

Popular Government

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Dear *Popular Government* readers,

Today's communication tools are evolving rapidly, and governments and organizations are evaluating the best ways to meet the changing needs of their audiences. The School of Government is no exception. As part of our ongoing efforts to share information with public officials and others in the most effective ways possible, we have decided to stop publishing *Popular Government*.

As many of you know, last year the School began a strategic planning initiative with the goal of ensuring that we are working in ways that will have the greatest impact for the public officials we serve. We have used focus groups, a wide-ranging survey, and one-on-one interviews to identify our strengths and determine gaps in our services.

As the economy has rapidly changed the needs of North Carolina communities, we have sought ways to be more responsive, provide more timely information, be more environmentally responsible, and decrease costs. Our decision about *Popular Government* reflects our commitment to do more for you—not less—and to do it more effectively.

Although we have enormous pride in and affection for *Popular Government*, which has been an integral part of our history, this will be the last issue. As alternative forms of disseminating and exchanging information have grown exponentially in the past few years, it has become apparent that the School can provide information and resources to public officials in other ways. Many of you already communicate with the School's faculty members—and each other—through our website, listservs, and growing number of blogs. Our faculty members are allocating their time to get information to you in more convenient and accessible formats, and we especially value opportunities for two-way communication as we refine our work to meet your changing needs.

I welcome your thoughts as we consider print and online alternatives to *Popular Government*, and I invite you to take a brief online survey to let us know what information you need, and how we can best provide it. Our decision about *Popular Government* itself has been informed by feedback from you. You will find the survey at www.sog.unc.edu/popgov/. Also, you may contact me at msmith@sog.unc.edu or 919.966.4107 to share your thoughts.

In the meantime, we will continue to offer archived issues of *Popular Government* on our website, free of charge. As always, I hope you will take advantage of the growing number of online resources that the School continues to make available at www.sog.unc.edu.

I look forward to receiving your ideas and comments.

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Dean, School of Government