



Next Steps in PBA – Fall 2012

1. The faculty teaching PA 384C in the fall semester 2012 will continue to use the ‘pre-course’ and ‘end of course’ assessment based on the “Child Abuse” and “Express Transit” case studies. (Bacon, Evans, and Greenberg).
2. An effort will be made to further clarify the category scoring language in the rubric to promote more consistency in how memos are scored.
3. The faculty group will discuss the core concepts in PA 384C course to see if we should add, modify, or delete content from the course in response to the assessment results. We will also consider how we can improve our teaching methods to help students achieve the program outcomes.
4. We will also consider how we can improve our teaching in the areas of leadership, political context, and developing actionable management recommendations.

Concluding Comments

1. Professors Heinrich and Evans deserve special thanks for diligently using the PBA cases in their course and participating in discussions about how to use the results to improve how we teach the course (content and delivery).
2. A fundamental problem in developing an assessment of the public management core course here at LBJ is the breadth of the knowledge to be covered in what is essentially a 'survey' course. The list of core management concepts to be covered in the course is very large. In a one-semester survey, each faculty member teaching the course tends to emphasize certain areas at the expense of others. The development of a PBA for the course brings this issue to the fore. A question the faculty faces is whether to 'narrow' the range of topics covered in the course in order to ensure all students gain the same knowledge/skill base or to maintain the broader range of topics covered at the expense of a loss of some consistency in the measured student performance on a PBA.
3. If public management were a two-semester course (similar to the Integrated Management Curriculum of the Evans School of Public Affairs), it would be possible to deliver a richer management curriculum and achieve more consistent results in student ability to assess management situations and develop appropriate courses of action.
4. Perhaps the most valuable outcome of our efforts to develop our PBA is that it has stimulated very valuable conversations amongst the public management faculty. These conversations have helped all of us make improvements in how we teach the course and in the content we include in the course. (For example, based on the PBA we identified the need to specifically teach students the components of an effective recommendation to management.) We look forward to continuing these discussions and to further improvement in the core public management course and the PBA.

Exhibit 1

**MPAff Program Outcomes
For Public Management**
(As proposed by Public Mgt. Faculty October 15, 2010)

MPAff Program Outcome # 5 (as of September 2010)

“Students will demonstrate proficiency in analyzing and developing systems to manage human, organization, information and technology resources in a public policy context.”

*******New MPAff Program Outcome # 5 *******

“Students will demonstrate proficiency in solving common management problems encountered in public sector organizations, taking into account the political environments in which they arise. Their solutions will be based on an understanding of relevant management theory and problem solving skills that address the structural, cultural, and leadership dimensions of public sector organizations.”

Source:

Suggested Program Outcomes developed during September – October 2010 based on discussions among faculty teaching public management courses at LBJ. The faculty members involved were:

Angela Evans, Ken Ashworth, Dick Schott, Larry Lynn, and Kevin Bacon

Exhibit 1 (continued)

September 14, 2010

To: Kevin Bacon, Angela Evans, Kent Ashworth, Laurence Lynn, Dick Schott, Bill Spelman

From: Robert H. Wilson, Associate Dean

Subject: PBAS issues regarding Public Management

I again congratulate you on the good progress you have made in assessing student competencies in public management (PM). I hope that you will maintain this momentum in the coming year.

I would like to give you a chance to update or revise two elements of the system. As you know public management is included in PO 2 and 5 (See below). One faculty member has asked why PM occurs twice while other topics are referenced in only a single PO. In addition, I had the challenge of determining where to integrate the results of your assessment into this year's report (attached). On a somewhat arbitrary basis, I included some elements under PO 2 (p. 10 of the report) and other elements in PO5 (p. 15-17). I believe that the POs are not well aligned with your assessment instrument.

I would like your advice on how to address this problem. You could, for example, remove PM for PO 2 and modify PO5 in a way to address the full range of PM knowledge and skill topics. But please indicate whether you wish to leave the POs as stated, or whether you wish to revise them.

I also encourage you to review the rubric for Public Management (attached) that can be used to assess student papers. Please feel free to revise it.

Could you please respond by October 15, 2010?

I assume that Kevin remains the point person for the PM group. If someone else is taking the lead, please let me know.

I look forward to hearing of your plans for the PBAS assessment in PM for 2010-11

Robert H. Wilson
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Research
Mike Hogg Professor of Urban Policy
LBJ School of Public Affairs University of Texas at Austin

Current Program Outcomes Involving Public Management

Program Outcome 2: Students will demonstrate substantive knowledge in financial, managerial, economic, and quantitative analysis required for public policy.

Program Outcome 5: Students will demonstrate proficiency in analyzing and developing systems to manage human, organization, information and technology resources in a public policy context.

Exhibit 2

“Beginning of Course Assessment Memo”

Public Management PA 384C

Assignment # 1

Memo on Preventing Child Abuse Case Study

The purpose of this memo is to give you an opportunity to analyze a complex management situation and write a 3-page memo in response to two questions about the case. I will grade this assignment and return it to you with my comments. It will help me gauge the level of management knowledge in our class as we start the semester. Please do not undertake any additional research on this case. Stick to what you find in the case study reading.

Your memo should respond to the following two questions. It is important to do more than just state your *opinion* in response to the questions – try to explain *why* you respond as you did.

1. Provide a simple list of the several aspects of the agency situation that you think contribute to the problems the agency has dealing with child abuse. (Your simple list can be in the form of ‘bullet point’ phrases.) From your list, pick the 3 that you think are most significant and explain why.
2. What actions would you recommend to improve the agency and help it fulfill its mission on behalf of the public? Provide a logical analytical basis for your recommended actions, not just your personal opinion.

Logistics

- 1) Please read the case, “Preventing Child Abuse: The Challenge Facing the State Department of Social Services.” (The case was handed out at our first class.)
- 2) Please prepare a 3-page memo addressed to Bradley Patton, the Secretary of Human Services. (Use space-and-a-half line spacing, 12 point font size) **Send an e-mail copy of your memo to me by 9 am _____**. My email address is: _____@mail.utexas.edu. I will grade and return them to you on _____. Bring a hard copy of your memo to class on _____. We will discuss it in class.
- 3) This is an individual, and not a team, project.

This assignment is aimed at exercising your memo writing skills and your ability to analyze management challenges. Class discussion will focus on the attributes of good memo writing *and* on analyzing management challenges. I may ask you to share your memo with the class so **be prepared!**

Exhibit 2 (continued)

“End of Course Assessment Memo”

Public Management PA 384C

**Memo on
Express Transit Maintenance Division Case Study**

The purpose of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to analyze a complex management situation and write a memorandum in response to two questions about the case. Many of the ideas and tools we have discussed this semester will be of help as you analyze the case and develop a course of action.

Your memo should be no more than 5 pages in length (use 12 point font; space-and-a-half line spacing). It should respond to the following two questions. Your memo should be addressed to Martin Giles, Executive Director of Express Transit. It is important that you not only state your response to each question, but that you explain the basis for your response.

1. What are the two most important challenges (limit yourself to two challenges) facing Martin Jiles, the Executive Director of Express Transit? Explain your reasons for choosing the major challenges.
2. What actions would you recommend to Martin Jiles? What should he do immediately (first 24 to 48 hours), and during the first week, and first month after reading the news story at the beginning of the case? Again, explain the reasoning for your recommendations.

Logistics

1. Read the, “Express Transit Maintenance Division (A)” case study. The case is 9 pages plus 6 pages of exhibits. (The case was distributed in class.)
2. Prepare a 5-page memo addressed to Martin Jiles (use 12 point font, space-and-a-half line spacing) that answers the questions set out above.
3. This is an individual and not a team assignment.
4. Please email me an **electronic copy** of your paper to me by date (@mail.utexas.edu)

Exhibit 3

Suggested Answers – Child Abuse Case

Case: Preventing Child Abuse: The Challenge Facing the Department of Social Services

Category Response to Question # 1 in Exercise -- List of Most Significant Issues Affecting Agency Performance --

- L 1 Lack of leadership -- Patton needs to appoint a Commissioner
- S 2 Lack of agreed standards and procedures for conducting case work
- S 3 Lack of agreed standards/qualifications/training for case workers
- S 4 Weak supervision of case workers -- poorly qualified supervisors promoted w/out regard to superv. Skills
- S 5 High caseloads for case workers make it difficult/impossible to do a proper job
- S&C 6 Poor state of labor management relations in the department -- need to collectively bargain many issues
- S&C 7 Unclear/non-existent accountability framework for caseworkers/supervisors
- C&L 8 Low worker motivation/morale due to uncertainty about their job future & negative public perceptions of their work
- S 9 Lack of training for case workers
- L&C 10 High level of legislative, media, & interest group scrutiny of Dept. makes staff & managers reluctant to act
- L 11 Outside consultant (Swartz) has not created an effective transition plan and neglected labor relations issues
- S 12 Promotions are based on seniority not on performance or qualifications as supervisor/manager

Response to Question # 2 in Exercise -- List of Recommended Actions to Improve Performance --

- L 1 Sec. Patton should identify his criteria for and hire a new Commissioner ASAP to run the Dept. and make key decisions
- L 2 Sec. Patton should oppose the 'grandfather' bill in the Legislature
- S 3 Develop standards for selecting case workers and supervisors based on knowledge & skills needed for case work
- S 4 Develop clear standards and procedures for conducting case work
- S 5 Reduce worker case loads (requires legislative support for required budget increases)
- S&C 6 Provide training to case workers and supervisors to raise skill levels and implement Dept. case work S.O.P.
- S&C 7 Get labor relations specialist (Bonati) involved in improving relations with union
- S 8 Hire or transfer in more qualified case workers
- L 9 Get rid of consultant Swartz --- he is not providing useful transition advice and is antagonizing the union
- S 10 Base promotions on performance not on straight seniority

Note: L = leadership issues, S = structural issues, C = cultural issues

Exhibit 3 (continues below)

Scoring Matrix

Scoring Rubric:	Description of Score Criteria			
	4 "Excellent"	3 "Proficient"	2 "Less than Proficient"	1 "Failed"
3 Issues Causing Performance Problems	Identified 3 issues from the list of 12 acceptable items on rubric	Identified 3 issues and 2 were from the list of 12	Identified 3 issues and only one was from the list of 12	Did not identify 3 issues or any item from the 12 items on rubric
Structural Issues - include: budget, caseloads, organ. structure, work rules, case mgt. processes and guidelines, civil service rules	Memo clearly addresses 3 or more structural aspects of case (laws, org. chart, core tasks & processes, worker quals/skills, budgets, collective bargaining, supervision) - Student focus is on higher order structural issues where the Secretary would appropriately focus	Memo addresses at least 2 key structural aspects of the case. (see list at left) Description and/or analysis of structural aspects is generally clear.	Memo addresses at least 1 key structural aspect of the case. Description and/or analysis of structural aspects is weak/unclear. Student focus is on issues that are more 'tactical' rather than strategic and appropriate for the Secretary.	Memo does not clearly address any structural factors important to the case and/or analysis is very weak/unclear.
Cultural Issues -- include: internal/local organization culture, professional norms for social work,	Memo identifies multiple aspects of existing culture that impact performance & <u>changes</u> needed to improve results. Aspects include: past reorgs, lack of collaborative commun., labor-mgt relations, press relations, lack of accountability	Refers to 2 aspects of culture (see box at left). Memo makes reference to Dept. history and how that affects employee attitudes and performance.	Refers to at least one aspect of culture (see first box). Some reference to cultural aspects but no analytical link to performance problems or solutions.	Memo makes no reference to cultural aspect that influence performance or needed changes.
Leadership - include: recognition of appropriate role and duty of Patton, need for a Commissioner, lead role on taking position on legislation	Memo explicitly recognizes need for Sec Patton to appoint a Commissioner.	Memo recognizes some leadership issues such as need to oppose legislation, firing Swartz, or providing direction to new dept.; makes some recommendations to address leadership issues.	Memo makes generalized/indirect reference to leadership issues but does not directly address them. Uses the word 'leadership' as part of action plan.	Memo makes no explicit recognition of leadership issues.
Political Context includes: recognizes roles/interests of external actors such as Governor, legislature, interest groups, union, AND need to build/maintain political support to effect change	Mentions at least two political actor roles & interests (Leg., Gov., unions, etc.) and <u>impact</u> on issues & possible actions	Mentions at least one political actor(s) roles & interests -- some consideration of impacts	Identifies one sector of the political environment but does not define potential impact this sector would have on the issues/actions facing the Secretary.	Displayed no awareness of roles of and impacts of political actors on issues & recommendations
Recomm. Actions	Clearly described at least 3 actions from the list of 10 in rubric AND clearly places these actions in the context of a Secretary-level deliberation	Described at least 2 actions from list of 10 - some weaknesses in explaining actions	Prescribed at least 1 action from list of 10 -- unclear in explanation of proposed actions	Did not prescribe any action from list of 10 and/or poor explanation of proposed actions
Reasons & Evidence	Makes good use of case facts in memo; explains reasons and/or theory in support of analysis & proposed actions -- Student provides analysis -- not just recitation of case facts. NO unsubstantiated assertions.	Refers to case facts; implies but does not explicitly state reasons/theory behind analysis and actions -- some analysis but generally more descriptive than "4" rated memos	Some reference to case facts; uses 'generic good manager' ideas rather than specific reasons appropriate to this case. Minimal or no analysis tying the facts to a larger management framework	No reasons, theory, or evidence cited to support analysis or recommendations
Writing Quality	Met all assign. requirements; no spelling/grammar errors; logical & well organized memo. Student understands they are writing to the Secretary. Uses headings/sub-headings appropriately.	Met almost all assign. requirements; minor spelling/grammar errors; organization & logic of memo acceptable	Missed some assign. requirements; minor spelling/grammar errors; organization & logic of memo weak	Did not meet assign. requirements; significant spelling/grammar errors; organization/logic of memo hard to follow

Exhibit 3

Tally sheet used to summarize scores

Student	Issue Identification	Structural Issues	Cultural Issues	Leadership Issues	Political Context	Recomm. Actions	Reasons & Evidence	Writing Quality	Total Score
1									0
2									0
3									0
4									0
5									0
6									0
7									0
8									0
9									0
10									0
11									0
12									0
13									0
14									0
15									0
16									0
17									0
18									0
19									0
20									0
Average	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!

Scoring: Each of the items in the row is scored on a 4 point scale (1-2-3-4 -- whole numbers only) based on the scoring rubric on the next page. This tally sheet will provide total scores for each student and averages for each evaluation category and the class as a whole.
(4 = Excellent, 3 = Proficient, 2 = Less than Proficient, 1 = Failed)

Exhibit 4

Suggested Answers – Express Transit Case

Case: Express Transit Maintenance Division (Electronic Hallway case)

Response to Question # 1 in Exercise -- Two major challenges facing Martin Giles, Executive Director

1. Protect Public Safety: (sub-components listed below)

- a. Are the buses safe? What do we do to make sure they are safe ASAP?
- b. Are we polluting the environment? If so, what do we do to stop this ASAP.
- c. What do we tell the public about this situation? Who should speak for us?
- d. How can we provide required service safely by the Monday morning commute?

2. What is wrong with Express Transit? (sub-components listed below)

- a. Why am I reading this in the newspaper?
- b. Why didn't the organization surface this issue and bring it to my attention much earlier? What aspects of the organization caused this? (Culture, mgt. structure, personnel, processes, policies, etc.)
- c. Is my management team incompetent? Do I have the right people working for me? Who can I trust / rely on?
- d. How can I get honest information and get to the bottom of this situation so we can solve the problem?
- e. How do we communicate with those who spoke to the press? How do we take back control of the message?

Response to Question # 2 in Exercise --Recommended actions - first 24-48 hours, first week, first month

1. First 24-48 Hour Response

- a. Call my management team together ASAP to gather information and address the problems.
- b. Order brake checks for all buses before allowing them back in service. (Make needed repairs before return to service.)
- c. Be sure the next shift of drivers are told what is being done and how to respond to problems or public questions.
- d. Talk with the Transit Board Chair and members to brief them on the problems, what is being done, and solicit support.
- e. Publicly demonstrate his focus on making sure the public is safe. Take visible action to show he is in charge.
- f. Develop the 'message' and arrange to meet with the press to get his story out.
- g. Model the leadership behaviors he wants his managers to demonstrate.
- h. Develop a strategy to address internal problems that gave rise to this problem.
- i. Decide who on his management team he can trust going forward.
- j. Communicate/meet with those staff and others who were quoted in the press.

2. First Week Response

- a. Get mechanics and inspectors at the North Base and Westview Annex reporting to someone other than the current base chief. (Can he be trusted?)
- b. Plan and announce that an independent inquiry board will investigate the issues in the news story -- help convince the public and the employees that the issues are being taken seriously, there will be no cover up, and that advice on corrective actions will be taken seriously.
- c. Be sure that brake repairs are being made on all buses in need of work.
- d. Get in the field and talk with mechanics, inspectors, drivers, and the union to gather firsthand information and show that he is concerned and acting on this problem. Understand why they felt they had to go to the press to address this problem.
- e. Determine if he needs to remove Baker (Manager of Vehicle Maintenance) from his job.
- f. Determine what Preston knew/did not know about the safety situation and whether he is also responsible for the problems. (Giles to identify a temporary replacement if he thinks Preston has failed.)
- g. Follow up with regular communications to the Board and the public.
- h. Find out why he had to read about this problem in the newspaper. Figure out why his management team either overlooked these problems or hid them from him. Meet individually with key managers to assess this.
- i. Since North Base seems to have the most serious problems, focus early efforts on solving problems at that base.

3. First Month Response

- a. Start looking into the MIRS maintenance information system and how data gets in to the system and how the system is used to manage the business.
- b. Examine the broader performance management system (MBO) and incentives at the agency and how that may have contributed to these problems -- then how to fix it.
- c. Examine the practice of mechanics "topping out" after only a few years service and how that affects behavior and may need to be revised to create a better incentive system.
- d. Select members of the independent inquiry board, get it up and running ASAP and be sure it gets full cooperation.
- e. Consult with environmental experts who have found past problems at Express to assess the current situation.
- f. Ensure maintenance inspectors are truly independent and can enforce safety rules properly.
- g. Continue working with the media and his own communications staff to reassure the riding public the buses are safe and Express Transit is taking steps to address the root causes of the problems.
- h. Address the adversarial labor-management relations environment by meeting with the union, identifying their issues, and working with the management team to change the environment so workers are better able to communicate issues/problems openly.
- i. Look into potential theft problems within the Maintenance organization and what should be done about it.
- j. Spread credit/commendation across the organization for those helping Express Transit get out of this mess.

Exhibit 4 (continued)

Scoring Matrix

Scoring Rubric:	Description of Score Criteria			
	4 "Excellent"	3 "Proficient"	2 "Less than Proficient"	1 "Failed"
Identified Two Major Challenges Facing Giles	Identified both main issues from the perspective of Giles as Executive Director.	Identified both main issues but with less clear focus on Giles' perspective as Executive Director.	Clearly identified one of the two main issues.	Did not identify either main issue.
First 24 Hours Actions	Must say BOTH: 1) meet with mgt team ASAP; 2) Fix brakes ASAP; plus at least one other item in recommended answer	Only has one of the two 'must have' items in the 'excellent answer' AND call for 2 or more the 10 actions in the expected answer	Called for 2 of the 10 actions in the expected answer AND does NOT have either of the two 'must have' items.	Called for only 1 or none of the actions of the 10 in the expected answer AND does NOT have either of the two 'must have' items.
First Week Actions	Called for 4 or more of the 9 actions in the expected answer - The 4 include BOTH create an independent investigation and checking out Baker & Preston	Called for 2 or 3 of the 9 actions in the expected answer and includes at least one of the two 'must have' items in the excellent answer	Called for 1 of the 9 actions in the expected answer AND does NOT include either of the two 'must have' items	Called for none of the actions of the 9 in the expected answer
First Month Actions	Called for 4 or more of the 10 actions in the expected answer AND one action includes examining MIRS	Called for 3 or 4 of the 10 actions in the expected answer BUT does NOT include examining the MIRS system	Called for 2 of the 10 actions in the expected answer BUT does NOT include examining the MIRS system	Called for only 1 or none of the actions of the 10 in the expected answer BUT does NOT include examng MIRS
Structural Issues	Memo clearly analyzes 3 or more structural aspects of the case (perform. measure system -MIRS, budgets, MBO - incentive systems, collective bargaining, supervision practices, standard maintenance procedures, no handoffs between shifts,)	Memo addresses at least 2 key structural aspects of the case. (see list at left) Description and/or analysis of structural aspects is clear.	Memo addresses at least 2 key structural aspects of the case. Description and/or analysis of structural aspects is weak/unclear.	Memo does not clearly address any structural factors important to the case and/or analysis is very weak/unclear.
Cultural Issues	Memo identifies at least 2 aspects of the culture, analyzes their impact, & recommends changes. Aspects include: absence of open communication, can-do culture leads to hiding bad news, labor-mgt relations, managers not getting out on the floor, lack of accountability, lack of a safety culture	Refers to 2 aspects of culture (see box at left). Memo analyzes how culture issues impact performance. Analysis and recommendations are less clear than in the 'excellent' rating.	Refers to at least one aspect of culture (see first box). Some reference to cultural aspects but no analytical link to performance problems or solutions.	Memo makes no reference to cultural aspects that influence performance or needed changes.
Leadership	Memo explicitly recognizes need for Giles to take immediate action on safety issues and then address root causes of the problem. Recognizes Giles' need to address public concerns and his role as Exec Director.	Memo addresses main topics of safety and root causes. Less explicit about Giles' role in addressing public concerns. Recognizes leadership weaknesses contributed to the case problems.	Memo makes generalized/indirect reference to leadership issues but does not directly address them. Uses the word 'leadership' as part of action plan.	Memo makes no explicit recognition of leadership issues.
Political Context	Awareness of a range of political actor roles & interests (Governing Board, press., unions, public opinion, riders) and impact on issues & possible actions. Explicitly recognizes need to address riders, govern. Board, a public concerns ASAP	Some awareness of political actors roles & interests -- some consideration of impacts. Explicitly recognizes need for ASAP action to address public concerns.	Minimal awareness of political actors and impact on issues & proposed actions	Displayed no awareness of roles of and impacts of political actors on issues & recommendations
Recomm. Actions	Clearly described at least 4 actions in each of the 3 time periods called for in the rubric. (See note on next page for details.)	Clearly described at least 3 actions in each of the 3 time periods called for in the rubric.	Described at least 2 actions in each of the 3 time periods called for in the rubric. Descriptions of actions are not clear.	Described one or none of actions in each of the 3 time periods called for in the rubric. Descriptions of actions are not clear.
Reasons & Evidence	Makes good use of case facts in memo; explains reasons and/or theory in support of analysis & proposed actions -- Student provides analysis -- not just recitation of case facts. NO unsubstantiated assertions.	Refers to case facts; implies but does not explicitly state reasons/theory behind analysis and actions -- some analysis but generally more descriptive than "4" rated memos	Some reference to case facts; uses 'generic good manager' ideas rather than specific reasons appropriate to this case. Minimal or no analysis tying the facts to a larger management framework	No reasons, theory, or evidence cited to support analysis or recommendations
Writing Quality	Met all assignment requirements; no spelling/grammar errors; logical & well organized memo. Uses headings/sub-headings appropriately. Addresses memo to Giles' as Executive Director.	Met all assignment requirements; minor spelling/grammar errors; organization & logic of memo acceptable	Missed some assign. requirements; minor spelling/grammar errors; organization & logic of memo weak	Did not meet assign. requirements; significant spelling/grammar errors; organization/logic of memo hard to follow

Exhibit 4 (continued)

Tally Sheet

Student	2 Major Challenges	First 24 Hours	First Week	First Month	Structural Issues	Cultural Issues	Leadership Issues	Political Context	Recomm. Actions	Reasons & Evidence	Writing Quality	Total Score
1												0
2												0
3												0
4												0
5												0
6												0
7												0
8												0
9												0
10												0
11												0
12												0
13												0
14												0
15												0
16												0
17												0
18												0
19												0
20												0
Average	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!

Scoring: Each of the items in the row is scored on a 4 point scale (1-2-3-4 -- whole numbers only) based on the scoring rubric on the next page. This tally sheet will provide total scores for each student and averages for each evaluation category and the class as a whole.
(4 = Excellent, 3 = Proficient, 2 = Less than Proficient, 1 = Failed)