



**35th Annual**  
**Teaching Public Administration Conference (TPAC)**  
May 21-23, 2012  
South Padre Island, Texas  
Diversity and Civic Engagement in Teaching Public Administration





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## PREFACE

The 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Teaching Public Administration Conference (TPAC) was held at the Isla Grand Beach Resort on South Padre Island, Texas from May 21-23, 2012. Among the purposes of TPAC is to offer professors, practitioners and community leaders an opportunity to share experiences and ideas as well as to learn about ongoing research that can inform the policy process and enhance the implementation and evaluation of public services. TPAC offers ample opportunities for exchanging ideas, developing new skills, networking and learning about publication opportunities.

The theme of this year's TPAC was "Diversity and Civic Engagement in Teaching Public Administration," and there were a number of presentations that addressed these two important and related concepts that are sometimes treated as separate considerations. Papers presented at the conference as well as roundtable discussions explored various approaches to inclusiveness with civil exchange of views, and keynote speaker, John Cook, presented the "Difficult Dialogues" program that promotes civil discussion of divisive subjects. Innovative teaching techniques plus curriculum development and evaluation were also examined in a number of papers and roundtables. These proceedings record many but not all of the insightful and innovative presentations for TPAC 2012.

Many people contributed to making TPAC 2012 both an informative and enjoyable experience. The contributions of those who presented research papers, participated on roundtables and moderated breakout sessions are greatly

appreciated. We also thank those who served as peer-reviewers for the papers and presentations submitted to TPAC 2012. The efforts of Carlos Figueroa, Kathy Bussert-Webb, Jessie Melander, Louis Falk, Jangsup Choi, Diane Kimoto, Lisa Dicke and Pamela Gibson as peer-reviewers are greatly appreciated.

We also thank Camilla Montoya and Ed.D.ie Woodard from UTB and TSC Creative Services staff for invaluable assistance in imagining how to conduct the conference. Sylvia Soliz, Mayra Nuñez and Evon Nuss of the South Padre Island Convention Center provided tremendous support with the logistics of the conference. Shamina Davis of the UTB and TSC Center for Civic Engagement supported the panel of UTB and TSC students with a Scholarship of Community Engagement (SOCE) grant. Dean Charles Lackey of UTB Graduate Studies supported TPAC with a sponsorship. ME Sharpe is recognized as a long-time supporter and sponsor of TPAC. Jalane Meloun, Bob Roquemore, Diane Kimoto, Jessie Melander and Bob Cunningham provided invaluable support with registration and accounting. John Dunning kept the Teaching Public Administration website continuously updated at [teachingpa.org](http://teachingpa.org).

We also greatly appreciate the efforts of the staff of Isla Grand Beach Resort Hotel, especially Shirley Donahue, Patricia Blancas and Murphy Jeffries for providing the facilities and expertise to conduct this conference.

Leland M. Coxe, Conference Chair  
Kathie Lennertz, Program Chair

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## Civics 101: Whither the State?

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“O I see flashing that this America is only you and me, it’s power, weapons, testimony, are you and me...”

– “By Blue Ontario’s Shore” by Walt Whitman

America is only you and me—which meant then and means now that “you and me” represent the best, and the worst, of what is America. This is something the authors try to instill in their students: as current and future public administrators, “you and me” have a responsibility greater than our private-sector counterparts; we exercise public power. Yet, as Frederickson tells us, “the sovereignty of jurisdictions, and particularly of nation-states, is evaporating out at the top, leaking out at the sides, and seeping out at the bottom.” Privatization, contracting out and a host of other current trends blur the line between public and private—they create what at best is a fuzzy line.

Public administration operates under divided authority; it is in the executive branch but oversight is also done by the other branches. It operates in a climate that is often distrustful of public power. Practitioners and students of public administration must take these facts into account to adequately understand their role in the American political system. Yet training in public administration seldom emphasizes this. It needs to.

This study looks at the argument that civic engagement has been in decline. It is an argument that civic engagement was once the norm, an argument the authors challenge. Rather than declining, the authors argue that civic engagement is returning to what has been the traditional norm in American culture.

## Launching, Enriching, and Sustaining an Online M.P.A. Program: The Cal State San Bernardino Experience

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Cal State San Bernardino launched an online M.P.A. program as an early adopter of distance learning in AY 2005-06. The overall purpose of this presentation is to share our evolving experiences and research concerning online education. Further, we will facilitate an interactive discussion with others about overcoming distance learning challenges while progressively building a sustainable online venue for students.

We believe one of the compelling merits of our proposal lies in the demonstration of 100% of our faculty contributing to our online program. The synergy from this serendipitously cultivates an ongoing learning community where we experiment, share, and support each other in continuous improvement of our online program. The panel will ensure that it lives within the time parameters for a demonstration project while keeping the presentation interactive.

## **The Certified Public Manager (CPM) Program: A Valuable CoM.P.A. nion Program for the Masters in Public Administration (M.P.A.) Program**

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Panelists familiar with both M.P.A. and CPM Programs will review their experiences with both M.P.A. and CPM Programs in Texas and around the U.S.. The panelists shall concentrate on how CPM Programs and M.P.A. Programs can enrich and enhance each other. The experience of CPM Program in Texas and their relationship to M.P.A. Programs in Texas and other states in the U.S. will be explored in detail. Several of the panelists will have had experience as both M.P.A. Directors and CPM Directors at their respective universities.

The proposed panel will review how CPM Programs can serve as a “feeder” into M.P.A. Programs and also discuss how practitioners enrolled in CPM Programs can be used as recruiters and “mentors” for students enrolled in M.P.A. Programs.

With the assistance of the audience the panel will review and evaluate options and make recommendations for enhancing M.P.A. and CPM collaboration in Texas and throughout the U.S.. These recommendations will build toward a paper that can be submitted to the Journal of Public Affairs Education (JPAAE).

## **All Groups Welcome: The Floor is Open for Discussion**

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The National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) seeks to “...ensure excellence in education and training for public service to promote the ideal of public service” (NASPAA, 2012). Therefore, the public administration curriculum should provide students with knowledge about the important functions of government, provide tools to adequately administer public programs, develop skills that enable effective responses to natural disasters and demonstrate a responsibility to be good stewards of public resources. However, these skills represent only part of the duties of an effective public administrator. Public administration education should also facilitate healthy dialogues about diversity, cultural competence and social equity. It has been previously argued that more thoughtful consideration should be given to context (e.g. people, place and time), particularly as it represents an opportunity to discuss the long-term struggles and obstacles of underserved groups in society and what can be done to prevent similar injustices from reoccurring. Research over the last 15 years have attempted to raise the level of consciousness with regard to issues related to racial and gender differences, sexual orientation and class disparities within the field (Alexander, 1997; Alkadry, 1997, 2003; Oldfield, 2003; Oldfield, Candler, and Johnson, 2006; Stivers, 2002, 2007; Witt, 2006). However, as society has become more diverse, students also need to be equipped with skills, knowledge, and abilities that will enable them to successfully engage citizens from these varying walks of life. Thus, the classroom can be used to stimulate critical thinking through assigned reading materials, course work and service learning projects.

This paper seeks to develop core competencies that will foster a more inclusive dialogue and meaningful engagement with the diverse groups represented in our

society. Conducting a thorough analysis of the literature, the researcher will use both historic and contemporary examples to create a framework that will enable public administration faculty to instigate broader dialogues within their courses (core or electives). Therefore, the classroom can be used to expose students to the injustices perpetrated against racial and ethnic minorities; power and privilege relationships that promote heterosexual norms at the expense of homosexual and transsexual rights; and political and religious bias that seeks to restrict the reproductive rights of women. These issues are critical and are becoming embedded in the political discourse, which requires future practitioners to be cognizant of the social contexts that not only impact society, but also their respective constituents. This research incorporates the principles of democracy and uses civic engagement as a process to inform the practices of future administrators.

### **Employing the Philosophy of Pragmatism in the Classroom: Eliciting a Range of Views and Perspectives**

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This round table will provide participants a facilitated discussion on the Pragmatist philosophy, Pragmatism's roots and branches and its role in teaching public administration. Each participant will take part both in discussion and contributing to a problem solving exercise by iPad. The exercise will employ synchronous technology to engage participants in a collaborative learning experience and discussions based in the pragmatic paradigm. The intention is to develop the ability of participants to recognize the role of Pragmatism in teaching public administration.

Pragmatism: a philosophy that places an emphasis on learning through action and building a knowledge base from experience and reflection. Experience is not individualistic since it requires engagement with others in a community. The classroom provides a setting for creating community and harnessing the interactions to increase student understanding. This presentation facilitates a discussion where the participants themselves constitute the community of inquiry and will take part in addressing a problem situation with collaborative technology.

### **Joined up Service Learning: When High School and Graduate Students Collaborate to Improve Community**

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This paper presents an innovative and unique approach to service learning to enhance community. Grounded in the theories of service learning and the civic obligations of higher education institutions, the project is defined as "joined up service learning" in which graduate and high school students were joined together to analyze community needs and suggest strategies for community enhancement. The design, process and outcomes for graduate students, high school students and the community are presented. Recommendations for replicating or building on this model are suggested.

### **Shaping a Culture of Service Learning in Public Administration: The Partners in Community Leadership Model at James Madison University**

Amanda J. Cleveland, James Madison University

Liliokanaio Peaslee, James Madison University

Nicholas Swartz, James Madison University

Each presenter discussed their respective pedagogical techniques for developing service learning projects, lessons learned, recommendations and individual results in student KSA's and community outcomes. Collectively, the panel will offer a model for building and institutionalizing a service learning culture. Special attention will be given to linking PCL projects to core NASPAA competencies as well as exploring innovation in program governance.

## **Implementing a Course in Difficult Dialogues for Valuing Diversity: The Employment of College Course Requirements for Civic Engagement and Public Communication in Inculcating in a Community Value for Diversity**

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From 2005-2009, The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College (UTB and TSC) was operating under a grant from the Ford Foundation for generating difficult dialogues for valuing diversity. The Principal Investigator for the grant was Dr. John Cook, a communication studies expert. Cook along with colleagues implemented a civic engagement project and public communication events such as fora, symposia, town meetings, and theatrical productions to enhance understanding of diversity issues in the Rio Grande Valley. In addition, the UTB and TSC campus introduced a series of monthly events for students and community members referred to as “free speech alley,” with topics germane to the same diversity considerations.

Topics ranged broadly from interfaith discussions to gender issues and immigration and social justice topics. Although the grant has expired, UTB and TSC continues to teach diversity in this manner.

The definitions and reasons for difficult dialogues are discussed herein along with the impact this methodology has had on inculcating more value for diversity in the university and surrounding community located in a very traditional, largely Hispanic community.

## **The Students Talk Back – Assignments and Activities that Promote Deep Learning**

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Dr. Ken Bain (2004) describes “deep learning” as that which involves a change in conceptual understanding and critical thinking. This is contrasted with “strategic learning” (mastering concepts sufficiently to get a desired grade) and “surface learning” (gaining enough familiarity with the topic to avoid an unacceptably low grade).

Dr. Bain notes that people engage in deep learning when they find a topic “important, intriguing, or just beautiful.” Deep learning is more likely when students feel some sense of control over the learning experience and can learn by trial-and-error techniques such as speculation.

This raises the question of what kinds of assignments and activities promote deep learning. Examining this question from a “bottom-up” approach, a group of students at levels ranging from Brownsville Early College High School (BECHS) to graduate school will discuss how particular assignments and activities promoted deep learning for them.

## **Latinos (and Immigrants) in Introductory P.A. Texts; Missing, Maligned, or Appropriately Included?**

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Public administration’s introductory texts shape the field’s parameters and develop M.P.A. graduates’ understanding of how the public service interacts with other parts of our changing society. How well are the texts addressing

issues arising both from anti-Hispanic racism and immigration flows, both legal and extra-legal, into the United States? The paper will explore that question before presenting additional queries and making several modest recommendations.

The purpose of this session is to stimulate discussion of means that text authors, and others, can use to increase public servants' awareness of contemporary challenges confronting U.S. natives of Latino descent, immigrants of various ethnicities, public agencies, non-profit organizations and policy makers.

### **“Meeting of the Minds:” Using Classroom Simulations as Pedagogical Tools for Developing Epistemic Learning Communities (ELC)**

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Recent studies have suggested that classroom simulations, especially in both business schools and public administration programs, can serve as training for real-world application (Gurley, Wilson, and Jackson 2010; Snyder, Acker-Hocevar, and Snyder 2008). This paper demonstrates the extent to which classroom simulations are also useful in upper-level political science courses, at a regional state-supported university, because they serve as effective pedagogical tools for teachers through the development of what the author calls Epistemic Learning Communities™ (ELC). These ELC in turn provide participants with the intellectual environment (Hurd and Stein, 2004) to hone critical thinking skills essential for effective civic engagement, and dealing with “real-world” policy, governance and administrative problematic-situations in the short- and long-terms.

### **Thought Self-Leadership Teaching: Is There Power in Constructive Thinking?**

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There is a growing concern in health care organizations with managerial ethics. Richmond and Smith (2005) found that health care professionals, from staff to managers, tended to agree with questionable ethical practices and exhibited Machiavellian propensities. In its ethics policy statement of 2007, the American College of Healthcare Executives, has stressed ethics education for health care executives as a means for acquiring ethical competences and commitment to high ethical conduct. Similarly, the American Society for Public Administration’s ethics code emphasizes personal integrity in all activities to inspire public confidence and trust in the public service.

Two approaches to teaching ethics—the character education approach and the cognitive-developmental approach —have gained widespread interest and attention in university settings (Tappan, 1998; Pritchard, 1999). The former approach is essential in enhancing administrators’ awareness of their character dimensions and the fitness of their values with those of the regime (Reynolds, 1995). However, the listing of principles and virtues has proven easier than their translation into practice (Reynolds, 1995). The cognitive development approach views moral development as a problem solving capacity (Piaget, 1962). Piaget’s (1962) theory states that cognitive skills development can be accelerated through educational approaches. The Center for Civic Education (1994) has also identified constructive thinking, and the formulation of positions on public issues as important civic skills to be fostered through educational methods. One such method, the thought self-leadership (TSL) approach—which focuses on teaching individuals how to create constructive patterns of beliefs and assumptions, self-talk and mental imagery—has proven successful in enhancing individuals’ cognitive processes, behavior and affective states in a variety of workplace management training programs (Neck and Manz, 1996b). VanSandt and Neck (2003) theorized that TSL training could influence individuals’ ethical thinking and ethical behaviors.

Based on the social cognitive theory of morality (Bandura, 1991), theory of TSL (Neck and Manz, 1996b) and VanSandt and Neck's (2003) propositions, this study examines the impact of TSL teaching on students' learning awareness of (1) the Use of constructive patterns of beliefs, self-talk and mental imagery, (2) the importance of ethics and social responsibility, and (3) Machiavellian practices. A pre-experimental research design, the one-group pretest-posttest design was used. The TSL teaching method was implemented in an elective M.P.A. course, "Healthcare Administration Law", at a large university in the Midwestern region of the United States. The research was conducted on the universe of 16 graduate students. The class met for six hours five Saturdays over a semester of 14 weeks. Two hours were devoted to TSL training as part of the course. Session topics included: TSL cognitive strategies and their relevance to the ethics domain, beliefs and assumptions, self-talk, mental imagery and relapse prevention.

The results obtained from Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks test indicated that there was a statistically significant improvement between students' pre- and post-test self-talk, mental imagery and Machiavellian scores. The study provides preliminary evidence that strategies in self-regulation of cognitions may possibly be learned in a university setting and may promote students' independent constructive thinking in ethics and civic engagement.

### **Jumping on the Bandwagon: Contemporary Instructional Practices at a Historically Black University**

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National trends in education show the strength in non-traditional instructional practices. With studies showing at least 20 percent of all students now taking at least

one online class, it is obvious that the field of public administration cannot ignore the future of modified teaching. The changes in teaching delivery have become reality for an array of reasons favoring both students and M.P.A. programs. Students are commanding the flexibility due to limited time and packed schedules, while M.P.A. programs nationally have been forced to make changes based on budget cuts, ability to serve students in more remote locations and due to competition with other M.P.A. programs.

The purpose of this study is to illustrate how a variety of non-traditional teaching methods have been successfully incorporated into the M.P.A. program at a small historically black university. M.P.A. faculty at the University of the Virgin Islands use an assortment of teaching methods including Asynchronous Distance Learning, Synchronous (video-conferencing) and hybrid (mixed) courses. The authors offer best practices for variance on courses rooted in course type (lecture, seminar, etc.), accessibility and student enrollment. Implications are also suggested.

### **Through "The Wire": How TV Can Influence Teaching and Learning in Public Administration Courses**

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Many universities in the U.S. are looking for and are using new ways to enrich their courses beyond the basic structure of articles, books and lectures. Professors and department administrators design programs to incorporate not only a diverse array of subjects but also attempt to expose students to the challenges, issues and realities of communities. Harvard University, Duke University, Middlebury College, University of California – Berkeley, Loyola University New Orleans, Syracuse University (Bennett, 2010) and many others are all offering courses that are using television series to teach fields ranging from social science to media and film studies to anthropology.

Historically, Public Administration (PA) curricula attempt to bridge theoretical concepts with practical depictions of real-world situations; attempting to provide students with an understanding of the public organizations that students

oftentimes find themselves working within. By expanding instructional methods to include select visual components - those that depict the “real-world” that faculty need to impart on students – student learning may be encouraged and their grasp of course material may be strengthened.

This proposed presentation is aimed at answering the question, “How do we facilitate examination of a range of views and perspectives in an atmosphere of mutual respect in a diverse population?” The answer: Through “The Wire”. A fictional drama that initially aired in 2002 on HBO, “The Wire” gives viewers an uncensored glimpse into the lives of elected officials, public administrators, public school administrators and the constituents that they work to serve. Although a fictional television program, “The Wire” accurately depicts the challenges of many levels of public administration – from the drug dealer on the corner to the corrupt politician in the state house. Harvard professor, William Julius Wilson suggests that “The Wire”, “forces us to confront social realities more effectively than any other media production in the era of so called reality TV.” (2010)

Through an examination of existing course syllabi, scholarly writings, interviews with university professors using “The Wire” as a primary or supplemental teaching resource and personal experience, the study argues that “The Wire” provides PA faculty with a tool to expose students to theories and concepts in a format unlike any other. The show is distinctively different from academic research as it portrays the intersection of life in urban communities, government, schools and life’s everyday struggles – connections that “are very difficult to illustrate in academic works.” (Williams and Chaddha, 2010)

## **Teaching Spirituality in Public Administration: The Shortcomings of Secularized Faith-based Ministries Regarding Felon Disconnect**

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A current topic in teaching spirituality in public administration is the rising concerns of publicly funding faith-based organizations (Chaves and Wineburg, 2010; Lindsay and Wuthnow, 2010). The need for public funding and prescribed accountability has prompted an atmosphere of secularization for faith-based ministries (Vita and Wilson, 2001, Green, 2000). This materialistic and programmatic progression of agenda has eclipsed the standing of spiritual intervention offered by faith-based prisoner reentry programs (Sharif, 2004). Faith-based prisoner reentry programs provide planned services to address issues that threaten the successful return of offenders to the community (Hugen et al., 2006). The planning of such programs should be in the context of ministries rooted in spirituality.

Spiritual interventions, such as faith-based ministries, are still needed to combat the inherent socio-cultural and psychological disconnect found in felons’ life stages. In this exploratory examination, the researchers provide an understanding of the “ineffectual nature” of secularized faith-based ministries as it relates to the problems of felon disconnect. This investigation delineates “ineffectual nature” as the abandoning of spiritual intent in order to convey public professionalism and gain access to government resources and funding (Vita and Wilson, 2001, Green, 2000). This linkage of thematic content reveals the weakening of secularized faith-based ministries’ capacity to infuse felony reform with a higher purpose as it relates to communal bonding.

In addition, this study offers strategies for promoting diversity in programs that offer spiritually - focused civic engagement. By encouraging spirituality in faith-based ministries, offenders will benefit from positive life adjustments essential to their reentry into the community.

### **Preparing Future Public Managers to Effectively Lead Diverse Local Government Organizations and Communities**

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Rapid demographic change is the new reality for 21st century communities. Consequently, public managers need skills to effectively manage a diverse workforce and meet the demands of an increasingly diverse citizenry. An important consideration for faculty is how aspiring public managers should be prepared for the opportunities and challenges this contemporary landscape presents. Some questions considered for discussion at the proposed roundtable include:

- How are we preparing students for the changing face of communities?
- What can we learn from private sector organizations that have experienced the benefits and challenges of diverse workplaces?
- What other relevant questions should be considered?

The above questions are designed to start a discussion about ensuring students in public management programs are prepared for the realities of today's workplaces and communities. Rice (2004) addressed this issue and provided an example of assignments used in his course that challenge students to think critically about diversity issues.

### **Reconsidering the Microeconomics Curriculum in Public Administration Education**

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Presentation objectives and description: Microeconomics coursework is a common part of master's programs in public administration, yet is understudied in the pedagogical literature. This presentation will analyze the role microeconomics plays in the M.P.A. core curriculum, the various teaching methods and topics covered. The author argues that a different focus and pedagogical methodology is required from most M.P.A. economics curricula to integrate the courses to the rest of the program, emphasize public and non-profit management and build non-structured problem solving skills. The analysis includes comparative statics of course requirements and electives for a random sample of M.P.A. programs.

### **An Evaluation of the Cultural Competency Assessment Instrument for M.P.A. Students: Identifying and Meeting Needs for Enhanced Cultural Competency**

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A culturally competent public administration acknowledges the importance of culture, is aware of the dynamics that result from cultural differences, increases cultural knowledge and adapts services to meet culturally unique needs (see, Rice 2007, Benancourt, et al.,2003). While cultural competency is important for effective service delivery (Rice 2007), few universities have specific courses on the subject of cultural competency. In fact, less than half of top-ranked M.P.A. programs in the U.S. expose students to "core courses that related to any aspects of

diversity” (White 2004:120). If M.P.A. programs are to integrate cultural competency into the curriculum, it must be done efficiently. This study uses the validated Cultural Competency Assessment (CCA) instrument among M.P.A. students (Schim, et al. 2003). The CCA is modified to be suitable for M.P.A. students and public administrators. The results will shed light on student strengths and weaknesses in the area of cultural competence and validate the tool for M.P.A. students. Based on what is learned, priority areas for cultural competency are identified and recommendations are made.

## **Should Social Media be used to Promote Civic Engagement among Students or Would It be Safer to Play with Faulty Firecrackers?**

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Although there are global, cultural differences of degree, humans\*\* are social creatures. To feed and fuel our craving for interaction, social media was born. The words “Facebook,” “Twitter,” “LinkedIn,” “Digg,” “Tumblr,” and “REd.D.it,” had no meaning just a few short years ago, but now provide an entire framework for personal and work lives. As of December 31, 2011, statistics suggest that nearly 79% of the North American population uses the Internet, and 50.3% of Americans and 11.5% or 799,092,160 people of the world use Facebook (“Internet world stats,” 2012). On an average day in December 2011, 483,000,000 users checked their Facebook pages at least once a day (“Facebook pressroom factsheet,” 2012). The weed-like growth of social media is by no means limited to Facebook, currently available in over 70 languages (“Facebook pressroom factsheet”, 2012). It can easily be labeled “a global phenomenon” as even China has its somewhat-parallel-to-Facebook social media site called Renren which means “everybody” and has been the buzz of Twitter (Goldkorn, 2011).

It makes sense that educators would want to capitalize on such a popular pastime as social media. Not only do

students tend to have an interest in social media, but they already have the know-how to navigate the ins-and-outs of features such as “friending” or “poking” (Facebook Help Center, 2012). So interest coupled with knowledge of use should equate to an educational goldmine of a tool for the college instructor, particularly for encouraging civic engagement, which lends itself to online collaboration and communication.

This may be the case, except that the United States educational process does operate in a legal environment. Issues of copyright law, intellectual property of both the student and instructor, and privacy issues should be considered. This paper will address both the pros and cons of utilizing social media as part of a college course to encourage civic engagement. Particular attention will be made to U.S. copyright law, Technology Education And Copyright Harmonization (TEACH) Act, Family Educational Requirements Act (FERPA) of 1974 and the new amendment (Notice of Proposed Rulemaking) proposed that comes up for a vote on May 23, 2012. After reading this paper, the gentle reader may make a better educated judgment on whether he or she is prepared to use social media to aid the educational process, or whether other non-social media Web 2.0 options are better ancillaries that less resemble faulty fireworks.

## **Outcome-Driven Learning (ODL): Valuing Diversity through the Power of Communication**

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An open discussion about the Outcome-Driven Learning (ODL) (Kimoto, Mulder, Frasco and Jackson, in print) approach and how this system expands diversity by utilizing a holistic communication approach as the conduit for change in strategic civic engagement (Kimoto, Frasco, Mulder, and Juta, 2009.) (Kimoto, 2011) The roundtable discussion will focus on how ODL cultivates both traditional interpersonal and web-based communication skills in

students (Nagata, 2004) (NAASPA, 2011) (Henry, Goodsell, Lynn, Stivers, and Wamsley, 2009) while recognizing the limitations of each of these media. Presenters will then give an example of a civic engagement assignment which creates action-learning opportunities with community partners. The objectives of this presentation are:

1. Discuss how ODL prepares students for lifelong civic engagement and employment through the power of effective interpersonal communication.
2. Reveal how ODL is one of the answers to the abbreviated web-based communication which dominates our societal interactions (texting, tweeting, facebook, etc.)
3. Explain how ODL develops proficiencies with technological and interpersonal communications, both of which are need for today's public leaders.
4. Describe ODL activities which cultivate civic involvement, and help students realize their personal voices, while respecting the differences of others.
5. Investigate the philosophical and theoretical underpinnings of ODL, and how these tenets expand diversity and civic engagement through thoughtful communication.

### **Predicting Graduate Success in the M.P.A.: Ethnicity, Professional Service and the GRE**

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Graduate schools around the country frequently use graduate entrance exams (GRE, MAT, GMAT) as one of the key factors in determining graduate school admission. While the justification for requiring such exams is that they are good predictors of graduate school success, this claim is not without controversy. Graduate entrance exams such as the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) have been criticized for not reflecting the types of skills and abilities necessary to succeed in contemporary graduate programs, and for susceptibility to gaming by test-takers.

Additional concerns arise that these tests may be racially biased. Partially in response to these criticisms, the GRE was revised in 2011. Educational Testing Services (ETS), who administers the test, claims that the revised GRE will be more reflective of student ability and will therefore better predict student success in graduate school. In order to test this claim, however, we must first ascertain the predictive ability of the old GRE.

The purpose of this research is twofold. First, we use individual-level student data from the University of Memphis Division of Public and Nonprofit Administration from 1993 through 2011 to test the predictive ability of the GRE on M.P.A. student success. Specifically, we examine the relationship between GRE scores and graduate grade point average (GPA) for three key student subgroups: African American students, students in the Nonprofit and Public Policy and Management program concentrations, and those students with professional experience in the public or nonprofit sector. Preliminary findings suggest there is a relationship between GRE scores and Graduate GPA. We further find that ethnicity and M.P.A. concentration are significantly correlated with GRE scores, while professional experience is not. Thus M.P.A. program administrators may wish to consider these factors when making admissions and GRE waiver decisions. The second purpose of this research is to establish a baseline against which to compare the ability of the revised GRE to predict M.P.A. student success. This baseline will help determine whether the changes to the GRE are indeed an improvement over the previous test. Once the predictive validity of the revised GRE is determined, M.P.A. program administrators can determine if the GRE should be weighed more heavily, less heavily, or be considered at all when making admissions decisions.

### **Teaching the Changing Faces of Tax and Revenue Policies in Louisiana: A Historical Review of the Audit Reports from 1856 to 2010**

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A state accounting auditor's report primarily provides financial information using accounting jargon. The financial information shows the expectations and the realities for each period reported upon. The report does not explain why certain actions such as legislation of a new type of tax were taken. In other words the auditor's report does

not tell the reader why taxes on the hospitality businesses were enacted. However, over time and taking note of events at different periods, a keen eye can observe the different taxes and infer the reasons/policies about a state's taxes and/or revenue policies. Possible sources of information about the reasons for each type of tax are: (1) the legislative minutes, (2) local newspapers, and (3) the state court records. It also, seems that a review of economic events such as the great depression or the development of commerce or anything that the state leaders deemed worthy of financing through taxation may explain the reasons or purposes of enacting a particular tax.

The auditor's report for the state of Louisiana was used to illustrate the process. Thirty (30) accounting audit reports covering the period 1856-2010 for the state of Louisiana were obtained. The thirty audit reports were not obtained for equal lengths of intervals. For example; we have reports after every two years and others that are every five years. This irregularity among the length of periods reviewed was due to our inability to obtain consecutive annual reports. From the available reports, two explanations seem to permeate Louisiana's tax policies. The two reasons are need and opportunity. For example; when a need for developing intellectual capacity arose, an education tax was enacted. Then when New Orleans began to attract people to settle and develop property, a need to protect property from flooding due to water overflow of the Mississippi River, a tax for construction and maintenance of levees was introduced. We note that the levee tax is no longer on the audit report because the federal government assumed the responsibility.

When tourism began to thrive, taxes on the hospitality industry were introduced. Nowhere in the audit report did we read about the consideration of the taxpayers' ability to pay. Some taxes have been discontinued and new ones have been enacted over the years. The amount of individual income tax revenue has continued to grow over the years. However, to appreciate the real growth, one would have to look at the amounts collected in conjunction with inflation rates during those periods.

New names and subcategories of some taxes have been used in the past. For example, for some time period there was a tax on alcohol. Later on subcategories of alcohol such as beer or wine began to appear on the auditor's report. The main author plans to conduct an extended year by year study to cover the past 100 years of taxation in the state.

## Getting the "Satisfaction" Out of Student-Based Course Evaluations: Collecting Data That is Fair and Relevant to the Teaching/Learning Process

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Student surveys and their associated measures of student "satisfaction" play a critical role in faculty tenure and reappointment decisions. Crumbly and Reichelt (2009) in their study of teaching effectiveness contend that student evaluations have destroyed higher education. They believe that it has led to grade inflation and the dumbing down of curricula. Fish (2010) questions the value of student evaluation surveys. He believes that most surveys simply measure satisfaction based on a set of expectations that bear no relationship to the efficacy of learning.

This presentation reports on a faculty-driven project (in a private New York City college) aimed at making student-based course surveys more relevant and objective. The goal of the project was to create a data base more relevant to learning. Concurrently we sought to have more objective data used in faculty promotion and reappointment decisions. The barriers and political culture in creating a more relevant and equitable system to evaluate faculty will also be discussed.

## Public Administration Internships: Preparing Students for the Working World

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This paper addresses the importance of internships in academic curricula. The focus is on how internships provide real world experience to students who are learning the relevant knowledge and skills required to enter into a specific career path such as public administration and the field of criminal justice. The discussion evolves around the premise that students will be able to relate the theory

learned in the classroom to the working world via various public agency disciplines in the field of criminal justice, such as corrections, law enforcement, the judiciary, juvenile justice, or social justice. The paper includes an analysis of traits such as leadership, communication, social change, diversity, and ethics developed from data in 101 criminal justice student internship final projects created at the conclusion of their fifteen week experience.

The objectives of the presentation are:

1. An assessment of student internships in the department of public administration – criminal justice concentration. Whether students are prepared for the working world in the areas of leadership, communication, social change, diversity, and ethics?
2. Does the internship experience satisfy the curriculum learning outcomes and at the same time provide a benefit to the community (agencies served) as well as enlightenment to the university?

## Public Managers, Civic Engagement and the Future

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Academics have long lamented the lack of civic engagement in America. Since the 2008 Recession some Americans have stepped up their involvement in the debate about the role and cost of government. Citizens showing up at town meetings and legislative hearings are complaining about the cost of government. Granted political activists like the Tea Party members may be more involved than the average citizen. Indeed the Tea Party's version of civic engagement is unique in that there does not seem to be a leader or a clear agenda. However the rhetoric generated by movement' has had an impact on politicians. By supporting politicians who pledge to shrink government, they have shifted the discourse on the role of government. This debate is more than just the latest cycle of a taxpayer revolt. It seems to be about government centralization, devolution and cost. Both sides of the political spectrum seem to be mobilized. The type of groups mobilized may have surprised civic engagement advocating academics.

The Tea Party members have staged several anti-government demonstrations in Washington. A variety of left-leaning citizens have demonstrated against Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker's attempts to curb the collective bargaining scope of public unions. Republican candidates for the 2012 Presidential Election have advocated the termination of agencies ranging from the Department of Education to the Environment Protection Agency. President Obama wants to consolidate six major federal departments and agencies with responsibilities for business and trade laws, although the fiscal problems of the U.S. Postal Service do not seem to be amenable to anything less than a cutback of services. Congresspersons get letters from citizens demanding a continuation of service. As a result the Postal Service cannot make the changes it needs to make. In other words, there is a growing concern about the general cost and role of government. For many government agencies, these attacks are unsettling.

Government-mandated reorganizations, budget shortfalls and technologically-induced obsolescence are challenges for agencies and public managers.

This roundtable will discuss the challenges public managers face when dealing with these growing, external, and disruptive arguments about the role and cost of government. The questions we plan to address are: Should public managers take sides in these debates? Can they afford to stay neutral? Can they ignore the subtext of the debate such as resentment toward public employee benefits and the inefficiency of the government in general? What are the downsides of devolution of government? If the federal government gets out of its massive service function, what would replace it? State and local governments? The private sector? Finally, how can we make government more efficient without politically-imposed reorganization and devolution? The roundtable will also discuss ways in which public administration teachers can prepare their students to cope with the issues associated with the current government debate.

## Awareness of Multiculturalism and M.P.A. Students

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Public administration scholars have discussed the merits of representative bureaucracy for quite some time. Progress has certainly been made in public sector diversification, at least at the federal level. For example, in 2003, 47 percent of women, 12 percent of African-Americans, and 11 percent of Latinos worked for the federal government (Dresang 2009). The clientele that public administrators serve is also increasingly diversified, as the U.S. becomes more heterogeneous. A more diverse workforce and populace has significantly influenced the public sector, such as organizations becoming more aware of issues relating to discrimination and harassment as well as making policy decisions to better accommodate the needs of a diversified workforce (Cayer 2004). In addition, we have seen Master of Public Administration (M.P.A.) programs integrating material relating to multi-culturalism and diversity into their curriculum. Teaching future public administrators how to understand and relate to diverse coworkers and clients creates challenges for public affairs education. It is unclear whether M.P.A. students are becoming more knowledgeable and aware of issues relating to multi-culturalism and diversity. In other words, are programs using the most effective techniques to raise diversity awareness in their students? To address this question, we examine whether M.P.A. students become more knowledgeable and aware of multi-cultural and diversity issues after they complete courses that cover material relating to multi-culturalism and diversity. We use a pre-post evaluation design to assess whether M.P.A. students change their views related to multi-culturalism and diversity issues as a result of class materials and assignments meant to enhance awareness. We have collected data from assessment surveys for several years and report on our preliminary findings. We are not only able to assess the changes of students in particular courses, but the change in attitudes as students move through the entire program.

## An M.P.A. Curriculum for Local Governance and Community Development

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This paper describes a collaborative, integrated service learning and action research model specifically designed to meet four strategic purposes: (1) to provide students with hands-on learning opportunities that build core skills by putting theory into practice in a real-time, reflective manner; (2) to contribute to West Virginia University's institutional land grant mission to improve the quality of life in West Virginia; (3) to provide substantive and sustained community design and development in a proven developmental process; and (4) to produce all three results in collaboration across disciplines through aligned curriculum and integrated service learning and action research. The principal partners are West Virginia University's (WVU) Division of Public Administration, Eberly College of Arts and Sciences, and Landscape Architecture Program in the Division of Resource Management, Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design. The model is being tested in a pilot project during 2011-2013 in Moundsville, West Virginia, a Marshall County city with a population of about 9,000.

This is a collaborative, integrated service learning and action research model and pilot project specifically designed to meet four strategic purposes:

1. to provide students with hands-on learning opportunities that build core skills by putting theory into practice in a real-time, reflective manner;
2. to contribute to West Virginia University's institutional land grant mission to improve the quality of life in West Virginia;
3. to provide substantive and sustained community design and development in a proven developmental process; and
4. to produce all three results in collaboration across disciplines through aligned curricula and integrated service learning and action research.

## Project-Based Learning (PBL) to Enhance Civic Engagement and Increase Student Success

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What we have to learn to do, we learn by doing . . . Aristotle

Students in M.P.A. programs are diverse, coming from different personal and professional backgrounds. One responsibility, as an educator in the field of public administration/public affairs, is to bring that diverse group of students together, and to provide them with the skills necessary to achieve successful careers in the public sector. Besides just wanting to have students develop skills and competencies, it is equally important to have them develop connections with the community in which they live and work. To accomplish the objectives of having students learn competencies and skills needed in the public workforce, work with diverse populations, and engage with the community, project-based learning (PBL) experiences are an excellent pedagogical tool. According to the Buck Institute for Education (2003), Project-Based Learning is “a systematic teaching method that engages students in learning knowledge and skills through an extended inquiry process structured around complex, authentic questions and carefully designed projects and tasks” (Markham, Larmer, and Ravitz, 2003, p.4). By structuring courses in the curriculum around projects that help solve needs in our communities, M.P.A. programs can increase the civic engagement of students and provide vital services to the community. Working on projects allows students to apply the skills they have been learning in the classroom to real-life situations. It also provides opportunities for students to work with agencies in the community which can develop into long-term relationships outside of the university. The capstone is an exceptionally good course to use a project-based approach, since it allows students to successfully demonstrate their ability in each of the five universal competencies based on NASPAA standards. The purpose of this paper is to present information on the design of a project-based learning (PBL) course and how this can help students become more actively engaged citizens within, and for, their communities. A description and history of project-based learning (PBL) will be presented, including how this pedagogical approach fits into the larger experiential-learning or service-learning

literature. Considerations on course design will be discussed, as will challenges in deciding possible projects to complete. Summary data from a course using project-based learning will be presented to demonstrate its social worth to the community and to offer experiences from students completing projects in this course. To conclude, suggestions on best practices will be provided.

## An Interdisciplinary Proposal to Address Fiscal Retrenchment

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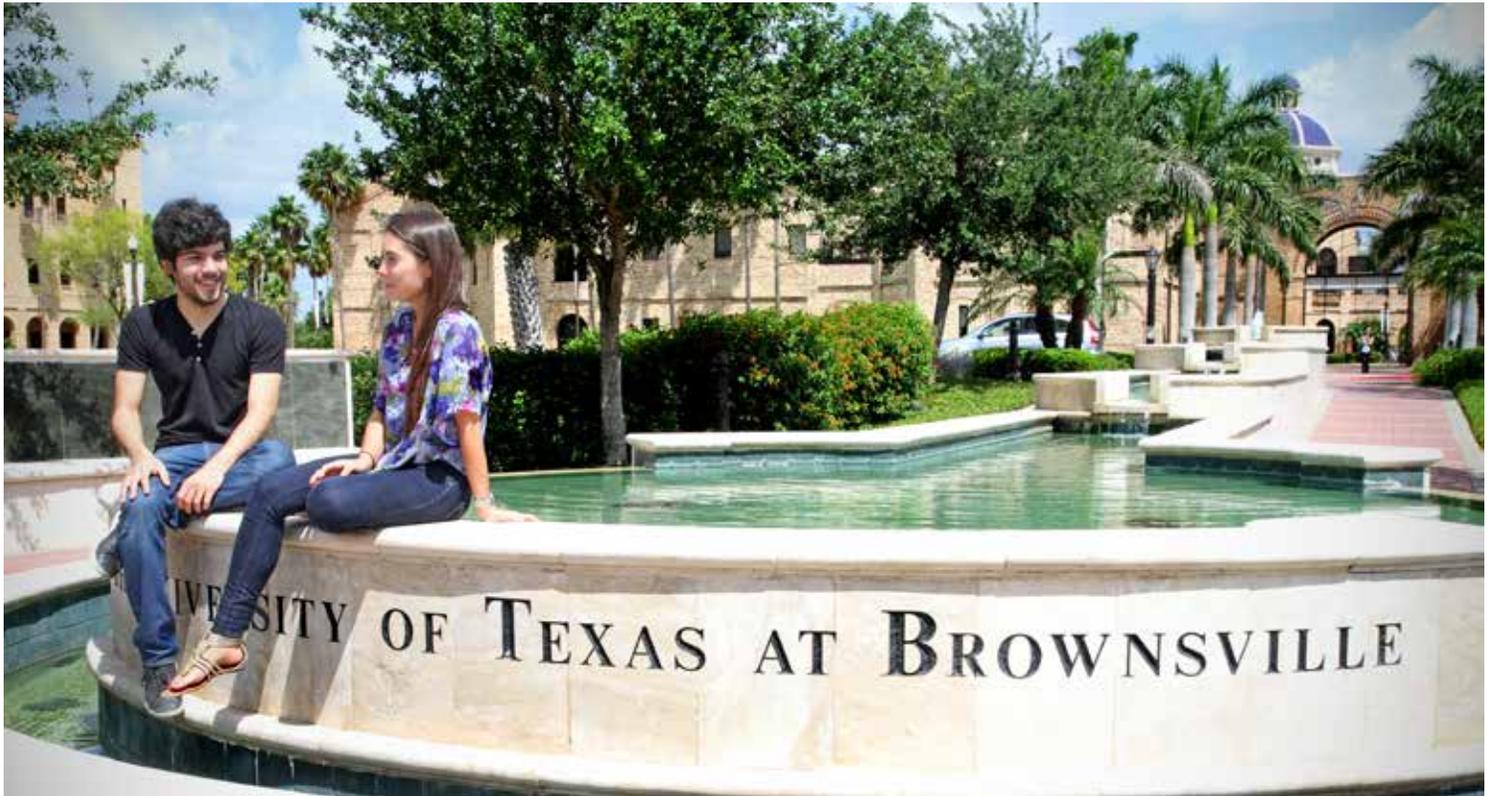
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The past decade has seen a remarkable drop in state-supported funding for institutions of higher learning. Prior to the recession of 2007, many states were reducing the amount of support going to higher education. Over the last five years, this trend has continued and expanded to place many colleges and universities in financial difficulty. In response, institutions have significantly increased tuition and fees, cut costs, drained investment portfolios, dipped heavily into endowments, and have attempted to upgrade their capital giving campaigns. While cost cutting and fund raising look to be part of the higher education landscape for the foreseeable future; the authors of this paper believe the greatest gains in the academic environment may be found in high quality programs designed with creative and intentional use of scarce resources. The interdisciplinary M.P.A. Program described herein provides both an effective and efficient graduate education for the students. Student evaluations, alumni surveys, pre and post testing data, employer surveys, nationally standardized test scores, and a variety of other measures illustrate the high quality and low cost of the program. Recent accreditation visits and reports from NASPAA, SACS, and an internal review all revealed an overall design that may be of interest to other institutions. The maximization of faculty resources combined with the economies of scale of on campus and on line programming do much to alleviate the financial challenges of the current economy.

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