



**2025 Annual Master Clerks Academies
For City and County Clerks
UNC School of Government**

**Wednesday, November 12, 2025
MMC Academy I**

7:45-9:00	Breakfast
9:00-10:00	<p>Managing Citizen Incivility Leisha DeHart-Davis, Professor of Public Administration and Government, UNC School of Government</p> <p>Description: This course will equip local government professionals with the knowledge they need to understand and manage citizen incivility. It will give an overview of the nature of citizen incivility and how it affects local government employees; introduce civility policies as a tool for managing citizen behavior; cover messaging to citizens that encourages respectful behavior; and address strategies that managers and employees can use to manage the emotional labor required for dealing with uncivil citizens.</p>
10:00-10:15	Break
10:15-12:15	<p>Contracting and Procurement: What Clerks Need to Know Crista Cuccaro, Teaching Assistant Professor, UNC School of Government</p> <p>Description: In this session, clerks will gain insights into the legal frameworks, principles, and best practices that govern public procurement and contracting in North Carolina. We will cover the fundamentals that clerks need to know about procurement—from bidding method and advertising periods to handling problems with bids. We will also discuss important aspects of contracting, including controversial clauses and whether clerks are required to attest signatures on contracts.</p>
12:15-1:15	Lunch
1:15-3:15	<p>Managing Up Elliot Stoller, Assistant Professor of Public Leadership and Governance, UNC School of Government</p> <p>Description: How can you more effectively interact with senior officials and manage up? This session will cover core competencies for managing up including but not limited to emotional intelligence, disagreeing without being disagreeable, power politics for good, and building trust. Participants will engage in role playing and skill-develop activities to strengthen these skills for influencing decision-making processes, communicating effectively, and improving outcomes.</p>

3:15-3:30	Break
3:30-4:30	Clerk Panel: Lessons Learned Description: Clerks will hear from seasoned peers during this interactive panel. Experienced clerks will share their wisdom on topics such as the mechanics of clerking, dealing with difficult board dynamics, managing burnout, and much more. Panelists will comment on prepared questions as well as take questions from the audience.
4:30-6:00	Reception

Thursday, November 13, 2025
MMC Academy II

7:45-9:00	Breakfast
9:00-11:00	Changing Technology in the Clerk's Office Shannon H. Tufts , Professor of Public Law and Government and Director, Center for Public Technology, UNC School of Government Description: This session will focus on the emerging technologies impacting clerks' offices. There will be a strong focus on social media and its usage, legal and political considerations, and employee usage considerations. Objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants will be able to identify 2-3 emerging technology trends which may be applicable to their work environment. 2. Participants will be familiar with the common social media applications used by governments and able to determine the appropriateness of each application to their work environment. 3. Participants will have a basic understanding of the political and legal complexities associated with social media, particularly as related to public records laws and retention. 4. Participants will be able to identify specific employee conduct issues related to social media use and when the government can legally curtail employee behavior in online forums.
11:00-11:15	Break
11:15-12:15	Clerk Panel: Election Year De-Brief/Prep Session Description: With city clerks just coming off an election and county clerks preparing for an election year, peer leaders will share best practices for managing all things elections including dealing with the public and candidates, handling campaign questions, and maintaining neutrality. Clerks will learn tips and tricks of the trade relevant to surviving election season.

- 12:15-1:45 **Lunch/Concurrent Association Business Meetings**
- 1:45-3:15 **Introduction to Local Government Finance**
Rebecca Badgett, Teaching Assistant Professor of Public Law and Government, UNC School of Government
Description: This session will explore the fundamental principles of local government finance. Specifically, it will touch on key topics such revenue generation and expenditure authority. To encourage practical application, participants will complete a scavenger hunt activity in which they will search for and analyze relevant laws that impact local government finance.
- 3:15-3:30 **Break**
- 3:30-5:00 **Personnel Records and Closed Sessions**
Kristina Wilson, Assistant Professor of Public Law and Government, UNC School of Government
Description: This session will focus on the laws surrounding personnel records including city and county confidentiality laws. It will also examine when personnel closed sessions can be held and discuss the mechanics of those closed sessions.

Friday, November 14, 2025
MMC Academy II

- 7:45-9:00 **Breakfast**
- 9:00-11:00 **Introduction to Fundamental Supervisory Practices**
Carolyn Miller, Assistant County Manager, Chatham County; Adjunct Instructor, Center for Public Leadership and Governance, UNC School of Government
Description: Being a supervisor in local government today is more challenging than ever. This session introduces critical knowledge and skills needed to be effective supervisors. Topics covered include the role, duties, and skills needed to be an effective supervisor in the public sector, how to work effectively in a diverse, multi-generational workforce and create an inclusive environment where all can prosper, and techniques and strategies to improve communication, deliver difficult performance feedback, and engage in productive coaching conversations with direct reports.

Credit for Successful Completion of Master Clerks Academies

The School of Government of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is the International Institute of Municipal Clerks' recognized provider of city and county clerks' educational programming in North Carolina. The School's Clerks Academies may be used for credit towards the IIMC's designations of Certified Municipal Clerk (CMC) and Master Municipal Clerk (MMC). The School also works cooperatively with the North Carolina Association of County Clerks and the

North Carolina Association of Municipal Clerks to provide programs that earn credit under their respective state certification programs.

The School awards points for successfully completing the 2025 Master Clerks Academy I and Master Clerks Academy II. **Points are awarded separately for each Academy. To receive credit for an Academy, the student must attend all sessions as shown by the School's electronic attendance monitoring system and must complete and submit an on-line evaluation form for that event. No partial credit can be awarded.**

Amounts of Credit Awarded

1. Persons successfully completing Master Clerks Academy I will receive 3 CMC/MMC points (6 hours).
2. Persons successfully completing Master Clerks Academy II will receive 4 CMC/MMC points (8 hours)
3. The amount of credit awarded by the NC Association of Municipal Clerks and NC Association of County Clerks in their respective state certification programs is decided by each association in accordance with its own rules. Generally, the amount of credit allowed is based on the number of classroom hours attended.

Instructors

Rebecca Badgett is an expert on grants management. In her role as teaching assistant professor, she provides training, consulting, and publications for local governments. Her courses largely focus on internal control and compliance with the federal Uniform Guidance and state law. Badgett also plays a key role in the facilitation of the [Lead for North Carolina](#) program, where she teaches and advises the fellows throughout the program and manages the training and curriculum for the LFNC Summer Academy. Rebecca Badgett joined the School of Government in 2017. She previously served as a legal educator for the School before joining the faculty. Prior to joining the School, Badgett served as a law clerk at the North Carolina Court of Appeals for three years. She earned bachelor's and master's degrees from UNC-Wilmington and a J.D. from North Carolina Central University.

Crista Cuccaro joined the School of Government's law and finance division in June 2022. She teaches and advises on procurement, contracting, property disposal, and ethics and conflicts of interest related to contracting. Cuccaro is the liaison for the North Carolina Association of Governmental Purchasing and the North Carolina Minority/Women Business Enterprise Coordinators' Network. In 2019, she became a Local Government Fellow and was one of the first municipal attorneys in North Carolina to be recognized as such by the International Municipal Lawyers Association. Prior to joining the School, Cuccaro was a senior assistant city attorney for the City of Durham, where she advised on community development, municipal finance and procurement, state legislative issues, economic development, and more. Before practicing law in North Carolina, she was a staff attorney in Knoxville, Tennessee. In Tennessee, her practice included land use and redevelopment, and she served as vice president of the Tennessee Municipal Attorneys Association. Cuccaro also taught Contract Drafting as an adjunct instructor at the University of Tennessee School of Law. She earned her B.A. degree from the University of North

Carolina and her J.D. degree from the University of Tennessee College of Law. Cuccaro is a member of the North Carolina and Tennessee State Bars.

Leisha DeHart-Davis is a professor of public administration and government at the School of Government. Her applied research focuses on workplace climate in local government organizations. DeHart-Davis's academic research addresses public sector organizational behavior, most recently, employee voice, organizational structure, and citizen and workplace incivility. She is a faculty member in the School's Master of Public Administration program and directs the Local Government Workplaces Initiative, a research program that conducts workplace climate and employee engagement research to help local governments create great workplaces. DeHart-Davis is the recipient of the 2024 Herbert Simon Award for the Scientific Study of Bureaucracy, given by the Public Administration Caucus of the Midwest Political Science Association. She is also a National Academy of Public Administration Fellow and recipient of the 2019 Gary Cornia Distinguished Lecturer given by the Romney Institute of Brigham Young University. She has published two books, the award-winning *Creating Effective Rules in Public Sector Organizations* and *Understanding Gender Imbalance in Public Sector Leadership*. Her research has also been published in academic journals including the *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, *Public Administration Review*, *International Public Management Journal*, *Administration and Society*, and *Review of Public Personnel Administration*. DeHart-Davis is past-president of the Public Management Research Association and a UNC Thorp Faculty Engaged Scholar. She holds a Ph.D. in public policy from the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Carolyn Miller is an assistant county manager in Chatham County and has instructed in the areas of leadership, conflict management, and supervision for over 20 years. She is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, Pennsylvania State University, and East Carolina University. She is an instructor with the UNC School of Government Center for Public Leadership and Governance in their Fundamental Supervisory Practices course and works as a small group coach for the Navigate Difficult Conversations course. She also works with the LTAP programs at North Carolina State University and the University of Kentucky in the continuing education programs for local government employees, instructing courses in supervision, leadership, ethics, supervision and conflict management.

Elliot Stoller is an assistant professor of leadership and governance at the School of Government. In the role, he serves municipal, county, and state officials in areas of leadership, management, and governance. Stoller's research focuses on how government officials in centralized management positions, such as chief administrative officers or local government managers, can better identify, use, and expand existing capabilities across multiple government departments. Stoller is the faculty lead for Advanced Leadership Corps and Essentials of Municipal Government. Stoller joined the School's faculty in December 2023. Previously, Stoller has worked in state government as an assistant project manager for the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) as well as in legislative and constituent affairs for an Illinois state senator. He also has experience as a substitute teacher and as the co-founder and co-president of AMENDS. Stoller earned a bachelor's degree from Stanford University and a master's degree in sociology as well as a Ph.D. in organizational behavior from Harvard University.

Shannon H. Tufts is a professor of public administration and government at the School of Government. She is an expert on the intersection of law and technology in the public sector, cybersecurity, cloud computing, social media, and strategic IT investments, as well as CIO leadership and development. As faculty member at the School of Government, she designed and implemented the first local government [Certified Government Chief Information Officers](#) (CGCIO) program in the nation in 2004 and continues to run multiple CIO certification programs across the United States for local and state government IT professionals. She joined the School in 2000 and is the director of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's [Center for Public Technology](#). Tufts earned a bachelor's degree UNC–Chapel Hill, MPA from UNC–Charlotte, and Ph.D. in public administration with a concentration in public sector information systems from North Carolina State University.

Kristina Wilson joined the School of Government in September of 2021, and her work focuses on local government structure and authority, board procedures, and public records and transparency issues. Prior to joining the School, Kristina practiced as a Civil Litigation Associate at Yates, McLamb & Weyher LLP in the areas of medical malpractice and general civil liability defense. Kristina received her J.D. *cum laude* from Wake Forest University School of Law where she was a published member and Executive Online Editor of the *Wake Forest Law Review*. Kristina earned undergraduate degrees in English and Spanish *cum laude* from Georgetown University. She is a member of the North Carolina State Bar.