

Assessment of the Centex Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration

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Abstract

This study is an assessment of the Central Texas Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration. It examines the effectiveness of current programs and services offered by the Chapter and the need for programs and services in the future. The study uses an examination of literature on national professional associations, such as the American Library Association, to identify the primary functions for a local professional association, like the Centex Chapter. The literature reveals three primary functions associated with a local professional association, these are: Networking Opportunities, Access to Information, and Skill **Development**. The programs and services are rated based upon their effectiveness in providing these functions. The findings from the survey identify the memberships' attitudes and perception of the current and future programs and services of the Centex Chapter. The response rate of the membership survey was 35%. The results show that the Chapter's programs and services are considered effective in providing Networking Opportunities and ineffective at providing for Skill Development. Providing Access to Information has a neutral rating from the membership, with a few programs rated as effective and a few as ineffective. The recommendations

for future activities are also identified, including new programs, services, and alternate locations for events.

Chapter 1

Introduction and Statement of the Research Purpose

Introduction

In the summer of 1998, the Central Texas Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration decided to have an evaluation conducted. The chapter leadership believed that in order for the Centex Chapter to continue and improve its service to the membership and the communities of Central Texas an evaluation had to be conducted. The leadership wanted the evaluation to examine the effectiveness of the organization and its programs and services. The desire was to identify the areas where the organization was performing well and the areas that needed improvement.

Research Questions

This study is a reflection of the need to serve the current membership of a professional association, as requested by the Centex Chapter's board of officers. The questions asked by the Chapter leadership provide the basis for the study.

- **Who are we serving?** Develop a profile of current members of the Centex Chapter.
- **How well are we doing?** Evaluate the effectiveness of current programs and services offered by the Centex Chapter.
- **Where do we go from here?** Assess the Centex Chapter membership's future need for programs and services.

Chapter Summaries

This applied research project is divided into seven chapters, a bibliography, and related appendices. Chapter One, introduces the subject matter, contains the research purpose, and the summary of chapters. Chapter Two is a literature review on the purpose of and professionalism in public administration. Chapter Three is a review of the literature on professional associations, what they are, their purpose, functions, responsibilities, and member expectations. The research setting, described in Chapter Four, including a description of the American Society for Public Administration, addresses the history, purpose, and programs of the Centex Chapter. Chapter Five contains an explanation of the research methodology, the survey instrument, an assessment of surveys as a method for

performing this research, and a description of the research population. The analysis and explanation of the results is contained in Chapter Six. Chapter Seven contains recommendations, gathered through the survey instrument, and the conclusion of the research. The Appendices contain the survey instrument, the strategic plan of the American Society for Public Administration, the constitution of the Centex Chapter, and related tables.

Chapter 2

Literature Review: Public Administration

Introduction

Today's public servant suffers from a serious image problem, which is set in the minds of most citizens of the United States. People see the government and its bureaucracy as an inept and inefficient monster that must be feared. Though there are numerous examples of good and effective government, it is much easier for people to identify those things that go wrong in government (Cohen, 1995, p. 14-15).

The attitude of the public can be understood if a deeper examination of the current situation is made. Steven Cohen, in his book The New Effective Public Manager, identifies three factors that contribute to the public's image of government and bureaucracies. One cause is that it is much easier to make officials look bad than to illustrate the complexities of their position. Second is the bureaucratic practice of avoiding decision-making. The third factor is the importance placed on formality and written communication by the bureaucracy (1995, p. 17).

These factors combined make the general public uneasy about dealing with the government and bureaucracies.

The purpose of this chapter, which is derived from the factors identified by Cohen, is threefold. First, the question: What is public administration, is examined. Second, there is a discussion on the function and purpose of public administration. Third, professionalism in public administration is addressed.

Defining Public Administration

There is much controversy surrounding any attempt to define the term public administration. There is not one specific, all encompassing definition of public administration.

The immediate effect of all one-sentence or one-paragraph definitions of public administration is mental paralysis rather than enlightenment and stimulation. This is because a serious definition of the term—as against an epigrammatical definition, however witty—inevitably contains several abstract words or phrases (Waldo, 1955/1978, p. 171).

There are two major arguments, which are still being debated, about public administration that contribute to the overriding sense of confusion. One is the indeterminate nature of the subject matter of public administration at the core of the discipline. The other is the confusion

generated by the argument over whether public administration is an art, a science, both, or something else.

The Indeterminate Nature of Public Administration

Public administration is a branch of the study of political science. From this core, evolves the central concepts of the discipline, which are:

communal activities subject to political direction carried out by government institutions according to concepts of "publicness" through unique administrative processes (Caiden, 1971, p.12).

While on the perimeter, public administration merges with and borrows from other fields of study. The areas covered by public administration, at times, include management, finance, economics, philosophy, or sociology. This contrast between the central concepts and the outlying themes serves to create some of the confusion associated with public administration.

Although the interdisciplinary nature of public administration is cause for confusion, it also serves to create solutions. Because there is not a sharp boundary between public administration and other fields, a natural avenue of communication is created between the disciplines. This avenue allows for an interchange of problems, ideas,

and solutions, which might not otherwise be possible, for the benefit of everyone involved. The absence of a sharp boundary also allows an approach to the subject matter from many different directions.

Art or Science?

When Woodrow Wilson, in 1887, first wrote about public administration, he was mainly interested in the science of administration. This science of administration was

to straighten the paths of government, make its business less unbusinesslike, to strengthen and purify its organization, and to crown its dutifulness (Wilson, 1887/1978, p.5).

Wilson believed that administration should be separated from the realm of politics and should not be manipulated by politics. This concept of dichotomy between politics and administration formed the basis from which the study of public administration began. Wilson saw the science of administration a good and necessary step in the development of the American democracy.

Though public administration was originally referred to as a science, many continue to promote it as such, the changing philosophy has labeled public administration in other ways as well. Dwight Waldo, in 1955, wrote of this conflict between art and science in public administration.

The belief in the science of public administration is concerned with evolution along the lines of the natural and physical sciences. While, the belief in public administration, the art, is concerned with the fluid and creative qualities inherent in the discipline. The art and science of public administration, Waldo states, reflects the belief that there are important uses of both art and science in public administration (Waldo, 1955/1978, p. 172). While public administration shares traits with science and art, there are other classifications for public administration.

For example, Berkley, Rose, and Begovich believe that there is a better classification for public administration. They argue that neither science nor art completely describes public administration. They characterized science as being precise and predictable. While administrators use scientific techniques, there is little precision or predictability in public administration. An artist creates works of aesthetics using imagination and intuition but an administrator uses imagination and intuition to solve problems. In both cases, they argue that the traits of science and art do not satisfactorily describe public administration. Instead, public

administration should be categorized as a craft, this is the most suitable and workable category (1991, p. 4).

Definitions of Public Administration

Public administration is a difficult and complex phrase to define. There have been many attempts, by scholars, to create an all-encompassing definition, though each attempt either falls short or contains abstract concepts. Some possible definitions for public administration include:

- I. Public administration is the organization and management of men and materials to achieve the purposes of government (Waldo, 1955/1978, p. 172).
- II. Public administration is the art and science of management as applied to affairs of state (Waldo, 1955/1978, p. 172).
- III. Public administration may be defined as all processes, organizations, and individuals associated with carrying out laws and other rules adopted or issued by legislatures, executives, and courts (Gordon, 1978, p. 8).
- IV. Public administration comprises those activities involved in carrying out the policies and programs of governments (Lane, 1978, p. 4).
- V. Public Administration deals with the stewardship and implementation of the products of a living democracy (Shields, 1998, p. 199)

While each of these definitions is different in the scope of public administration, all of the definitions include many similarities. First, all of the definitions agree that public administration is part of cooperative human behavior and is located in an organizational or bureaucratic structure. Second, each definition refers to or implies the existence of administrative responsibility to an organization and the public. Third, the interdisciplinary nature of public administration is apparent in each definition.

Waldo refers to this inability to define the field in the following manner: "public administration is a subject matter in search of a discipline (1967/1971, p. 17)."

While there is no single definition that can be used to completely define public administration, the societal functions of public administration are unique and ever increasing.

The Societal Functions of Public Administration

While there is a great difficulty in the ability of people to define public administration, this difficulty does not extend to the functions associated with public administration.

There are three aspects that identify the scope of public administration. First, the foremost ingredient of administration is people, because without people administration can not exist. Action is the second ingredient of administration, there must be some action taken to create administration. Third, human interaction is an integral part of administration, since administration is people relating to other people (Berkley, Rouse & Begovich, 1991, pg. 2-3). These aspects are the important ingredients in the scope of public administration.

Mosher and Bower, in their article "What is public administration", identify five basic features of public administration:

- 1) **Reform-** assumes that **current** process and procedures can and should be **improved**
- 2) **Economy and Self Efficiency-** provide public services at the **minimum** cost
- 3) **Structure of formal organization-** reform of organizational structures based on **logical** rules or principles
- 4) **Stress on personnel-** hiring and promotion based on merit, incentives, personality, collective bargaining
- 5) **Budget-** principle **tool** in making decisions, planning for the future, allocation of resources and developing control and accountability (1978, p. 8)

These features demonstrate the wide variety of tasks that are contained in the scope of public administration. Though the functions of administration are easily described, the question of what is a professional administrator must still be examined.

Professionalism in Public Administration

Today's public administrator has a task that can be both rewarding and frustrating. The public administrator, through their accepted role, has a responsibility for certain duties and has an obligation to perform those duties in the manner directed (Cooper, 1998, p. xvii-xviii). This responsibility can come into conflict with personally held beliefs or other obligations held by the administrator. The challenge then becomes how to decide what to do that will help promote the public good. Waldo believes that an administrator's action is defined by the ability to maximize the realization of goals that are public by definition. They must relate these goals in such a way that the goals of the individual, as well as the organization, are maximized (1955/1978, p. 173). In order

to accomplish this balance, administrators today must be good decision-makers.

As the nation moves into the twenty-first century, a heavy burden is being placed on the public administrator. As budgets continue to be cut down and the demand for quality service increases, administrators become increasingly responsible for defining and maintaining the common good. Louis Gawthrop makes this statement about service to society:

society is dependent upon career professionals in government to lead it to the notion of the common good. Public service in the spirit of democracy demands an unqualified commitment to the common good. Nothing less will do; nothing more is needed.

The administrator's burden also increases as the field of public administration is continuously transformed and expanded in areas such as: the subject matter, functions, and responsibilities. This transformation in public administration has many significant contributing factors. One, the public's demand to share in the latest advances of civilization. Two, the public demands a higher quality of performance and service from government. Three, there have been many advances in technology that have allowed for the expansion of government services. Four, there has been a decline of other institutions that once carried some of the

burdens of administration (Caiden, 1971, pg. 23-25). This continued expansion, along with the American federal system, has created a unique environment for public administrators in the United States.

The public administrator in the United States has a unique system in which to work through and around. The founding fathers created a new type of political system, in order to protect individuals from government. This federal system brought a new concept to administration. Popular sovereignty, as well as public opinion, makes it harder for a democracy to organize administration than a monarchy. Since the ideas and structures of administration were created under monarchies, this presented the administrator with only one opinion from one person. With the introduction of popular sovereignty, public opinion creates several differing opinions to which no one can agree (Wilson, 1887/1978, p. 8-9).

The federal system also created another problem for administrators. Public administration in the United States must work through a system where administrators must bridge the separation of executive and legislative powers. Administrators are called upon to establish more effective and cooperative relationships between and among the national government, the state governments, and local

governments. This becomes especially difficult with the integration of executive powers in a single executive at each level of government (Lane, 1978, p. 5). This decentralized authority allows for an increase in government responsiveness and flexibility, but places a greater burden on the public administrator.

One place where a public administrator can learn the values and responsibilities necessary to be a professional is the professional association. In the next chapter, the role of the professional association in the defining of public administration, the functioning of administration and the importance to the professional career is discussed. The professional association provides a community in which to discuss ideas, problems, and solutions with other people from a common field.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter begins with a discussion of the purpose and functions of a professional association, in relation to its membership. Next, the aspects most available in a local association will be identified and discussed. The reasons why a needs assessment is necessary and what function it serves to an organization is then discussed. The chapter concludes with the development of the conceptual framework, which is the organizing tool for the empirical component of this assessment. The purpose of this chapter is to identify the functions of a professional association that provide the best results when performed at the local level.

The Professional Association

"Associations are a body of people who collectively have a tremendous wealth of experience to draw upon in a common field (Frank, 1997, p. 308)." A professional association has three important functions in its service to

a profession as a whole. First, the association defines the nature and scope of the field, while maintaining relations with other fields. Second, the association treats the profession as a whole, looking beyond the narrow self-interest of groups or individuals. Third, an association performs as a social organism, performing social functions that individuals cannot perform separately.

While a professional association is not a 'club,' it serves some valuable social functions for its members. The association serves as a focal point for those who are like-minded and have similar employment. Those who do similar work tend to have similar interests, skills, values, and ethics. Thus, local chapter meetings, regional and international conferences, as well as the work of the association's boards and committees, provide opportunities to network, to share personal experiences, to exchange similar or even contested views on topics of common professional interest, and to reinforce their professional identities (Pemberton, 1994, p.63).

In terms of its activities, professional associations have been found to invest most of their time--and money--in thirteen functional areas:

- 1) Administration and fund-raising
- 2) Educational programs
- 3) Community service
- 4) Conventions

- 5) Public Information
- 6) Setting performance standards and safety standards
- 7) Research and statistics
- 8) Political education
- 9) Setting ethical standards
- 10) Setting professional standards
- 11) Certifying performance standards**
- 12) Enforcing ethical standards
- 13) Accreditation (of educational Programs)

Among these functions, different associations will have varying priorities. Every association, however, should be involved in each area to some extent since, together, they encompass the broad role of the professional association (Pemberton, 1994, p.51-52).

Professional associations help to provide a variety of services to a profession. First, the association brings all interested parties together to help facilitate communication, cooperation, and understanding (Fisher, 1997, p.321). Second, associations provide up to date information, formal programs for information sharing, access to outside information sources, a network of contacts, and expose members to a variety of viewpoints and perspectives (Frank, 1997, p. 308). Third, according to Michael Pemberton, the most important services provided by

a professional association are information and education. Providing current, credible, and usable information that applies to the profession is a vital role of the association (p. 53). In order to fulfill these services, an association constantly works to extend the horizon of the field toward the larger community, thus increasing the public awareness of the field and attracting new practitioners and therefore new members.

An association continually strives to promote awareness in the field in order to attract new members. There are many reasons for people to join a professional association. Sue Kamm, in a study about the American Library association, found that most members considered the opportunity to network with other colleagues as the most important reason to join a professional association. Other reasons members gave for joining the association included retention, tenure or promotion, to influence professional goals and current developments in the field, and to speak or publish (p. 295).

People who participate in professional associations also have the opportunity to improve or enhance leadership skills, administrative skills, and planning and implementation skills. The importance placed on the

reasons varies between professions, but the reasons for joining an association are similar in every field.

Many observers, according to the report, believe that the motivations of engineers in professional societies evolve over years. Initially, a principle reason to join is access to the latest technical information. And as long as their professional lives remain serene, they are likely to be mostly focused on associations as a means of access to technical developments (Who joins, 1996, p.19).

Another aspect of membership that should be considered is why members leave the organization. Sue Kamm, in her study of the American Library Association, asked people why they discontinued membership in professional associations. The reasons for dropping membership centered on three important issues for associations. These reasons were the high cost of dues, the lack of local opportunities for involvement in the association, and political issues. The reasons for members leaving an association are vitally important when considering the basis of why people join. People will continue membership based upon the cost of dues versus the return on their investment in the association. Members considered the return on investments to include informative publications, conference/program availability, relevancy to their jobs, and the opportunity to network with colleagues (p. 296). Therefore, if members believe

the association is a good investment of their time and money then they will maintain membership in the association.

A study conducted by the American Society of Agricultural Engineers, found that about half of all professional engineers maintained membership in one or more professional associations. The study also found that those with higher education, doctorates compared to bachelors degrees, were more likely to maintain membership in the association. This study found that the education level of the individual and the type of employment directly influenced maintaining membership in the association, even after the individual left the workforce. It was also noted that the association typically recruited new members while they are still students. Though many of these members would drop their membership when they became unemployed and still more would drop out when they left the workforce entirely'(Who joins, 1996, p. 19).

Professional associations are intended to be dynamic organizations that change and grow to service the needs of the membership and the field. In order to promote the growth and expansion of an organization, the decision-makers in the organization must know how the organization is doing and how it is performing. The decision-makers

also need recommendations for the organization to perform well in the future (Burnham, 1995, p. 89). Since the current and future health of an organization is dependent upon active participation by its members and the local level provides the opportunity for participation, an evaluation of the local organization should be performed in order to insure the continued participation of the members.

Functions of Local Professional Associations

The local chapters of a professional association are considered the backbone of an association. It is through the local chapter that most members associate and participate with the professional association. The local association allows members to become aware of the sense of a professional community that provides perspective and insight into the culture of the profession as a whole (Frank, 1937, p. 312). Local associations also provide a unique forum for professional growth and development. The local meetings provide opportunity for professional interaction and networking, access to information (through classes, technical information, and the exchange of ideas and knowledge), and professional skills development (through classes or active participation) (Gorman, 1997, p 5). The areas of networking opportunities, access to

information, and skills development are considered most important functions of the local association.

Networking Opportunities

Cornell and Farkas define networking as "the building of business and social relationships for present and future opportunities (p.44)." Networking provides access to information, new perspectives, and new opportunities and there by creates a sense of professional community. The building of these relationships can be the most important aspect in a person's professional growth and future. The ability to network is an essential part of any association and is beneficial to all members. It is also one of the most important aspects of the local association.

Access to Information

Another important aspect of an association is access to the latest information or developments (Gorman, 1997, p. 5). The association provides an excellent opportunity for the formal and informal exchange of ideas and techniques, the articulation of problems and solutions, and the discussion of policies and procedures (Cornell & Farkas, 1995, p. 44-45). The association also offers a source of

differing viewpoints and perspectives on any new issues related to the field.

Skill Development

The association is a place where new professionals can learn skills necessary for future professional growth. These skills include communication skills, administrative skills, planning and implementation skills, and "by participating actively in professional associations, one learns what it means to be a professional (Frank, 1997, p. 311)."

Conducting a Needs Assessment

The needs assessment is a tool used by organizations to evaluate the probable need for services or programs. Through the needs assessment process the organization can develop trust, with its employees or members and the public, and a common vision for the future (Holleran, 1996, p. 32-33).

The needs assessment refers to a process of assessing the needs of an organization. A **need** can be defined in many different ways, in the needs assessment, need is the gap between 'what is,' the current situation, and 'what should be,' the desired situation. The process can be used

as a means of evaluation, decision making, or prioritizing efforts. Thus, enabling organizations to collect vital and reliable data that helps to target services and efforts to the target population (Witkin & Altschuld, 1995, p. 6-7).

A needs assessment can be critical to the strategic future of an organization. Needs assessments are a key to survival, fulfilling missions, understanding the status of the population served, and for formulating strategies for the future (Holleran, 1996, p. 32).

Because the needs assessment has so many uses, people can confuse needs assessments with program evaluation

To some people, having to collect information that would alter an existing agency's services smacks of program evaluation, because it may suggest that some of the current services are not needed or are lacking (Soriano, 1995, p. 1-2).

The difference between a needs assessment and a program evaluation is that the information collected through the use of a needs assessment or program evaluation is treated differently and used for different purposes. A needs assessment evaluates the use and need for services or programs. While, program evaluation examines a program's effectiveness, evaluating the outcomes or effects of specific programs (Soriano, p. 2-3).

Although the needs assessment can be an effective means of collecting information, there are limitations to

the needs assessment. The limitations of a needs assessment are:

- Reluctance by needs assessment participants to truly admit the current use of services or to reveal personal concerns about the need for services.
- Opposition to disclosing to agencies a need for services, regardless of recognized need for them.

Lack of access to respondents.

- Unwillingness by some to participate in any survey or study.

Purposely deceptive responses given by some.

- Poorly written or confusing questions.
- Erroneous interpretation of responses.

"Consequently, rather than being conclusive, needs assessments suggest the probable need for services or programs (Soriano, 1995)."

Many different types of organizations; church groups, government agencies, schools, businesses, cities, use needs assessments.

The needs assessment is conducted to derive information and perceptions of value to making policy and program decisions that will benefit specific groups of people (Witkin & Altschuld, 1995, p. 5).

The needs assessment allows any organization to tailor their specific interests into the conducting of a needs

assessment. This flexibility makes the needs assessment ideally suited for many differing purposes.

Conceptual Framework

This literature review has listed and discussed the main functions of a professional association and the needs assessment. From the discussion of professional association functions, three functions have been identified as crucial to the role of the local association (chapter). From this discussion, the final goal of the chapter is developed: the conceptual framework. The conceptual framework is the tool used to organize the empirical portion of this study. The survey instrument, and all the questions that are used, is developed through and linked to the conceptual framework.

The conceptual framework provides a link between the research questions and the data collected. The membership profile provides the decision-makers with an understanding of who they serve and is a basic component of most survey instruments. The evaluation of current programs and services is done in relation to the functions addressed in the literature review. The unique factors associated with any organization are also taken into account. These factors are developed through the input of the Chapter's

leadership and are made to address specific concerns within the leadership or the organization in general. The need for future programs is assessed in relationship to the functions of a local association addressed in the literature review.

The literature review is a reflection of scholarly opinion about the role and functions of professional associations. While there is some discussion concerning the local association, there is little written specifically about the roles and functions of a local professional association. The following conceptual framework, shown in Table 3.1, was developed from the existing literature to conduct a needs assessment of a local professional association.

Table 3.1

Conceptual Framework

QUESTION	
Who are we serving?	I. Demographic Profile
How well are we doing?	II. Networking Opportunities A. Current Programs and Services III. Access to Information A. Current Programs and Services IV. Skills Development A. Current Programs and Services V. Unique Characteristics
Where do we go from here?	VI. Future Programs A. Networking Opportunities B. Access to Information C. Skills Development

The ultimate goal of an organization is to provide needed current and relevant services to its members. The needs assessment is a useful tool to identify the types of services needed to help an organization plan for its future. With the successful completion of a needs assessment, the findings can help to prioritize efforts for the greatest possible effect.

If the association is diligent in its roles of education, information, representing, and furthering the economic interests of its members-as-practitioners, then it follows that satisfied practitioners-as-members will see that the

association will itself stay healthy (Pemberton, 1994, p. 54).

The next chapter changes the focus from all professional associations to a specific organization in Texas. The chapter examines the structure and functions of the Centex Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration.

Chapter 4

Setting: ASPA and the Centex Chapter

Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to give the reader an understanding of the Centex Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration. This brief discussion provides the reader with information on the purpose and structure of the national organization as well as the local association. There is also a background section on the American Society for Public Administration. Then the history and functions of the Centex chapter are discussed.

American Society for Public Administration

The mission of the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA), is to:

professionalize the public service, to keep members on the cutting edge of good government, and to help answer the enduring question of how to make government work better (www.aspanet.org).

Since the establishment of ASPA in 1939, the Society has emerged as the largest and most prominent professional association in the field of public administration. With a diverse membership composed of more than 10,000

practitioners, teachers, and students, ASPA has become the focal point for intellectual and professional interaction, thereby serving as the principal arena for linking thought and practice within the field of public administration (www.aspanet.org).

Structure

ASPA has a vision to be a powerful voice for the public service. In order to help accomplish this vision, ASPA is currently organized to promote membership involvement in the organization. The ASPA organizational structure consists of a national council, regions, sections, and local chapters.

The current division each part of the organization is encouraged to bring forth policy questions and raises issues of importance to their membership. The national council is the main governing body of ASPA, while an executive committee monitors the day-to-day operations. The national council is charged with setting general policy for ASPA, including the budget and the bylaws. The national council consists of elected representatives from each of the regions. There are currently ten regions in the organizational structure of ASPA. The regions are not part of the governing process, though each sends representatives

to the national council. The regions bring members from areas with similar concerns together and allow them to act in a joint manner.

The sections and the local chapters are the places where members are the most involved with the organization. The sections are completely voluntary organizations, which offer members the opportunity to interact with other professionals who are concerned with the same area of public administration. There are currently twenty sections covering a wide range of issues concerning public administration. The sections are also responsible for enhancing communication between professionals and they sponsor sessions concerning their areas at the ASPA national conference. The local chapters are considered, by the national organization, the backbone of ASPA. The chapters, by providing programs and services directly to the membership, are the primary link between the Society and the members and are the primary source of membership interaction with the Society. There are currently over one hundred twenty local affiliated chapters across the United States (www.aspanet.org).

The Centex chapter¹

The Centex Chapter of ASPA is the local professional association in public administration for Central Texas. The Chapter services an area of Central Texas bounded by the cities of Seguin, Columbus, Huntsville, Tyler, Brownwood, Brady, and Kerrville. The organization is open to all interested individuals in the area serviced.

Purpose

The Centex Chapter is responsible for carrying out the mission and goals of the national organization. In addition Centex has established the following:

- a. Encourage and facilitate the interchange of ideas and information among Central Texans interested or engaged in the field of public administration.
- b. Further public administration in Central Texas through encouragement and support of professional development, public service productivity, professionalism, and administrative excellence.

Structure

The Centex Chapter has established a governing body consisting of eight officers and an eighteen-member council. The officers are elected to one-year terms, while the council members are elected to two-year terms. The

¹ Minutes Centex Chapter: November 19, 1993, January 21, 1994, June 14, 1996, August 14, 1996.

governing body is charged with the supervision and control of the affairs of the chapter and its actions.

Programs and Services

In order to accomplish the established goals, Centex offers a wide range of programs and services to its membership. The programs offered by Centex are:

- Council Meetings
- Membership Luncheons
- Student Leadership Forum
- The Annual Conference
- Activities for Public Service Recognition Week
- Awards Banquet
- Co-sponsored Programs with other organization

The services offered are:

- Newsletters
- Web Site
- Social Hours/Holiday Party
- Participation in the Texas Adopt-a-Highway Program

Recent History

The Centex Chapter of today is a vibrant and active professional association. By providing programs and services for the membership, the organization has become a source of interaction for those interested in the field of

public administration. Though this has not always been the case.

For many years, the Centex Chapter had been inactive in its services to the ASPA membership. In 1993 a group of ASPA members from Austin, sought to revitalize the chapter. With approval from the local members, including the former leaders of the Centex Chapter and the national organization, the chapter was relocated from Waco to Austin, in January of 1994, and life was brought back to the chapter.

With the inactivity of the Centex Chapter a separate association had developed to serve the needs of public administrators in the Austin area. The Austin Society for Public Administration had been active for many years and had continued to develop along side the newly revived Centex Chapter. In 1996, dialogue and negotiations were undertaken between the two groups to enact a merger of the two associations. In June of 1996, it was decided that the Austin Society for Public Administration would disband and join Centex ASPA. This merger served to create a single professional association to serve the needs of all public administrators living in the Austin area.

Chapter 5

Methodology

Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the methodology used for this research. There are three purposes to this research. One is to develop a basic profile of the current Centex Chapter membership. Second, to assess the effectiveness of current programs and services offered by the Centex Chapter. Third, to assess the need for services that should be provided in the future for the Centex Chapter membership.

Research Design

Survey research was chosen as the means for conducting this assessment. Soriano depicts survey research as an efficient and expedient means of generating significant amounts of data (1995, p. 35). Surveys are an excellent means for measuring attitudes and orientation in a large population. Surveys can be used for descriptive, explanatory, and exploratory purposes, and are used in studies that have individual people as the unit of analysis

(Babbie, 1995, p.257). These attitudes suggest that the use of surveys is appropriate for this research.

In order to show that the use of surveys is the correct choice for this study, it is important to note the advantages and disadvantages of survey research. Survey research has an advantage in economy, with the ability to reach, describe, and analyze large populations. There is also an advantage in flexibility, by asking many questions covering a single topic a researcher does not have to commit to a single operational definition. The standardization of questions and data are an important strength of surveys in regards to measurement. The weaknesses associated with survey research are: the inability to adapt the design to better fit the reality, the limited choices can create artificial or superficial responses, and the survey can only measure recalled past action or hypothetical action, not the social process. Overall, survey research is weak on validity and strong on reliability (Babbie, 1995, p. 275-276). Therefore, survey research is appropriate for this research so long as consideration is given to the probable weaknesses in the research technique.

The questionnaire is organized according to the three research purposes and the descriptive categories in the

conceptual framework. The descriptive categories are networking opportunities, access to information, and skills development. Before mailing, the survey was pre-tested by a small group of the Centex Chapter officers.

Sample

Since there is only approximately two hundred members in the Centex Chapter, the survey is sent to every 'active' member in the organization. The term active is defined as a member having paid their annual dues to the national organization of ASPA. In order to receive the list of current 'active' members, a request for a mailing list was sent to the national organization. The list received contained a group of one hundred fifty four names, to which the survey was sent. This way an accurate and reliable conclusion can be drawn about each of the programs and services offered by the Centex Chapter. The rate of response was 35%.

Operationalization of the Conceptual Framework

Table 5.1 illustrates the operationalization of the conceptual framework. The questionnaire (see appendix B) is included. The answers to the program information is based on a scale of 1, meaning very ineffective, to 5,

meaning very effective. In all questions with a 'yes' or 'no' response; answers of 'yes' are given a value of 1, while answers of 'no' are given a value of 0. The question of sex will be coded with answers of 'male' being given a value of 0 and 'female' being given a value of 1. The question of ethnicity is coded by the following: 'African-American' 1, 'Asian' 2, 'Caucasian' 3, 'Hispanic' 4, and 'other' 5.

Table 5.1
Operationalization of the Conceptual Framework

I. Membership Profile	Questionnaire Item
Sex	1
Ethnicity	2
Employment	3
Education	4
Student	6
II. Networking Opportunities	
Council Meetings	7
Membership luncheons	8
Social Hour/Holiday Party	9
Adopt a Highway	10
Newsletter	11
Web Site	12
Student Leadership Forum	13
Awards Banquet	14
Annual Conference	15
Co-sponsored Programs	16
III. Access to Information	
Council Meetings	21
Membership Luncheons	22
Social Hour/Holiday Party	23
Student Leadership Forum	24
Newsletter	25
Web Site	26
Awards Banquet	27
Public Service Recognition Week	28
Annual Conference	29
Co-sponsored Programs	30
IV. Skills Development	
Council Meetings	35
Membership Luncheons	36
Social Hour/Holiday Party	37
Student Leadership Forum	38
Newsletter	39
Web Site	40
Awards Banquet	41
Public Service Recognition Week	42
Annual Conference	43
Co-sponsored Program	44

V. Unique Characteristics	
School received degree(s)?	5
Other professional organizations	18
Membership directory	20
Speakers at events	32
Considered for council member	49
Chair or serve on committee?	50
Attend National conference	51
VI. Future Programs	
Programs or Services for networking opportunities	17
Networking Reception in Austin	19
Programs or Services for access to information	31
Dinner program in Austin	33
Attend conference of Texas' ASPA Chapters?	34
Programs or Service for skills development.	45
Saturday conference in Austin	47
Weekday conference in Austin	48
Lunch Hour speaker in Austin	46

Descriptive statistics are used in the presentation of the results of the research (chi-square, t-test, frequency, percentages, percent distribution, and means). The tables reflect the distribution of the responses made by the respondents. The mean, where applicable, is included with the tables. Chapter Six reports the findings of the study on current programs and services offered by Centex.

Chapter 6

Results

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The chapter is divided into subheadings using the research questions. While each subheading is further organized using the conceptual framework.

Membership Profile

The survey instrument was mailed to 154 active members of the Centex Chapter. The term active is defined as a member having paid their annual dues to the national organization of ASPA. The survey had a thirty-percent response rate. Table 6.1 shows the basic demographic information of the respondents.

Table 6.1
Demographic Information

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
SEX		
Male	27	58.7
Female	19	41.3
Total		100
ETHNICITY		
African-American	4	8.7
Asian	0	0.0
Caucasian	32	69.6
Hispanic	10	21.7
Other	0	0.0
Total		100
EDUCATION		
Bachelors	17	35.4
Masters	26	56.3
Ph.D.	2	4.2
JD	2	4.2
Total		100
SECTOR OF EMPLOYMENT		
Public	29	67.4
Private	5	11.6
Non-Profit	3	7
Academia	6	14
Total		100
STUDENT		
Total		100

The majority of respondents indicated they were male (58.7%), Caucasian (69.6%), with a Masters Degree (56.3), and working in the public sector (67.4%). Of the respondents, 45.7% are currently enrolled at an area

university (a list of the universities indicated is given in **Appendix C**).

Networking Opportunities

The following table (Table 6.2) indicates how effective the Centex Chapter's current programs and services provide networking opportunities

Table 6.2
Program Effectiveness:
Networking Opportunities

PROGRAM	N	MEAN	SD	t
Council Meetings	36	3.55	1.081	3.08**
Membership Luncheons	41	3.51	1.052	3.12**
Social Hour/Holiday Party	40	3.72	1.062	4.32**
Adopt-A-Highway	36	2.66	0.926	-2.16*
Newsletter	46	3.09	1.170	0.50
Web Site	43	3.88	0.911	4.61**
Student Leadership Forum	38	3.42	1.177	2.21*
Awards Banquet	40	3.60	1.128	3.36**
Annual Conference	39	3.61	1.067	3.60**
Co-Sponsored Programs	40	3.55	0.876	3.97**

*Significantly different from neutral at the .05 level.
** Significantly different from neutral at the .01 level.
All responses are on a 1 to 5 scale.

The data indicates that most of the programs and services for networking opportunities provided by the Centex Chapter are very effective. The web site was rated the most effective, with a mean response of 3.88, while the social hour/holiday party was rated second, with a mean response of 3.72. Only one program, the adopt-a-highway

program with a mean of 2.64, was considered an ineffective networking opportunity.

The ratings of networking opportunities for the current programs and services offered two surprises. One, that the membership rated the web site as the most effective means for networking. The other programs rated effective are not surprising, since this opportunity is one of the purposes associated with these activities. The rating of the adopt-a-highway program as an ineffective opportunity for networking is the second surprise. The adopt-a-highway would seem to be a program designed as a networking opportunity. The neutral rating associated with the newsletter is not surprises either. The newsletter is not expected to be a means of networking.

Performing a one-sample t-test, for all of the means, found that the means of most of the programs were significantly different from neutral. The council meetings are considered effective, with a mean of 3.50, as is the student leadership forum, with a mean of 3.42, both were significant at the $p \leq .05$ level. The adopt-a-highway is considered ineffective, with a mean of 2.67, which is significant at the $p \leq .05$ level. All other programs, except the newsletter, can be considered effective and are

significant at the $p \leq .01$ level. The newsletter was not significantly different than neutral.

Access to Information

The effectiveness of the Centex Chapter in providing access to information is presented in Table 5.3. The overall assessment, by the membership, shows that five of the programs are considered effective. The web site, rated the highest, the newsletter, rated second, the annual conference, and the co-sponsored programs are all considered very effective measures for accessing information. Public Service Recognition Week, with a mean of 3.37, is also considered an effective means of accessing information, by the membership.

Table 6.3

**Program Effectiveness:
Access to Information**

PROGRAM	N	MEAN	SD	t
Council Meetings	37	3.27	1.071	1.53
Membership Luncheons	40	3.27	0.933	1.86
Social Hour/Holiday Party	37	2.75	1.084	-1.21
Student Leadership Forum	37	3.30	1.102	1.64
Newsletter	43	3.91	1.019	5.84**
Web Site	41	3.93	0.932	6.36**
Awards Banquet	39	3.21	1.151	1.11
Public Service Recognition Week	40	3.38	1.030	2.30*
Annual Conference	39	3.87	0.864	6.30**
Co-Sponsored Programs	39	3.51	0.914	3.50**

*Significantly different from neutral at the .05 level.

** Significantly different from neutral at the .01 level.

All responses are on a 1 to 5 scale.

The membership's rating of programs for access to information is mostly as expected. The newsletter and the web site effectiveness rates high in access to information as expected, while the social hours are expected to be rated ineffective.

Performing a one-sample t-test of the means demonstrates the neutral attitude of the membership to access to information through the Centex Chapter's programs and services. The newsletter (mean of 3.91), the web site (mean of 3.92), the annual conference (mean of 3.87), and the co-sponsored programs (mean of 3.51) are significantly different from neutral at the $p \leq .01$ level. Public Service Recognition Week, with a mean of 3.38, is significant at the $p \leq .05$ level. All other programs were not significantly different than neutral.

Skill Development

Table 5.4 shows the mean, standard deviation, and t-value of the programs offered by the Centex Chapter. The data represents the effectiveness of the chapter in developing the professional skills of the membership.

Table 6.4

Program Effectiveness:
Skill Development

PROGRAM	N	MEAN	SD	t
Council Meetings	38	2.97	1.052	-0.15
Membership Luncheons	40	2.98	1.000	-0.16
Social Hour/Holiday Party	40	2.45	1.061	-3.28**
Student Leadership Forum	39	3.1795	1.023	1.10
Newsletter	45	2.96	1.065	-0.28
Web Site	43	2.91	1.079	-0.60
Awards Banquet	42	2.76	1.122	-1.38
Public Service Recognition Week	41	2.98	0.987	-0.16
Annual Conference	42	3.71	0.918	5.04**
Co-Sponsored Programs	40	3.30	0.853	2.22*

*Significantly different from neutral at the .05 level.

** Significantly different form neutral at the .01 level.

All responses are on a 1 to 5 scale.

The data indicates that the majority of programs are considered to be ineffective in providing professional skills development to the membership. The social hour/holiday party is considered to be very ineffective in this aspect, as expected, while the annual conference is considered to be very effective in skill development. The co-sponsored programs, mean equals 3.30, are also considered to be an effective means of professional skill development.

The t-tests show that there are only three means that are significantly different from neutral. The social hour/holiday party (mean = 2.45, t-value = -3.28) and the annual conference (mean = 3.71, t-value = 5.04) were both significant at the $p \leq .01$ level. The co-sponsored

programs, with a t-value of 2.22, are significant at the $p \leq .05$ level.

Summary

The following table shows the highest rated programs and services in each category.

Table 6.5
Highest Ranking Programs

	Networking Opportunities	Access to Information	Skill Development
First	Web Site	Web Site	Annual Conference
Second	Social Hour	Newsletter	Co-Sponsored Programs
Third	Annual Conference	Annual Conference	Student Leadership Forum
Fourth	Awards Banquet	Co-Sponsored Programs	Membership Luncheons

The rankings show that the Annual Conference is the highest rated programs overall. The Annual Conference is ranked first in Skill Development third in Access to Information and third in Networking. The Web Site is ranked first in Networking and Access to Information. While the Co-Sponsored Programs are ranked second in Skill Development and fourth in Access to Information. The other programs are each ranked in the top four only once.

Cross-tabulation

The purpose in performing a cross-tabulation on the current programs and services is to identify any possible relationships between the sex, ethnicity, education, and

sector of work to the responses identified in the previous section. An indicated relationship is important in the association's goal promoting diversity and in the planning of events. The cross-tabulation uses the chi-square test of independence to indicate a relationship between two variables (see Appendix D for complete Table).

When the test of independence is performed three categories demonstrate a relationship. The chi-square test shows there is a significant relationship between the following:

- Ethnicity and the Social Hour/Holiday Party as a means of Skill Development shows that Hispanics (30.0%) and African-Americans (33.3%) are more likely to rate the program effective than Caucasians (7.7%).
- Education and Membership Luncheons as a means of Access to Information shows that as the level of education increases the more likely this program will be rated effective. (30% Bachelors, 45% of Masters, 66.7% of Ph.D. and 100% of JD)
- Education and Student Leadership Forum as a means of Skill Development shows that as education increases the more likely members are to rate this program effective. (26% of Bachelors, 45% of Masters, and 100% of Ph.D.)

The relationship between education and membership luncheons as a means of Access to Information is significant at the $p \leq .01$ level. The other four relationships are all significant at the $p \leq .05$ level.

The final chapter makes recommendations for possible programs and services to be offered by Centex and brings the project to a conclusion.

Chapter 7

Recommendations and Conclusion

Introduction

Recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the Centex Chapter were solicited from the members. From the results of the survey many of the proposed events were well received by the membership. There were also many members who responded with suggestions on services and programs to improve Centex.

Survey Recommendations

This section looks at possible programs and services to be offered by the Centex Chapter in the future identified on the survey instrument. The following table (Table 7.1) presents the likelihood of members to want or attend the indicated programs and services.

Table 7.1

Likelihood to Attend Future Programs

PROGRAM OR SERVICE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT YES
Networking reception in Austin	44	79.5%
Centex Membership Directory	44	88.6%
Dinner Program in Austin	45	80.0%
Conference of Texas Chapters	45	73.3%
Lunch Hour Speaker in Austin	44	68.9%
Saturday 6-hour Conference	45	55.6%
Weekday 6-hour Conference	45	55.6%

This data indicates that these programs should be implemented by the organization. With the exception of the 6-hour conferences, the response is over whelming for these programs and services. Almost ninety percent of respondents want an annual directory of Centex members. The Saturday and Weekday conferences are supported, though not as strongly as the others are, they should be considered as possible future programs.

Cross-tabulations

The purpose in performing a cross-tabulation on the need for future programs and services is to identify any possible relationships between the sex, ethnicity, education, and sector of work to the responses identified in the previous section. The cross-tabulation uses the chi-square test of independence to indicate a relationship between two variables (see **Appendix D** for complete table).

From this data, the chi-square values indicate the relationship between two sets of variables. There is a relationship between Sex and Saturday 6-hour Conference. This relationship shows that 75% of women, but only 44.4% of men would attend a Saturday Conference. With a chi-square of 4.388, the relationship is significant at the $p \leq .05$ level. There is also a relationship shown between Sector of Employment and attending a Networking Reception in Austin. This indicates that those in the Public (85.7%) and Private (100%) sectors are more likely to attend a Networking Reception in Austin. This relationship is also significant at the $p \leq .05$ level.

Member Recommendations

The suggestions given by the membership can be divided among four categories: notification, location of events, conferences, and new services.

Notification

The responses in this category were either related to the membership knowing of an event or ways to notify members of upcoming events. The biggest reason given by members for not attending programs was that they did not know about them until after the event took place. Five members stated that the web site could be used as a means

for notifying members. One member suggested using a list serve to e-mail members of upcoming events. These suggestions could be used in conjunction with the current newsletter mailings.

Location of Events

The second most common reason for not attending Centex functions was the location of events. Members stated that because of the location, and times, of functions they are unable to get to the function or it takes too long to travel to the functions. There were five members who suggested having functions in San Antonio, seven who suggested San Marcos, three members suggested to hold a function somewhere in Williamson County, Round Rock or Georgetown, it was also suggested to hold functions in Waco and College Station.

Conferences

The membership suggested holding a variety of conferences to help promote networking opportunities, access to information, and skill development. The types of conferences ranged from a state conference for ASPA members to conferences for specific skills, such as grant writing or presentation skills. There were also suggestions for Internet conferences and a continuing education series to

be sponsored by Centex. The main concern associated with these conferences was the cost to members.

New Services

There were three new services that members suggested for possible sponsorship by the Centex Chapter. One, help in finding and acquiring internships. This was suggested a means to help promote networking with new members and professional skills development. Two, a mentor program where student members are designated a practicing mentor to help with networking and professional development. Three develop the web site to include more chapter schedule information (including the e mailing mentioned earlier) and links to public administration web sites. The members intend all of these service suggestions, to help increase the participation in Centex and provide members more opportunities and information.

Conclusion

The findings suggest that the Centex Chapter is not being effective in the areas most needed at the local level. In providing networking opportunities, the Centex Chapter's current programs and services are mostly rated very effective by the membership. The members also provide suggestions on ways to make the programs and services

offered even more effective. In regards to providing access to information, the Centex Chapter's current programs and services are seen as neutral, neither effective nor ineffective. With the exception of the newsletter, web page, and the annual conference, which were all rated very effective, and the co-sponsored programs, which were rated effective. The members had many suggestions to improve the performance of Centex in this area, including more items on the Internet, mentoring programs, and conferences. Since information is so important to public administration, it is necessary for the effectiveness of the chapter to provide for greater access to information. The professional skills development programs and services of the Centex Chapter were also seen as neutral in their effectiveness, by the membership. Only the annual conference and the co-sponsored programs were rated effective, while the social hour was rated ineffective. The development of professional skills is very important to a professional career and help needs to be provided by the local association. The members made three suggestions, the mentoring program, the internship service, and the skill conferences, for programs to help improve the effectiveness of skill development in the Centex Chapter.

The Centex Chapter, like all organizations, needs to conduct an evaluation of its programs and services every few years. The needs assessment is a good tool to use to accomplish this evaluation, as it provides an evaluation on current services and possibilities for future services. Any future assessment of the Centex Chapter should explore the effects of new programs, the effectiveness of continued programs, and the attitudes of the membership towards the Centex Chapter and its programs and services.

Appendix A

March 29, 1999

Dear Centex Member:

This questionnaire seeks to gain information to assess the effectiveness of the Centex Chapter. This survey has been designed to:

- assess the effectiveness of current programs and services sponsored by Centex
- to gain information about current members to assist the Chapter in providing programs and services
- assess the membership's need for programs and services to be sponsored by Centex in the future

The results of the survey will be used for partial fulfillment for a Masters of Public Administration requirement. The questionnaire takes about 25 minutes to complete. Please return the completed questionnaire in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope by April 14, 1999. Your assistance in this study is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

John Paddenburg

Centex Membership Survey

Please respond to the following:

1. Sex: Male Female

2. Ethnicity: African American 1
 Asian 2
 Caucasian 3
 Hispanic 4
 Other 5

3. In what sector do you work?
Public Private Non-Profit Academia

4. What is your highest level of education?
 Bachelors
 Masters
 PhD
 JD

5. From what school(s) did you receive your degree(s)?

6. Are you currently a student? Yes No
If yes, what university?

Networking Opportunities

Please rate each program in regards to how well you feel it provides networking opportunities with other members. On a scale from 1, representing 'very ineffective', to 5, representing 'very effective' .

Circle the appropriate response:

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7. Council Meetings | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. Membership Luncheons | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. Social Hour/Holiday Party | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10. Adopt-A-Highway | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 11. Newsletter | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 12. Web Site | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13. Student Leadership Forum | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 14. Awards Banquet | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

- | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15. Annual Conference | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 16. Co-sponsored Programs | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Answer the following in the space provided:

17. Please list possible programs that could provide networking opportunities among members of Centex.

18. To what other professional organizations do you belong?

19. Would you attend:
 5-7pm networking reception in Austin Yes No
 5-7pm networking reception elsewhere (specify location)

20. Would you be interested in receiving an annual membership directory for Centex? Yes No

Access to Information

Please rate each program in regards to how effective you feel it provides access to information in public administration. Rate each program on a scale from 1, representing 'very ineffective', to 5, representing 'very effective'.

Circle the appropriate response:

- | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 21. Council Meetings | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 22. Membership Luncheons | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 23. Social Hour/Holiday Party | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 24. Student Leadership Forum | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 25. Newsletter | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 26. Web Site | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 27. Awards Banquet | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 28. Public Service Recognition Week | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 29. Annual Conference | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 30. Co-sponsored Programs | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Answer the following questions in the space provided:

45. Please list possible programs or services that could provide members with the opportunity for professional skills development.
46. Mark any that you would likely attend:
 Lunch Hour speaker in Austin Yes No
 Lunch Hour speaker elsewhere (specify location)
47. Saturday 6-hour conference in Austin Yes No
 Saturday 6-hour conference elsewhere (specify location).
48. Weekday 6-hour conference in Austin Yes No
 Weekday 6-hour conference elsewhere (specify location)
49. Would you like to be considered for a council member or officer position? Yes No
50. Would you like to chair or serve on a committee?
 Yes No

If yes, list any preference as to which committee you would like to be on.

51. Have you ever attended a national conference? Yes No
- If no, why not?

If yes, was it worth the travel and expense?

Appendix B

CONSTITUTION, Centex Chapter, The American Society for Public Administration

Article I. Name and Purpose

Section 1. The name of this chapter shall be the **Centex** Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration, hereinafter referred to as the Chapter.

Section 2. The purpose of this Chapter shall be to advance the objectives of the American Society for Public Administration, stated in the Society's constitution, as well as to:

a. Encourage and facilitate the interchange of ideas and information among Central Texans interested or engaged in the field of public administration.

b. Further public administration in Central Texas through encouragement and support of professional development, public service productivity, professionalism, and administrative excellence.

Section 3. The Chapter shall serve the area of Central Texas bounded by and including the cities of Seguin, Columbus, Huntsville, Tyler, Brownwood, Brady, and Kerrville.

Article II. Membership

Section 1. Chapter membership shall be limited to persons holding membership in the American Society for Public Administration. Nonmember public administrators and other interested persons are welcome to attend chapter meetings and to participate in chapter activities.

Section 2. Chapter members shall have the right to vote for chapter officers and Council and to participate in all Chapter activities.

Section 3. Membership in the Chapter shall be open to all interested individuals without regard to race, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, religion, creed, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability or political affiliation.

Article III. Officers and Governing Body

Section 1. The officers of this Chapter shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, *Webmaster*, *Parliamentarian*, and Membership Chair. Their duties shall be ~~those customarily performed by such officers. The Vice President shall, in addition to other usual responsibilities, serve as program coordinator.~~ as follows:

*President - Serve as presiding **officer** of the Council and general membership meetings of the Chapter.*

*Vice President - Coordinate the general membership **programs** of the Chapter and preside in the absence of the President.*

*Secretary - Prepare minutes ~~of~~ each Council meeting and maintain the **official** records of the Chapter.*

Treasurer - Handle the financial transactions, maintain records of and report the financial status of the Chapter to the Council.

Newsletter Editor - Solicit, develop and edit the content of the chapter newsletter and other publications.

Webmaster - Arrange for and maintain the Chapter Home Page on the World Wide Web.

Parliamentarian - Advise the President to ensure that the conduct of Chapter business at all times conforms to the Chapter Constitution.

Membership Chair - Coordinate membership recruitment, welcome new members, encourage members to renew, and oversee membership development and service projects.

Section 2. The governing body of the Chapter shall be the Council, which shall consist of the Chapter officers, the two most recent past Presidents, and ~~seven (7)~~ **eighteen (18)** council members, ~~three (3)~~ **nine (9)** to be elected in odd numbered years and ~~four (4)~~ **nine (9)** to be elected in even numbered years. Council members shall serve two year terms, and officers shall serve one year terms. Officers and council members may be reelected for an unlimited number of terms. Every effort shall be made to nominate and elect officers and Council members who represent the broad geographic region the Chapter serves, the wide spectrum of public and nonprofit sector related activities undertaken in the region, and both academic ***professional and student*** and practitioner interests. The Council shall supervise and control the affairs of the Chapter and its actions shall follow the general policies of the Society. The President shall serve as the presiding officer of the Council.

Section 3. Officers and Council members shall serve until their successors are elected or appointed to take office. The President shall make interim appointments to fill any vacancies on the Council. In case of a vacancy in the office of President, the Vice President shall be appointed President by the Council. Any vacancy in the office of Vice President shall be filled by an interim appointment of the Council from its own membership. All interim appointments shall serve until the next regular election.

Section 4. The quorum of the Chapter Council shall consist of seven members including the President or Vice President.

Section 5. All officers and Chapter Council members shall be members of the American Society for Public Administration and shall be Chapter members in good standing.

Article IV. Nominations and Elections

Section 1. Chapter officers shall be elected annually for one year terms. ~~Three (3)~~ **nine (9)** Council members shall be elected in odd numbered years for two year terms, and ~~four (4)~~ **nine (9)** Council members shall be elected in even numbered years for two year terms. Officers and Council members shall take office in January after elections are held.

Section 2. Nominations for the offices of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, ***Webmaster, Parliamentarian,*** Membership Chair and Council members shall be made by a nominating committee of three (3) regular members to be appointed by the President approximately thirty days before the annual meeting. Nominations may also be made from the floor by any regular member of the Chapter.

Section 3. A majority of the Chapter members voting shall decide all elections. In case of ties the tie shall be broken by a flip of a coin.

Article V. Meetings

Section 1. The Chapter year shall be the calendar year.

Section 2. This Chapter shall hold at least four program activities during the calendar year, including the annual business meeting.

Section 3. The annual meeting shall be held in the first calendar quarter unless otherwise specified by the Council.

Section 4. Other meetings of the Chapter shall be held at times and places designated by the President or by the Council.

Section 5. Chapter members shall be given at least seven days notice in writing of the time, place, and the scheduled business to be considered at the annual meeting. Appropriate notice shall be given to members of all chapter activities.

Section 6. For consideration of business at the annual meeting, business meetings, or special meetings, a quorum shall consist of ~~20%~~ 15% of the total membership of the Chapter. A Quorum must be present for business to be conducted at a Chapter meeting or Council meeting. A quorum is not required for program or other non-business meetings, nor for discussion meetings of the Council, as long as business is not conducted at such meetings.

Article VI. Committees

Section 1. The Council may establish committees and/or task forces for various purposes. Committee chairs and members shall be appointed by the President. All such committees and/or task forces shall terminate at the annual meeting upon election of the new officers and Council. Committees and/or task forces may be reappointed by the new President.

Article VII. Fees

Section 1. That portion of the national membership dues designated for rebate to the Chapter shall constitute the fee for chapter membership when received by Chapter officers.

Section 2. Other fees as deemed necessary for continuing and special projects may be assessed by the Chapter Council.

Article VIII. Amendments

Section 1. Amendments to this Constitution may be made in the following manner:

a. Amendments may be proposed by the Chapter Council, by a petition signed by at least 20% of the Chapter members in good standing, or by a majority of the Chapter members present and voting at a regular or annual meeting.

b. Notice to members in writing of the time, place, and amendment(s) to be considered must be sent and received by the membership at least seven (7) days prior to a meeting at which a vote is scheduled to be taken to amend this Constitution?except that at any regular?annual, or special Chapter meeting at which there is a quorum present, a majority of those present can approve a motion to consider an amendment to this Constitution, even if prior notice of the amendment has not been given in writing.

Section 2. All amendments to the Chapter Constitution shall be submitted to the American Society for Public Administration.

Adopted by the organization meeting of 1978; amended January 1995 and January 1997.

Appendix C

Colleges and Universities

Members Received Degrees From

Bachelors Degree

Angelo State University
Baylor University
Bentley College
Bowling Green State
Columbia College
Cornell University
Eastern New Mexico
Gustaves Adalpus College
Rice University
St. Edward's university
St. Mary's University
Southwest Texas State
Stanford University
Texas Tech University
Troy State
Tulane University
University of Houston
University of Texas
Wayland Baptist

Masters Degree

Austin Presbyterian
Seminary
Cornell University
Southwest Texas State
The Ohio State University
Texas Tech University
Texas Women' s University
University of Houston
University of Texas

Ph.D.

University of Kansas
The Ohio State University
Syracuse University
Texas A&M University

JD

Texas Tech University

University of Texas

Members are Currently Enrolled

Baylor School of Law

Southwest Texas University

St. Edward's University

Virginia Tech

Appendix D

Cross-tabulation Tables:

Current Programs

Relationships between SEX and Networking Opportunities¹

Programs	Percent Effective		Chi-Square
	Male	Female	
Council Meetings	45.0	56.3	4.352
Membership Luncheons	52.1	61.1	2.564
Social Hour/Holiday Party	65.2	70.6	3.001
Adopt-A-Highway	19.1	0.0	3.438
Newsletter	44.0	25.8	2.698
Web Site	41.6	26.3	1.998
Student Leadership Forum	40.9	56.3	7.209
Awards Banquet	68.2	44.4	5.903
Annual Conference	68.2	58.8	1.922
Co-Sponsored Programs	54.5	40.0	3.333

Relationship between SEX and Access to Information

Programs	Percent Effective		Chi Square
	Male	Female	
Council Meetings	45.5	26.6	3.244
Membership Luncheons	40.9	50.0	4.158
Social Hour/Holiday Party	35.0	23.5	1.860
Student Leadership Forum	42.9	50.0	1.791
Newsletter	64.7	85.7	4.196
Web Site	66.7	85.0	4.737
Awards Banquet	47.6	27.8	8.392
Public Service Recognition Week	50.0	50.0	0.967
Annual Conference	80.9	77.8	1.286
Co-Sponsored Programs	57.2	55.6	1.780

¹significantly different from neutral at the .05 level.

** significantly different from neutral at the .01 level.

All responses are on a 1 to 5 scale, with effective being a 4 or 5.

Relationship between SEX and Skill Development

Programs	Percent Effective		Chi-Square
	Male	Female	
Council Meetings	23.3	23.5	3.664
Membership Luncheons	43.5	17.6	3.529
Social Hour/Holiday Party	21.7	5.9	2.443
Student Leadership Forum	34.8	50.1	3.179
Newsletter	37.5	14.3	4.795
Web Site	30.4	25.0	1.859
Awards Banquet	29.1	10.5	7.795
Public Service Recognition Week	39.1	11.1	7.377
Annual Conference	56.2	57.9	1.599
Co-Sponsored Programs	34.7	41.2	1.603

Relationship between ETHNICITY and Networking Opportunities¹

Programs	Percent Effective			Chi-Square
	African-American	Caucasian	Hispanic	
Council Meetings	50.0	37.8	50.0	2.730
Membership Luncheons	33.3	63.0	50.0	10.225
Social Hour/Holiday Party	33.3	65.3	80.0	9.838
Adopt-A-Highway	50.0	8.6	10.0	4.812
Newsletter	33.3	31.3	50.0	11.087
Web Site	66.6	31.0	30.0	5.607
Student Leadership Forum	100.0	33.4	70.0	8.142
Awards Banquet	33.3	57.7	70.0	8.441
Annual Conference	100.0	57.7	70.0	4.206
Co-Sponsored Programs	100.0	51.8	50.0	5.278

¹significantly different from neutral at the .05 level.

** Significantly different from neutral at the .01 level.

All responses are on a 1 to 5 scale, with effective being a 4 or 5

Relationship between ETHNICITY and Access to Information'

Programs	Percent Effective			Chi-Square
	African American	Caucasian	Hispanic	
Council Meetings	50.0	33.3	50.0	4.930
Membership Luncheons	100.0	34.6	50.0	9.138
Social Hour/Holiday Party	33.3	25.0	44.4	14.141
Student Leadership Forum	100.0	34.8	50.0	9.837
Newsletter	75.0	64.3	100.0	8.552
Web Site	66.6	70.3	90.0	4.502
Awards Banquet	100.0	32.0	40.0	6.945
Public Service Recognition Week	50.0	51.8	40.0	5.257
Annual Conference	100.0	84.6	60.0	5.951
Co-Sponsored Programs	100.0	61.5	40.0	5.289

Relationship between ETHNICITY and Skill Development

Programs	Percent Effective			Chi-square
	African American	Caucasian	Hispanic	
Council Meetings	66.6	25.0	30.0	5.861
Membership Luncheons	50.0	33.3	30.0	8.809
Social Hour/Holiday Party	33.3	7.7	30.0	15.972"
Student Leadership Forum	100.0	36.0	40.0	7.003
Newsletter	50.0	26.7	20.0	12.584
Web Site	33.3	31.0	20.0	8.996
Awards Banquet	66.6	21.5	30.0	5.939
Public Service Recognition Week	66.6	22.5	30.0	4.671
Annual Conference	100.0	64.3	50.0	5.078
Co-Sponsored Programs	0.0	44.4	33.3	7.602

[†]Significantly different from neutral at the .05 level.

** Significantly different from neutral at the .01 level.

All responses are on a 1 to 5 scale, with effective being a 4 or 5.

Relationship between WORK and Networking Opportunities¹

Programs	Percent Effective				Chi-Square
	Public	Private	Non-Profit	Academia	
Council Meetings	47.6	33.3	100.0	42.9	13.013
Membership Luncheons	52.0	75.0	50.0	57.2	4.091
Social Hour/Holiday Party	54.2	100.0	100.0	85.7	16.700
Adopt-A-Highway	13.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.541
Newsletter	24.5	50.0	33.3	28.6	9.709
Web Site	37.0	25.0	33.3	28.6	8.514
Student Leadership Forum	54.2	25.0	50.0	50.0	10.805
Awards Banquet	58.4	50.0	0.0	71.5	8.592
Annual Conference	66.6	25.0	100.0	57.2	15.928
Co-Sponsored Programs	62.0	50.0	50.0	57.5	4.835

Relationship between WORK and Access to Information

Programs	Percent Effective				Chi-Square
	Public	Private	Non-Profit	Academia	
Council Meetings	50.0	0.0	0.0	28.6	6.328
Membership Luncheons	52.0	66.7	50.0	14.3	9.846
Social Hour/Holiday Party	27.2	33.3	0.0	42.9	4.081
Student Leadership Forum	45.4	33.3	0.0	71.5	9.491
Newsletter	67.9	100.0	100.0	71.4	14.934
Web Site	73.0	66.7	100.0	71.4	17.971
Awards Banquet	45.8	33.3	0.0	42.9	3.754
Public Service Recognition Week	56.0	66.7	50.0	42.9	6.872
Annual Conference	83.3	100.0	100.0	57.2	13.085
Co-Sponsored Programs	60.0	66.7	50.0	57.2	8.897

¹ +Significantly different from neutral at the .05 level.

** Significantly different from neutral at the .01 level.

All responses are on a 1 to 5 scale, with effective being a 4 or 5.

Relationship between WORK and Skill Development

Programs	Percent Effective				Chi-Square
	Public	Private	Non-Profit	Academia	
Council Meetings	36.5	0.0	0.0	28.6	9.587
Membership Luncheons	37.5	33.3	0.0	42.9	7.889
Social Hour/Holiday Party	16.7	33.3	0.0	14.3	8.160
Student Leadership Forum	39.1	33.3	0.0	71.4	18.350
Newsletter	24.1	33.3	0.0	42.9	9.892
Web Site	18.5	33.3	0.0	57.2	15.508
Awards Banquet	30.8	0.0	0.0	42.9	12.518
Public Service Recognition Week	28.0	33.3	0.0	28.6	11.976
Annual Conference	57.7	100.0	33.3	71.5	9.936
Co-Sponsored Programs	36.0	66.6	0.0	57.2	8.332

Relationship between Education and Networking Opportunities¹

Programs	Percent Effective				Chi-Square
	Bachelors	Masters	Ph.D.	JD	
Council Meetings	53.9	42.1	66.7	100.0	20.894
Membership Luncheons	42.8	60.8	66.7	100.0	9.916
Social Hour/Holiday Party	64.3	59.1	100.0	100.0	9.870
Adopt-A-Highway	30.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	17.967
Newsletter	17.7	40.0	66.7	100.0	16.720
Web Site	30.4	31.8	66.7	100.0	12.527
Student Leadership Forum	35.7	50.0	66.7	100.0	16.216
Awards Banquet	28.5	72.8	66.7	100.0	15.090
Annual Conference	61.6	63.7	66.7	100.0	3.031
Co-Sponsored Programs	28.5	63.6	100.0	100.0	17.909

"Significantly different from neutral at the .05 level.

Significantly different from neutral at the .01 level.

All responses are on a 1 to 5 scale, with effective being a 4 or 5.

Relationship between Education and Access to Information¹

Programs	Percent Effective				Chi Square
	Bachelors	Masters	Ph.D.	JD	
Council Meetings	30.8	40.0	66.7	0.0	16.247
Membership Luncheons	35.7	45.5	66.7	100.0	25.724*
Social Hour/Holiday Party	7.7	40.0	66.7	0.0	14.192
Student Leadership Forum	42.8	47.4	33.3	100.0	10.149
Newsletter	82.4	63.7	100.0	100.0	12.430
Web Site	81.3	56.6	100.0	100.0	12.430
Awards Banquet	28.5	38.1	66.7	100.0	10.886
Public Service Recognition Week	42.8	45.4	100.0	100.0	19.982
Annual Conference	76.9	77.3	100.0	100.0	13.547
Co-Sponsored Programs	50.0	57.1	66.7	100.0	4.694

Relationship between Education and Skill Development

Programs	Percent Effective				Chi Square
	Bachelors	Masters	Ph.D.	JD	
Council Meetings	30.8	28.6	33.3	0.0	18.594
Membership Luncheons	21.4	31.8	66.7	100.0	19.617
Social Hour/Holiday Party	20.0	14.3	0.0	0.0	17.409
Student Leadership Forum	26.7	45.0	100.0	0.0	24.700*
Newsletter	22.2	26.0	66.7	0.0	11.968
Web Site	11.8	36.3	66.7	0.0	14.303
Awards Banquet	12.5	31.8	33.3	100.0	13.387
Public Service Recognition Week	20.0	27.3	33.3	100.0	7.009
Annual Conference	60.0	56.5	100.0	100.0	10.726
Co-Sponsored Programs	21.4	45.4	66.7	0.0	9.603

¹*Significantly different from neutral at the .05 level.

** Significantly different from neutral at the .01 level.

All responses are on a 1 to 5 scale, with effective being a 4 or 5.

Cross-tabulation: Future Programs

Relationship between SEX and Future programs¹

PROGRAMS	SEX		CHI-SQUARE
	MALE	FEMALE	
Networking reception in Austin	88.5	70.0	2.448
Centex Membership Directory	84.6	95.0	1.258
Dinner Program in Austin	85.2	75.0	0.770
Conference of Texas Chapters	66.7	85.0	2.031
Lunch Hour Speaker in Austin	77.8	60.0	1.740
Saturday 6-hour Conference	44.4	75.0	4.388*
Weekday 6-hour Conference	48.1	65.0	1.320

Relationship between ETHNICITY and Future Programs

PROGRAMS	ETHNICITY			CHI-SQUARE
	AFRICAN AMERICAN	CAUCASIAN	HISPANIC	
Networking reception in Austin	66.7	81.8	80.0	0.403
	100.0	87.9	90.0	0.427
Dinner Program in Austin	66.7	85.3	70.0	1.584
Conference of Texas Chapters	66.7	73.5	24.2	0.273
Lunch Hour Speaker in Austin	66.7	73.5	60.0	0.696
Saturday 6-hour Conference	66.7	55.9	60.0	0.165
Weekday 6-hour Conference	66.7	55.9	50.0	0.275

¹ *Significant relationship at the .05 level.

** Significant relationship at the .01 level.

Relationship between WORK and Future programs'

PROGRAMS	SECTOR OF EMPLOYMENT				CHI-SQUARE
	PUBLIC	PRIVATE	NON PROFIT	ACADEMIA	
Networking reception in Austin	85.7	100.0	33.3	57.1	7.896*
Centex Membership Directory	82.8	100.0	100.0	100.0	2.731
Dinner Program in Austin	82.8	80.0	66.7	71.4	0.774
Conference of Texas Chapters	69.0	60.0	100.0	85.7	2.335
Lunch Hour Speaker in Austin	69.0	80.0	33.3	71.4	2.043
Saturday 6-hour Conference	32.1	20.0	33.3	71.4	4.371
Weekday 6-hour Conference	51.7	60.0	33.3	57.1	0.892

Relationship between EDUCATION and Future Programs

PROGRAMS	HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION				CHI-SQUARE
	BACHELORS	MASTERS	Ph.D.	JD	
Networking reception in Austin	82.4	76.0	100.0	100.0	1.325
Centex Membership Directory	88.2	88.0	100.0	100.0	0.535
Dinner Program in Austin	64.7	88.5	100.0	100.0	4.782
Conference of Texas Chapters	82.4	65.4	100.0	100.0	3.056
Lunch Hour Speaker in Austin	58.8	73.1	100.0	100.0	2.853
Saturday 6-hour Conference	64.7	50.0	50.0	100.0	1.801
Weekday 6-hour Conference	41.2	57.7	100.0	100.0	4.666

¹*significant relationship at the .05 level.

** significant relationship at the .01 level.

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