



Standards, policy-making and politics at UCL



An academic and standards practitioner

I'm Lecturer in Regulation, Innovation and Public Policy at UCL's Department of Science, Technology, Engineering and Public Policy (STeAPP). STeAPP promotes action research and experiential teaching about how science, technology and engineering expertise can support policy-making in order to tackle global challenges.

My research focuses on new, adaptive and more dynamic ways of governing disruptive technologies, especially digital and bio-technologies. The relationship between standards and regulations when tackling the risks and uncertainties associated with these technologies has been central to my research for over a decade. I've an interest in understanding how epistemic communities - such as national and international standards bodies - develop 'consensus knowledge' that supports new policies and regulatory interventions for tackling the risks of emerging technologies.

Since 2017, I've Chaired the BSI Internet of Things (IoT)/1 Committee, which addresses horizontal standardization issues pertaining to the privacy, security, safety and interoperability of IoT, and mirrors IoT committees at international level.

Master of Public Administration (MPA)

At STeAPP I lead three courses in our flagship interdisciplinary Master of Public Administration (MPA):

- Public Administration
- Introduction to Digital Technologies and Policy
- Risk Assessment and Governance

Across these courses, we explore how standards underpin responsible innovation and inform policy-making. Each year I also lead one of the MPA Group Projects, where students work with partner organisations to solve policy-relevant problems. Four MPA candidates partnered with BSI to help them understand the challenges SMEs face when navigating, adopting and implementing IoT standards.

"We explore how standards underpin responsible innovation and inform policy-making"

bsi.

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Teaching standards and standardization

I focus primarily on the underexplored and often misunderstood relationship between standards, policy-making and politics and in particular:

- Recognition of the diversity of standards we encounter in our daily lives: open and proprietary standards; de facto and formal standards; product and process standards
- Understanding the difference between voluntary and mandatory standards, and how they interact with regulatory frameworks
- Exploration of the challenges associated with standards development processes, such as industry and political capture, standard-essential patents (SEPs), different standards review models and decision-making processes.

Tools and resources

By interacting with standards through BSI's British Standards Online (BSOL) database students develop practical knowledge about how standards are developed and the role they play in supporting innovation in science and engineering. We also draw on BSI case studies, such as on Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (CAVs), through which we explore the challenges faced when developing standards and policies for emerging technologies. And we make use of BSI guest talks – most recently on risk. A BSI Risk Management Committee (RM/1) member spoke to students about how risk management standards are developed, reviewed and implemented.

Next generation of decision-makers

Standards and standardization processes are often perceived as the domain of technical experts, and as removed from important societal issues such as consumer protection, responsible innovation and policy-making. In reality, standards matter for the next generation of decision-makers and policy-makers we're preparing at STeAPP through our teaching and research practice.



Learn more at: www.ucl.ac.uk/steapp



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About BSI Education

Universities make a significant contribution to standardization by teaching about standards, contributing academic research, and being standards-makers. BSI Education builds relationships and creates programmes with universities to help raise awareness of the benefits of standards to society and the economy and to encourage and increase participation in standards-making.



For more information visit bsigroup.com/education or contact education@bsigroup.com