

“Region-Making in Connecticut: Fostering Cooperation and Improving Governance”*



**10:45-3:00, Thursday, April 16,
2009**
Washington Room, Mather Hall
Trinity College, Hartford,
Connecticut



This symposium/Common Hour event will feature two sets of panelists, each addressing key issues and challenges concerning regional development and cooperation in Connecticut. The keynote address, “**Seeking Common Ground: Weighing the Costs and Benefits of Regionalism in CT**” will be delivered by Dennis Heffley, Professor and Head, Department of Economics, University of Connecticut.

The recent economic downturn is forcing government at all levels in Connecticut to rethink how the services they provide are financed. Connecticut faces deficits upwards of four billion dollars each of the next two years and this inevitably will lead to reductions in state-aid to municipalities. Regionalism, an option long talked about but never seriously considered, is being examined by the state and by municipalities themselves as a direction they may have to take if they are to continue to provide basic core services. There is a need to understand what regionalism is and at what level can it work best for Connecticut to help the state stay competitive with not only other regions in the U.S. but with global mega-regions.

First Panel:

- Oz Griebel, President and CEO, MetroHartford Alliance
- J. Brendan Sharkey 88th Assembly District State Representative, House Chairman of the Planning and Development Committee
- Lyle Wray, Executive Director, Capital Region Council of Governments, Hartford
- **Moderated by Jason Rojas: Director of Community Relations, Trinity College**

The first panel will discuss the political, procedural, and policy implications that confront Connecticut during the current economic downturn. As municipalities face a future marked by significant reductions of state and federal aid, a once unthinkable change in the organization of Connecticut governance has suddenly become a hot topic: Regionalism in the land of “Steady Habits”.

❖ **Keynote Address: Dennis Heffley: “Seeking Common Ground: Weighing the Costs and Benefits of Regionalism in CT”**

- Professor Heffley will address such questions as: What does regionalism mean for CT? What do we need to do in the short vs. long term? Where do we start to become more regionally cooperative and effective in CT and the Greater Capital Region? What are we doing in CT? What are we not doing in CT?

Second Panel:

- James Gomes, Director, Mosakowski Institute for Public Enterprise, Clark University
- Kevin McMahon, John R. Reitemeyer Associate Professor & Chair of Political Science, Trinity College
- Brian Osoba, Assistant Professor of Economics, Central Connecticut State University
- **Moderated by Xiangming Chen, Dean & Director, Center for Urban and Global Studies, Trinity College**

The second panel will examine regionalism more broadly and comparatively. Regionalism is often thought of in economic and governance terms. What are other areas of society can be discussed in the context of regionalism? What other facets are there?



****Co-sponsored by the Center for Urban and Global Studies and Office of Community Relations at Trinity College and Capital Region Council of Governments, Hartford.***