



## Best Practices for On-Boarding Practitioner-Academics

Advancing the Public Administration Discipline

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Increasingly, as society and the economy change, and stakeholder interests evolve, universities are reflecting on their overall mandate and thinking about how they respond. It seems the traditional role of the university is being challenged. Greater emphasis on experiential education, co-op placement and practicums, market driven programming, workplace skills development and training challenge not only the notion of the traditional role, but also places great pressure on traditional academic faculty to deliver on altered mandates. In many cases, practitioners from relevant professions or sectors of the economy are being brought in to engage in programming. In many instances this includes having them employed to teach courses.

This action-research study will consider this trend in the context of public policy and administration and use a case study to highlight these issues. This is a reflective piece that builds on efforts to on-board five faculty members to part-time teaching positions in the School of Public Policy and Administration at York University. This paper will argue that it is necessary to go beyond traditional on-boarding efforts for “practitioner-academics” and will propose a series of best practices informed by the reflections of both the author and the five key informants. The paper will propose a curricular framework and on-boarding model that provides insight into the issues of training versus educating, as well as dealing with conflict of interest, and implications imposed on instructors by employers.