1980

Professional Education for Mid-Career Managers in Government [1997]

Nova University

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION FOR MID-CAREER MANAGERS IN GOVERNMENT

John M. Clarke, Director

Center for the Study of Administration
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Nova University was chartered by the State of Florida in 1964 as an institution for graduate study and research in science and technology. In 1970 Nova joined with the New York Institute of Technology in an educational consortium. Nova is non-sectarian, non-profit, and practices a policy of non-discrimination.

Nova was accredited in 1971. In 1974 its regional accreditation was reaffirmed for ten years by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the official accrediting agency for institutions of higher education in the southeastern states. Nova has pioneered in the development of new, off-campus programs for persons in mid-career. Its research programs are directed toward the solution of public problems of immediate concern to mankind.

Nova University has programs leading to the Doctor of Philosophy degree in the behavioral, life, and ocean sciences. The Juris Doctor is offered in law. The Education Specialist degree is offered in education, both on campus and in an off-campus format. The Master of Science degree is conferred in administration and supervision of educational systems, biochemistry, counseling and guidance, computer science, elementary education, exceptional child education, experimental oncology, gifted child education, learning technology, microbiology, reading, and visiting teacher education. The Master of Arts degree is offered in elementary education, exceptional child education, early childhood education, reading and secondary education. A number of degrees are offered in an off-campus format: the Doctor of Education in elementary and secondary school administration; in community college education; and in vocational, technical, and occupational education; as well as the Doctor of Public Administration and the Doctor of Education in early childhood education. At the Masters level the University also offers, in an off-campus format, degrees in public administration, human resources management, and business administration.

PREFACE

Five years of experience in developing a new educational program have been sufficient to demonstrate that it is an effective way of bringing professional education in public administration at the graduate level within the reach of mid-career administrators in public and community service. Since there is considerable interest in the program among persons in government who have risen to positions of administrative responsibility, and who have no opportunity to avail themselves of traditional modes of study, this report has been prepared. There is also interest in the Nova program among other educational institutions, some of which have found it worthy of emulation. In addition, state agencies, concerned with maintaining the quality of educational opportunity for citizens of the United States who are residents in their jurisdiction, have a proper interest in the Nova Doctoral Program for Administrators. For all these, this report is offered as a brief introduction.

For all who would know more, we invite a closer acquaintance through an examination of the curriculum and of our records, discussions with graduates and with faculty, and visits to on-site course conferences and to the workshops at Nova University. All Nova faculty and administrators welcome the opportunity to discuss the program, and can explain the processes and the very considerable problems of providing instruction and creating an effective learning environment for a largely decentralized body of student participants. Despite the admitted difficulties which are to be found in making such a program run smoothly, the person who chooses to examine it thoroughly is sure to be impressed by the enthusiasm for the learning experience shown by all participants—both student-participants and preceptorial-faculty. This shared enthusiasm for a vital learning experience, perhaps more than anything else, best characterizes the program, and sustains it.

Samuel Humes
August 1978

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION FOR MID-CAREER MANAGERS IN GOVERNMENT

The National DPA Program for Administrators at Nova University is a program of study and instruction for mid-career administrators in public and community service who are in positions of managerial responsibility. It leads to the degree of Doctor of Public Administration, not Doctor of Philosophy. The distinction is significant—the program is designed to enhance the professional competence of practicing administrators, not to prepare young would-be scholars for research and teaching. Nor is it an MPA program for inexperienced young people intending to enter the public service.

Origin and Purpose of the Program

The selection of this objective in 1973 was deliberate. American public administrators in the higher levels are drawn largely from the ranks of specialists who in time move out of their specialist roles, in which they have worked as individuals, into positions in which they direct, and are responsible for, the work of others. Most specialists so "promoted" have little or no opportunity to prepare themselves for their broader, more diverse, and different responsibilities. Usually they have had no opportunity to engage in systematic professional study or instruction in *public* administration. The National DPA Program for Administrators was designed to meet the needs of this archetypical group of administrators in local, state, and federal governments.

The program is especially timely and appropriate because of the phenomenal growth in the administrative functions of government during the past half century, with the consequent substantial increase in the need for competent managers in the public service. The complexity and interactive effects of the new and more

ambitious programs and the striking advance of science and technology applicable to public problems, add new dimensions to public administration. The technical problems are complicated further by the paradoxical escalation of public goals and simultaneous decline of public confidence and social consensus. Managers in government today have an overwhelming need to learn from the experience of others and to share in the accumulated knowledge of administration. They need all the help they can get in order to maximize the effectiveness of government in all its functions—service, remedial, and regulatory. The nexus today in the triad of problems, goals, and actions is the public administrator.

A 1973 report of the National Academy of Public Administration, *Meeting the Needs of Tomorrow's Public Service,* emphasized the urgency of the need for professional education for public administrators in the unstable conditions of the changing world; it also noted "the generally feeble response" to this need "at the graduate level" of university education. The report concluded (among other things) that pre-entry preparation of an administrator can never be adequate for long, and that his professional education must continue. It emphasized the challenges faced by the administrator which require "thorough understanding of the administrative process" (including the entire political, economic, social, and juridicial context of which it is a part). The administrator must have a "base of analytical skills which are both policy and process oriented" sufficient "to make him capable of understanding, using, and specifying the products of analysis." These qualities must be complemented by "an appreciation for, as well as minimum skills in, interpersonal relations, supervision, leadership, and coordination" and "an awareness of the nature and intensity of pressures...to which he must react." Possession of this skill, knowledge, insight, and wisdom is an ideal to which all public administrators can aspire. But is it attainable, especially for the person who is already in mid-career in government, "bearing the burden and heat of the day"? If it is to be attainable, surely the active administrator must have assistance.

The Academy's report, and the consensus which it reflected among senior members of the public administration community, may be regarded as a take-off point for the Nova National DPA Program for Administrators. The program is an integrated plan of study (not a collection of courses) specifically designed to

provide effective assistance to public administrators in their continuing professional education. It can be understood and properly evaluated only if that purpose is kept in mind.

Most public administrators in positions of responsibility do not find it feasible either to attend evening classes over long periods of time or to take leave from their jobs for study in residence on a university campus. Nor are they able to sustain purely independent study over long periods. The mode of instruction employed in the National DPA Program for Administrators provides a more practicable and acceptable regime for serious sustained study, and is a direct response to the challenge of the Academy's report.

The Format

Student participants in the program meet together in clusters of from fifteen to twenty-five with two instructors (a preceptor and the cluster director) for two-day "course conferences" at intervals of four or five weeks. There are eighteen of these two-day course conferences in the first six of the nine sequences of the program, three in each sequence.

The program provides a "curriculum statement" for each sequence which introduces the subject of study, reviews developments in the field, points up issues, comments on the literature, and sets the assignments for the three units of the sequence. The program also provides, and physically puts into the hands of the student participants, most of the required reading for the nine sequences, between fifty and sixty books and more than twenty-five additional documents. (The required reading assignments are changed at times.) These materials are supplied well in advance of the course conference at which they are to be considered.

Participants are required to prepare a paper (commentary) for each unit of the sequence along lines set in the curriculum statement and to send it to the preceptor in advance of the course conference. The commentary serves two purposes. It makes it necessary for the participant to react to the ideas or data presented in what he reads and also to consider their applicability to the kind of public administration in which he is involved. The commentary also gives the preceptor an idea of the respective reactions of the several participants, alerts the preceptor as to their concerns and conceptions (or misconceptions), and is useful in planning the ensuing course conference.

For the first six sequences, the course conferences are conducted in a metropolitan area in or near which most of the participants in the cluster are employed. (A few participants in almost every cluster have come considerable distances to attend, some from as far as five hundred miles.) The course conferences are held on Friday and Saturday in a conference center or motel having adequate conference facilities. The time of meeting makes it possible for the participants to avoid being away from the office for more than one day at a time every four or five weeks. The close association of participants and faculty for two full days on eighteen weekends makes it possible to utilize both the informal contacts and the formal conference sessions for purposes of learning.

The course conferences are traditional in the sense that student participants meet together with instructors in face-to-face seminar-type discussions. Participants learn from their reading, from their efforts to react in writing, from their close and sustained contacts with faculty, and from each other. The sharing of experience, attitudes, and ideas among mid-career employees of local, state, and federal governments engaged in many different functions is important, and the sharing increases as the program progresses.

The program is non-traditional in that the curriculum, the books, and the faculty are brought to the students. In a real sense the university goes to the student, rather than the student to the university. The program also reverses the traditional relationship in that the student provides the laboratory, or real life experience. The instruction does not have to provide the laboratory or clinic or to simulate the real world; the students are practitioners living in the laboratory and are themselves actors on the real world stage of public administration.

The University's function is, first, to put the participant in touch with the experience of others and the organized knowledge applicable to public administration which has been therein accumulated. Its function, second, is to stimulate and aid participants to react to and understand this shared experience, so that they can be more effective in learning from their own experience as well as that of others. The learning process is not complete until a person can generalize perceptively about what he has experienced (directly or vicariously) in such a way that he can share it with others. What a person cannot explain, he does not fully

understand. Or to put it positively, one begins to understand what one can explain to others.

The format of instruction changes after the sixth sequence. For the three remaining sequences—designated A, B, and C—participants go to Nova University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, for week-long workshops. Participants from all clusters come together here for essentially the same seminar-type sessions with faculty and each other. Curriculum statements and required reading materials are distributed well in advance. Papers are prepared and presented, and are subjected to both peer group and faculty criticism. The workshops are held in spring, late summer, and early winter (usually May, August, and December). Workshop A usually follows Sequence Three; Workshop B follows Sequence Six in the second year of the program; and Workshop C comes at the end of the third year.

The Sequence Curriculum

The curriculum organization for the nine sequences (eighteen onsite course conferences and three workshops in Fort Lauderdale) is based roughly on roles or functions of the manager in public administration. This concept cannot be too narrowly interpreted, however, since a number of sequences have a double function. Although the explanation of the sequences has changed at times, they may be roughly described as follows:

1. Political Partner (and the context of political power and political ideas).
2. Policy Formulator (and the policy imperatives which constitute a current dynamic context).
3. Information User (and the methods and facilities for the meaningful use of relevant data).
4. Organizational Coordinator (and the realities of intra-organizational behavior).
5. Resource Mobilizer (and the uses of authority, money, and people).
6. Program Mover (and the art of putting it all together).
7. Workshop A. Program-Project Developer (The approach and techniques of problem analysis and project development.)
8. Workshop B. Systems Changing (The problems of structural and institutional obsolescence considered

in the light of the experiences of other nations.)

9. Workshop C. Public Administration and the Public Administrator Viewed in Historical Perspective. (The basic and recurring issues of public administration and how they have been treated in doctrine and practice over time.)

There have been changes in the required reading and the materials supplied for each sequence from year to year. A list of materials which have been used most regularly among the seventy-five to ninety books and documents supplied to participants is appended. As new and more appropriate materials become available, they are added or substituted in the reading list.

The function of providing these materials has been assumed by the program deliberately, so that participants in the program are saved the time, expense, and frustration of ordering the books from publishers, going to book stores, searching in libraries, only to find the books too late to be useful.

Every participant has the materials at hand on his own desk and in his own study. He can underline and make marginal notations in the books if that is his style, and, at the end of the program, he has a basic working library in public administration to build on as he continues in his profession of public administration. Although the program cannot make the work easy, it tries in this way to make it possible for participants to do the work required in the program with no wasted time.

What Participants Do

Participants do a substantial amount of writing throughout the program. The commentaries for each course conference have been mentioned; each of these runs from fifteen to thirty pages, and must be submitted in advance of the course conference. In Sequence Three, participants prepare, in addition to the commentary, an exercise of considerable importance, the development of a management information system for use in their own agency.

Participants also prepare additional documents of a substantial character during the course of the program. The first of these is a problem/case study, a report on the handling of a critical incident or the making of a significant decision. The case study must provide the information necessary for the reader to perceive and

understand the problem and the circumstances of the case sufficiently to be able to make an intelligent decision, if the issue is unresolved, and to evaluate the decision made, if the action has been completed. These cases are taken from the working experience of the participant and are due during the first sequence.

A longer paper is a job-related Analytical Report which treats a relevant problem within the participant's organization or working experience, identifies and defines the problem clearly, develops the alternative courses of action for dealing with it, weighs and selects the best solution, prepares a plan for implementing the decision, and carries it through to completion (or evaluates the action taken if the power to act lies outside the participant's authority). This report is now prepared in connection with the Seventh Sequence, Workshop A, and is in part a training exercise preparing for the major Applied Research Project, which is the treatment in similar fashion of a more significant and complex problem.

In most cases, the participant takes as the subject of the project a genuine problem within his own jurisdiction. Not infrequently this is a pressing problem and one that he can act upon or get his organization to implement when the analysis has been completed and the plan of action prepared. The projects go through several stages: a proposal outlining the study to be made, followed by the investigation, analysis, and final report. Both proposals and reports are reviewed and must be approved by the program's central faculty at Nova.

The commentary for Sequence 9 (Workshop C) differs from those in the preceding sequences in that it is a single paper for the sequence—an administrative history of an agency, organization, or program in which the student participant is involved. It is based largely on an examination of files, records, official documents, and interviews with persons directly involved in the events described. Like the case study, the Sequence 9 commentary is prepared from original sources and may for the first time make the historical record available to others.

Learning from experience is not necessarily automatic. These two papers by participants are intended to increase their alertness as to relevant data, to sharpen their perceptiveness as to underlying themes and basic issues, and to strengthen their ability to make valid judgments. At a minimum, the Sequence 9 com-

mentary is intended to heighten the consciousness of mid-career administrators to the significance of the administrative processes and institutions of which they are a part.

Writing based upon reading (commentaries), analysis (reports on projects), and historical investigation (case study and Sequence 9 commentary) are not all that participants "do" in the program. In the eighteen course conferences and in the three workshops, students actively participate in the discussions. They are required to be present at all course conferences and workshop seminars and to enter actively into the discussions. Preceptors give no formal lectures, but lead the discussions and of course at times make the principal contribution to clarification of the issues, enrichment of the content, or critical evaluation of ideas presented by participants. An important part of the educational philosophy of the program is that people learn more by what they try to explain to others and by trying to formulate their interpretive, critical, and evaluative ideas so that others may understand them than they learn from what they are told. (There is obviously a function for attentive listening in participation; for without it, communication breaks down. Fostering the art of listening is in fact an objective of one unit of the program, but listening alone is not enough.)

The policy of the program is not to permit participants to sit silently in group sessions. They must involve themselves, actively sharing their experience with others, as peer group critics of the papers and ideas of others, and offering their own ideas and interpretations for critical comment by others. In this educationally profitable exchange, the preceptor and cluster director, of course, make the most important contribution. They set the tone, keep the discussion on the more important aspects of the subject, and provide the authority of expert knowledge and extensive experience in applying the test of validity to ideas and information under discussion. The point is that participants must expose their ideas orally in face-to-face discussions with faculty and peers, as well as in the extensive written work. For mature men and women, rich in experience in government, this is an effective learning process.

Finally, the participants take two examinations; a six-and-a-half hour comprehensive written examination, following the sixth sequence, and an oral examination before a three-member faculty

committee after all other requirements in the program have been completed.

All things considered, the students in the National DPA Program for Administrators are aptly described as participants.

Despite the decentralized character of instruction in two-thirds of the program, there is no lack of meaningful student-faculty interchange. Not counting the informal discussions during course conference weekends and workshops, which are also useful educationally, participants meet face-to-face with faculty in planned conference and seminar sessions of small groups totaling some four hundred hours during the program.

Evaluation

The performance of participants is evaluated systematically throughout the program. The commentaries of every unit in every sequence are read, graded, annotated, and returned to participants by the preceptors. The participation in course conferences is graded by both preceptors and cluster directors. Case/problems, reports, and projects are reviewed and evaluated by the Nova central faculty in Fort Lauderdale in both the proposal stage and the final report stage. Unsatisfactory proposals are returned with comments; unsatisfactory project reports are reviewed and returned for revision, sometimes repeatedly.

Preceptors and resident faculty members submit questions for the comprehensive written examinations, which are prepared and graded by the resident faculty in Fort Lauderdale. Answer papers are numbered, and not identified by name, to avoid the possibility of bias in evaluation, and the individual questions or parts of the examination are graded by three or more persons, not by one faculty member alone.

Oral examinations by three-member committees of the resident faculty last for one-and-a-half to two-and-a-half hours. The typical examination runs a little more than an hour and a half. On occasion, cluster directors and non-resident preceptors participate as additional committee members in the oral examinations.

The emphasis throughout the program and also in the examinations is on the ability to apply what has been learned, in ideas, concepts, or data, to problems and processes of public administration, and on the ability to use analytical skills in addressing problems of policy or operations.

Faculty

For each unit of each sequence, a senior preceptor is responsible for preparing the curriculum statement for that unit, selecting the required reading, and defining the commentary and exercise requirements. (A central Nova faculty member is senior preceptor of one unit and/or has a coordinating function for the sequence.) The preceptor also is the active teacher in charge of the conduct of course conferences. The preceptor is highly qualified in the subject matter of the unit and is, with few exceptions, experienced in government.

For each cluster, instruction is provided by two persons: the preceptor and a cluster director. Preceptors move from one cluster to another, teaching in their sequence or unit as the cluster comes to it. In sequences 3, 6, 7, 8, and 9, the same person is usually preceptor in all three units. In other sequences, a preceptor teaches only one unit of the sequence, with three preceptors covering the three units. The difference is dictated by the subject matter of the sequences.

The cluster director is a resident in the area in which the cluster meets, and continues with the cluster throughout the program. His functions are both administrative and instructional. He makes all arrangements for cluster meetings; he is an important channel of communication between the DPA central staff and the participants; and he distributes the curriculum statements, books, and other documents supplied to the participants. He gives initial screening to case studies and proposals and reports on Applied Research projects, which participants then send in for evaluation by the central DPA staff. He is a guide and counselor, as needed, to the participants. He participates in the course conferences as required by the preceptor, frequently as a discussion leader when the cluster is broken into smaller groups. Finally, the cluster director is responsible for the Friday evening seminars centering on specific management problems and featuring consideration of public administration cases. These seminars continue through the third year of the program.

The preceptor is in charge of instruction in each course conference. He has read and evaluated the commentaries before the conference; he makes the instructional plans for the conference; and he may or may not involve the cluster director in the conference, depending on the nature of the material and the methods

of instruction selected. The preceptor and the cluster director usually meet on the evening before the course conference and make plans for the conference. The cluster director, who remains with the cluster month after month, briefs the preceptor on the characteristics of the group and provides any information which will aid the preceptor in the course conference.

Both the preceptor and cluster director grade the participants on performance in the course conference. The preceptor grades the written commentaries. Grades are reported to Nova after each conference.

The senior preceptor, for each sequence or unit, prepares the curriculum statement, selects the required readings, and sets the commentary task and exercises. The senior preceptor also has the lion's share of preceptorial assignments. There are two or three additional preceptors for each unit who also are highly qualified in the subject and who take some of the preceptorial assignments.

The preceptors are chosen for their expert knowledge of the field in which they teach. Most of them also are active currently in public administration as practitioners or have had extensive experience in government. Only two of thirty-three presently active preceptors have not had significant experience in public administration. The combination of expert knowledge and experience in responsible roles in government makes for easy understanding between preceptor and participant. Ten of the preceptors also are experienced university teachers. (It may be noted that the practitioners serving as preceptors have proved to be fully as effective teachers as currently active university faculty members.) A list of the more active preceptors is appended.

Preceptors participating in the program have a variety of current affiliations. Seven are faculty members of the Center for Public Affairs and Administration of Nova University. Eight others have full active or emeritus status in other long-established universities, private (five) and public (three). Of these eight, only two have not had extensive experience in government, and these two are recognized scholars in public administration.

Eighteen preceptors have significant experience in the federal government, and nine in local or state governments or both. (There is some overlap.) This is a rich background to complement the expertise of the preceptors in their respective fields, and

makes for easy communication between faculty and students. In part because of the compatibility of interests and a shared background, the course conferences have proved to be effective learning experiences, interesting and stimulating to both faculty and student participants.

University Base

The National Doctoral Program for Administrators is offered by the Center for Public Affairs and Administration of Nova University. The director and faculty of the Program have had freedom in developing the program. This has permitted experimentation and innovation. Rapid changes have been possible when needed, without long delays. In other words, the Center and the Program are substantially autonomous, and there has never been any constraint in the design of the program or interference in its execution.

An important guidance and review function is provided by the Advisory Board which consists of some two dozen persons drawn from other university faculties and the public service. (The Board serving in 1978-79 is appended.) It is the University's policy to utilize this Board (and others similar to it) for close scrutiny and continuing evaluation of educational programs. Although the Board's status is technically advisory, it is consulted on all important questions of policy and has great influence. The eminence of the members, their interest in advancing professional education, and their commitment to making it possible for active mid-career managers to obtain the best in professional education—all these give the Board great authority. The Board, which is kept informed through frequent reports, meets twice a year for day-long review of the program. The Advisory Board's advice is taken seriously, and on issues on which there is a Board consensus, its position has never been rejected by the program staff.

The University provided financial support for the program in its first year. Since then the program has not drawn on University funds, but has received overhead services (e.g., space, utilities, print shop, library) for which it has made reasonable contributions.

Present Status (July 1978)

Since November 1973, thirty-three clusters have been organized. Eighteen have completed all sequences, and fourteen are active in

the sequences 1 through 9. As of July 31, 1978, 136 participants had completed the program and been awarded the DPA degree. Approximately 150 were in the process of completing papers and preparing for the final oral examination.

Persons who unconsciously perceive this program as a Ph.D. program that is preparing young persons for research and teaching may think that the number of doctorates is large and may fear a flooding of the market, but this fear is unwarranted. The Nova participants are practitioners who expect to advance and continue in government as more effective, responsible administrators, and they are doing so. In all, their total number will never be more than miniscule among public administrators who are at mid-management levels.

The prospect is for not more than fifteen to twenty clusters operating at any given time, each beginning with from twenty to twenty-five participants. The attrition following the comprehensive written examination (after Sequence 6) has tended to be about one in three. The attrition for all causes at all stages of the program has been considerably higher. Eighteen to twenty clusters approach the upper limit of the program. To attempt to instruct a larger number would overburden the select group of experienced preceptors who have the combination of qualities needed and who have proved their effectiveness as teachers. A larger number of participants would also make it difficult to maintain a consistent viewpoint and uniform criteria in the Nova central faculty, which reviews and assesses case studies, project proposals and reports, and Sequence 9 commentaries. Since these documents are criticized in detail and frequently returned for revision, the student...faculty relations are extremely close. There is an upper limit to which the numbers of students can rise without loss of faculty unity and close personal relations with individual participants. The program avoids the limitations of both independent study and mass education, and is committed to maintaining this kind of personal direction of instruction.

Reflections on Five Years

Some obstacles and hazards are remembered. One is the inherent logistic difficulty of putting all the pieces together precisely for every participant and every cluster in the highly de-

centralized instructional plan. Books, participants, preceptors, and cluster directors—all must come together in more than a dozen places precisely on time. Assessments (grades) must be reported. Case studies, analytical reports, and administrative histories must be reviewed, annotated, and returned for revision. Participants in a dozen different clusters, each on its own schedule, must be accommodated in the same workshop three times a year. This coordination, requiring exact timing and depending on factors which are not always controllable, is not easy, and, regrettably, it has not always been accomplished smoothly.

Skepticism about a new program of fresh design in the educational world (which is institutionally, if not ideologically, conservative) is inevitable. This attitude is expected and accepted, since all educational programs should be judged on their merits—the old as well as the new. What was unexpected was the extent of spontaneous hostility, instead of skepticism, and an unwillingness to consider the facts and judge the program on its merits. Such reactions to the program are regrettable, not only because they betray the ideals of the academic world from which they come, but also because the anxiety which prompts the hostility is so unnecessary. Campus-based instruction in public administration is not threatened by the National DPA Program for Administrators. This fact should be recognized as it becomes clear that participants in the program are not persons who will ever be candidates for study in residence or for three-nights-a-week after-hours instruction. Experience to date seems to indicate that the interest of participants in the Nova program—mid-career administrators—actually stimulates the market; younger colleagues catch fire from their older associates, and become interested in going back to school themselves. Many of these younger men and women can fit evening courses on campus into their schedules.

The logistical problems and fraternal hostility, however, weigh lightly in the scales when balanced against the benefits which the program enjoys.

1. The program is fortunate in the expert and experienced men and women who constitute its active teaching faculty. They speak with authority and understanding, and they know how to listen both critically and empathetically. They have proved to be highly effective teachers who in the aggregate have an intellectual authority in public administration that few residential faculties

could reasonably be expected to match. The range of background and experience which they possess is an educational asset. Each participant is directly involved during the program with seventeen of eighteen preceptors, each of them from two to six days. The intimacy of this involvement with a faculty of wide-ranging experience has had benefits which all participants have recognized.

2. The present richness of the literature relevant to public administration is also a great asset. It has been possible to select from a broad spectrum of sources—books, monographs, articles, and public documents which are relevant and rewarding for the public administrator. (How different from the situation only a half century ago!) It has been possible for senior preceptors to make their selection from this literature and then to supplement the chosen reading with a curriculum statement which introduces and opens up the whole subject, making formal lectures unnecessary.

3. A tremendous asset is the fact that the participants are actively engaged in administration. They are living in the laboratory and/or clinic of real world practices. Scientists can easily understand the effects of this situation on learning. Participants have a basic body of direct experience and impressions against which to apply the ideas of others and the hypotheses, doctrines, and principles which are to be found in the relevant literature. The University's function is to put practitioners in touch with this body of ideas and data and to help them to apply it. This is a much less difficult task than trying to simulate the real world of administration in the classroom. The experience which participants have in administration prior to and during the program makes it possible for them to quickly grasp the ideas about administration which are presented in this program and to understand them thoroughly. This is an advantage which inexperienced students do not have.

4. The makeup of the clusters also has proved to be an educational asset. Participants come from all levels of government and from many different functions and departments, with a sprinkling of persons from quasi-governmental organizations. The common element is managerial responsibility. In this situation, participants learn from each other. This is the testimony of every cluster. The benefits are so clear that Nova has always declined to organize a cluster comprised of persons from a single agency. Too much would be lost by doing so.

5. The personal involvement within the clusters month after month for the two-day course conferences provide an exceptional opportunity to study and practice effective group behavior. This opportunity has not always been fully exploited, but additional guidance is now being provided in the early course conferences which should speed up the learning process and permit it to go much farther. In learning to see their colleagues more perceptively, participants also begin to see themselves in a new light. The self-image is inevitably modified by learning how one is regarded by others, especially if there is a group consensus. This self-awareness can be invaluable.

6. During the program, participants have an opportunity not only to learn from others but to review, analyze, and interpret their own experience more perceptively and with a better perspective. In the end, they may have a better idea of how far they have come, where they are, and where they may be going professionally. They should more nearly understand themselves as administrators, with their own strengths, weaknesses, and tendencies.

7. Finally, in going through the program in company with a diverse group of other practitioners, challenged by a variety of preceptors, and digging into the problems both of substantive policy and organized administration, participants get a better idea of the whole administrative process and the interlinked governmental institutions of which they are a part. They can better perceive their own critical roles today. They begin to understand that some basic issues of today have been faced by others before them in a different context, and that there is a continuity of administrative experience despite changes in the economy, technology, and ways of living. They can see that they are carrying burdens which others have carried before, and that they must prepare for others who will surely follow after them.

Participants come to understand that the major problems of society are seldom solved finally in a mathematical sense, and that the changing goal of progress, which Western civilization (and now the whole world) has pursued for so long, is approached not by a great leap into a golden age but by successive steps. They can see also that each of these steps, no matter how small, is important.

In a world in which it is increasingly evident that men succeed or fail together, and that the most advanced peoples will be

dragged down by the least advanced unless the least advanced are enabled to pull themselves up, responsible public administrators must recognize the fact that their collective competence, institutional memory, and integrative skill are essential elements in national progress and survival. Without anyone's ever intending it to be so, it is clear that today more depends upon government than ever before and that in government more depends upon administrators. Public administrators may not stand high in social status in the American culture, but no group exceeds them in societal importance. Public administrators can well be proud of their function, but humble in facing their responsibilities.

APPENDIX A
MATERIALS SUPPLIED TO PARTICIPANTS
(A Partial List)

SEQUENCE 1

Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, *Intergovernmental Perspective,* Winter 1978, Vol. 4, No. 1, Washington: 1978

Dahl, Robert A., *Democracy in the United States: Promise and Performance,* 3d ed., Chicago: Rand McNally, c1976

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APPENDIX B — FACULTY

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