

# Gobernar: The Journal of Latin American Public Policy and Governance

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Volume 1 | Issue 1

Article 2

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2016

## Editorial - English


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### Recommended Citation

Rubaii, Nadia and Leyva-Botero, Santiago (2016) "Editorial - English," *Gobernar: The Journal of Latin American Public Policy and Governance*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 1 , Article 2.

Available at: <http://orb.binghamton.edu/gobernar/vol1/iss1/2>

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## Editorial

As founding co-editors of *Gobernar: The Journal of Latin American Public Policy and Governance*, we are excited to reach the milestone of publication of our inaugural issue of the journal. The work that went in to establishing the journal, and the journal itself, represent the ideals of North-South and South-South collaborations that we consider essential to fully understanding the policy and governance challenges in Latin America, to more effectively responding to those challenges, to enhancing the quality of research that is produced by Latin American scholars, and expanding the reach of that research.

The journal is intended to fill a gap in the available scholarly outlets and to ensure that Latin American scholars do not have to choose between journals based in their home countries and internationally-rated English-language journals largely based in the United States or Western Europe. The name of the journal deliberately reflects key elements of our vision. It includes both Spanish and English elements to signify our commitment to publishing in both languages; it encompasses theoretical and practical elements; it spans public management and public policy; and it is focused *on* the region but not limited to authors *in* the region. In that sense, it seeks submissions of papers that have Latin-American relevance or significance for Latin Americanists around the world. As such, ***Gobernar*** not only aims at an audience with some degree of interest in policy issues in Latin America, since many of the problems present in this region are also common to continents such as Africa or Asia. Beyond issues related to underdevelopment, ***Gobernar*** also aims to create a debate that helps to bring up to date the issues that are discussed in Latin American academia by creating a widely shared platform for exchanging ideas and concepts across the continent.

It aims to contribute a Latin American regional perspective to the debate on the rationale, design, implementation and evaluation of public policies, as well as the effectiveness, quality and the failures of state intervention in the contexts of weak states. The journal is interested in topics that need to be widely discussed in Latin America, such as corruption, political machines, clientelism and patronage politics, market and governance failures (market, states and networks), different types of bureau-pathologies, and the many problems that emerge when governance reforms are implemented in contexts different that the classic textbook Anglo-Saxon example of strong states that are used in many Latin American classrooms, despite its likely irrelevance. The journal is equally interested in topics specific to individual countries or populations within Latin America.

The journal is devoted to the dissemination of research articles from the broad range of disciplines related to Public Policy and Governance, including: political science, economics, public administration, law and all other disciplines related with public affairs in general. It aims to provide an intellectual platform for scholars in those fields helping to bridge the gap between north and south, between disciplines and between policy areas. The journal defines governance, as it is used in the English-language public administration and public policy literature, to reflect that effective policy responses to social problems requires more than government or State actors. Governance in this sense encompasses traditional public administration, political institutions, public service and the role of the State at all levels, as well as the role of civil society and nongovernmental organizations.

***Gobernar*** focuses on the publication of original articles that present qualitative or quantitative research, case studies, survey articles, studies of effective pedagogy, conceptual framework, analytical models, and empirical research, as well as book reviews. It is a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary academic publication fundamentally dedicated to the dissemination of research articles. In particular, the Journal welcomes research in the field of

public policy related to theory, applied studies, actors, instruments, analysis, design, implementation, substantive policy areas and comparative public policy.

Creating a bilingual, peer-reviewed, open-access, journal co-produced by two universities was a long-held idea of the Department of Government and Political Science at Universidad EAFIT, and was the direct result of a conference organized and hosted by the Department of Public Administration at Binghamton University in 2015. Academics from both universities had worked together as research collaborators and found the experience enriching, and the journal represented a scaling up of that relationship to the institutional level.

Creating a bilingual, peer-reviewed, open-access, journal co-produced by two universities was a long-held idea of the Department of Government and Political Science at Universidad EAFIT, and was the direct result of a conference organized and hosted by the Department of Public Administration at Binghamton University in 2015. The collaboration between the two institutions began several years ago when some academics from both universities began to work together on research. This experience soon was pushed forward with the idea of creating this joint journal, an idea that was warmly welcomed by different instances of both institutions. In other words, in the first instance it is important to recognize the role of the chancellors and deans of both, EAFIT University and the University of Binghamton, in the creation of the journal.

There is considerable work behind the scenes that goes into the establishment and production of a journal. We are thankful for the financial and human capital support provided by Universidad EAFIT, in particular dedicating Leonardo Garcia-Jaramillo to work as Managing Editor for the journal, and to Binghamton University for financial and technical support, including the Digital Commons platform for the journal on the Open Repository @ Binghamton (ORB). We would be remiss if we did not also thank the scholars from leading universities throughout the Americas who have agreed to serve on our Editorial Review Committee. We know they are busy with their own research, teaching, and administrative responsibilities, and we appreciate their willingness to give time and expertise to this endeavor.

It is also important to recognize the important role played by the current leadership of the Inter-American Network of Public Administration Education (INPAE). They specially deserve credit for expanding our collaboration to a regional level through their affiliation with the journal. In particular, we would like to recognize the role of President Cristian Plissock (University of Chile), Vice-President Hiram Angel (Guadalajara University), Secretary Diego J. Gantus (National University of Rosario, Argentina), and the role of Pablo Sanabria (Los Andes University in Bogota) in the very conception of the idea. This group of people believed in the project and allowed the magazine, even before its birth, to become the official magazine of INPAE. This helped *Gobernar* to strengthen its international and collaborative vocation, since it has become officially the space that will help to disseminate all the important work that is prepared for the annual meetings of the Network.

We thank the authors who have contributed papers to this first issue for trusting their work to a new publication, and for being patient with the inevitable technical and logistical challenges associated with publishing a new journal. We are honored to open the first issue of the journal with the invited remarks of one of the leading scholars of public policy and public administration in the region, Dr. Oscar Oszlak. As Oscar so aptly observes, governance is hard and thus requires deliberate scholarly attention. He notes that this journal provides both a motivation and a means by which to reinvigorate and strengthen comparative public administration research toward that goal. We find his perspective informative and inspirational.

The research articles represent a range of policy issues in a variety of contexts and at both macro and micro levels. You will find three articles which apply a bird's eye view to public policy. Juan Guillermo Vieira Silva seeks to provide an introductory overview to the study of

policy analysis as it applies to Latin America. Along a similar vein, Carlos Andres Olaya Mesa traces the evolution of the discipline of public policy and examines its relevance to the Colombian context. And Santiago Silva Jaramillo applies a particular methodological approach – that of mapping of stakeholder interests – to the study of public policy in Colombia.

Following that we have three articles focused on specific policy issues in specific contexts. Josefina Bruni Celli and Javier Rodriguez provide insight into stages of development of Venezuelan policies on means of production and property during the Chavez administration. Gloria Estela Lopez Lopera and Diana Patricia Salina Arango present a case study collective action displayed by cycling advocacy groups in Medellín and lessons that can be learned from their effectiveness. In another Medellín-based research project, Alejandra León Rojas presents a very different kind of case study, applying a meta-analysis to the challenges of implementing gender mainstreaming as part of the Public Policy for Medellín Women. Finally, we wrap up the issue with a review by Susan Appe on a new book by Lentfer and Cothran about the big role that small grants can play in addressing global problems.

While we want to enjoy the moment of publishing this first issue, we are also looking ahead to subsequent issues. This first issue includes almost exclusively works in Spanish, with the exception of the book review. It also includes a disproportionate number of authors and articles with a focus on Colombia. We intend for future issues to be more balanced in terms of articles in English and Spanish, and more fully representative of the entire region. For future numbers, we are excited to announce plans for some special issues in collaboration with key regional organizations. In what we intend to have as an annual feature of our journal, our next issue will be focused on the theme of the most recent INPAE conference which was held in Lima, Peru, in April 2017. The conference, and this special issue will focus on “*Public Management Controls and Accountability*” with particular attention on the problems and challenges that arise in conceptualizing or implementing political, fiscal, social and jurisdictional controls in the distinct bodies responsible for the administration of public affairs. We look forward to working with our INPAE colleagues on this issue.

Following that we will feature a one-time special issue on “*Democracy and Civil Society in Latin America and the Caribbean in a Time of Change*” which will include select papers from the 11th International Society for Third-Sector Research’s (ISTR) Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean which will be held in Quito, Ecuador in October 2017. We are grateful to guest co-editors Daniel Barragán of Universidad de Los Hemisferios, Ecuador; Anabel Cruz of the Instituto de Comunicación y Desarrollo (ICD), Uruguay; and Susan Appe of Binghamton University, USA, for proposing this collaboration and for spearheading the process.

We invite you to read the articles in this first issue and to share your feedback with us. We also hope that you will consider advancing the goals of *Gobernar* by submitting your research for our consideration and encouraging your colleagues to do the same. We have a multi-year plan for increasing the visibility of the journal and establishing it among key ranking organizations; for that we need your quality submissions.

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