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PROGRAM AND PROBLEMS OF THE INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION, UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES

Philippines

by

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Interest in programs for training and research in public Administration is on the rise everywhere. One evidence of this is that technical assistance projects are now underway in various parts of the world, particularly in nations which are newly independent or which for other reasons face serious administrative problems. These public administration centers, established with financial or technical help from the United Nations or the United States Government, are designed to serve not only the countries in which they are located, but also neighboring states in the region.

The United Nations, through its Technical Assistance Administration, has assisted in the creation of public administration centers in Rio de Janeiro at the Brazilian School of Public Administration, and in Turkey at the University of Ankara. A similar center is planned for Central America. For Southeast Asia, the most significant development of this kind is the establishment in 1952 of the Institute of Public Administration at the University of the Philippines. Financial support for this Institute comes from the United States Government as a joint technical assistance project of the Foreign Operations Administration (formerly Mutual Security Agency) and the Philippine Council for United States Aid. The administrative device used to carry out the project is a contract between the University of the Philippines and the University of Michigan. Under the contract, the University of Michigan is primarily responsible for furnishing technical personnel and library materials, and the University of the Philippines provides needed physical facilities. During the contract period, responsibility for conduct of the Institute will gradually be shifted from American to Filipino hands. After this transition has been completed, the Institute is expected to continue as a permanent unit of the University of the Philippines, serving not only the Philippines but all of Southeast Asia.

The objectives of the Institute fall into three closely related categories: (1) academic course work leading to degrees in public administration, (2) in-service training for government employees, and (3) consultation, research and publication. The Institute now has a technical, clerical and library staff of 28 full-time and 2 part-time members engaged in carrying on these activities. Short-term consultants join the staff from time to time for special assignments. For instance, Dr. Lillian M. Gilbreth world famous management expert, was a consultant with the Institute for three months beginning in August. All phases of the Institute

program rely heavily on the resources of the Institute Library, which is being built up with the assistance of the University of Michigan. This collection of books, periodicals, official documents, and other materials on public administration is now extensive and continues to grow. When completed, the Institute Library is expected to be the best of its kind in the Far East.

The academic offerings of the Institute lead to undergraduate and graduate degrees in public administration. The four year curriculum for the bachelor's degree (B.A.P.A.) provides for a broad liberal arts program during the first two years, followed with specialization in public administration and related subjects during the last two years. The program of instruction for the master's degree (M.P.A.) calls for completion of 30 units of graduate work. No fixed curriculum is prescribed for this degree, except for a few core courses in administration. Aside from these courses, each student's program is designed to suit his individual needs, taking into account his earlier preparation, his particular field of interest, and the requirements of government employment.

During the current semester, there are over 200 registrations in Institute courses with about 70 students enrolled as degree candidates, divided almost equally between undergraduate and graduate students. The number of students taking courses and working toward degrees with the Institute has remained steady despite a deliberate policy of discouraging mediocre students through strict grading practices and in other ways. Students eliminated by low grades have been replaced by new candidates. The philosophy of the Institute has been and continues to be that it is preferable to concentrate on a relatively small number of competent and promising students than to strive for quantity of students at the sacrifice of quality.

Over half of the students are government employees who take courses outside of office hours. To accommodate these employed students, most courses are offered in Manila during late afternoon or evening hours. Some courses are also given in the daytime at the main campus of the University at Diliman.

In line with its aim of developing as a regional center for training in public administration, the Institute has been able to provide a number of scholarships for graduate study to qualified students from other states of Southeast Asia. Three of these scholars have already been appointed, two from Thailand and one from Indonesia, and are in residence during the current semester. Additional scholarships will be awarded before the beginning of the next academic year.

The in-service training work of the Institute has been given a high priority, because of the urgent need for assisting government officials and employees to improve performance in their present assignments and to prepare for more responsible duties. Employees in these in-service training courses are assigned by their respective agencies to take the courses at government expense during regular working hours. A successful program of this kind requires close cooperation with and full support from top level government officials. The Institute has benefitted from such support. In February, 1953, the Institute's plan for in-service training was approved by the President and the Cabinet, and a Government Advisory Board for In-Service Training was created. With guidance from the Advisory Board, the Institute's Director of In-Service Training, assisted by a Training Specialist and other members of the staff, has mapped out and put into effect a comprehensive schedule of in-service training courses.

Attention during the first year has centered on a one-week short course in First-Line Supervision and a four-week course in Executive Development. The supervision course was started in May, and has been offered ever since on a weekly basis. Over 700 supervisors have participated, in groups of 20 to 30 each week. These supervisors have been selected under a quota arrangement from various agencies of the central government and the city government of Manila, so that each group represents a cross section of the Philippine public service. Interest in the course does not seem to be diminishing, and there are no plans for discontinuing it in the near future.

The first Executive Development course ended on November 6, and a second class is now in session. This course is designed for high ranking officials such as bureau chiefs, administrative officers, and division chiefs, who are nominated by their agency heads to take the course. Plans had been to impose a maximum of 40 persons in the first group, but 254 nominations came in, so the limit was raised to 80. Of those chosen, 70 completed the course satisfactorily and received certificates of recognition. Sessions of this course are held five mornings a week for four successive weeks. The opening hour is set aside for a lecture on the topic for the day, with the second hour reserved for a question and discussion period. The lecturers are drawn from the Philippine Government, from the Foreign Operations Administration and other U.S. Government agencies, and from the staff of the Institute. Because of the interest in the course and the favorable response to the first session, this course will probably be repeated several times.

Beyond plans for continuance of these established courses, preparations are being made for other types of in-service training programs. A specialist in records management will arrive soon to carry out a survey of records management problems in the Philippines and to initiate a follow-up in-service training course. A series of one day training conferences for government secretary-stenographers and typists is being arranged, and plans are also being worked out for short courses in advanced supervision and work simplification. These in-service training activities have already proved their value and they hold promise of making a substantial contribution to the improvement of administrative performance in the future.

As its third major field of operations, the Institute offers consultant services to government agencies, conducts research on problems of Philippine public administration and issues publications resulting from these research efforts. The full-time research staff consists of the Director of Research and two American research assistants, assisted by several part-time student assistants selected from the student body of the University of the Philippines. Other regular members of the Institute staff are devoting a substantial part of their time to research and consultation in the areas of their particular specialization and competency.

Several products of the research work have already been issued. These include a series of charts showing the organization of Philippine government agencies. These charts, after they had been checked with the Office of the Philippine Budget Commissioner, were widely distributed both in the Philippines and the United States. The charts are proving useful in connection with the position-classification survey being conducted in the Philippine government, and for many other purposes. Another publication is a general bibliography on Philippine public administration, which will be followed by more specialized bibliographies on such subjects as the Philippine civil service. A Union List of Serials has been issued, listing the collections of special libraries in various Philippine government agencies. Several manuscripts are in draft form and will be published soon, including a report on the organization and administration of the Manila Police Department, an analysis of the Philippine census of 1948, an analysis and comparison of the charters of Philippine cities, and a compilation of questions and answers on supervision based on the course in First Line Supervision.

Major research projects still in progress are a survey of Philippine local government, and the preparation of a volume on the principal features and characteristics of public administration in the Philippines. A research team composed of two Americans and two Filipinos has been travelling extensively throughout the archipelago collecting data for the local government study.

American and Filipino members of the staff are also collaborating in preparation of the book on Philippine public administration, which will be used in connection with Institute courses, but should also be of interest to other readers in the Philippines and elsewhere.

After more than a year of operation, the Institute of Public Administration can point to an encouraging record of substantial accomplishment in all phases of its program. The objectives of the agencies which cooperated in establishing the Institute have now been realized in large part, and prospects for the future development of the Institute are encouraging.

Despite these accomplishments, the Institute does face serious problems which demand attention and action in the near future. These may be summarized under the headings of housing, staffing, and financing.

The first of these problems is an urgent one but it will soon be solved. The Institute now occupies space made available in the Medical Compound of the University in Manila. This is a temporary arrangement, pending reconstruction of Rizal Hall, a building on the Manila campus which was badly damaged during the war. When ready for occupancy about March, 1954, Rizal Hall will provide adequate permanent quarters for the Institute.

The staffing problem is more complicated and will take longer to cope with, but progress is being made. The intention from the beginning has been that during the contract period Filipino personnel would be selected and trained for future service with the Institute, and would take over the work of the Institute on a gradual basis. Then by the time of contract termination, the Institute would be entirely in Filipino hands, except for assistance from short-term visiting professors and consultants from other countries. Up to now, this plan is being carried out. Several members of the permanent staff of the University, who have recently returned from training at universities in the United States, are now assigned to the Institute. They are making an effective contribution to all of its work, including academic instruction, in-service training, research, and internal administration. They are preparing in a systematic way to assume direction and operation of the Institute program as contractor personnel depart.

The dilemma is how to provide a sufficient number of such well qualified persons soon enough. One possibility, which is now under consideration, is to lengthen the transition period by extending the contract with the University of Michigan from its present termination date of December 15, 1954, in order to permit retention of two or three American professors or in-service training specialists until the end of academic year 1954-55

and perhaps for an additional year beyond that. Even if a longer transition period is provided, however, there will still be difficulty in training a sufficient number of Filipinos to fully staff the Institute as contractor personnel become unavailable. The regular FOA trainee program has not proved completely satisfactory up to now in meeting the staffing needs of the Institute. Various alternatives are being considered in order to make the greatest possible progress during the coming year in training future Institute staff members. Now that most of the initial problems of getting the Institute started have been met, emphasis can be transferred to long range matters such as this. The prospect is not discouraging by any means, but the question is one that calls for the cooperative attention of all agencies interested in the future of the Institute.

The financial needs of the Institute have been met so far partly with dollars made available under the contract with the University of Michigan, and partly with pesos out of counterpart funds. Support from the joint FOA-PHILCUSA technical assistance program will continue during the life of the basic contract, but at a gradually diminishing rate. As this outside support is withdrawn, the University of the Philippines will have to finance the Institute out of its regularly appropriated funds, supplemented by whatever other financial aid may be available, such as from private foundations or international agencies. It is too early to tell whether the Institute will continue to receive adequate financial backing. At any rate, necessary steps are being taken to seek this support. The University of the Philippines is making budgetary plans for assuming, at the beginning of the fiscal year next July 1, recurring costs of the Institute now being met out of counterpart funds. If the funds requested are provided by the Philippine Government, the Institute will be able to maintain approximately its current scope of operations after it comes completely under Philippine auspices.

This report has dealt both with the past progress and the future prospects of the Institute of Public Administration. The Institute has already moved a long way toward accomplishing the purposes for which it was created. Many questions about the future of the Institute remain unanswered, and only time can provide the answers. We may look forward with confidence, however, to continued development of the Institute as a regional center for public administration, serving the Republic of the Philippines and all of Southeast Asia.

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