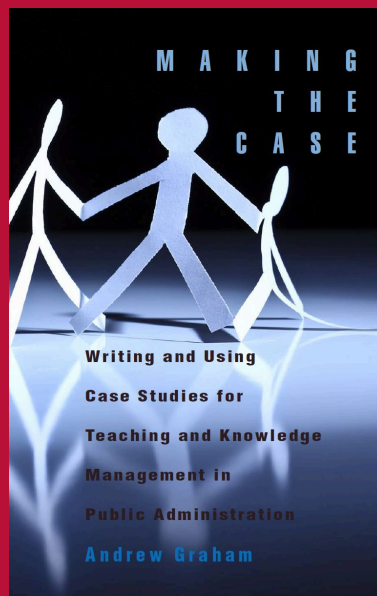




Queen's  
UNIVERSITY

# Case Studies: Perspectives on Writing and Teaching

Presentation to the African Management  
Development Institutes Network, October 2021



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By the end of this presentation, you will have...



- An overview of the use of case studies in Canadian public administration pedagogy
- An outline of the Case Study Program of the Institute of Public Administration of Canada
- Learned of two major applications of the case method to learning for government officials
- Seen how the National Case Competition advances the use of cases in public administration schools
- Developed a perspective on the challenges faced in Canada for the development and use of cases.

# The Public Policy & Administration Education Challenges



“Students must learn how to thrive on chaos, to make rapid decisions based on incomplete and biased information, to resolve novel situations as apprehensive parties clamour to secure their interests, and to collaborate with a team of fellow bureaucrats as they identify, share, and master a situation that is filtered through fog of quasi-accurate information.”

Peters Bruce. , Governance without government? Rethinking public administration.

Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 8(2), 223-43.

# The Use of Case Studies in Public Administration Education



- Applies to both university-based degree and professional training and to professional development training within government
- Extensive use of case studies in many Schools
- Not a matter of policy but of practice – Harvard model not adopted
- Case application is course and content specific
- Cases cover the range of design options from short problem-centered cases to extensive and complex cases engaging students in team-work and simulations
- Academics seldom publish their cases

# The IPAC Case Study Program



- Over forty years old
- Inventory of approximately 200 cases
- Principal clients have been individual academics
- Expanded to practitioners
- Presently in stasis



[https://www.ipac.ca/iPAC\\_EN/Programs\\_Services/Research/Case\\_Study\\_Program/iPAC\\_EN/Programs/Case\\_Study\\_Program.aspx?hkey=6b00086d-9a84-48bb-8404-590f01286855](https://www.ipac.ca/iPAC_EN/Programs_Services/Research/Case_Study_Program/iPAC_EN/Programs/Case_Study_Program.aspx?hkey=6b00086d-9a84-48bb-8404-590f01286855)

# The Ontario Public Service Case Series



- IPAC partnering with the Ontario Government
- Series of in-depth researched cases on major policy challenges
- Unique format of long case, short case, teaching notes and plan
- Used extensively within the Ontario Government for staff training, most notably aimed at policy communicates and operational managers
- Created unique learning integration as key players in the cases were available for class discussion
- Total of 10 cases created, 8 published in IPAC inventory
- Project ceased with loss of funding
- Good example of co-build and use by a government

# The Canada School of the Public Service: One Application



- The School has a history with case development but is not systematically active at this point
- Course-based cases are used extensively
- Example: “Geopolitics and National Security Premium Course for Executives.”
- Three types of cases developed for this top-level course:
  - Topic Specific: Class discussion with relevant experts
  - Complex Case: focus on group work and exploring solutions
  - Simulation: major exercise involving fictional case, actual performance in simulation mode and feedback
- Well integrated and successful, but course specific

# The National Public Administration Case Competition



- Joint exercise of IPAC and the Canada Association of Programs in Public Administration (CAPPA)
- Annual event
- Involving 14 Schools create teams
- Complex case developed for each team to present to a panel of judges
- 10 years since inception
- Very successful way to foster case learning and raise its profile



## Canadian Experience, Challenges and Opportunities



- Experiential learning – of which case method is a key tool
  - is growing in all Schools
- Sustaining support for systematic case writing is tough
  - IPAC Case Study Program is not active
  - Academics remain reluctant to share their cases
- Getting good case material is easy, but working with governments is more difficult – reluctant to expose errors
- Cases have been successful for both academic programs and professional training within governments
- COVID-driven online learning has increased the use of cases as a learning tool
- Many academics remain challenged in how to teach cases