

Thursday, September 8, 2011  
3pm - 4:30  
Patterson Office Tower, 18th Floor Lecture Room

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## Policy Analysis with Incredible Certitude

Abstract: Analyses of public policy regularly express certitude about the consequences of alternative policy choices. Yet policy predictions often are fragile, with conclusions resting on critical unsupported assumptions or leaps of logic. Then the certitude of policy analysis is not credible. I develop a typology of incredible analytical practices and give illustrative cases. I call these practices *conventional certitude*, *dueling certitudes*, *conflating science and advocacy*, *wishful extrapolation*, *illogical certitude*, and *media overreach*.

Co-sponsored by The Department of Economics, The Martin School for Public Policy and The Quantitative Initiative for Policy and Social Research.

This talk is relevant to anyone interested in how research is used and abused for making important policy decisions. The talk is free and open to the public