**School *of* Governance
and Society**

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Newsletter of
School of Governance and Society

Fostering Diversity and Inclusion

DEAN'S MESSAGE

Welcome to another exciting edition of our school newsletter! As we begin a new academic term, I'm thrilled to connect with you and share the impressive progress and upcoming opportunities at the School of Governance and Society, home to our esteemed Public Administration and Policy programs. At the School of Governance and Society, our mission is clear: to educate and empower the next generation of leaders in public administration and policy. Our programs are crafted to give students a solid understanding of governance theories while equipping them with the practical skills needed to implement effective policies.

To our new and returning students, I extend a warm welcome. You are joining a vibrant and diverse community committed to public service and societal improvement. I encourage you to fully engage with your coursework, participate in discussions, and take advantage of the wealth of knowledge and experience from our distinguished faculty. Remember, the relationships you build and the networks you create here will support you throughout your professional journey. Our faculty members are not only exceptional educators but also prominent researchers and practitioners in their fields. Their work influences policy and practice at local, national, and international levels. I encourage you to seek mentorship opportunities and contribute to the research initiatives that position our school as a hub of innovation and impact.

This newsletter offers a glimpse into the dynamic activities and achievements of our community. I hope you find inspiration in the stories of innovation, resilience, and impact shared within these pages. I invite you to share your own experiences and successes in future editions, as your contributions are essential to our collective growth and achievements. As we look to the future, let's remain dedicated to fostering excellence in public administration and policy. Together, we can tackle the challenges of our time and build a future that embodies our ideals of justice, equity, and effective governance.

Thank you for being an integral part of our community. I look forward to all that we will achieve together in the months ahead.

Dr. Aisha Azhar
Acting Dean SGS

Dean SGS joins Punjab Education Minister to Conduct Interviews for Key Educational Leadership Positions in Punjab

Dean SGS Dr Aisha Azhar joined the interview panel headed by Honorable Minister for Education Rana Sikandar Hayat, who personally conducted interviews over three days for the positions of DPIs, CEOs, DEOs, and Deputy DEOs at the PMIU-PESRP. The interview panel comprised distinguished members, including Khalid Nazir Wattoo (Secretary School Education Department, Government of Punjab), Muhammad Farooq Rasheed (Program Director PMIU-PESRP), Muzammil Mehmood (Member of the CM Advisory Committee), Fouzia Khurshid (Special Education Department), Inam-ul-Haque (Deputy Secretary, Higher Education Department), Dr Aisha Azhar (University of Management and Technology), Dr Saima Dawood (Director, Center for Clinical Psychology), Zahid Manzoor (Additional Secretary, P&T, S&GAD), and Rana Azhar Ali Khan (Senior Chief, P&D Board).

Digital Governance in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: Challenges and Opportunities

SGS held an insightful panel talk on digital governance and artificial intelligence: opportunities and challenges. Panelists included Dr. Agha Ali Raza, Assistant Professor (LUMS) and Founding Director of the Center for Speech and Language Technologies (CSaLT), Waqar Qureshi, Director General at PITB, and Syed Qasim Afzal, Additional Director General (IT Operations), and PITB joined the session. The discussion provided valuable insights into how AI can enhance governance processes, improve efficiency, and address the evolving needs of society.

UMT Center for Disaster Management (CDM) signs MOU with Pakistan Air Quality Initiative – PAQI

An MoU was signed between the Center for Disaster Management at SGS-UMT, and the Pakistan Air Quality Initiative (PAQI) (Air Emissions Consultants Pvt. Ltd.). Working on issues of climate and air quality, PAQI aims to make an ambitious contribution to attaining healthy air quality levels in Pakistani cities and contribute to global sustainable development goals. The two organizations share a mutual interest in promoting research on climate action, clean air initiatives, and sustainable development in Pakistan.

Roundtable on Managing Infrastructure and Energy Corridors for Economic and Climate Resilience

Dr Aisha Azhar, Dean SGS, and Dr Ahmad Gul, Director CDM, attended a roundtable on "Managing Infrastructure and Energy Corridors for Economic and Climate Resilience" at Beaconhouse National University on June 26, 2024.
Prof Hong Stella Zhang (Harvard) and Imrana Tiwana (Head of Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability) were the key panelists. The event was moderated by Ambassador Mansoor Ahmad Khan, Director of BNU Center for Policy Research.

NAPA Organizes Session on Alternatives to Incarceration Techniques for Offenders

Dean SGS attended a day-long policy input session on "Alternatives to Incarceration Techniques for Offenders" organized by the National Academy for Prisons Administration (NAPA). UN best practices were benchmarked in the session for future implementation. Several government departments, including the Child Protection Bureau, Provincial Bar Councils, Inspector Generals from all provinces, and the Social Welfare Department, attended for their input.

Punjab Police Training College (PTC) Visit

In wake of a collaboration between President UMT and Police Training College Commandant, a delegation from UMT comprising Dr Aisha Azhar, Dean SGS, Dr Naveed Yazdani, Dean HSM, M Nasir Khan, Registrar UMT, and M Zahid Warraich, Director Special Projects visited the Punjab Police Training College (PTC) in Chung to review their campus programs and facilities. The delegation thoroughly examined the existing training programs and engaged in detailed discussions on transforming these programs into degree courses and upgrading the campus from a college to a university.

Highlights from SGS Dean Merit Award Ceremony

To relive the memorable moments from the Dean Merit Award Ceremony, SGS celebrated the outstanding achievements of students and their commitment to excellence. Congratulations to all the awardees!

Leadership Talk

Shaping Pakistan's Future in a Multipolar World

A look back at the insightful seminar, "Universities as Intellectual Think Tanks." Dr. Moeed Yusuf, VC of Beaconhouse National University, led a compelling discussion on the vital role of universities in driving intellectual innovation and strategic thought for Pakistan's future in a complex global landscape.

SGS Signs MoU with Punjab Local Government & Community Development Department

An MOU was signed between the Punjab Local Government and Community Development Department and the School of Governance and Society at the University of Management and Technology. This MOU aimed to strengthen the relationship between academia and government, fostering enhanced policy research, improving service delivery, and establishing a more effective feedback system.

Panel discussion on Lessons from Phase-1 & Implementation of CPEC Phase-2

UMT, in collaboration with the Golden Ring Economic Forum (GREF), the School of Governance and Society (SGS), and the School of Law and Policy (SLP), hosted a successful panel discussion on "Lessons from Phase-1 & Implementation of CPEC Phase-2." The Chief Guest, H.E. Mr. Zhao Shiren, Consul General of China in Lahore, graced the event with his presence. The event focused on assessing lessons from CPEC Phase 1 and exploring strategies for Phase 2.

SGS Faculty, Students Participate in LUMS- Yale Collaborated Workshop on Water and Climate Justice

Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani School of Humanities and Social Sciences (LUMS), in collaboration with Yale Macmillan Center: South Asian Studies Council (Yale University), organized a two-day workshop on Water and Climate Justice. The School of Governance and Society (SGS-UMT) participated in a contributory role for the second day's events. Dr Seemi Waheed, Founder of Sustainable Water Resources Initiative (SWRI-SGS), served as a panelist for her session "Cooperation for Sustainable Water Resource Governance" for the session on "Water and Climate Litigation and Governance." Dr Ahmad Ali Gul, Director Center of Disaster Management (CDM-SGS), served as a moderator for the session "Design, Engineering, and the Future of Water (A Transformative Agenda)." Students of BS Public Administration attending the Disaster Management stream also attended the workshop. The workshop facilitated valuable networking opportunities, fostering potential collaborations for future research initiatives.

Latest Publications of SGS Faculty

■ Dai, J., & Azhar, A. (2024). Collaborative governance in disaster management and sustainable development. Public Administration and Development. https://doi.org/10.1002/pad.2071

■ Zhou, J., Azhar, A., Suhail, A., & Dai, J. (2024). Ethical Challenges of Disaster Management Faced by Humanitarian Populations: Empirical Insights from a Developing Country. Natural Hazards Review, 25(3), https://doi.org/10.1061/NHREFO.NHENG-19

■ Azhar, A., Malik, M. N., & Ullah, S. S. (2024). Impact of war on terror on conspiracy theory beliefs: implications for polio vaccination in Pakistan. Journal of Public Health (Berl.), 1-11. (2024). https://doi.org/10.1007/s10389-024-02199-x

■ Abbas, H. S. M.; Azhar, A.; Gul, A. A. (2024). Impact of Environmental and Economic Determinants on Life Expectancy: A Sustainable Development Exploration in Sino-Pak from 1965 to 2020. International Journal of Environment and Sustainable Development. 2022, 1 (1), 1. https://doi.org/10.1504/ijesd.2022.10052100.

- Waheed, S. Safe Drinking Water and Wastewater Disposal: A Basic Human Right (2024). In Zafarullah, H. and Azmat, Governance, Sustainable Development in South Asia. Springer. Coming out in November

- Khawaja, S. Z., Gul, A. A., Ur Rehman Tariq, M. A., Vink, K., Amir Jafri, S. H., & Gujree, I. (2024). Investigating the flood risk perception of residents in informal settlements around the floodplains of river Ravi in Lahore, Pakistan. International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction, 104334. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdrr.2024.104334

- Khan, M. N., Tan, Y., Gul, A. A., Lodhi, M. K., & Wang, J. (2024). A regional-level spatiotemporal perspective of land use and land cover change impact on forest aboveground biomass in Three Gorges Reservoir region, China. Geocarto International, 39(1). https://doi.org/10.1080/10106049.2024.2397468

- Khan M. N., Tan Y., Gul A. A., Abbas S., Wang J. (2024) Forest Aboveground Biomass Estimation and Inventory: Evaluating Remote Sensing-Based Approaches. Forests; 15(6):1055. https://doi.org/10.3390/f15061055

- Usman, M.; Gul, A. A.; Abbas, S.; Rabbani, U.; Irteza, S. M. Identifying Morphological Hotspots in Large Rivers by Optimizing Image Enhancement. Remote Sens. Lett. 2023, 14 (11), 1173–1185. https://doi.org/10.1080/2150704X.2023.2275550.

BUREAUCRACY INSIGHT

Contributed by Dr. Aisha Azhar

Digital Governance and Artificial Intelligence: Opportunities and Challenges

In recent years, the global surge in artificial intelligence (AI) has sparked conversations about its role in governance, and Pakistan is no exception. The School of Governance and Society's recent panel talk on Digital Governance and Artificial Intelligence: Opportunities and Challenges brought to light both the promise and the complexity of integrating AI into Pakistan's public sector. With esteemed experts such as Dr. Agha Ali Raza from LUMS and Waqar Qureshi (DG) and Syed Qasim Afzal (Additional DG) as senior officials from the Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB), the discussion revealed not only what's possible but also the deeper bureaucratic challenges Pakistan will need to overcome. The session was moderated by Dr. Aisha Azhar, Dean of the School of Governance and Society.

At its core, AI offers an unparalleled opportunity to modernize governance. From enhancing public service delivery to improving transparency, there is no doubt that digital governance—fueled by AI—has the potential to transform the way government functions. Yet, as much as the conversation centered around this potential, it became equally clear that Pakistan's public sector faces systemic barriers that, if left unaddressed, could stymie progress. One of the key takeaways from the session was that Pakistan is taking a "mimicry" approach—adopting AI frameworks and strategies that have been successful in other countries. On paper, this seems like a reasonable strategy, but it raises an important question: can solutions from vastly different socio-economic and governance contexts be replicated here? The tendency to transplant policies from technologically advanced nations without considering local nuances can lead to solutions that don't fit the context, further complicating an already sluggish bureaucracy.

The integration of AI into sectors like criminal law enforcement, as highlighted by the panel, is a promising development. But herein lies another challenge: the speed of AI adoption. Globally, private companies are leading the AI revolution, while governments—especially in developing nations—lag behind. This is evident in Pakistan as well. While AI has found its way into private enterprises and even some law enforcement strategies, the public sector's slow adoption rate threatens to widen the gap between innovation and actual implementation. Governments are not known for their agility, and the bureaucratic machinery in Pakistan often grinds far too slowly to keep up with technological advancements. Moreover, AI is not without its ethical concerns. In countries like Pakistan, where digital governance is still in its nascent stages, issues of privacy and data security loom large. The government is treading a thin line between using AI to drive efficiency and ensuring that citizens' rights are protected in the process. Regulatory frameworks are essential but often lag behind the very technologies they seek to govern. Establishing these frameworks cannot be an afterthought; they must be prioritized before the wholesale adoption of AI, or the country risks exposing itself to serious governance and ethical issues.
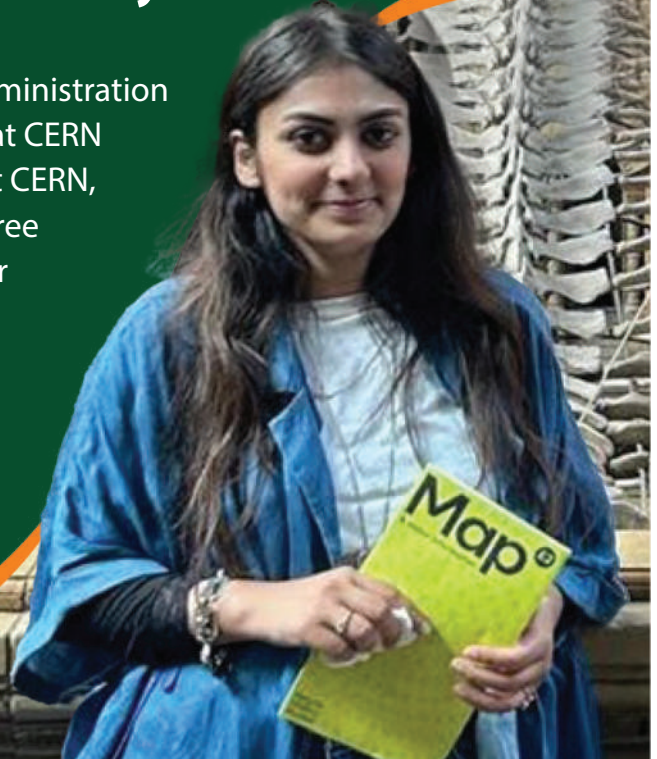
Perhaps the most alarming aspect of AI's potential use in governance is the possibility of deepening existing inequalities. In a country where digital access is uneven, particularly in rural areas, the adoption of AI without a parallel investment in digital infrastructure will likely exacerbate the digital divide. As the government looks to AI to streamline services, those in less connected regions could be left further behind. A governance system that leaves parts of its population on the margins is not merely inefficient—it is unjust. It is also worth noting the lack of skilled human capital in AI and digital technologies, a point stressed by the panelists. Pakistan has a growing pool of tech-savvy individuals, but it is not enough. Without a substantial investment in education and training, the AI revolution could pass Pakistan by, leaving it reliant on foreign expertise or worse, unable to leverage its own technological potential. The result could be a form of digital neo-colonialism, where Pakistan's AI systems are controlled by external forces rather than homegrown expertise.

The path forward is clear: Pakistan must adopt a strategic approach to AI, one that is rooted in local realities, backed by robust policies and driven by a focus on human capital development. AI can undoubtedly enhance governance, but the government must ensure that this technological transformation does not simply add layers to an already burdened bureaucracy. Instead, it should strip away inefficiencies, foster transparency, and make governance more responsive to citizens' needs. If Pakistan is serious about embracing AI, it must move beyond the allure of technology for technology's sake. AI must be integrated into governance in a way that is equitable, ethical, and efficient. Otherwise, it will be just another buzzword—like so many before it—that promises much but delivers little.

Students Achievements: Defining Victories
Rameen Javed MS Public Policy

Rameen Javed, currently enrolled in BS Public Administration degree, has been appointed as an administrator at CERN under the fully-funded international internship at CERN, Switzerland. She proudly considers her BSPA degree and experiences earned at SGS the foundation for opening up the opportunity of joining CERN- the most renowned and prestigious research center that is known for its revolutionary contributions to science and research all over the world. She is currently engaged with a pivotal project called CERN Grey Book.

Umair Anwar MS Public Policy, 2020-2022

Umair currently serves as Additional Director (Policy Analysis) at Pakistan's premier institute, the National School of Public Policy (NSPP). His prior experience includes working with international donor agencies and leading public sector organizations. Umair credits earning his MS Public Policy degree from SGS-UMT as a major motivation for joining the Policy Analysis division at NSPP.

SGS FACULTY PROFILES

Dr Aisha Azhar
Acting Dean, Associate Professor

Affiliated Researcher with Center of Human
Rights and Humanitarian Studies (CHRHS),
Brown University, USA
PhD, Public Administration, Florida State University,
USA (Fulbright Scholar)
MPA, Public Administration, Florida State University,
USA (Fulbright Scholar)

Dr Seemi Waheed
Assistant Professor

PhD, Management Studies,
Dr Hasan Murad School of
Management, UMT

Dr Ahmad Ali Gul
Assistant Professor, Director Center for Disaster Management

PhD Disaster Management, National Graduate
Institute for Policy Study, Japan
MS Disaster Management, National Graduate
Institute for Policy Study, Japan

Dr Tariq Rahim
Assistant Professor

Phd, Political Science and Public
Administration, Middle East Technical
University, Ankara, Turkey.

Dr Rana Danish Nisar
Assistant Professor

PhD International Relations,
Central China Normal University, China
MPhil International Relations,
University of Sargodha, Pakistan.
MA Pakistan Studies,
University of Sargodha, Pakistan.

Ifrah Khalid
Lecturer

MPhil Public Policy, Forman Christian
College University (FC College), Pakistan

Programs Offered at the School of Governance and Society (SGS)

SCHOLARSHIPS

MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS FOR BS PUBLIC ADMINSTRATION

On the Basis of Fa / FSc / ICom/ A-Laevel with equivalent percentage mentioned by IBCC

Sr. No.	Percentage Marks in intermediate	Scholarship
1	Position Holders	100%
2	95% and Above	90%
3	90% to 94.99%	80%
4	85% to 84.99%	70%
5	80% to 84.99%	50%
6	75% to 79.99%	35%
7	70% to 74.99%	25%
8	65% to 69.99%	10%

MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS FOR MS PUBLIC POLICY

On the Basis of 4 years BS degree (16 years of education) with CGPA

Sr. No.	Academic CGPA	Scholarship
1	3.75 to 4.00	60%
2	3.50 to 3.74	45%
3	3.25 to 3.49	35%
4	3.00 to 3.24	25%

EXPERIENCE-BASED SCHOLARSHIP FOR MS PUBLIC POLICY

On the Basis of Professional /Industrial expernience with minimum 5 years

Sr. No.	Academic CGPA	Scholarship
1	10 years and above	30%
2	7 years and above	25%
3	5 years and above	20%