

**MARK O. HATFIELD SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT  
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION DIVISION  
MPA PROGRAM  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION SPECIALIZATION**

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Sarah Jo Chaplen, City Manager, Hillsboro, Oregon; Ellen Conley, Assistant City Manager, Hillsboro, Oregon, Oregon; Joseph Gall, City Administrator, Fairview, Oregon; James Hough, City Manager, Banks, Oregon; Scott Lazenby, City Manager, Sandy, Oregon; David Waffle, City Manager, Cornelius, Oregon, Carina Christensen, Assistant to the City Manager, Tualatin, Oregon.

INTRODUCTION: The 2007 Census of Governments found that there was one federal government, fifty state governments, and 89,476 local governments.<sup>1</sup> Some 39,044 of these governments are general purpose local government jurisdictions such as cities, towns, and counties.<sup>2</sup> In Oregon there are 1,546 local governments with 161,419 employees.<sup>3</sup> The most recent available Census of Governments data show that local government employees represent 63.1% of all public employees nation-wide, the states another 24.1%, and the federal government civilian employees only 12.8%.<sup>4</sup>

The International City/County Management Association has become increasingly concerned, as is the Oregon City/County Management Association, that there is in process a substantial trend toward retirement of local government administrators without a sufficient number of younger professionals entering and moving through their career progression to replace those leaving the field with top quality, well prepared managers. Indeed, ICMA found in its 2006 survey that only 13% of city managers were forty or under.<sup>5</sup> With the large number of expected retirements of the current, this situation is likely to intensify, as is the need for a new generation of local government managers. The ICMA and the state organizations wish to support efforts to encourage more students to consider a local government administration career

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<sup>1</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, Local Governments and Public School Systems by Type and State: 2007, at <http://ftp2.census.gov/govs/cog/GovOrgTab03ss.xls>, as of November 12, 2008.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>U.S. Census, Compendium of Public Employment 2002, Table 1:Summary of Public Employment and Payrolls by Type of Government: March 2002, National Summary, p. 1, at <http://www.census.gov/prod/2004pubs/gc023x2.pdf>, as of November 12, 2008.

<sup>5</sup>International City/County Management Association, "Next Generation Initiative: Statistics and Data," <http://icma.org/main/bc.asp?bcid=812&hsid=9&ssid1=2868>, as of November 12, 2008.

and to offer assistance in the form of internships, professional conference participation, and other career building activities. Additionally, those same organizations seek to enhance options for those presently working in local government departments to consider moving to a general management position that would lead to manager or assistant manager positions.

There are few MPA programs in the nation that either specialize in education for local government or that have an established specialization in local government administration, none of which are in the Pacific Northwest.

Many students entering graduate training are not aware of the possibilities in local government careers. When they learn that these are professional positions that pay reasonable well, carry quite substantial fringe benefits, and offer attractive retirement opportunities, they often find local government an interesting career option. Even more attractive is the fact that local government offers a position where efforts bear fruit in a relatively short period of time. There is also a close connection between a local government professionals' work and a clearly visible impact on the lives of residents of their communities.

Between our faculty and area local government professionals, the Public Administration Division of the Hatfield School of Government has knowledge and skills to offer students who are moving toward a career in local government administration. There are a variety of courses offered in other units of the university that can also be taken by our MPA students with that goal in mind.

Finally, and of singular importance, is the willingness of area local government professionals to work with us in encouraging students to consider a local government career. They have been mobilizing to assist students in appropriate professional development activities that will help them move into local government administration careers. Several of those managers have been serving on an advisory committee to assist faculty in working toward development of the specialization. They have also been actively promoting professional development opportunities, providing PA 509 placements, and working to make internships available to our student. See e.g., the attached Oregon City/County Management Association, "Resources for students of PSU's Hatfield School of Government MPA program" document. These discussions have included consideration of the need to enhance point of entry positions for a first step on the local government management career ladder.

A number of our MPA students have received significant career placement opportunities as a result of the good work and enthusiasm of our students and the support of area local government professionals. One student won the competition for the Robert Kincaid Memorial Internship in the City of Lake Oswego and won the ICMA Stene Award which is a national recognition with competition from many students with a local government focus from MPA programs around the nation. Others have been finalists in the Kincaid competition and are now applying for ICMA local government fellowships.

Faculty members have been active in teaching, service, and research in local government. Professor Morgan has published a number of articles in leading journals, including the Public

Administration Review, on local government administration and has worked with cities, counties, and other local governments in the Pacific Northwest for many years. Professor Shinn has worked with a variety of local governments for years and has particular interest and knowledge of special district operations. Professor Shinn is also an expert on intergovernmental relations and governance and has taught a course in that area in the past. Professor Ingle has worked with Professors Morgan and Shinn in an ongoing local government professional development program in Washington County and in other communities over time in the U.S. and abroad. Professor Ingle and Professor Nishishiba have led the Japan program with Wasida University and have offered programs at PSU and in Japan for local government officials. Professor Nishishiba has been working also been working with area local government agencies on issues of workforce diversity and has been building her knowledge and skills in local government administration. Professor Cooper was Chair of the Department of Public Administration at the University of Kansas, the nation's leading MPA program for those entering city management career paths and has been actively involved in the International City/County Management Association over the years serving on its Task Force on Small Cities and Towns. He is currently serving on the ICMA Publications Advisory Committee. He teaches local government administration, maintains a local government website, and has sought to integrate local government foci in various aspects of public administration literature.

**THE SPECIALIZATION:** The specialization consists of three elements that include Area V specialization courses, Area II relevant skill development courses, and a limited but important professional development component. In addition, local government specialists, like all MPA students must complete the Area I Core Course requirements which include;

Area I: 10 courses (30 credits)

- PA 511 Public Administration (3)
- PA 513 Administrative Ethics & Values (3) (prerequisite PA 511)
- PA 533 Public Policy: Origins and Processes (3)
- PA 534 Administrative Law and Policy Implementation (3)
- PA 540 Administrative Theory & Behavior (3) (Prerequisite PA 511)
- PA 551 Analytic Methods in Public Administration I (3)
- PA 552 Analytic Methods in Public Administration II (3)
- PA 582 Public Budgeting (3)
- PA 585 Financial Management in the Public Sector (3) (or Economics course approved by advisor)
- PA 590 Human Resource Management in the Public Sector (3) (Prerequisite PA 511)

This specialization is designed for two quite different kinds of students. One group of students will include pre-service students without significant local government administration experience who expect to move into a career in local government management. The other group of students will consist of public service professionals who are already working in some aspect of local government, but who seek to develop skills and knowledge that will assist them in moving along in a local government management career track. We will ask students to work closely with their faculty advisor, but also encourage pre-service students to identify a mentor currently in a local government administration position to provide them with professional

development advice.

Area V. Five courses (15 credits) to include:

Some classes, including the two required courses, particularly emphasize local government, while others involve skills and knowledge that are especially important to local government managers, even if the course is not focused on those jurisdictions.

Required Courses: PA 510 Local Government Administration (3)  
PA 510 Intergovernmental Relations (3)

Elective Courses: Three additional courses (9 credits) in electives selected in consultation with the student's advisor from among courses offered by other units of the college or university. (NOTE: From time to time special topics courses are offered under the PA 510 course number. We ask students to be alert to these courses on the schedule and consult with their advisers to determine whether they would be appropriate as Area II skill development classes for this specialization.) Suggested courses include the following:

#### Public Administration Division Offerings

PA 515 Public Works Administration (3)  
PA 518 Leading Public Organizations (3)  
PA 519 Civic Capacity (3)  
PA 542 Sustainable Development Implementation (3)  
PA 543 Creating Collaborative Communities (3)  
PA 545 Organization Development (3)  
PA 546 Supervision in the Public Sector (3)  
PA 563 Citizens and Administration (3)  
PA 564 Current Issues in Environmental Policy and Administration (3)  
PA 583 Advanced Budgeting Concepts and Techniques (3)  
PA 593 Civil Rights for Public Managers (3)

#### Other offerings in the College and the University

USP 431/531 Urban Economics (3)  
USP 451/551 Community Economic Development (3)  
USP 468/568 Oregon Land Use Law (3)  
USP 531 Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for Planners (4)  
USP 542 Land Use Implementation (3)

Area II. Three skill development courses (9 credits) chosen in consultation with the student's advisor. (NOTE: From time to time special topics courses are offered under the PA 510 course number. We ask students to be alert to these courses on the schedule and consult with their advisers to determine whether they would be appropriate as Area II skill development classes for this specialization.)

PA 510 Project Management (3)  
PA 514 Global Leadership & Management (3)  
PA 536 Strategic Planning (3)  
PA 549 Cross-cultural Communications in the Public Sector (3)  
PA 550 Managing Information Resources (3)  
PA 555 Program Evaluation and Management (3)  
PA 556 Public Contract Management (3)  
PA 557 Operations Research in Public Administration (3)  
PA 595 Public Sector Collective Bargaining: The Legal Framework (3)  
PA 596 Public Sector Collective Bargaining: Negotiations and Impasse Resolution (3)  
PA 597 Public Sector Collective Bargaining: Administering the Agreement (3)  
USP 591 Geographic Information Systems I: Introduction (4)  
USP 592 Geographic Information Systems II: Applications (4)

#### Professional Socialization Requirements:

While relevant course work is essential to effective local government administration, so is appropriate professional development. While many local government administrative operations are relatively small and their professionals serve particular communities, local government professionals share a great deal and cooperate in a variety of ways. They also tend to serve in a number of communities over the course of their careers. For these and other reasons, it is important to become acquainted with and participate in professional socialization. We particularly encourage students interested in this field to ask their advisor about possible local government mentors with whom they can work to develop their knowledge of the profession beyond the classroom.

Attend at least one Oregon or Washington local government conference, League of Oregon Cities, International City/County Management Association regional summit, or ICMA annual conference.

Complete a PA 509 experience in a local government placement or, for mid-career students, the case study course sequence with a work on local government topics.