



UNCG GUIDE *to* COLLABORATIVE COMPETENCIES



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UNIVERSITY
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COLLABORATIVE
GOVERNANCE

**Policy Consensus Initiative and University Network for
Collaborative Governance 2011**

UNCG Guide to Collaborative Competencies

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ABBREVIATIONS

BCCF	University of British Columbia College of Health Discipline
ICMA.....	International City and County Managers Association
OPM.....	U.S. Office of Personnel Management
PCI	Policy Consensus Initiative
PIE.....	Public Issues Education Competencies Task Force
UNCG	University Network for Collaborative Governance
USBOR	U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation

PREFACE

Since its founding in 1997, we at the Policy Consensus Initiative (PCI) have met hundreds of leaders, managers, and practitioners who are leading the way in creating better outcomes through collaborative governance. As their successes build, we - and the University Network for Collaborative Governance - get more and more requests for training in collaboration and its component skills. Like elite athletes to whom their sport just comes naturally, collaborative competence often comes naturally to the early innovators in the field of collaborative governance. While “swim faster” works well for the already advanced, the elements of swimming - or collaboration - often need to be broken down for those who are new to the field or who wish to encourage their colleagues and employees to take the first steps in using collaboration as an effective problem-solving mechanism.

That is where co-authors Kirk Emerson (School of Government and Public Policy, University of Arizona) and Steve Smutko (Ruckelshaus Institute, University of Wyoming) and their colleagues at more than 25 university-based centers that conduct scholarship and research on collaborative governance provide invaluable support. Steve and Kirk have drawn upon the collective knowledge and vast experience of the Network to provide an overview of the concrete skills needed to initiate and participate in collaborative approaches for public issues. This guide is designed to help teachers, leaders, trainers, public managers, and practitioners think deeply about what it means to be competent in collaboration and to help them decide where more training or other professional development might be helpful. Throughout the country, UNCG members are available to design and conduct training for those who need it, improving the ability of governments and communities to achieve their goals effectively and efficiently.

PCI is proud to join with the UNCG to present this *Guide to Collaborative Competence* and looks forward to working with all of you on the next wave of collaborative innovation.

Wendy Willis, Interim Director
Policy Consensus Initiative

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The authors are ever grateful for the guidance, feedback, and input of our colleagues and leaders in the discipline and practice of collaborative governance. Chris Carlson of the Policy Consensus Initiative provided the inspiration for starting the project, and the guidance for seeing it through. Our colleagues at Florida State University, Bob Jones and Jeff Blair, and John Stephens at the University of North Carolina made sure the project remained relevant and true to current research. And our reviewers, Martin Carcasson of Colorado State University and Matt Leighninger of the Deliberative Democracy Forum, ensured that the document speaks to the full spectrum of the practice of collaborative governance.

INTRODUCTION

UNCG Guide to Collaborative Competencies

Kirk Emerson and L. Steven Smutko

Solving the complex public policy problems we face today has come to exceed the capacity of any one sector – private, public or civic. Increasingly, people are working across sectors, jurisdictions, and diverse interests to make decisions and take actions together. Cooperative problem solving, consensus building, and constructive conflict resolution were once considered interesting alternatives and last resorts when conventional approaches failed. Now, they are becoming standard management practices and are being integrated into the way we govern ourselves and our scarce resources, public services, and human capital. *Collaboration is becoming the 21st century's governance tool of choice and necessity.*

Local, state, regional, and national governing bodies are practicing collaborative governance more and more across the country. You can find examples of communities using collaborative governance in community development, energy, environment and natural resources, health care, human services, telecommunications, and land use and transportation. Collaborative governance can take many forms, as forums for public deliberation, community problem solving or multi-stakeholder dispute resolution (Henton and Melville, 2005). Collaborative governance is still evolving. New rules, new incentives, and new technologies are constantly being created and integrated into new and existing governance and management systems. However, collaborative governance requires people to develop and put to use collaborative behaviors, skills, and tools in order for it to be most effective. Public agencies must identify, cultivate, practice and reward such collaborative *competencies* if we are to work better together in doing the public's business.

The University Network for Collaborative Governance (UNCG) has prepared this guide to help build collaborative competence within the private, public and civic sectors. It is intended primarily for use by public officials and managers who are seeking to improve their own or their staff's collaborative competence through continuing education and training. Public managers play many roles within a collaborative endeavor- from conveners to decision-makers, process managers, participants, and resource experts. The guide should also be useful to

professional trainers within and beyond UNCG as well as university faculty who are preparing the next generation for public service.

The *UNCG Guide to Collaborative Competencies* draws on a number of sources, including guidance from the federal Office of Personnel Management, the U.S Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution, as well as professional associations, such as the International City/County Management Association and university leadership development programs. From these sources, we developed a framework of five collaborative competencies that encompass ten specific skill sets and together constitute collaborative competence.

The Guide presents a description of these competencies and associated skill sets and a self-assessment tool for taking stock of your collaborative competence. The Guide also contains a catalogue of available training programs, useful weblinks, and references.

A word on terminology

In this report, we refer to “competencies” as the broader term for mastery over associated knowledge, behavior, and skills. “Skill sets” refer to a combination of skills, techniques, tools and information that constitute a given competency.

CASE STUDY:

Delaware Cancer Consortium

Cancer incidence and mortality in Delaware was among the highest in the nation in 2002. Governor Ruth Ann Minner formed the Delaware Cancer Consortium (DCC) to advise the governor and legislature on the causes of cancer incidence and mortality and potential methods for reducing both. The Consortium has implemented programs and services, driven awareness and education campaigns and many other activities to lessen the cancer burden in Delaware. Delaware's rate of improvement for cancer mortality now leads the country.

PCI, www.policyconsensus.org/casestudies/docs/DE_cancer.pdf

DEVELOPMENT *of the* COLLABORATIVE COMPETENCIES FRAMEWORK

The UNCG competence framework was developed in partnership with practitioners and academics from the fields of conflict resolution and consensus building, leadership development, civic engagement, and deliberative democracy.

The framework was largely derived from several published sources for collaborative competencies:

- *Qualifications and Competencies for Senior Executive Service*, U.S. Government Office of Personnel Management (OPM)
- *Action Plan: Competency-Based Approach to Collaboration and Partnering in the Hiring, Training, and Recognition of EPA Employees*, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- *Position Descriptions for Collaboration Levels*, U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Reclamation (USBOR)
- *Practices for Effective Local Management*, International City and County Managers Association (ICMA)
- *Report on Collaborative Governance Leadership Training Options* for the Alberta Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Christine Carlson, Policy Consensus Initiative
- *Core Competencies of Public Issues Educators*, National Public Policy Education Committee, Cooperative Extension, Public Issues Education Competencies Task Force (PIE)
- *The British Columbia Competency Framework for Interprofessional Collaboration*, College of Health Disciplines, University of British Columbia (BCCF)
- *Teaching Democracy in Public Administration*, Matt Leighninger, Deliberative Democracy Consortium
- *7 Collaborative Competencies for Project Leaders*, Sue Dyer, International Partnering Institute

Combining and synthesizing these nine sources yielded five distinctive collaborative competencies: leadership and management, process dynamics, analysis, knowledge management, and professional accountability. These five competencies and ten specific skill sets with attendant skill areas comprise the framework.

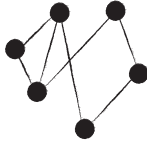
The framework is consistent with the literature in graduate management education including the functions of network managers (Agranoff and McGuire, 2001), collaborative skills needed by emergency managers (Alexander, 2003), entrepreneurial strategies for inter-organizational managers (Page, 2003), general capabilities for collaborative public managers (Bingham, Sandfort and O'Leary, 2008), and knowledge and skills relevant to local deliberative practice (Carcasson and Bruns, 2009).

To test the relevance and accuracy of the competencies, the framework was field tested through surveys of college and university training providers and managers in the public agencies who are cultivating these competencies within the public service workforce. The field survey work verified the importance of these competencies to managers and trainers. Over 60 federal, state and local agency respondents rated process competencies, such as listening and participating in teams effectively, leadership and management competencies, and professional accountability among the most important competencies for their staff. Alternatively, most university providers are teaching primarily about process and leadership competencies.

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ABOUT *the* NETWORK



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The University Network for Collaborative Governance (UNCG) consists of centers and programs in colleges and universities that conduct service and scholarship in order to enable citizens and their leaders to engage in dialogue, discussion, problem solving, and conflict resolution around public issues.

The Network supports centers and programs, helping them carry out their mission, connecting them with colleagues, sharing ideas and programs that work, offering consultation and assistance, and holding outstanding conferences.

In March 2008, the inaugural meeting of the Network was held in Atlanta, Georgia, where founding members of the Network adopted the Charter and identified objectives.

Network Objectives

The Network promotes and champions the role universities and their centers play as neutral forums and resources for collaborative governance. Network objectives are to:

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- Advance teaching, research and outreach in public deliberation, collaborative problem solving and multi-party conflict resolution;
- Share knowledge, information and best practices among members;
- Assist universities in shaping and adapting their research, teaching, and community engagement to enhance their effectiveness;
- Acquaint university leaders, policymakers, and the public with the role universities can play in carrying out collaborative governance practices;
- Provide linkages between university centers and leaders interested in using collaborative governance practices;
- Promote policies that support the use of best practices and systems for collaborative governance.

AUTHORS

Kirk Emerson has had a longstanding career in environmental conflict resolution (ECR) and collaboration as a practitioner, trainer, researcher, and administrator. She is the founding director of the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution of the Morris K. Udall Foundation (1998 – 2008). Previously, she coordinated the ECR program at the Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy at the University of Arizona, where she directed applied research on water resources, endangered species, and western range issues. Emerson is currently a Research Associate at the School of Government and Public Policy at The University of Arizona and at the Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration at the University of Syracuse's Maxwell School. She studies collaborative governance, particularly related to climate change, border security, and public lands management. She also provides consulting services through Kirk Emerson & Associates, located in Tucson, AZ, including process consultation and design, background research, conflict assessment, facilitation and mediation, strategic planning, training, and evaluation. Emerson received her B.A. from Princeton University, Masters in City Planning from MIT, and PhD in political science and public policy from Indiana University. In 1998, Emerson was awarded the William Anderson Award by the American Political Science Association. She was recently appointed to the working board of the National Institute for Civil Discourse.

L. Steven Smutko is a professor in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics and the Environment and Natural Resources Program at the University of Wyoming. He conducts research in decision making and negotiation on issues related to natural resource management and environmental policy. He has designed, convened, and facilitated stakeholder engagement projects on numerous natural resources issues in both the Rocky Mountain West and the southeast US. Dr. Smutko conducts negotiation training programs for local, state, and federal agencies, private industry, and nonprofit organizations, and teaches negotiation analysis and environmental conflict resolution to Wyoming students.

UNCG GUIDE to COLLABORATIVE COMPETENCIES

The Guide to Collaborative Competencies arrives at a critical juncture in modern governance. In the world of public policy, the 20th century was an era of honing and deepening knowledge of individual problems and issues. Commensurate with that refinement emerged an ever-more-specialized set of offices, agencies, roles, and responsibilities. In many respects, the world of 21st century decision making confronts challenges of re-integrating the decision making context. Coordination, collaboration, networks, and shared decision making have gained momentum as public agencies strive to work together and with various citizens to address challenges that transcend jurisdictional boundaries, individual agency responsibilities, and public and private spheres of action. This setting requires skills in collaboration, dialogue, mediation, and coordination. The Guide distills these concepts and describes qualities and capacities that support successful collaboration. Through a set of questions, it helps managers and other professionals identify when these qualities and capacities are especially relevant. The guide provides a significant training and management tool for organizations--public and private--that increasingly operate in contexts of coordination and collaborative governance. The guide is timely, practical, and user friendly--a great contribution to the emergent world of collaborative governance.

Lynn Scarlett,
Former Deputy Secretary of the Interior

While organizations and jurisdictions collaborate, the competencies of the human beings representing those organizations and jurisdictions always affect the success of the collaboration. In other words, in the world of collaboration, you are only as good as the people at the table. This Guide enlightens us about what collaborative competency means in the areas of leadership and management, process, analytics, knowledge management, and professional accountability. It pushes the boundaries of public policy, public management, collaborative governance, and negotiation by merging them in a new and creative way. It is a must-read for every leader, manager, and student who works, or hopes to work, across boundaries to solve society's most challenging problems.

Rosemary O'Leary
**Distinguished Professor and Phanstiel Chair in
Strategic Management and Leadership**
The Maxwell School of Syracuse University



In the current climate, state governments no longer have the luxury to make single-outcome investments. Collaboration is essential to the way that states do business, and the Guide to Collaborative Competencies gives public managers a useful and useable tool to assist in hiring, training, team-building, and evaluation.

Mike Jordan
State Chief Operating Officer, Oregon

No less an authority on citizen participation than the late John Gardiner, former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, stated, 'With all due respect to the ancient arts of law and diplomacy, the recent development of systematic, teachable techniques for getting at the roots of conflict, and engaging multiple parties in disciplined and voluntary collaborative problem solving, represents something new in the 5,000 years of recorded history.' This Guide to Collaborative Competencies, designed for current and future public managers, is an impressive compendium of the techniques Gardiner referred to.

Knowledge of collaborative decision-making processes and skills is essential to insure the onward march of our democracy. This Guide helps to understand the nature of these processes and skills. Its framework will prove an invaluable tool to achieve the promise of Gardiner's belief.

Bill Ruckelshaus,
**Chairman Emeritus of the Ruckelshaus Institute of
Environment and Natural Resources Board, Chair of
the William D. Ruckelshaus Center Advisory Board,
and 1st and 5th Administrator of the U.S. Environ-
mental Protection Agency**

Back in Wyoming, folks would get together to resolve an issue by dropping by the house, leaning on the hood of a pickup truck for a chat, or going inside for coffee and a visit around the kitchen table. Typically, when we agreed on a course of action, a handshake or a simple nod sealed the deal. Issues were resolved and commitments were made around the kitchen table. In that tradition, I see a great need for public managers who tackle the toughest and most sensitive issues in the same manner, such as the Guide to Collaborative Competencies describes. We can solve the toughest and most sensitive issues facing our states, communities and country, if we have leaders who are well-versed in the skills the Guide covers.

Jim Geringer,
Former Governor of Wyoming

