

E-government, Strategic Planning and Co-production, : Can Technology Promote Greater Citizen Engagement in a Rapidly Changing and Crisis-Oriented World, The University Response.

Roger E. Hamlin, Juanjuan Zhao, Amanda Hamlin

Abstract

Any large city mayor or public administrator has a sense that the world with which his/her city must interface is moving exponentially faster. Advancing communication, transportation and other technologies have made the people of the world increasingly interconnect. Immediate crises such as financial break down, pandemics, climate change and military tensions bring this global phenomenon to the fore. But, even in their absence, other incipient, but persistent, and portentous issues are increasingly demanding of public action. Simultaneously, pressure to engage all citizens in public policy debates and decision-making is growing.

The collision of the two forces, rapid change v. increasing public debate and involvement, gives further salience to the notion that science-based technologies are charging ahead while the development of social technologies, such as democratic institutions, are lagging behind.

This paper looks at several approaches to citizen engagement: co-production, asset-oriented public management, strategic planning and participatory modeling. It then, addresses various forms of e-governance and investigates how new technologies might be used to expand and improve citizen engagement while allowing government to deal with rapid change. Some criticisms and cautions are listed. Finally, the paper investigates how well higher education in public administration is responding to the collision through the offering of specialized courses and programs.