

# **Ethics and Policy Issues in Computing**

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# Today

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- Debate
- What is “policy”? Why is it interesting?
- Policy for sales of software in SE Asia
  
- Next time: Privacy

# The Debate

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- *Software piracy is ethical in third world countries*
  - Pro: Iris
  - Con: Trisha

# Policy

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- “A **policy** is a deliberate plan of action to guide decisions and achieve rational outcome(s).”
  - *Wikipedia*
- “A plan or course of action, as of a government, political party, or business, intended to influence and determine decisions, actions, and other matters”
  - *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 4th ed., 2000.
- “A principle or course of action adopted or proposed as desirable, advantageous, or expedient; *esp.* one formally advocated by a government, political party, etc.”
  - *Oxford English Dictionary*, Draft Revision, 2008.

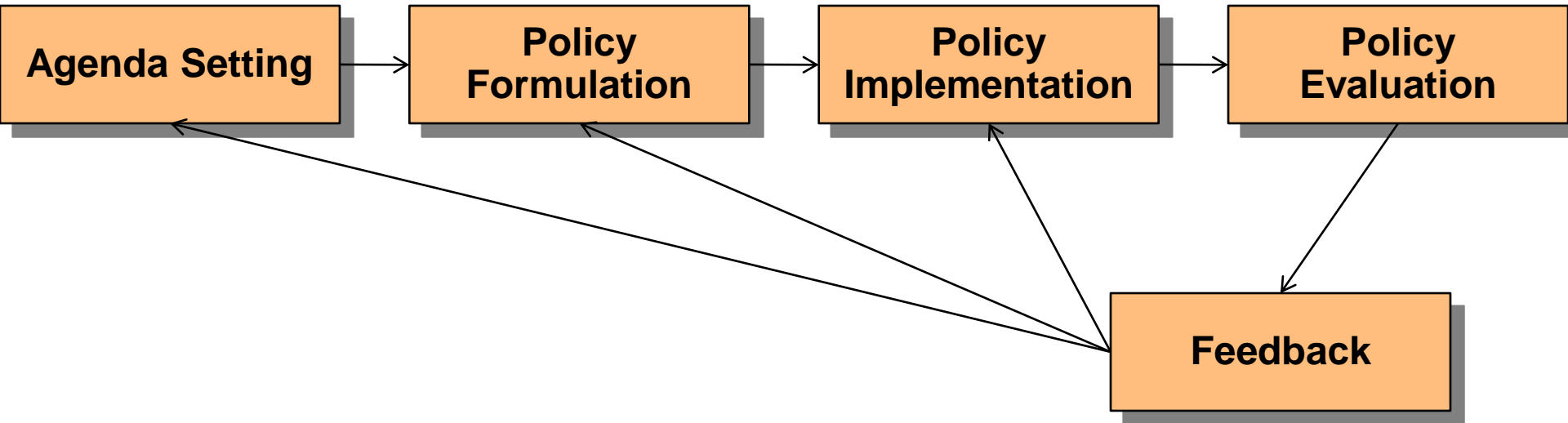
# Law and Policy

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- Law: “A rule of conduct imposed by authority.”
  - *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2d ed., 1989.
- Criminal versus civil
- Case law versus codified law
- Policies can be made into law, e.g.,
  - Policy promoting home ownership
  - Tax law, deduction of mortgage interest
- Policies can be formulated in response to laws, e.g.,
  - HIPAA
  - Policies for how hospitals treat patient data

# Policy Life Cycle

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From Barkenbus, J. (1998). *Expertise and the Policy Cycle*. Energy, Environment and Resources Center, University of Tennessee.

# Policy Impact - 1

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- Intended consequences
  - Did we achieve our objective?
  - Objective may be hazy: did Prop 8 strengthen marriage?
  - Causal relationship may be difficult to determine: are we safer because of the War in Iraq?
- Unintended consequences\*
  - Ignorance
  - Error
  - “Imperious immediacy of interest” (p.901)
  - Basic values
  - Self-defeating prediction

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Merton, R.K. (1936). The Unanticipated Consequences of Purposive Social Action. *American Sociological Review*, 1(6), pp. 894-904.

# Policy Impact - 2

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- Unintended consequences: Benefits
  - Telephones increase social interaction\*
- Unintended consequences: Perverse

“ ‘Let's use our keyboard and mouse in our hands as weapons,’ as one person wrote, ‘to chop out the heads of these adulterers, to pay for the sacrifice of the husband.’ “\*\*

\*Fisc... CA:  
University of California...

\*\*French, H.W. (2006). Mob rule on China's Internet: The keyboard as weapon. *International Herald Tribune*, June 1.



Barbara Streisand's house. California Coastal Records Project,  
<http://www.californiacoastline.org/cgi-bin/image.cgi?image=3850&mode=sequential&flags=0>

# Price and IP Policy in SE Asia

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- Microsoft Marketing
- Economic Ministers of ASEAN  
(Association of Southeast Asian Nations)
- Work out a policy for the sale of software in the region
- Current status
  - Pirating is rampant
  - Prices for legal software equivalent to average annual income in many countries

# Per Capita GDP ASEAN Countries

Brunei Darussalam	31,076.1
Cambodia	598.4
Indonesia	1,919.6
Lao PDR	736.1
Malaysia	6,880.2
Myanmar	215.6
The Philippines	1,652.8
Singapore	35,206.1
Thailand	3,740.1
Viet Nam	836.7
<b>ASEAN</b>	<b>2,227.3</b>

# Microsoft Office Pricing

Office Version	Retail Price
Office Standard	\$400
Office Small Business	\$450
Office Professional	\$500
Office Ultimate	\$680

# Discussion / Q&A

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