

## **National Teaching Public Administration Conference Purpose and Recent History**

The purpose of the conference is to promote excellence in teaching through shared experience and research. The conference provides an excellent opportunity for improving classroom teaching skills, sharing concerns about courses, program content and the general direction of public administration education. It also serves as a source of expertise for professors, administrators, students and practitioners concerned with:

- (1) The preparation of the next generation of professionals in public service and
- (2) Developing professional competency and leadership in individuals currently associated with administration of public and non-profit organizations.

The conference has been run on an ad hoc basis without standing committees since 1978. An annual business meeting is held at each conference where the direction and site of the next conference are determined. Periodically the teaching conference is held in conjunction with the Public Administration Network (PAT-Net) conference.

During the conference business meetings in 2010 and 2011 the decision was made to formally associate the conference with the ASPA Section on Public Administration Education (SPAE). The conference will be known as the Annual SPAE Teaching Public Administration Conference.

- Rationale: For the Teaching Conference this provides a membership base, an ASPA hosted web site, formal continuity in conference leadership and planning, and the opportunity for a broader baseline for attendance. For SPAE this provides the members with an annual conference, the opportunity for a meeting other than at the National ASPA Conference, and a baseline for expanding section member benefits. (This action was discussed and favorably considered at the March SPAE business meeting.)

The decision was also made to transfer the National Teaching Public Administration Conference web site (<http://www.teachingpa.org>) and archives will to the SPAE website (<http://www.aspaonline.org/spae/>).

- Rationale: The current conference web domain and site have been privately maintained and funded. The transition will allow ASPA and SPAE to share this responsibility.

For a good history of the first ten years of the conference, see the “Reflections” link and the article by Linda Wolfe – written as part of the 1988 Conference Proceedings.

Over the past 15 years, the informal leadership for the conference has been provided by Dr. Bob Cunningham ([rcunning@utk.edu](mailto:rcunning@utk.edu)) University of Tennessee at Knoxville. Dr. John Dunning ([jdunning@troy.edu](mailto:jdunning@troy.edu)) Troy University, AL has served as the conference web administrator since 2007. Both Bob and John have retired from full-time teaching and have taken on the project of gathering the conference archives – the current function of this website.