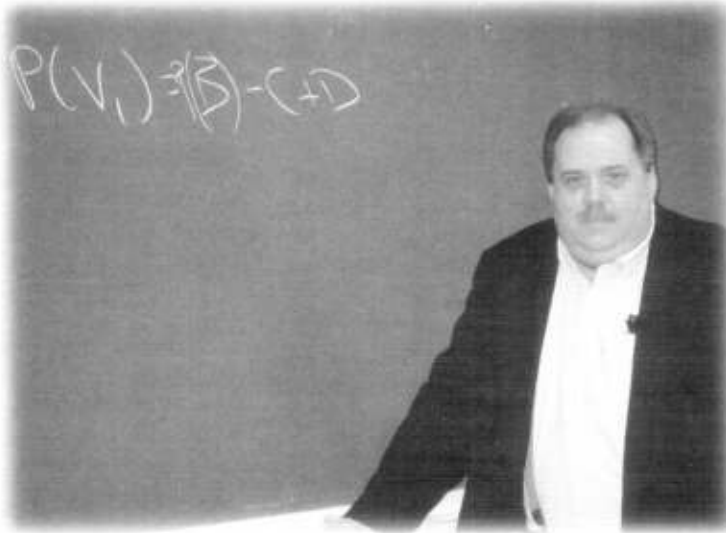


Faculty Profile:

Lee Frost-Kumpf



It's one thing to create a government program designed to solve a problem. It's something else entirely to figure out whether the program is effective.

Enter Lee Frost-Kumpf, an assistant professor of political studies and public affairs and an expert in the emerging field of performance management. Frost-Kumpf has been at UIS since 1996 and has a joint appointment in the Institute for Public Affairs' Office of Policy and Administrative Studies.

Frost-Kumpf works under contract with the state's Department of Human Services to help it improve the effectiveness of its relatively new Teen REACH program. The Illinois Department of Human Services established Teen REACH for children 10 to 17 years old in about 40 sites throughout the state. The program has four basic goals. One is to improve academic achievement. A sec-

ond is to enhance social development through sports, the arts, and other forms of self-expression. The third is to develop positive role models through adult and peer mentoring. The fourth is to develop healthy life skills that would foster teens' ability to live independently after high school and lead to reduced cases of substance abuse and unplanned pregnancy.

Frost-Kumpf has worked with the agency to develop indicators and reporting systems related to the four goals. In short, he is helping the agency know whether its program is working. On academic achievement, for example, they chose to look at grades, promotion rates, and graduation rates — hoping for increases in all three — and also to look at dropout rates, hoping for a decrease.

The assistant professor does not develop those indicators on his own. He collaborates with those involved in the program so that the participants find the indicators useful and important. Clients are more committed to performance measurements and reports if they have a role in developing them, he says.

Frost-Kumpf also uses his performance management skills in working with federal programs. He and the IPA have received contracts from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to help evaluate a number of pesticide measurement programs.

One program has to do with pesticide application training on commercial crops and around people's homes. Frost-Kumpf says it is important not only to have educational programs, but also to measure the outcome of those programs, such as identifying the number of people trained for certification and the number who know the importance of labeling and keeping certain pesticides away from water supplies and wells.

Measuring such items can lead to the adoption of the best management practices, Frost-Kumpf says, noting that he helped the USDA develop the goals and indicators to be used in measurement. This project and two other pesticide-related projects have taken the UIS professor around the country to gather information and interact with people concerned about these issues. Pesticide management involves not only farms, but also golf courses, nurseries, and the companies that homeowners hire to spray their homes.

The real goal, Frost-Kumpf said, is not for an agency like the USDA to set standards or provide educational programs, but to make sure those programs are making a difference. The kind of work he does makes its way into reports that go to Congress, which is requiring more and more accountability of government programs and agencies.

He said Congress enacted the 1993 federal Government Performance and Results Act to help rebuild the trust of the American people in their government, to improve the performance of agencies, and to measure agencies' results in a systematic way.

"This is a shift from process to outcome," he says. "It involves the management of results, and ultimately, the allocation of resources to manage those results."