

---

# Transitioning a Public Administration Program:

W. Earle Klay  
Florida State University

## Abstract

*Scholars in public administration have developed a "standard" prescriptive model of strategic management for public agencies. The standard strategic management model emphasizes metaplanning, stakeholder analysis, and analysis of strengths and weaknesses. The standard model also includes environmental scanning to anticipate threats and opportunities. This paper suggests some modifications to that model to meet the needs of strategic management for academic programs in public administration.*

*Environmental analysis for academic programs in public administration needs to include at least three distinct arenas of inquiry: (1) The "Disciplinary Environment" encompasses conjecture about current and future changes in the field of public administration. (2) The "Graduates' Environment" encompasses conjecture about the future context within which students are likely to live their lives and practice their profession. (3) The "Institutional Environment" is comprised of conjecture about the present and future environments of the hierarchy of institutions within which an academic program exists -- colleges, universities, university systems, state governments, regional economies, and so on. Each of these three types of environments is discussed. The paper then shows how the modified model is being applied in one setting, that of the Askew School of Public Administration and Policy of the Florida State University.*

## INTRODUCTION

Strategies are the fundamental decisions that guide organizations. Strategy formulation has interested academicians for many years. Academic programs in public administration, though, probably teach strategic management more than they practice it. For several decades, we academicians in public administration have been reading the voluminous

literature on business strategy. That literature has influenced us greatly, but it has often seemed to fit public organizations poorly. In response, scholars in public administration have observed leaders of public organizations to discover how they develop strategies. From these efforts has emerged a "standard" model of strategic management for public agencies. It is a prescriptive model, created to guide decision makers, rather than an explanatory model derived solely to explain observed behaviors.

The "standard" model probably fits most public agencies well, but it does not quite fit academic programs -- especially academic programs in public administration. This paper suggests a modified model of strategic management for academic programs in public administration and shows how it is being applied in one setting, that of the Askew School of Public Administration and Policy of the Florida State University. Emphasis is placed on the future of public administration itself, as well as the possible futures of our students and of our own unique institutional environments.

### **THE "STANDARD" MODEL OF STRATEGIC PLANNING/STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT FOR PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS**

Early models of strategic planning for business emphasized analysis of both the organization and its environment (*Hofer, 1976*). The popular SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) model, for example, calls for studying the external environment to anticipate emergent threats and opportunities. The study of the external environment is often called "environmental scanning." The internal operations of the organization are studied to ascertain its strengths and weaknesses in the context of the external threats and opportunities. Unfortunately, early strategic planning theory and practice was often naive, assuming that change was linear, rather than nonlinear and surprising. Opposition to planning and plans was often overlooked.

Failures of strategic planning became evident (e.g. *Richards, 1973*). Researchers began to delve more deeply to learn when strategic planning contributed to organizational performance and when it did not (e.g. *Shrader, Taylor and Dalton, 1984*). Two problems became obvious (*Paul, 1978*). The forecasts upon which the linear thinking of early strategic planning was based were sometimes wrong. In addition, the strategic plans, often developed by specialized planning units with little participation from others

in organizations, were not self implementing. The need for better theory became evident by the late 1970s. Strategic planning theory needed to be altered to provide better guidance to leaders who have to develop strategy under conditions in which forecasts can be wrong, in which the future can be one of surprises, and in which agreement to implement strategic plans cannot be taken for granted.

Strategic management theory, a response to the shortcomings of strategic planning, began to supplant the latter (*Ansoff, Declerck and Hayes, 1976; Ansoff, 1984*). It emphasized the need to be adaptive to nonlinear changes in an organization's environment and to laying the groundwork for organizational change. Integrating strategic planning theory with organization development theory -- to create an ongoing learning process that is both participatory and anticipatory -- was emphasized (*Ackoff, 1981*). Strategic management theory also began to recognize that business leaders face political constraints. Business managers became strategists in political environments (*MacMillan, 1978; Narayanan and Fahey, 1982*). The importance of identifying and understanding the various stakeholders of a business was also "discovered" (*Mitroff, 1983*). Unlike the earlier strategic planning theory, the theory of strategic management has not been overthrown. Strategy oriented literature for businesses today is mostly a refinement of the strategic management model.

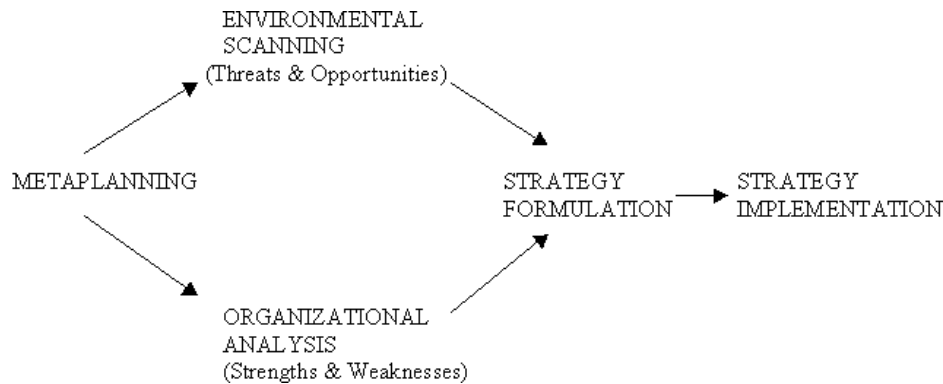
Much of what I call the "standard" model of strategic management for public agencies is based upon the theory of strategic management for businesses that was substantially in place by the early 1980s. Public administration theorists generally share with their business oriented colleagues the following assumptions and conclusions regarding strategic management: (1) Organizations should be proactive. (2) Leaders should not allow themselves to be overwhelmed with the demands of the present. (3) Instead, leaders should learn about the external environment of organizations and think about what needs to be done to better position their organizations for a future that will differ from the present. (4) Leaders should learn about the organization itself to create strategies that build upon an organization's strengths and shore up its weaknesses.. (5) Strategies constitute those things which seem most important to accomplish in order to position the organization in its future environment. (6) Positioning an organization for the future is most likely to succeed when its threats are averted and its opportunities are recognized and pursued. (7) Strategies are often resisted, so steps should be taken to gain support; such steps can

include participation in the formulation of the strategies. (8) "Meta-planning," planning the strategic management process itself to garner support and improve the organization's ability to assess itself and its environment, is important. (9) Be adaptive to surprises when they happen.

Strategic management theory for businesses, however, is insufficient to the needs of public sector applications. Business planning is usually focused on some variation of a single objective -- return on investment. It leads to practices such as portfolio analysis that call for businesses to divest themselves of activities that are not sufficiently profitable. Public sector theorists recognized that the strategic management of public organizations is different (*Ring and Perry, 1985*). Public managers cannot divest themselves of their responsibilities. Their planning must encompass multiple objectives, some of which may be conflicting or poorly defined in law. Electoral cycles and the brief tenure of many political executives make it difficult for career public managers to argue the salience of the longer range future. Stakeholders are more diverse and contentious and public managers must deal with them in the "fish bowl" of public scrutiny. In governments designed to limit executive authority, the heads of even the largest government agencies have less decision making authority than does a typical corporate CEO. Not surprisingly, the political circumstances of some public agencies lead to reactive, rather than proactive, strategy formulation (*Wechsler and Backoff, 1986*)

Public sector strategic management theory has wisely emphasized the need to take political contexts into account. This is done by "meta-planning," the design of planning processes that incorporate the viewpoints of multiple stakeholders. In Figure 1, the "standard" model of strategic management for public agencies is presented. It is a simplified abridgment of more complex models proposed for public organizations by such scholars as John Bryson (*1988*), Paul Nutt (*1984*) and Kovach and Mandell (*1990*).

**Figure 1: The "Standard" Model of Public Strategic Management**



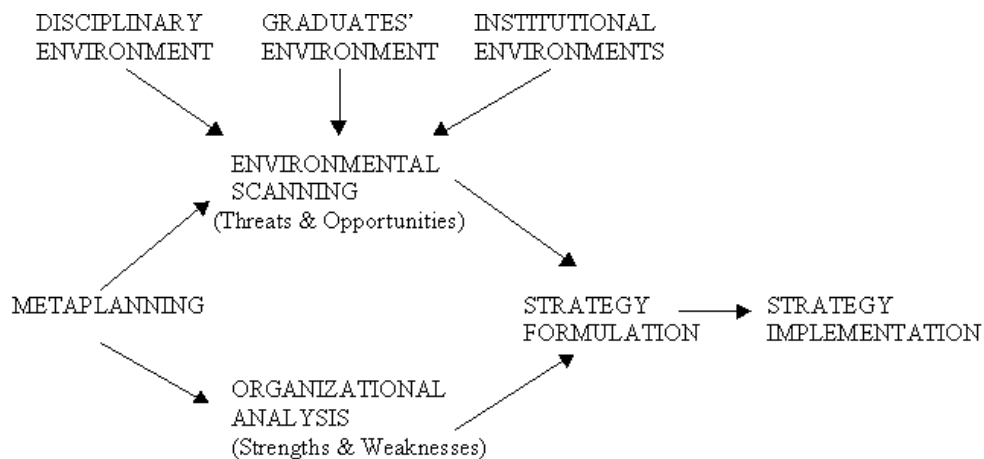
The most distinctive feature of the "standard" model of strategic management is the emphasis placed upon meta-planning. Public managers, the model stresses, must carefully build interpersonal networks, within and beyond their organizations, to gain the support and input of an agency's many stakeholders. In some prescriptions for public sector strategic management, stakeholder assessment takes precedence over analysis of all other aspects of the organization's environment. For example, Montanari and Bracker (1986) suggested that the analysis of opportunities and threats in the organization's environment be replaced by an assessment of advocates (those key stakeholders who actively support an agency's agenda) and adversaries (key stakeholders who oppose the agency). Others, however, believe it is necessary to incorporate both stakeholder assessment and broader environmental scanning.

Figure 1 reflects the latter point of view -- that public sector leaders should think astutely about politics, but do so in the context of analysis of the changing environment of the agency and of the people whom it serves. The "standard" model of strategic management for public sector organizations offers much to those who wish to develop strategy for academic programs but it is not sufficient. The several variations of the standard model are directed toward the leaders of public agencies. What they do not do is define the environment of academic programs. For example, they omit consideration of the future of our academic discipline, a vital consideration for strategic thinking in an academic setting.

## A STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT MODEL FOR ACADEMIC PROGRAMS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Defining the environment of an organization is one of the most perplexing aspects of strategic management. Scholars disagree about the concept of environment (*Lenz and Engledow, 1986*). Such disagreement leads to uncertainty as to what an organization should study and how it should organize itself to conduct such studies. The "standard" model outlined in Figure 1 does not provide guidance to the leaders of academic programs about the study of their environments. To remedy that shortcoming, Figure 2 presents an adaptation of the standard model that identifies some aspects of the environments of academic programs which seem to be of particular importance.

**Figure 2: The Strategic Management Model for Academic Programs**



The strategic management model for academic programs presented in Figure 2 continues to emphasize metaplanning. Academic program administrators work in political contexts that can be as complex as those of public agencies; stakeholders are many, some are advocates, others are possible opponents, and so on. Consequently, academic leaders in public administration should probably be as attentive to stakeholder realities as their agency counterparts. The model for strategy development in an academic setting also continues to emphasize the need for internal analysis of strengths and weaknesses. Environmental scanning to anticipate threats and opportunities is also retained from the standard model. Environmental

scanning, however, is elaborated to fit the specific information needs of academic programs in public administration.

Environmental analysis for academic programs in public administration needs to include at least three distinct arenas of inquiry: (1) The "Disciplinary Environment" encompasses conjecture about current and future changes in the field of public administration. (2) The "Graduates' Environment." encompasses conjecture about the future context within which students are likely to live their lives and practice their profession. (3) The "Institutional Environment" is comprised of conjecture about the present and future environments of the hierarchy of institutions within which an academic program exists -- colleges, universities, university systems, state governments, regional economies, and so on -- which have their own particular, but quite relevant, environments.

Environmental scanning is a futures research method in which information is gathered about relevant conditions and trends. This information is used to develop well ordered conjectures (*see DeJouvenel, 1967 and Bell, 1997*) about the possible future environmental context of an organization and its clients. Environmental scanning has been recommended for the strategic management of academic institutions (*Morrison, et. al., 1984*). In the case of the Askew School, environmental scanning was conducted primarily in the context of a research project of two of the school's faculty members. In a project supported by the Florida Institute of Government, faculty members of all of the state's public universities were asked to submit brief summaries of the trends and conditions -- global, national, state, or local -- which seemed likely to substantially affect the future of Floridians. Reports were received from slightly more than two hundred faculty members from a wide range of disciplines. Initial analysis of these reports has been published elsewhere (*Klay and DeHaven-Smith, 1997*). Informal ongoing discussions among faculty members, based upon their own readings of literature and current events, also constituted an important part of the school's environmental scanning. Finally, a day long retreat with members of the school's alumni advisory board also provided valuable insights.

In environmental scanning, detail must be sacrificed in order to gain a sense of the entirety of the organizational environment. In the pages that follow, some trends and conditions that pertain to the future of academic programs in public administration are summarized in very broad brush

strokes. This information is presented primarily in the form of conjectures about the futures of the discipline of public administration, of the graduates of public administration programs, and of universities. Whether or not these conjectures will be accurate remains to be seen. The conjectures are presented here as fact, however, in one sense. They constitute some of the primary decision premises which have influenced the development of strategy for the Askew School. Five decades ago, Herbert Simon (1947) argued for the careful study of the premises that frame decisions. It should not be surprising that the application of strategic management to our own academic programs requires us to carefully formulate, and critically examine, our own decision premises.

### **"DISCIPLINARY ENVIRONMENT": SOME PROBLEMS THAT SEEM LIKELY TO AFFECT THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

One way to "envision" the future of our academic discipline is to ask, "What will government be called upon to do in the next century?" A century ago, academic public administration began to be created in the U.S. to enable governments to cope with the problems created by a new national industrial economy. They were problems which that economy did not solve of its own accord through the marketplace. Some of those problems were ably summarized by Luther Gulick whose amazing career began with the birthing of academic public administration in the U.S in the early 20th century. Among the most challenging tasks for government were the rendering of services that the marketplace would not adequately supply of its own accord (e.g. public education, sanitation, transportation infrastructure, policing, and so on), regulating the marketplace to avoid monopolies and the booms and busts to which unfettered capitalism is prone, ameliorating the status of the weak and underprivileged who had fallen behind, and to "undertake and to encourage developmental research, ideas and experimentation (*Gulick, 1975, p. 264*)."

Twenty-first century public administration seems likely to be shaped by governments' efforts to cope with the problems created by a global, high technology oriented, economy which that economy will not solve of its own accord. Understanding the history of academic public administration requires a realization of the problems that faced governments a century ago. Similarly, formulating conjectures about the future of our discipline requires an understanding of the problems that seem likely to face



governments in the next century. There seem to be at least five major categories of "problems" that will challenge governments in the next century.

*AMERICAN DEMOGRAPHICS:* In the 1990s, Americans of European ancestry reached zero population growth (approximately 193.5 million in 1995). Immigration from Europe is so low that it seems unlikely to alter the numbers of Americans of European ancestry very much. The Census Bureau's mid-range projection for European-Americans for the year 2050 is 190.5 million with no migration and 208 million assuming a continuation of recent migration levels. Nearly all future net growth is expected to occur among Americans of other origins (*see U.S. Census, 1996*) The effects of demographic change are most evident among our youngest citizens. By 2030, midrange census projections suggest that more than half of all American children under the age of 18 will be Hispanic, African American, Asian, or American Indian in origin (*DeVita, 1996*).

The history of the United States is one of great paradox. Two centuries ago, the planet's first lasting constitutional democracy was founded upon traditions based in the European Enlightenment. Paradoxically, however, full citizenship in that democracy was limited to property owning males whose ancestors had come from a handful of countries in northwestern Europe. Much was said of the myth and tradition of the "melting pot," but it was mostly European centered until recent decades. It was not until well into the present century that votes were extended to women (1920), civil rights legislation was enacted (1960s), and discriminatory immigration laws were repealed (1965). Now, in a nation that is becoming more ethnically diverse, scholars are asking important questions about how Americans develop their sense of identity. Questions are being asked about the role of ethnicity as a source of cultural identity relative to more universalistic sources of identity through the sharing of citizenship in a democracy (*e.g. Higham, 1993 and Smith, 1996*).

In the coming century, our nation and its governments (therefore public administration) will be challenged to extend the context of a democratic community --forged two centuries ago in a white male European context to all of its future inhabitants. This demographic development challenges public administration theorists and practitioners to address our role in nurturing the kinds of values and attitudes that are requisite to forging a common sense of identity through mutually shared citizenship.

*TECHNOLOGY DRIVEN CAPITALISM/CAPITALIST DRIVEN TECHNOLOGY:* Some of the faculty members of Florida's universities who participated in the environmental scan cited above were concerned about the interactive effects of capitalism and advanced technology. By themselves, both technological innovation and capitalism are powerful forces for societal change. Each of these now drives the other in a mutually reinforcing manner. The result is a world of continuous dynamic change. Political events such as the demise of Marxist planned economies and technological innovations, especially in computing and communications, have combined to make "high tech capitalism" increasingly global in its scope.

Many transformative technologies have been introduced in the past two centuries-- e.g. in land transport in the 19th century and in air transport during the present century. The greatest transformations in the coming century may come from those technologies that enable people to discover, create, convey, and apply information. The Human Genome Project, for example, is a cooperative effort of several governments to uncover the information in human genes. Even though governments play indispensable roles in technological innovation, public administration theory has generally neglected the implications of technological change for society. Perhaps that is because our primary focus for theory development has been the office. The technology of offices as late as 1980 was essentially unchanged from that of 1900 (typewriters, file cabinets, and telephones). The personal computer did not appear on desk tops until the early 1980s and public administration theory seems to be lagging behind the changes that are accompanying that new technology.

Will our theory be adequate for the offices of several decades hence? Will there be large factory-like offices, peopled by workers doing highly repetitive tasks, given the potential of expert systems in the year 2030? Major technological innovations have heretofore been accompanied by new forms of job opportunities -- in factories when farmers were mechanized off of their farms, in offices and services when factories needed fewer workers. It is possible, however, that no new sector of employment will emerge to provide jobs for everyone in the coming century.

It is obviously not possible here to identify the many ramifications of the interactions of global capitalism and advanced technology. The pace

of technological innovation underlies the concept of postmodernism -- transient relationships, fleeting perceptions, and unending change. In 1914, the noted scholar of social change William F. Ogburn (1964) coined the term "cultural lag" to describe how cultures are stressed following new technological innovations. Those stresses are lessened in societies where institutions are more adaptive to change. In times of turbulence, governments can facilitate adaptation while providing essential stability and opportunity. Finding ways to do so seems likely to be a continuing concern for public administration in the coming century.

*HAVES AND HAVE NOTS:* A century ago, one of the greatest problems faced by a newly industrialized society was an extreme gap between rich and poor. The fruits of the industrial revolution were maldistributed to the point that large numbers of people worked for sustenance wages under appalling conditions. The weakest were children who did not yet benefit from child labor laws. In the latter half of the 19th century, the settlement house movement was created to remedy some of the many social problems of America's urban poor. The founders of the New York Bureau of Municipal Research were reformers whose roots were in the settlement house movement (Schacter, 1995). The bureau's training school gave rise to the first academic program in public administration at Syracuse University. In short, the roots of academic public administration rest squarely in an effort to remediate the problems of the urban poor, problems created by the then newly industrialized economy.

It seems likely that we academicians in public administration will again be drawn to the problem of income gaps in the coming century. A particularly troubling effect of the global high tech economy is a growing split between the "Haves," those who have access to technology and the knowledge to use it to create goods and services, and the "Have Nots," persons who lack such access and knowledge. This gap is growing between the wealthiest and poorest nations (United Nations, 1994) and within the United States (Karoly, 1996). Just as governments were called upon to address the income gaps created by early industrial society, it seems likely that governments ( and therefore public administration) will be pressed to remedy the gaps now being created by technology driven global capitalism.

*CREATING WEALTH/VALUE:* The role of government and public administration in creating the defining technologies of a knowledge based economy has largely been overlooked. The computer was invented in a

federal research project, not by private business. The internet was invented and perfected by agencies of the federal government over a span of more than two decades before the net became commercially viable. Governments are now sponsoring the Human Genome Project that could bring much change in biotechnology. Centers of high technology oriented economic activity are usually places where governments have invested much in the development of human resources. Government policy is also responsible for the fact that most Americans living today have never experienced a depression. A challenge for public administration, therefore, will be to find ways to stimulate the economy, especially through knowledge and the commercial application of it, while stabilizing it and remedying growing income gaps.

*THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT:* Global economic activity is creating numerous ecological effects that the marketplace will not solve of its own accord. Problems such as global warming, ozone depletion, biodiversity, water pollution, and so on require numerous forms of collective action, some of which only governments can accomplish. Global population growth is likely to exacerbate adverse environmental impacts, especially as poorer nations seek to adopt the lifestyles of the affluent nations. It is interesting that a major political leader, Vice President Gore (1992) believes that the next century could be defined as much by global environmental threat as the present one has been defined by two global wars and the threat of a third one. If the vice-president's conjecture is even partly correct, the theory and practice of public administration in the next century could become as deeply rooted in ecology as the theory and practice of this century has been rooted in organizational behavior.

### **"GRADUATES' ENVIRONMENTS": THE FUTURES OF OUR STUDENTS**

Academic programs in public administration exist to prepare students for future careers in public service. Each of the problem areas that are likely to affect the future of the discipline are also likely to affect the personal futures of our students. In conjecturing about their futures, however, it is appropriate to consider how their career patterns and work environments might change.

Prevailing thought, among both theorists and practitioners, seems to favor the fashioning of relatively nonhierarchical organizational structures

to deal with societal problems. This is not a new trend. It is a perspective that began to be advanced by the founders of organization development a half century ago. Today, few, if any, theorists argue the merits of large permanent pyramidal bureaucracies. That arrangement might have served Henry Ford well, and few question Max Weber's assertion that such bureaucracies were vastly more potent than their more amateurish predecessors, but they seem dinosauric in a rapidly changing world. Instead, for several decades theorists have effectively argued various forms of decentralization and market based competition arranged in fluid networks of inter-organizational competition and cooperation (*Benveniste, 1994.*)

Practitioners have heeded the theorists. Business CEOs look for ways to cut layers of middle management that are no longer needed to gather and analyze information. Instead, they look to computer oriented reengineering to capture information electronically and transfer it instantly to the point of use. Elected officials of both national political parties seek ways to debureaucratize such institutions as public schools through charter schools, vouchers, and school based management. The extent to which bureaucracies will yield to such pressures in the future is, of course, unknowable. It seems prudent, however, to assume that our students will be called upon to be leaders in more transient, networking oriented situations and prepare them accordingly

The idea of networking -- bringing together various combinations of public and private organizations in creative ways to deal with problems -- is not new but it does seem to be increasingly in vogue. In public administration, the term "governance" is becoming fashionable to describe the efforts of people -- working through governments, businesses, and civic organizations -- to fashion solutions to their problems (*e.g. Frederickson, 1997*). In addition, opportunities seem to be greatest for those persons who are adept at using technology and other means to obtain and use information in solving problems (*Reich, 1991*). It seems prudent, therefore, for public administration programs to prepare students to help fashion and administer the flexible institutional arrangements of "governance" ... and to be adept at using technology in doing so.

What are some of the skills that our graduates will need to administer the institutions and processes of governance? Future public administrators will almost certainly need skills in the management of the three central categories of organizational resources -- human, financial, and

---

informational. In addition, the processes of governance place a premium on skills in developing networks of interpersonal relationships. Alumni advisors of the Askew School, for example, have stressed the importance of skills in negotiations, dispute resolution, and team building. Criminal justice is an area of public administration in which many practitioners are seeking to network themselves with their communities in order to help transform them. The skills needed to make community policing work are likely to be skills that are needed to make governance work in other contexts. Skills in new forms of contracting, building inter-organizational relationships to enable a continuing search for value on behalf of the public, are also likely to be needed (*Bowden and Klay, 1996*).

The demographic context of American public administration cannot be ignored. Graduates will serve an increasingly diverse nation. They will also serve a nation whose most basic institution, the family, has undergone historically unprecedented stress and change in the last half century. Children raised in single parent or step parented families tend to exhibit more behavioral problems and less psychological well-being than do children raised by both biological parents (*Hanson, McLanahan, and Thompson, 1996*). Such changes have caused increased concern about the efficacy of our society in conveying basic norms from one generation to another. This includes the norms that are requisite to democracy.

Communitarian theorists, including eminent sociologists Philip Selznick (*1992*) and Amitai Etzioni (*1993*), argue that our democracy has been weakened by a widespread neglect of the conveyance of democracy enabling and enhancing values from one generation to another. Since the marketplace seems unlikely to initiate efforts to fulfill this societal need (and often exacerbates it), it falls upon government, and therefore public administration, working in concert with civic institutions, to seek ways to enhance the conveyance of democracy enhancing values. Ways need to be found that will enable people to attain a portion of their identity from their ethnic heritage, if that is their wish, *and* build a common identity as fellow citizens of a democracy. Failure to prepare the graduates of public administration programs to address this aspect of their future environment could have severe consequences for the future of the nation.

## **"INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENTS:" TRENDS AND CONDITIONS AFFECTING THE FUTURE OF UNIVERSITIES**

Each public administration program exists within its own multilayered institutional context. Each of the larger institutional layers -- colleges, universities, higher educational systems, state governments, regional economies, etc. -- has its own set of environmental trends and conditions to be considered. Each of those institutional contexts should be considered, insofar as is possible.

There are trends and conditions that are likely to affect the futures of all institutions of higher education. These, too, should be considered. All universities, for example, are likely to be affected by the changing demographics of the globe and of North America, although in varying ways depending upon their specific locales. Paradoxically, as our nation becomes more ethnically diverse, there has been a withdrawal in law and in practice from affirmative action oriented policies. Underlying this paradox is a conflict between two desirable objectives, that of remedying the effects of past discrimination and that of treating all citizens as equals irrespective of their origins. As representatives of the academic discipline which prepares students to exercise the power of the state, public administration programs are presented with the opportunity to lead their universities through exemplification of efforts to advance both objectives.

All universities are also likely to be challenged by emergent technologies. Electronically mediated instructional technologies present both opportunities and threats. The technologies can expand students' access to information and they enable new forms of faculty-student, student-student, and student-practitioner interaction. These same technologies, however, could also introduce the worst aspects of the marketplace to higher education. Cutthroat competition between on-line degree programs could threaten disciplinary collegiality. University administrators who seek new revenue streams might neglect questions of instructional quality or disciplinary collegiality. In a future when it might no longer be necessary to come to campuses to gain access to the universities' two great storehouses of knowledge -- libraries and faculties -- what is to be the future of campus based research and public service (*Noam, 1995*)?

---

## INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENTS OF THE ASKEW SCHOOL

The Askew School has applied the model of strategic management for academic programs in its own operations. What is presented here is a summation of some of the major considerations that have influenced the school in the development of its strategies. The school's parent institution, the Florida State University, is being influenced by all of the trends and conditions that seem likely to affect the futures of universities in general. The Askew School shares with other public administration programs all of the general trends and conditions associated with the futures of the discipline and of graduates. In addition, there are unique characteristics associated with the school's particular environment that had to be considered in the shaping of strategies for the school. These characteristics pertain to the nature and culture of Florida, of its government, of its higher education system, of the university, and of the school.

*FLORIDA AND ITS HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM.* Florida, the nation's fourth largest state with a population of nearly 15 million, continues to grow rapidly. Rapid growth has existed for more than a century and is expected to continue well into the next century. The number of students seeking access to the state's higher education system could nearly double by the end of the first decade of the next century. Most will be undergraduates and the attention of policy makers has been shifting toward undergraduate education. Florida began this century as one of the least educated states in the nation. It is entering the next century in the same position relative to the other states, among the bottom ten states in per capita expenditures and close to 50th in per pupil expenditures on higher education. The Askew School is unlikely, therefore, to receive additional appropriated monies in significant quantities to support its graduate programs, yet the demand for educated public administrators in a growing state is likely to be strong.

Florida's population is more diverse and older, on average, than the nation as a whole. Its loss of ecological habitat exceeds the rates of many third world nations. Florida's population is more transient than most, having high annual rates of migration within and across its borders. A majority of Floridians were born elsewhere. Some indicators of social stress, such as high school dropouts and divorce rates, have been among the highest in the nation. In the early 1990s its level of criminality was the highest in the nation, suggesting that Florida has much to do in building a sense of



community, in propagating the values of responsible citizenship, and in creating a world in which its youth believe that they have an attractive future. Furthermore, the future ability of Florida's economy to generate large amounts of new revenue is doubtful. States that neglect higher education are not likely to generate the best jobs for their citizens in a high tech world.

*THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY.* A women's college for nearly a third of its century and a half of existence, Florida State University is one of the three primary research universities of the state. Its heritage has left it with strong traditions in liberal arts and faculty governance. In a state where support for higher education is meager, the university has had to learn to husband its resources carefully. It has twice been designated, in studies conducted by the *US News* company, as the national university that generates the greatest average reputational rankings of its programs relative to the level of its funding. It is also one of few universities to garner enough research support to be ranked a "research category I" institution without having either a medical school or an agriculture school.

Relative to the growth of the university system, Florida State's growth in students in the past two decades has been modest. In spite of the overall population growth of the state and university system, the number of students attending Florida State has increased by only about 400 per year in the 1990s. During that same time, the Askew School's parent College of Social Sciences experienced a significant drop in its enrollments, prompting fears of budget cuts. From mid-decade to this writing in Fall 1998, the MPA degree program also declined in numbers of students. Speculation abounds but reasons for the declines are not apparent.

### **STRATEGY FORMULATION: THE ASKEW SCHOOL'S STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS**

Formulation of strategy for the Askew School has been underway for more than two decades, most notably in a series of occasional faculty retreats. Two events occurred during the 1997-98 academic year which prompted a rethinking of the school's strategies -- a NASPAA accreditation self-study and selection of a new director for the school. A discussion document on environmental trends and conditions was circulated among the faculty. Advice was also sought from students and from an alumni advisory group. The school's strategizing is done in the context of occasional

reviews of strengths and weaknesses of the school itself. Foremost on the positive side is a faculty of fourteen, including the active participation of the distinguished former governor for whom the school named itself and thirteen regularly publishing academicians, most of whom have significant practitioner experience. Foremost on the negative side is a continuing lack of funds to recruit new students.

After undergoing a self analysis along the lines of the strategic management model described above, the faculty endorsed the pursuit of several complementary strategies. The ones discussed below are those that might be of greatest interest to colleagues in other programs. These begin with efforts to become a more effective agent for normatively oriented change in our state.

(1) *EXEMPLIFY AND ADVANCE THE VALUES OF CITIZENSHIP AND PUBLIC SERVICE.* In many ways, the problems confronting Florida reflect the transient, almost "postmodern," lifestyles of many of its people. Rootlessness, endemic to Florida, impairs a sense of democratic community. Many of the problems facing Floridians cannot be solved by the marketplace of its own accord. There is a need for institutions to advance the values of citizenship and public service. The Askew School hopes to play a catalytic role in this regard. Such a role begins with trying to exemplify those values and to promote them through its teaching and related service activities. A major step occurred in 1994, when the faculty voted to name the school for Reubin O'D. Askew, an alumnus who has been designated one of the ten outstanding governors nationally in the 20th century. The symbolism of the gesture was significant because his career, free from hints of scandal or favoritism, has exemplified integrity, inclusion, transparency in government, and service to the public.

(2) *DEVELOP AN UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE WITH A MAJOR IN "PUBLIC SERVICE."* Faculty across Florida State's campus are being asked to contribute ideas toward the development of a degree designed especially to educate future civic and political leaders. The degree will be a multidisciplinary, liberal arts and social science oriented, pre-professional degree. Some of the program's students will reside in a campus dormitory that will be designated for students who are interested in public affairs and service. The potential of the Askew School to impart a sense of citizenship and public service throughout Florida and elsewhere seems limited if the school continues to restrict itself to offering graduate professional

programs. The undergraduate degree could enable the Askew School to influence a greater number of the state's future leaders.

(3) *PROTECT THE SCHOOL'S REPUTATION AMONG PEERS.* The faculty generally believe that the reputation of the school is solid but improvable. The reputation attained among academic peers to date seems to have come primarily through two sets of activities -- publishing in the field's journals and service in professional organizations. To secure its reputation, much less enhance it, the school must find funds to support and encourage its faculty's national and regional activities.

(4) *BUILD THE SCHOOL'S FINANCIAL BASE THROUGH APPROPRIATED FUNDS.* The financial realities of Florida's government indicate that attaining significant new appropriations will be very difficult. Two strategies are being pursued. The first is an effort to better package and present the outreach activities of the School to the state's leaders in ways that increases their understanding and support of those activities. The second is that of increasing enrollments, including undergraduate enrollments.

(5) *BUILD THE SCHOOL'S FINANCIAL BASE THROUGH ENDOWED FUNDS.* The school is fortunate to have one endowed chair, the Jerry Collins Eminent Scholar chair. Future bequests for additional endowed chairs have been promised and other endowment centered efforts are underway. Seeking endowed scholarships has become a high priority.

(6) *BUILD THE SCHOOL'S FINANCIAL BASE THROUGH APPLIED RESEARCH AND SERVICE.* Applied research, consulting, and training can be used to obtain things like assistantships, travel, and expense money. Outreach activities, however, are problematic for an academic program. They can interfere with a faculty's efforts to do disciplinary research. It takes a great deal of time and energy to build the networks of contacts and relationships that are requisite to bring in significant amounts of money through outreach activities. The Askew School has lacked a group of outreach oriented professionals to take the lead in obtaining and doing applied research and training.

In 1994, the Askew School created the Florida Public Affairs Center(FPAC). FPAC's purpose is to engage in applied research for clients that will yield disciplinary research opportunities and a financial base for

itself and students. Receiving no appropriated funds, FPAC reached annual revenues of a half million dollars in 1998. . The center is being developed as a "virtual" organization, flexible but with a solid center based upon a lasting commitment from and to the Askew School.

(7) *ANALYZE AND BENCHMARK SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSES.* On many (probably most) campuses, the administration of departments and schools is an afterthought. Work processes are poorly identified and seldom analyzed, staffing patterns have not been rethought in the context of electronic technologies, and opportunities for benchmarking have been overlooked. Finding itself in this situation, and believing that a public administration program should be an exemplar to its parent institution, the Askew School is undertaking a project to map its work processes and to apply better practices through benchmarking. Lacking an administrative staff to undertake such a project, benchmarking for the school is being done as a practicum in which MPA students learn to analyze and improve the operations of their school. Concurrently, staff are being realigned to improve the school's capacity to manage information.

(8) *USE TECHNOLOGY FULLY.* Believing that public administration programs must learn to use and promote new technologies wisely, the faculty has authorized several technology related initiatives. One of these is an MPA specialization in information resource management. The school is also seeking to come to grips with distance learning technologies, especially those that are web based. In 1996, the faculty voted to offer a distance version of its MPA degree but the school failed to obtain the needed funding. This failure was attributed, at least in part, to the faculty's decision to limit the numbers of distance students, in order to first understand how to do distance education on a small scale before undertaking it with larger numbers of students.. Since then, some members of the faculty have had second thoughts about putting the entire degree on line.

Prematurely rushing to put entire degree programs on-line could be professionally irresponsible. Doing so constitutes an acceptance of a market-centered model of unfettered competition between programs for the same students, threatening collegiality with proprietary divisiveness. The result could be a weakening of public administration education, especially in locales now served by smaller programs. If large distance programs put an end to smaller local programs, their locales would be deprived of resident faculty members who now offer local consultation and training

services. Our pedagogy is lagging -- we know almost nothing about the socialization of distance students with respect to norms of professional and ethical behavior. The Askew School is now more inclined to seek ways to operationalize a collaborative model of distance education, putting some specialization course packages on-line that could be taken by students elsewhere as a part of their local degree programs. Ways are also being developed to use web technologies to improve interaction with the school's proximate students and alumni.

(9) *DEVELOP A MISSION STATEMENT FOR THE MPA PROGRAM THAT REFLECTS CHANGES IN PEDAGOGICAL PHILOSOPHY.* In 1997, the faculty deliberated several draft versions of a revised mission statement for its MPA degree program. We wanted a statement that would reflect our desire to offer a degree that prepares students for a future in which the role of public administration is likely to be shaped by the demands and pressures of an emergent, global, high tech economy. That economy could eventually alter public administration as much as the emergence of the nationwide industrial economy did a century ago. We do not profess to know how debates over the roles that government will play in the coming century will be resolved.

Faced with much uncertainty about the future, the faculty decided to emphasize some key underlying values. Expressions of such values can provide valuable normative frameworks for deliberation and action. Our use of the term "governance" underscores our belief that graduates of public administration should be prepared for much more than just the traditional role of administering government bureaucracies. Governance, as we use it, refers to the various institutional arrangements involving government agencies, civic, and business organizations as they interact to help solve the problems of modern society in a democratic manner. It implies a mixture of Hamiltonian effectiveness and professionalism with Jeffersonian participation and empowerment. Accordingly, the following mission statement was adopted.

The mission of the Master of Public Administration program is to prepare well educated public servants to effectively administer the organizations of governance in the 21st century. Academic training in the Askew School is grounded in the best traditions of citizenship, emphasizing integrity and stewardship, civility, inclusion and empowerment, openness

and accountability, skills in research and administration, and leadership.

## CONCLUSION

Strategic thinking is an ongoing process. As Charles Lindblom (1979) wisely pointed out, strategically oriented policy needs to be informed by broad futuristic thinking while undergoing incremental adjustments along the way. The Askew School expects to make many specific adjustments. We also look forward to learning from others who seek to apply strategic management to their own academic programs. It is only by sharing information that we can build the knowledge base for the strategic management of our programs.

In light of the challenges that the future presents, it is both surprising and disappointing that our profession has not done more to enhance strategic thinking in its academic programs. All academic programs in public administration are likely to be similarly affected by broad societal changes. Future problems -- especially those emanating from global, technology driven capitalism -- will challenge reformers to define new roles for governments and governance. Our graduates need to be prepared to deal with those problems. Future changes in the roles of governments will almost certainly challenge us to reconceptualize our academic discipline. Efforts to improve the informational base for conjecture about emergent problems and opportunities -- especially about such things as educational technologies and the future roles of government in the changing economy -- could enhance strategic thinking in all academic programs. Such efforts should be encouraged by our national professional associations.

## References

- Ackoff, Russell (1981). Creating the Corporate Future: Plan or Be Planned For. New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- Ansoff, H. Igor, Roger P. Declerck, and Robert L. Hayes (1976). From Strategic Planning to Strategic Management. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

- Ansoff, H. Igor (1984). Implanting Strategic Management. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Bell, Wendell (1997). Foundations of Futures Studies Volumes 1 & 2. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Benveniste, Guy (1994). The Twenty-First Century Organization. San Francisco: Jossey Bass Inc.
- Bowden, Margaret and W. E. Klay (1996). Contracting for 21st Century Infrastructure. Public Budgeting and Financial Management 8:3 (Fall): 384-405.
- Bryson, John M. (1988). Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc.
- DeJouvenel, Bertrand (1967). The Art of Conjecture. New York: Basic Books, Inc.
- DeVita, Carol J. (1996). The United States at Mid-Decade. Population Bulletin 50:4 (March ) entire issue.
- Etzioni, Amitai (1993). The Spirit of Community. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Frederickson, George (1997). The Spirit of Public Administration. San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publishers.
- Gore, Al (1992). Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit. Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Gulick, Luther (1975). George Maxwell Had a Dream: A Historical Note with a Comment on the Future. In Frederick C. Mosher, ed. American Public Administration: Past, Present, Future. University: University of Alabama Press, pp. 253-267.
- Hanson, Thomas L, Sara S. McLanahan and Elizabeth Thomson (1996). Double Jeopardy: Parental Conflict and Stepfamily

---

Outcomes for Children. Journal of Marriage and the Family 58:1 (February): 141-154.

- Higham, John (1993). Multiculturalism and Universalism: A History and Critique. American Quarterly 45:2 (June): 195-219.
- Hofer, Charles W. (1976). Research on Strategic Planning: A Survey of Past Studies and Suggestions for Future Efforts. Journal of Economics and Business 28:3 (Spring/Summer): 261-286.
- Karoly, Lynn A. (1996). Anatomy of the U.S Income Distribution: Two Decades of Change. Oxford Review of Economic History 12:1 (Spring): 76-95.
- Klay, William Earle and Lance DeHaven-Smith (1997). It's the Economy (Values, Stupid! Findings of the FloridaScan Project. Futures Research Quarterly 13:4 (Winter): 51-73.
- Kovach, Carol and Myrna P. Mandel (1990). A New Public-Sector Based Model of Strategic Management for Cities. State and Local Government Review 22:1 (Winter): 27-36.
- Lenz, R. T. and Jack L. Engledow (1986). Environmental Analysis: The Applicability of Current Theory. Strategic Management Journal 7:4 (July-August): 329-346.
- Lindblom, Charles (1979). Still Muddling, Not Yet Through. Public Administration Review 39:6 (November): 517-526.
- MacMillan, Ian C. (1978). Strategy Formulation: Political Concepts. St. Paul, MN: West Publishing Co.
- Mitroff, Ian I. (1983). Stakeholders of the Organizational Mind. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Montanari, John R. and Jeffrey S. Bracker (1986). The Strategic Management Process at the Public Planning Unit Level. Strategic Management Journal 7:3 (May-June): 251-265.



- 
- Morrison, James L., William L. Renfro, and Wayne I. Boucher (1984). Futures Research and the Strategic Planning Process. ASHE-ERIC Report No. 9, American Society for Higher Education.
  - Narayanan, V. K. and Liam Fahey (1982). The Micro-Politics of Strategy Formulation. Academy of Management Review 7:1 (January): 25-34.
  - Noam, Eli (1995). Electronics and the Dim Future of the University. Science 270 (October 13): 247-249.
  - Nutt, Paul C. (1984). A Strategic Planning Network for Non-Profit Organizations, Strategic Management Journal 5:1 (January): 57-75.
  - Ogburn, William F. (1964). On Culture and Social Change. Selected papers edited by Otis Dudley Duncan, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
  - Paul, Ronald N. (1978). The Reality Gap in Strategic Planning. Harvard Business Review 56:3 (May/June): 124-130.
  - Reich, Robert (1991). The Work of Nations. New York: Vintage Books.
  - Richards, Max D. (1973). An Exploratory Study of Strategic Failure. Academy of Management Proceedings 33 (August): 40-46.
  - Ring, Peter Smith and James L. Perry (1985). Strategic Management in Public and Private Organizations: Implications of Distinctive Contexts and Constraints. Academy of Management Review 10:2 (April): 276-286.
  - Schacter, Hindy Lauer (1995). Democracy, Scientific Management and Urban Reform. Journal of Management History 1 (2): 52-64.
  - Selznick, Philip (1992). The Moral Commonwealth: Social Theory and the Promise of Community. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- 
- Shrader, Charles B., Lew Taylor and Dan R. Dalton (1984). Strategic Planning and Organizational Performance: A Critical Appraisal. Journal of Management 10:2 (Summer): 149-171
  - Simon, Herbert A. (1947). Administrative Behavior. New York: Free Press.
  - Smith, Rogers M. (1988). The 'American Creed' and American Identity: The Limits of Liberal Citizenship. Western Political Quarterly 41:2 (June): 225-251.
  - U. N Development Programme (1994). Human Development Report, 1994. New York: Oxford University Press.
  - U.S. Bureau of the Census (1996). Current Population Reports. No. P25-1130.
  - Wechsler, Barton S. and Robert W. Backoff (1986). Policy Making and Administration in State Agencies: Strategic Management Approaches. Public Administration Review 46:4 (July/August): 321-327.