

Roger Williams University

DOCS@RWU

---

Justice Studies Faculty Publications

Justice Studies

---

2015

## Knowledge Transfer and Teaching Public Administration: the Academy Model

Michael Hall

Roger Williams University, mhall@rwu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: [https://docs.rwu.edu/sjs\\_fp](https://docs.rwu.edu/sjs_fp)



Part of the [Education Commons](#), and the [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Hall, Michael. 2015. "Knowledge Transfer and Teaching Public Administration: the Academy Model." *Teaching Public Administration* 2015.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Justice Studies at DOCS@RWU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Justice Studies Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of DOCS@RWU. For more information, please contact [mwu@rwu.edu](mailto:mwu@rwu.edu).

## Page Proof Instructions and Queries

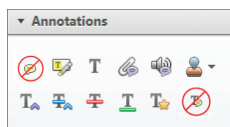
**Journal Title:** TPA

**Article Number:** 593338

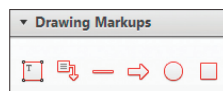
Greetings, and thank you for publishing with SAGE. We have prepared this page proof for your review. Please respond to each of the below queries by digitally marking this PDF using Adobe Reader.

Click "Comment" in the upper right corner of Adobe Reader to access the mark-up tools as follows:

For textual edits, please use the "Annotations" tools. Please refrain from using the two tools crossed out below, as data loss can occur when using these tools.



For formatting requests, questions, or other complicated changes, please insert a comment using "Drawing Markups."



Detailed annotation guidelines can be viewed at: <http://www.sagepub.com/repository/binaries/pdfs/AnnotationGuidelines.pdf>

Adobe Reader can be downloaded (free) at: <http://www.adobe.com/products/reader.html>.

No.	Query
	Please confirm that all author information, including names, affiliations, sequence, and contact details, is correct.
	Please review the entire document for typographical errors, mathematical errors, and any other necessary corrections; check headings, tables, and figures.
	Please confirm that the Funding and Conflict of Interest statements are accurate.
	Please ensure that you have obtained and enclosed all necessary permissions for the reproduction of artistic works, (e.g. illustrations, photographs, charts, maps, other visual material, etc.) not owned by yourself. Please refer to your publishing agreement for further information.
	Please note that this proof represents your final opportunity to review your article prior to publication, so please do send all of your changes now.

# Knowledge transfer and teaching public administration: The academy model

Teaching Public Administration

1–14

© The Author(s) 2015

Reprints and permissions:

[sagepub.co.uk/journalsPermissions.nav](http://sagepub.co.uk/journalsPermissions.nav)

DOI: 10.1177/0144739415593338

[tpa.sagepub.com](http://tpa.sagepub.com)**Michael Hall**

Roger Williams University, Providence, RI, USA

**Abstract**

Since the beginnings of Public Administration in the US and its accompanying education in other parts of the world, government and policy have become more complex. The education in Public Administration created a professional pathway to public service. The addition of education to Public Administration came out of the Progressive Movement in the United States to make knowledge in Public Administration more important in the face of corruption brought on by patronage appointments. When nonprofits became part the US public sector as elsewhere along with nonprofit healthcare, the complexity expanded enormously, requiring professionals to know more in what has become a multidisciplinary field of study. Given the diversity and complexity of the public sector and the need for Public Administration to embrace more knowledge from many disciplines, it stands to reason that an earlier start on the education portion of Public Administration or a pathway would be beneficial. A model of early Public Administration knowledge transfer is described and illustrated below. The Academy described is based on the US career pathways and high school academies as part of the school to work educational movement. The success of the combination of these two areas will also be pointed out in the academy described. Translation of lessons learned from the Academy to Europe and Asia are also considered.

**Keywords**

American Society for Public Administration, career pathways, Carl D. Perkins Act, colleges and universities, school to work

**Corresponding author:**

Michael Hall, Roger Williams University, Bristol and Providence, Rhode Island, 150 Washington Street, Suite 210 Room D, Providence, RI 02903, USA.

Email: [mhall@rwu.edu](mailto:mhall@rwu.edu)

## Introduction

As a field of study Public Administration concentrates on the analysis of “government in action,” “the business of government,” or “the running of a constitution” as Woodrow Wilson, Princeton University Professor and later Governor of New Jersey and US President, referred to it in his essay “The Study of Administration” in 1887 (Verheijen and Connaughton, 2003). In the United States, Wilson is considered the originator of Public Administration. University degrees followed in time with the intention being those who hold the degrees would “run a constitution” or as it known in modern parlance to conduct public management. Since Wilson was an educator at the beginning of his career, it would be logical to assume his desire for public administration to be studied to run a constitution would be met with some degree of satisfaction on his part. Importantly, Wilson’s 1887 article was based on his observations of European approaches to education. He was particularly interested in the British tradition of establishing colleges for subjects such as government. His tour of Europe leading to the article also influenced his view of how government should be organized (Rosser, 2010).

In the United States, colleges and universities began after 1900 to develop closer to the form they resemble today with increased emphasis on “professional studies” (Funk and Wagnalls *New World Encyclopedia*, 2014). New colleges and universities began to appear in Britain and Europe with the growth of the middle class in post-industrial revolution societies also. Those colleges and universities had professional schools in which it was expected of learners to practice what they had been taught. Progressives, of which Wilson was one, began teaching public administration courses leading to the first professional program with a curriculum influenced by Progressives (Laurer Schatacter, 2011). Later, in the mid-1920s, Syracuse University offered the first master’s degree in Public Administration under the leadership of William Mosher, the first Syracuse University Dean of the Maxwell School (Plant, 2015). The professional association of public administration was formed in 1939, solidifying the idea that professionals in the field would have degrees and be considered an important part of governance.

Since the beginnings of Public Administration in the US and its accompanying education in other parts of the world, government and policy have become more complex. With the addition of nonprofits to the US public sector plus nonprofit healthcare as elsewhere, the complexity has expanded enormously, requiring professionals to know more in what has become a multidisciplinary field of study. Given the diversity and complexity of the public sector and the need for Public Administration to embrace more knowledge from many disciplines, it stands to reason that an earlier start on the education portion of Public Administration or a pathway would be beneficial. In the following pages, a model of early Public Administration will be described and illustrated. The model is based on the US career pathways and high school academies. The success of the combination of these two areas will also be pointed out in the academy described. Translation of lessons learned to Europe and Asia are also considered.

## Background

Recognizing Public Administration is a profession and since teaching Public Administration is intended to create professionals for the field along with the requisite competencies, education is the professional pathway to positions in Public Administration. Building strong career pathways through education can begin earlier than college enrollment (Mosher, 1982; Stillman, 1987). Conventional thinking about educational pathways has accepted the pathway beginning at the collegiate level. Thus, a “career pathway,” as Wilson intended, begins as the college study of a profession. In the US, the idea of a career pathway to a profession has expanded to include, certainly education, but also a clearer focus on employment (Rose, 2015).

Career pathways, particularly for high school students, have been supported by a number of employment centered organizations. Burke writes, “career pathways are the new driving force for education and training in the U.S.” (2004, p. 1). Davenport (2006) indicates industry credentials, such as certification, are sought after since they provide platform for better performance on the job and demonstrates the holder of the certification is committed to a profession such as health professions (Balogun et al., 2005).

Career pathways support students in translating classroom lessons to jobs using internships, for example, and provide education to meet psychological rewards, including professional income returns and achievement of social status (Adamson, 2006; Castellano et al., 2003). According to the Ohio Sex Equity Center at The Ohio State University,

Career pathways are important because all students need the following: rigorous academics and technical skills to be prepared for both post-secondary education and for careers; broad-based, transferable skills for workplace success; ability to learn better and retain more when they learn in context; and ability to adapt and change jobs within a career cluster. (The Ohio State University, 1998, Abstract page)

Career pathways have received support from the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act. The Perkins Act purposes to improve links to the economy with a strong education for students to improve career opportunities with high school academics linked to careers and additional education (Threeton, 2007).

The Pathways to College Network has created a full set of characteristics for career pathways. These characteristics are composed of high expectations, inclusive leadership, collaborative partnerships, sufficient resources, and important professional attributes. (Awe and Bauman, 2010).

Career pathways typically focus on high-demand and well-paying employment sectors. They create an approach that includes skills training, work experience, and additional training to prepare the under skilled, including school dropouts and high school graduates with poor skills, for both employment and advancement in a career. The Workforce Strategy Center, as described by Lewis (2003) reports a pathway should include an introduction to career opportunities in a region’s high-wage, high-demand employment sectors; basic skills needed to succeed in postsecondary education and

training; transition to entry-level skills training; internships and employment; continuous upgrade training; and social supports throughout, as necessary.

Many policy analysts and, even President Barack Obama, support US Community Colleges as the foundation for a knowledgeable and skilled workforce (Branham, 2009). Community colleges, according to Shulock and Offenstien, (2012, p. 38) offer an “array of career-oriented certificates and associate degrees.” Writing in the *Huffington Post*, Smirniotopoulos (2015) even calls for community colleges to join the League of Innovative Community Colleges to work with businesses to advance their curricula to include a more comprehensive industry/education partnership to create a natural transition from education to employment. American Community Colleges are two-year institutions, not four-year college degree granting institutions.

Given its complexity, Public Administration for the twenty-first century requires, not only all of the elements forming a sound workforce, but also an ability to practice in the same way as professionals such as physicians, engineers, and lawyers. A combination of education and experiential or project learning, for example internships, for actual professional positions would be found in medical, engineering, and legal education. The academic lessons for these and other professions, including Public Administration, typically require more than two years of classroom work and internships. The United States Federal Office of Personnel Management (OPM) requires four-year degrees and graduate degrees for its positions. The National Association of Schools of Public Administration and Affairs (NASPAA) also supports career pathways. However, NASPAA membership is primarily four-year baccalaureate institutions and/or graduate schools in those institutions. The distinct between the two kinds of educational approaches might be understood best as the difference between educating for an occupation versus educating for a profession (Pescosolido, 1991).

## **Literature review: Career pathways and academies**

High-school career pathway academies form an element of the school to work movement in the United States (Maxwell and Rubin, 2000). The career academy model has three defining features. First, academy students are taught separately, creating a school within a school. Second, the academic coursework is integrated with work in the form of internships. Employers are also involved in an academy. Academy programs are designed to motivate high school students who are generally low-achieving and disengaged from school by giving them both a strong academic base and work-related skills in the context of a particular field such as health, business, or performing arts, regardless of gender. However, high performing students are not excluded from becoming academy students. “Such programs (academies) have helped produce many positive outcomes for students, and the model has been widely embraced by education leaders and nonprofits” (Kantrov, 2015). Research has also found a linkage between academies and four-year college enrollment (Gitter, 2001).

Much of the published literature on academies is based on vocational approaches to careers. The Maxwell and Rubin (2000) research is an exception. Nonetheless, when searching the literature for public administration or public service academies, much, if

not most, is about high school academies leading to two-year institutions in such fields as police service, health services, or technology associated with these and other professions.

The career academy model can encompass co-operative education, apprenticeships, work-based learning programs, and tech prep partnerships, all of these kinds of experiences forge a closer relationship between school and work or career, thus a pathway. The programs are designed to ensure that schools serve a broader base of students by integrating aspects of academic and vocational education. Hoachlander (2008: 27) reports: “students come to understand that both are important, and they are therefore more likely to emerge from high school ready for lasting success in both college and career”.

Career clusters, for example marketing, business, and pathway approaches are important in economies which are increasingly complex. The complexity takes the form of a fragmented labor market which no longer allows job change in a straight line within one company or organization. Workers are more likely to move vertically and laterally among a number of jobs. Industry clusters along with pathways can be used to identify skill requirements in vocations. Complexity of managing nonprofits, governments, health care institutions, and public policy in general is part of the increasingly complex economy. Advisors and teachers for pathways can create lessons and assignments to assist students as they guide them toward the future with information about and some understanding of the complexity their students will face as they move into work and careers. Clusters and pathways are a way for public educators and workforce leaders, including those in government and nonprofits, to organize class material, classroom instruction, and internships including adequate assessment of educational progress. Hamilton (2012) reports that high schools participating in career clusters and pathway models can also create better connections to the local economy and/or government while producing workers with the appropriate skills for jobs in the region. Pathway approaches are an articulation of knowledge, skills, and competencies, which connect education with work in an occupation.

An academy in Government and Public Administration can be a pathway to public service. The Government and Public Administration Academy of the Pawtucket, Rhode Island Schools is such a pathway. During its existence, it has produced students who have gone on to college, as the research indicates happens with academy students. The Academy has generated public service-minded students as well (Tolman High School and Shea High School, Academy Records, 2005–2014). The Government and Public Administration Academy is the academy of focus in what follows. Its circumstances and founding must be fully understood to recognize what it, its teachers, and its students have accomplished as a career pathway.

The demographics, economics, and physical surroundings of the Academy presented any number of challenges to success. The first challenge is the state of Rhode Island itself. It is one of the oldest states in the Union. Rhode Island was the first state to declare its independence from Britain. Rhode Island is considered the “birthplace” of the American industrial revolution. Its industrial past from the first industrial revolution to the industrial revolution of the early- and mid-twentieth century can still be seen in the form of abandoned factory buildings, empty retail outlets, and even in one of the last

Bulova watch repair centers anywhere. Bulova was once an extremely popular and widely sold watch.

Rhode Island's population as of 2013 was 1,050,173, with a foreign-born population of 12.9%, and 21% of state residents spoke English as a second language. The median household income for the years 2009 to 2013 was \$56,631 (United States Census, Rhode Island Quick Facts, 2014).

Rhode Island is geographically the smallest state in the nation. The state covers an area of 1,214 square miles. The distance North to South in the state is 48 miles, and the distance East to West is 37 miles (50states.com, n.d.). Unlike most US states, Rhode Island has no county government. It is divided into 39 municipalities each having its own form of local government. These geographic and government attributes mean the state has little room to grow and a limited tax base. Moreover, since each of the Rhode Island cities is a separate government, the tax base is even further restricted for them. The state and all of its localities suffered severely during the Great Recession of 2008. After the economic turndown, the repercussions remained strongly against a quick or sound recovery. What economic recovery there has been can only be described as modest.

Pawtucket, home to the Government and Public Administration Academy, is a city located in northeast Rhode Island. Pawtucket is considered an industrial suburb of Providence. Legally, Pawtucket is a separately incorporated city. The city is recognized as the location for the first successful water-powered cotton mill in the United States (1790–1793) built by Samuel Slater, a British-born textile pioneer. Pawtucket's population was 72,644 (U. S. Census Bureau, 2014) and according to the United States Census of 2010, the population of Pawtucket was 71,148 (U. S. Census Bureau, 2010). The city has undergone changes in the post-industrial period none of which have benefited either the economy or the schools in the city. Pawtucket has employee pension funding problems as do other Rhode Island cities and towns since each is responsible for its own pension liabilities. Additionally, Pawtucket has crime and abandoned property problems. The neighborhoods from which the Academy students come are embedded in these problems.

Pawtucket's population is approximately 71,170. The percentage of white residents is 66.5%. The minority populations are displayed in Table 1.

The level of household income limits the amount of tax revenue for the schools in Pawtucket, thus creating another challenge for new school initiatives such as the Government and Public Administration Academy. Further, the diverse cultures and languages present challenges to Academy teachers and their colleagues in delivering course content, arranging internships, and having students lead oral presentations.

The physical plants of the schools also generate challenges and limitations. The school buildings in Pawtucket date from the 1920s. The school buildings do not have twenty-first-century classrooms. The school buildings are not heated well in the winter and have no air conditioning for the warmer days of May and June of the school year. Shea High School, one of two high schools in the city, is the home of the Government and Public Administration. Shea High School has graduation rates and standard test scores categorizing it as under-performing. Consequently, the learning environment is not favorable.



**Table 1.** Minority populations in Rhode Island.

African/American	Hispanic/Latino	Asian	Foreign-born	Language other than English
13.4%	19.7%	1.5%	25.6%	40.3%

Sources: RI Department of Labor and Training, Labor Market Information, Center General Complex; US Census, State and County Quick, 2014.

Despite these trying circumstances, the Pawtucket Schools Government and Public Administration Academy was founded in 2005. Michael Connolly, a long time Pawtucket Schools faculty member, conceived of the Academy as a way of creating a pathway to college for his students and he thought public service a worthy endeavor. He further believed his students were capable of such an education. Connolly thought he could overcome the problems his Academy students would face. He recognized he would have an “uphill” battle with parents and guidance counselors who in many, if not most instances, thought that the Shea High students were not college material. Connolly was aware Perkins funding could be used for the Academy and while it would be money well spent, convincing administrators that such funding would not be a “cost” to the schools, particularly, since he would write the grant was one more obstacle for creation of the Academy. He thought he could not only write the grant, submit it by the deadline, and be accountable for the funding, but also, since he had begun his career teaching convicted felons in a “portable” building, he was used to such challenges.

Perkins funding must be based on an association with an institution of higher education since a college education is the assumed pathway to jobs and careers. Connolly began his outreach to find a college willing to meet the challenges of taking on high school students in an academy from less than affluent circumstances. After approaching a number of Rhode Island state schools with no positive response, Connolly found a willing partner in Roger Williams University. The Masters in Public Administration (MPA) was itself beginning in 2005. Connolly began his outreach with Edward Pascarella, Project Director for High School programs at Roger Williams University. There were faculty members in the MPA program willing to work to meet the challenges associated with building a pathway for Academy students.

The leadership of the MPA program at Roger Williams University transitioned during the academic year 2006. While the change created some disruptions in the Academy’s work with the University, the final result was a sound relationship between the new director of the MPA and Michael Connolly. During the academic year of 2007, the Academy and Roger Williams University’s MPA began a new partnership built on the values public service and education and a commitment to a Public Administration “pathway” to careers and success.

Once in the classroom, Connolly would encounter the language and ethnic diversity found in the city at large. Academy students often speak more than two languages. The languages can include Creole, Spanish, Portuguese, and languages of African nations. The inclusion and mainstreaming requirements mean the Academy has had a number of students with disabilities among its numbers.

Academy students have part-time jobs to provide additional family income. Academy students work after school, following internships and after studying for the work of the Academy. Academy students frequently act as interpreters for their family members for physician visits and shopping including payment for purchases. Interpretation is needed for any state government assistance programs on which their families may depend. The Academy students are thus taxed when school lessons and Academy work is added to their schedules.

Connolly convinced the Pawtucket Schools Administration to take advantage of the Perkins funding. From 2005 to 2011, Perkins funding was dependent on partnerships with four-year higher education institutions among other requirements, all of which the Pawtucket Schools' Academy in Government and Public Administration could meet. However, after 2011, the funding requirements changed dramatically. Academies of any kind were required to have industry certification after 2010. In many technical fields, such an industry certification would be more readily achieved than for Public Administration. Engineering, Computer Science, and even Criminal Justice could meet the new requirements. Public Administration is not an industry; rather it is field. Nonetheless, there is a professional association: The American Society for Public Administration (ASPA).

Through the Roger Williams University's MPA director's membership and participation in ASPA, meetings with the ASPA president and president elect, were held at the Annual Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada, to discuss ASPA certification for the Academy. While not unknown to ASPA, such certifications were relatively infrequent. After consultation with the ASPA National Council, a document representing certification was developed and delivered to the Academy and the Director of the Roger Williams University MPA program.

However, the certification document was only the first step. The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) would need to be informed about the ASPA certification, and then approve such a certification. After consultation with national ASPA headquarters, RIDE agreed to accept the ASPA certification. The ASPA certification has remained in place since the original certification. The certification must be bestowed on other such academies with the approval of ASPA.

Perkins funding requirements include a ~~fourth~~-year college visit to campus. The Academy students came to the Roger Williams University for a visit to the MPA Program Director's American Government class in 2008. The Academy students were paired with American Government students for an in class exercise. They had been "prepped" by the Academy instructor, Edward Kostka. However, they were not aware with whom they would be partnered. Each group was assigned a public policy topic. The public policy issues included environmental policy, health policy, and similar topics. Each group presented its report including policy recommendations to be used. The class was attended by RWU administrators, Pawtucket School officials, and Roger Williams University Admissions personnel.

In subsequent visits, Academy students met with the MPA Director's Public Policy courses to cover other aspects of Public Administration. For example, they were required to research a nonprofit trade group. The students examined the IRS Form 990 found on

Guidestar to determine the trade organization's mission, information about its board, the money spent on lobbying, and the compensation of the leadership. As in previous visits, PA Academy students and Roger Williams University undergraduates enrolled in the Director's courses participated. The academic work in the MPA Director's classes was in addition to the required Academy curriculum.

The basis of Academy course begins with creating an understanding of the institutions that comprise Public Administration. The curriculum is currently a sequence of two nine-week semesters. Following coverage of traditional institutions of government, that is, federal and state government, the courts of the United States, both state and local, elections are added to fully establish the democratic context of Public Administration. Administration of government is introduced through instruction. While much of the content may seem abstract to students, the abstraction is removed when they must perform internships.

The internships and projects for the Academy students are the representation of the practical learning experience component of the career pathways work advocated by school to work policies described by researchers (Adamson, 2006; Castellano et al., 2003). According to Garcia-Reid (2014) internships and/or projects help foster people to people relationships within intercity school populations, providing skills which they would otherwise not carry to the workplace. Academy students have been placed in a number of internships. Among them are the Rhode Island Department of State, the Department of Taxation, the Rhode Island governor's office, and the Rhode Island attorney general office, plus others.

In addition to internships, Academy students have been tasked with project learning creating a value added component to the "context" of learning for the workplace. Furthermore, a number of accrediting organizations require project learning, including the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, which accredits RWU. The Government and Public Administration Academy was ahead of such requirements. The Academy's curriculum assignments have included project learning from its beginning.

In the fall of 2006, the Government and Public Administration Academy organized a state-wide conference of high-school students for a conference on public policy affecting high school students. The conference was held at the Providence, Rhode Island campus of Roger Williams University. The Government and Public Administration Academy students were responsible for the topics, the location logistics, and the invitations to high schools throughout Rhode Island, and presenters. While they were assisted by Mr. Connolly, Edward Pascarella, and other teachers, the conference was largely the result of work by the Academy students. During the spring of 2007, the Academy students began a closer association with the Rhode Island Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration of Rhode Island (RIASPA) and accordingly moved directly into the professional pathway of Public Administration in a more in depth and clearly professional way. The following year, Academy students organized and conducted a mock election on topics of concern to Rhode Island high school students.

Rhode Island ASPA activity was added soon after the first two years of the student-led programs. Initially, the Academy students were only observers at RIASPA events. In spring of 2008, Academy students attended the first annual Public Service Week

Conference held at Roger Williams University. Their role would change as the event became institutionalized.

The spring-2009 conference was the first in which the Academy students were major contributors to a number of “breakout” sessions. They were part of the sessions such as Women in Public Administration, Nonprofit Administration, and government employment in Public Administration. At the 2009 conference, the keynote address was delivered by Dr. Johari Brown of the Federal Emergency Management Agency of the US Federal Government. Dr. Brown, as a woman of color, was a major asset to the conference and drew extra attention from the Academy students concerning careers in public service.

By 2010, the RWU MPA Director and RIASPA President included the Academy students more directly. The Academy students were given their own presentation forum. They were required to describe their internships and they were also required to present what they had learned.

The requirements for participation increased in 2013. The Academy students developed public service messages. Importantly, by this time, the Pawtucket based Blackstone Valley YouthBuild Community Action Agency, or BIVCAP, joined with the Academy to produce the public service message project. The Tolman High School Law and Public Safety Academy joined the Shea High School Academy in presenting public service messages. The three groups presented their public service messages as Tweets, PowerPoint slides, and a video required by the MPA Director for posting on YouTube. Scripts and stage direction were produced by all three groups. The 2015 Academy students from Shea and Tolman High Schools were tasked with developing their own curriculum in selected Public Administration areas along with a redesign of classrooms to present and work on such a curriculum. The redesign was created in 3D using Sketch Up software and the redesign was based on a literature review classroom design.

These projects were added to make the Academy curriculum more rigorous and, therefore, worthy of college credit. Mr. Pascarella had developed an articulation agreement between Roger Williams University and the Pawtucket Public Schools to grant three-course credits for academy students choosing to seek them. Naturally, the work done by the Academy students must be worthy of three university credits. Students wishing college credit must create an Eportfolio of the all the work completed for the academic year. The articulation agreement, negotiated by Mr. Pascarella, requires the Eportfolio to be examined and approved by a faculty member of the Roger Williams University MPA program. The course credits can be applied to a Roger Williams University transcript or transferred to other colleges and/or universities in the United States. Course materials and assignments completed, internship reports, and the RIASPA projects are included in the Eportfolio. The institutions of higher education chosen by the students who have been granted the three credits include the Community College of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College, the University of Pennsylvania, Georgetown University, and the University of Rhode Island. Currently, 12 Academy graduates attend Roger Williams University across all four class years.

The capstones of success for the Academy students include graduation rates and membership to the American Society for Public Administration in addition to college

acceptances. Since 2006, the Government and Public Administration Academy had graduated 189 of 190 students contrasted with 60% of the of the Shea High School population (as Michael Connolly and Edward Kostka records). The attendance rate for academy students is more than 15% better than other students in their school. The tardiness rate is approximately 20% better. To date, 60% of Academy graduates to date are female. All academy students have been accepted to higher education with two exceptions. The two exceptions were students with disabilities.

The 2010 Academy students were the first high school students inducted into membership of the professional association of Public Administration. Membership was awarded by the then President of ASPA, Eric Bergrund. Subsequently, each Academy class has had a similar induction. In 2013, the induction was accompanied by a citation from the Senior US Senator from Rhode Island, Jack Reed along with certificates of membership in ASPA presented by President Steven Condrey. The 2014 and 2015 memberships were awarded by ASPA Executive Director, William Shields, along with the President and Vice President of ASPA. The Academy students remain the only high-school students in the United States who are members of the American Society for Public Administration.

## **Conclusion: Knowledge transfer lessons**

Public Administration in the United States has been a “study” since Woodrow Wilson first used the term. In addition to Wilson, there were other educators including Herbert Baxter Adams, James Bryce, Richard Ely, and Albert Shaw. Adams and Bryce both taught early lessons in what became Public Administration. Ely taught at Johns Hopkins and later the University of Wisconsin. Shaw was a journalist who, like Wilson, had been influenced strongly by his European observations. He taught at Cornell and the University of Michigan. The intention of all of these educators was to improve Public Administration through education. Subsequently, education became the career pathway for many in public service (Hoffman, 2002). European and later Asian higher education followed a not dissimilar educational pathway and professional association affiliations to improve the operation of government and, later, nonprofit operations and administration (Bice and Sullivan, 2014; Randma and Connaughton, 2005).

An early professional pathway to Public Administration and Public Service is being built in the Shea High School Government and Public Administration Academy despite trying circumstances. It provides students with curriculum, project learning, and internships as an educational foundation for Public Administration. The Academy is, thus, very much conducting the work Wilson and others along with European colleagues developed (Kletz et al., 2014).

The lessons learned from the Academy’s work are important to understand and recognize. The first lesson is, despite, major disadvantages, urban students can thrive among challenges such as those described above. Dedicated teachers can make an important difference in setting high standard for learning and success. The seasoned teachers described here are examples of the point.

Secondly, given the complexity of twenty-first-century Public Administration, having grown to encompass a large number of disciplines, for example Sociology, Psychology,

Science, Mathematics, and Health Administration, beginning the education of potential Public Administrators is well served by beginning the educational effort sooner than college (Zalmanovitch, 2014). The work of the 2015 Academy is a testament to getting acquainted with the literature in the field and using college library based resources to do so.

Third, the success of the Academy is transferable to other parts of the US, Asia, and Europe. There are notable colleges and universities around the US with Public Administration bachelors and master's program which would make partnerships such as the one between and RWU workable. European and Asian Universities are found in urban settings which bear resemblance to the Rhode Island environment. Outreach to their respective communities such as Michael Connolly conducted would be a starting point.

Fourth, ASPA is a professional association forming a lynchpin between Public Administration as a field of study and Public Administration practice. Further, ASPA encourages international participation and would welcome members from Europe, Asia, South Asia, the Pacific Rim, and elsewhere to bring education and practice together. Such cross fertilization of this kind is not new in Public Administration as the work of Rosser indicates (Rosser, 2010). The European Group for Public Administration with its collaboration with ASPA for professional development and the Asian counterparts with the Young Scholars Program for students are evidence of the advantages of education for the advancement of education and practice.

Perhaps most importantly for educators in Public Administration, an earlier beginning than college or university education pushes the "envelope" for teaching the subject. If what is taught conventionally at the undergraduate level begins earlier, that which is taught currently can be moved to an earlier stage. Consequently, those who teach public administration now will be "pushed" to create advanced lessons at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The result can be a stronger pathway to Public Administration careers and an improved public service.

Finally, an important transferable lesson from the work of the Academy is that there is no substitute for dedicated educators who are willing to work to see their students succeed despite what the difficult circumstances those students face might be. Such a lesson is also part of the legacy of the early contributors to education and Public Administration. In the United States, they had to face complacency, corruption, and patronage. For many at the time and perhaps even today in some quarters, government work is so simple anyone can do it. If Wilson and others could succeed against such attitudes and Michael Connolly, Edward Pascarella, and their key colleagues could succeed where economics and attitudes of the kind described above did not favor success, other dedicated teachers can transfer what all of these educators learned: students first, the value of Public Administration, the value of education, and an eye to a professional pathway to Public Administration beginning with learning.

## **Funding**

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

## Conflict of interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

## References

- 50states.com (n.d.) Rhode Island Facts and Trivia. Available at: <http://www.50states.com/facts/rdisl.htm#.UeL2z4rD9yF>
- Adamson P (2006) A certified health career. *Techniques: Connecting Education and Careers* 81(3): 30–31.
- Awe C and Bauman J (2010) Instructional Design and Assessment: Theoretical and Conceptual Framework for a High School Pathways to Pharmacy Program. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education* 74(8): Article 149.
- Balogun JA, Sloan PA and Hardney K (2005) Health professions career awareness program for seventh and eighth grade African American students: A Pilot Study. *Journal of Allied Health* 2005 34(4): 236–243.
- Bice S and Sullivan H (2014) Public policy studies and the Asian century: New orientations, challenges, and opportunities. *Governance* 27(4): 539–544.
- Branham M (2009) State news (Council of State Governments). Sep, Vol. 8, Technical Education and Comprehensive School Reform: Implications for Research and Practice. *Review of Educational Research* 7(2): 231–272.
- Castellano M, Stringfield S and Stone III, JR (2003) Secondary career and technical education and comprehensive school reform: Implications for research and practice. *Review of Educational Research* 7(2): 231–272.
- Burke B (2004) School to career: reworking the model. *Technology & Learning* 24(6): 26–33.
- Davenport R (2006) Credentialing and certification. *Training and Development* 60(5): 60–61.
- Funk and Wagnalls *New World Encyclopedia* (2014) Chicago, IL: World Book Inc.
- Garcia-Reid P (2014) An ecological approach to experiential learning in an inner-city context. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal* 42(4): 386–396.
- Gitter RJ (2001) Ohio Wesleyan University, Career Academies. *Monthly Labor Review* 124(10): 31.
- Hamilton V (2012) *Career pathway and cluster skill development: Promising models from the United States*. OECD Local Economic and Employment Development (LEED) Working Papers.
- Hoachlander G (2008) Bringing industry to the classroom. *Educational Leadership* 65(8): 22–27.
- Hoffman MC (2002) Paradigm Lost: Public Administration at Johns Hopkins University, 1884–96. *Public Administration Review* 62(1): 12–23.
- Kantrov I (2015) New CTE model is a plus for schools and students. *Phi Delta Kappan* 2015 96(6): 27–32.
- Kletz F, Hénaut L and Sardas J-C (2014) New public management and the professions within cultural organizations: One hybridization may hide another. *International Review of Administrative Sciences* 80(1): 89–109.
- Lauer Schachter H (2011) The New York School of Philanthropy, the Bureau of Municipal Research, and the trail of the missing women: A public administration history detective story. *Administration & Society* 43(1): 3–21.
- Lewis AC (2003) Community college career pathways. *Tech Directions* 62(6): 9–10.
- Maxwell NL and Rubin V (2000) *High school career academies: A pathway to educational reform in urban school districts?* Kalamazoo, MI: Upjohn (W.E.) Institute for Employment Research. ISBN: 0-88099-214.

- Mosher FC (1982) *Democracy and the public service* (2nd ed). New York, NY: Oxford Press.
- Ohio State University, Ohio Vocational Sex Equity, Columbus, Ohio (1998) Career pathways and gender equity: Providing opportunities for all students. Center for Sex Equity, *Equity Issues* 4(2).
- Pescosolido BA (1991) The sociology of the professions and the profession of sociology: Professional responsibility, teaching, and graduate training. *Teaching Sociology* 19(3): 351–361.
- Plant J (2015) Remembering William Mosher: A pioneer of public administration. *Public Administration Review* 2015 75(1): 13–14.
- Randma L and Connaughton B (2005) Public administration as a field of study: Divergence or convergence in the light of “Europeanization”. *TRAMES: A Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences* 9(4): 348–360.
- Rose R (2015) Student preferences for federal, state, and local government careers: National opportunities and local service. *Journal of Public Affairs Education* 21(1): 83–100.
- Rosser C (2010) Woodrow Wilson’s administrative thought and German political theory. *Public Administration Review* 70(4): 547–556.
- Shea High School Academy Records (2005–2014) Shea High School, 485 East Avenue, Pawtucket, RI 02860, USA.
- Shulock N and Offenstein J (2012) *Career opportunities: Career technical education and the college completion agenda. Part I: Structure and Funding of Career Technical Education in the California Community Colleges*. Sacramento, CA: Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Policy.
- Smirniotopoulos P (2014) Public education and job readiness: What can be done to shrink the skills gap? *The Huffington Post*, 17 March.
- Stillman RJ (1987) *The American bureaucracy*. Chicago, IL: Nelson Hall Publishers.
- Threeton MD (2007) ) The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) Act of 2006 and the Roles and Responsibilities of CTE Teachers and Faculty Members. *Journal of Industrial Teacher Education* 44(1): 66–82.
- Tolman High School Records (2005–2014) Tolman High School, 150 Exchange Street, Pawtucket, RI 02860, USA.
- U. S. Census Bureau (2010) United States Census Profile of Selected Social Characteristics, Pawtucket, Rhode Island. Retrieved 20 May 2015 from U.S. census.gov.
- U. S. Census Bureau (2014) United States Census State and County Quick Facts, Rhode Island. Retrieved 20 May 2015 from U.S. census.gov.
- Verheijen and Connaughton (2003) Public administration education and Europeanization: Prospects for the emancipation of a discipline? *Public Administration* 81(4): 833–851.
- Zalmanovitch Y (2014) Don’t reinvent the wheel: The search for an identity for public administration. *International Review of Administrative Sciences* 80(4): 808–826.