PRESENTATION

A PROGRAM FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION IN NEW JERSEY

STEVENS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

HOBOKEN, NEW JERSEY

SYNOPSIS

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE -

It is level of government closest to the people - it is their training school in democracy.

It spends large sums for fundamental purposes, protecting and effecting the citizen in his every day life.

STANDARDS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAN BEST BE RAISED -

By working with the many sincere and interested officials and by making available to them:

(a) Opportunities to learn the best current practice in government through group meetings and courses.

(b) A complete specialized reference library unavailable in the State of New Jersey.

(c) Research on particular problems affecting local government, and job manuals for ready reference for new and also experienced officials.

By offering civic minded individuals or groups similar opportunities so that they may take an intelligent interest in their local affairs.

By giving to both graduate and undergraduate students an insight into local government problems, and thereby awakening in these engineers a sense of their social responsibility.

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN MANY OTHER STATES have been doing such work but it has been largely neglected in New Jersey.

THE INITIAL PROGRAM STARTED BY STEVENS this fall shows an interest and demand for such education and services beyond Stevens' financial ability to meet. On page two following is the Stevens' Report of progress for its first few months of operation.

AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM SUCH AS THIS can never pay its own way. It is a proper field in which private funds can, and in other states have, become largely interested.

REPORT OF PROGRESS

1. The noted municipal manager of Teaneck, N.J., Paul A. Volcker, joined the Stevens Faculty in September 1950 to assist in organizing and directing the new municipal government program at Stevens.

2. An Educational Advisory Committee consisting of the leaders of three organizations of municipal officials was formed to work with us.

   (a) They closely collaborated in helping to establish and promote among their members three courses in municipal government that Stevens offered this Fall.

   (b) Another member of the committee has been added representing the Association of Municipal Assessors in New Jersey.

3. Forty-five municipal officials and employees are now attending classes at Stevens.

   (a) They represent thirty municipalities. They come from as far away as Spring Lake and Deal, New Jersey.

   (b) They represent eight counties. (See Appendix A for the complete breakdown).

4. A short course in Municipal Government has just been completed by Professor Volcker in Ridgewood, New Jersey for a mixed group of the League of Women Voters and town officials and employees.

   (a) Several other requests have subsequently been received from organizations in other municipalities to repeat this course.

5. A job manual for councilmen is being prepared by Professor Volcker.

   (a) Plans are being formulated to prepare one for municipal assessors.

6. Four courses will be offered in the Spring term as follows:

   Municipal Administration
   Public Works Administration
   Survey of Municipal Finance
   Municipal Assessing Principles - I

A PROGRAM FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION IN NEW JERSEY

THE FIELD

While local government raises and spends a relatively small amount of the large sum of taxes raised and spent in the United States, it is that level of government which is closest to the people and which affects them most directly in their every day living. It is the level of government in which people can become, and do become, the most interested and effective. It is the training school for democracy.

It is generally recognized that our unique kind of American democracy may be in as much danger from within as a result of inefficient, ineffective and ignorant government administration, as it is from without, because of conflicting ideologies. Ineffective and ignorant administration at the local government level leads almost inevitably to transference of functions of local government to the state and federal levels.

THE PROBLEM IN NEW JERSEY

In New Jersey, Princeton is working on fundamental government problems at the state level and Rutgers is offering officials one 'training' course in municipal finance, and is doing some long-term research work. However, there is no group or organization with a rounded program which is teaching municipal administration to municipal officials and there is no place to which interested officials can go for advice or consultation on their day-to-day problems. There are no general State research and consulting services for such problems available to governing bodies.

It is the belief of Stevens that the best work in raising municipal

standards and services can be done by giving local officials the information they need and an opportunity to improve themselves through in-service training and education. It is our opinion, formed after exploratory investigation and our own experience, that municipal officials as a whole are interested and will take advantage of such opportunities. The work must go further than this by training young people for jobs in local government in New Jersey especially.

There are citizen groups, such as the League of Women Voters, Junior Chambers of Commerce, and teachers of the social sciences in high school who are in need of and who would be appreciative of an opportunity to study the process of local government.

WHAT IS BEING DONE IN OTHER STATES — Other states have far surpassed New Jersey in assistances given to local officials and citizens in raising the standard of local government.

In many states, state universities and other educational institutions furnish over-all training services and opportunities to local government now lacking in New Jersey.

As examples-

1. Of state universities - Minnesota, Maine, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Michigan State, Michigan.

2. Of other institutions - University of Pennsylvania, Bowdoin, Boston University, University of Pittsburgh, University of Southern California at Los Angeles, University of Chicago, Illinois Institute of Technology, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

WHAT STEVENS IS DOING - A REPORT OF PROGRESS — Noted Municipal Manager joined faculty in September 1950

After extensive research, Stevens announced in the Spring of 1950 that it intended to offer in the Fall of 1950 courses for local govern-

ment officials, graduate and undergraduate students, and other qualified persons, Paul A. Volcker, who made an outstanding record for twenty years as municipal manager and engineer of Teaneck of N.J. and was retiring from that position, was invited to join the Stevens faculty beginning in September 1950 as an Associate Professor in Municipal Government in the Graduate School. His functions are primarily toteach and assist in organizing the program in municipal government. Later when financial support is obtained it is intended he will, with an assistant, head the Stevens' research and consulting service in municipal government.

Forty-five municipal officials now studying at Stevens

Three courses are now being given to municipal officials on the Hoboken campus with the aid of two outside experts as teachers, in addition to Professor Volcker. Sixty individuals are attending, including forty-five government officials and employees. The breakdown of positions of these individuals and municipalities they represent appear in Appendix A.

The response of municipal people and municipalities has been tremendously encouraging. For instance, the Village of South Orange has sent four to attend the courses and Teaneck has sent three.

Municipal government leaders on Educational Advisory Committee

In order to plan wisely for the courses to be offered, an Educational Advisory Committee was established. It is composed of top officials of the organizations co-sponsoring the courses with us including the New Jersey State League of Municipalities; The American Public Works Association, and the Municipal Finance Officers Association of New Jersey. These organizations through their officers assisted us in establishing the courses by providing mailing lists for our course bulletin, by publicizing the courses in their own publications, and by generally urging their members to attend.

Due to the initial success of our program, the Municipal Assessors Association of New Jersey, was invited to co-sponsor work in assessing, one of the most neglected but most vital fields in all of municipal government. This Association was considering providing its own instruction, but preferred to work with Stevens because of its experience and prestige. As a consequence, we are offering in the coming Spring a course entitled Municipal Assessing Principles - I, to be followed in the Spring of 1952 with an advanced course. The great enthusiasm of the officers of this organization at the prospect of working with Stevens is hard to describe. Appendix B contains the description of this course and the others being offered in the Spring of1951.

We are planning on adding one or two more new courses in the Fall of 1951 in additional fields as part of our expanding program.

Requests received by Stevens to give similar courses in New Jersey

Subsequent to starting the Stevens program, Professor Volcker was asked to teach a short course in municipal government for members of the Ridgewood League of Women Voters and seventeen township officials and employees, which he is doing. Fairlawn and Montclair, N.J. are asking that the same thing be done next Spring for a similar mixed group. We have been asked to start a number of courses for government officials and employees in Madison and nearby communities. Professor Volcker was also asked to deliver lectures in local government by the Bergen-Passaic Planning Board. We do not have the staff to respond to all of the requests, although they are all worthy and should be given prompt attention to broaden the impact of the program more quickly.

Stevens program not competitive with Princeton or Rutgers

Princeton has been interested in government for years but almost entirely

on the state level. Rutgers has lately become interested, in the municipal field. However, there is so much work to be done in New Jersey that the combined efforts of the three institutions will not nearly meet the needs considering their scope and the long neglect. The work of these institutions is not competitive but entirely complementary. In Pennsylvania, the University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania State University, and the University of Pennsylvania work together.

THE PLACE OF THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAM AT STEVENS

Municipal government program an outgrowth of program in business and industrial management

The municipal government program at Stevens is an outgrowth of the program in business and industrial management now given in the Graduate School. The objectives of this business and industrial management training are both to increase the breadth of knowledge of the students and to open wider horizons so that they will be able to do their jobs better and will be better fitted for industrial and business leadership.

The municipal government program has identical objectives in the field of municipal management. Sound and tested management principles and practices do not differ wherever they are applied. Only the emphasis and the institutional framework are different. Our intention is that our majors in business and industrial management should be familiar with the problems of government management, just as those majoring in municipal management, when we reach that point, should have the opportunity to become familiar with the problems of business and industrial management. In general, at the present time, a specialist in government knows little or nothing about the operations of private business and the student of industrial management is equally ignorant of government at any level. The potential benefits flowing from cross-fertilization promise to be large in terms of better citizenship, of capacity to do a

better job and of understanding the principles, practices and problems of both government and business. The possibilities of research in the linked fields are numerous and should be productive of advancement in thinking in each.

The Stevens administration, trustees and faculty recognize the importance to the community at large of making educational opportunities available in municipal administration. They believe that Stevens can do its share in giving attention to this vital field that has been so neglected in New Jersey.

THE STEVENS PLAN

The overall plan divides itself into two general groups, (1) instruction, and (2) research and consultation including an adequate specialized research library. Some of the plan has been already established, more has been put off either for financial reasons or because slower expansion is a sounder policy. The details of the plan follow:

1. Instruction

(a) In-service training courses for municipal officials and employees

These are after-hour courses designed to help officials and employees. Many of these people as well as their governing bodies, are anxious to improve the quality of their own administration. Where appropriate, members of such organizations as league of Women Voters, Junior Chambers of Commerce, Taxpayers Leagues, High School Teachers in social science courses are invited to attend. At the present time we are giving courses in Municipal Administration, Municipal Finance Administration and Public Works Administration. They will be augmented in the Spring of 1951 by an elementary course in municipal assessing, cited above. Stevens' location in the

metropolitan New York area makes it possible for us to attract leading experts to teach in the evenings. All of the teaching material must be prepared especially for the courses by the instructors because little published material is available. We consider that in-service training will continue to be one of our most important contributions in helping to raise the level of administrative competence in local government.

(b) Training for lay members of official municipal boards

Citizens are appointed to boards of education, housing boards and planning boards, usually with no experience and no way to learn how to do the jobs they have accepted. When staff and financial backing is available, we propose to offer short courses, conferences and study groups for citizen members of these organizations.

(c) Graduate program leading to a master's degree in municipal administration

This is an ultimate goal depending exclusively on the requisite staff and financial resources. We prefer to work towards this goal slowly and build solidly. By integrating graduate work with in-service training, our graduate students will gain immeasurably by studying in the same class with municipal officials. Engineering courses particularly in civil engineering, that can be made available, will be of great assistance in working out such a graduate program.

(d) Undergraduate courses

At the present time Professor Volcker is giving an introducory elective course in municipal engineering and management to our senior engineering students. This course is strongly

stimulating the interest of these individuals in municipal engineering and management. Also it is helping to make them better citizens in the communities in which they live.

As staff becomes available, we intend to expand, for the benefit of undergraduates, our course offerings in the field of government, particularly on the local level.

2. Research and Consultation

(a) Preparation of job manuals

In New Jersey when a man is elected or appointed to municipal office, he is usually virtually on his own to learn the responsibilities and functions of his office as well as the administrative and legal decisionsaffecting it. His difficulties are magnified, since often the former incumbent is not available to help him. A long period of trial and error frequently costly to taxpayers must ensue.

We propose, over a period of years, to prepare job manuals to fill this important gap. These will carry Stevens' work to the smallest municipalities in all corners of the state. Present officials can check their work and new officials will have a ready source for quick reference.

At the present time Professor Volcker is preparing a manual for councilmen in New Jersey municipalities and plans are being formulated to prepare a manual for assessors.

We believe that this is one of the most vital things we can do. We intend to start as soon as we have the finances to employ the necessary staff.

(b) A consulting service

Although our first aim is education, so that the man on the job can do his work better, yet it is obvious that he cannot be an expert in every problem he faces. To fill this gap, it is our intention to offer a consulting service to municipalities on a contract basis, at cost, for the investigation of existing or pending problems, either administrative or physical, as well as a comprehensive survey of the administration and functions of the municipality. The work will be done by staff members and experts brought in for the occasion. Specializing on New Jersey problems, our organization will acquire an unequaled experience and expertness in local government in this state.

One of the primary aims of the consulting service, just as of our other work, is educational. The personnel of the municipalities must be thoroughly educated by the consulting service so that they, who are on the job, can carry the recommendations of the consulting service to a successful conclusion. This phase of consulting is now usually neglected and hence the money expended is too often largely wasted. In addition, practical field work for our students will go far to increasing their competence.

(c) Reference bureau and library

There is no specialized library and reference bureau in New Jersey to which municipal officials and employees can go to obtain information or to get it for themselves.

The purpose of this service would be to amass data on New Jersey municipal problems under the direction of a competent

research expert so that day-to-day inquiries from municipal officials can be answered and so that students can turn to this material for amplification of the matters brought up in their courses.

FINANCIAL POSITION AND NEEDS

Present budget

At the present, based on a below minimum course program, the estimated out-of-the-pocket expenses for t he year is $7,800. This does not include quarters, part time secretarial help, telephone and other expenses. Nor does it include more than nominal progress on the building up of the much needed research bureau and library which is a necessity for the college and the state. The estimated income for the year is $4,500. The Institute is financing the $3,300 deficit. Further financial help from Stevens in much greater quantity cannot be expected because of the present demands on its limited funds.

From our previous experience, we feel confident that a program limited to course work on the campus largely manned by outside instructors will carry itself when the program becomes firmly established during the next few years. However, tuition alone can never be expected to finance the necessary research activities to strengthen local government, or to build the research bureau and library, nor to carry on the other activities enumerated previously. Tuition fees cannot finance a top level permanent staff which is necessary for a strong, continuing organization that can work closely with officials and governing bodies. Such fees cannot finance these things at Stevens nor can they in other institutions of high learning. For instance the University of Pennsylvania receives a yearly grant from the Fels Foundation of $70,000 for their program in state and local government. Other institutions received foundation, private or public funds to carry on their work.

Following are preliminary budgets spanning a five year period giving the minimum needed to establish a minimum adequate program. It is obvious that faculty of caliber cannot be attracted to Stevens if they do not have some assurance that funds will be available during the establishment of the program over this period.

Preliminary Budget as of January 1, 1951		Preliminary Budget as of January 1, 1956	
Expenses:		Expenses:	
Director and Professor	$6,000	Director and Professor	$7,500
Research Professor	6,000	Research Professors (2)	13,000
Librarian and research assistant	5,000	Librarian and research assistant	5,000
Secretary	2,500	Secretary	3,000
Books and research materials	2,500	Books and research materials	3,000
Instructors (outside)	1,500	Instructors (outside)	6,000
Other expenses including publications, scholarships, conferences, traveling, etc.	5,000	Other expenses (for similar purposes as in 1951)	5,000
	$28,500		$42,500
Income:		Income:	
Tuition fees	4,500	Tuition fees $10,000, consulting services $9,000	19,000
	$24,000		$23,500

For the next five years, we estimate that approximately $121,000.00 will be needed from outside sources for the basic necessities to being the plan from its present incomplete to a fully developed state. This $121,000.00 is less than one hundredth of one per cent of what New Jersey municipalities will spend during that period, exclusive of school costs.

We have not extended our estimate beyond five years for this is a long enough period to prove the soundness of our plan. With the finances for the first five years in hand, it will permit the energies of all of the staff to be devoted exclusively to the building of the program without constant financial worry.

It is doubtful whether the program will ever become entirely self supporting. Granted that in these five years it has proven its worthwhileness, it must continue to have help from interested individuals and organizations. Colleges and private research agencies have found thisto be inherent in the very nature of such work. But the need, after the first five years, for the program to prove itself and attract continuing financial support, will be a sharp stimulus to those engaged in the program to make their research and educational activities effective and useful.

Appendix A and Appendix B follow

APPENDIX A

Positions and Geographical Distribution of Municipal Officials and Employees Taking In-Service Training Courses at Stevens Institute of Technology in the Fall of 1950

Positions in Municipalities	
Mayors	2
Councilmen	4
Commissioners and deputies	2
Municipal clerks	5
Financial officers	12
Engineers or assistants	4
Public works dept.	8
Board of education	3
Others	5
	45
In addition:	
Commerce and industry	15
	60

Counties Represented (8)

Bergen	Monmouth
Essex	Passaic
Hudson	Somerset
Middlesex	Union

Municipalities Represented (30)

Belleville	Newark
Bernardsville	North Arlington
Butler	Oradell
Chatham	Paramus
Cliffside Park	Park Ridge
Clifton	Passaic
Deal	Paterson
Elizabeth	Perth Amboy
Hackensack	Red Bank
Hasbrouck Heights	South Orange
Hoboken	Spring Lake
Little Ferry	Teaneck
Livingston	Tenafly
Maplewood	Union
Maywood	Union City

APPENDIX B

Program for the Spring of 1951