



# **Influencing Policy Development in Academy: What has Worked and What has Not?**

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# Outline

- What is required to influence policy
- A few lessons that I have learned
- How –ie. what mechanisms will help engage academics in policy



# Framing the Question

- What is policy development?√
- How do we measure progress? √
- What Activities and Roles are Important?
- What Modes of Communication are useful?
- What Timeframes are required?
- What institutions programs and practices make it work?

# What academic activities influence policy?

- Teaching
  - Undergrad – public education
  - Grad – research skills, honing the basic skills
- Discovery Based Research
  - Creativity and innovation in processes is rewarded
- Client based consulting
  - Using economic skills to build apparatus and to answer specific questions



# What activities (continued)

- Extension
  - Proactive dissemination of research results
    - Websites
    - Organising conferences
    - Writing policy briefs
    - Organising speakers / programs
    - Prepared info articles
- Meetings and public dialogue
  - learn, listen, dialogue
  - invited speaking
  - responding to the press
  - Op eds



# What Points of Contact are used?

- Students
- Industry
- NGO's
- Mixed boards and committees
- Public/Media
- Government officials
- Politicians



# What timeframes ?

- Depends on the policy and the approach
- Challenging a proposed policy or dealing with a crisis requires very shift action
  - Have to have a stock of relevant knowledge /skills
  - Have to have the short run capacity to work on the issue
  - Have to have currency with the stakeholders
- Improving an existing policy has a much longer fuse
  - Research to bear on the question is essential
  - extension and long term relationship building is important
- Dynamics–short term activities can have long term impacts on relations and reputation



# Influencing Policy

- The policy development is very complex
- The pathways to influence policy are very numerous and diverse
- Direct influence requires a proactive approach

# Some Past Experience with Influencing Policy

- GRIP - 1991
- Farmland ownership 2001
- Land use/habitat
- CWB Basis -FAFs 1997
- CWB marketing –the debates 1992, 1998
- Estey transport process
- Ongoing- Several Aspects of Innovation Policy



# Lessons Learned

- Real policy issues make interesting economic problems
- They often require new relationships
- Have a thick skin (and Tenure)
  - Results that are critical of existing policy will provoke negative responses from defenders of the status quo
  - Results that support the status quo will provoke responses from those that want change
  - The more important your results are to a policy the more aggressive the response.
- Proactively network... be interested, be friendly be helpful, be communicative
- Be careful in your research and how it might be perceived, reputation is fragile and subject to manipulation



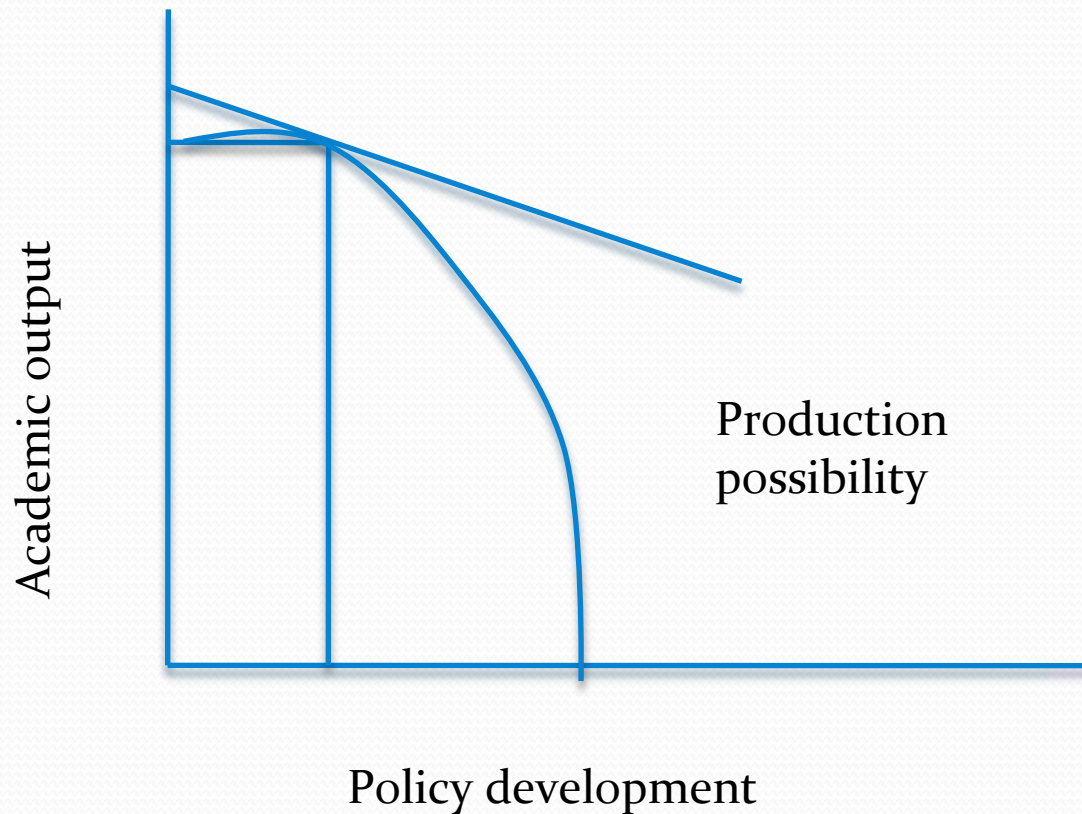
# Incentives To Engage in Policy

- ▣ Globalization means Universities increasingly compete on the basis of international reputation and scholarship
- Universities reward peer publication, peer publication, peer publication and teaching
- Then why should professors do policy research?
- Why spend time engaging the policy process?

# How do we engage academics in policy development?

- Professors are motivated by:
  1. curiosity
  2. a desire to teach and work with grad students
  3. prestige amongst peers and community
  4. fun of the debate
  5. desire to contribute to society (altruism)
  6. and sometimes money
- These ends must compete for scarce time

# The Professors' PP Curve and Incentives



# How do governments get the relevant academic policy knowledge produced and “commercialized”?

- More Faculty
- Contracting
- Competitive Grants
- Industry committees/boards
- Non-university centers/institutions
- Academic Centers
- Policy Networks

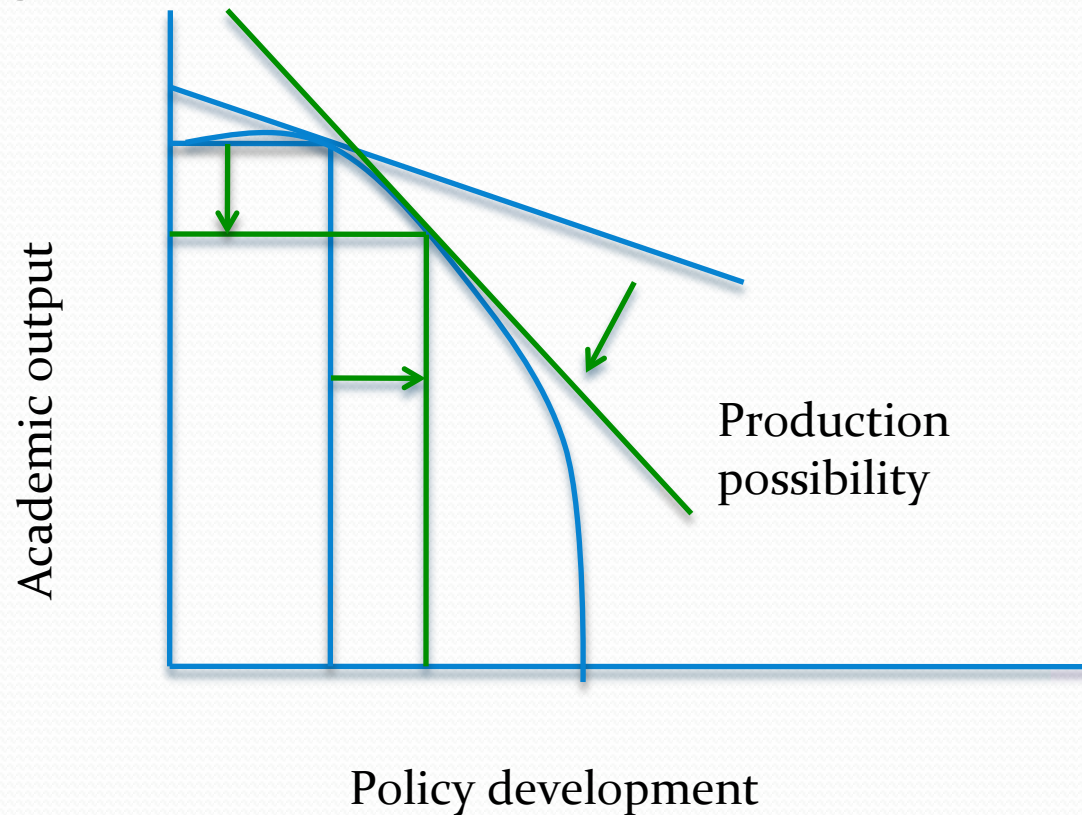


# More Faculty

- Declining capacity on campus
- Increased demands
- Policy engagement take time but there is less of it
- Outputs have a large public good component ie. Not private sector activity

# Contracting/Consulting

- Changes the incentives/time allocation





# Competitive Grants

- These add capacity, and create new knowledge, but:
  - require long lead times
  - have high transactions costs
- Does not work at all in short run
- Can be more effective in medium and long term



## **Industry committees/boards**

- Academics are often added to stakeholder processes
- Can bring existing knowledge/expertise to bear on the issue
- Does not come with a lot of academic resources



# Non-University Centers

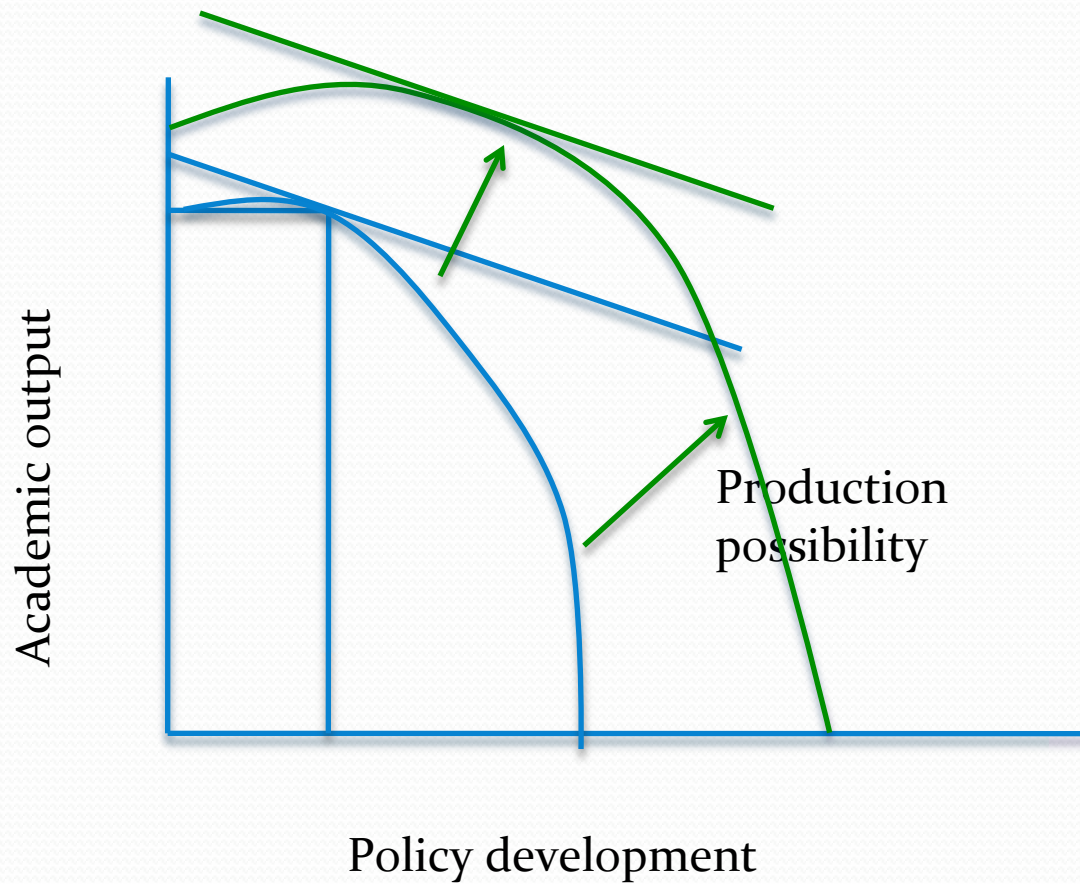
- Also part of the policy development solution
  - Can be direct source of knowledge
  - Can be the link to “commercialize’ the academic knowledge value chain- eg. CAPI
  - links with students are weaker by definition



## Academic Centers (e.g. CSALE/KIS)

- These are part of the University Response to the policy need
- Can detract from academics but usually augment resources
  - Student/post doc research
  - Communications/visibility/relationship resources
- Costly to Start Up
- Need an active champion and ongoing resources to run

# Academic Centers





# Policy Networks

- Eg. the Agricultural Policy Research Networks
  - Networks of agricultural policy academics
  - Established 4 years ago by AAFC
  - Farm level
  - Consumer and Market Issues
  - Trade
  - Innovation

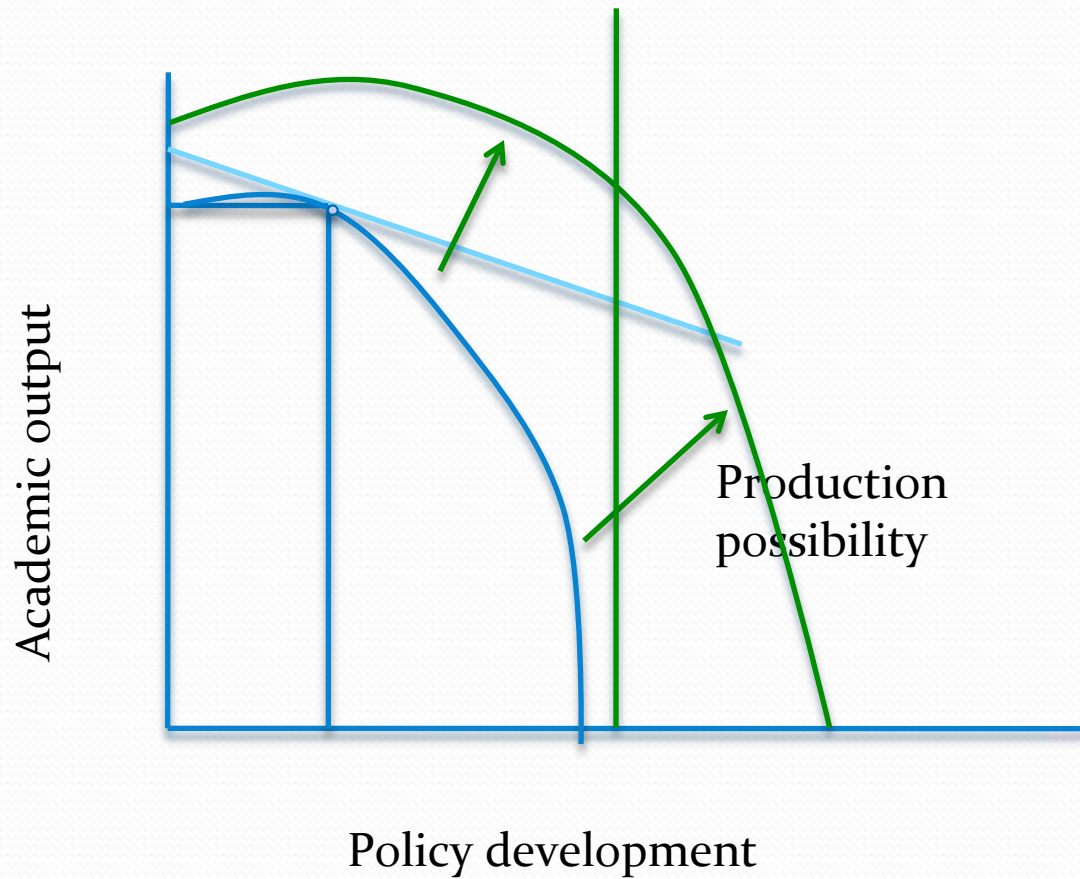
<http://www.ag-innovation.usask.ca/>



# Policy Networks

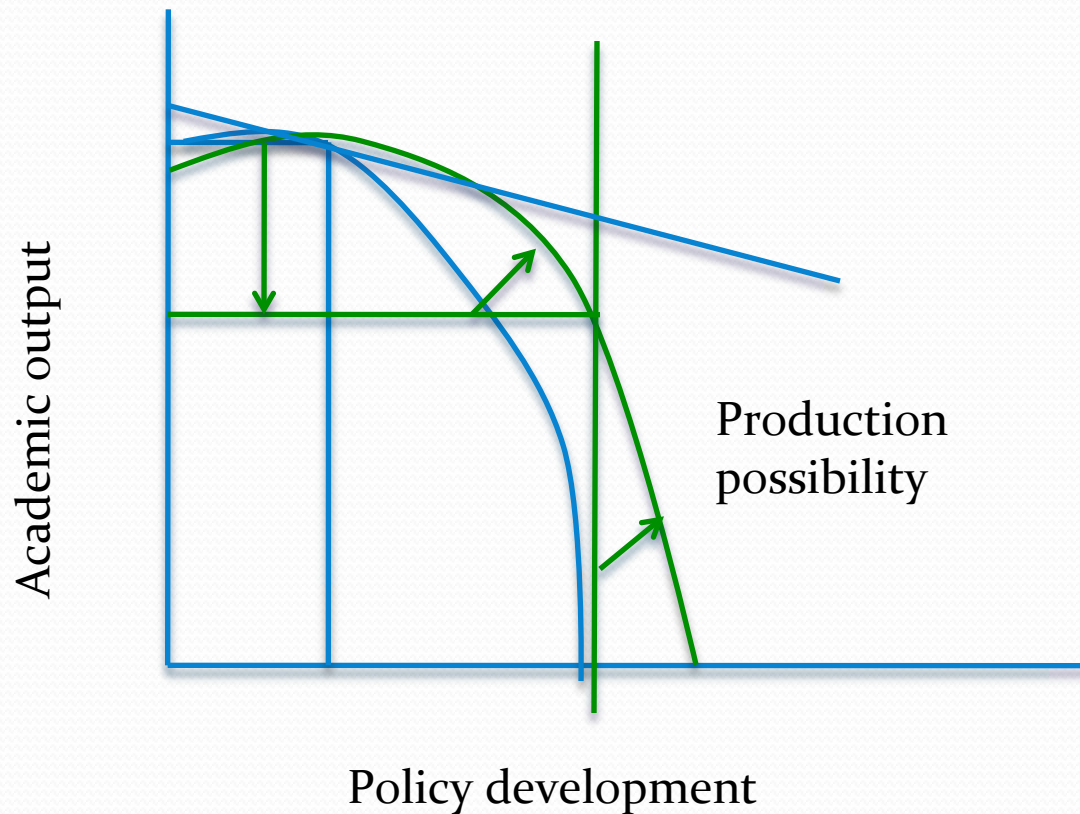
- These networks policy output in return for resources
  - Very helpful in grad student recruitment
  - Helpful with the stimulation of policy research
  - Helpful with the “commercialization” of policy knowledge ie. the two way communication
  - The reviews were very positive- ie. they seem to be working

# Policy Networks



# Larger Policy Expectations and Lower Net Resources

- Academics could be worse off





# Conclusions

- Globalization means Universities will increasingly compete on the basis of international reputation and scholarship
- Many academics have played an important (essential) role in knowledge development and student training
- Networks/ Centers have helped to reengage agricultural economists in policy
- “Commercialization” of academic policy research requires both incentives and resources