

Leadership Competencies for Future Public Administrators: Bridging Higher Education and Government Practices

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Effective leadership is a critical requirement for future public administrators as governments continue to face complex social, economic, and technological challenges. Higher education institutions play a vital role in preparing students with the competencies needed to lead public organizations effectively. According to Haupt et al. (2017), public administration graduates must possess leadership, communication, strategic thinking, and problem-solving skills that align with the expectations of government employers. This highlights the importance of designing academic programs that develop both theoretical knowledge and practical leadership abilities.

Curriculum relevance is essential in ensuring that public administration graduates are equipped for the realities of government service. Jalagat and Aquino (2023) emphasize that many public administration programs must continuously update their curricula to address the changing needs of public institutions. Strengthening partnerships between universities and government agencies through internships, field experiences, and stakeholder consultations allows students to gain practical exposure while ensuring that academic instruction reflects current workplace demands. Such collaboration helps bridge the gap between classroom learning and professional practice.

The rapid digital transformation of public services has also expanded the competencies required of future public administrators. McQuiston and Manoharan (2017) argue that public administration education should integrate digital governance, information technology, and e-government concepts into the curriculum. At the same time, Seemiller (2016) emphasizes that leadership development should extend beyond technical knowledge by fostering ethical decision-making, collaboration, adaptability, and emotional intelligence. These competencies enable graduates to lead effectively in increasingly technology-driven and citizen-centered government environments.

Assessing students' readiness for public service is equally important in ensuring workforce preparedness. Gauran (2026) found that competency assessments can identify strengths and areas needing improvement, providing a basis for curriculum enhancement. Competency-based education, combined with experiential learning opportunities, helps students develop confidence and professional skills before entering government service. Continuous curriculum evaluation ensures that graduates remain responsive to evolving public sector expectations and organizational needs.

In conclusion, preparing future public administrators requires strong collaboration between higher education institutions and government organizations. Leadership competencies, relevant curricula, digital governance skills, ethical values, and practical experience all contribute to developing competent public servants. By aligning educational programs with workforce requirements, universities can produce

graduates who are capable of leading innovation, promoting good governance, and delivering responsive public services in an increasingly complex and dynamic society.

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