



Teaching Courses on Managing Diversity: Using Learning Contracts to Address Challenges and Model Behavior

Nadia Rubaii-Barrett

To cite this article: Nadia Rubaii-Barrett (2006) Teaching Courses on Managing Diversity: Using Learning Contracts to Address Challenges and Model Behavior, Journal of Public Affairs Education, 12:3, 361-383, DOI: [10.1080/15236803.2006.12001441](https://doi.org/10.1080/15236803.2006.12001441)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15236803.2006.12001441>



Published online: 13 Apr 2018.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 79



View related articles [↗](#)



Citing articles: 4 View citing articles [↗](#)

Teaching Courses on Managing Diversity: Using Learning Contracts to Address Challenges and Model Behavior

Nadia Rubaii-Barrett
Binghamton University

ABSTRACT

Managing for diversity is widely recognized as an increasingly important component of public administration curricula. Students must be prepared to function effectively in a workplace characterized by greater diversity among coworkers and the publics served. Despite the recognized need for courses on managing diversity, many faculty feel ill-prepared to determine course content and teach such courses. This article provides practical and normative justifications for the use of learning contracts in diversity courses. From a practical standpoint, learning contracts are an effective means of meeting the needs of diverse students and increasing course relevance while reducing the burden on the instructor to completely retool and develop a new area of expertise. The author asserts that learning contracts should be used because they are an appropriate instructional strategy for the adult learners who comprise public affairs programs and they provide a means for the instructor to model a behavior that demonstrates valuing diversity as an asset. The author presents a step-by-step guide to learning contracts tailored for use in diversity courses, provides examples of learning contract provisions developed by students in courses on managing diversity, and shares feedback received from students about the process.

If public affairs programs are to meet their charge of preparing students for professional leadership in public service, they must take steps to ensure that students are able to work effectively in and utilize the strengths associated

with an environment of increasing diversity. To do so will require that program administrators and faculty move beyond mere acknowledgement of the need for diversity in the curriculum and the offering of a list of explanations for why it is not done. We must develop and apply strategies that address the obstacles and facilitate more diversity-related course offerings. In this article, I briefly reiterate the rationale for teaching diversity in public affairs programs and review the obstacles that faculty have identified. I then make the case that learning contracts can be an effective instructional strategy for responding to these challenges. I present both practical and normative justifications for the use of learning contracts in courses on diversity. For those who are motivated to use this instructional approach, I provide guidelines for the use of learning contracts and, in tables throughout the article, I share samples of learning contract provisions that students have developed in my courses on managing diversity.

THE CASE FOR TEACHING DIVERSITY IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAMS

The population of the United States is becoming increasingly diverse. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the total population exceeds 281 million, among whom more than 12 percent (35.3 million) are Hispanic, almost 13 percent (36.4 million) are black or African American, and four percent (11.9 million) are Asian (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). By the year 2050, these groups are projected to comprise 24.4, 14.6, and 8 percent of the U.S. population, respectively (U.S. Census Bureau, 2004). Similar patterns of diversification have been experienced and are expected to continue in both higher education (Wlodkowski and Ginsberg, 1995) and in the workplace (U.S. Department of Labor, 2003). It is widely acknowledged that organizational effectiveness in the future will likely be in large part a function of the ability to make a sincere effort to recognize diversity as a strength rather than a liability and to make corresponding changes to organizational structures and managerial policies and practices (Thomas, 1990).

The arguments for more attention on diversity and multiculturalism in the curriculum have been well documented in higher education (Applebaum, 2002; Day and Glick, 2000; Siegel, 2003; Wlodkowski and Ginsberg, 1995). Diversity is widely recognized as a particularly important component of public affairs education (NASPAA, 2000; Rice, 2004; Tschirhart and Wise, 2002; White, 2004). Students in our programs represent increasingly diverse backgrounds, and they must be prepared to function effectively in a workplace characterized by greater diversity among coworkers and the publics served.

The students in public administration programs have been characterized as “a mosaic of nationalities, races, social classes, ethnic groups and lifestyles” (Rich 2005, 3). In 2002-2003, approximately 26,000 master’s degree students were enrolled in public administration, public policy, and public affairs programs, and 8,000 of those were receiving degrees (NASPAA, 2004). Of those graduating, 15 percent were African American, 12 percent were citizens of other countries,

6 percent were Hispanic, 5 percent were Asian Americans, and 1 percent were Native American (NASPAA, 2004). The traditional dimensions of diversity, such as race, ethnicity, gender, and class, have been expanded to include sexual orientation, age, language, and disability. In addition, the students at many colleges and universities reflect “widely varying backgrounds, previous experiences, interests, learning styles, life patterns, outside commitments, and learning speeds” (Codde, 1996), as well as differences in culture, religion, profession, organizational or team tenure, political party, personality type, functional background, education level, and other demographic, socioeconomic, and psychographic characteristics (Wise and Tschirhart, 2000, 387). In response to changing demographics, curricular and pedagogical changes are warranted in order to meet the needs of diverse students (Castaneda, 2004).

Public affairs students need to develop cultural competence, that is, the ability to respond effectively and respectfully to the challenges and opportunities posed by interacting with people who differ from themselves in terms of culture, language, class, race, ethnic background, religion, and other factors (White, 2004). NASPAA has highlighted the importance of diversity through a variety of mechanisms, including the requirement of a program-specific diversity plan as part of the accreditation process, the collection and dissemination of statistics regarding diversity among students, graduates, and faculty, and the hosting of numerous panels and presentations on diversity during the annual conferences. The NASPAA Diversity Report (NASPAA, 2000) presents a range of diversity issues related to students, faculty, teaching, research, service, and internationalization within our programs. A recurrent theme is that public administration educators have a professional responsibility to prepare students to work effectively in an environment that is and will continue to be characterized by diversity (Rice, 2004). Diversity courses are one way to foster such competence (White, 2004).

Despite the recognition of its importance, coverage of diversity in the public affairs curriculum does not always reflect the full range of diversity groups, nor does it reach all students. Courses on the topics of race and ethnicity are the most common form of diversity offerings, yet, according to baseline data presented in the NASPAA Diversity Report, even these courses were reported to be part of the curricula in fewer than half of public affairs programs (NASPAA, 2000). Courses on gender, multiculturalism, disability, and sexual orientation were less frequently available (NASPAA, 2000). Additionally, few programs require courses on diversity. While one-third to one-half of programs indicated that they offered courses addressing some aspect of diversity or multiculturalism, fewer than 10 percent include those courses as required curriculum components. Instead, diversity and multiculturalism are discussed as topics within more general core courses, such as human resource management, or in elective courses (NASPAA, 2000).

More recent studies suggest that, despite some advances, many students in public affairs programs may still complete their degrees with limited exposure

to issues of diversity within their programs of study. In a study of the top 20 MPA programs in the nation, White (2004) found that fewer than half covered some aspect of diversity or cultural competence in their curricula, and those that did tended to do so in elective rather than core courses. In their comparison of the coverage of diversity within the public affairs and law programs on the same campus of a large university, Pitts and Wise (2004) observed that the public affairs program had a larger number of elective courses that addressed topics of diversity and exposed a slightly larger percentage of their students to diversity topics, but offered fewer diversity courses per year and reached only one-fifth of the students in their program. White (2004) found that the topics covered in MPA courses on diversity focused on issues of race, gender, and ethnicity more than religion, age, sexual orientation, or disability. Pitts and Wise (2004), using a slightly different categorization scheme for evaluating the diversity content of courses, observed that the public affairs program exposed students to issues related to either social class diversity or cultural diversity more than issues of racial diversity, gender diversity, or diversity of ability. Both studies reinforce the findings of the NASPAA Diversity Report (2000), which noted that, despite the recognized importance of preparing public affairs students to work effectively with diversity, little has been done to reflect that need in many program curricula.

OBSTACLES TO TEACHING DIVERSITY IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAMS

The explanations offered for the paucity of diversity courses in public affairs programs are telling. The NASPAA Diversity Report identified “lack of faculty knowledge, lack of student interest, and absence of materials” as the major barriers to incorporating issues of race/ethnicity into the curriculum (NASPAA 2000, 32). A contributing factor to faculty unease and student disinterest may be the increasing diversity among students. Students from diverse backgrounds may differ widely in their values, their views about members of other groups, and their knowledge of and experience with people who differ from them. Some students have traveled extensively and have experienced a variety of cultures and communities, and others have led very sheltered lives. Some have strong prejudices that may or may not be acknowledged, and others are very open to difference. Based on their current work situations and/or career aspirations, some aspects of diversity may be more relevant than others to particular students. If the course is taught online, the students may live in very different communities contributing to different priorities for the knowledge and skill sets they would like to obtain as part of the course. Additionally, discussions on some aspects of diversity can generate emotional responses from students, causing faculty members to feel “uncomfortable with discussions of race and ethnicity” (NASPAA 2000, 32).

As faculty, we are also limited by our own biases, experiences, characteristics, and disciplinary training. Historically, doctoral programs in the various disciplines from which public affairs faculty hail have not had strong diversity com-

ponents, so it should come as no surprise that many faculty feel they are “not capable of teaching the subject” (NASPAA, 2000, 32). The lack of formal training may be compounded by the lack of an established curriculum for teaching diversity. In addition, there is a shortage of teaching and learning resources to assist educators who prepare current and future managers for an increasingly diverse work world (Gallos et al., 1997). This lack of materials for teaching courses on diversity is gradually being addressed; however, the materials that do exist may only serve to further confuse and frustrate faculty who are new to the subject, because there is no consensus on diversity course content. Significant differences exist between the nondiscrimination, valuing difference, and managing diversity approaches (Gardenswartz and Rowe, 1998). Questions about whether the course should focus on traditional dimensions of diversity or address a multitude of individual differences, about whether the course should educate students about the contributions diverse groups have made to society or should get them to engage in social action, and about whether the course should inform students of demographic trends and current laws or about strategies for achieving enhanced “organizational efficiency and effectiveness...from the interaction of individuals who vary in their degree of heterogeneity” (Wise and Tschirhart, 2000, 387) can make the task of teaching a course on diversity seem overwhelming.

It is in this context that I advocate for the use of learning contracts as an instructional strategy for teaching courses on about diversity. Faculty unease about teaching courses on diversity can be overcome, and student interest can be heightened, through the use of this method, which shares the responsibility for learning in a structured, rigorous, and individualized manner. In addition to these practical justifications for using learning contracts, I present two normative arguments. First, learning contracts are appropriate when dealing with adult learners. The students in graduate public affairs are and should be treated as adults. The use of learning contracts recognizes that the students have different learning needs in the context of diversity, that they can take responsibility for locating many of their own materials, and that they have much to contribute. Finally, and arguably most importantly, the learning contract process demonstrates and models a behavior that is particularly appropriate in courses on diversity: treating diversity as an asset that can be utilized to the benefit of the whole class, rather than as a challenging obstacle to be overcome or controlled.

MAKING THE CASE FOR LEARNING CONTRACTS

Learning contracts are an instructional tool designed to encourage self-directed learning and to allow for individualized selection of topics, techniques, and evaluation criteria without sacrificing academic rigor. Within parameters established by the course instructor, students identify their own learning objectives, the strategies and resources they will use to achieve those objectives, the number and type of deliverables or activities they will use to demonstrate their new

knowledge and skills, a timeline for completion, and the criteria the instructor will use to evaluate the quality of the work. Although initially developed for use in independent study programs (Knowles 1980), learning contracts are now used in formal academic courses, particularly within professional degree programs, as a means of placing greater responsibility on students for planning and carrying out their own learning and as a way to accommodate their individual differences (Knowles, 1980; Knowles, 1986). When applied to professional education, learning contracts support the concept that “preparation for a successful career lies both in the content of education received and the process itself” (Day and Glick, 2000, 351).

PRACTICAL JUSTIFICATIONS: LEARNING CONTRACTS TO OVERCOME FACULTY UNEASE AND STUDENT DISINTEREST

Learning contracts reduce the faculty member’s burden as “the expert” in the subject of diversity. The role of the faculty member shifts from being one of conveying information to one of providing an academic environment that treats students as individuals and encourages their learning and active participation (Chism, 1994; Codde, 1996). This does not remove from the faculty the responsibility for educating themselves on issues of diversity prior to teaching the course; public affairs faculty have a responsibility to develop their own cultural competence if they are to effectively prepare current and future public administrators. In the context of a course on diversity, even one that utilizes learning contracts, faculty still need to be able to identify useful self-assessment instruments to aid students in determining their own learning needs related to diversity, select appropriate foundation readings, and evaluate the quality of the learning contract proposals submitted by individual students. Faculty establish the general boundaries of the course and provide some structure and oversight of the learning process, but they are no longer solely responsible for determining the entire course content, developing the assignments and exams, establishing the grading criteria, and directing the learning. As such, the faculty member does not have to decide whether a traditional or broad definition of diversity is appropriate for the course. Rather, the faculty need only ensure that students understand that the definition of diversity is open to debate and then let each student determine for themselves what definition to use. Similarly, the instructor does not have to select among a non-discrimination, valuing diversity, or managing for diversity approach to the course. Instead, the instructor can assign readings that present those alternative perspectives, facilitate some discussion among students, and then allow individual student learning needs and interests to dictate which approach each student emphasizes.

The same characteristics of learning contracts that minimize the faculty member’s burden for developing comprehensive expertise in an entirely new area are the characteristics that enhance the potential for student interest in diversity

courses. A contributing factor to the lack of student interest may be the diversity of students in our programs, which makes it difficult to select course content and methods that are equally relevant and interesting to all. It is not realistic to assume that we can accommodate increasingly diverse needs in a traditional course design. Responding to the needs of diverse students requires attention on process as well as content (Castaneda, 2004; Chism, 1994; Tschirhart and Wise, 2002; Wlodkowski and Ginsberg, 1995). One of the primary benefits of learning contracts is that they make learning more relevant. They allow learning to be tailored to the specific needs and interests of different learners, and learners can use them to develop specific skills or competencies relevant to own field of work (Anderson et al., 1996).

NORMATIVE JUSTIFICATIONS: LEARNING CONTRACTS TO RESPOND TO ADULT LEARNERS AND MODEL DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

In addition to the practical justifications for the use of learning contracts as a means for responding to the reasons identified by faculty for the lack of diversity course offerings, there are also some normative considerations. Learning contracts *should* be used in courses on diversity because they are appropriate for the audience and the subject matter. That is, they are designed to meet the unique and diverse learning needs of adults, and they model behavior that recognizes, values, and manages for diversity.

Given the large number of in-career master's degree students in public administration, there is a need for greater attention to teaching strategies appropriate for adult learners (Frederickson 2004, 87). Adults learners are presumed to be better able and more interested in helping to direct their own learning in a way that acknowledges and values different experiences and facilitates connections between theory and practice (Schroth et al., 1999). Learning contracts were developed as part of the movement toward recognizing that adult learners differ from children in their educational preferences and priorities.

Traditional theories of pedagogy emphasize clear differences in the roles played by the instructor and student, and they place the instructor alone in the position of authority and expertise. As the "art and science of teaching children," pedagogy is premised on the notion that teaching is about transmitting knowledge and skills from teacher to student (White, 2000, 70). Beginning in the 1920s, educators recognized that there were problems with teaching adults in a pedagogical fashion (Codde, 1996). Adults want more than mere knowledge; they want meaningful, relevant, and interesting learning. Malcolm Knowles coined the term "andragogy" to refer to an alternative education philosophy for adult education in which roles and responsibilities are shared by the instructor (now more of a facilitator) and the students (Codde, 1996; Knowles, 1980; Knowles, 1986; White, 2000). The guiding principles of an andragogic approach are that learning is self-directed, based on the learner's unique experiences, geared to the

learner's readiness to learn, organized around life tasks or problems, and connected to intrinsic motivations of the learner (Anderson et al., 1996, Codde, 1996; Knowles, 1980; Knowles, 1986). Learning contracts are a logical part of an andragogical approach.

The adult learner argument for learning contracts can be applied to a multitude of courses in a public affairs program; however, an additional justification is specific to courses on managing diversity: if we accept that government is obligated to model positive diversity management and that public administration programs have a responsibility to prepare future public servants to fulfill this obligation (Wise and Tshirhart, 2000), a logical extension of that argument is that public administration educators should model positive diversity management. One way to do so is in the classroom. In arguing for greater attention to issues of social equity and diversity in the public administration curriculum, Rice (2004) asserts that "traditional methods, processes, and teachings are not compatible with the constructs and realities of the time" (143). More specifically, he argues that failure to include topics such as social equity and diversity in the curriculum will hamper students' abilities to "manage and work in public organizations in a contemporary multicultural society" (143) and that teaching that emphasizes paradigms of traditional bureaucratic culture will impede students' abilities to be responsive to an increasingly diverse citizenry (145). Although Rice's primary focus is on the content of teaching, the same reasoning can be applied to the methodology; that is, an instructional methodology that is teacher-centered, highly controlled, and focused on transmitting facts does not prepare students to engage in more participatory and culturally sensitive strategies as public administrators.

The traditional instructional method assumes, explicitly or implicitly, that "all students should be exposed to identical experiences and cover the same material in the same way" so their learning and performance can be "compared, measured and certified" (Anderson and Boud, 1996, 224). Yet this is in stark contrast to what diversity courses aim to teach. In recognition that instructional strategies are not "value, cultural or gender neutral" (Rich, 2005, 9), we must acknowledge that teaching students to effectively manage for diversity is not simply about selecting the appropriate content, it is also about the instructional methods chosen for the course.

We need to "practice what we teach" (Newman, 1996) and select methods that complement and demonstrate the message we hope to convey, rather than contradict that message. When instructors select the content, establish the delivery modes, and set the evaluation criteria, we advantage some students and disadvantage others (Rich, 2005; Tschirhart and Wise, 2002). If the behaviors we model are that the instructor knows what is best for others and uses his or her position to establish and impose all goals, procedures and standards, the message we convey is that once students graduate and assume positions of power they can be the ones to make those decisions for others. If, on the other hand, we model behaviors

in the classroom that demonstrate that we recognize and value differences and that we can achieve legitimate and appropriate ends through a variety of means, students may be better prepared to apply those same principles to their jobs as public administrators when interacting with diverse co-workers, employees, citizens, and clients.

As part of courses on managing for diversity, we may expect that students will expand their understanding of difference, their appreciation for difference, and their willingness and ability to take steps to allow differences to contribute to an organization. We hope that they will go on to institute organizational, policy, and structural changes in their places of work to respond to diversity among employees and populations served. If we are not willing to model that behavior, is it realistic for us to expect they will do it just because we tell them they should? Using learning contracts to individualize the education process rather than requiring the same assignments of all students demonstrates an openness to diversity and difference and provides a model of how to allow differences to contribute to a collective whole.

Learning contracts are the equivalent of applying a managing for diversity approach to the classroom. They “can foster an awareness of individual and cultural differences” (Anderson et al., 1996, 12), and they allow the instructor to demonstrate how an organization, or in this case a classroom and everyone in it, will be changed by the diversity of its members and can be more effective because of it. Through this process we can demonstrate that different experiences, learning styles, and beliefs all have value and can contribute to the learning process. The method by which messages about diversity are conveyed can have an even a greater influence than the message itself (Brown, 2004). Thus, learning contracts can be a type of “culturally responsive pedagogy” that “(1) respects diversity, (2) engages the motivation of all learners, (3) creates a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment, (4) derives teaching practices from principles that cross disciplines and cultures, and (5) promotes justice and equity in society” (Wlodkowski and Ginsberg, 1995, xii).

Learning contracts facilitate excitement about learning because the learning is relevant and it is not imposed from outside. As such, they promote “deep approaches to learning” (Anderson et al., 1996, 9) in which the student is motivated to continue investigating a topic after the course ends and to continue to engage in strategies designed to improve knowledge and skills even after the assessment is complete. This is particularly appropriate when examining issues of diversity, because “[l]earning about diversity in all its forms is a lifelong undertaking” (Gallos et al., 1997, 105).

THE LEARNING CONTRACT PROCESS

For those who are persuaded that the learning contract may be a valuable instructional tool, I provide some instruction and advice on their use. Books and

articles on learning contracts are widely available, so my emphasis is on the application of learning contracts in courses on managing diversity. As such, I limit the discussion of each step of the learning contract process to a brief description and give more attention to how that step fits within the context of teaching courses on diversity.

The learning contract process is typically presented as consisting of eight steps. Students 1) diagnose their learning needs, 2) specify their learning objectives, 3) identify learning resources and strategies, 4) indicate what evidence of accomplishment they will produce, 5) specify how the evidence will be evaluated, 6) review the contract with others, 7) carry out the tasks, and 8) evaluate their own learning (Knowles, 1986). Some instructions on the use of learning contracts simplify the process and reduce the number of steps (e.g., Anderson et al., 1996, Wloskowski and Ginsberg, 1995); they focus solely on the written contract document rather than on the entire process in which the learning contract is utilized. Streamlined versions generally omit the first step, in which the students diagnose their individual learning needs, and assume that the final two steps (carrying out the project and reflecting on the learning) will occur without explicit mention.

In my experience, an expanded 12-step process is more effective. I add, near the beginning of the process, a step in which I present the rationale for learning contracts in the context of my objectives for the course, and I require the completion and discussion of a common set of readings and assignments on diversity. I also add two steps near the end of the process: one in which students are required to share their experiences with their classmates and one in which I evaluate each student's work prior to their own self-evaluation. My expanded version of the learning contract process is presented in Table 1 and each step is discussed below.

Step 1: Provide a Rationale. Learning contracts need to be carefully introduced and supported, not just used in an instrumental fashion (Anderson and Boud, 1996). Students sometimes react with anxiety, confusion, resistance, and even resentment at being asked to do what they perceive to be the instructor's job. It is important to provide detailed guidelines for the development of learning contracts and to discuss the rationale as well as the process (O'Donnell and Caffarella, 1990). During the first class meeting, I generally devote some time to the topic of adult learning and the rationale for the use of learning contracts in the course, and I list recommended readings on these subjects in the syllabus. I articulate my objectives for the course, identify the knowledge and skills I intend for *all* students to have at the end of the course, and explain how I expect learning contracts to help facilitate those objectives.

I have found it essential to provide very clear guidelines for developing learning contracts and to provide samples of sections of learning contracts for students to see the range of possibilities. I provide students with examples of a multitude of acceptable learning objectives, learning strategies, deliverables, and evaluation criteria; however, I do not provide them with any complete learning contracts. I

Table I. The Learning Contract Process for Courses on Diversity

<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. <i>Provide a Rationale</i> The instructor explains the why learning contracts are being used, how they are relevant in courses on diversity, and the steps of the process.2. <i>Facilitate Self-assessments</i> The instructor facilitates student completion of self-assessment instruments to help students diagnose their learning needs related to diversity.3. <i>Establish a Common Background</i> The instructor assigns some common readings on demographic trends, existing laws and policies, and approaches to diversity to provide students with a base-line of information from which they can work.4. <i>Specify Learning Objectives</i> Students specify their learning objectives based on their learning needs and in the context of the general course objectives.5. <i>Identify Resources and Strategies</i> Students identify the how they intend to acquire the knowledge and skills listed in their learning objectives.6. <i>Activities and Deliverables</i> Students indicate what they will submit as evidence of accomplishment.7. <i>Evaluation Criteria</i> Students develop detailed evaluation criteria and specify a timeline for completion of each task.8. <i>Obtain Approvals</i> Students submit the written contract, which includes explanations of items 4 through 7, and obtain the instructor approval and signature.9. <i>Implementation</i> Students carry out the tasks identified in item 5 and submit the deliverables listed in item 6.10. <i>Sharing and Collective Learning</i> Students share their experiences with others in the class, with an emphasis on how their experiences contribute to the broader understanding of how to work effectively in a diverse environment.11. <i>Instructor Evaluation</i> The instructor evaluates each student's learning according to the individualized evaluation criteria specified in each contract.12. <i>Self-reflection</i> Students reflect on their learning and evaluate their work. Students also reflect on the learning contract process.
--

strongly advise against the distribution of one complete sample learning contract, as it may be interpreted as a template to be followed rather than a sample. I do not want students to simply copy what another student has done, but rather to see a range of diverse and equally acceptable options.

The learning contract process involves considerable give and take between the instructor and student. The process of negotiation between the student and the instructor ensures that academic rigor is maintained, that objectives are reasonable (that is, sufficiently challenging and yet doable), that the project is appropriate for the course, and that adequate resources will be available. The issue of what is negotiable and what is not must be clearly addressed early on. Students unfamiliar with contracts will welcome the boundaries that limit or guide their initial planning (Anderson and Boud, 1996, 223). I let students know that they have many options, including work-related projects for in-service students and team projects for those who are interested, but that the learning contracts will have to contain certain key provisions and that the activities and deliverables will need to meet standards of academic rigor and relevance to the course. As such, work-related projects will require approvals of the contract and evaluation of the deliverables by a practitioner supervisor, but this in addition to, not in place of, my approval and evaluation as the course instructor. I also provide the option of team-based learning contract projects for some activities; however, each student must develop individualized learning objectives, some individualized deliverables, and their own evaluation criteria. I make it clear to students that this is an opportunity for them to tailor their learning, not an opportunity to avoid learning.

Step 2: Facilitate Self-Assessments. The second step in the learning contract process is to have each student diagnose their learning needs to identify the gap between where the student is now and where they would like to be in regard to a particular set of competencies (Knowles 1986, 28). In the absence of some structured self-assessment exercises at the beginning of the course, students may not be able to determine what they need to learn (Anderson et al., 1996). In general, this begins with competency assessment or competency profiling (MacNamara, 1998). This often includes general assessments of written or verbal communication skills, but in a course on managing diversity this should also involve assessing their current status of cultural competence. Self-assessment exercises are useful at this stage to determine students' interests, current levels of knowledge and understanding, and range of experiences related to diversity. A variety of self-assessment tools and exercises are available. I like to have students develop an awareness of their racial identity and that of others in the class using a process described by Kulik (1998) and to assess their beliefs and stereotypes about difference using exercises designed by the Southern Poverty Law Center (www.tolerance.org). In addition to the traditional skill assessments and cultural competence assessments, I also find it useful to gather information on students' professional interests and aspirations. Knowing each student's preferred sector, geographical region, and substan-

tive policy interests allows me to help them identify ways to tailor their projects to best meet their career goals. The instructor's role at this stage is to make the assessment instruments available, to assist in interpretation of the results, and to probe for possible activities that the student might be interested in pursuing and that would address their learning needs.

Step 3: Establish a Common Baseline. Much of the research and reading that students do throughout the semester will be individualized and based on their learning contracts, but I do not want my courses on diversity to dissipate into a series of individualized study projects. To maintain an appropriate balance, the learning contract is a substantial component of the course, but it is not the entire course. Used in this way, the learning contract lies "somewhere along a continuum which has a totally prescribed task at one end and a fully independent, self-directed learning activity at the other" (Anderson et al., 1996, 5).

I make sure that we begin the semester with a common baseline of readings that provide foundation information on demographic trends, existing laws and policies, and alternative approaches to diversity. As part of this process, I have students brainstorm collectively about diversity challenges facing organizations, jurisdictions, and communities of which they are aware. I also have students complete a series of short assignments in which they gather information on the diversity characteristics of local communities and organizations, and they share that information in class. We use this information as the basis for discussing the types of knowledge and skills needed by individuals and by organizations to respond effectively to increasing diversity.

Step 4: Specify Learning Objectives. Once individual learning needs have been identified and students have a baseline understanding of some of the fundamental issues surrounding diversity, each student needs to identify specific learning objectives. I meet individually with students to talk about the intersection of the results of their assessments from step 2 and the ideas generated by the class readings and assignments in step 3. At this stage students should indicate what knowledge or skills they hope to acquire, without worrying about what they will *do* in order to acquire them (Knowles, 1986, 29). I have found that it is sometimes necessary to insist that students challenge themselves to develop knowledge and skills they do not already have, and I evaluate each potential learning objective against that standard and the requirement that it be related to their ability to respect difference and work effectively amidst diversity.

Each student lists learning objectives in the form of the knowledge, skills and/or abilities they intend to obtain as a result of their project. These learning objectives are presented in terms of how acquiring that new knowledge or skill will address a need and how it will help that students improve personally and professionally. I require students to justify their learning contract projects in terms of the intersection of their self-assessments, professional goals, and diversity needs. Table 2 presents sample learning objectives developed by students in my courses

on managing diversity with reference to the corresponding learning needs identified through the assessment process.

Step 5: Identify Resources and Strategies. Students frequently “differ in the resources they prefer to use, the conditions under which they learn best, and their information processing style as well as personal abilities and characteristics” (O’Donnell and Caffarella, 1990, 138). With that in mind, the learning contract process

Table 2: Sample Learning Objectives Linked to Self-Assessment Results

<i>Learning Objectives</i>	<i>Based On—</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To become more familiar with Mexican-American culture and to be able to better distinguish myths from facts so that I can work more effectively in the community and avoid prejudicial behaviors. 2. To improve my ability to communicate effectively and respectfully with individuals for whom English is not their primary language so I will not be so frustrated when I deal with people who do not speak English. 	<p>A preservice student with strong stereotypical views of Mexican Americans.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To learn how law enforcement agencies in other jurisdictions and other public agencies in male-dominated professions have effectively addressed the problem of sexual harassment so I can help my own department improve. 2. To better equip myself to prevent and respond to allegations of sexual harassment in the workplace. 	<p>A police officer with administrative aspirations who was working in a police department with a history of sexual harassment.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To learn about the multiple cultures represented in [the community] and the trends in race, ethnicity, and national origin so I can help local agencies and officials plan for current and future needs. 2. To develop skills in communicating across cultural and language differences so I can work effectively as the executive director of [organization]. 	<p>A mid-career student who just moved to the area to take a position as director of a local nonprofit and who was quickly confronted with how little she knew about the cultural history and values of the people the organization served.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To learn how XYZ country and the United States differ in terms of in- and out-migration patterns so I better understand both countries. 2. To determine what each country can learn from the experiences of the other. 	<p>A preservice international student planning to return to his home country with little knowledge of aspects of diversity in the United States.</p>

allows the student to identify how they will acquire knowledge and skills rather than the instructor assigning tasks to achieve learning objectives. Each student must specify what material and human resources they plan to use, and what techniques and tools they will apply to get the most out of them (Knowles, 1986). The student identifies the process or processes that will be used to acquire the knowledge and skills identified in the learning objectives. This might include conducting library research or web searches, readings books and articles, interviewing public officials or residents of a community, gathering data through a survey, attending workshops or seminars, or engaging in community service. Table 3 presents some sample strategies and resources developed by students in my courses on managing diversity.

Step 6: Activities and Deliverables. The sixth component of the learning contract process is to specify what evidence of accomplishment will be provided to demonstrate that the intended learning has occurred. These are essentially alterna-

Table 3. Sample Strategies and Resources

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct face-to-face interviews with heads of all state cabinet-level agencies regarding perceptions of diversity and agency priorities.• Read state agency strategic plans to assess priority of diversity.• Conduct a diversity audit of my own agency.• Conduct a library and Web search of literature on diversity initiatives in public agencies.• Review federal and state laws and court cases pertaining to nondiscrimination in hiring to determine what is and is not allowed in the recruitment, screening, and selection processes.• Conduct a review of the literature on best diversity practices in recruitment and hiring.• Review hard copy and online job announcement and application materials for public and private organizations.• Review Web sites of organizations identified by various “minority” magazines as the best employers for various groups (gays, single parents, blacks, Hispanics)• Volunteer five hours per week of service at community center in a minority neighborhood.• Learn how to take oral histories by reading about the method and talking with faculty in the history department who engage in this type of research.• Take oral histories from at least five first-generation immigrants in the community who have lived here at least 20 years.

tives to tests (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995) and they can take a multitude of forms. A student may organize a workshop, make a presentation, prepare a report, analyze data, develop an annotated bibliography, draft a policy, design a brochure, create a museum display, design and implement a survey, or complete a cost-benefit analysis (Knowles, 1986, Wlodkowski and Ginsberg, 1995). I generally allow a fall-back option of producing a traditional research paper for the learning contract deliverables, but this must be justified within the context of their individual professional goals, their self-assessments, and statements about how this paper will address the diversity challenges identified by the class in step 3. Table 4 presents some sample deliverables from learning contracts developed by students in my courses on managing diversity.

Step 7: Evaluation Criteria. In my experience, the seventh step is one of the hardest parts of the learning contract process for students. Here they are required

Table 4. Sample Activities and Deliverables

- Compile oral histories into a format that can be used in subsequent offerings of this class as well as other courses that present myths and stereotypes versus facts and real stories of people in the community.
- Write a report for the board of directors of a local nonprofit on the challenges and priorities of new minority groups in the community.
- Produce a video segment in three languages targeted to new residents of the community for airing on the public access station that introduces officials, agencies, services, and segments of the community. Prepare an accompanying pamphlet available in three additional languages.
- Compile and develop all materials needed to conduct a diversity training session at work. Schedule and conduct the training session with existing employees. Gather evaluations from participants to determine revisions that should be made before offering the workshop to other departments in the county.
- Provide documentation from community center director on number of volunteer hours worked.
- Conduct a workshop on cross-cultural communication for counselors and teachers in the high school where I teach.
- Prepare a report for the director of human resources, the city manager, and the city council on the costs and benefits of an expanded employee benefit package that would recognize domestic partners. Make a presentation to the HR director and other officials based on the findings presented in the report.
- Develop a Web site for a small nonprofit that demonstrates the diversity of their staff and their commitment to diversity in their service provision, and arrange to have the site linked to related organizations.

to specify how the evidence will be validated and evaluated. That is, they must specify the grading criteria that will be applied by the instructor to assess the quality of the work they submit. The more detailed the criteria the better, as it leaves less room for subjectivity and misunderstandings. Because we are not relying on traditional tests to assess knowledge and skills, the instructor should review the assessment criteria to ensure that they are valid, reliable, and will allow evaluation of that particular student's work (Boak, 1998). This is often the part of the learning contract where students demonstrate the most resistance; many want simply to defer to the instructor's discretion. It is important to insist that they establish evaluation criteria so there is no doubt about what constitutes 'A,' 'B,' 'C,' or 'F' quality work.

Although the ultimate goal for the course is to have students enhance their cultural competence, this is a difficult concept to evaluate for a grade. As a result, most of the grading is based on quantitative assessments of traditional skills, such as writing or presentations. I encourage students to include diversity-specific evaluation criteria wherever possible. I have not provided samples of the evaluation criteria in a separate table because the descriptions tend to be lengthy; instead, I provide some general guidelines based on my experience.

I have learned not to allow students to state simply "the report is worth 70% of the project grade, and the presentation is worth 30%," or even that "the report is to be graded with equal weight placed on content and written clarity" or "the presentation should be graded based on content, appropriate length, professional attire and speech, and ability to respond to questions." I insist on descriptive details about the standards to be applied when grading. If the grade will be based, in any part, on hours worked, the student needs to specify the minimum and target number of hours per week s/he will volunteer, how s/he will document those hours, and how hours worked translate into grades. For written documents, students must indicate, for example, how many grammatical, spelling, punctuation or typographical errors are allowed for a grade of 'A' (zero), 'B' (no more than three in the entire report), 'C' (between three and 10) or 'F' (an average of one per page). Similar grading criteria can be applied to the presence of language in a document that reflects a lack of sensitivity to different groups. If the student intends to make a presentation or conduct a workshop, I have them submit the evaluation (survey) instrument that will be used at the end of the presentation or workshop to get participant/attendee feedback. I will insist that some of the survey questions specifically address issues of diversity and the respondents' assessment of how well the student addressed those issues. The student must also specify how participant ratings translate into grades.

For each task the student identifies as part of the learning process, a deadline for completion must be listed. I establish a deadline for submission and approval of the learning contract document (which includes steps 4 through 8), but the student determines deadlines for completing the tasks. In setting the deadline for

the contract, I have found it necessary to allocate time for negotiation. I generally allow several weeks for students for students to develop the contract and leave the remainder of the semester for completion of the tasks.

Students must provide a timeline for completion of each of their tasks and the submission of each deliverable. I require students to set target dates throughout the semester for the completion of tasks within their overall project. I do not allow the entire project to rest on a single end-of-the-semester deadline. The dates should be flexible, but not ignored completely; the student should stipulate in the learning contract which deadlines are firm and which are more flexible. There needs to be some flexibility in meeting deadlines when circumstances beyond a student's control contribute to delays, but all changes must be approved.

Step 8: Obtain Approvals. A learning contract is not developed in isolation. Drafts of the document should be reviewed by classmates and the instructor and, in the case of work-based projects, by practitioners. Classmates, practitioners, and the instructor can provide feedback and offer suggestions. Constructive feedback throughout the process is essential. Constructive feedback is informational rather than controlling, based on agreed-upon standards, specific and constructive, prompt and frequent (Wlodkowski and Ginsberg, 1995). The role of the instructor is to negotiate, guide, and challenge, but not impose.

The student and the instructor (and the third party, if applicable) should sign and date the contract indicating agreement to its provisions. In principle and in practice, the contract must be open to renegotiation. In response to changing levels of student awareness, time constraints imposed by third parties, and other considerations, various provisions of the learning contract may have to change. Everything in the contract, including the learning objectives, is negotiable, but I require that all changes to the contract be made in writing. I enforce this by reminding students that the approved learning contract provides me with the basis for evaluating their work and assigning a grade. Failure to update their contract may result in a lower grade if the new deliverables and deadlines do not correspond to the agreed-upon contract provisions.

Step 9: Implementation. Preparation of the learning contract is a worthwhile exercise; however, it is not the goal in and of itself. The steps taken to develop the learning contract are simply the precursor to carrying out the contract. Thus, the ninth step in the process is to implement the contract. Students must utilize the resources and strategies they identified, complete their tasks, and submit the promised deliverables for evaluation. This process generally extends over the entire semester, although I insist on a final deadline for submission of deliverables at least two weeks prior to the end of the semester to allow adequate time for the remaining three steps.

Step 10: Sharing and Collective Learning. Throughout the process, I look for opportunities for students to share their ideas and experiences with each other during class meetings. During class sessions, we discuss issues related to each student's

project. I ask students to identify readings they have located that they think would be of interest to their classmates, and we discuss those on designated dates. I regularly have students report on their progress to put pressure on them to make progress every week. I let students know that what they share with their classmates may be related to what they are learning, how they are feeling, or with what they are struggling. In this way, the learning contract projects are an integral part of the course and contribute to our collective learning; they are not simply a series of discrete individual activities. Near the end of the semester, we look for common themes and notable differences among the students' collective experiences, and we discuss how the individual projects can, when considered as a whole, contribute to our understanding of and ability to work effectively with diversity.

Step 11: Instructor Evaluation. When the learning contract activities and projects are completed, it is time for the instructor to evaluate each student's learning according to the criteria specified in the learning contract. When evaluating the student's work, it is essential that you refer back to the contract as the basis for the grading criteria. Before examining any student's deliverables, I re-read the learning contract to ensure that I will focus on the agreed-upon criteria.

Step 12: Student Reflection. Because one of the goals of adult learning strategies, in general, and learning contracts, in particular, is for the individual to develop an appreciation for lifelong and self-directed learning, the process is not complete until the student reflects on and evaluates for themselves the learning that has occurred. This is particularly important in a course on diversity in which I, as the instructor, cannot quantify and grade some of the more internal aspects of their cultural competency development.

I ask students to look back at the results of their initial self-assessments and to reflect on the extent to which their views have changed and skills have improved based on new knowledge and experience. I have experimented with placing this step of the process prior to my evaluation so their assessment is not biased by my judgment of the quality of their work, and I think that this is a legitimate modification to the process. I have found, however, that concluding with self-reflection highlights the importance of their own assessments of their work and better reflects the ideal of continuous learning. My evaluation will be the basis for their grades in the course, but I hope that their own assessments will have a more permanent impact.

Student feedback on the use of learning contracts in my courses on diversity has been notable in two respects. First, I have observed a general pattern of resistance early in the process, followed by an appreciation for the process and the value of diversity upon reflection. The most dramatic transformations occur in the students who are most hostile to the idea when it is first introduced. Even though it no longer surprises me, I continue to feel a sense of satisfaction when I hear students say in class or I read in their course evaluations such things as "I thought this was going to be a waste of time and a lot touchy-feely stuff, but I

really learned a lot and I am glad I had to do it” and “I know I complained about having to do so many revisions [of my contract], but it was really a valuable experience to think about what I could do to help myself and my agency” and “thanks for pushing me to recognize how my views of others could hurt me as well as them.” Student feedback has not been universally supportive of learning contracts. Some have complained that the process involves more work that they would ordinarily be required to perform, and that they miss the structure and logical sequence of learning associated with a typical seminar.

The second aspect of feedback stems not from the course itself, but from my later interaction with students who have used learning contracts in the course. When I have had these students in subsequent classes, many have been vocal proponents of the process to students who are hesitant. They are the most effective advocates for the method as they can speak from experience and relate to the anxieties of students who have not yet experienced the process. I have been most impressed when these students have incorporated appreciation for diversity into their arguments in favor of learning contracts, with statements such as “if we each do things based on our own strengths and then share information and perspectives, we can get even more out of the class.”

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

I have had the best success when I use learning contracts for a significant portion of the course grade, but not the basis for the entire course grade. Given the mix of pre-service and in-service students found in most MPA programs, a balanced or integrated approach, rather than a strictly pedagogical or andragogical paradigm, is most appropriate for MPA programs (White, 2000). When learning contracts are used for a substantial portion of the course, but not as the sole instructional methodology, they provide a means to achieve that balance. In order to be taken seriously and given sufficient time and attention, the learning contract projects need to be more than just one of many assignments. On the other hand, I do not want the course to become a series of independent study projects without any integration of ideas and interaction among the students. Therefore, discussion of readings, contributions to class discussions, and sharing of experiences regarding the learning contract projects is still essential.

I typically make the contract document itself (comprising steps 4 through 8) worth 15 percent of the grade based on criteria I establish and make it due on a date that I establish. This encourages students to take the process seriously, invest time at the beginning of the semester, and prepare a polished and thoughtful learning contract. The activities and deliverables are worth 60 percent of the course grade and are evaluated based on the criteria identified in the learning contract. The remaining 25 percent of the course grade is based on traditional measures such as exams, class participation, and short assignments.

Learning contracts are not a panacea and they are not without limitations. Teachers and students tend to be uncomfortable with them at first. Instructors must be willing to surrender some control over content and method, and students who are used to having standards imposed may be anxious about how to assume responsibilities for their own learning (Anderson et al., 1996; O'Donnell and Caffarella, 1990). Academic standards may suffer if assessment standards are left entirely to the student, without oversight and input from the instructor (Anderson et al., 1996). The development and use of learning contracts is a time-consuming process of negotiating, facilitating, and supervising learning, and is not suitable for situations in which the learner is completely unfamiliar with the topic and unable to select resources and learning strategies.

The instructor must set boundaries on the types of acceptable learning contract projects and activities. I have found it challenging to remain open to new ideas and approaches while insisting that projects not stray too far from the course objectives or my own standards of academic rigor. Even after using learning contracts repeatedly, I still have to consciously remind myself to treat the negotiation process and all class discussions as an opportunity to appreciate and learn from diversity.

CONCLUSION

Learning contracts provide a viable solution to the struggle of accommodating diverse student needs and interests, motivating students with varying levels of experience and different values, and maintaining academic rigor. The learning contract directly involves students in every step of their own learning and facilitates the teaching of topics, such as managing diversity, that are recognized as important but for which the faculty may feel inadequately prepared to provide all instruction. Using learning contracts does not absolve faculty from the duty to develop a sufficient knowledge base on diversity, but the method reduces the pressure on faculty to become diversity experts. The use of this instructional strategy, while effective for a variety of adult education settings and a full range of courses in public affairs programs, is particularly well suited to courses on managing diversity because it models the behaviors and skills for the constructive utilization of diversity that students will find useful in their professional careers.

REFERENCES

- Applebaum, Peter. 2002. *Multicultural and Diversity Education: A Reference Handbook*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO.
- Anderson, Geoff, and David Boud. 1996. "Learning Contracts and Learning Flexibility." *Innovations in Education and Training International*, 33(4):221-227.
- Anderson, Geoff, David Boud, and Jane Sampson. 1996. *Learning Contracts*. London: Kogan Page Limited.
- Boak, George. 1998. *A Complete Guide to Learning Contracts*. Great Britain: Gower Publishing Limited.

Teaching Courses on Managing Diversity: Using Learning Contracts

- Brown, Elinor L. 2004. "What Precipitates Change in Cultural Diversity Awareness During a Multicultural Course: The Message or the Method?" *Journal of Teaching Education*, 55(4):325-340.
- Castaneda, Carmelita R. 2004. *Teaching and Learning in Diverse Classrooms: Faculty Reflections on Their Experiences and Pedagogical Practices of Teaching Diverse Populations*. New York: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Chism, Nancy. 1994. "Taking Student Diversity into Account." In Wilbur J. McKeachie, ed., *Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research and Theory for College and University Teachers*, 9th ed. Lexington, Mass: D.C. Heath, 223-237.
- Codde, Joseph R. 1996. "Using Learning Contracts in the College Classroom." Available at www.msu.edu/user/coddejos/contract.htm. Accessed December 1, 2004.
- Day, Nancy E., and Betty J. Glick. 2000. "Teaching Diversity: A Study of Organizational Needs and Diversity Curriculum in Higher Education." *Journal of Management Education*, 24(3):338-352.
- Frederickson, H. George. 2004. "The Journal of Public Affairs Education at Age Ten: History, Content, and Prospects." *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 10(2):83-89.
- Gallos, Joan V., V. Jean Ramsey, and Associates. 1997. *Teaching Diversity: Listening to the Soul, Speaking from the Heart*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Gardenswartz, Lee, and Anita Rowe. 1998. *Managing Diversity: A Complete Desk Reference and Planning Guide*, 2nd ed. NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Knowles, Malcolm S. 1980. *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy*. Chicago, IL: Association Press Follett Publishing.
- Knowles, Malcolm S. 1986. *Using Learning Contracts: Practical Approaches to Individualizing and Structuring Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Kulik, Carol T. 1998. "Managing Diversity in Organizations: An Exercise Based on Racial Awareness Training." *Journal of Management Education*, 22(2):193-204.
- MacNamara, Doug. 1998. "Learning Contracts, Competency Profiles: The New Wave in Executive Development." *Canadian HR Reporter*, November 16:G8, G12.
- NASPAA. 2000. *NASPAA Diversity Report*. Washington, D.C.: National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration.
- NASPAA. 2004. "Enrollment and Degrees Awarded Data: Master's Degrees: 2002-2003. National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration." Available at www.naspaa.org/principals/almanac/almanac.asp. Accessed June 20, 2005.
- Newman, Meredith A. 1996. "Practicing What We Teach: Beyond the Lecture in a Public Administration Class." *Journal of Public Administration Education*, 2(1):16-29.
- O'Donnell, Judith M., and Rosemary S. Caffarella. 1990. "Learning Contracts." In Michael W. Galbraith, ed., *Adult Learning Methods: A Guide for Effective Instruction*. Malabar: Krieger Publishing Company.
- Pitts, David W., and Lois R. Wise. 2004. "Diversity in Professional Schools: A Case Study of Public Affairs and Law." *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 10(2):125-142.
- Rice, Mitchell F. 2004. "Organizational Culture, Social Equity, and Diversity: Teaching Public Administration Education in the Postmodern Era." *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 10(2):143-154.
- Rich, Wilbur C. 2005. "Public Administration Teaching and Diversity: The Challenge of Educating Students That Don't Look or Think Like You." Paper presented at the Annual Teaching Public Administration Conference, Fort Walton Beach, FL, February.
- Schroth, Gwen, Anita M. Pankake, and Gordon Gate. "A Comparison of Pedagogical Approaches to Teaching Graduate Students in Educational Administration." *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 26(4):238-249.
- Siegel, David J. 2003. *The Call for Diversity: Pressure, Expectation, and Organizational Response in the Postsecondary Setting*. New York: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Tschirhart, Mary, and Lois R. Wise. 2002. "Responding to a Diverse Class: Insights from Seeing a Course as an Organization." *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 8(3):165-177.
- Thomas, R. Roosevelt, Jr. 1990. *Beyond Race and Gender: Unleashing the Power of Your Total Work Force by Managing Diversity*. New York: American Management Association.
- White, Richard D. 2000. "On Pedagogy and Andragogy: Balancing the Learning Needs of Pre-Service and In-Service MPA Students." *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 6(2):69-78.

- White, Susan. 2004. "Multicultural MPA Curriculum: Are We Preparing Culturally Competent Public Administrators?" *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 10(2):111-123.
- Wise, Lois R., and Mary Tschirhart. 2000. "Examining Empirical Evidence on Diversity Effects: How Useful Is Diversity Research for Public-Sector Managers?" *Public Administration Review*, 60(5):386-394.
- Wlodkowski, Raymond J., and Margery B. Ginsberg. 1995. *Diversity and Motivation: Culturally Responsive Teaching*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- U.S. Census Bureau. 2000. *Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau.
- U.S. Census Bureau. 2004. *Projected Population of the United States, by Race and Hispanic Origin: 2000 to 2050*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau.
- U.S. Department of Labor. 2003. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Available at www.bls.gov. Accessed June 9, 2005.

Nadia Rubaii-Barrett is an associate professor of public administration at Binghamton University. Her research and teaching interests focus on issues of diversity as they relate to policy, administration, and pedagogy.