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New APSA Pracademic Program Announced Supported by the Beryl Radin Fund

Based on a generous future bequest by the 2013 APSA Gaus Lecturer Beryl A. Radin, APSA announced the creation of the APSA Pracademic Program supported by the Beryl Radin Fund. Professor Radin described herself as a “pracademic” because she has moved back and forth between the world of the practitioner and that of the academic. Beryl A. Radin’s government service included an assignment as a special advisor to the assistant secretary for management and budget of the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as well as other experiences in the Office of Management and Budget and HHS. She is a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration, editor of the book series “Public Management and Change” at Georgetown University Press, past president of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, former head of the APSA public administration section, and has held faculty positions at the University of Southern California, the University of Albany, and American and Georgetown universities. As the title suggests, this will be a fellowship aimed at providing APSA member academics in the fields of public policy and public administration with practical, hands-on experience that the recipients can take back to their institutions and classrooms to help build bridges between the worlds of academe and applied politics.



Background

The public administration/public management/public policy fields began with a strong commitment to link theory and practice. Many of the pioneers in all of these fields came to the academic world with personal experience in policy development and management. Their writings and relationships to the field reflected that knowledge. These experiences provided them with a perspective that gave them the ability to use their personal experiences not only to look outside the walls of academe, but also to bring the insights gained by practice to the academic setting. Over the past several decades, limited opportunities exist for faculty members in these fields to move between the academy and the world of practitioners. This program is designed to create opportunities for faculty members to recreate the historical experience of joining theory and practice. The participants would be encouraged to find placements that provide them with direct knowledge of decision making and discouraged from working in a primarily research environment.

Who is eligible for the program?

The program has been established for faculty members teaching public administration, public management, public policy, and related fields. It is designed to be eclectic in terms of background, academic program home, and research agenda of prospective grantees. To start, the program will be seen as an effort aligned with the APSA Congressional Fellowship Program to provide a cohort with whom the recipient can share experiences and also benefit from the fellowship’s enrichment offerings. Initially, the APSA Pracademic Program will be focused on placements in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. It is hoped that a pilot program can be initiated in the near future.

Placements

Examples of placements for the six to twelve-month program could include:

- Executive Branch offices through the Intergovernmental Personnel Act.
- nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).
- Washington, DC think tanks.
- District of Columbia gubernatorial or state legislative offices, legislative-oriented policy positions in the Congress.
- congressional support arms (e.g., Congressional Budget Office, Government Accountability Office, Congressional Research Service).

Participants are expected to spend the time in the public administration and related fields that would allow them to gain an insider perspective in an organization working directly with practitioners in the field. This would include both public institutions and nonprofit organizations that work in the policy and public management arenas.

Inclusion of discussions of a prearranged placement will be an important ingredient in a successful application and the APSA Congressional Fellowship staff would be prepared to collaborate on ideas.

What is the source of the funding for the program?

Eventually the funding for the program will come from the estate of Beryl Radin. Other tax-exempt contributions would be welcomed. A specific amount of funding will eventually be designated for the effort, and the yearly funding would spend down

from the principal amount. The program will last as long as the funds, supplemented by other contributions, last.

Who would administer the program?

The APSA's Centennial Center for Political Science and Public Affairs will administer the program along with consultation with the APSA Congressional Fellowship Program and appropriate APSA sections including public administration, public policy, and federalism. It is hoped that sufficient small grants can be secured to initiate an initial pilot program. APSA would be responsible for advertising the availability of the program and administrative details would be developed by the Centennial Center. As with the Congressional Fellowship Program, an overhead rate (estimated to be 2%) would be attached to the grants. The funds would be overseen by APSA's Trust and Development Committee and managed to maximize the principal used to fund the program.

How would the recipient be chosen?

APSA would designate a three-person selection committee yearly for the program. The committee would include a

practitioner from the world of public policy/public administration, a senior APSA faculty member, and a member of the Centennial Center's Advisory Board.

What should a candidate's application contain?

Applicants would be expected to submit a resume; two recommendations; a two to-three page statement indicating how the proposed experience is expected to contribute to, and enhance, the applicant's subsequent teaching and research and practice. This would include evidence of past research and expected outcomes such as revised syllabi, publications, and service. It is expected that applicants would show clear indication of initial conversations with a host organization where the applicant would be stationed during the program. A successful applicant would be expected to submit a report on the outcome of their experience at the conclusion of the program, and asked to provide a brief follow-up report after a year or two.

For more information or to leave a comment or contribute to this program please visit www.apsanet.org/radinpracacademic-fund. Or contact Jeff Biggs at 202-483-2512. ■