

# Diversity Across the Curriculum:

## **Perceptions & Practices**

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## Importance of Teaching Diversity

- **Diverse Constituents**
  - Population characteristics & projections
- **Diverse Workplace**

## Strategic Plan v. Standards

- **Diversity:**
  - included as a core priority in NASPAA's strategic plan
  - Not included as a common curriculum component in the General Information and Standards guidebook

### Proposed Standard (x.3) Diversity Across the Curriculum

- "Program activities must prepare students to work in and contribute to diverse workplaces and communities. Consequently, courses, curriculum materials, and other program activities should expose students to differences relating to social identity categories, such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, and disability"

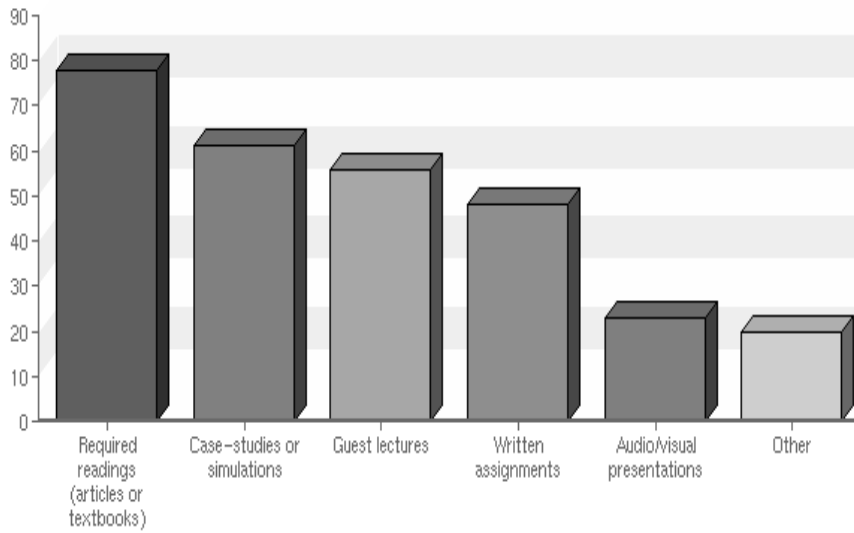
## A Few Key Questions

- What are MPA/PPM programs doing to educate students and raise awareness on issues of diversity?
- What instructional strategies are used to incorporate the subject of diversity into existing courses?
- How many programs offer stand alone courses?
- What are the perceptions of MPA directors of the proposed diversity standard?

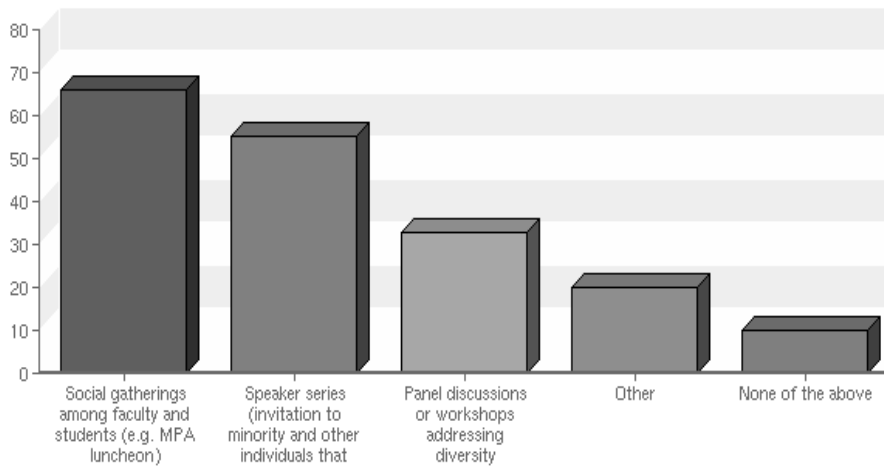
## Survey

- Sampling frame
- Online survey
- 92 respondents (38% response rate)

## Instructional Strategies



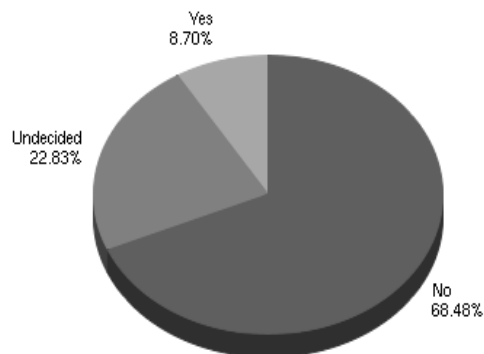
## Activities outside of the classroom to expose students to diversity



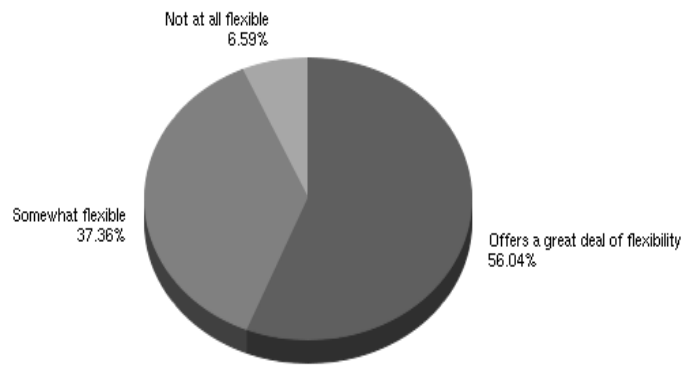
## Diversity Content & Delivery

Item	Integrate into existing courses	Stand-alone course	Not addressed
Age	82.2%	6.7%	11.1%
Disability	89.5%	7%	3.5%
Ethnicity	75.6%	17.8%	6.7%
Gender	81.8%	17%	1.1%
Race	76.9%	20.9%	2.2%
Religion	60%	5.9%	34.1%
Social Class	72.7%	11.4%	15.9%

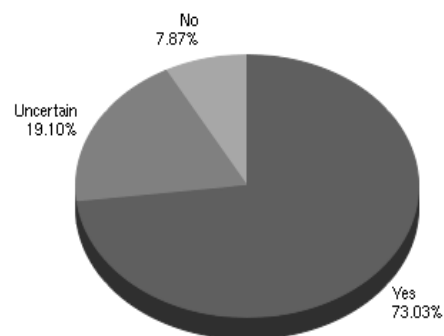
Do you intend to increase the number of stand-alone courses that address diversity issues?



### Perception of Flexibility in implementation of the proposed standard



### Directors' perception that his/her graduate program currently satisfies standard



# A Few Written Comments

## Flexibility & Limited Resources

- Flexibility is essential
  - Variations in the degree of diversity among students, faculty, & surrounding communities
  - Variations in available resources & size of programs
    - e.g. difficult to offer stand-alone courses on diversity due to existing course load demands

## "Flexibility" Comment

- "We believe that diversity, like writing and critical thinking, is an "across the curriculum" matter. This is a consistent philosophy for all masters level programs at this institution. We believe that approach better integrates diversity issues with other issues and contexts. The final standard should allow programs flexibility in incorporating diversity into curricula in order to reflect varying institutional missions, cultures, and philosophies."

## "Lack of clarity" comment:

- "it is unclear to me from the statement whether "courses, curriculum and program activities" means all such features of a program must comply with this standard or whether a preponderance of such features, a small set of such features that is strategically aimed at achieving the overarching objective, or that such features are demonstrably present in some way. I think for clarity of implementation it would be good if the standard gave some hint about what is intended with respect to the breadth of this standard."

“Litmus test” comment:

- "Only that this not become some type of bizarre litmus test of program legitimacy. Each program is different. Wide flexibility in meeting the standard should be allowed. The content and quality of an MPA program is the most important element of an MPA program, of which diversity is only a part, not the major driver."

“It is about time” Comment

- The APSA "gets it", the publishing industry "gets it", local, state, and national public servants (and some elected officials) "get it"... so IT IS ABOUT TIME THAT COPRA HAS INCLUDED IT AS a (proposed) standard!

## Other elements of our research

- Content analysis
- Interviews

## Content Analysis

- Selection of 50 member institutions that did not respond to the survey
- Geographically disbursed
- 15 provided stand-alone courses
  - None in core
  - 11 of 15 emphasize global perspective
  - 5 addressed race & gender
  - None on religion or sexual orientation

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