

Bioengineering Seminar

Friday, February 24th, 2012

12:30PM-1:30PM, Room 3507

Nguyen Engineering Building

Marc Rigas, Ph.D.

National Science Foundation

Square Pegs and Round Holes: Science and Technology in the U.S. Congress

A great deal of engineering work in the United States is supported by the Federal government. Sometimes this is through direct support of research by grants from agencies such as the Department of Energy, the Department of Defense, the National Institutes of Health, and the National Science Foundation. Federal agencies also procure large engineered systems from contractors which employ a number of engineers and scientists.

The priorities of these agencies are determined in a complex political process that involve Congress and the agencies of the Executive branch and are influenced by multiple stakeholders. Both the complexity and inscrutability of the social and political system often makes engineers throw up their hands in frustration at how priorities are determined. However, engineers who can work on technical problems and also navigate the political landscape have the opportunity to build great careers and advance the interests of their organization.

Living, as we do, near Washington DC, gives us a unique ability to observe the close relationship between science and public policy. In this seminar, we discuss how science and technology is perceived on Capitol Hill and how these get translated into science and engineering research agendas at the federal agencies.

BIOGRAPHY

Marc Rigas is a program manager at the National Science Foundation where he coordinates computing and engineering programs and is also an adjunct faculty member in Bioengineering at George Mason University.

Before coming to the NSF in 2011, Dr. Rigas was a Brookings congressional Fellow serving U.S. Representative Diana DeGette and the Energy and Commerce Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives. Dr. Rigas has managed the review of grant portfolios in bioengineering at the National Institutes of Health and was a research engineer with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Dr. Rigas earned a Ph.D. in Bioengineering from the Pennsylvania State University and a B.S.E. in bioengineering from the University of Pennsylvania.



For any questions please contact Claudia Borke at cborke@gmu.edu, (703) 993-4190