Homeland Security in Higher Education: The State of Affairs

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**Abstract**

In the past two decades, the number of institutions of higher education offering degrees in homeland security has increased exponentially. This rapid growth, brought on by external factors, has led to some discussion about the ability of programs to address the needs of the field. This article is an overview of the state of higher education (college and technical school) programs in the fields of homeland security and emergency management. The authors look at the rapid growth of these programs in the U.S. system, explain the state of a lack of shared learning outcomes and standards in the field and describe the evolution of these issues, and conclude by offering some criteria and guidelines based on recent studies and organizational needs for such programs.

Catastrophes like the terrorist attacks on Oklahoma City in 1995, the attacks on the World Trade Center in 1993 and on September 11, 2001, along with natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina in 2005, have raised the nation's awareness of natural, accidental, and human-made risks. The costs of natural disaster have been increasing exponentially, largely due to increases in population and wealth density in disaster-prone areas. Even when accounting for the exponential rise in gross domestic product (GDP) over the last four decades, the costs of natural disasters have tripled (Blanchard, 2008). In the decade following 9/11, the United States—federal and state governments, private and nonprofit sectors—have invested countless billions in increasing our nation's preparedness.

**Keywords:** homeland security, emergency management, higher education
to all hazards and other possible acts of terrorism on U.S. soil. Mueller and Stewart recently estimated that the nation’s investment in domestic homeland security over this period has amounted to $1 trillion (Mueller & Stewart, 2011). The growing priority of securing the homeland and managing the consequences of attacks and disasters has brought about corresponding adaptation and response by the nation’s higher education sector to meet the demands of the market.

This article begins with an overview of the state of higher education (college and technical school) programs in the fields of homeland security (HS) and emergency management (EM). We look at the rapid growth of these programs in the U.S. system, explain the state of a lack of shared learning outcomes and standards in the field, and discuss how this situation is evolving. We conclude by offering some criteria and guidelines based on recent studies and organizational needs for such programs.

**Overview of Programs**

Emergency management and homeland security are in much the same position as public administration always is—striving to find a way to relate theory to practice and education to professional identity. Scholars who have examined this issue of developing emergency management and homeland security as a discipline (Plant, Arminio, & Thompson, 2011) have quoted Dwight Waldo’s observations that public administration should be a profession without actually becoming one in the strictest sense, leaving behind the true professional designations, institutionalized standards for entry, licensing, training, and clear ethical guidelines. The leaders in public administration in the 1960s saw the need for professionalization in the field, yet no professional identity emerged for those engaged in the work of the public sector.

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, found most universities as unprepared to deal with the “new normalcy” as government agencies. As has been well documented in the literature, emergency management and homeland security courses and programs sprang up quickly to meet demand and opportunity (Bellavita & Gordon, 2006; Cwiak, 2011; Drabek, 2007; Kiltz, 2011; McCreight, 2011; Polson, Persyn, & Cupp, 2010). Plant et al. (2011) concluded that whether homeland security is a true profession or not is inconsequential when one considers its universal relevance. Like public administration, homeland security needs to act as if it is an emerging profession in its attention to the most important aspects of any professional grouping: a concern for subject matter expertise, shared values, and a commitment to dialogue and excellence among its members.

Tierney noted in 2005 that disasters often serve as “focusing events” leading to the development of new legislation, policies, and practices. On September 10, 2001, there was no single federal agency for homeland security. Most of the U.S. states did not have a Director of Homeland Security, a budget line for homeland security activities, nor an agency committed to coordinating these efforts. By the
end of that year, things had changed significantly. A federal office was created (and in November 2002, a federal agency), and all 50 states had created a position to coordinate homeland security efforts. Today, every state and most large localities have some form of governmental organization tasked specifically with homeland security efforts (compared to seven states and only a handful of cities before September 11, 2001). And, since the creation of the Department of Homeland Security grants programs in 2003, state and local governments have been granted billions of dollars in funding for improving their preparedness efforts. It is an area of employment that has been growing rapidly over the past decade. And although it is hard to pinpoint a single number representing homeland security/emergency management employment in the United States, the growth in personnel at the Department of Homeland Security is evidence of this continued upward trend (see Table 1). In addition, this number does not include the over 200,000 contractors the agency employs annually. This growth is projected to continue. The Office of Bureau of Labor and Statistics expects future growth in several fields under the umbrella of homeland security, such as cybersecurity (http://www.bls.gov/oco/cg/cgs041.htm#empty).

Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>168,344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>179,871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>189,507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>191,063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>199,492</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although many homeland security jobs are with the federal, state, and local governments, both for-profit and nonprofit organizations also hire in the field of homeland security. According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics’ (BLS) Occupational Outlook Quarterly on Homeland Security, security is one of the largest areas of employment in the private sector (Jones, 2006, p. 4). The field of homeland security is broad and varied, and according to the BLS includes careers in areas such as Information Security, Law Enforcement, Emergency Management, Infrastructure Protection, Business Continuity, Intelligence Analysis, and Physical Security to name a few (Jones, 2006). Developing programs to prepare graduates adequately for such a variety of positions can be challenging for academic institutions when it comes to curriculum development.
These increased employment opportunities are likely a main factor contributing to the growth in interest in homeland security by both students and colleges and universities. The Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Emergency Management Institute charted this growth of higher education programs in emergency management over the period from 1983 to 2007 (See Figure 1).

Figure 1.
Emergency Management College Programs by Year

As of October 2012, the number of colleges with specialized programs in emergency management has grown from zero in 1993 to 259, according to FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute. (see Figure 1). This includes

- 67 certificates, minors, diplomas, tracks, focus
- 50 associate degrees
- 46 bachelor degrees
- 87 master’s-level programs
- 9 doctoral-level programs

FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute EMI also has identified 131 higher education programs related to Homeland Security, Homeland Defense and/or Terrorism. Additionally, there are 31 programs related to public health, 10 U.S.
Tierney’s point, noted earlier in this work, regarding disasters serving as “focusing events” can be seen in the growth in emergency management programs evident in Figure 1. The first bubble of growth occurs in 1995—following the Oklahoma City bombing—followed by unabated growth through 9/11 in 2001 and by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. Simultaneously, this period has also seen growth in programs focusing on homeland security. *U.S. News and World Report* identified both homeland security and cybersecurity as two of the nine hottest college majors in 2011 (Gearon, 2011). *U.S. News* says job demand has grown “tenfold over the last 10 years” for cybersecurity or information assurance (teaching students to spot and fix vulnerabilities in the nation’s information infrastructure). Further, the article identified a high interest in public health programs, which may stem from the heightened awareness of pandemics such as SARS and influenza viruses circulating in animals that pose threats to human health, the spread of antibiotic resistance, or health care reform.1 As of 2009, some 140 institutions offered an undergraduate major, minor, or concentration in homeland security, according to the *U.S. News* article.

These programs have grown in absolute numbers as the higher education community has tried to respond to national priorities and increased awareness of its homeland security role under the War on Terror, as well as a greater appreciation of the effect of catastrophic disasters due to the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. With this rapid growth in program development come questions of consistency in curriculum quality, student learning outcomes, industry standards, and guidelines as well as the need for accreditation.

**Curriculum Overview**

In 2007, Rollins and Rowan noted that higher education programs for the homeland security discipline was an evolving, ungoverned environment of numerous programs purporting to prepare students for various positions of responsibility (Rollins & Rowan, 2007). Many programs were established using current institutional courses that have since been revised to address issues related to homeland security. As the discipline continues to mature, program commonalities, core teaching areas, and course standardization may emerge that shape the homeland security academic environment and produce graduates conversant with a standard set of homeland security topics.

Although the homeland security academic environment does not appear to have matured to the point that common core courses are being taught at any level of higher education, the education community is still debating whether the establishment criteria and standardization of the curriculum is optimal at this time. Members of both the academic and the professional communities are concerned that the diversity of issues related to the discipline does not lend itself to identifiable core teachings, and that the pace of change in homeland security—especially when you
include the mission of cybersecurity—is currently too fluid. Rollins and Rowan (2007) noted that homeland security practitioners and academicians agreed that greater attention is needed for the role and utility of homeland security as a permanent, well-understood discipline. Much consensus also exists around the idea that for the field to mature, the homeland security environment must be further defined; this in turn would provide for the development of core educational objectives (Rollins & Rowan, 2007). However, Drabek (2007) notes that curricula reflecting homeland security issues and competencies have been established following the terrorist attacks of 9/11.

Although clear consensus exists on the curriculum that should be delivered in this area, one institution is working closely with the leading agency in the field in developing and delivering coursework. The Center for Homeland Defense and Security, the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS), has been the nation’s premier provider of homeland security graduate- and executive-level education since 2002. NPS and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) are collaborating to pioneer the development and delivery of homeland security education programs for governors, mayors, and senior homeland security leaders across a wide spectrum of disciplines in local, tribal, state and federal governments, and the military. Given the time CHDS has spent in the homeland security academic environment, its ongoing interaction with homeland security entities throughout the nation, the use of its graduate program as a model for numerous other universities, and the collaborative activities occurring with DHS, many institutions look to this organization for guidance on homeland security academic issues (Rollins & Rowan, 2007, p. 14).

Regarding curriculum standards, the field of emergency management appears to be a bit further along than homeland security. According to the research, emergency management has become more professionalized as a field over the past three decades (Drabek, 2007). An important part of this transformation has been the explosive growth in higher education programs designed to provide the fundamental knowledge and skills required of emergency managers (Blanchard, 2005). Before this unexpected rapid growth, FEMA created a Higher Education Program in 1994 to serve as the “nation’s leading focal point for emergency management higher education, foster the professionalization of the field via educational efforts, and contribute to a more resilient nation by creating a cadre of professional emergency managers” (Blanchard, 2008, p. 5). This program has worked to align higher education standards and curriculum with the needs of the field.

Recently, the FEMA Higher Education Program organized a collaborative effort of emergency management academics that produced Curriculum Outcomes describing the knowledge and skills expected of a person possessing an undergraduate degree in the field of emergency management (Cwiak, 2011). And although this document “is a much needed step forward and will serve the field well,” it does not address
all the existing issues and “is just one step of many to come as the emergency management community seeks to standardize what those holding emergency management degrees should know” (Cwiak, 2011, pp. 11–12). As Cwiak points out, graduate education and research agenda priorities in emergency management still need to be addressed. The efforts of FEMA around higher education seem to have helped advance the discussion of shared learning objectives and outcomes in this area. Perhaps as the DHS continues to evolve, this agency will provide a similar leadership role in the field of homeland security.

Challenges to Curriculum Development

Some of the challenges preventing the development of a straightforward set of standards are that initiatives for increased integration among emergency management and homeland security curricula are constrained by important cultural differences, future governmental policies, disaster events, and other external factors (Drabek, 2007). These factors include the nation’s War on Terror priority that dominated all-hazards disaster management during the first decade of this new century. This period also emphasized the teaching of a top-down management paradigm reflective of homeland security, rather than the emergency management alternative model, which emphasizes cooperation, not command; coordination, not control. These factors have created tension over the intergovernmental nature of emergency management versus homeland security. For example, homeland security emphasizes “the crime scene” nature of the disaster setting and the important roles played by law enforcement and intelligence agencies that gather information to thwart potential enemy attacks and the quick capture of those who might be successful in implementing their plot. In the homeland security paradigm, local officials are recognized, but the role of the federal bureaus rises to the top of the agenda (Drabek, 2007). Again, this culture differs significantly from the world of emergency management as it is practiced within most local communities.

These competing cultures are so strong that they even exist in national doctrine such as the National Preparedness Goal. This conflict is evident in how the Goal operationalizes missions such as Mitigation versus the Prevention and Protection missions (FEMA, 2011). DHS, FEMA, and its partners and national stakeholders are currently working on developing national frameworks for Prevention, Protection, and Mitigation. These frameworks are all deliverables of Presidential Policy Directive 8 and set the foundation for the implementation of each mission area. As part of this directive, the frameworks lay out key roles and responsibilities among all the partners, including local, state, tribal, territorial, and federal governments; the private sector; voluntary, faith-based, and community organizations; and the public (http://fema.ideascale.com/a/ideafactory.do?discussionID=57956). The National Preparedness Goal separately distinguishes protection, mitigation, and prevention in a way that is unclear given the stated definitions. Distinctions between these
three missions become clear upon looking at the core capabilities list for the goal (see Table 2), which identifies what steps can be taken to achieve Mitigation, Protection, or Prevention. You may note that Protection and Prevention have mostly the same terrorism-centric capabilities and differ from the core capabilities of Mitigation. This structure leads to the conclusion that these missions are the focus of the Homeland Security community that is focused on law enforcement, intelligence, and homeland defense. This national planning effort highlights one of the challenges that exist in developing common curriculum standards due to the competing cultures within the fields of homeland security and emergency management.

Table 2.
National Preparedness Goal: Unique Core Capabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protection</th>
<th>Prevention</th>
<th>Mitigation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intelligence and information sharing</td>
<td>Intelligence and information sharing</td>
<td>Community resilience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdiction and disruption</td>
<td>Interdiction and disruption</td>
<td>Long-term vulnerability reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screening, search, and detection</td>
<td>Screening, search, and detection</td>
<td>Risk and disaster resilience assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access control and identity verification</td>
<td>Forensics and attribution</td>
<td>Threats and hazard identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cybersecurity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical protective measures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk management for protection programs and activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply chain integrity and security</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access control and identity verification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Professional Education**

In October 2006, the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA) charged FEMA with responsibility for leading the nation in developing a national preparedness system, of which training and education are key elements. In 2009, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) reviewed FEMA’s efforts to implement PKEMRA, which established a Homeland Security Education Program, including a graduate-level Homeland Security Education Program in the National Capital Region (NCR). PKEMRA acknowledged the need to provide educational opportunities to senior federal officials and selected state and local officials with
homeland security and emergency management responsibilities. It also requires
the leveraging of existing resources, as well as establishing student enrollment
priorities and selection criteria and employee service commitments. As a result,
the Naval Postgraduate School’s Center for Homeland Defense and Security,
FEMA, and DHS have created an 18-month Homeland Security Master’s Degree
Program for the NCR. The Homeland Security Master’s Degree Program is taught,
and the degree awarded, by the Naval Postgraduate School’s Center for Homeland
Defense and Security using the approved curricula. The program employs adjunct
faculty from universities and colleges across the United States and is open to DHS
employees at the GS-13, GS-14, GS-15, and exceptional GS-12 levels, as well as
to other federal and nonfederal employees.

FEMA has developed new strategies for its training and education policies.
According to FEMA’s 2011–2014 Strategic Plan, FEMA will realign and enhance
existing and emerging training and education programs for state, local, and tribal
emergency management officials, and FEMA employees, into a comprehensive
emergency management curriculum. FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute
(EMI), Center for Domestic Preparedness (CDP), and the FEMA-sponsored Center
for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS) at the Naval Postgraduate School
will play prominent roles in this effort. According to the FEMA plan, the programs
at EMI, CDP, and CHDS, along with FEMA’s other training and education providers,
are to serve as the basis for training in core competencies across four areas; founda-
tional, technical, management, and leadership. FEMA’s approach will emphasize
education opportunities for newly appointed emergency managers and staff from
state, local, tribal and territorial, and federal emergency management offices. The
training will focus on the core competencies to provide new practitioners with
broad and generalized knowledge and skills in the field of emergency management
that meaningfully correlate to job performance. It will also build on executive-
level programs that build strategic leadership competencies and foster collaborative
action among current and future emergency management leaders. These standards
in homeland security and emergency management professional development could
be a step in the direction of articulating agreed-upon curriculum standards for
bachelor’s and master’s degrees in both of these areas as well.

ACCREDITATION

Currently there is no official organization that accredits undergraduate or graduate
programs specifically in homeland security/emergency management. These programs
do exist in colleges and universities accredited by regional accrediting organizations
(such as the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) and within accredited
programs such as Masters of Public Administration Programs (MPA). So, although
the National Association for Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA,
the MPA accrediting organization) and other regional accrediting organizations
do not accredit homeland security or emergency management programs specifically, they do examine these courses and programs with the same attention they give to all other courses and programs offered. There is a check on the general quality of these classes, offering some assurance that they meet basic guidelines and standards in advancing an institution’s goals and mission.

Other organizations will accredit specific types of homeland security programs, such as information security. For example, the National Centers of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education Program (CAE/IAE) accredits undergraduate and graduate programs in Information Assurance (IA) and other similar areas. However, this accreditation does not apply to the fields of homeland security or emergency management in general, and it still leaves open the issue of how to ensure that graduates learn a certain body of knowledge, understanding, or skill set in an area so critical.

Although in many academic areas no accreditation exists, it seems to be more prevalent in fields where specific professional careers are associated with the degree (e.g., business, public administration, education, medicine, etc.) Accreditation can lend credibility to programs and ensure that institutions prepare students with a particular body of knowledge and skill set. It provides accountability to programs by setting standards for quality of instruction and program outcomes. It is not our argument that accreditation is a necessary component in higher education degree programs; only that it indicates generally a shared set of values and principles within a discipline.

**Recommendations**

As the field has continued to grow, so has the need for communication among programs and between academics and practitioners. Several organizations have either developed or refocused to address this need. The National Academic Consortium for Homeland Security (the Consortium) comprises public and private academic institutions engaged in activities related to current and future U.S. national security challenges. The primary role of the Consortium is to promote, support, and enhance academic research, technology development, education and training, and service programs dealing with all aspects of international and homeland security (Rollins & Rowan, 2007, p. 14). In addition, the Center for Homeland Defense and Security along with FEMA’s Higher Education Program have worked to coordinate discussions among academics and practitioners to develop curriculum outcomes or focus areas within degree programs.

Based on survey input and face-to-face meetings, both FEMA and CHDS have put together some suggested guidelines for curriculum development. These are general core areas in which foundational knowledge and skills should be developed. According to the FEMA work group in the *Curriculum Outcomes* document, an individual with an undergraduate degree in Emergency Management should be able to demonstrate knowledge, skills, and abilities in the following areas.
FOUNDATIONAL TENETS

- **Historical awareness**: History of natural disasters and the field of Emergency Management
- **Effective communications**: Proficiency in scientific research methodology; able to produce multiple forms of written professional documentation; strong verbal and written communication
- **Leadership, management, and decision making**: Leadership, management, and decision-making skills; strategic planning; ethics
- **Personal, organizational, and professional development**: A commitment to the promotion of personal, organizational, and professional development

CORE AREAS

- **The “Principles of Emergency Management”**: Definition, mission, concepts, and terminology used and applied in emergency management
- **Human dimensions**: Social, political, economic, cultural and ecological issues; interpersonal and interorganizational behavior; disaster myths; the concept of vulnerability and the social construct of disaster human behavior
- **Policy and legal dimensions**: Statutory basis of emergency management in the public sector and federal, state, tribal and local policies, legislation, directives, and regulations
- **Areas of emergency management responsibilities**: Mitigation opportunities, planning, training, exercises, warning, evacuation, sheltering, damage assessment, debris removal, donations management, volunteer management, public information, federal assistance programs, and recovery programs. Graduates should be able to understand the need to integrate the essential stakeholders within their community (e.g., law enforcement, emergency medical services, public health, fire, Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), public works, critical infrastructure partners, and businesses) in order to create a community framework that reduces vulnerability to hazards and enhances the ability to cope with disasters.
- **Risk assessment process and methodology**: Hazard identification, threat analysis, and vulnerability assessment within the overlapping contexts of the social, built, and physical environments
- **Fiscal dimensions of emergency management**: Fiscal responsibilities of the private, nongovernmental organization (NGO), and public sectors at the federal, state, tribal, and local level; internal and external sources of revenue; budgets and expenditures; accountability; reimbursements; grant management; resource lists; cost-benefit analysis; mutual aid; procurement; disaster assistance funding
• *Awareness and promotion of EM*: Recognize and promote the awareness and advancement of emergency management through the involvement of political leaders and key decision makers, policy advocacy, stakeholder engagement, partnerships among practitioners and scholars, public education, and involvement in professional organizations

• *EM standards, best practices, and comparative practices*: Existing standards; best practices and comparative perspectives; current, ongoing, and developing societal and technological changes (Jaffin et al., 2011)

Based on a study conducted by Craig Marks in 2005, the following *master’s level* competencies in Emergency Management were suggested for FEMA support:

• *Leadership*: Incident Command/NIMS/NRP, Consensus Building, Risk Communication

• *Communications*: Oral, written, and technical

• *Analytical and planning skills*: Preparedness and Prevention Operations, Response Operations, Recovery Operations and Mitigation Operations

• *Hazard and risk assessment*: Risk Planning, Risk Management and Business Recovery/COOP

• *Government operations*: Administration and Financial Management

• *Training and professional development*: Professional Development, Exercise Design, Evaluation, Development and Execution (Marks, 2005)

In 2009, the Center for Homeland Defense and Security sponsored a meeting of faculty from a number of programs across the country to discuss the key curricular components that should be included in *undergraduate* programs or certificates in Homeland Security. The following major areas were identified as critical.

• *Administering homeland security*: Leadership; Management; Budget and Finance; Logistics; Human Resources; Organizational Behavior and Public Administration

• *Intelligence*: History, Evolution, and Current Structure of Intelligence Community; Counterintelligence; State and Local Intelligence; Intelligence Cycle; Covert and Clandestine Activities

• *Private sector and homeland security*: Public/Private Partnerships; Business Continuity and Resilience; Private Sector Motivations; Public Education; Public Relations; Public vs. Private Organizational Functions; Role of Private Sector in Planning

• *Research and analysis*: Information Literacy; Collection and Analysis; Theory Analysis and Application; Inductive/Deductive Reasoning; Applied Statistics; Spatial Analysis; Geographic Information Systems (GIS); Evaluation Research; Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis

• *Emergency management*: Application of All-hazards Analysis; Federal, State, Local, and Tribal Emergency Management; Disaster Planning Models; Community Preparedness; Understanding Basic Concepts Such as Mitigation, Preparedness, Prevention, Recovery, etc.; Land
Use Planning; Resilient Community Design; Exercise and Evaluation Programs; Social, Economic, Political, and Environmental Recovery

- **Natural and human caused hazards**: Types and History of Hazards; Organizational Responses; All-hazards Approach; Developing Preparedness and Instilling Resilience; Needs of Vulnerable Populations

- **Risk management**: Components of Risk, Methods for Conducting Risk Assessments; Federal, State, Local, and Private Sector Perspectives; Application of Prevention, Mitigation, and Recovery Strategies to Various Sectors

- **Critical infrastructure protection**: Critical Infrastructure, Key Resources, and Interdependencies; Critical Components in an Infrastructure in Particular Contexts (State, Local, Private, etc.); Various Methods to Achieve Levels of Protection; Financial and Operational Relationships; Strategies, Policies, Programs, and Agencies Involved; Global Security Threats and Hazards; Scalable Assessment Methodologies

- **Strategic planning**: Budgeting; Integrated Planning Systems; Risk-based and Scenario-based Planning; Deliberate and Crisis-Action Planning; Interagency and Interorganizational Planning; Current Policy Mechanisms; Leveraging Resources and Grants; NIMS, ICS, NIPP, NRF

- **Strategic communication**: Elements of Strategic Communication; Risk Communication; Cultural Awareness; Audience Identification; Communication Planning; Synchronization of Messages; Maintaining Consistency; Role of Media; Public Affairs, Education, and Emergency Communication; Agencies and Organizations; Technology; Interoperability of Messaging and Strategies; Community Outreach

- **Law and policy**: Society and Civics; Constitutional Law and Federalism; Statutes, Executive Orders, and Directives; National, Regional, State, and Local Policies and Strategies; International Treaties and Agreements; Sector-specific Laws; Civil-military Relations; Policy-making Processes and Analysis; Administrative Law; Regulator Processes

- **Technology**: Role and Types used in Homeland Security; Approaches to Framing; Ethical and Privacy Considerations; Technology Development Cycle; Network/Cyber infrastructure Protection; Consequences; Limitations and Interoperability

- **Terrorism and counterterrorism**: Definitions and Distinctions; History and Root Causes; Theories of Motivations; Tactics and Operations of Groups; Role of Media and Internet; Effects of Terrorism; Military Role; Policing and Actionable Intelligence; Lack of Support; Competition Among Terrorist Groups; Compromise, Political Resolution and Cooption
In addition, the group recommends that four themes underlie all courses: critical thinking, ethics, oral and written communication, and whole of society.

In his research, Drabek (2007) made three points that are relevant to this evolving field. Within all democratic societies, universities and other institutions of higher learning have performed the function of helping to sort out the priorities and roles of emergency management and homeland security. Hence, within emergency management and homeland security programs, students must be encouraged to critically examine current doctrine, no matter its source. It is not enough just to “know” the book. The capacity for critical analysis must be developed, encouraged, and protected. Indeed, it must be required of all participants, students, and faculty.

Second, developments of programs and curriculums in emergency management and homeland security should be promoted and stimulated by various governmental bureaus, but the government must not dictate. As faculty implement a wide variety of courses, programs, and credentials of various types, including specialized certificates and formal degrees, all governmental bureaus should maintain a clear boundary. Their role is to nurture, not to prescribe. As with curricular innovations of the past, the pathways will be many and marked with both successes and failures. As the professions of emergency management and homeland security continue to evolve, they must become more active participants in the standard-setting process. Decisions regarding curricular content and assessments of academic excellence must come from within these institutions and the accreditation procedures and bodies they construct.

Finally, we must recognize that future catastrophic events will have the greatest impact on the long-term developmental pattern of such curricular innovation. As new disaster events, some of which most policy makers, professionals, or faculty cannot imagine, the field must continue to evolve and adapt (Drabek, 2007). It is important for Homeland Security/Emergency Management programs agree upon a shared set of values and skills necessary for degree and/or certificate completion, yet be flexible enough to address future changes and needs of an ever-evolving field.

**CONCLUSION**

Homeland Security and Emergency Management education will continue to be important topics within the field of public administration. What started out as mostly a subfield within our discipline (as well as within other disciplines) has quickly grown into a field of its own. Along with tremendous growth in stand-alone programs, degrees, and certificates, the scholarship of homeland security has also significantly increased. Several new journals focus solely on this area—including the *Journal of Homeland Security Education*, the most recent journal covering innovative concepts and models, strategies, and technical tools connecting education to practice.

In this article, we discuss the challenges associated with such a fast-growing field. This past year alone, nine new master’s-level programs in Emergency
Management were added across the country. As higher education institutions develop these programs and curriculum, employers are pushing for set standards across the field so they have some assurance of the knowledge and skill set of their workforce educated in this area. At this time, no accrediting body or core competencies for programs in Homeland Security and Emergency Management exist, causing some concern for consistency in the education and training of degree holders. However, through the leadership of both FEMA, the Center for Homeland Defense, and leading academics in the field, there is movement in the direction of developing standard learning outcomes and competencies for programs. This movement seems to be more natural for the field of Emergency Management than it does for Homeland Security, in part as the definition of homeland security continues to evolve. The continuing dialogue that is taking place should in theory lead to a richer discussion of the expectations of the higher education community in preparing students for Homeland Security and Emergency Management careers.

Because the evolving nature of these fields still keeps measurable standards out of reach, future students to these fields are challenged to determine the best value for their education dollar. And such challenges face our nation if we are to assess the extent to which the growth in these studies and schools has enhanced our national capabilities in homeland security and emergency management.

**Footnotes**


2. The Goal defines *Mitigation* as including those capabilities necessary to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. It is focused on the premise that individuals, the private sector, communities, critical infrastructure, and the nation as a whole are made more resilient when the consequences and impacts, the duration, and the financial and human costs to respond to and recover from adverse incidents are all reduced. But the Goal defines *Protection* as “including capabilities to safeguard the homeland against acts of terrorism and man-made or natural disasters. It is focused on actions to protect the citizens, residents, visitors, and critical assets, systems, and networks against the greatest risks to our nation in a manner that allows our interests, aspirations, and way of life to thrive.” Further, the Goal defines *Protection* as “capabilities to safeguard the homeland against acts of terrorism and man-made or natural disasters. It is focused on actions to protect the citizens, residents, visitors, and critical assets, systems, and networks against the greatest risks to our Nation in a manner that allows our interests, aspirations, and way of life to thrive.”

References


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