

# Florida City and County Management Association

## Florida Management Internship Program



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**Assistant's Committee**  
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## **PREFACE**

In 2002, the Assistants Committee proposed to the FCCMA Board that an Internship White Paper be drafted. The purpose of the White Paper was to explore the need for additional internship opportunities in local government management in the State of Florida.

Two individuals have stepped up and worked hard to develop this paper. My sincere appreciation is extended to Karen Kolinski and Caryn Miller for their dedication and outstanding efforts to research and draft this important paper. They have both performed Yeoman's work in a very short period of time. Extraordinary volunteers such as these are the life blood of FCCMA now and in the future.

We are hopeful that the ideas and content expressed in this White Paper will be helpful to the FCCMA board as the status of internships are explored as part of the local government profession. The content of this paper does not reflect a broad consensus of thought on this subject. This paper, rather, is dedicated to the need for change and the ideas and options available for FCCMA to consider in evaluating internships in our state.

Sincerely,

William R. Whitson, Chair  
Assistants Committee

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE ..... 2

INTRODUCTION..... 4

CURRENT STATUS IN FLORIDA ..... 4

    University Populations..... 5

    Internship Availability ..... 5

    Other State Associations ..... 6

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS ..... 7

KEY ISSUES ..... 7

PROPOSED PLAN..... 8

CONCLUSION ..... 9

Table 1.0..... 10

Table 2.0..... 13

ATTACHMENTS..... 14

## **INTRODUCTION**

Public Management Magazine recently posed a crucial question to the local government management profession, "What can be done to attract young adults to careers in local government?"

Michelle Frisby explores what has been affectionately termed as the quiet crisis, or the graying of the local government profession. The article points out that in the year 2000, 77% of local government managers surveyed were between the ages of 41 and 60, with an additional 6% over the age of 60. Young adults are exhibiting a low interest in local government management as a career, thereby exacerbating the aging of the profession.

Additionally, students interested in public policy are choosing to enter the nonprofit and private sector industries. This means that competition for human capital and talent, given the array of career choices, will become more intense in the near future. The article states "while nearly 61 percent of respondents said that they would consider a career in local government, only 13 percent indicated that they had ever considered a career as city, town or county manager." This creates an interesting dilemma for professional, local government managers who face a myriad of challenging issues such as growth management, state budget constraints, sunshine laws, environmental awareness and the ever increasing demands of balancing the needs of diverse, elected officials and the day-to-day management of the government. In order to create a pipeline of talent -into our profession it is necessary to train and place young, qualified future managers in a position to succeed. The question becomes, "How can we create and maintain the appropriate levels of well trained management talent entering our profession?"

To proactively address the changing environment, more internship opportunities for developing young management talent are needed through out the state. Internships open doors of opportunity, provide crucial skills needed to survive in this profession, and establish a critical pool of management talent for local communities to draw upon. The concern is that in Florida, even if a young person desires to enter our profession, open doors are limited. The objective of this white paper is to evaluate and propose solutions that can place the state of Florida among the leaders in opening doors of opportunity in local government management profession. Eliminating barriers to enter our profession should be one of the main goals of the management intern program.

The issue before FCCMA is the creation of meaningful, professional management experiences that will open doors and create opportunity for young talent to become managers in local government throughout the state. Development of the next generation of local government managers is a critical responsibility for today's manager. This paper is dedicated to the purpose of exploring the problems, issues, opportunities and most critically, the next steps in order to resolve the graying our profession.

## **CURRENT STATUS IN FLORIDA**

To determine the current environment in Florida, research was conducted to identify university populations and verify the inventory of internships available throughout the state. The twenty-two universities offering government related programs of study were distributed an email survey that targeted matriculation numbers from undergraduate/graduate programs and the type of students graduating from the program (i.e., traditional, non-traditional, minority). The eight universities that responded did not include the Florida State University, University of Central Florida and University of Florida, which are three of the largest State schools in Florida. Their lack of response to the formal survey is an indicator of relationships that need to be built.

Additional telephone contacts were made and the information provided is reflected in the tables attached.

To develop the inventory of available internships, two requests for information were sent out to cities via the Florida League of Cities Datagram and Ken Smalls' CMs' email distribution list. In addition, informal emails were sent to known City and County addresses based on the information provided in the Florida League of Cities Directory. Finally, several telephone contacts were made to cities and counties that had not responded to the previous requests.

### **University Populations**

Currently, 22 universities or colleges offer undergraduate or graduate programs in public administration or closely related fields (political science, public affairs, public policy, etc.). Twelve offer a degree in political science, eight in public administration, one in public affairs and one in arts and sciences. The results of the survey indicate that Florida universities that offer a government related program grant an average of 25 undergraduate degrees a year. Likewise, the average number of master degrees is 28 per year. These numbers are best estimates based on the survey instrument and follow up telephone calls. More precise numbers can be obtained and verified upon request from the FCCMA Board. The universities have a diverse mix of student populations, which include both traditional and non-traditional students. Traditional students are full-time, in their early-to-mid twenties that have little or no professional experience in the workforce. Non-traditional students comprise that population which is attending school part-time, in the evening, has professional experience and may have dependents. The median population is 66% of students are non-traditional with a high of 95% and a low of 30%.

Very few programs that responded require all students to complete an internship. Some require three credit hours if the student does not have pre-service experience or a student may elect to take internship credit hours. Other programs required a capstone project in lieu of an internship. Respondents encourage their students to participate in internship programs; however, they cite that it is sometimes difficult to locate opportunities and would appreciate assistance in identifying available positions.

Table 1.0 displays the responses from the responding universities. Interestingly, many of the universities that responded have "non-traditional" students that have dependents, are in-service, are part-time or have returned to school after having been in the workforce. Recognizing the need for these students to be able to support a family, maintain a certain income level or have other needs, it is necessary to tailor a post-graduate management intern program that meets the financial needs of these entry level professionals so not to lose them to the higher salary opportunities offered by state or federal governments.

### **Internship Availability**

Four post-graduate management internship positions located in the manager's office are available throughout the state of Florida, according to respondents. And an additional three post-graduate positions are in the process of being created. Post-graduate management internships generally pay between \$25,000 - \$35,000 a year, include benefits and last 1 - 2 years. Some cities and counties find the idea of a post-graduate internship very appealing; however, funding for such a position is a primary barrier to implementation.

Many communities have internship opportunities available in the manager's office and throughout the organization while students are working toward their degrees (See Table 2.0). Often times these internships are located in specific departments including Planning/Zoning,

Management and Budget or Parks and Recreation. These internships may be on an “as needed basis” or may last for the duration of a student’s academic career. Usually, the average rate of pay is \$9.00 - \$10.00 an hour and does not include benefits. One City reports that as an added incentive, they will provide bonuses to the interns after they have completed a particular project in addition to the salary. Other cities have proposed the innovative idea of partnering to share an internship amongst multiple communities. For example, the cities of Port Orange and South Daytona have discussed the possibility of partnering to create a management internship between their communities. This type of innovative thinking should be encouraged.

### **Other State Associations**

To identify the efforts of other state City and County Management Associations, information was requested regarding the implementation of an internship program. Eleven responses were received. The Michigan Local Government Management Association (MLGMA) sponsors an internship in a local community for a University of Michigan student and gives the student an opportunity to address the MLGMA membership at a State Association meeting. MLGMA has a line item in its budget to support the program. They report it has been very successful.

California uses their web site to post openings free of charge. It is our understanding, that California is entitling their intern initiative, The Next Generation. Information regarding the California initiative can be found in the attachments section of this white paper.

Georgia reports that it has not established a formal internship program. They provide two \$1,000 scholarships to graduate students pursuing an MPA degree and sponsor a luncheon at the spring GCCMA meeting where current MPA students are introduced and provided time at the meeting for managers to interview them for potential internships or permanent placements.

Virginia supports but does not sponsor internship programs. They do sponsor scholarships to the University of Virginia's Leadership Program. Individual cities and counties sponsor the internships. In addition, the State of Illinois does not coordinate a formal internship program through their association but does provide one \$2000 fellowship for a student enrolled in an MPA program. However, their assistants association (IAMMA) has tried to maintain a list of interns and then passed those names along to communities seeking interns.

Massachusetts and North Carolina do not have a formal internship program. However, North Carolina reports they award approximately 6 scholarships to students from colleges and universities with MPA programs. This program has been in effect for at least 20 years if not more. Massachusetts offers an annual scholarship of \$1,000 to a graduate student, usually pursuing an MPA, who plans to enter municipal management, and the association tries to focus at least one meeting per year towards assistants and the younger members who are newer to the profession.

West Virginia, Washington, and Kentucky also expressed they do not have formal internship programs through their associations. Internships are done on an individual city or county basis. In summary, most state associations do not have a formal program, but encourage the municipalities to provide those opportunities to new talent wanting to enter the profession.

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

Universities are the starting point to identify our profession's future. Using the average that each university grants 28 graduate degrees each year, it is estimated that 166 master's degrees are awarded in government related degrees each year. The number of undergraduate degrees is far greater. Of the approximately 166 master degrees award, 66% are likely to be granted to non-traditional students. Non-traditional students have differing needs than traditional students. Many universities do not require internships, particularly of non-traditional students. However, for those students needing internship opportunities it is sometimes difficult to find them.

Internships are available in two main categories: pre-graduation and post-graduate. Many communities have internships available for students in the process of earning their degree. Our research shows many times these internships are located in departments other than the manager's office. Also, these internships are short in duration and pay an hourly wage without benefits. Post-graduate internships are usually one or two years, pay an annual salary and provide benefits. The post-graduate intern has already graduated or will be graduating within six months. Four post-graduate management intern programs are currently available in Florida. One of the primary obstacles facing communities is the cost to implement post-graduate management intern positions.

The state associations that responded to requests for information regarding internship programs indicate that little action is being taken by associations to function as the so called "cog" in the internship program development "wheel". Approaches are more passive by providing scholarships and mentoring opportunities, while leaving the internship development to individual communities.

## **KEY ISSUES**

The research included in this white paper is a good beginning for identifying initiatives to halt the graying of our profession; however, certain issues still remain, primarily:

- What benefits do manager's need to gain from an FCCMA Internship Program? How can we encourage managers to develop successful intern programs? How can we meet the needs of both managers and intern candidates? We believe it is important important to create an internship program that recognizes the needs of managers while identifying any major barriers to success. This has not been done yet. We also recognize that it is important to apply these questions to universities and students as well.
- How do we communicate the availability of positions to Florida universities? Our response from State universities regarding surveys has not been good. This is also reflected in applications for scholarships offered by FCCMA and our student membership numbers. The program may be created but if it is not utilized we will not impact the graying of our profession.
- How much staff time will it require from FCCMA to create and maintain a management intern program that proposes to transition from a "clearinghouse" of information to an "official" program, which would include regular evaluation of the program? Honest consideration must be given to the amount of administrative time that will be required to move from providing the platform to promote and communicate internship availability and guidelines to reviewing and recommending students upon a community's' request.

## **PROPOSED PLAN**

In order to implement a successful Florida Management Intern plan it is necessary to strategically develop a method for gathering further information on our market environment, forging ahead to make progress and reaching the vision of establishing FCCMA as a leader in the development of new talent in the local government management profession by creating a Florida Management Intern Program that sets the national standard for internship programs. We believe that FCCMA should act as a change agent and provide leadership in exploring this important area of our profession.

As such, our proposed plan of action is to create a Florida Management Intern program that will develop future local government management talent while meeting the diverse needs of Florida communities by:

- Identifying the current environment in which we are functioning (FY04)
  - *University populations---student needs.* Crucial is to continue gathering information on the needs of universities and the students they are graduating. One mechanism is to create a student work group headed by the B. Harold Farmer Scholarship winner that consists of students from the different universities. This would require scholarship winners to complete a survey instrument that they distribute to their classmates to identify why there is limited awareness or interest in local government and what needs to be done to overcome this problem. A student work group will promote awareness of FCCMA to students while developing a useful product.
  - *Internship availability.* Work with communities to continue identifying internship opportunities. With permission of the FCCMA board and various communities, we can begin building our internship listing to be posted on the FCCMA website (to be discussed later in the plan).
  - *Manager's needs.* Little consideration has been given to realizing the needs managers. Managers will be the individuals initiating and proposing intern positions. If the program does not meet their needs, little buy-in will occur and success will be difficult. FCCMA should find a handful of managers (proponents, opponents, small communities, large communities) and have a focus group to determine critical so that the internship program is reflective of the diversity within FCCMA. FCCMA should try to facilitate progress and serve as an encouraging "change agent".
  - *FCCMA administrative capacity.* Moving from a "clearinghouse" of providing suggestions for internship standards, serving as a platform for opportunity interchange via the internet and increasing awareness through university interaction to additional tasks such as resume reviews and suggesting candidates for internship positions will require additional administrative time and costs. FCCMA should evaluate how or if such an effort should be done.
- Developing an education component that targets recommended internship practices (FY05)
  - *Internship standards (toolkit).* Develop suggested guidelines for creating successful internships based on feedback from the information gathered during FY04. This information would be posted to the Internet. It will also be used to develop the Florida Internship Program to be sanctioned by FCCMA.
  - *Use of Internet technology.* Use the FCCMA website to post internship opportunities and resumes of students to create an interchange between communities and our future leaders.



- *More outreach with university professors and the students.* Devise a marketing campaign that will promote FCCMA as the place for intern information and career development.
- Implementing the Florida Management Intern program (FY06)
  - *Transition from “clearing house.”* The crux of the work plan is the development of a FCCMA sanctioned intern program. This aspect of the program can be modeled to reflect the Presidential Management Intern Program (PMI) established by the Federal government in the 1970’s. The Florida Management Intern Program will involve adopting formal guidelines developed during FY05 and will be used in establishing an officially recognized management intern program. To be recognized as an accredited Florida Management Intern program, communities would have to meet the established guidelines. Also, as part of the program, FCCMA could, if a community should make the request, review resumes of interested students and provide a recommendation of the most qualified candidates, much like the Range Riders do for manager searches.
- Evaluating and monitoring the Florida Management Intern Program (FY07)
  - *Intern perspective.* Identify success rates of interns participating in Florida Management Intern program. Do they take jobs with the community they interned for? What position are they hired in following their internship (assistant (to the) manager, analyst, department head)
  - *Manager perspective.* What benefits, issues, etc. were faced? Are there areas of improvement in the guidelines?
  - *FCCMA support staff perspective.* What impacts have the program had on administrative staff time?

## **CONCLUSION**

To stop the graying of our profession, educate people on the importance of professional management and preserve the future of local government, it is necessary to take action. Action must be taken on many fronts: in the universities, by managers and by city and county management associations. It cannot be done by any one of these entities singly, but must be accomplished in partnership and with special attention to developing relationships and understanding the needs of each group.

Originally, the intent was to provide options, but after further research and deliberation it was recognized that previously proposed suggestions were steps along the path to ultimately stop the graying of our profession. The proposed work plan submitted in this white paper recognizes the needs of universities/students, managers, the FCCMA administration and the dependence of working off a successful model, the Presidential Management Intern Program.

The work plan has continuous loops of feedback built into it and proposes to utilize the very targets of the program (students and managers) to develop the background information and the guidelines. The work plan also brings together many of the committees serving the FCCMA: the assistant’s committee/education committee, the membership committee and the technology committee, to name a few.

Recognizing the graying of our profession is only the first step. What must follow is a commitment to take the many steps along a path that encourages the formation of partnerships necessary to successfully infuse our profession with new talent. By committing to this work plan we can stop the graying of our profession and encourage new doors of opportunity to be formed and opened.

**Table 1.0**

<b>DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENT UNIVERSITIES</b>				
<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>LEVEL</b>	<b>NUMBER OF GRADUATES</b>	<b>DEMOGRAPHICS</b>
Barry University	Political Science	Undergraduate	8	Most of our majors are female. About 30% are black and from the Caribbean.
Barry University	International Studies	Undergraduate	10	Most of our majors are female. About 30% are black and from the Caribbean.
New College	Political Science	Undergraduate	10	Can't recall more than one or two who ever expressed an interest in local or state government service. I think you are wasting resources on us.
Miami		Undergraduate	70	Maybe 10 undergraduates do internships.
Miami		Graduate	12	ALL pre-service graduate students do internships.
Florida Southern	Political Science	Undergraduate	8-10	Most of graduates plan to pursue law school, although we are trying to encourage alternatives such as public administration, planning and city management.
West Florida	Political Science	Undergraduate	Not provided	Most of our students are mid career
Florida Gulf Coast	Political Science	Undergraduate	Started FY02	No graduates as of yet. However, undergrads are full-time and may choose an elective internship. In the accelerated program students earn a BA and MPA in 5-years and if they do not have a full year's of professional experience, they will be required to earn 3 internship credits.
Florida Gulf Coast	Public Administration	Graduate	10	95% of MPA students are part-time, in-service careers in public and non-profit sector. An internship is not required in the degree program for these students.
Florida Atlantic	Public Management	Graduate	Not provided	Have 200 MPM students enrolled
UCF	Public Administration	Graduate	47	86% non-traditional students, part-time for the most part

FSU	Public Administration	Graduate	44	No information provided
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SCHOOL	PROGRAM	LEVEL	NUMBER OF GRADUATES	DEMOGRAPHICS
West Florida	Public Administration	Graduate	20	Most students mid career; capstone course in lieu of an internship; we might have 3-4 fulltime students per year that are interested in a local government internship; most of our students are parents or have dependent family member of one type or the other; our program is a night program; we do offer a few weekend courses; although we have a rather small demand for internships, those that do need one sometimes have difficulty locating a suitable program. So, we welcome your efforts in this regard, and think it very appropriate to steer students (especially pre-service students) toward local government internships; if I can be of additional assistance please let me know.
Stetson	Political Science	Undergraduate	15-20	The majority of these go to Law School, but we try to encourage them to go into other fields instead, such as state and local public administration. Our students are usually "traditional," graduating at age 23 or so, but increasingly we are having a few non-traditional, i.e., older student seeking second careers. We set up internships on an adhoc basis, and we would be happy to participate in something you may design.
Florida Atlantic	Public Management	Undergraduate	45	Have 175 BPM students enrolled. Approximately 59% female, 31% minority, 45% full-time. Approximately 60% of BPM's are currently working for government. Students come from 4 primary counties: Broward, Palm Beach, Martin and Dade County.
USF	Public Administration	Graduate	33	Most part- time non-traditional students

## **Table 2.0**

City of Port St. Lucie. They are in the process of ironing out the final touches to the program. However, the intern will be placed in the Manager's Office for a period of one year or less and will be provided a salary between \$20-30,000. There was no indication of benefits provided, and the intern must be an MPA student or graduate.

City of North Lauderdale. Provides a position with the Managers' Office. This is a paid position with a salary of \$24,808-34,198 including benefits. Term length for this position varies.

City of Leesburg. This program has just been instituted and will be located in the Managers' Office. The City of Leesburg recognizes the need for continued professional development in the field and recently received approval for the funding of this position. Although this will be a paid position, there are no available details on the actual salary amount and whether benefits will be included. The position is slated to last 12 weeks in the summer and will utilize a College student. The City is in current discussion with UCF and Lake Sumter CC with regard to the available pool of applicants for the position.

City of Clearwater. This is a long time established program in the Manager's Office. Intern salaries are \$27,000 plus benefits and they are provided raises annually. The position length is from one to two years.

The City of Venice. This City provides an internship opportunity to High School and College students within the Managers' Office, Finance and the City Clerks' Office combined. The salary is \$7.50 per hour and does not provide benefits. The length of the internship varies.

Miami-Dade County. Provides MPA students with a one year paid internship in the Manager's Office. The salary is \$35,000 and it is not clear whether or not benefits are included.

Hillsborough County. This is a new position and is still in progress. While it is located in the OMB Office, the intern reports to the County Managers' Office. This is full time position, salary is \$33,000 plus benefits, and is primarily geared toward Post graduate MPA students. The length of time varies from one to two years. This County also provides an internship for MPA students which are still enrolled in the graduate program. This is a rotational assignment, exposing the intern to various departments within the County. The position length varies and the salary is \$10-12.00 per hour. While benefits are not provided, they do offer "perks" such as stipends to attend the FCCMA Conferences and the like.

City of Orange City. This is a part-time unpaid position within the Managers' Office. The Length of time also may vary.

City of Palm Coast. The City is in the process of initiating a position in the Managers' Office. The details are still being discussed and planned out.

Volusia County. The County has an Administrative Intern Program that varies in length and assignment. There are times the intern may be placed in the County Manager's Office. This is a paid position with a salary range of \$7.76-11.63 per hour with no benefits. This is available to College students currently enrolled and most of the time they come from Stetson University.

Broward County. The County has two separate programs. One is for MPA Graduates; it is a permanent position within the government and pays 35,000 per year plus benefits. An Intern may stay there as long as they wish to. The Second one is for students in the MPA program. It is also a paid position, \$26,000 average annually and lasts for one year and in the Managers' Office.

## **ATTACHMENTS**