

## Panel 12: Special Panel of Colloquium 'Professionals under Pressure'

### **Chairs:**

prof.dr. M. Noordegraaf en prof.dr. A.J. Steijn

As in 2007, a special session of the NIG colloquium 'Professionals under pressure' was held at the NIG Annual Work Conference on Thursday 20th and Friday 21 th November 2008 in Enschede, University of Twente.

This session was open for both the members of the colloquium as well as other researchers or practitioners interested in this theme, which can be – briefly – described as follows. Public organizations – varying from policy organizations and executive agencies, to health care, welfare and school organizations – face pressures to (re)-professionalize. Roles of work floor professionals are recast, experts enter into new relations with superiors, and managers try to find 'professional' competencies. By bringing together scholars from diverse fields – varying from justice to social work –, with different orientations – managers, organisations, street level bureaucrats – and with different outlooks – values, roles, behaviour – the colloquium intends to investigate these dynamics. The general question that underlies Colloquium activities is:

How can changing roles and relations of public managers, experts and professionals be understood and developed?

These changes do not occur in a vacuum. (Re)-professionalization dynamics happen in-between political impulses from 'above', practical demands from 'below', and performance pressures from 'outside'. For the 2008 NIG Conference, we are especially interested in papers that focus on strategies for being or becoming professional amidst these contradictory forces.