



So, You Want To Be a University Professor?
--Some Thoughts from the Encore Committee--

As many baby-boomer managers are transitioning into their next life phase, some of us have thought about teaching at the university level. We have acquired a lot of knowledge about public administration during our careers and we can share a wealth of practical experience. The Cal-ICMA Encore Committee has surveyed a number of managers who have taught at universities and would like to share their insights with colleagues with similar aspirations.

Why Consider University Teaching?

If you have an aptitude for teaching, university teaching is a nice way to transition from a full-time career, staying active and engaged and continuing to give back based on your years of experience. However, there is a shelf-life to that experience as you get further removed from active duty, so university teaching requires ongoing learning even after you exit your management career.

Those who have taught at the university level cite a number of positive outcomes for them and others. Teaching at the university. . .

- ✓ Allows one to share a life-time of experience with students
- ✓ Provides the opportunity to interact in a meaningful way with young people
- ✓ Helps one leave a legacy
- ✓ Encourages students to consider careers in public service, especially local government
- ✓ Helps one reconnect with the value of government service and inspire others
- ✓ Creates new professional connections across generations
- ✓ Creates opportunities for coaching and mentorship
- ✓ Influences the future direction of public policy
- ✓ Promotes ongoing learning
- ✓ Is challenging and energizing
- ✓ Provides some supplemental income

Some Reasons Why You May Not Want To Teach

While there are many reasons to consider teaching, there are some downsides as well. These include the following:

- ✓ Teaching is time-consuming (developing a curriculum, reviewing the literature, preparing lectures, grading papers, meeting with students).
- ✓ While some early- and mid-career students are highly focused, it is sometimes difficult motivating students who are working professionals and have worked all-day, rushed to class after work, and are tired.
- ✓ Some students may focus more on grades than learning.
- ✓ Teaching requires that you deal with another bureaucracy and another set of "politics."
- ✓ One has to adjust to a loss of status--from senior executive to lowly adjunct faculty.
- ✓ Universities provide minimal assistance and training.
- ✓ It does not pay well (as opposed to interim management or consulting).

How Much Teaching Do You Want To Do?

Many of us desire a variety of activities in our next life phase. After a demanding career in local government management, you may want to re-focus on relationships with spouses/ partners, children, parents, and/or friends. You may want to re-engage in some creative endeavor such as photography, music, painting, cooking or gardening. You may wish to pursue volunteer service, or physical fitness, or traveling, or other leisure activity.

Periodically teaching a class can be complimentary to hobbies and other endeavors. Activities in your next life phase do not have to be mutually exclusive.

Where does teaching fit in? And what kind of meaning and purpose does it provide you?

How Much Time Does Teaching Take?

Assuming that you decide that teaching is a desired and beneficial activity in your portfolio of encore experiences, you may wish to teach only one or perhaps two courses during the school year. Teaching one course a quarter (usually ten weeks) or semester (usually 12-16 weeks) takes a commitment of time and energy. If teaching provides a lot of meaning for you and you have the time and energy, you may wish to teach full-time.

In terms of preparation for one class, a good rule of thumb is that it requires a minimum of two hours of preparation (assuming you are familiar with the material) for one hour of actual in-class instruction. If you must research the topic, the preparation time is much greater. Of course, once you present a lecture plus interactive activities for a particular class, it requires less time to re-use and adapt the material for a subsequent class on the same topic.

Grading papers and providing comments do require a lot of time and energy. The time commitment is related to how many students are in the course and how many written assignments are required.

In respect to office hours, typically part-time instructors make themselves available immediately before and/or after classes so they do not have to schedule separate office hours on campus.

The Difference Between Undergraduate and Graduate Courses

Graduate teaching is typically different from undergraduate instruction and attracts a different kind of student. Graduate courses are offered at a more advanced level, cover more complicated material, and have a different kind of student. They do not, however, necessarily require more work on the part of the instructor.

Most undergraduate courses usually cover material in a broad and more general way. Students in undergraduate courses usually come from a variety of majors and typically do not yet have focused career interests. Undergraduate teaching provides a great opportunity to attract talented students into local government careers, especially for those who are leaning towards the non-profit world.

Most students in graduate courses have already made career choices. In an MPA program, they have already decided to work in government or the nonprofit sector, even though they may not have chosen a specific discipline such as planning, public safety, finance, human resources, or general management. In many programs, most or all such students are already working in a public sector job, either as a full-time employee or as an intern, and can thus share some of their experience in creating the content for the course.

How to Seek a Teaching Position

The best way to find a teaching position is if you have previously lectured at specific universities and developed relationships with university colleagues. If you have done a good job and they know your work, it is easier to find a part-time position as an encore pursuit. Since it takes some time (six to twelve months) for a position to open up, it is a good idea to let the chair of the public administration program or other university department know that you are interested in teaching before you leave your manager position.

If you have not done a lot of teaching as an active manager, it is a good idea to start before you exit your full-time local government career. Not only will part-time teaching as an active manager provide contacts and a track-record as a teacher, but it will give you a sense if you enjoy this kind of work and service. (See below for more on how to "rehearse.")

If you'd like to teach one of the standard courses in a public administration, public policy or urban studies program, it is a good idea to develop a draft curriculum for the course. This is a good starting point along with your resume when you discuss a position with a university program director.

If you have not taught much as a manager, you may also wish to guest lecture for some active or former managers who do teach. Again, it will help you test your assumptions about teaching and provide you with some teaching experience which you can then market as you pursue a teaching position.

Even if you have not done any guest lectures, you can still make some university contacts by hiring interns in your local government agency; offering a special project to a practicum class in a public administration, public policy or urban studies program; serving as a Practitioner/Mentor for an

ICMA Student Chapter at a local university; or offering to participate on a university advisory board for the public administration or policy program.

Developing a Course Syllabus

Every course requires a syllabus describing the course. The syllabus typically includes the following elements:

- Course name and number
- Information about the instructor
- Course description or summary
- Learning objectives
- Course requirements
- Assigned readings and bibliographic information
- Grading criteria (the percent of the final grade related to class participation, class project, class presentations, written report and/or exams)
- Course topics and schedule
- Instructor policies (for example, policies regarding class attendance, missed assignments, class participation)

The course syllabus may include guest speakers. Students like to hear about different career journeys as well as explore local government issues from different vantage points. It is helpful to engage a diverse group of guest speakers, including younger assistants or department heads as well as city/county managers, women as well as men, and professionals of color. The diversity of presenters will suggest that there is great opportunity and many paths to serve and become a local government leader.

The syllabus may also include a time-limited work assignment or mini-consulting job for a local government agency. These assignments can deliver value for the agency; establish contacts for the students; and test whether local government work speaks to the passions of the students.

To get you started in developing a course syllabus, you may wish to request syllabi from other courses taught in the university program or department in order to get a sense of the general format and style; ask the university department for a syllabus from the same course that was previously taught; peruse syllabi available through the university's teacher resource center; and/or ask other managers who teach for their syllabi.

To critique and make suggestions in enhancing the proposed syllabus, ask the help of a manager who teaches, a coach who has teaching experience, or a university colleague.

Even once you have finalized your syllabus for a particular course, it is a good idea to start the first class session with a discussion of what you want to teach, what you expect of the students, what they want to learn, and what they expect out of the class and out of you. Then, be open to revising the syllabus based on the discussion.

Co-Teaching a Course

To get started, you may wish to consider co-teaching a course with a manager who is experienced in teaching or with a university professor. There are some advantages to this approach:

- You can learn from the more experienced instructor.
- Co-teaching allows both of you to share the load.
- You can complement each other, with your different areas of expertise or classroom skills (summarizing the literature vs. providing real-life examples, lecturing vs. facilitating group exercises).
- Co-teaching gives both instructors the opportunity to miss a class or two given other commitments.

Co-teaching does require that you both make allowances for each other's different styles. The only downside is that you split the income from teaching the class.

Even if you don't co-teach, you may be eligible to use a teaching assistant (typically a paid graduate student from the department or program). The TA can help with many of the logistics, grading, turning in the grades, etc.

Avoiding the Over-Use of "War Stories"

The best practitioners who teach are those who can integrate their personal experience with research. Unfortunately, some managers over-use their personal experiences and tell too many "war stories." War stories are valuable if they illustrate a point and make the material come alive but they cannot replace a thoughtful presentation of issues, challenges, summary of the literature, effective strategies or best practices, and the like. War stories can easily be used as case studies which do support the content of the presentation. (See below for the use of case studies.)

A useful practice is to ask students about their own experiences related to the topic, thus allowing them to share own relevant stories.

Engaging Students in the Content

An effective university professor is like any other successful presenter. Your effectiveness is not just about providing information and sharing your knowledge. You must *engage* the students in the material and help them develop the content from their real-life experience.

Teachers, like other presenters, should remember the TED.com rule: adult learners can only actively listen to a maximum of eighteen minutes of lecturing or content before they lose attention.

In teaching university students, you should keep these adult learning principles in mind and try to incorporate them into the curriculum:

1. Adults learn best from *doing* and then reflecting upon the doing.
2. To achieve true learning, the adult learner must *apply* content.
3. Using learner's real-life experiences promotes learning.

4. Feedback helps the learner reflect upon their doing/learning.
5. Modeling of desired behavior is a powerful way for adults to learn.
6. Interactive learning enhances understanding.
7. Any learning session should consist of 15-20 minutes of presentation or lecturing interspersed with an interactive activity.
8. Adults learn best in “safe” environment in which their knowledge & experiences are respected.

Different Learning Methods

To promote these adult learning principles into your teaching practice, you may wish to include a variety of learning methods into your curriculum, such as:

- Small group exercises or discussions so that students respond to provocative questions about the presentation
- Identification of student experiences dealing with a particular challenge (e.g., environmental sustainability, civic engagement, affordable housing)
- Team projects focusing on real-world challenges
- Interviews of practitioners who are knowledgeable of the topic and then reports from students who conduct the interviews
- Student presentations of the readings or some of the literature or an experience related to the topic
- Presentations of real-life case studies and a critique by the students
- Web techniques such as chats and assignment sharing
- Multi-media presentations, including relevant videos
- Reaction panel of 2-3 students at the end of each class for them to react to the material: What resonated with you? What did not? What do you have to add?

The basic rule is to mix lectures or presentations with other learning methods. A mix of instructional methods will keep students interested and engaged.

Rehearsing or Preparing

Just like other encore endeavors (for example, consulting, training, golfing, sailing), it is advisable that you rehearse and practice before fully committing. So, how does one rehearse or prepare for university teaching? There are several ways:

1. Do some guest lecturing while you serve as an active manager.
2. Serve as a "Manager in University Residence" and conduct some in-class presentations over a course of two or three days or a week. (Some universities have active "Practitioner in Residence" programs; Cal-ICMA has an organized "Manager in Residence" program at universities across California.)
3. Take a teaching course or a "train the trainers" course (training and teaching are very similar).
4. Begin to collect case studies from your own local government practice related to typical topics.

If you rehearse before leaving your executive position, it is a good idea to get your Council's support or at least let the Council as well as staff know of your additional responsibility. Just because there is a new crisis du jour at work, you still need to show up for your class and focus on the students.

Using Case Studies

Using case studies to promote learning is very effective and engaging. One way to use case studies is to describe (but not evaluate) the situation and what happened and then have the students respond to the following three questions:

- What went well?
- What did not go well?
- What can we learn for future practice?

To collect case studies, you can collect them from your own experience, colleagues, ICMA (see ICMA resources below), and the literature. Stanford and Harvard regularly update their case studies. Many of these case studies include instructor notes and discussion guidelines. Harvard Publishing has a quarterly newsletter listing teaching resources that are available.

Teaching Resources or Other Assistance

The good news is that there are a variety of teaching resources available to instructors wishing to enhance their teaching practice.

First, most universities have a teaching resource center on campus which provides sample syllabi, teaching resource tips, and other materials.

Second, the university may offer coaches or mentors for new instructors. Everyone needs a coach or mentor, even teachers.

Third, as an instructor, you should know of the resources available for students in your class. These include the tutoring and writing centers, technology lab, and library study rooms. These are resources that can help your students who may be struggling in certain areas or need technology or meeting rooms to do group projects. Don't expect the adult learners new to the campus to know about these resources and don't expect all students to write at a professional level.

Fourth, it is a good idea to meet with the dean or program director in order to review the program's policies related to plagiarism, grading, accommodating students with disabilities, submitting grades, contesting grades, and the like. Get to know the administrative assistant in the department or program who can help with AV, printing and other logistics. Find out if you can use the department's copy center.

Fifth, ICMA provides a wealth of resources for "Managers Who Teach." These include:

A Practitioner's Guide to Teaching Public Administration

Syllabi samples
Teaching tips
Case studies
Knowledge network group for managers who teach

See the attachment for a full listing of ICMA resources. We particularly recommend "Managers as Teachers--A Practitioner's Guide to Teaching Public Administration" from the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA).

Another resource for would-be university faculty is *On Course--A Week-by-Week Guide to Your First Semester of College Teaching* by James Lang.

Encore Committee Resources

To support managers who are thinking of their next life phase and those who have already begun their encore journey, the Cal-ICMA Encore Committee has developed a number of support programs. These efforts include:

- A webpage on the Cal-ICMA website provides information and access to all our services and resources.
- One-to-one peer coaching match-ups are available on the webpage. Those wishing peer coaching can review profiles of encore managers who can provide advice for those wanting to explore consulting, teaching, interim management, non-profit service or other opportunities.
- "My Journey" vignettes including tips and lessons learned are also posted on the webpage.
- A resource list includes books, articles, and other websites.
- Support network meetings are offered two or three times a year for senior and encore managers to share experiences and learn from each other.

In addition, the Encore Committee has produced two similar papers to assist managers wishing to pursue different paths:

- "So, You Want to Be an Interim Manager?"
- "So, You Want to Be a Consultant?"

To access these resources, go to www.cal-icma.org and click on "Senior Manager/Encore Manager Program." On the Senior Manager/Encore Manager Program webpage, you then click on "Resources."

Contributors

We wish to thank the following encore managers who contributed their thoughts to this paper:

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Your Observations or Questions

We would like this short guide to be a living document. Would you like to share any questions, comments or observations about university teaching as an encore opportunity? If so, please email your questions or comments to the following members of the Cal-ICMA Encore Committee:

Kevin O'Rourke at kevin@kolgs.com
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The Joys of Teaching

In summary, please do consider university teaching as an encore opportunity if you. . .

- ✓ Like to be around young people, including working professionals eager to advance in their public service careers
- ✓ Are energized by preparing the next generation of government leaders and wish to create further legacy
- ✓ Have a desire to give back
- ✓ Wish to be challenged and continue your learning
- ✓ Want to experience the ultimate satisfaction of positively influencing careers and lives

Attachment

ICMA Resources--"Managers as Faculty"

Managers as Faculty

Teaching Resources

ICMA has a growing collection of resources for managers who teach, including information on student membership, student chapters, internships and fellowships, a career guide, civics education, data on the profession and other teaching resources. Items in **blue** are active web links.

Teaching resources available at icma.org/teach Include:

- Advisory Board on Graduate Education roster and resources
- [Managers as Teachers: A Practitioner's Guide to Teaching Public Administration](#)
- Syllabi samples
- Teaching tips
- [Roster of Managers in residency](#)

[Knowledge Network group for Managers Who Teach:](#)

- or use bit.ly/14zsMLn

ICMA Press Academic Resources:

- icma.org/academics
 - ICMA Press textbooks
 - [Case studies](#)
 - Free downloads for instructors
 - [Guide on how to use case studies in the classroom](#)
 - Rights to use/reproduce excerpts from ICMA material for classroom use
 - [Adjunct's Corner](#)

ICMA Student Chapters:

- icma.org/studentchapter

Other Resources:

- Career Wiki: icma.org/Wiki/Careers_in_Local_Government_Management
- Management Internships Guidebook: icma.org/internships
- NASPAA Resources for Adjunct Professors: naspaa.org/principals/resources/adjunct.asp
- [NASPAA website](#)
- [ASPA website](#)
- [Evans School: The Electronic Hallway](#)