

PUBLIC MANAGEMENT FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM: DEVELOPING RELEVANT AND INTEGRATED PROFESSIONAL CURRICULA?¹

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Introduction

The world in which public managers function is rapidly changing and vastly different from that contemplated by the early intellectual stalwarts of public administration. Public agencies are expected to collaborate with each other, with nonprofit organizations and with citizen groups and to use modern technology strategically to manage and deliver services. They are under powerful pressures to use resources efficiently as markets and quasi-markets influenced by global forces play a much greater role in structuring service delivery. Within this context public agencies must manage human resources accordingly, yet also humanely and legally.

Plainly, public management programs must revise their curricula and pedagogy to align them with contemporary societal, organizational and student needs. The many relevant disciplines (economics, finance and accounting, organizational behavior, information technology, etc.) can no longer be presented to students in splendid isolation from each other. Rather the disciplines need to be integrated in the public management curriculum in ways that ensure they will be integrated in students' minds and hence their practice. Most fundamentally, public management pedagogy should be oriented to help students learn about public organizations, government and governance, and the role of the public sector in a mixed (three sector) society and economy.

Our purpose in this article is to offer some trend analysis, a conceptual framework and related specific suggestions for restructuring public management curricula as a way of beginning a dialogue about how the many knowledge and discourse traditions relevant to public management education might be brought together for curricular purposes.² We begin with a discussion of the nature of public management and of knowledge and inquiry about it focused around the primary question: What we should be teaching students of the subject who would be practitioners? We then consider changes in the environment of public management and in related disciplines such as economics and political science that have provided important insights that should guide our teaching as they now guide public policymaking and public management practice. Finally, we sketch two curricular models for preparing professional public managers that might be derived from our analysis and offer some suggestions about pedagogy.

How to Define Public Management?

Initially we may begin this task by asking a very basic question: how may we define public management? Generally, we understand public management to mean performing certain tasks related to policy implementation in publicly supported programs. However, to answer this question more definitively, we must ask a second question: what should public management researchers study? By public management researchers, we mean primarily academics teaching in public management programs. There are at least two

answers to this second question. The first is that we should do good work, i.e., research that is careful and honest, adheres to canons of fair argument, and is current. Research should be driven by interesting and important, but not necessarily fashionable, questions and it should display sound theoretical grounding, good conceptual and analytic judgment, attention to empirical evidence, and, at times, some intellectual daring. The second answer is that we should study the things our colleagues and students, as well as management practitioners, either want to or ought to know. That is, we should figure out their needs and these should drive our research agenda. Both answers are correct, but the second is more pertinent here because it goes directly to the question of what we should study.

What should our colleagues and students know? Presumably, they ought to know how to manage, and then how to teach what they understand. Therefore, the question becomes: what does it mean to know how to manage in the contemporary public sector? Looking at the curricula of many business schools as an analogue, one might infer that the answer to this question is that managers should know how to use a set of tools. These schools are organized like large toolboxes, compartmentalized by “functional” departments or disciplines: strategy and policy; marketing; organization theory and behavior; human resources; finance; accounting; managerial economics; operations research, applied quantitative methods and statistics; and information technology and its management. This structure is reinforced by the curricular dictums of the bodies that accredit these institutions.

However, public management is not business management. While most of the differences between managing in the public and private sectors may be matters of degree not of kind, significant differences do exist. Public managers need something more than a set of generic management tools, otherwise we could send them to business schools for their professional education. But, even if management training were merely tools transmission and skills acquisition, we believe this would be the wrong strategy. This is not merely a matter of emphasis and attitude. Some of the tools public managers would take from business schools are ill-suited to the jobs they face; many of the critical tools they need are entirely absent from the business curriculum. Nevertheless, generic management tools are basic to management practice. When public management scholars ignore these tools, we ignore the needs of our students. Yet, all too often, that is what we do.³

Because the business disciplines have developed a variety of useful, basic tools and because it makes little sense to reinvent the wheel, it follows that public management scholars should study generic management tools. Also, we should consider the learning agenda that guides the business disciplines: (1) identification of basic management tools (description); (2) best practice research to tell us how and where those tools should be used (normative analysis); and (3) the evidentiary basis for claims about how well the tools work (positive analysis). To study generic management tools we must first figure out what they are. We must chart the boundaries of generic management by identifying the intersection of the jobs of public and business managers.⁴

In our view there is a large area of overlap between business and public management. Many scholars probably won't be surprised to learn this is the case with respect to economics, organization theory, human resources, finance, accounting, or information technology (although there is scant evidence that public management researchers in the U.S. pay adequate attention to finance, accounting, or information technology).⁵ Some may be surprised to learn, however, that there is as much or more overlap in strategy and policy and marketing — and in politics, negotiation, law, and ethics. We acknowledge that in recent years many business schools have given these latter fields a more prominent place in their curricula.

One place where business schools often go wrong is in the way they compartmentalize their tools. Their disciplinary stovepipes have always been dysfunctional as they have more to do with faculty preparation than the needs of students. Nowadays, they are also increasingly irrelevant. Organizations are no longer compartmentalized the way business schools are (Bruggeman, 1995; Otley, 1994; Bunce, Fraser, Woodcock, 1995). Arguably, decompartmentalization is being driven by the information revolution that is breaking down economies of scale and scope built upon functional specialization. According to Hammer, modern data bases, expert systems, and telecommunications networks provide many, if not all, the benefits that once made internal specialization of administrative functions like personnel, finance and accounting attractive (Hammer, 1990: 108-112). To the extent the provision of these services requires specialized skills, they are increasingly contracted out to specialist firms. The rest are performed by the people in the organization who actually do its core work.

What we see emerging are smaller, flatter organizations, organized around a set of generic, value-creating processes and specific competencies. Some single mission organizations are now organized as virtual networks; some multi-mission organizations as alliances of networks. Johnson & Johnson, 3M, and Rubbermaid, for examples, are loose alliances, sharing only their top management, a set of core competencies, and a common culture (Quinn, 1992). The control systems of these organizations, like those of centralized bureaucracies, collect information on every aspect of operations, including non-financial information. However, unlike the control systems of stovepipe organizations erected on the premise that the exercise of judgment should be passed up the managerial ranks, this information is used to push the exercise of judgment down into the organization, to wherever it is needed, e.g., at the point of sale, at delivery, or in production (Simons, 1995).

Evans and Wurster refer to these new kinds of organizational arrangements as *hyperarchies*, after the hyperlinks of the world wide web (Evans and Wurster, 1997: 75). They assert that, like the internet itself, the architectures of object-oriented software programming, and packet switching in telecommunications, these kinds of organizations have eliminated the need to channel information, thereby eliminating the tradeoff between information bandwidth (richness) and connectivity (reach). This, they claim, challenges all hierarchies, whether of logic or of power, "...with the possibility (or the threat) of random access and information symmetry." It would be ironic if public

management schools were *now* to compartmentalize themselves in the way that business schools have done.

Organizational Models

Are there alternatives to the way business schools compartmentalize their tools? Perhaps Peter Drucker (1953, 343-344), had the right idea. Drucker claims there is a set of generic management skills that can be organized in terms of the common functions or tasks that managers perform in all organizations:

A manager, in the first place, *sets objectives*. ...Secondly, a manager *organizes*. ...Next a manager *motivates* and *communicates*. ...The fourth basic element in the work of the manager is the job of *measurement*. ...Finally, a manager *develops people*. ...

There are higher level functions:

- Planning*: formulating a product/market strategy to allow the organization to exploit its core competencies to meet the demands of its external environment;
- Organizing*: aligning the organization's administrative, responsibility, and account structures with its strategy;
- Staffing*: motivating and inspiring people to serve the interests of the organization, recruiting, training, and indoctrinating them, and coordinating their activities to do its work;
- Developing*: creating a culture and a web of personal relationships that strengthens and maintains the organization's core competencies and reinforces its formal structures.

Secondly, there are lower-level functions:

- Controlling*: monitoring and enforcing rules and procedures, encouraging productive and discouraging unproductive behavior, rewarding performance;
- Operating*: detailed planning of capacity utilization, scheduling of material and work-flows, and task execution;
- Reporting*: reporting to higher level authorities on environmental forces and surprises, opportunities and threats, strengths and weakness, efforts and accomplishments;
- Budgeting*: assessing alternative investments and policies, programming the consequences of investment decisions and policy commitments, target setting.

We like Drucker's approach because it reflects a commitment to generic management. It also satisfies the requirement that a taxonomy be, so far as possible, a mutually exclusive and severally exhaustive set of classes, something that business school stovepipes never even pretended to be. Moreover, Drucker's answer has been around for a long time. The particular formulation of it presented here, POSDCORB, was articulated by Luther

Gulick in the mid-1930s in his introduction to *Papers on the Science of Administration* (Gulick and Urwick, 1937). One can imagine a core management curriculum designed around POSDCORB: first term courses would include planning, organizing, staffing, and developing (the higher level functions); the second term would then cover controlling, operating, reporting, and budgeting (the lower-level functions).

However, many critics have become disenchanted with POSDCORB. It now seems obvious that replacing the business school disciplinary structure and curricular design with one designed around management tasks merely replaces one compartmentalized set of stovepipes with another. Further, we are inclined to believe that POSDCORB is too inward looking. In our view, the manager's single most important job is understanding and shaping the organization's environment, primarily, but not solely, by means of the services it delivers to its customers and clients. We think Moore (1995) has the right idea if not necessarily all the right directions.⁶

Moore asks how governmental organizations can create value for the public. He concludes that managers must look upward toward securing more effective policy mandates and building support and legitimacy for agency initiatives, outward to the accomplishment of public purposes, and downward to the competent operation of their agencies. Moore also recommends specific, concrete changes in the practices of individual public managers: how they envision what is valuable to produce, how they deliver services and fulfill obligations to clients, and how they engage their political overseers. Like Drucker, Moore relies primarily on case analysis, drawing for example on cases from the Harvard Kennedy School files, e.g., William Ruckelshaus and the EPA, Jerome Miller and the Department of Youth Services, Miles Mahoney and the Park Plaza Redevelopment Project, David Spencer and the Swine Flu Scare, Lee Brown and the Houston Police Department, Harry Spence and the Boston Housing Authority, and others.

Moore's advice makes a great deal of sense because (a) he makes the manager the center of his enterprise, rather than its subject, (b) he focuses on fundamental processes through which organizations create value, and (c) he emphasizes the acquisition of a repertoire of task-contingent skills. But his advice does not constitute a complete blueprint for a management curriculum. Moore's view of management is almost a mirror image of the POSDCORB view. If POSDCORB is too inward looking, then Moore's view isn't inward looking enough — it has almost nothing to say about organizing, staffing, and designing, for examples, let alone lower level management tasks. This is not surprising. Moore set out to write a book about organizational strategy and policy, not a blueprint for a management curriculum. It is not a criticism to say he succeeded in doing what he set out to do.

If there is a problem with Moore's managerial strategists, it is that they often seem more interested in public relations than in performance. They are also surprisingly oblivious to the development and maintenance of core competencies. They can envision value, but don't seem to grasp that in the information age, organizations create value from knowledge. Of course, managers must look outward and upward but they must also look

back — across the entire supply chain — and they must work *through* the organization (or network) rather than down to create value from knowledge.

Analyzing Management

In our view there are two ways to approach the study of management. In both instances, the unit of analysis is the manager. In one instance, the manager is the subject of study; in the other the manager is its object. Most observers distinguish between these two approaches with the adjectives *positive* and *normative*. Positive analysis is concerned with identifying rules that decision makers are likely to follow, given their incentives, and with predicting what managers will do under specified circumstances (or explaining why after the fact). Normative analysis is concerned with identifying rules that would lead decision makers to make decisions that are optimal from the standpoint of the citizenry at large – with telling managers what to do and how to do it. Here we come down on the side of the normative focus because the design of curricula is necessarily prescriptive. While our proximate goal must be prescription rather than prediction, clearly positive analysis will have a complementary contribution to make.

A second distinction is often drawn between the two approaches: contrasting “science” and “engineering” perspectives (Behn, 1996). Bluntly put, the distinction here is between explaining choices and solving problems. Insofar as we are of the opinion that public management researchers should be concerned primarily with “how to” questions, we favor an engineering emphasis.⁷ Clients are much more interested in diagnosing and treating administrative problems than in pursuing Herbert Simon’s project of building an administrative science. Again, however, it appears that we have something of a false dichotomy in that solving problems requires a solid understanding of how things work. Yet, our knowledge of management tools, especially those concerned with the higher level managerial functions, rests on somewhat weak evidentiary foundations. Who could object to empirical verification of the safety and efficacy of our prescriptions?

We think the real conflict is between “pure” science (to us irrelevant) versus applied (relevant) research; between a narrow focus on armchair theorizing and statistical hypothesis testing versus clinical investigation and case and field study; and between doing social science versus studying managerial processes, functions and tasks, and where appropriate using eclectic methods suitable for the tasks.⁸ Social scientists build elegant, logically consistent models; public managers deal with messy, real-world problems. Indeed, it can be argued that economists, for example, prefer rational choice theories to models that incorporate bounded rationality primarily because the former are conclusive, not because they are right. However, decision makers can be approximately rational in a nearly infinite number of ways, some of which may be feasible, while they can be rational in only one, which often is not.

This difference between social science and management thinking is illustrated by the problem of voluntary provision of collective goods. Economists define a collective or public good in terms of two properties: jointness of supply and impossibility of exclusion. This definition implies that once a collective good is supplied by some of the members of

a group, it may be enjoyed by all. From this premise it may be deduced that the decision of some of the members of a group to provide the good or some quantity of it for themselves presents each of the other members with an opportunity for strategic or shirking behavior. Since the other members of the group can profitably engage in strategic behavior, economists assume they will. If the other members of the group can share in the good regardless of their contributions, economists predict they will withhold or reduce their own contributions to its provision. Hence, the decision by some of the members of a group to supply a quantity of a collective good leads other members to “free-ride” on their contributions — which is to say that, if contributions are voluntary, collective goods will be under-provided or, in the extreme, not provided at all.

A management theorist will take the economist’s conclusion as a starting point, not an end point: voluntary contributions to the provision of public goods will not spontaneously occur; opportunities for collectively beneficial action must be identified, individual contributions negotiated, performance monitored, and defectors sanctioned (Heckathorn and Maser, 1987). In other words, voluntary provision can be organized and must be *managed*. Because management implies a manager, it follows that someone, usually a public official, must be charged with mobilizing the community on behalf of the public good, organizing provision of the good, creating incentives, and supervising enforcement of community norms (Powers & Thompson, 1994). This is a function largely ignored by the pure social scientist.

Which Paradigms to Follow?

Lan and Rosenbloom (1992) have claimed that the study of public affairs is undergoing a paradigm shift and that a rational-choice, economics-based paradigm has now emerged preeminent in the field. There is a kernel of truth to this claim. Many in the field now reject the traditional bureaucratic paradigm and that is a significant change. Moreover, the rational choice disciplines, especially economics, seem much more directly relevant to the concerns of public managers now than in the past. There are three related reasons for these changes: changes in the environment of public management, advances in economic science, and changing styles in political science.

Changes in the Environment of Public Management

Public management in the United States and elsewhere has been influenced by the “new public management” school of thought. The new public management emphasizes “...performance appraisal and efficiency; the disaggregation of public bureaucracies into agencies which deal with each other on a user-pay basis; the use of quasi-markets and contracting out to foster competition; cost-cutting; and a style of management which emphasizes, amongst other things, output targets, limited term contracts, monetary targets and incentives, and freedom to manage” (Rhodes, 1991: 11; Dunleavy & Hood, 1994). The new public management is a widespread movement (Rhodes, 1991; see also Hood, 1991; Barzelay, 1992; Osborne and Gaebler, 1992; Schedler, 1995). Herman Schwartz (1994), for example, argues that government is undergoing, “...a profound shift toward a new kind of regime not simply a shift towards less state, but also a shift to a different kind of state.” He attributes this shift to international market pressures. He stresses that

many of the governments that have embraced the new public management are or were dominated by social democrats. New Zealand, which under Labour governments went further than any other country in its embrace of the new public management, is the most often cited example.

Changes in Economics

While the business-management literature is central to the new public management, two bodies of economics literature have also profoundly influenced its reception and its implementation: public choice theory and the new economics of organization. Public choice involves the application of economic logic — methodological individualism and rational, self-interested decision making — to questions and issues that had traditionally been the concern of political scientists and public administration scholars. Public choice theory has been one of the great success stories of modern social and economic science. It has changed the way we think about government and how it works. Moreover, in explaining the rules that voters, elected officials and bureaucrats are likely to follow given their incentives, public choice theory has provided public administrators some useful new normative guides. Nevertheless, when public administrators look to advances in economic science for help, it is not primarily to the public choice literature that they turn, but to the new economics of organization.

The new economics of organization focuses on incentive and control structures and on the allocation of property rights and asset ownership so as to minimize intra-organizational externalities or spillovers. It comprehends concepts like the Coase Theorem, transaction costs, externalities, and asymmetric information — including agency theory, moral hazard, adverse selection, contract theory, search and signaling theory, team theory, and incentive compatibility — that are directly relevant to managerial problems. It provides the new public management with the solid analytical foundation needed to understand how, when, and where to delegate authority, replace rules and regulations with incentives, develop budgets based upon results, expose operations to competition, search for market rather than administrative solutions, or use quasi-markets and contracting out to foster competition.

The economics of organization has already influenced the design of a variety of institutional arrangements, ranging from emissions trading and “bubbles” to outright deregulation of airlines and interstate trucking in the United States, and the privatization and securing of an astonishing array of government-owned assets (and some liabilities) in Europe. Moreover, the evidence is accumulating that these arrangements work (Megginson and Netter, 1999). It is partly because of this evidence that the market-oriented ideas of the new public management command the attention they do.

Changes in Political Science

It is, perhaps, not too strong to say that a rational-choice, economics-based paradigm has emerged preeminent in American political science, including in bureaucracy and public policy, sub-fields that are closely related to public administration. In our opinion this is a healthy turn of events. An unbiased observer would have to acknowledge, however, that political science, like most of the humanities and social sciences, is prone to academic

fads. They come and they go, often leaving little behind in the way of accumulated knowledge. It is natural that we think of ourselves as the tip of progress's arrow, but intellectual history demands a more humble interpretation. Just as academics of past generations usually seem wrong-headed to us, so too are we likely to appear to the next. Nevertheless, for good or ill, when political science sneezes, public administration often catches a cold. Political science has sneezed. That rational choice thinking often seems to have come to public management via a detour through political science is a rather curious turn. We might be better advised to go directly to its source disciplines.

The Key Issue: Feasibility

In our view, there is no way that doing social science, even economic science, can substitute for studying managerial processes, functions, and tasks, or that armchair theorizing and statistical hypothesis testing will largely replace clinical investigation via case and field study in public management. There are several reasons for this. One of the most important is that administrative science remains remarkably inconclusive. Unlike the subjects of the physical sciences, human beings make choices that confound analytic designs. For example, we believe that a variety of institutional innovations — decentralization, employee empowerment, principle-centered leadership, cycle-time burdening, and transaction cost accounting — can make substantial contributions to organizational performance. We know that some organizations have used these ideas to improve their performance dramatically and that many other organizations have embraced them. But management scholars can rarely show a straightforward, unambiguous cause-effect relationship between innovation and performance improvement.

For example, we may consider the issue of organizational decentralization. Many management scholars and practitioners believe that the effectiveness of large and complex organizations improves when authority is delegated down into the organization along with responsibility and control over resources. Decisions are then made by those with the most pertinent knowledge and the largest stake in outcomes. However, only a handful of studies show any kind of a statistical relationship between performance and decentralization, and they don't tell a coherent story (see Thompson, 1998). We do not mean to say that good administrative science is not being done, or even that good *public* administrative science is not being done. The task is simply very daunting.

For example, the best explanation we have seen of the micromanagement cycle that may follow decentralization initiatives is found in the work of Frant, and Jones and Bixler (1993, 1996a, 1996b; Jones and Bixler, 1992). Frant argues that constraining rules are used to control opportunism, that opportunism can be controlled via a range of institutional alternatives, and that the alternative chosen may depend crucially on the self-interest of politicians, which in turn depends on how well citizens control politicians. Jones and Bixler provide a number of persuasive political explanations for congressional micromanagement of the U.S. Department of Defense and their analysis is supported by a large set of empirical data and analyses.

We find this research methodologically sound and insightful and it explains an important phenomenon. However, it falls short in telling us what to do to solve the problems it identifies. To be useful, science must be powerful enough to yield new solutions to problems -- e.g., it doesn't just explain what causes micromanagement it should help to fix it, in part by suggesting efficacious interventions. Our assessment is that even the best public administration and management research in the social scientific tradition fails in this regard. Moreover, managers are right to be impatient with academics who tell them to wait for scientific certainty. To managers, the proof is in the putting.

What public management scholars can do to go beyond the limitations of past research is to describe what managers do, and try to explain what works, what doesn't, under which conditions, and why. This kind of information often has practical utility. Practical reason in most fields is hermeneutic (Behn, 1996). People figure out what do by interpreting situations, deciding which facts are important, searching memory for similar fact patterns with known solutions, testing those known solutions against their interpretation of the situation, and applying the solution, or some modified form of it, to the problem at hand. If that doesn't work, they start over. By describing what works, we enlarge the array of fact patterns with known solutions at the disposal of managers — the bigger their tool box, the more likely it will contain the right tool for the job. We should not apologize for it. However, in our view, much public administration and management research often fails in practice, not because it is descriptive but because (a) either it does not present or refer to any theory, or where theory is presented, it is useless to advise practice to practitioners, i.e., the research is theoretically or practically meaningless; (b) it looks at the wrong things; or (c) it is simply careless. We believe these flaws are correctable.

Curriculum Development Implications: Production Function and Value Creation Models

The implications of our analysis of what should be researched in the field of management generally and public management specifically with respect to curriculum development are open to debate. Our basic idea should be clear however – the curriculum and its delivery should be organized to draw upon disciplinary knowledge and perspectives not for their own sake but so as to facilitate the understanding and analysis of management processes, problems and solutions. From one perspective, management in the private sector provides a model for curriculum design. For example, a graduate public management curriculum could be designed along the lines of a production function model, influenced by value chain analysis and supply chain perspectives, e.g., following an input-output process flow (input-work processes-output-outcomes). Accordingly, the first set of courses taught to students would cover the inputs to public management, the second set is comprised of the functional work process areas, the third component provides approaches to distribution and evaluation of outputs, and the fourth concentrates on measuring and evaluating outcomes.

Following this approach, initial courses deal with the environment and organizational inputs: an introduction to supply chain management (including inter-organizational and inter-sectoral relationships), human and other forms of capital inputs to organizations,

strategic planning, public sector marketing, (and perhaps political and media relations), and the legal framework governing the public sector.⁹ The second set covers the traditional work processes including budgeting, finance, human resource management, procurement and acquisition, contracting, and some new areas including information technology in management. The third component includes cost accounting, performance measurement, value chain analysis and performance auditing. The fourth component includes program evaluation, public policy analysis, and a capstone course in organizational design and market alignment, concluding with approaches to creating learning organizations.

Another way to formulate the curriculum along the same lines of thinking is as follows. (This curricular approach intends to prepare students better to create value from information.) This alternative consists of organizing the program core around three course sequences, each oriented to one of the key value creating processes: (a) exchange with customers, (b) relations with stakeholders and the public; (c) internal transformation, i.e., production of products and services and related operations; and (d) supply chain management. The content of these courses would be comprised of the same basic material taught in the core of most public administration and management programs, with financial reporting, information technology, economics, finance, and quantitative methods and statistics taught as service courses.

There are two salient differences between what most of us do now and either of these curriculum design proposals. First, it seems to us that all the material having to do with one of the three value creating processes should be taught together. For example, Value Creation through the Organization could combine material from budget and control (managerial accounting), organization theory and design, human resources management, and operations management. Customers, Markets, and the Public would combine chunks from marketing, economics, government, business and society, and organizational policy and strategy. Supply Chain Management would include contract management, acquisition and purchasing, and network collaboration. Theories and skill-building in negotiation would be a key component of this course block.

Implications for Service Delivery

Finally, we would suggest that the demands of today's students and the managerial environment call for significant changes in the way we deliver instruction. According to Peter Block (1995), this means restructuring the delivery of knowledge away from entrenched disciplines and organizing it around students "rather than requiring the student to integrate knowledge across disciplines," moving faculties out of their specialties to "learn enough about other fields to develop a truly integrated curriculum," and organizing faculty "around courses of study that they would design and teach together."

The next step in the development of a service strategy for learning should focus on reinventing the relationships among the members of the professional school community. Management schools preach that high commitment human resource management techniques promote superior performance, especially in knowledge-based organizations.

Unfortunately, their practices rarely match their sermons. Instead of high commitment HR practices, management schools typically treat their students like interchangeable parts -- teachers teach, students listen and learn.

We believe these practices are wrong in at least three ways. First, they are bad pedagogy; they don't motivate students to learn. Second, they pattern the wrong kind of behavior for current and future managers. Third, they will not elicit high commitment to our schools from students and future alumni.

Based on Jeffrey Pfeffer's (1998) list of the HR practices of successful organizations, the following would appear to be especially relevant to relationships between the members of our communities, some of which are already common practice in schools of public management:

1. Careful recruitment of faculty and students based upon the right attitudes, values, and cultural fit with the school's *modus operandi*;
2. Reliance on self-managed multidisciplinary instructional teams, made up of students as well as faculty, and decentralization of decision-making as basic principles of organizational practice;
3. Grading largely contingent upon team and school performance relative to absolute standards not the standard grading curve – this might well produce a comparatively elevated grade distribution if policies are successful in eliciting high quality work;
4. Extensive, shared training involving everyone in the community;
5. Extensive sharing of performance and financial information throughout the community;
6. Reduced status distinctions within the community.

Smaller professional schools like most of those preparing students for public management are, in our opinion, relatively well positioned to accommodate the changes required to reinvent professional education in the field. Our comparative advantage lies in teaching students to work with others, to communicate and to listen, to scan the environment and distinguish between the important and the irrelevant, to integrate knowledge, to create, and to make critical and ethical judgements. These are all things that computers cannot do or cannot do very well and will, therefore, become increasingly important.

The weakness of these schools relative to large professional schools has always been a lack of disciplinary depth, strength and specialization. Information technology, however, is depreciating the relative value of specialized information processing skills – storing information, organizing and accessing data, and computing. These are things that computers do better than people. They will become relatively less important. They are also at the core of the intellectual division of labor that characterizes the disciplinary structure of universities and larger professional schools.

Hence, it should be easier for public management schools to break down the disciplinary silos that divide and fracture knowledge and to reorganize it to accommodate uniquely human strengths and skills than it will be for our brethren in the business schools. Our size should also enable us to be nimbler and faster in responding to the need for change.

Smaller professional programs also face especially big risks. Size protects. When the stampede starts, pigmies must jump fast -- and in the right direction -- or be trampled. Public management programs that fail to embrace knowledge management in general and information technology in particular will be among the first institutions to be swept away by the new order of things. It will not suffice to change only the content of our curriculum. Exploiting the full power of IT to enhance learning means also transforming information exchange -- i.e., using IT to transform the process of learning.

We envision curricula built around web oriented, wireless networks, utilizing a full range of "knowledge management" tools, digital agents, and (group) decision support systems. This wide category of software, and in some cases dedicated hardware systems, includes:

- a. *Systems dictionaries of cultural or disciplinary dialects* that enable collaborators with different backgrounds to understand one another's vocabulary;
- b. *Mental map and mental representation tools* that enable users to develop graphical representations of their own or others' basic conceptual approach to problems;
- c. *Document profiling systems* in shared work spaces that enable users to hyperlink related documents, to identify key relationships with key documents, etc.;
- d. *Memory capture systems* designed to track and enable retrieval in a variety of forms, styles, practices, precedents, contacts, or cultures that may be relevant to future learning;
- e. *Open hypermedia data systems* that enable new entrants into a learning group quickly to develop an understanding of its prior history, culture, distinctive uses of terms, etc.;
- f. *Learning models*, including neural net-based models, of professional judgment and rule-based expert systems;
- g. *Individual and group creativity tools* including idea generation tools such as electronic whiteboards for graphical representation of connections between ideas;
- h. *Graphical problem structuring tools* that are integrated with search and analysis agents operating over banks of relevant information available on intranets, perhaps organized using hypermedia linkages; and
- i. *Meeting management tools* to help participants generate options, identify pros and cons, and track the flow of discussion and debate.

Knowledge management systems promise to transform teaching and learning. They are much more concerned with the organization of and connections between bits of knowledge than is current pedagogic practice. They depend on much richer modeling of

how knowledge ought to be conceived and they often have no real analogs in the paper and ink world. Moreover, many of these systems are synchronous, allowing participants to work simultaneously rather than sequentially. And, they are oriented to the organization of effective 360-degree sharing. Knowledge management systems enable all the participants in the learning process to shape ideas, problems, arguments, and solutions, not just the talking head at the front of the class.

Conclusions

There are many ways to define public management and what should be taught in a graduate public management curriculum. The approach taken here represents the authors' perspective on basic principles and relevant current intellectual developments but the paper is intended primarily to stimulate a scholarly dialogue on the design of graduate curricula for the public management profession. We particularly welcome rejoinders and alternative proposals from scholars outside the United States.

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Notes

¹ A preliminary version of this paper was presented at the International Public Management Network Workshop on Developing and Integrating Graduate Public Management Curricula, University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark, July 18-20, 2001. The authors are grateful for valuable comments received from workshop colleagues.

2. Our target student market here is graduate professional students enrolled in a master's degree program of one and one half to two years duration (perhaps longer if students are less than full time).

³ Many public affairs programs in the U.S. are dominated by political scientists — nearly 40 percent of the MPA programs in the U.S. are located in political science departments although this is no longer true of the leading programs. At its core, management education is fundamentally about skills building and training. As the result of the behavioral revolution, political scientists rejected generic management, with its largely mundane subject matter and modest intellectual claims. As a result, academic public administration yielded to the proclivities of political scientists and cut itself off from its

roots in generic management, leaving training in management functions to business schools where it thrived and where, in a few areas, powerful scientifically based theories developed. The political scientists' disdain for generic management continues to be reflected in the inclination of public management scholars to define their field narrowly and, arguably, also in their skepticism about its contemporary prototype, the "New Public Management"; see Borins, 1995; Thompson, 1997.

⁴ Not everyone agrees with the necessity of setting disciplinary boundaries; see Landau, 1977 and Axelrod, 1975.

⁵ Public management's neglect of information technology as a teaching and research area seems especially myopic. Perhaps the greatest challenge now facing organizations in both the public and the private sectors is figuring out how to use information technology to transform giant bureaucracies into flexible networks (Fountain, 1994).

⁶ A rather more balanced perspective, which combines both a functional and a process focus, is provided by Cohen and Eimecke, 1995.

⁷ The most persuasive advocate of the science side of this issue is Lynn (1994, 1996).

⁸ The propensity to decide the methods issue in favor of social science methods may be especially strong in schools of public policy in the U.S. These schools tried to build a coherent applied curriculum derived from economic analysis. They continue to benefit from the halo effect produced by their location at elite universities, but most now acknowledge that their defining mission— training *pure* policy analysts — was somewhat misconceived.

⁹ The legal framework would vary from country to country of course, but the topic might also be taught comparatively.

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