv Mandell is Chair and Professor of Public Policy at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC). His research and teaching center on the application of quantitative methods to policy analysis. This includes program evaluation and the application of operations research to public policy and management. Prof. Mandell received his Ph.D. from Northwestern University. He has also taught at Syracuse University and the Johns Hopkins University.

Prof. Mandell has served as the principal investigator or co-principal investigator on many evaluation projects and has served on a number of evaluation-related work groups and review panels. Prof. Mandell is the co-author of *Social Experiments and Public Policy* (Urban Institute Press, 2003). His work has also appeared in such journals as *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, *Management Science*, *Location Science*, and *Socio-Economic Planning Sciences*.

Additional information about the Carnegie Mellon University/University of Pittsburgh Applied Decision Modeling Seminar Series can be found at <http://www.andrew.cmu.edu/user/johnson2/AppliedOR.htm>.

Prof. Mandell is available for meetings Thursday, February 26 between 12:00 PM – 1 PM (lunch) and 1 PM - 3:00 PM (office meetings) and after the reception. Please make appointments using the Pittsburgh Social Sciences Seminar Tracker, <http://gsiaserver1.gsia.cmu.edu/seminars/seminar.html>.