ICMA

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MANAGERS AS TEACHERS: A PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE TO TEACHING PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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ICMA

ICMA is the premier local government leadership and management organization. Its mission is to create excellence in local governance by developing and advocating professional management of local government worldwide. ICMA provides member support; publications, data, and information; peer and results-oriented assistance; and training and professional development to more than 10,000 city, town, and county experts and other individuals throughout the world.

ICMA ADVISORY BOARD FOR GRADUATE EDUCATION (ABGE)

ICMA has a long history of dialogue with the academic community through various member committees and task forces, each of which has worked cooperatively with a task force of professors appointed by NASPAA (the Network of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration). The purpose of this dialogue and liaison is to improve the educational preparation of the next generation of local government managers.

The ABGE is a member group that meets jointly with professors of public administration for the purpose of enhancing the education of future local government management professionals. ABGE members are appointed by ICMA's executive director, and work hand-in-hand with NASPAA's Local Government Management Education Committee through two subcommittees and breakout interest groups. Each subcommittee is led by one of two vice-chairs

Academic Connections

- Local Government Management Competencies
- Getting Managers into the Classroom
- Connections between ABGE and ICMA State Affiliates

Future of the Profession

- Learning by Experience (internships, research projects, etc.)
- New Career Paths
- Filling the Grad School Pipeline

The ABGE has created a number of useful tools for improving the education of future managers, including an Internship Toolkit, the Adjunct's Corner column for managers who teach, and *Guidelines for Managers Who Teach*. You can find these and additional resources at icma.org/teach.

All committee communication is managed through our group e-mail list. ABGE members can sign up for the group e-mail list at essmail.ess.niu.edu/mailman/listinfo/abge.

To view the ABGE member roster or more resources, please visit icma.org/abge.

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FOREWORD TO THE THIRD EDITION

As Aristotle famously noted almost two and a half millennia ago, some things must be observed and experienced to be understood. He was talking about ethics and ethical behavior, but I think the comment is equally pertinent to a range of organizational and interpersonal relationships. Therein lies the issue for those looking for "good teachers" of public administration. For certain types of courses that are often at the core of a public administration curriculum (budgeting, personnel, intergovernmental relations, management), expertise is as likely to be the product of equal parts education and experience. For many years, graduate programs in public administration, especially those that recruit "midcareer" students, have relied upon working professionals who teach part-time. Some in universities (especially those not in professional degree programs) view this as detrimental to the quality of the programs and degree. Even those in those professional programs view the use of nontraditional faculty as more of a budgetary necessity than as a key to enhancing the quality of the academic training. Yet that is what I am suggesting: the use of skilled and experienced working professionals may be the key to enhancing the quality of the academic experience of the students. This moves adjunct faculty closer to the center, not the periphery, of the learning process.

Practicing managers are needed and wanted in the classroom. Who can better add a touch of reality to a public administration education than those currently in practice? The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) have jointly published *Guidelines for Local Government Management Education* as a guide to developing local government–focused courses within a program of graduate education in public administration. These standards require the use of practitioners. Part-time, adjunct faculty play a critically important role. In addition to the perspectives afforded by their offices and experiences, they provide a mentoring function that is crucial to student development.

What makes a good teacher? For a professional degree program, it is having faculty (whether full- or part-time) who can translate their own experiences into living examples of how to understand the nature, culture, and rhythms of the workplace. While not everyone has the time or the inclination to become a part-time faculty member, those who have the desire to teach represent a vital resource for any professional program. All of this is a long way around to suggesting that adjuncts are critical to our teaching mission. Their knowledge, judgment, and understanding make them an important and vital resource. Student evaluations often comment positively on how much they learned from the "professional" teacher. In truth, when we think of the "cutting edge," we are not talking about theoretical advancements in the natural and social sciences; we are talking about practice. Students need to see (and hear) what is the latest and best. Practitioners—you—are much more likely to know best practice and therefore be on the cutting edge than the professors. In other words, the academy needs you.

Raymond W. Cox III, PhD.
Professor
University of Akron

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

"Go Teach a Course." This is just one title of the many different links on ICMA's home page relevant to teaching. The volume of ICMA's references to academia and the directness of these four words are telling. There is significant interest in teaching among the membership. Whether you are a seasoned in-service local government professional or one seeking an "encore" in the next phase of life, the opportunity to teach the next generation of local government leaders remains a rewarding way to continue to contribute to your community and your profession.

Yet even the most motivated local government official may not be fully aware of the ins and outs of moving from the dais to the lectern. For those still in service, it involves finding the balance between one's primary profession while simultaneously operating in another. For those post-service professionals, it may mean adjusting to an entirely new role. In either event, it is an incremental journey that is more easily traveled with a manual and a roadmap. Fortunately, *Managers as Teachers: A Practitioners Guide to Teaching Public Administration* has filled this role for more than sixteen years. It has served as the primary source of information for local government practitioners interested not only in explaining what it takes to get into the classroom but also in depicting what it is like once you get there.

What's new in this edition?

As prefaced in its 2000 revision, this guide "is not a reference source to the literature on effective teaching. It is, rather, a place to start preparing to teach." In continuance of this theme, this edition does not focus on the nuances of effective teaching either. However, it does provide a new compendium on educational resources and tools.

From its inception through the publication of the second edition in 2007, this guide is as relevant today as it was originally. With the exception of minor edits, the third edition consists primarily of additives to existing sections, some out-and-out new additions, and no major deletions. Using boxed sidebars, this edition incorporates expanded substantive information without disrupting the cadence of the narrative. With the addition of the appendices, the use of sidebars, and an updated format, this guide should serve as an easy-to-use ready reference for those practitioners interested in teaching.

- Additions:
  - An expanded, numbered, and more definitive Table of Contents
  - Modifications to headings, fonts, and line spacing
- New boxed sidebars:
  - Why Consider University Teaching?
  - Some Reasons Why You May Not Want To Teach
  - Seven Steps to Teaching
  - Using Learning Management Software Resources
- Expanded Narrative to Sections:
  - The Basics
  - Workplace Expectations
  - Finding a Place to Teach
  - Instructional Design
  - Distance Learning and Technology
- New Sections:
  - Communicating Knowledge
  - Evaluation—Looking Back to Look Forward

- Appendix A: Managers as Faculty Resources and Tools
  - ICMA—Resources and Tools
  - External Organizational Resources
- Appendix B: Using the Case Teaching Method

A Special Thank You to Those Who Contribute to the Subject of the Practitioner/Teacher

This subject has certainly drawn a lot of cooks to the kitchen. Whether they come from the ranks of academia or from local government, there is no lack of passion about having practitioners in the classroom. Through the joint sponsorship of ICMA and the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration (NASPAA), the Task Force for Local Government Management Education produced the initial versions of this guide prior to the year 2000. **James M. Banovetz, Mark M. Levin,** and **Michael McDowell** spearheaded these efforts. Joined by **Raymond Cox III,** this expanded team produced the second edition in 2007.

Yet there are certainly others, from both ICMA's Advisory Board for Graduate Education (ABGE) and NASPAA's Committee on Local Government Education, who have contributed greatly to this dialogue. I will most certainly miss many names, yet I have personally participated in conversations with, witnessed, or read about many practitioners and academics alike who have expressed more than a passing interest in the subject of managers in the classroom.

Many thanks go to past and present members of the ABGE: **Robert Bland, Robert Blair, Roger Kemp, Karl Nollenberger, Kurt Thurmaier, Carl Stenberg, Scott Lazenby, and Sam Gaston.**

Additional thanks go to others, outside of the ABGE, who have contributed to the conversation of managers in the classroom: **Frank Benest, Tony Constantouros, Glen Rojas, Tom Lundy, Bob Bell, David Boesch, Bill Chiat, Jan Perkins, Mike Garvey, Robert Vanacour, and Robert Denhardt.**

The contributions of all these dedicated individuals, along with members of the 2016 Committee on Revisions to *Managers as Teachers*—Raymond Cox III, Sam Gaston, Anne Pflug, Becky Starnes, and Monika Hudson—made this third edition of *Managers as Teachers: A Practitioners Guide to Teaching Public Administration* possible.

Now with all of this—get out and teach!

Stephen G. Harding
Instructor
Northwestern University
(Retired City Manager)

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

This guide has been designed for the local government practitioner who is or may be thinking about teaching a course in a public administration program at a local college or university. While the examples used reference the Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree, we presume that local government managers have the skill and competence to teach a range of courses at both the master's and undergraduate levels and across a number of academic disciplines. Our goal is to help you better understand the work environment and expectations of a part-time member of the academic community.

As fiscal limits affect more and more colleges and universities, academic administrators increasingly are turning to knowledgeable part-time faculty when faced with the need to add staff. Furthermore, teaching opportunities for local government administrators are becoming more common as schools recognize that practitioners make good teachers. They bring a real-world perspective to education, helping students bridge the gap between the classroom and the world of work. In fact, NASPAA, the accrediting body for MPA programs, expects those programs to provide opportunities for their students to learn from practitioners.

This guide is intended to offer answers to the many questions that arise as the public administrator thinks about the academy; it is not a reference source to the literature on effective teaching. It is, rather, a place to start preparing to teach. It focuses on the environment within which teaching takes place and responds to the wide range of questions that will inevitably be raised, such as:

What might I teach? For whom?
How do I select a textbook?
How do I prepare a syllabus?
What kinds of assignments should I give?
What quality of work should I expect?
What teaching style will work best for me?
How should I interpret student evaluations of my work?

The material in this guide is based on the authors' experiences, including more than 60 years of teaching public administration, 40 years directing graduate programs in public administration, and 50 years as local government managers.

Raymond W. Cox III, PhD., Professor, University of Akron
Mark M. Levin, City Administrator, Maryland Heights, Missouri
James M. Banovetz, Professor Emeritus, Northern Illinois University
Michael McDowell, City Manager, Olivette, Missouri

WHY MANAGERS SHOULD TEACH

Where will the next generation of city managers come from? Many local government managers/administrators (i.e., practitioners) have considered, at one time or another, their role and responsibility in preparing future local government professionals. Some venture into the classroom as guest lecturers or supervise graduate interns. A few serve as part-time faculty. Part-time teaching at the college level attracts practitioners for a variety of reasons, including the following:

- **To satisfy a need to share experiences, insights, and observations**
- **To contribute to the profession**
- **To explore academics as an alternative career**
- **To sharpen management skills**
- **To supplement income**

Each year city managers apply the wealth of knowledge and insights they have gained in the profession by sharing that knowledge with students in colleges and universities across the country. At a certain level every college and university needs more faculty, both full-time and part-time. But those needs go beyond troubling concerns about supply and demand to real issues about the quality of education we offer in professional degree programs. Even if there were not a pressing need for faculty, there would always be a need for skilled and dedicated practitioners in the classroom. Especially in professional degree programs such as the master of public administration (MPA), but also in preprofessional undergraduate degree programs such as criminal justice, or political science, or even accounting, there is a need for that practical (and realistic) outlook that only those in the profession can provide.

Teaching is modifying behavior; it takes students from where they are to where the teacher wants them to be, facilitating the discovery and understanding of facts and theories while building intellectual abilities and developing functional skills. A good local government manager is already a good teacher: council orientations or briefings, staff training, intern supervision, and

Why Consider University Teaching?

If you have an aptitude for teaching, university teaching is a nice way to transition from a full-time career, staying active and engaged and continuing to give back based on your years of experience. However, there is a shelf-life to that experience as you get further removed from active duty, so university teaching requires ongoing learning even after you exit your management career.

Those who have taught at the university level cite a number of positive outcomes for them and others. Teaching at the university . . .

- Allows one to share a life-time of experience with students
- Provides the opportunity to interact in a meaningful way with young people
- Helps one leave a legacy
- Encourages students to consider careers in public service, especially local government
- Helps one reconnect with the value of government service and inspire others
- Creates new professional connections across generations
- Creates opportunities for coaching and mentorship
- Influences the future direction of public policy
- Promotes ongoing learning
- Is challenging and energizing
- Provides some supplemental income

So You Want To Be a University Professor? | Cal-ICMA Encore Committee

community presentations are all forms of teaching. Although practitioners worry about their lack of training or classroom experience, few college professors are trained as teachers. They are often researchers who began their teaching by copying the style of their favorite professors. Teaching is a learned skill, and many managers already have it.

Today's MPA classrooms are often filled with in-service students from a variety of public and nonprofit agencies seeking an advanced degree to move up in their organizations. These "nontraditional" students are older, more motivated, and more experienced in the work world than the full-time students many managers may envision. These students want the practical skills needed on the job, skills that practitioners have. They need to balance theory with practice. This requires that teachers relate theory and research to the workplace, illustrating by example and making issues real. A local government manager with five years' experience has gained a great deal of substantive knowledge. And for those who are still worried about the adequacy of their knowledge, the best way to learn more about a subject is to teach it.

While this guide focuses primarily on teaching in MPA programs, other teaching assignments can be equally important to students, to academic programs, and to the local government management profession. Using managers as teachers in undergraduate programs, for example, is a means of encouraging more students to consider local government as a career option.

More than five hundred colleges and universities offer masters programs in public administration or public policy, and another two hundred offer undergraduate degrees in those subjects. In addition, there are courses in business administration and criminal justice at community colleges or in undergraduate and graduate schools that may be appropriate for practitioners to teach. The opportunities to teach are extensive. Cost pressures on colleges and universities have meant that they now rely on a growing number of part-time faculty to cover course offerings. Furthermore, as a society we are aging. The number of faculty members, much like the demographic of public managers, is skewed toward those at or near retirement age. More faculty, both full-time and part-time, will be hired in the coming decade.

Some Reasons Why You May Not Want to Teach

While there are many reasons to consider teaching, there are some downsides as well. These include the following:

- Teaching is time-consuming (developing a curriculum, reviewing the literature, preparing lectures, grading papers, meeting with students).
- While some early- and mid-career students are highly focused, it is sometimes difficult motivating students who are working professionals and have worked all-day, rushed to class after work, and are tired.
- Some students may focus more on grades than learning.
- Teaching requires that you deal with another bureaucracy and another set of "politics."
- One has to adjust to a loss of status—from senior executive to lowly adjunct faculty.
- Universities provide minimal assistance and training.
- It does not pay well (as opposed to interim management or consulting).

So You Want To Be a University Professor? | Cal-ICMA Encore Committee

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

The Basics

Practitioners considering teaching are often faced with a variety of questions and concerns:

- **What am I really qualified to teach?**
- **Do I have the time and energy to devote to a second job?**
- **How will the city council react? The community?**
- **How do I find out about teaching positions?**
- **Can I be an effective teacher?**
- **Do I have to create a course, or is there one already in place?**
- **Where do I get help writing a syllabus, picking textbooks, developing audiovisual aids, grading?**

While the average MPA program may offer ten to twenty courses in the catalog, the courses that are appropriate for practitioners to teach are generally those that emphasize practice rather than theory, such as public budgeting, local government administration, personnel management, and supervision in the public sector. There are also limited opportunities to teach courses in special topics in which the practitioner has special knowledge. Full-time faculty may already be teaching these courses, but turnover, sabbatical leaves, and policies that allow research grants to buy faculty time provide opportunities for practitioners to teach.

A manager considering a teaching position should consult with the city council and check the calendar(s) for conference dates, budget deadlines, and meeting schedules to avoid potential job conflicts. Missing one or two classes may be acceptable—if prior arrangements are made: a substitute, a guest lecturer, a proctored exam, or an online class. Some practitioners have conducted classes after hours in the city hall conference room (with the permission of the council and the school). This provides a welcome change for students and gives the manager an opportunity to expose students to the environment of local government as well as to give them ready access to maps, documents, and other resources that can be used in the classroom.

Teaching—even a single class—can be very time-consuming. We will discuss this in more detail later. At this point we simply urge you to consider both job and family before making a decision. We have known managers who taught because members of the council or their family were supportive, and we have known managers who did not because of opposition within the council or their family. Furthermore, support today may vanish tomorrow.

You will also find that today's students are probably different from those you remember when you were sitting in the classroom. The educational environment is a mixture of traditional students and working adults. Given individual interests, motivations, and ability, you will probably experience varying degrees of student focus and quality of work, as well as a changed notion of student/instructor relations. You should also be aware that not every student in your class has an interest in, or knowledge of, municipal government. It is well documented that many students see careers in the not-for-profit sector as more interesting than those offered in local government. This may be due to a lack of interest by a majority of K-12 systems in expanding government education beyond the federal or state level. As a result, you may find that a significant percentage of your students, even graduate students, have a very limited understanding of civics and the functioning of government at any level.

Lastly, remember that an academic department is also a workplace. The school has a work culture, standards, forms, a pay scale, personnel policies, evaluations, and a hierarchy. The departmental faculty may welcome the department head's decision to hire a practitioner and view him or her as a resource, but in those cases where full-time faculty positions are being replaced with part-time teachers, they may see the practitioner as taking away an employment opportunity for full-time staff. A prospective teacher should ask the kind of questions any new employee would ask.

Workplace Expectations

The average course requires about forty classroom hours in a semester; a quarter course will require about thirty hours. The time commitment for teaching each classroom hour is about two hours of outside work spent writing the syllabus, reading, preparing for class, acquiring resources, and grading papers. Teaching online may increase your time commitment by an additional 20 to 25 percent. Fortunately, the time

for preparation will decrease as a teacher repeats the course offering in future terms.

Some schools require part-time faculty to maintain on-campus office hours. Commuting to and from campus also takes time. Most graduate classes are taught at night (after 5:00 pm), and some schools offer a variety of weekend formats. Most courses meet once a week for two-and-one-half hours, but some programs require a greater weekly time commitment owing to accelerated or condensed schedules.

Instructional styles vary. Students enjoy different approaches; case study, class discussion, in-class exercises, student presentations, small group work, directed field experiences, and, increasingly, web-based courses are all preferred over the traditional lecture-based format. In most courses there is more than one approach to the subject matter: federal vs. local, theory vs. practice, etc. Part-time faculty members usually are free to develop a style that is comfortable and effective for them and their students.

MAKING THE COMMITMENT TO TEACH

"The best part of teaching is the interaction with the students and the satisfaction of preparing the next generation."

—**Sam Gaston,** City Manager, City of Mountain Brook, Alabama

Finding a Place to Teach

Given the wide range of opportunities to teach, sorting out from among those opportunities may be the most difficult task. The first step is to ask yourself what you have to offer. Think of this as though you were writing a job description in reverse. Start with the KSAs: what knowledge, skills, and abilities do you have? How do those relate to what might be taught in the public administration classroom? We suggest that you do this as a formal exercise. First, think about how the knowledge and skills you have gained through your work life might fit in the classroom. Each of us has accumulated such knowledge and skills and practices in the context of our career progression. Maybe you worked in finance or personnel at some point. That experience, combined with the responsibility to manage those departments, may well represent sufficient knowledge for you to lend your expertise to the classroom. The end result of this assessment is a skill set list that represents the topics on which you can make a contribution. Combining such KSAs into clusters that represent the knowledge needed to teach a traditional course can reshape this skill set list.

The next step is to see what might be available. This involves determining what is offered and at what level, and it is easily accomplished by going to the local college or university website. Generally under the heading "Academics," you will be able examine a list of all the colleges and departments in a university. Using your KSA analysis, examine the list of potential departments to see where there might be a fit. Then click on the department's "programs" and/or "curriculum" list and review the actual courses in the program.

From the catalog, make a list of *all the courses* you might be able to teach *by department*. Now go back to the general university website to find past and present class schedules. See how often the courses on your list are taught—and when. If it is always taught M-W-F at 11 am, it may not work. If it is often taught at night or is taught in a single block of time, it may. If it still fits, then determine the level of these course. Generally, you will be allowed to teach only at a level below your highest academic degree. The significant exception is where you have extensive work experience that is directly related to the topic of the course.

A couple of things to know about graduate work: Required courses are often broader and less detailed. Also, some electives presume knowledge from other required courses. You will likely be asked to teach an elective course only if the department knows you have the basic, required knowledge and/or advanced knowledge that is germane to the elective.

At the end of this process, you will end up with a list of courses, organized by academic department and academic level, that you think you can teach. *Review the list to determine what you might be interested in teaching. Now it is time to contact the pertinent academic department*. Unless you have some prior teaching or workshop experience, some departments may be reluctant to hire you immediately to teach a full course. This is partly because of a lack of knowledge of your *teaching style*, but it is also because of the responsibilities that go along with teaching—writing a syllabus, grading papers, etc. One way to become involved is to "ease in" to teaching, and the easiest way to do that is to volunteer to guest lecture. Offer to discuss the city management profession in an introductory public administration class, or discuss budgeting practices or the personnel system in your community.

The best advice that we can offer a guest lecturer is to focus more on the details of your topic rather than on war stories. Again, because many students may have read only about the federal government, they may not have a good sense of how local government is different. Tell them the differences. If you team-teach, you may be freer to tell stories—the "regular" professor will teach the framework and you can explain how reality differs from the textbook by telling them about your *experience*.

Seven Steps to Teaching

1. Get an appointment to meet with the person who administers the graduate program in public administration at the college or university.

Depending on the school, this might be an M.P.A. program director, a department head, a school director, or the dean of a college. If you are unsure whom to call, start with the dean, then try a school director, then a department head or chair, then the M.P.A. program director.

Feel free to call or write and suggest a meeting, maybe lunch, that will give you a chance to get better acquainted. If you don't already know this person, the meeting will be an important contact for both of you. Tell the person in advance that you'd like to talk about the possibility of occasional teaching. Offer to go to the campus, not just because it will be more convenient for the director but also because it will give you a chance to check out the facilities.

2. Prepare for the meeting.

Look at the courses the department or school offers, primarily those at the graduate level and, indeed, any that you might be able to teach. (This information is probably available online, but if not, ask to have something sent to you before your meeting.) Identify those courses that you could teach and would like to teach. If there are existing courses related to urban management, these would likely be "naturals" for you, but also think about courses in fields like human resources or budgeting and financial management.

If you don't see courses listed that fit your background and interests, outline a course you'd like to design. Maybe your experience is strong in public works and civil engineering. If so, ask about a course in "urban infrastructure." Or perhaps your experience would fit a course on "public entrepreneurship." Whatever you choose, develop a short, written course description and an outline of likely topics to be covered. A page or two will be more than enough.

3. Think about schedules that would work for you, and make sure you have the time to devote to teaching.

Most M.P.A. programs offer their courses once a week in the evenings, though there are many other patterns. One that is being used more and more often is the weekend intensive program, or three days a week (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday), twice a semester, with assignments before, between, and after.

Think, too, about preparation time and grading time. Some people estimate that teaching takes at least two hours outside class for every hour spent in class. Teaching any course is a big commitment. Especially if you are continuing to work full-time for the city or county, make sure that you can reasonably undertake a class.

4. Don't expect to be hired on the spot.

University schedules typically must be submitted way up-front, as much as six months before the start of a new semester. And not all courses are offered every semester. The university representative will likely ask you for a vita and a list of courses you could teach, then promise to get back to you when something opens up. To build your relationship with the university, offer to do individual class sessions at any time.

An instructor already teaching an urban management course, say, would probably be delighted to have you there for a session, and it would give you a chance to get a sense of what the classroom is like. It also gets your foot a little further in the door. You might also encourage students who are in need of class projects to call you and see if there is something you could give them to do in your city.

Ideally, the director will get back to you soon. Most M.P.A. program directors are delighted to offer classes taught by practitioners because this gives their programs a more distinctive flavor. And many students simply enjoy the perspective of someone who's been out in the "real world." NASPAA, the public affairs accrediting body, requires that a program have at least half of its M.P.A. courses taught by regular faculty, but this stipulation is typically not a problem.

In any case, if you don't hear anything back in a month or two, don't be hesitant to send a gentle reminder or maybe an update by e-mail. Similarly, if you see the director on other business, remind the director of your earlier conversation and your continuing interest in teaching.

5. If you are asked to teach, ask for a copy of the syllabus last used in the course.

You probably won't have to stick to this syllabus, but it will give you an idea of what other teachers have done with the course. You might also ask other managers you know who are teaching similar courses elsewhere for their recommendations. (Many syllabi can be found online.) Check out possible books for the class, and find out when book orders are due at the college. Design the course, and be ready for the first night of class.

6. Identify resources that can help you in the class.

Go to the ICMA Web site at ICMA.org, and link to "Managers Who Teach." The current list offers some 80 people you can contact for advice. Attend the ICMA annual conference, where panel discussions are held that are devoted to managers who teach or would like to teach. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet, face to face, with your colleagues and get their advice. These managers will be delighted to spend some time with you. Become acquainted with the many available resources for teaching, such as the University of Washington's Electronic Hallway, a repository of information on teaching public administration and a source of significant case studies you might want to use. Many universities and community colleges offer workshops on teaching, which can be extremely helpful.

7. Teach the class.

Enjoy it. Learn from it. Ask to teach it again sometime. You will probably find teaching a significant and rewarding experience. While some students may drift away from time to time, the majority will be right there with you every step of the way. Especially if you are teaching people who work full-time, they will have made a significant commitment just to attend, and, while their problems during the day may occasionally creep into their minds, they will really be there to learn.

Managers who teach will probably find that they are pretty good at it. After all, as we pointed out earlier, managers and assistants engage in a lot of education in their daily work with councils, staff, and citizens. They already know how to engage and motivate people, and this is a significant part of the classroom experience.

Most classes will be subject to student evaluations, which you will receive a few weeks after the class ends. These provide an opportunity to evaluate your teaching experience and think about ways to make it even better next time around. If you are like most manager-teachers, you'll get mostly favorable comments, with maybe one or two negatives. These ratings will likely be the ones you will focus on, but remember that they are a small number. You can recover from them.

Most importantly, engage in some reflection about the experience. Ask yourself, Did I enjoy this? Could I improve the next time around? Expect that it will take teaching several courses to feel really comfortable, and know that many faculty, even the best, feel nervousness and anxiety about their teaching. But in the long run, helping to prepare the next generation of public servants and especially urban management practitioners is extremely rewarding work.

Martin Vanacour and Robert Denhardt
"Managers Who Teach or Would Like to Teach"
PM Magazine, October 2005, Volume 87, Number 9

If you are going to meet with the academic department head, you will need a résumé that emphasizes your education, training, and experiences that are potentially useful in teaching (remember the KSA exercise). Remember, it is a job interview.

Deciding whether to teach a course is, of course, the first step. Part of the decision is based on the factors discussed above; part of it, too, should be based on a realistic notion of what the commitment to teach involves. Once made, the decision to teach leads to many decisions *about* teaching. The following material focuses on specific aspects of college or university teaching.

Undergraduate vs. Graduate Teaching

The difference between graduate teaching and undergraduate teaching is considerable. Graduate courses are offered at a more advanced intellectual level, cover more complicated material, require considerably more work from the student, and have a different kind of student. They do not, however, necessarily require more work on the part of the instructor.

The material covered in an undergraduate course is usually broad and more general in nature. Undergraduate courses typically have a textbook that presents the standard contents for the particular course in an organized, structured manner. Students in undergraduate courses usually come from a variety of majors and typically do not yet have focused career interests. Undergraduate teaching provides an opportunity to recruit bright, able students to the local government management profession.

Many students in graduate courses have already narrowed their career choices; in public administration courses, they typically know that they want to work in the public sector or not-for-profit sector. Some may not yet have chosen which level of government or even which service field (e.g., general management, policy analysis, human services) is most attractive to them, but in many programs, most or all students are already working in a public sector job, either as a full-time employee or as an intern. Some will be police officers or firefighters seeking a credential required for promotion.

Courses Commonly Taught

While you may have a good idea what you want to teach, the course you may be asked to teach depends entirely on the needs of the school. The department may want you to begin to teach almost immediately. The number and type of courses available will usually depend on the courses being taught (or not taught) by regular faculty. For example, if a department has a faculty member going on leave, it may need to cover four to eight courses during the year, some with part-time faculty. In that case, they may even give you a choice of the courses.

Common undergraduate courses include Introduction to American Government, State and Local Government, and Introduction to Public Administration. Graduate teaching involves more specialized courses: Organization Theory, Budgeting, Personnel Management, and Public Works Administration. Such courses obviously involve coverage of the material in depth and detail. Generally speaking, practitioners should teach courses on topics with which they feel most competent. These usually will be courses that deal with material they confront in their daily activities. Courses that emphasize administrative methods (e.g., budget preparation, personnel administration) are easier for practitioners to teach than administrative theory courses (e.g., organization theory, research design). Practitioners should not attempt to teach courses in quantitative or analytical methods (such as statistics) unless they use such methods in their daily work.

GETTING STARTED

There are many things to remember as you prepare for this first course….

First and foremost, faculty are not likely to be very helpful. Sadly, in many departments, once you have agreed to teach, you will then be left to your own devices to get the job done. Rarely is there an organized orientation for new part-time faculty. Except for the person who hired you (typically the department chair), most of the faculty will not even know you are going to be teaching. *You may be on your own to uncover the written and unwritten rules of the department*.

Therefore, there are two important steps to take, possibly before you get to that first class.

- First concerns the students: Who are they (are they young and inexperienced or older with government experience, are they from diverse backgrounds)? What do they expect from faculty in terms of outside help? Are they interested in an education or in getting a credential? *This information is important to how you conduct your class*.
- Second concerns your place in the faculty: Ask the department chair, MPA director, or someone you know on the faculty (or another part-timer) to step forward to be your mentor, whose key role in explaining the unwritten rules is very important. But even the written rules will vary; for example, there may be a specific format for syllabi, and there will be a deadline for books and a prescribed way to order them. Often you will find that the books have already been ordered and/or that there is a collective syllabus for the course. Don't agree to teach unless you have a mentor to help you through this.

Instructional Design

Two critical issues should be considered in the design of a course: (1) coverage of material and (2) instructor competence. The material to be covered is, first and foremost, that which is specified or implied in the course's catalog description. The catalog offers a kind of guarantee to the student about what will be covered and limits the course to material relevant to that description. Most schools will be able to provide new instructors with syllabi used in previous offerings of the course; these can serve as guides to the coverage that is expected. Generally, instructors should emphasize their strengths. They should not try to copy the methods and styles—nor should they feel bound to follow the course syllabi—of other instructors. They should place their greatest emphasis on the elements of the course they know best and should use the teaching styles and techniques with which they feel most comfortable.

Some professors are most effective when lecturing; others work best when leading discussions or asking questions. The teaching techniques used also depend more on class size and instructor preference than on course level. A discussion/seminar format can be used more easily in an undergraduate course with an enrollment of twelve students than in a graduate course with twenty-five students. Every course should include exercises designed to develop or improve specific skills, especially those of analysis, writing, and speaking. Individual courses should impart other specific skills: a budgeting and finance course, for example, might teach students how to prepare and use a spreadsheet; a personnel course might teach them how to develop position classifications.

Manager/teachers should also feel free to ask about the availability of supplementary teaching materials. In addition to books and websites, many courses are centered on the case method of teaching. A comprehensive outline of the use of case studies is included in Appendix B. Computer simulations have also been developed as an aid to learning in some courses. The school will have a collection of audiovisual materials that might be useful. Many schools have staff dedicated to assisting faculty in instructional design and use of resources.

Two key points need to be emphasized in course design. First, managers should feel free to use materials from their own offices (with permission, of course). Maps, technical manuals, budgets, memoranda, contracts, and similar documents and materials provide excellent vehicles for bringing the real world to the classroom. Engaging department heads and other government staff in class discussions also serves that

purpose. Second, managers who teach must feel free to ask for help. Although they are busy, academic department chairs are typically more than willing to provide help when asked to do so.

There is a method to designing a course. Before writing a syllabus, the instructor should have a general plan for the course. You should ask and answer four questions:

- *What do the students need to know to achieve the key outcomes? (What are the three or four key lessons within each outcome?)*
- *How do the three to four learning outcomes relate to the weeks in the term and the chapters in the readings assignments? (How much time is needed to cover how much material?)*
- *Are the "lessons to be learned" accumulative or distinct? (Some overview or intro courses have distinct lessons and outcomes, but most do not.)*
- *If the lessons are accumulative, what is their best order of presentation? (Your judgment is critical; you must do it the way that makes sense to you.)*

To answer these questions one must think strategically. To begin, work backwards (this is the same technique as backward mapping in strategic management). Where do you want them to end up? Then work back to where they start (the expectations at the start of the course. Fill in the time, factoring in examinations and other class exercises (presentations, etc.). Once you have answered these basic questions, it is time to select a text and prepare a syllabus.

There are three things to remember:

1. Most textbooks (except the many excellent books from ICMA!) address federal government practices. Students don't get the opportunity to read about local government.
2. Most faculties are uninformed about local government; you are more knowledgeable about local government structures and practice than most of the faculty. In this area, *you, not the faculty*, are the subject-matter expert.
3. Students welcome insights from practitioners. The MPA is, after all, a professional degree program.

Textbooks/Readings

One of the first tasks in teaching any course is to select the reading materials. Usually this means choosing one or more texts. Sometimes the academic department has chosen a standard text or texts for the course. More commonly, the instructor will be free to make his or her own selection. Suggestions can usually be gained from the department chair or other regular faculty and from past offerings of the course. Another source of textbook recommendations is the ICMA online academic forum, whose members are primarily practitioners who teach.

Many publishing companies are happy to suggest appropriate titles from their own lists and often provide an instructor with complimentary examination copies of possible texts. (Some publishers send books out on thirty- or sixty-day approval.) Most publishing houses provide instructors with a complimentary desk copy of any text adopted for classroom use.[1]

It is sometimes more difficult to find a text for graduate courses. Some courses, such as those in municipal finance, may have a variety of texts from which to choose, but there may be none that approaches the topic from the perspective the instructor prefers. There are many texts on government finance and budgeting, for example, but not all of them focus on municipal or local government finance and budgeting. For local government courses, appropriate texts are sometimes available from professional organizations, such as ICMA. Other associations with texts in their area of expertise include the American Planning Association, the Government Finance Officers Association, and the American Public Works Association.

Some instructors prefer to assemble their own "text," drawing articles, book chapters, case studies, and even governmental forms and rules and regulations from a variety of publications. This is not as difficult to do as it sounds, but copyright laws make it risky (legally), cumbersome, and expensive to reproduce such collections at commercial or even private copy facilities. Many schools have a system in place to produce these collections.[2]

Many university cultures expect faculty to use texts for every course and may question the quality of courses that do not have a text. Many instructors solve this problem by adopting at least one text and assigning supplementary readings to cover the subject adequately. Others may use two or three different texts—perhaps a standard text to cover the basic course topics and one or more supplementary texts to provide additional readings, case studies, or other material for class exercises. Finally, some instructors use a text together with materials placed in library reserve room collec-

tions. In large part, especially when a number of the students are commuters, students prefer to spend more money on assigned texts than to spend time trying to find and copy materials in the library.

While students will complain about any size book bill, they are accustomed to spending thirty to sixty dollars for a single book, and one hundred dollars or more for books for each course taken. One advantage of commonly used texts is the availability of used books. Campus bookstores can easily locate and purchase such books on the national market and make them available to students, usually at *50–60 percent* of the new book cost. There may be less of a used book market for some books published by professional associations because many students keep such books for their permanent professional libraries. One strategy for reducing the cost of books is to place reading materials on reserve in the university library. While this will work well for students close to campus, commuting students may well tolerate higher book bills if it reduces the number of trips they must make to a library. More and more texts are available online at prices below retail.

Developing a Syllabus

Once the core text has been chosen, the next task is to develop the syllabus. The syllabus is the written document that describes the course, specifies the instructor's expectations, and guides the student through the assignments. The syllabus should be given to each student no later than the first class meeting. Once distributed, the syllabus should not be changed without prior written notification to all the students in the course.

The syllabus becomes a contract on which the students depend, and busy students, particularly those balancing a job and family responsibilities with their student life, use it to plan their schedule for weeks in advance. Students may view the document as a contract and instructors can be (and have been) accused of arbitrary and capricious behavior for untimely or inappropriately announced changes in course requirements or expectations.

Course syllabi take many different forms, but the following information is usually presented:

1. Course number and name. These are usually accompanied by a detailed statement of course content or purpose. The number and name are important within the college or university, but not beyond the campus. Higher education has no standardized course numbering system or nomenclature.

2. Information about the instructor. This usually includes the instructor's name, office location, hours when the instructor is available to meet with students, and office phone number. Part-time instructors usually make themselves available just before or after class to meet with individual students; they are not usually expected to make separate trips to campus for this purpose. It is entirely appropriate to limit the hours and days of the week when the instructor will be available to take phone calls; it is not necessary to provide students with the instructor's home phone number. It may or may not be appropriate to communicate with students using office technology, depending on local policy.

3. Bibliographic information on all assigned texts and readings.

4. A course outline. This outline should include the dates the class will meet, topics to be discussed on each date, and readings or other assignments to be completed by that date.

5. A description of class assignments. A separate description should be given for each assignment. The description should be sufficiently detailed to provide guidance to students working alone late at night. Optimally, it should outline both what the student is to do and the basis on which the student's work will be evaluated. A technique often used is to list expected outcomes for each week's class meeting so that students will understand the objectives for the week's assignment.

6. A description of grading policies. Students are entitled to know how their work will be evaluated (e.g., whether writing style will be evaluated as well as content), the activities that will receive a grade and be counted in determining the final course grade, and a summary of how the course grade will be calculated.

7. An explicit statement of the instructor's and university's policies. This particularly includes expectations regarding class attendance and policies governing makeup work, missed assignments, and papers not submitted by due dates. No extra-credit work should be accepted unless provision for it is made on the syllabus and all students have an equal opportunity to present such work. In the best administrative tradition, penalties for failure to follow the rules should also be specified. Some schools may have specific requirements for the inclusion of policies on topics such as academic integrity.

CONDUCTING CLASSES

The first one or two classes are the most critical for any course. It is here that classroom expectations are developed, the class personality is established, and the interactive patterns for the rest of the academic term take form. One way to develop good interactive patterns is to get students talking in the first class or two by digressing into course-germane topics that are provocative and controversial. Many instructors like to ask students at the beginning of each course what they expect from the class. The responses can act as a guideline for the instructor to make last-minute modifications to meet such objectives.

The style used to conduct the class is a function of several variables. Size of class affects the choice of lecture or seminar style as well as the use of oral reports, but student participation can be evoked even in large lecture halls. Some classes, such as courses in accounting or budget preparation, lend themselves to student exercises or simulations. Case studies are always a popular method of stimulating class participation. They can be modified for use in simulations, small group discussions, and similar mechanisms to draw students into active participation.

Lectures, still widely used and necessary, are increasingly linked with other, more participatory techniques such as simulations, in-class exercises, and small group discussions. Presentations by students are essential to develop oral communication skills. The use of guests— other professionals with competence relevant to the topic under consideration—is still favored by many instructors as a way of enriching the learning experience. Guests might be asked to make presentations or to participate in class discussions or evaluations of student reports or projects.

The two most significant changes over the last twenty years have been the shift to longer classes and the increasing use of web-enhanced and web-based instruction. A generation ago, most classes were fifty to seventy-five minutes in length, meeting two or three times a week. Today, a growing number of classes, including most classes taken by part-time and commuter students, are two-and-one-half to four hours long, meeting once a week. Such classes need to be broken up, not only by breaks from the work routine but also by changes in the pattern of instruction. Movement from lecture to in-class exercises, to seminar discussion, to case study exercises helps keep students alert and learning. Regardless of the pattern used, student participation and attention fall off over time, especially in the evening.

Most importantly, the chosen format should be one with which the instructor is comfortable. People teach most effectively when they teach from their own strengths—pedagogical as well as subject matter. New instructors should experiment with different methods until they find the techniques that work best for them.

Teaching online is, in some ways, not unlike teaching a traditional class: the learning outcomes, assignments, and expectations are the same. On the other hand, online classes are very different in presentation. Depending on the electronic format and medium, you might find some combination of PowerPoint slides, film clips, electronic bulletin boards, and chat rooms to replace the lecture and face-to-face discussion. Teaching online is very much "in vogue," but do not mistake the role of the electronic media for an easier time teaching. Online courses require far more *advanced* preparation, especially as you prepare PowerPoint slides and bulletin boards. In effect, you are preparing electronic responses to student questions and concerns *before the class* rather than during the class. This is not easy. Many seasoned instructors find this medium intimidating. In most circumstances, we suggest that you teach a course "on the ground" before attempting it online.

Homework

Student complaints about the volume of homework assignments are inevitable. In all higher education classes, however, and particularly in graduate classes, the homework assignments are the foundation for learning. Homework is where basic knowledge is acquired; the classroom is where such knowledge is refined and thought processes are sharpened. Still, "how much is too much?" is a legitimate question. The old axiom that students should spend two hours outside of class for every hour in class and still more time to do research and complete term papers or projects and prepare for examinations is still a useful guide. It is not unrealistic to expect that students will spend five to ten hours each week preparing for a standard three- or four-credit course. Early weeks of a term often

require closer to five hours; the last weeks of the term may require ten hours or more per week.

Written Assignments

Except for classes with enrollments exceeding fifty students, written assignments should be a standard component of classroom instruction. They should be fitted to the level of the class and the sophistication of the students. Most graduate students are capable of completing very sophisticated assignments and doing so in compliance with demanding standards. Written assignments range from the preparation of a one-page memo to a twenty- to forty-page research paper; these assignments can require the student to assimilate extensive reading and research or to analyze their personal experiences in the light of concepts covered in the course. They can be on a topic of the instructor's or the student's choosing.

What is important is that the assignment requires the student to grow intellectually and that it be counted as a meaningful component in the calculation of the course grade. It is also important that such assignments are fully described in the course syllabus and that a due date be established for their completion. Except for extraordinary circumstances, individual students should not be given a time extension. Students who are not held to deadlines are taught a very wrong lesson—a lesson not transferable to the world of professional work.

Increasingly in MPA programs, instructors are moving away from the traditional research paper in favor of a series of short reports or even memoranda. Such assignments are perceived to be more like the kind of research/writing assignment that typically confronts practicing administrators. *Practitioners who teach should expect graduate students to produce the quality of work that they, themselves, would feel comfortable transmitting to their councils. It is also important that students receive written feedback on their written assignments.* A grade at the top of the paper is not sufficient. Papers should be marked up and evaluated on the basis of both substantive content (e.g., organization, information, and analysis) and writing quality. Writing errors should be marked; instructors who fail to do so are to blame for the poor writing skills of university graduates.

One of the best techniques for teaching needed writing skills is to return papers to students and require that the papers be rewritten until they meet the instructor's standards and expectations—for content as well as for writing quality. Writing teachers often maintain that rewriting work is the best technique for improving writing skills.

The easy availability of the Internet and of commercial suppliers of papers can increase the temptation for students to supplement their written work from these sources. The course syllabus should cite university policies regarding ethics code violations. It should make clear that unethical behavior may result in a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Requiring many short papers rather than one long term paper will minimize the use of acquired term papers. If a part-time instructor has doubts about the authorship of any student paper, consultation with the program director is definitely in order.

Other Assignments

Not all classes require an oral presentation from students, but MPA programs are expected to develop students' oral communication skills. Class assignments are the standard way in which this expectation is met. Again, the nature of the assignment varies; oral reports can be based on research, on literature reviews, on class problems, on case studies, or on similar materials. Oral presentations do not have to be lengthy; a two-minute briefing exercise (so-called "elevator speeches") can be very effective. As is the case with written reports, students need and deserve written feedback, and not just a grade, on their work.

Many classes, particularly those based on analytical and research skills, assign exercises for the students to complete. Such exercises are appropriate for other classes, too. Several simulation exercises are commonly used to develop skills in areas such as budgeting and planning. Some case studies, such as those published by ICMA, are also usable as simulations.

Some instructors favor the use of group activities or assignments. They divide the class into groups of three to five students and give each group an assignment that must be prepared and presented, in written or oral form, either to the instructor or to the whole class. Such assignments teach students to work in collaboration with others, particularly others not of their own choosing. This, too, is seen as a simulation of real-world administration. Instructors who use such groups should require a work product that allows for an evaluation of the input and performance of each individual

student; for example, a written report might require an identification of the contribution of each student.

Tests

There was a time when many instructors were abandoning tests and relying on other evaluation instruments. That time is past, and testing is again viewed as an important evaluative tool. The number and kinds of test, however, vary widely. Large undergraduate courses often rely on objective tests: multiple choice, true-false, and matching kinds of questions. Smaller classes and most graduate classes rely almost exclusively on subjective (essay) tests. The general rule of thumb is that objective tests take a long time to prepare and are easy to grade; subjective tests are easy to prepare but difficult and time-consuming to grade. The key distinguishing factor, however, is quite different. Objective tests, for the most part, evaluate one skill—recognition knowledge—and have a relatively high chance element. (Every student has a fifty-fifty chance of getting a true-false question right.)Essay tests evaluate the student's ability to think and communicate about a subject—key skills in the professional world.

Publishers of undergraduate texts often supply a teacher's guide that suggests test questions. Such guides are less common for advanced courses and rarely accompany graduate-level texts. Undergraduate classes typically have one or two midterm exams plus a final examination, which may or may not cover the entire course. In addition, particularly in lower-level courses, instructors often use quizzes to encourage students to keep up with reading assignments. Some graduate courses use a midterm exam; more use a comprehensive final examination. Quizzes are usually confined to skill-oriented courses (e.g., a course in statistics or computer software applications).

A good essay examination usually gives students some choice in the questions they may answer. A good estimate is to give undergraduate students twenty to thirty minutes to answer each essay question; graduate students are expected to provide more sophisticated answers, and so a time allowance of thirty to forty-five minutes per question to be answered is more common.

Some essay questions are very narrow: they test the specific information that the student is expected to supply (e.g., what are the key steps in preparing or revising job descriptions for administrative positions?) and can sometimes be graded with a key or answer sheet. Other questions are broader and seek to test both the student's knowledge and his or her ability to think (e.g., discuss the major conceptual issues involved in the preparation and use of job descriptions). Still other questions probe these matters and challenge the student's creativity (e.g., what changes in the preparation and use of job descriptions would you make to increase the effectiveness of personnel management? Explain and defend your recommendations). Such open-ended questions are more difficult to grade, but they do a better job of testing the students' level of sophistication and learning from the course.

The best method of objectively grading essay questions is to grade all such questions at the same time. For example, in a class of twelve students taking an essay test requiring each student to answer three of five questions, the instructor should grade all answers to the first essay question at the same time, comparing the answers to each other and rank ordering them from strongest to weakest. With all the answers read together, the instructor can assign grades based on a composite of an absolute standard of what the instructor expected together with a relative standard that takes overall class performance into account.

Responses to essay questions should be evaluated on the basis of both content (information, organization, analysis, and creativity) and articulation (clarity and quality of the writing). Given the time constraints of the examination process, content should be the primary consideration, with some allowances made with respect to writing quality. However, poor writing skills will be a hindrance in the professional world (even good ideas lose their impact if they cannot be communicated effectively) and, thus, this factor, too, should be reflected in the grade. Instructors should *never* yield to the argument that writing skills are taught and graded only in English classes. Practitioners/instructors who do buy into that argument deserve their fate when they employ college graduates lacking in communication skills.

Students usually appreciate instructor notations or comments regarding their performance on examinations. Some teachers mark tests extensively; others make fewer notes and discuss the exam questions in class. In either event, instructors should encourage students to visit with them outside of class to discuss their exam performances. Most students do not take advantage of that opportunity, but it is still important that it be made available to the students.

Providing a study guide for students prior to an examination has two benefits: first, in a broad subject, it draws attention to what the instructor wants students to focus their efforts on; and second, by listing a number of issues or questions, it helps to ensure that students will undertake more than an unstructured review of the semester's work.

Communicating Knowledge

Just like your own employees, people respond differently to different forms of communication. No one really likes to sit through over two hours of lecturing—and you probably don't want to talk for that long.We offer a few suggestions and general lessons on "lecturing."

The first thing you need to do is to learn about yourself. At the beginning of this workshop you were asked to analyze your knowledge and capability. Now we need to reanalyze that knowledge and capability for purposes of conveying to another that knowledge and capability.

You have two kinds of knowledge: explicit and tacit. Explicit is easy; it is the product of training and education. Tacit knowledge is harder to convey. It reflects the capabilities and capacity to respond to the world without thinking. The academic books often illustrate this capacity by talking about having a "feel" for the job or the transcendent ability that we see in great athletes. You need to think about how to explain how you act without thinking. This is not easy. Sometimes the best you can do is tell a story as a way to illustrate the ability (this is a war story with a purpose).

The secret is to work from the explicit knowledge (the information in the book) to a story that illustrates tacit understanding. While this works best with experienced, mid-career students with tacit knowledge of their own, it can help even the least experienced of students. The key is to always connect the tacit back to the explicit.

Second is to let the students ask questions. Often it is best to start class by asking the students if they have questions about the reading assignments. Students ask questions about that which they don't understand. If we are in the business of teaching, we need to focus on what they think they don't understand. Often you will find that the questions match what you wanted to say. That means that much of your lesson plan is out the window—but it will probably serve as a great summary just before you dismiss the class.

Third is to understand the importance of mixing learning environments. Talk with them, ask them questions, let them ask questions, tell stories, let them tell stories, and even invite colleagues in as guest speakers. The best classes are those in which many voices are heard.

Fourth is to change the forms of presentation. Try to avoid being a talking head. Use PowerPoint and/or video.

Fifth is to change the pace. Except old-fashioned fifty- and sixty-five-minute classes, every class has an implicit ten-minute break planned. Avoid taking the break at the same time. Finish the discussion. Break at the change of topic, not in the middle.

Using Library Resources

In the information age, the use of library resources as an integral part of higher education is more important than ever. But the use of such resources is very different from what it was a generation ago. Most importantly, such resources are far more abundant with the advent of the Internet. Not only does the Internet offer access to vast data resources, but also libraries themselves have had their capacities expanded by electronic storage and retrieval systems. Within the last generation, the number of data sources, the varieties of indexes to data, and the evolution of sophisticated interlibrary loan systems have enhanced greatly the availability of information.

Despite the information explosion, however, the typical student is not necessarily experienced in library use. Large undergraduate class sizes have reduced both the number of classes in which students have individual research assignments and the level of one-on-one research direction provided by faculty to students. As a result, instructors can expect to encounter students who, on average, have less familiarity with the use of library resources than students of a generation ago. University libraries have professional staffs available to help instructors direct their students to appropriate library resources. Further, those staffs are eager to provide such assistance. They should be consulted, and students should be challenged through research assignments to develop their skills in using such resources. A final note of caution: students using the Internet have access to data that may not be accurate or verifiable. Helping students sort the "wheat from the chaff" of electronic data is an important task for any instructor.

Grading

Having told the students in the syllabus (and probably again in the first class) how you will grade them, it is time to fulfill that commitment. Grading is a subjective and uncertain process at best. It takes experience to gain a clear and consistent sense of what students should be able to accomplish. Many new instructors have high expectations and grade harshly. Others become personally close to their students or fear low teaching evaluation scores from them and have a hard time enforcing demanding standards. They tend to give too many high grades. A happy medium is hard to find. There is a strong, positive correlation between the number of graded assignments and tests given to each student in a course and the quality/validity of the final course grade.

It is important to remind instructors that they are evaluating the *observable* performance of the students in your class. You are not evaluating the student as a potential member of your profession. You are not judging how hard the student worked or the amount of time spent on the course. Performance in each course must be judged on its own merits.

On the other hand, there are norms and expectations in every academic department that are based upon department history, experience, and quality of their students. Learn what the norms are before grading. It is true that grade inflation has changed grading practices in the last quarter century. Standards are more lenient, and the quality of the educational process has probably suffered accordingly. On the other hand, student expectations regarding grades and performance are proportionately higher than they used to be, and this, too, must be taken into account. Students today, however, accept lower grades more willingly and graciously if they understand the instructor's expectations and perceive the grading process to be fair.

We suggest that instructors use multiple methods of evaluation for the simple reason that different students learn best from different forms of presentation. Students often perform differently depending on the type of evaluation used in the course. For example, some students write good research papers but do not do well on in-class essay examinations. Others shine in oral presentations. The best rule is to mix the methods of evaluation to level the field for students. We are strong advocates of using as many evaluation techniques as possible. In some programs, group projects or in-class presentations are frowned upon; this is another issue that you need to review with the program chair. In other programs, such practices are found in virtually every class. Certain classes will have norms. More "technical" courses such as research methods often use traditional examination processes to assess students. More theoretical courses, such as organization theory or ethics, tend to rely upon papers and/or essay examinations.

Grading standards also vary by level of course and by academic program. Undergraduate grading scales use more grades (usually A, B, C, D, and F or some variant thereof) to distinguish student performance. Grade frequencies are likely to reflect the bell-shaped curve, with C being the most frequently earned grade. Upper-division courses often have somewhat higher grade-point averages than freshman and sophomore classes. Graduate programs use a different scale. While they typically use the same range of grades, the grades have different meaning. Grades of D and F are both failing grades and are given only in exceptional circumstances or to students who have not completed all assignments. Grades of C are used to signify passing but less than satisfactory performance; rarely will more than one or two students in a class of ten to twenty get a C, and many such classes will have no students who get a C. Typically, one-third to one-half of the students in a master's-level class will receive a grade of A. But these generalizations will vary significantly from academic program to academic program. Some programs will give almost all of their students grades of A. Others hold to more traditional standards.

University and program reputations do not provide a reliable clue to grading standards. Programs that argue that their admission standards are high and that their students are of very high quality and earn high grades may be covering their professors' reluctance to make discriminating judgments in the grading process. A newer trend in grading, but one not held in high favor, is to give grades based on the number of assignments completed (e.g., to get a grade of A, students must do five short papers; to get a B, they must do four papers; to get a C, they must do three papers.). Grading policies that substitute quantity for quality in assigning grades are unprofessional and do a disservice to both the student and future employers.

A student may ask for a reconsideration of his or her course grade. Unless there has been a computational error in the grade's determination, however, term grade changes are unusual. The student lament, "I need an A (or B or C) from you to (fill in a reason)" is *never* a

valid justification for special consideration. Requests from university administrators or other faculty to give special consideration to a particular student are rare and should always be referred to the program chair before any commitments or changes are made.

New instructors should ask about the program's grading policies and expectations. They should ask for guidelines regarding the percentage of grades commonly given by regular faculty at each level, using this information as a baseline for plotting their own grading strategy and standards. *Part-time faculty should seek to avoid giving a significantly greater number of high grades than the program average.* Practitioners in the classroom should support and encourage the use of discriminating grading policies. Such policies mean that the transcripts they will receive describing the academic performance of new graduates/job applicants will give them a more meaningful basis for evaluating the ability of the candidates for the jobs they are seeking to fill. The use of "incomplete" grades is discussed below in "Preparing Students for the Real World."

Student Expectations

Just as grading expectations vary by course level and from program to program, so too do student expectations regarding the amount of work they will be expected to do. This applies equally to the amount of expected reading, the number of oral or written assignments, and the number and kinds of tests. Again, it is perfectly acceptable for new instructors to ask questions regarding these expectations. Student feedback, however, should not be the sole source for this kind of information. Some level of student complaint is common, and that level may be higher in classes enrolling predominantly part-time students whose lives are complicated by a large number of daily obligations.

Meaningful learning occurs most frequently when students are exerting effort beyond their comfort level—that is, when they are being seriously challenged. Good teachers challenge students to learn. It is hard to discern when student complaints about workload are routine and when they should be seriously considered. Again, this is a matter on which the part-time teacher should seek advice from the experienced (both full- and part-time) members of the faculty. Ultimately, the greatest measure of good teaching is the level of respect shown by former students who have tested their education in the real world.

The class is finished when the grades are turned in, but you are not. Some time in the tenth week of a quarter-based class, or the fourteenth or fifteenth week of a semester-long course, you will likely be given an evaluation form for the students to fill out. While some of these forms are so generic that they are useless, others, especially those with department- or program-specific questions, can provide good data about the course and the instructor. Take time to review the results (you will most likely get the evaluations back two to four weeks after the term). But more importantly, do a debriefing with yourself.

DISTANCE LEARNING AND TECHNOLOGY

Approximately seven million, or roughly one-third of all college students, are enrolled in at least one online course per term. It only stands to reason that the demand for instructors proficient in the distance-learning environment has also increased. As a result, given the expanded interest in online educational offerings, many academic programs are now exploring the use of various distance-learning technologies to deliver courses simultaneously to groups of students located in different geographic locations. Until more experience is gained with them, such courses are best left to more experienced faculty members. However, practitioners who make guest appearances in such courses, or even those who decide to tackle such courses themselves, will encounter an interesting, personal learning experience that will put them in better touch with other technologies.

Primarily for the set meeting schedule requirements of synchronous online teaching programs, the newest and most promising of these technologies involves what is known as interactive television. Essentially the same as video conferencing, interactive television links students and faculty in two or more locations by both voice and picture; it permits participants to see and hear each other, interacting with the same intensity and spontaneity as they would if all were in the same room.

Alternatively, there is a growing focus on the asynchronous format for course and program delivery. Asynchronous courses do not meet at a certain time or a certain day of the week. Course designs in this format require an emphasis on blog and discussion postings in response to specific questions, reading assignments, supplemental information and prerecorded video lectures by the instructor. The asynchronous environment is much different from either the traditional classroom or the virtual classroom setting in that the relationship between instructor and student, as well as between student and student, is not instantaneous. Contact is usually spread out over a week, which requires both the instructor and the students to go online regularly to stay engaged and respond to discussion board blog postings. In many ways, it may be described as a protracted conversation. Whether constrained by geography or life commitments, the asynchronous format is becoming the platform of choice for many students, especially the working adult learner.

In either the synchronous or asynchronous format, the technology permits the exchange of documents, papers, and pictures; it enables the faculty member to show films, use videotapes to record or project lessons, and even integrate computer instruction in such classes. Both formats require an expanded knowledge of learning management systems and specific educational software pertaining to such subjects as video recording, plagiarism detection, testing options, and copyright laws.

For both student and instructor alike, online class preparation and participation usually requires more time than that required in a traditional classroom environment. This is especially true of the returning adult learner who may have to hone forgotten study, analytical, and writing skills. In this instance, the additional burden of learning how to be an online student may be too much to bear all at once.

A note of caution is in order: none of these technologies makes it possible for the instructor to teach a greater number of students in any given class at a constant level of effectiveness (quality). As is true with larger class sizes in one room, an increased number of students reduces an instructor's pedagogical options. There is nothing in distance learning technology that increases the ability of the teacher to read and grade more papers with the same effort, that permits the class to hear oral reports from more students in a given amount of time, or that overcomes the natural propensity of people (students) to speak out less as the size of the group increases.

Using Learning Management Software Resources

Over the last ten years, colleges and universities have introduced computer software that assists faculty and students in the learning process. This software has a wide range of functions and can be successfully used to reduce the time commitment of part-time faculty by aiding in communication, class design, submission, return of class work, grading, and evaluation. Collectively called "learning management systems" (LMS), the four most commonly used platforms as of 2016 are the following:

- *"Blackboard"* (www.blackboard.com/higher-education/index.aspx)
- *"Canvas"* (www.canvaslms.com/higher-education/)
- *"Angel"* (www.angellearning.com/products/lms/whats_new_74.html)
- *"Moodle"* (moodle.org)

The Masters of Public Administration program where you teach may (or may not) use these systems, custom software that has been developed in-house, or various online learning software platforms.

Typically you can attend online or in-person training for two to four hours on the use of LMS software sponsored by your institution once you have a computer user account. Often in-house trainers or other faculty can provide you with "best practice" examples of the use of various software features in teaching. If your institution does not have LMS software, you can still use it through a free account with Canvas and make it available to just your students through the Internet. Committing the time to learn some of the basic functions of the software can save you hours of work in the short and long run making copies; sending and responding to e-mail; or collecting, grading, and handing back assignments, papers, and tests.

A quick overview of some common basic functions:

Communication. Provides class announcement and/or e-mail connection with your students and among students, including students working in groups. It often has a calendar and tracking functions that allow you and your students to plan and be notified of class activities, assignments, and deadlines.

Class content. Provides an electronic "home" for all your class material, assignments, tests, and grades. The software guides you through designing and posting class material for your class sessions, modules, or units. You can post readings, PowerPoint presentations, pictures, website links, video clips, audio clips, discussion threads, grading criteria (rubrics), syllabi, and background information. The software makes the posted information available to you and your students but not the general public via the Internet.

- *Submitting and grading class work.* You can electronically create and convey assignments or tests that students can respond to individually in a secure environment online through the software's features. Students can respond by submitting documents or posting answers that are conveyed to you. You can then comment on electronic versions of submitted assignments, grade them electronically, and return them to students. If you want to work with hard copies, you can print out material submitted online.
- *Tracking and submitting class grades.* Most institutions connect their LMS to their grading applications so that instructors can download class grades at the end of the quarter or semester directly without individually posting them. The LMS typically has a grade-tracking function that allows you to post grades for each element of the class that carries points or a grade and then calculates a final grade at the end of the academic quarter or semester based on your instructions. Students can see their own grades throughout the class so they can track their own progress without asking you for updates.
- *Group activities and discussions.* Additional features are available that facilitate interactive work among students or between the instructor and one or more students. Various features for collaboration, discussion, and consultation are available to augment or substitute for the basic in-person classroom experience.

Anne Phlug, *Senior Advisor*

EVALUATION—LOOKING BACK TO LOOK FORWARD

Most universities include as part of faculty evaluations a student input component. It is important to take time to review the results (you will most likely get them two to four weeks after the term). But more importantly, do a debriefing with you.

Start at the beginning:

- Review the learning outcomes
- Review the grading criteria
- Review the grading methods
- Review the readings

How could the class have been done better (beyond the simple reality that you will get better with experience)? What books would you use in the future? What lecture and presentation techniques might you try?

SUPPORT SERVICES FOR FACULTY

Most colleges and universities have a variety of support services available to full- and part-time faculty. These include, of course, full access to the university's library resources and computer laboratories and facilities. Perhaps even more important, instruction and technical assistance are available to help faculty use these resources. Professional librarians have a genuine commitment to service. That, together with their professional expertise, makes librarians an invaluable resource. Most libraries have staffs that specialize in the use of particular collections, such as the government documents collection or the social studies collection. These staffs are more than happy to work with part-time faculty, helping them plan course assignments that draw on library resources, use library materials in class planning and lecture development, and guide students in their work in the library.

College and university campuses today have computer labs available to students, and most offer short courses for faculty, including part-time instructors, on the various uses and applications of computers. Such training opportunities can be a valuable benefit for the administrator who wishes to learn more about computers but is reluctant to draw on local staff resources in city hall for such help. Most campuses also have computer equipment and facilities for grading objective-type examinations. Information about such equipment and the means of using it can be gained from program faculty.

Most schools also have audiovisual offices that maintain a collection of both equipment and films for classroom use. These collections are typically available for class use either without charge or with only a bookkeeping charge to the academic program. Part-time faculty should ask for a catalog of available films and documents and ask program secretaries for help in arranging for the use of such materials in the classroom.

Some university programs will provide part-time instructors with course-related secretarial services on an as-needed basis, but most instructor/administrators find it easier and more convenient to use their own secretaries for what little work must be done.

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE REAL WORLD

By far, the most common behavioral problems that instructors will encounter in today's college or university classroom will be attendance, punctuality, and adherence to deadlines. Unfortunately, students who are allowed to follow sloppy personal habits with respect to school obligations are not being well prepared for life in the real world.

On most campuses, whether an instructor takes attendance is a matter of personal preference. To do so takes valuable class time and adds to the record-keeping burden. In small classes, an observant instructor will know which students develop a pattern of erratic attendance or habitual lateness. Whether the instructor wishes to impose an academic penalty for excessive absences or tardiness is again a matter of personal style, but if penalties might be assessed, students should be warned in advance, preferably in the course syllabus.

Like most adults, students will take as much time to complete assignments as they are allowed. Failure to meet assignment deadlines is a learned pattern of behavior, and it will persist just as long as the instructor tolerates it. And there is good reason not to tolerate it. Late papers are too easily lost; they are often not graded together with those submitted on time and thus might well be graded with a different subjective framework by the instructor; and, most importantly, they tend to create greater problems for the student and the instructor in the hectic last days of the academic term.

The best way to prevent too frequent absences, tardiness, and especially late submission of assignments is to make the instructor's lack of tolerance clear at the beginning of the course, preferably with a written warning in the syllabus and verbal reinforcement on the first day of class. Students will respect a teacher who takes a no-nonsense attitude on such matters, particularly if the instructor makes it clear that this attitude is the same one taken by employers in the professional world. The best preventive measure is to adopt and announce a policy that no late papers will be accepted and no make-up examinations will be administered without advance approval of the instructor. Valid excuses, and there are valid reasons for missing work, generally are known sufficiently well in advance that a phone call can be made and instructor clearance can be provided. Even a note left with a secretary demonstrates good intent on the part of the student.

Nonattendance in class is not an acceptable reason for late submission of a paper. Someone with scheduling problems can use e-mail, fax, or overnight delivery systems to transmit their work. The same lack of tolerance should apply to requests from students for more time to complete their assignments and especially for incomplete grades in the course for that purpose. Students often will request such grades so they can have more time after the end of the term to complete their assignments. There are valid reasons for allowing students to take more time, but excessive workload is not usually one of them.

Students must learn to organize their time so that they complete their assignments on schedule. Employers and supervisors expect it on the job; instructors should expect it in the classroom. Again, students should be told in advance, preferably in the syllabus, that incomplete grades will not be given unless advance arrangements are made with the instructor. Tests and assignments not submitted by the due dates, especially at the end of the term, should be given a grade of F. Not surprisingly, clear advance warning of a tough instructor attitude on these matters will prevent most of the requests and problems, making life much easier for both the instructor and the students. Most importantly, such a tough policy better prepares students for life in the real world.

SOURCES OF ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

The best sources of technical assistance are the chair and the individual faculty members of the academic unit (department, college, or program) offering the course. These are the people who can best describe the local instructional culture, customs, and procedures; they alone can define what a particular course is expected to accomplish and how it is linked to the rest of the curriculum. They can tell you how it was done last time. They can help, too, with such matters as selecting a textbook, accessing technical equipment such as computers and audiovisual aids, and clarifying the expectations of students enrolled in the program of which the course is a part. Most faculty members are very willing to answer questions about their program and assist community faculty.

Most colleges and universities also have a substantial number of technical aids. Many, for example, have facilities to videotape course sessions and to review those tapes with the teacher and offer advice. Most also have a range of student services available to assist instructors, including tutorial assistance, workshops on technical writing, training courses on the use of computer programs, special programs to help students for whom English is a second language, and extensive counseling services for students with personal problems.

ICMA provides a number of resources for instructors on its website, maintains a list of members who teach, and arranges a meeting at each year's annual conference at which these members can discuss common problems and share their experiences.[3]

COMPENSATION

In addition to the personal satisfaction gained from contributing to the profession, there are, of course, measurable benefits to teaching. Practitioners teaching a course in public administration on a part-time basis are paid market rates, currently ranging anywhere from $1,000 (too low and exploitive) to $8,500 per course, per term. Few schools offer fringe benefits to adjunct faculty, although some may require participation in their retirement system. While the university sets the rate for part-time faculty, there may be some room for negotiation. Typically, adjunct faculty without a PhD are paid less than those who have one. However, some schools will consider practitioners with significant professional experience as qualifying for the higher pay rate. A written contract, approved by a school official, is almost always required.

Many bookstores give discounts to faculty members, as do some computer stores.

ACADEMIC MISCELLANY

It would be impossible to provide in this short document everything a prospective faculty member should know. Interviews with department heads, faculty handbooks, and discussions with full-time professors will answer most questions. The following are a few topics to begin your introduction to the academic world.[4]

Academic Rank and Titles

There is a hierarchy in the academic world, just as there is in local government. Full-time faculty generally have one of three titles signifying their place in that hierarchy. Professors and associate professors are tenured; assistant professors are on track to (they hope) becoming tenured. Nontenure-track faculty are usually assigned the rank of instructor or lecturer. Students often will assume that you are to be addressed as "Doctor" or "Professor." Unless you have a doctorate or have been assigned that title by the school, you should direct students to address you by Mr. or Ms. or, as is often the case, by your first name.

Costs and Benefits

Some schools provide free parking for faculty, but many impose a fee; sometimes parking stickers are not required on weekends. Some schools require that adjunct faculty participate in their retirement system, which makes a contribution mandatory; there may be an employer match and a vesting schedule. Compensation may be paid monthly or in a lump sum.

Departmental Communications and Participation

Some programs, not all, will make an effort to include part-time faculty in their staff meetings and trainings. Adjunct faculty may be assigned an office, a desk, or a mailbox. The use of office equipment and supplies may be provided. The use of graduate assistants or departmental support staff may or may not be permitted.

Ethical Conduct

As a member of the teaching faculty, you have an obligation to act within the ethical standards of the academy. These standards include behaviors that reflect fairness, equity, impartiality, academic freedom, privacy, and free speech. There are usually written policies defining these standards.

Political Considerations

While the local government administrator may view part-time teaching as a professionally relevant activity and a personal development experience, members of the press and local legislative body are more likely to view such teaching as a second job or outside employment. Thus, it is important that such assignments be accepted only after all administrative and politically required notifications and clearances have been accomplished. Most local government chief administrative officers informally clear part-time teaching appointments with their mayor, president, or local legislative body to minimize possible future misunderstandings.

CONCLUSION

The classroom must be linked to the workplace so that exposure to the world of work does not begin on the first day of employment. This is why the participation of managers in internship programs and as guest lecturers/resource people in classroom instruction is so important. But as critical as it is, that alone is not sufficient in most cases. Managers have a vital perspective to bring to bear on the professional education of public administrators, and especially of future managers, and that perspective is best imparted through continued intellectual interaction over time between manager and future manager. And that kind of interaction is most effectively achieved when managers teach courses in the MPA curriculum.

Managers who teach are the profession's best resource for ensuring its own future. They are society's best advertisement for attracting a future supply of competent professional leaders for community governments. Such leaders, in turn, are essential to the long-term preservation and viability of grassroots democracy.

ENDNOTES

1 A directory of publishers can be obtained from the National Association of College Book Stores, 500 E. Lorain St., Oberlin, OH 44074.2

2 Some copy stores will do this work and secure the needed copyright approvals but only if they can make money doing it.

3 See "Resources for Instructors" located in the ICMA Press section of ICMA's web site, www.icma.org.

4 Managers who want to explore resources beyond those included in this guide may want to read: *The Adjunct Faculty Handbook* edited by Virginia Bianco-Mathis and Neal Chalofsky, published in 1996 by Sage Publications, 2455 Teller Road, Thousand Oaks, California 91320.

APPENDIX A:
MANAGERS AS FACULTY (UPDATED 2016)

ICMA—Resources and Tools

Welcome Teachers
www.icma.org/en/icma/career_network/education

Go Teach a Course
www.icma.org/en/icma/career_network/education/teaching_resources/go_teach

Cal-ICMA

"So, You Want to Be a University Professor?"
www.icma.org/en/ca/newsroom/highlights/Article/105570CalICMA_Releases_Three_HowTo_Papers_on_Encore_Careers

"Why I Teach"
www.icma.org/en/press/pm_magazine/article/106888

"The Path to Academia"
www.icma.org/en/press/pm_magazine/article/104186

"Managers Who Teach or Would Like to Teach"
www.icma.org/en/press/pm_magazine/issue/129/2005/October

For Academics (and Managers)
www.icma.org/en/icma/career_network/education/teaching_resources/academic_resources

ICMA Publications
www.icma.org/en/press/home

E-Chapters and Case Studies
www.icma.org/en/Page/101025/Browsing_eChapters_and_Case_Studies

ICMA Group—Managers Who Teach
www.icma.org/en/icma/knowledge_network/groups/group/1112

ICMA's Adjuncts Corner
www.icma.org/en/icma/knowledge_network/documents/kn/Document/308054ICMAs_Adjuncts_Corner_Collected

Managers in Residency
www.icma.org/en/icma/career_network/education/teaching_resources/managers_in_residency

Teaching Tips
www.icma.org/en/icma/career_network/education/teaching_resources/teaching_tips

Sample Syllabi
www.icma.org/en/icma/knowledge_network/groups/group_files/1112

ICMA Student Chapter Program
www.icma.org/en/icma/career_network/students/student_chapters?mobile=false

K-12 Civics Education
www.icma.org/en/icma/career_network/education/civics_education

External Organizational Resources

Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA)
www.naspaa.org

NASPAA—Local Government Management Education Committee 2016—Proposed Competencies for Programs with Local Government Specializations
www.naspaa.org/principals/committees/comm_lgmt.asp

NASPAA's T*eaching Resources Guide for Public Affairs and Administration*, Third Edition, Rutgers University—School of Public Affairs & Administration,|Newark:
spaa.newark.rutgers.edu/teaching-resources-guide

NASPAA—Roster of Accredited MPA Programs
accreditation.naspaa.org/resources/roster-of-accredited-programs/

American Society for Public Administration (ASPA)
www.aspanet.org/public/

ASPA's Foundations of Public Administration Series
www.aspanet.org/PUBLIC/ASPA/Publications/Public_Administration_Review/Foundations_of_PA_Series/FPA_about.aspx

IBM Center for The Business of Government
Growing Leaders for Public Service
www.businessofgovernment.org/report/growing-leaders-public-service

Athabasca University
Theory and Practice of Online Learning
cde.athabascau.ca/online_book/ch11.html

U.S. Department of Education
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html

University of Washington, Evans School of Public Policy and Governance, Electronic Highway
hallway.evans.washington.edu

APPENDIX B:
USING THE "CASE TEACHING METHOD" IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION EDUCATION

The case method is a teaching approach that uses stories of real-world problems to put students in the role of public officials who are faced with difficult decisions that are full of complexities, ambiguities, and uncertainties. In sharp contrast to many other teaching methods, the case method requires that instructors refrain from providing their own opinions about the decisions in question. Rather, the chief task of instructors who use the case method is to ask students to devise and defend solutions to the problems at the heart of each case.

City and county managers are well suited by training and experience to teach using the case method. Experienced managers have faced many difficult problems in their careers and have, by necessity, developed management-oriented thinking and problem-solving skills. Most of these thinking and problem-solving skills were not learned in a classroom, but it is essential to convey them to the next generation of professionals in order to advance the profession and the functioning of today's communities.

Case studies have historically been used as both a teaching method and part of professional development, especially in business and legal education. The Harvard Business School is the most prominent developer and user of case studies. Faculties generally develop these studies with particular learning objectives in mind, using classroom experiences to refine the case prior to publication. Additional relevant documentation—including exhibits (such as financial statements, time lines, and short biographies of main characters), multimedia supplements (such as video-recordings of interviews with the case protagonist), and a carefully crafted teaching note—often accompanies the case studies.

Use of the case method has become a best practice in public sector management education over the last three decades. The case method is used to teach the *application* of public management principles and practices—in other words, "how to think like a public manager." In this capacity, it represents a significant intersection between theory and practice.

In general, fully developed public sector cases have many of the same features as those developed by the Harvard Business School. Teaching notes are frequently available to assist you in designing your case discussion in class and in selecting cases that complement your class learning objectives.

Cases used in class can come from a variety of sources, including problems that you have faced in your own organization or problems that students have faced in their professional experiences. The two largest public sector case collections are housed at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government (www.case .hks.harvard .edu/) and the Univer-sity of Washington's Evans School of Public Policy (Electronic Hallway at hallway.evans.washington.edu/case-teaching).

ICMA also publishes casebooks and individual cases in various publications available through the ICMA website. Some of the ICMA case studies are not designed for teaching but rather to describe a solution to a specific problem; thus, they may not be suitable for classroom use. To see more about the case method in action, you can watch a video from the Harvard Business School at www.youtube.com watch?v=eA5R41F7d9Q.

As an instructor, you are strongly encouraged to add material from your own experience, a video, or news clips to help bring case material alive for students. An opening question that serves as a "hook" for students to engage in the case discussion should be prepared ahead of each case teaching session, along with a general outline of what you want students to explore during the case discussion.

Many experienced case method instructors advise new instructors to enter the classroom with two or three major points to explore in the case discussion; these become your goals for the class session. In addition, it may help you to have an overall theme that you can use as a focus point or an anchor for yourself and the class during the conversation.

The generic case discussion outline that follows can be used as a discussion framework for yourself and your students. You may emphasize only some parts of the outline in a given case, working up to using the full outline as students gain skill and confidence. Depending on class size and case content, case discussions can take from forty-five minutes to two hours.

Basic Outline of a Classroom Case Discussion

1. IDENTIFY from case material
   a) PROTAGONIST and/or DECISION MAKER
   b) Points of TENSION in the decision environment or between stakeholders, groups, or ideas
   c) CENTRAL ISSUE or DECISION QUESTION
   d) Stakeholders and their interests
2. ANALYSIS of issue(s)
   a) Ancillary issues to be considered in addition to the central issue or decision question
   b) Opportunities/barriers faced by the protagonist, stakeholders, and/or organization
   c) Decision criteria that can be used to choose among alternative solutions
3. Identify and evaluate ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS
   a) Compare or contrast the alternatives
   b) Establish the evidence to support evaluation and/or conclusions
4. Identify protagonist's BEST CHOICE or the RECOMMENDED ACTION for decision makers using decision criteria and analysis
5. What ACTIONS are required to IMPLEMENT the best choice?
6. LESSONS LEARNED from the case

Helpful Hints for the Instructor

As the instructor, your job is to facilitate student conversation of the case, not provide the solution or tell stories about your personal (even though heroic) exploits. As class conversations mature, more and more of the conversation should occur among the students and less and less of the discussion with you as the instructor/facilitator. Early case discussions are bumpy affairs, so don't expect a rousing robust discussion the first time around. In the beginning, there will be long silent pauses; wait them out. Some helpful guidelines:

1. Be sure students know. A case discussion is an exploration of ideas, observations, strategies, and opinions; the instructor is not looking for the student with the "right" answer. As such, everyone has a valid point of view and all ideas are welcome; there is no "right" answer in a well-written case. Ask for students' ideas, observations, opinions, and potential strategies.
2. Understand the goal of case teaching and learning. The case method is not about teaching students how to think the way you do, but about how to think for themselves—critically, using evidence, and applying public management practices and techniques to address real-world problems. Challenge students to do so.
3. Encourage conversation. Wait through long pauses in the conversation; use prompts or restate the question being addressed by the group if silence needs some priming.
4. Foster participation in discussion. Say something positive about every student's contribution in order to build trust and engagement. Be respectful, no matter how off-base the student sounds. Ask other students to help if a student is speaking and gets stuck. Respectfulness is key to trust; trust is key to engaged learning. Engaged students use what they have learned at a later point in their careers!
5. Make classroom discussion ground rules known. Encourage civil engagement among students. You may need to establish a few ground rules for this at the outset. Both in and out of class, respectful disagreement and expression of different points of view are encouraged, while personal attacks, blaming, and name calling are discouraged.
6. Track case discussions. Track the main points of the conversation on the board or use an overhead to refer back and track progress. You can design what the board or overhead "record" looks like in advance to complement what you are teaching in the case.
7. Prepare your case discussion. Be sure students have the case reading and any study questions at least one week in advance. Prepare for the case discussion during the class session before by clarifying basic background facts, showing a short video or news article related to the case or subject matter, defining new terms that not all students may understand, and/or providing study questions that the students can use to prepare prior to class. Case preparation in student study groups prior to class can add depth to the class conversation and promote learning. Students who are more reluctant to speak out have an opportunity to practice or develop material to contribute in the smaller group setting.
8. Foster student engagement. Open the classroom case discussion with a question that connects student experience to the case at hand or identi-

fies strongly felt tensions or conflicts described in the case. Create an emotional connection for the students or a clear, focused mental picture of the situation from the perspective of an individual with whom they can relate. This technique hooks students into the case and creates higher energy, encouraging open participation and learning that informs later practice in a student's work life.

9. Develop strategies to increase participation. If students are having a hard time contributing to the conversation, consider the following techniques:

    a. Use name tags in class so you can call on students if you do not know everyone's name. Call on students after giving them advance warning.
    b. Pause midconversation, indicate the next subject that will be discussed, and let one or more students know you will be calling on them to contribute. This gives students some time to think about what they wish to say.
    c. Solicit different points of view periodically during the conversation. To kick-start comments, take an absurd position if no other is offered.
    d. When a student finally participates, compliment or thank the student for his or her contribution to the class discussion.
    e. Break the class down into smaller groups or pairs to discuss some dimension of the case, and have them present their findings to the larger group.
    f. Ask students to select the best option and present their reasoning; then hold a class vote or have them make a group presentation to the class.
    g. Clarify how participating in case discussions contributes to the student's grade in the class.
    h. Attach the case study to a graded written assignment or class presentation completed either before or after the case discussion in class.

10. Close strong. When the case discussion is complete, it is often useful for students to hear what "really happened." You can also use this time to discuss "lessons learned" and how they might apply in practice today. Here is the place to tell stories of your personal exploits as a way of reinforcing lessons learned.
11. Connect the case discussion to other assignments that expand learning. Case discussions can be followed by written assignments that challenge students to critique or expand on the classroom conversation; describe their own case approach, including definition of the problem, solution analysis, evidence and their rational; develop mock staff reports or presentations for elected decision makers; or use the case method to develop "cases" and/or solutions for real-world examples they might explore in an organization outside of the classroom.

Here is what some ICMA members who teach have said about their use of the case method:

"With case studies I usually started by asking about the facts, what do we know as opposed to opinion. I often spent a good deal of time on defining the Problem or Issue because I found that all too often students jump to a conclusion and tended to define the problem in terms of the solution. . . . I even found that my own staff sometimes tended to define the problem in terms of the solution they wanted. So I was keenly aware of this tendency and pressed my class in this area."

As a case teacher, "I would usually listen in on their discussions and sometimes either add to their confusion, ask some questions, or make a comment but certainly not solve it for them. That's the beauty of the case study approach."

"Graduate schools in public policy take pride in offering an evidence-based model of learning, relying upon solid facts, data, and case experiences that can be objectively analyzed and tested to validate the learning objectives and the conclusions which are established. This model is presumed to be equally applicable in the workplace for students pursuing careers in public management. In my opinion, what is not sufficiently understood and recognized by students when they enter into their professional careers in municipal jurisdictions is that this methodology is not always transferable, acceptable, or even believed by some policy makers. The conclusions from such methods of research in local, state, or federal government may prove to be unacceptable and rejected by some policy makers who, by virtue of their own ideology and bias, will question the very origin and truth of the "evidence, data, and facts" as well as case experiences that are used for policy research and which help form the basis for policy recommendations and decisions by elected officials. . . . But in today's political environment, managers as teachers must somehow learn to communicate these realities effectively to students seeking careers in municipal management so they do not become discouraged or disenchanted in their professional career when their best analysis, experience, and advice is rejected."

NOTES

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