

Policymaking Accountability—Abstract

Professor Rose-Ackerman's lecture will provide an overview of a draft book manuscript, entitled "Policymaking Accountability" that draws on and extends her past work in comparative administrative law and public policymaking. Public policymaking in modern democracies necessarily occurs not only in the legislature and in the offices of the head of state but also inside government ministries and in independent and quasi-public bodies. She considers the way that political actors work with bureaucrats to make policy under delegated authority. Technocratic impact assessment can resolve some factual disputes, but analytic methods by themselves cannot mediate deep disagreements over values. Rose-Ackerman argues that administrative law has a central role to play at the interface between the public and the policymaker—one that has been too often ignored. Aiming to remedy that lack, the book draws on the cases of Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and the US to study alternative ways of connecting public law with policymaking. Although no existing system is ideal, cross-country comparisons help to demonstrate that policymaking accountability is fundamental to legitimate democratic government, whatever the underlying governance structures.