ISM SEMINAR
Spring Term 2014-15

Speaker:	**Dr Antonio Cordella, London School of Economics**
Title:	**Technology, Bureaucracy, and Government: how technology re-composes administrative decentralization**
Date:	**Friday 23 January 2015**
Venue:	**B3.19, WBS, Scarman Road**
Time:	**14.00**

Abstract: This seminar will discuss how ICT shapes the integration of administrative procedures in e-government projects by reinforcing the bureaucratic order that will be intrinsically moulded into public sector digitalization programs. The seminar will look at public sector e-government strategies by focusing on the effects that the characteristics of ICTs have on the organization and coordination of the administrative practices underpinning the production and delivery of public services. The talk will discuss the structuring characteristics of ICTs building on the concepts of functional simplification and closure. These characteristics of ICTs are discussed against the organizational principles of bureaucracy which govern most of PAs organizations. Building on the case of the Government of the Canary Islands the seminar offers new insights on the policy implications that the endogenous properties of ICTs have by enforcing most of the bureaucratic principles which govern the coordination and procedural flow in public sector organizations. The conclusion that ICTs ultimately reinforce the bureaucratic nature of organizational activities they mediate is very valuable to help policy makers and e-government specialists to better frame and formulate ICTs strategies in the public sector. This contribution becomes even more relevant when e-government policies are designed and implemented to facilitate cross-organizational coordination and cooperation. In this context, ICTs help the rationalization of bureaucratic organizations enforcing standardized practices, molding the work of the administration around technically defined sequences of work. On the other hand, ICTs increase the interdependencies among and between administrations, making it more difficult to rationalize the administrative procedures across the PA. These ambivalent outcomes associated with the deployment of e-government solutions are valuable insights to explain the limits faced by e-government strategies to eliminate bureaucratic complexity. The identification of these limits and the reasons why they exist help policy makers and practitioners to better design e-government strategies that instead of considering ICTs as solutions to the bureaucratic burden account for the impacts that ICTs can have on the bureaucratic nature or PA; hence making the formulation of these strategies more closed to what is experienced when the outcomes of the adoption of ICTs in the public sector are assessed.

Biography: Antonio Cordella, PhD is a Lecturer at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) where he is responsible for the graduate courses on e-government and e-businesses. He is visiting professor at the Maastricht Graduate School of Governance, UNMERIT, The Netherland. He has published widely in Information Systems, e-government and public sector associated reforms. An Italian national, he holds a PhD in Information Systems from the Gothenburg University, Sweden.

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