



Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences



Wicked Problems, Contested Administrations:
Knowledge, Coordination, Strategy

The Research Colloquium of the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences:
CURRENT RESEARCH ON “WICKED (POLICY) PROBLEMS”

**“The role of new influence elites and flexible power
brokers in policy and governance”**

Venue: University of Potsdam, Campus Griebnitzsee
House 7, Room 227

Date: 11 May 2016

Time: 18 – 20 c.t.

Prof. Janine R. Wedel, PhD
George Mason University, Arlington / USA



“The role of new influence elites and flexible power brokers in policy and governance”

A new breed of influence elite has emerged over the past several decades. In contrast to the “power elites” described by sociologist C. Wright Mills a half century ago, the muscle of today’s influence elites resides at least as much in social networks as in command-and-control bureaucracy. These novel elites are less visible, less stable, and more mobile and global in reach than their forebears. They hold sway through informal, flexible, and unaccountable means and use consulting firms, think tanks, nonprofits, and “grassroots organisations,” among other entities, as vehicles of influence, not to mention the internet and social media.



Janine R. Wedel is an award-winning author and University Professor in the School of Policy, Government, and International Affairs at George Mason University (also affiliated in 2015-2016 with the Hertie School in Berlin and Kyiv-Mohyla Academy in Ukraine). She writes about governing, corruption, and influence elites through the lens of a social anthropologist. A five-time Fulbright fellow, she is the first anthropologist to win the Grawemeyer Award for Ideas Improving World Order, an honor typically reserved for political scientists (previous recipients include Samuel Huntington and Mikhail Gorbachev). She also has won awards from the MacArthur Foundation, National Science Foundation, Ford Foundation, and Institute for New Economic Thinking, among many others.