NUS National University of Singapore | Centre for Banking & Finance Law
Faculty of Law

CBFL SEMINAR SERIES

Regulating Powerful Businesses: Regulation by Intentional Institutionalism

Benedict Sheehy, Professor of Law, Canberra Law School

Tuesday, 1 September 2026 | 4.00PM TO 5.15PM (SGT) | CBFL Meeting Room, NUS Law (UTown)

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Benedict Sheehy is a Professor of Law at Canberra Law School and an internationally recognised leader in the fields of Corporate Social Responsibility, corporate law and regulatory theory. Benedict is a highly cited law academic, a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Law and formerly practiced as a barrister and solicitor of the Law Society of Upper Canada. Benedict's research examines different aspects of how law works, how law fails and how society can more effectively achieve long term environmental and social sustainability using various types of law in a wide variety of contexts. Benedict is an interdisciplinary researcher having published in the disciplines of law, business, economics, psychology and philosophy. His interdisciplinary approach comes from his interdisciplinary education which includes the following degrees: BTh, MA, JD, MA, LLM and PhD. He especially interested in Law and Society research and Business and Society research. His interdisciplinary work with researchers from around the globe has led to significant research outcomes.

ABOUT THE SEMINAR

Responsive regulation has been the dominant paradigm in regulatory theory and practice for three decades. Its enforcement pyramid, escalating from persuasion through deterrence to coercive sanction, has shaped regulatory design across jurisdictions and sectors. Yet thirty years of the dominant paradigm have coincided with a pattern of catastrophic corporate failures and large-scale institutional misconduct that the theory cannot explain as implementation failure: Barings, Enron, the global financial crisis, HSBC's systematic money laundering for drug cartels, Deutsche Bank's serial misconduct, Commonwealth Bank's 53,750 anti-money laundering breaches. The enforcement pyramid is not merely inadequate in this context — it is structurally absurd. It presupposes a regulatory dialogue with actors who are not in dialogue; it assumes vulnerability in actors who hold most of the structural power; and it mistakes the compliance theatre of sophisticated institutions for the normative engagement the theory requires. This paper develops Intentional Institutionalism as an original successor framework. Intentional Institutionalism holds that effective regulation of large institutional actors requires treating corporate culture as the primary regulatory object, leadership as the primary causal variable, and removal from office as the primary instrument of path disruption, combined with proactive institutional design exemplified by the De Nederlandsche Bank supervisory model as the mechanism for normative reconstruction. The framework is stratified by the motivational architecture of the regulated entity and integrates Oliver's (1991) strategic response typology, Schein's (1985) three-level model of organisational culture, Tyler's (1990) legitimacy-based compliance theory, Berger and Luckmann's (1966) socialisation mechanism, and Selznick's distinction between accountability and responsibility into a coherent design theory for the regulation of large institutional actors.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

Judges, legal practitioners, academics, policy makers, and students interested in regulation and social sciences of organisations.

PROGRAMME

3.30pm - Registration
4.00pm - Start of Event
5.00pm - Moderated Q&A
5.15pm - End of Event

CPD

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REGISTRATION

https://tinyurl.com/cbflss260901
or scan the QR code

S$98.10 (inclusive of 9% GST)
Complimentary for full-time NUS staff and students.

Closing date: **28 August 2026**
For enquiries, email cbfl@nus.edu.sg

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The Centre for Banking & Finance Law (CBFL) at the Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore, seeks to generate scholarship and promote thinking about the vibrancy, robustness and soundness of the banking sector, capital markets and other financial services. Through the research our scholars undertake and the events we organise, we seek to create and share knowledge, to engage stakeholders in an exchange of ideas, and to enhance the appreciation of legal and regulatory issues. We aim to bring greater theoretical and analytical clarity to these issues, to examine their policy impact, and to be a catalyst for ideas on how to improve banking and financial systems at the national, regional and global levels. Visit our website at https://law.nus.edu.sg/cbfl/.