Curriculum and Case Notes

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THE CLASS AS CASE: "REINVENTING" THE CLASSROOM

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Abstract

New approaches to public management provide principles by which to organize the classroom as a case. In teaching public management one can enhance learning for practice by modeling, experimenting with, and reflecting upon the principles that one is teaching the students. The principles from the new ideas about public management that can be used to organize the classroom as well are strength through diversity, continuous improvement, teamwork, *and* empowerment. *They represent changes in governing relations across the country and globe within which the new approaches to public management rest; each of these principles has a role in the "reinvented" classroom. Such practices require institutional support of various kinds as well. © 1999 by the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management.*

Introduction

The "case method" has become fundamental to teaching public management. Cases allow students to bring their various ideas, perspectives, experiences, and skills to bear on issues that are more "real life" than can normally be represented in the classroom.

The idea is that students can learn by proposing ways of thinking about or acting in a situation and having other students agree and extend or disagree and amend their suggestions. Cases present opportunities to strategize and plan for, make decisions, role-play, and assess management efforts. We would like to take the idea behind using cases one step further. In this effort we are combining two ideas that have been presented in the "Curriculum and Case Notes" section of the *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management.* O'Hare [1996] argued that the principles of the new public management should be used as a way of managing public policy schools and promoting the goals of improved teaching and learning; Gilmore and Schall [1996] suggested that the classroom should be used as a case of management with particular emphasis upon modeling both observation and participation situations for students so that they may learn "reflective practice and effective leadership" (p. 452). We propose using the class as a case governed by the principles of the new approaches to public management.

In the article, we argue that public management is currently embedded in changing expectations for the ways in which organizations and communities are governed, or the ways in which decisions are made. We argue that *strength through diversity*, as we define it later, and the connected principles of *continuous improvement, teamwork,* and *empowerment* capture these broader governance concerns. We suggest the transparent application of these principles in the education of public managers could enhance the capacity to practice management in today's world of heightened expectations and demands for broader participation and better government performance.

This is a tall order, and it is important to state that we do not claim to have achieved the implementation of these principles in the governance of our classrooms. We are engaged in a constant critical assessment of how these principles might be applied, and we struggle with our own individual teaching methods to bring them to fruition. As our examples illustrate, we have learned much more from our mistakes than from any realization of the ideal we discuss here. We also are not convinced that this approach is indeed the best way to manage every classroom where future public managers are trained. It might very well be the case that in order to learn (especially at an introductory stage) the basics of public management, a more traditional pedagogy is required. We do not have the means to make such an assessment but merely suggest here that there is room for discussion and pedagogical improvement and that the decision-making principles that we identify might be critical for our own front-line efforts in training future public servants.

Why Approach the Class as a Case?

To some degree any course is an implicit case and provides students with a model of governance. The traditional classroom structure based on hierarchical authority teaches students one way of making decisions. When public managers used hierarchical authority in their organizations in much the same way that the professors used it in the classroom, then what students were learning from the implicit model was appropriate to their future context. In recent years, however, there has been a divergence between these two settings. Increasingly, public managers are finding that hierarchical authority is rarely sufficient and often inappropriate. Our students as future public managers need to learn different ways of managing an organization. Traditional classroom structure deprives our students of one way of learning the skills required.

Where the traditional classroom is focused on the individual roles of the professor and students and the transfer of knowledge from one to the other, practicing managers

must now focus on the performance of multiple actors, both inside and outside the organization. Where the traditional classroom sticks to a routine defined not only in the traditional lecture format but in an explicit syllabus with readings deemed "essential," new public managers must be flexible, responding to new demands and the needs of their customers. Where feedback in the traditional classroom is limited to end of the semester evaluations, new public managers must engage in "two-way communication with their customers" as part of their operating improvement efforts. And decisions about course changes and content rest with the professor in the traditional classroom, while the new public manager must learn to empower employees to make decisions about improving both customer service and the performance of the organization.

Michael O'Hare [1996] reports on challenges facing Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM) member schools trying to make the transition to quality assurances within the new public management paradigm. Focusing on "what public policy schools are doing institutionally to improve the process of instruction" (p. 97), he concludes that the "report does not describe an 'industry' in the grip of quality fever" (p. 106). Although the practices of APPAM member schools do not necessarily represent faculty practices within classrooms for teaching public managers, O'Hare's conclusions about the lack of teamwork among faculty in course development and execution, the minimal efforts to continually improve the education process, and an institutionalized dyadic relationship between student and professor suggest that strong elements of the traditional classroom setting still persist (pp. 104–107). As we discuss later, many public management faculty are breaking traditional patterns in order to teach public managers new ways to practice public management. Such efforts, however, are made more difficult when the support for breaking with convention is minimal. Our suggestion to make course management and course relations transparent—examples or cases themselves for the learning process—challenges convention. Support for such efforts on the part of educational institutions is required not only in the way faculty are evaluated and rewarded, but in the management efforts of the institution itself, which might model the practices faculty could apply in their own teaching efforts.

What is the New Paradigm?

Alhough practitioners and academics speak often of "the new paradigm," the rubric covers a broad range of practices. Some identify what is "new" as "lessening or removing the differences between the public and private sectors," and a transition from "process accountability to accountability in terms of results" [Pallot, 1998; p. 1]. Other versions are more elaborate, focusing on the provision of quality services citizens value, management autonomy, rewards for high performance backed up by training and support, and an "open-mindedness" about the roles of public and private sector actors [Borins, 1998; pp. 37–38]. The same characteristics are applied in some cases to "make managers manage" and in others to "let them manage" [Kettl, 1997], in some cases to enhance the innovative capacities of government organizations and in others to tighten accountability to government overseers. In some cases, what is practiced is an intellectually consistent package; in other cases reformers pick and choose from the package as needed [Boston et al., 1996; Kettl,1994].

If we cannot agree upon the ways in which the new paradigm is manifest, how can we teach it in any systematic way? How can we turn its classroom application into a case itself? We argue that these diverse efforts are connected at a deeper level by a transition in governance in America and around the globe. The new public

management has its roots in different expectations for the relationships among citizens, elected officials, and public managers and for the ways in which decisions are made to govern organizations, communities, and countries. These new expectations derive from a variety of influences, including increased globalization and an increased recognition of the heterogeneity of populations within any jurisdiction [Boston et al., 1996]. They also include decreased trust in government and decreased available resources [Aucoin, 1996; DiIulio, Garvey and Kettl, 1993; Hood, 1995]. The result is increased emphasis and scrutiny on what value government operations are creating and for whom [Moore, 1995].

For public managers this suggests a transition not only in the way decisions are made but in the role they play in governance [Behn, 1998]. At the least, it suggests that they have a more active role to play in the creation of public value [Moore, 1995] and that managers must find innovative, or at least different, ways to utilize people and resources to build, sustain, and enhance the quality of public life. We view *strength through diversity*, and the connected principles of *continuous improvement, teamwork,* and *empowerment* as the basic premise of this new paradigm from which managers must make decisions within their organizations and in relation to the communities they serve.

The premise of diversity as *strength* rather than a *problem* is fundamental to responding to the expectations of management in a global and heterogeneous world. We use the term "diversity" broadly to embrace differences not only in terms of the physical, ideological, religious, and cultural identifications of individuals, but also in terms of individual approaches to learning, doing, and dealing with problems. The role of diversity is critical to the new paradigm of public management. Most administrative and management (public and private) textbooks printed in the past 20 years discuss diversity from a legal and personnel perspective. This is reflected in a substantial literature within the field of public administration that examines the racial, gender, and ethnic composition of government workforces at the state, local, and national levels [Cornwell and Kellough, 1994; Kim and Lewis, 1994; Murray et al., 1994; Naff, 1994]. Diversity is a fact; managers must learn not only to live with it, but to use it. But managers must also learn to think about diversity in more expansive terms. Before managers can begin to meet the expectations for better government performance, often with fewer resources, they must be able to tap new ideas, experiences, and information from their employees and the citizens they serve, and their organizations must have the capacity to deliver results. This more expansive view of diversity and its contributions to organizational performance is captured in recent management texts that advocate the embracing of diversity not only as a social responsibility, but also as the key to innovative learning organizations that can survive the networked world of the private, public, and nonprofit sectors [Cox, 1994; Thomas and Ely, 1996].

The principles of continuous improvement, teamwork, and empowerment are essential to realizing strength through diversity, given the expectations for improving upon and creating public value that confront public managers today. Under these conditions one can no longer assume that there is "one best way" and that once that solution is found one need not learn more. Instead, the principle of continuous improvement requires that one continuously search for new perspectives in order to understand situations that are not only incredibly complex but also constantly changing. No one person can accomplish the work required to bring about this kind of continuous improvement. Teams of people need to be used in order to provide the input necessary to understand these complex and changing arenas. These teams are not necessarily teams of managers. Indeed, managers find the utilization of as many

people as possible both within and outside of traditional boundaries as another response to the incredible complexity of the issues they face. Empowerment is the process of giving power to people who have not been recognized or have not recognized themselves as being capable of making a contribution. This process is essential to teamwork, continuous improvement, and most fundamentally to realizing strength though diversity because in order to bring about any of these, we need contributions from people who have traditionally been left out of decisionmaking processes.

The remainder of this article is a discussion of how one might go about implementing the classroom as a case of the new approach to public management. We discuss strength through diversity, continuous improvement, teamwork, and empowerment separately though the principles are necessarily interrelated. For each of these principles, we discuss both the role we see them playing in the new paradigm of public management and how we can implement them in the classroom. We draw upon our own and other peoples' efforts and experiences to build the principles of the new public management into our courses, and we critically reflect upon our efforts to do so. We next consider the barriers to implementing these principles in the traditional classroom and some ideas suggesting ways to overcome those barriers are discussed, as well as the need for institutional support for this endeavor. We conclude with a general discussion of the importance of this undertaking.

Principles of Governance in Public Management and in the Classroom

Strength through Diversity

Diversity has an uncomfortable history within traditional public administration as a concern for management within an organization and governance outside of the organization. Specifically, two aspects of public management have been approached in ways that stifled, prevented, and even eliminated diversity as we define it here. One of these is the composition of public organizations and the ways in which organizations have been managed. The other is the relationship of the public manager to the community and the responsibility of the manager for serving the public interest. Progressive reforms at the turn of the century worked to reduce the diversity of individuals working within government agencies. Merit systems, for example, replaced "political machines based upon linkages to new-immigrant communities" with "educated, English-speaking whites" [Dresang, 1991; p. 23]. Frederick Taylor's [1923] scientific management movement placed further restrictions on diversity of method, approach, or understanding of the ways work was done. Job classifications and codification of procedures, combined with the growth of professionals in the civil service just prior to and after World War II produced increased specialization in government [Knott and Miller, 1987; Mosher, 1982]. It also produced professionals with a great deal of autonomy from political influence, and a justification for that power based upon a relationship of noblesse oblige between professionals and the public. The public interest was best served, it was argued, when professionals exercised their judgment on behalf of the public [Landis, 1938].

The job of the new public manager, on the other hand, is viewed as explicitly connected with the public and the political world; indeed, the premise that the public manager's job is political is a key difference between the academic fields of public administration and public management. Policy analysis becomes part of a deliberative process, rather than definitive answers for public management problems [Majone,

1988]. Successful management, it is argued, requires attention not only to the capacity and position of the organization, but its relationship with and to the public and political overseers [Behn, 1997; Moore, 1995]. What remains to be worked out is the responsibility public managers might have to enhance and utilize the diversity of the communities within which they operate.

Managing for a diverse population specifically requires managers to recognize that the world looks quite different to people who have had different life experiences or have different resources or different native abilities. "One size fits all" will no longer do either for public management or for teaching it. The deputy city manager of Charlotte, North Carolina, a city noted for its use of innovative public management principles, summed up the importance of diversity when he said "diversity is the only thing that saves you" in this form of public management (Del Borgsdorf, interview, 29 September 1997). What did he mean by that? He went on to say that when he is thinking about doing something new he does not look for someone who usually agrees with him, but for someone whose opinions are usually very unlike his in order to get his or her perspective on whether he should go ahead or how he should change his plans. Despite the logic of the style, it is one not comfortably practiced. Indeed, it might very well cut against the comfort grain of human nature [Calvert, 1985]. Yet, it is the very decisionmaking style celebrated in practice by Franklin Roosevelt, viewed by presidential and public management scholars alike as one of America's most innovative chief executives [Barber, 1992; Neustadt, 1990].

Marginalized populations weaken our communities. Persistent marginalization creates public policy problems and is, as a result, inefficient in the long run. Managers need to be able to deliver public policies that have value for all citizens, not just the privileged, organized, or vocal. In order to do so, they must be inclusive in their decisionmaking efforts within their organizations and in relation to the community. They must also be inclusive in their management of the program and in their assessment of its performance. This is, no doubt about it, easier said than done. Our question is what can we do in managing the classroom that allows us to role model this principle and that allows our students to practice it?

In the tradition of Taylor [1923] and professional specialization, diversity in the classic classroom has been viewed as something to eliminate, or minimize specifically, in terms of the learning skills and interests of students. This is captured well by a recent discussion with a colleague. We were discussing communication styles and the efforts the public management students in our class had made to accommodate different styles in a team project. Specifically, students suggested writing more things down, taking breaks, and recognizing that some people "get to the point" more quickly than others. The colleague was taken aback that we would be accommodating people who do not get to the point quickly. From his perspective, what we should be doing is teaching everyone to get to the point quickly and that our students would do better out in the world if they could do so.

This conversation raises two issues. First, what is the role that our students will play when they are out in the world? Will our students only be in situations in which they must make their points quickly, or will they also be in situations in which they must hear many points being made in many different ways? The other issue is raised by the quotes around the phrase "getting to the point." The phrase suggests that there is *a* point to each communication and, by implication, that our students will be engaged in linear tasks—that there will be *a* point to their communications and that they will be in the position of communicating *to* an audience that wants only to know a single point. Practicing the new public management, however, often has none of these characteristics.

If we stop thinking of the classroom as a place in which we are trying to mold students to a certain predefined form and start thinking of the classroom as a place in which we are trying to create value, there are many more possibilities. Simply put, the dynamics of the classroom, its management, participation styles, expectations, and performance evaluations can all contribute to the development of public managers in ways that few written cases might. Robert Leone of Boston University, for example, utilizes a grading scheme in which class participation (50 percent of the grade for MBA students) is based upon students' rankings of each other on a five-point scale. The grading criterion for students is "X's contribution to my learning in this course" but nonresponses are allowed. Grades for students receiving higher than average nonresponses from their peers are adjusted downward with the explicit result of penalizing the student who contributes little to the learning of the class. The exercise teaches students to attend to each other, rather than to perform for the teacher. Students, in other words, are rewarded for "creating value, which usually means making someone else smart" [Michael O'Hare, University of California at Berkeley, Electronic Hallway correspondence, 20 March 1998]. This change in focus requires the attention of students to different ways of thinking, learning, and participating in class. Leone reports that the device allows for acknowledging out-of-class work by students and is one way to address cultural and gender differences that might limit participation in class [Robert Leone, E-mail correspondence, 17 August 1998]. Leone also notes that the process puts students in the uncomfortable but necessary role of exercising some control over the assessment process as managers and hence taking some responsibility for the performance of the class.

Such an approach to student evaluation would help to alter student expectations in a course. One of our students protested the requirement that he take public management as a public policy student and consistently challenged the value of open discussions, role plays, and case analyses in class as he was unable to see concrete tools or skills that he could apply from the discussion. What he wanted, in short, was a set of "right" answers for managers. When we stopped providing "explanations" for why discussions or role plays were important, and let fellow students respond spontaneously, students spoke directly to their peer about the importance of the material for them and ways in which it might be used to manage effectively. This particular student would have benefited greatly, as well, from an assessment by a fellow student of what they learned from his participation in class. It might have provided an avenue for thinking critically about his own expectations for the course, his own efforts in the course, and the value he might or might not be contributing. Given this particular student's ideas and understanding of politics and society (which he strongly believed separated him from his peers), the exercise might have provided greater opportunity for him to share and advance his understandings in a manner that enhanced the diversity of class discussion and participation.

Other ways of dealing with such students can also build upon the diversity students might bring to the classroom that is often not recognized by students or teachers as valuable. Public managers must deal with people who do not cooperate because they strongly disagree with management or with members of a team. Students need to learn to work with people who will disagree with them, and teachers can use even an obstreperous student, for example, as a learning opportunity. The teacher can role-model the position of the public manager. By drawing attention to the disagreement as an opportunity for learning, the teacher can stem some of the frustration students feel when time is taken dealing with a particular student. Indeed, students' ideas can be elicited for how a public manager can deal with this type of situation.

We had an experience with a teaching assistant (TA) that helps to illustrate further the role diversity can play in class management. We defined the TA position to involve facilitation of group processes, liaison between students and faculty, and logistic support, but not teaching or grading. We hired two TAs for the course. One of the TAs worked well with the predefined role, but the other was an extremely busy person who was not as available for some of the envisioned role such as logistic support. This TA, on the other hand, had a great deal of insight about and experience with public management. After several uncomfortable discussions about the TA being late for meetings and not available when needed, we reassessed, thinking more broadly about the possibilities for creating value. Some of the duties originally assigned to the TA were taken over by a secretary, and the TA was given more responsibility for teaching and grading. When we began to see what we could learn from this person and the contributions she could make beyond the "duties" of a TA, the value to the class was increased.

We are considering changes in two aspects of the course assignments and grading procedures that would enhance strength through diversity. One is to have what we call an "open syllabus." The open syllabus would have several planned sessions but would leave space open for several sessions to be determined by the class. Although we have not worked out all of the details, we envision soliciting information from the students about what they would like to contribute to the course, facilitating groups of students with similar interests, and providing a set of guidelines that would help the students create class sessions (or other activities) that would enhance the value of the course as a whole. This method of teaching would require a flexible grading process.

Flexible grading might consist of, for example, students being able to choose the weighting scheme used to assess their performance. It might also include the potential for not all students to participate in the same activities or in the same ways. In general, public management courses place heavy emphasis on participation. Our experience of grading participation has, however, rested on a very narrow definition of participation: talking in class. Although it is certainly true that we have been able to distinguish talking a lot from making a large contribution to the course, we have not been able to accommodate the other end of the "talking scale." Those people who do not talk very much have a very hard time having their participation counted highly. And yet, it does not seem true on the face of it that shy people or people who do not speak fluently the language being used for class discussion (in our case English) have less to offer to the course. Nor is it necessarily true that they will be less effective managers. The open syllabus combined with flexible grading might allow, for example, someone to write up some of his or her experiences in a case that the class could read or to provide the class with a set of readings and questions for discussion that would allow the class to address an issue of common interest. Moving away from the fixed syllabus and the preestablished grading scheme might open many possibilities for a wide variety of students to add value to the course.

Continuous Improvement in Public Management

The principle of continuous improvement is fundamental to the new approach to public management [Bryson, 1995; Huber and Glick, 1993]. Traditional and technocratic management assumes that there are right answers and our job is to find them. In the new public management, there is a recognition that the world is constantly changing and that our understandings of problems are constantly changing. As a result, our solutions must be constantly changing. This means that

we have to think of public management (and the teaching of public management) as an ongoing experiment in which we are continuously thinking of the needs that we are serving, how they are changing, and what we can do in response. This also means that we must train future public managers to view their employees, the citizens they serve, and other managers in other organizations as resources for continued improvement efforts.

The experimental nature of the enterprise means that there will be failures, yet in both traditional bureaucratic environments and traditional classrooms, we reward people for being risk averse. If we are going to be experimental, we have to support people, and even reward them, for taking risks. Vice President Gore's suggestion that managers hand out failure passes and strongly encourage their employees to try enough new things that they have to use them is representative. It is not enough, of course, just to make mistakes. We also have to develop the ability to learn from them. An example is instructive. During the Olympics in Atlanta some Charlotte, North Carolina, public buses were lent to Atlanta. As a result, there were not enough buses in Charlotte and riders became angry. In a traditional bureaucratic setting, such an incident might require firing someone or at least sanctioning him or her in some way. In a continuous improvement environment, such an incident is a reason to think about what information the person who made this decision needed but did not have and what can be learned from this incident about how the organization operates and how it can be changed [Del Borgsdorf, interview, 29 September 1997]. Although much has been written about the learning organization and what is required to bring it about [Brown and Duguid, 1991; Cook and Yanow, 1993; Schein, 1993, 1997; Weick, 1995; Weick and Roberts, 1993], we still have much to learn about what we need to do on a day-to-day basis and in a complex environment to support learning by individuals within the organization and learning by the organization as a whole.

We have similar problems in the classroom. We seem to have set things up in the classroom so that we reward people for being able to do things without our having to teach them [Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977]. In classrooms we often give the best grades to those people who can demonstrate that they came in knowing what is allegedly taught in the course. "Success on the first try" rather than "improvement" is judged. Although we talk about the classroom as a safe place to try out ideas, students who are worried about grade point averages and graduating often do not see the classroom as a safe place at all.

Implementation of the principle of continuous improvement requires the professor to be involved in continually improving the course and the students to be involved in continually improving their knowledge and skills. It also requires the faculty and students to be thinking about what needs to be done in a public management course, how the public management course interacts with the rest of the curriculum, and how the curriculum as a whole increases value for the citizens. At a minimum, it requires interaction between the world of public management and the course, between the faculty and the students, and between the course and the rest of the curriculum. Ideally, it involves opportunities for students to experience (through role modeling in class and through direct experience) the role that public participation plays in problem identification, discussion, and decisionmaking, as well as the role that interaction with others in the public sector can play in educating a manager and her organization about how better to create public value.

But continuous improvement is as difficult to implement in the classroom as it is in the world of public managers. Just as managers out in the world do not always understand the importance of experiments and learning and have a lot of pressures

not to "fail" [Schein, 1997]; faculty and students often do not understand the importance of experimentation. Students often come to the classroom thinking that they will be provided with the knowledge that they need to go forth and do a good job. That is, after all, what they paid tuition for. Some of them are less than thrilled even with a course that does not purport to have right answers. A course that takes on experimental learning may seem to be playing with their educational experience.

It also takes a lot of time to implement continuous improvement. In the classroom it means constantly reviewing and updating assignments, and finding new speakers, new cases, and new ways of presenting material. It also means encouraging students to try new things without penalizing them for not doing well on the first try. This means more time spent on an assignment for both students and faculty.

One of the things that can be changed is grading. In public management what we want to do is to make everyone more able to contribute to creating public value. In that context, value is not added by creating a curve for judging people. Instead of categorizing people as valuable and not valuable, we should be figuring out what people need to learn as managers responsible to and for their employees, the citizens they serve, and other managers with whom they must cooperate. This implies opportunities to learn improvement, and opportunities to learn under circumstances in which there are different types of expectations for what they must improve upon.

First, students must have opportunities to learn how to improve upon their various forms of participation. One of the ways we can do this is by allowing students to do an assignment and get comments and even a provisional grade and revise the assignment until the student demonstrates that he or she has learned what needs to be learned. Of course, this is very difficult to do in a large class unless the faculty member has a great deal of support. Also, it only addresses the issue of written assignments. What happens if some students develop a module for the open syllabus and it is a dismal failure? As it is unlikely that we would be able to repeat the performance within the confines of the term of the course, we may need to start thinking about how to grade something other than the outcome. For example, we could ask students to lay out a plan of what they would like to do and keep track of what they actually do and assess the plan and the outcome at the end of the experience. That would give the student the opportunity to learn from either failure or success and it would give faculty the opportunity to judge what was learned rather than what was performed. Such a strategy might also improve the likelihood of a successful performance.

Second, students must have opportunities to learn under circumstances in which there are different types of expectations for what they must improve upon. One possibility would be the development of a policy by teams of students and the evaluation of that policy by fellow students assuming the roles of citizens, employees, and comanagers. A role-play forces all students to think about the different types of expectations and concerns that various stakeholders might have. Simply thinking through these different types of concerns can be very informative. Taking this a step farther might include an assessment of the different positions by fellow students (assuming these different roles), thus confronting students with different types of expectations for improvement. In our classes, we asked students (grouped in teams of six or seven) to develop a policy for enhancing the climate of diversity within the program. Copies of the group proposals were given to all students to read, and an open discussion of the proposals followed. Although the students did not explicitly assume different roles, the discussion was wide-ranging and more informative for the students (in terms of continuous improvement) than a set of comments written

to the teams by the teachers. An extension of this exercise would be to have the consumers of these diversity policies (the dean, faculty, students, and future employers, for example) evaluate the proposals to identify strengths, weaknesses, and usefulness (or lack of usefulness) for them in fulfilling their obligations to the program and the public.

Teamwork

Western culture is fundamentally individualistic. Our workplaces and our teaching habits exhibit this characteristic. Although there is much discussion in both workplaces and schools about the importance of working and learning together, there is relatively little support for it in either place [see O'Hare, 1996; Resnick, 1987a, 1987b about lack of team learning in school settings]. Edgar Schein [1997] describes the situation in the following way:

For example, many organizations espouse "team work" and "cooperation" but the behavior that is rewarded and encouraged by the incentive and control systems of the organization is based more on a shared tacit assumption that only individuals can be accountable and that the best results will come from a system of individual competition and rewards. (p. 11)

Teamwork is important because the problems that are being confronted are just too complex for one person even to understand, much less to solve. Kurt Kimball, the city manager of Grand Rapids, Michigan, expressed this idea on a videotape he made for the public management course at the University of Michigan School of Public Policy:

The nature of organizations in the 21st century and the complexity of problems that exist out there are increasingly going to demand, not the traditional kind of command and control leadership model that you are all familiar with and has existed, but a manager that can facilitate a learning environment in the organization. No one person can have all the answers. People clamor and want someone with all the answers, but there simply aren't easy answers to complex problems and you aren't going to find any one individual that can chart a course. If you set your public leaders up as saviors to accomplish that, you are going to be sorely disappointed. In fact, the way things get accomplished, the way problems get solved is by gathering fairly broad, inclusive constituencies of stakeholders and listening carefully to what they have to say and stitching together in a learning environment everybody's thinking in order to accomplish the task.

This relates back to our discussion of strength through diversity. The only way that we can have public policies that work for a very diverse public is to examine problems from very diverse perspectives. Teams can provide that diversity of perspectives.

What teams contribute to solving problems can often become obscured by how difficult it is to develop a joint solution. In the practice of public policy, this happens, in part, because team members often have different bosses and bosses expect their subordinates to get the best possible deal for their interests [Feldman, 1989]. In such a case, the incentive system works to take everyone's interests into consideration (as long as the participants are roughly equal in power) but, because the interests are defined outside of the team and independent of the issue being addressed by the team, it works against the development of solutions that are new and innovative.

We suggest that the focus needs to be on the quality of the overall solution rather than the fit with the interests of the unit. For this focus to occur, there needs to be commitment to this idea throughout the hierarchy (or whatever form the structure

takes). Upper-level managers need to be aware of the consequences of a lower-level manager endorsing a plan that takes resources and work away from her department. In a city government, for instance, several departments may receive the mandate to lower the crime rate. Although lots of solutions that have been tried involve increased police on the beat, some innovative solutions might actually involve fewer police. What would make the chief of police support such a solution? This is an issue for the city manager. The point is that the commitment has to be consistent throughout the structure because at the place it stops, the pressure builds to individualize.

The issues are slightly different in the classroom. It is much easier to focus on the overall quality of the solution (by giving everyone on the team the same grade), but it is harder to make students see that the solution requires everyone's input. In the workplace, people from different offices or departments will have different bodies of knowledge, but in the classroom there will appear to be more commonality. Thus, whereas in the workplace one may be more afraid that lack of involvement will result in a solution that harms one's department, in the classroom one may be more concerned that others will become "free riders." The solution in both cases is to get people to understand that more input, more involvement, results in higher quality ideas [Cox, 1994].

One of the difficulties of accomplishing this in the classroom is represented in a debate that took place over the Electronic Hallway over the importance of a student's "absorbing" value versus the importance of a student's creating value for others. According to Roland Cole of the Software Patent Institute, "the student's primary goal, for his or her good and for the good of the rest of us, is to absorb value, to increase the human capital he or she will have to contribute to the world. This contribution will occur a bit while still a student (teaching assistants, summer internships, etc.), but should not be at the expense of doing what the world needs students to do" [Electronic Hallway Correspondence, 20 March 1998]. In response, Michael O'Hare argued that curriculum design is the process of identifying the skills students need to make the transition from school to the real world. The problem is that skills such as "giving useful criticism and collaborating with peers" are often identified by schools as skills to be learned while on the job, and schools in turn become comfortable teaching what they are good at [Electronic Hallway Correspondence, 20 March 1998].

We have tried several things to deal with the issue of teamwork. We have one major group project, mentioned earlier. The project we have used is a request for proposals for enhancing the climate for diversity in the School of Public Policy. Part of the assignment is to relate the proposal to the mission of the school. Students sign up to work in teams in such a way that they have considerable control over with whom they work. The project kickoff is a Saturday morning workshop with consultants who are expert at group work and the barriers to group work. The teams have their first team meeting at the workshop. Another team meeting is scheduled in the next week with a TA. A couple of weeks later an interim report is due. The interim report discusses both the project they are thinking about proposing and the group process. A couple of weeks later the final project is due. An in-class debriefing is scheduled about a week after the project is due. Everyone in the class is required to read all the proposals. Everyone working on the same proposal receives the same grade.

In addition to this major group project, we have several in-class group projects such as negotiations, small group discussions, and role plays. We have noticed that the group process workshop provides the students with a vocabulary and a set of common expectations for doing the small group work in class. We have heard reports that the same phenomenon occurs in the out-of-class group work.

Other possibilities for teamwork include formal mechanisms that focus students on the importance of team collaboration and shifting the culture from one that views teamwork as cheating, to one that views it as essential to high-quality products. Several (some quite controversial) grading mechanisms suggest ways that this might be accomplished. Fred Thompson, a professor at Willamette in Oregon, posts his syllabus on the World Wide Web (www.willamette.edu/~fthompso/[infom/IPE2) and requires the teams in his political economy class to create their own web pages and to post their written work for the course. Participation scores for the course are based on individual and team participation, and written work includes "cooperation points" that are earned through high scores for teamwork and in-class work. Evaluations of team assignments are posted on the class web page, with recommendations to see the writings of other teams as a reference for improvement. Another technique used by Larry Michaelsen, professor of business at the University of Oklahoma, involves the use of teams both for creating a grading system for the class [Michaelsen, Cragin, and Watson, 1981] and for a series of in-class individual and group exams including a final exam. Students take an exam individually and then as a member of a team of five or six students. Their grades are then a function of both the individual and the team exams [Larry Michaelsen, E-mail correspondence, 25 August 1998]. Such a scheme would clearly demonstrate the enhanced capacity of a team effort, as well as provide incentives to individuals to be prepared.[1]

It has been our observation that group process correlates with the quality of the project. This does not mean that the groups that work most easily together do the best job. On the contrary, groups that quickly converge on a solution often have the worst solutions. This phenomenon is, of course, similar to groupthink as identified by Janis [1972]. Just as groups can work "too efficiently," they can also have "too much fun." Groups that become social gatherings are not necessarily doing the hard work of confronting the different perspectives and knowledge that each has to bring to the enterprise. By contrast, groups in which people report that they really learned a lot from each other tend to have very good proposals. The issue here is very similar to the issue for continuous improvement. How do we convince people that taking the time to learn and to confront new perspectives is valuable?

Empowerment

The distribution of power in governance relations that has developed can be summarized in the following way: Citizens give power to elected officials who use that power to prescribe the actions of public administrators in their duty to serve the citizenry. This relationship produces a number of consequences that have become untenable. Citizens feel that, once they have voted, their contribution to governance is complete, and public administrators have little control over what and sometimes

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[1] Development and implementation of these and other grading systems are intricate processes that require attention to perverse consequences. Robert Leone, for example, uses a linear distribution of periodically posted scores anchored by the lowest scoring individual in a class. To prevent the lowest scoring student from being pressured to drop the course, or students simply awarding high grades to each other (his students participate in the grading), Leone determines the class performance (CP) grade of the student scoring lowest on the student participation evaluations at the end of the term (the evaluations are assessed periodically, and published, through the term) and then linearly distributes the CP grades up from that point to A. Under this scheme, students have a strong incentive to work with the lowest scoring students at any point in the semester to raise their performance (Robert Leone and Michael O'Hare, E-mail correspondence, 8 August 1998).

even over how something is done. This relationship requires forms of bureaucratic authority and structure that enable administrators to maintain control of information and decisionmaking at the upper levels of an organization. The result is that people at the "bottom" of the hierarchy are disempowered and that citizens feel unsatisfied with the services they receive.

Central to the new public management paradigm is the notion of empowerment. Empowerment involves sharing power within and outside of traditional boundaries. More people have responsibility, and accountability is distributed. Increasingly, power is being returned to citizens in various forms, such as selling public housing to tenants [Osbourne and Plastrik, 1997] and developing forums for citizen decisionmaking [Rabe, 1994]. Increasingly, public managers are being given more control over at least how public policies will be implemented and in many cases over what public policies will be implemented. Management of public organizations has followed a trend set by some private organizations in distributing power throughout the hierarchy with particular emphasis on having people on the frontlines of service delivery empowered to make decisions that enhance service.

Trust is central to empowerment [Carnevale, 1995; Osbourne and Plastik, 1997]. The essence of the change in management approach is captured in McGregor's theories X and Y. Theory X assumes that people do not want to work and that a manager's job is to coerce them into doing what the organization requires. Theory Y assumes that people do want to work and that a manager's job is to help them to contribute to the organization's goals [McGregor, 1960; Rainey, 1997]. Managers can help employees by making clear what the goals are and providing training and resources.

The challenge of empowerment is very similar for professors and public managers. Both have to change entrenched structures, cultures, and habits that centralize power and decrease the responsibility of people at the "lower" levels. Both are in contexts that require them to maintain control over certain aspects of their employees' or their students' behaviors. And in both contexts there may be questions about how much power people are willing to accept. Additional power can mean additional work and responsibility for outcomes. The fact that students are paying, rather than being paid for, their educational experience may be relevant for the responsibility they may be asked to assume in contributing to the learning of their peers. Similarly, lower-level employees might not want to take on work perceived as the responsibility of higher-paid management. Perhaps the biggest difference is that managers have longer time frames to work with. Employees normally devote 40 or more hours per week to the job and often stay in the same job for many years, while professors generally play a much smaller part in their students' environment and often for only 10 to 15 weeks.

Nonetheless, theories X and Y may be applicable in the classroom. Traditionally, classroom management gives the message that students need to be coerced to learn. The structure of the course provides the mechanisms of coercion. The teacher decides how class time will be spent. Students perform for the teacher. Grades provide motivation. As mentioned earlier, we may think of the classroom as a safe place because students can make mistakes there without losing their jobs. But the theory X attitude generates a context of vigilance and awareness of the potential for failure rather than of trust or safety.

We were particularly struck by the paradox of teaching the new public management in the traditional classroom when we took up the issue of trust and communication. Some would say that honest communication cannot take place in a context of unequal power [Habermas, 1973]. At the very least, there is broad support for the idea that communication will be very stilted without trust [Carnevale, 1995]. Yet, in

the discussion-oriented classroom we expect students to engage in intense discussion in a context in which they are observed by someone who has the power to pronounce their contributions right or wrong and ultimately to grade them on their contributions. Discussing trust and communication in this environment seemed to be the height of hypocrisy.

To begin to remedy this hypocrisy, we suggest two areas of change in the reinvented classroom. The first involves sharing power; the second, exposing it. Students must have a clear sense of responsibility for the learning that takes place in the course. In addition, the teacher must be willing continually to expose the dimensions of power and authority that can define interactions within and outside of class.

Traditionally, students' responsibilities lie with reading the course material, meeting the written course requirements, and participating through a daily presence in class and some in-class discussion. A more empowered student has responsibility for the learning that takes place in the classroom, as well. To use the language of Gary Miller's [1993] analysis of private management efforts, teachers must "share the hierarchy" (the authority for learning must be shared with the students). We suggest that courses begin with a discussion about how participants (students, TAs, and faculty) can contribute to the creation of value in the course. The discussion can result in a set of group norms that help to facilitate learning and that can be pointed to by any member of the course as the term progresses. We suggest that this exercise might work best if started in small groups without the participation of the TA or the professor. The faculty member may, in fact, want to act primarily as a facilitator who writes down the suggestions and makes them publicly available. It may also be useful to revisit the group norms from time to time. A further step may be taken by encouraging students to help determine their own performance measures. This could be done on an individual basis through a flexible grading schema and in conjunction with the open syllabus as discussed earlier. It could also be done on a collective basis in combination with evaluation by other students.

But student empowerment in the classroom might be pushed to a deeper level, contingent not only on the design of class sessions and assignments, but on the dynamics of the classroom made transparent by the teacher. We think it unlikely that the classroom, or indeed management situations, will ever be devoid of power disparities or their vestiges. Therefore, we suggest transparency as the next best thing. Transparency involves exposing the workings of power and discussing the significance of these aspects in the classroom and the management context—similar to what Gilmore and Schall [1996] call, "attending to the here-and-now of class dynamics." Class discussion, interaction between students and the teacher, and interaction between students and students hold lessons or snapshots of the role that power (in terms of authority, dominant personalities, particular types of expertise) plays in the learning efforts of an organization (or classroom).

We found exposing the power dynamics to be a fairly effective way to deal with the topic of communication and trust. Class began with the professor acknowledging her sense of the hypocrisy in relation to this issue. Discussion ensued about the obstacles to communication in this setting. Not all students felt the same constraints in their communication, and the students did not necessarily feel that the situation was inappropriate, but none of the students seemed to miss the point that the way the classroom situation was structured created obstacles for some. One wonders whether students who are more invested in the learning process (more empowered in the sense of taking responsibility for the learning) would be more inclined to find the classroom structure inappropriate.

Dimensions of power among students can also be exposed. A student, for example, might try to minimize the importance of a comment or discussion by rephrasing the point in a trivial manner, or by exhibiting body language, such as a roll of the eyes, or by engaging in conversation with a neighbor. The teacher might turn such a situation into a learning possibility. "What is it about the comment that you find difficult or trivial?" Or open it up to the class. "Is it a trivial point?" The ensuing conversation could go a long way to demonstrate the importance of social interactions that can stifle ideas and participation, as well as minimize opportunities for learning. Some individuals may play a more dominant role in class discussion and in group processes. This participation may be productive, but it may limit other participation and room for learning.

To identify such situations and maintain transparency is, we recognize, extremely difficult. It can put students on the spot and embarrass them and, if the spotlight is turned on the teacher, the potential for unease is clear. Our own efforts to do so have been restricted but very useful. We think the potential of this approach for learning about relations between individuals and the consequences for class, organization, or community growth and learning is probably greater than the short-term discomfort.

Institutional Support for Reinventing the Classroom

It is not enough to seek strength through diversity, continuous improvement, teamwork, and empowerment in the classroom setting. There must also be support from the institution or department within which any public affairs program rests. Just as the Charlotte, North Carolina, city council supported experimentation and continuous learning by not punishing the person who sent too many buses to Atlanta, teaching institutions need to support faculty who are engaged in educational experimentation.

There must be commitment by the leadership of any given program to these principles. This has two dimensions. First, institutional leadership must support individual faculty efforts to apply the principles in classroom teaching. There must be rewards (or at least not punishments) for investing the time and effort necessary to develop and teach a class as a case. Most critically, teaching effort should be a more significant component of tenure evaluations for faculty teaching in public affairs programs [O'Hare, 1996]. This would be more readily accomplished in programs that are institutionally distinct and able to offer tenure homes separate from other academic units. But even in these situations traditional emphasis upon research as the primary tenure criteria weighs heavily upon faculty making calculated decisions about time and effort allocations. At a minimum, institutional leadership can reduce course loads or provide time off over the period of a year or two years to accommodate new course development and the time required of a more demanding teaching style. Ideally, institutional leadership will work to develop tenure evaluation policies that demand a commitment to teaching and reward creativity and performance.

Similarly, the effort to teach in a reinvented classroom will require support staff for the teachers (TAs), mentoring and on-the-job training for new faculty, and (ideally) faculty willing to team up to teach separate sections of the course. Institutional leadership can go a long way toward facilitating these dimensions of the teaching effort, particularly in developing ways of sharing the teaching experiences and knowledge of faculty with other faculty [see O'Hare, 1996, for an assessment of APPAM member school efforts in this area]. In addition to the mutual learning that can take place in a team-taught course, institutional leadership can

implement programs requiring faculty to visit other classes, for example, or hold roundtable discussions or in-house seminars on teaching methods. Our own experience indicates the benefits of team teaching in terms of the final "product," as well as learning opportunities and support that comes through a team effort. Interestingly, our own initial efforts at team teaching were built upon a Tuesday morning group session that was not well defined and to which the four participants (two TAs and two teachers) brought slightly different expectations and concerns. It was not until our group process session (held early in the semester) that the expectations within the group were stated and we could begin to make real progress in terms of thinking about the approach and overall quality of the course as a team. Throughout the semester, our use of this group session evolved and became an integral part of efforts continually to improve what took place in the classroom. The synergies for team teaching are not, however, inevitable. Institutional leadership is required to facilitate team-taught course development and to follow up on team teaching efforts—both those deemed "successful" by participants and those not. An evaluation process that focused on what worked, what did not work and why, and what was learned by faculty and students alike would be an essential part of both the faculty's and the institution's efforts to improve continuously.

This brings us to the second dimension of support. Leaders need to support not only individual faculty efforts, but institutional features that facilitate classroom reinvention. For example, leadership should coordinate projects that cross classroom and even institutional boundaries, integrating different concepts and analytical tools. Again, this might mean very basic forms of individual faculty support for the development process. It also requires commitment to the cross-classroom effort, perhaps working with governments and organizations outside of the institution to participate in the process, and investing efforts to assess the process both as a learning tool for students and in terms of value that might be created for citizens and other participants in the public and private sectors. Learning to work with other organizations and citizens to utilize their distinctive competencies for creating public value and building relationships and avenues for future cooperative efforts requires not only an ability to work on a team, but an ability to work across boundaries. More fundamentally, any public manager will need to draw upon a variety of skills and knowledge bases to manage her own organization. In its simplest format, this might require public management students to utilize a benefit-cost analysis as part of their public management project. At a higher level, there might be a coordinated effort between two classes to conduct a public sector project that requires coordination between groups that cross the two classes and with organizations involved in the particular public sector. The coordination effort on the part of the teachers, if utilized, could stand as an example of managing across boundaries as well.

Finally, another key institutional feature should be feedback for courses as well as overall program performance. In our own course, we provided students with two questions about half-way through the term: What do you like about the course? What would you like to change? The suggestions were extremely useful and allowed us to make some changes with half of the semester remaining. Feedback provided by graduates of a public affairs program is another essential form of measurement and key to any effort to improve. Surveys asking alumni the value of the public management pedagogy and of cross-course efforts and asking them to discuss their current public policy challenges would provide very useful information not only for improving what is done in the classroom, but for how well the school is supporting the effort. And, as

O'Hare [1996] points out, feedback from employers of alumni and even citizens who finance the educational system and are served by alumni would be key to any institutional effort to improve upon pedagogy for practice.

Conclusion: Learning to Live with Risk

First, we believe that the "new public management" fundamentally requires that we grapple with deeper dimensions of governance and that the principles of strength through diversity, continuous improvement, teamwork, and empowerment go to the heart of those governance issues. In order to create public value, public managers must understand the framework of governance within which they operate. Fundamentally, this means managers must begin with an understanding of the organizational and community strengths that can come through diversity. Organizations and communities able fully to utilize "empowered" employees and teams and to generate continuous improvement build upon diversity within and without.

Second, any effort to adopt the principles of strength through diversity, empowerment, teamwork, and continuous improvement, as we have described them here, is a risky undertaking. Taking control of what happens in the classroom, exercising authority based upon hierarchy, defining the syllabus, and limiting the range of assignments ahead of time all minimize the "headaches" that accompany much of open learning. Nevertheless, we are asking our students to go out into the world and face similar risks on a daily basis. Angry constituents protest the siting of a new office building, procurement processes stall over suspected fraud on the part of the service provider, an empowered employee spends her time investing for her own personal future rather than the organization's, and political support waxes and wanes with the electoral cycles. It seems only fair that we not only work toward the application of the same principles we admonish future public managers to embrace, but that we take the risks associated with them, too. In fact, the lessons from risk-taking gone awry might be quite informative.

Third, we might find that we understand the principles and the new approach to public management much better if we try to implement them ourselves. As our students are fond of pointing out through their objections to theoretical readings, thinking about public management and practicing it are two very different enterprises. We still think it important for students to learn from people whose primary job is to think about it rather than to do it. We do, however, sympathize with the students' frustrations with our lack of perspective on what it means to practice what we preach. Implementing the principles of the new public management paradigm in our classrooms can go a long way toward helping us as teachers understand the current and future perspectives of our students. It might also assist us in our research endeavors. Our own practice can help us develop research questions and ways of answering them that may be more relevant to the practice of public management.

Fourth, we also recognize that there is no one best way to go about applying these four principles (which we view as the core of the new public management paradigm). Any effort to adopt the principles will need to be adapted to individual teaching and personality styles, different compositions of student abilities and interests, different institutional settings with varied levels of support for what is being tried, and basic time and resource constraints. Again, the analogy for our students is very real. Although the principles might be foremost in their minds, some might work in states with strong civil service unions, while others may work in right-to-work states;

some will work in settings that are economically devastated, while others will serve affluent populations; and some will work in societies that maintain barriers for diversity, while others will work in communities that embrace and thrive upon diversity. Learning to adapt the basic principles to a variety of settings, to remain clear about their overall purpose, and not to be lost in the minutia of daily details are the constants.

Finally, although we might fail, and the failure might hurt, we nevertheless must try—hopefully with institutional support. Trying requires, in turn, breaking out of our old ways of thinking about the roles we should play in the classroom, what roles our students should play, and what we think we all ought to learn. We can all learn from our experiences in the classroom. As Peter Senge [1990] has argued, we are not necessarily prisoners of a system, but prisoners of our own thinking that can be breached by viewing the system within which we work in a simplified, yet dynamic form. This, in part, requires visualizing a classroom that is more fluid and transparent, that requires burden sharing between all participants.

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