Research in InfoTech Policy
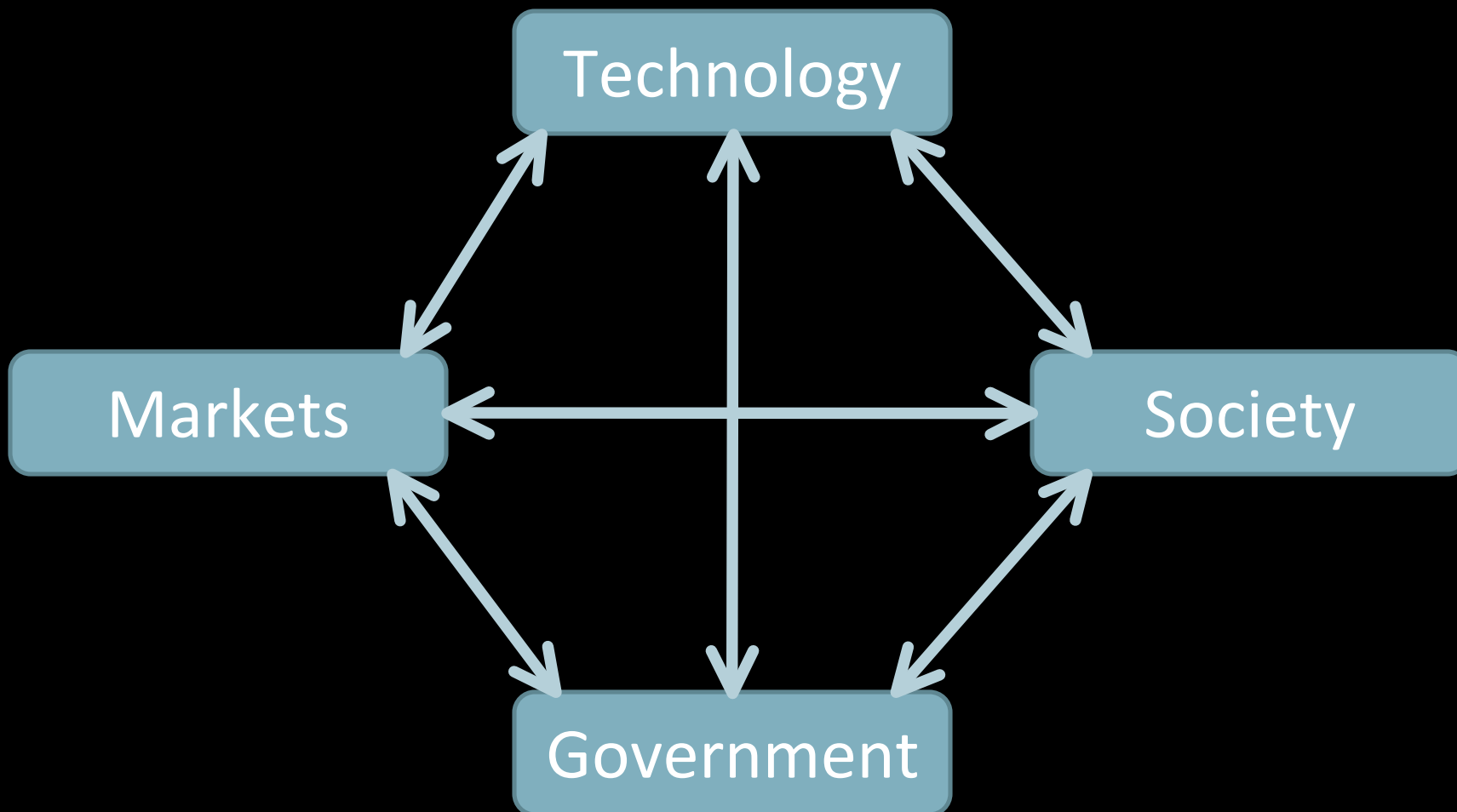
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Goals

Better agenda / problem choice

Intellectual import-export

Build human capital

Improve public policy

Challenges

(Usual cross-disciplinary issues)

Differences between disciplines

Time scales

Activism vs. research

Politics

Forms of Policy Input

Government should do _____.

The _____ problem will take care of itself.

Doing _____ will probably cause _____.

If you want _____ , try _____.

The key choice is _____ vs. _____.

_____ will be a problem in the future.

Example: E-Government

Claim: Internet / Web / social media can make government more open / efficient.

How to make this real?

Requires careful thinking about technology, institutions of government, markets.

Example: Software Patents

Big gap between techies and econ/law people

Strong opinions, weak grasp of other field

Subtle politics, infotech vs. biotech split

Example: Privacy

Big, messy area

Hot-button issues

Technically unsound distinctions built in to law

CS research often focused on wrong problem

Example: Net Neutrality

End-to-end, layering, other CS ideas driving policy debate

Big economic interests operating

Policy debate driven by subtle economic analyses

Technical issues: what kinds of discrimination are possible; how to detect it; countermeasures

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