



Center for Global Studies

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Transnational Seminar

Networks in the Public Interest

Friday, April 15, 2005 3:00pm

Levis Faculty Center Music Room

Description:

Recent advances in digital technologies invite consideration of organizing as a process that is accomplished by global, flexible, adaptive, and ad hoc transnational networks that can be created, maintained, dissolved, and reconstituted with remarkable alacrity. This paper describes a multi-theoretical multilevel (MTML) model of why we create, maintain, dissolve, and reconstitute knowledge and social networks. Using examples from his research in profit and non-profit organizations, government agencies involved in supporting community participation in the arts, transnational immigrant networks, food safety networks, tobacco control networks, environmental engineering, emergency response networks, and other public interest arenas, Contractor is developing a framework to understand how the discovery, diagnosis, and design of social and knowledge networks shape policy and are in turn shaped by policy.

[Full Text of Paper](#)

Speakers:

Noshir Contractor, Speech Comm and Psychology, UIUC

Biography:

Noshir Contractor is a Professor in the Department of Speech Communication, Department of Psychology, and the Coordinated Science Laboratory at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is a Research Affiliate of the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology, Director of the Science of Networks in Communities (SONIC) Group at the National Center for Supercomputing Applications, and Co-Director of the Age of Networks Initiative at the Center for Advanced Study at UIUC. His research program, funded continuously for the past decade by major grants from the National Science Foundation, is investigating factors that lead to formation, maintenance, and dissolution of dynamically linked knowledge networks in 21st century organizational forms. His book titled *Theories of Communication Networks* (co-authored with Peter Monge and published by Oxford University Press)

received the 2003 Book of the Year award from the Organizational Communication Division of the National Communication Association. He is the lead developer of **IKNOW (Inquiring Knowledge Networks On the Web)**, a community-ware web-based software and **Blanche**, a software program to simulate the dynamics of social networks.

Co-Sponsors:

The Departments of Sociology, Geography, Urban and Regional Planning, and the Center for Global Studies.

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