



> Thursday, March 18th, 2021

18:00 - 19:30

ACCOUNTING



EMPOWERING CHANGEMAKERS FOR A BETTER SOCIETY



“MAKING REGULATIONS WORK: A STUDY ON THE OPERATIONALIZATION OF DISCLOSURE REGULATION” BY DAVID COOPER – SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

ABSTRACT

This paper investigates how a regulator, in concert with others, makes new disclosure regulations operational. By operationalization we refer to actions and processes which take place once a regulation is enacted and that take a broad law, elaborate its details and make it useable by various actors. Although apparently mundane, operationalization impacts the construction of the meaning of the regulation, its alleged intentionality, procedures of compliance and, thus, the ‘gap’ between the law on the books and the law in practice. We focus on and problematize the process of operationalization in the case of a new mandatory financial disclosure regulation in Canada. We observe how the regulator and other actors co-construct the meaning of the regulation and the nature of compliance by engaging in an evolving process of meaning making, compliance, and enforcement. We highlight the recursive nature of this process and its effect on the interpretation, awareness, and overall impact of the regulation. Given the significant resources that accounting regulatory bodies invest in implementation, our study contributes to the emerging understanding of the dynamics of regulation and particularly that accounting regulation is more than the development of accounting rules.