

Session 1: NASPAA Accreditation and Strategic Program Management

October 19, 2022

Session Facilitator

William C. Rivenbark, Professor of
Public Administration and
Government, The University of
North Carolina at Chapel Hill

2022 Accreditation Institute

- The purpose of the 2022 Accreditation Institute is to help participants understand the NASPAA accreditation process and to write a successful and meaningful self-study report.
- The program's goal is to obtain accreditation, which provides a reliable and trustworthy indication of value and quality to all stakeholders of the respective program.

Training Objectives

- To review the value and process of accreditation.
- To outline the preconditions for accreditation readiness.
- To discuss the role of the site visit team.
- To discuss how COPRA makes its decision.
- To present accreditation resources.

Accreditation Value

NASPAA Accreditation supports a global network of programs bound by a commitment to public service values, programmatic improvement, and educational quality.

208
Accredited
Programs

9
Countries
with programs
active in
accreditation

Accreditation Value

- **Best Practices and Innovation:** While standards require baseline thresholds, they are intentionally designed to be flexible for each institution, mission, and context.
- **Peer Review:** Academics and practitioners involved in the process, providing critical feedback on program compliance and improvement.
- **Strategic Management:** mission-driven process by which a program makes evidence-based decisions in pursuit of defined outcomes.

Accreditation Value

Programs seeking (re)accreditation are continuously:

- pursuing their mission and goals,
- engaging with stakeholders,
- gathering data,
- assessing student learning, and
- evaluating the program.



Standard 7 Matching
Communications with Mission

Standard 6 Matching Resources
with Mission

Standard 5 Matching Operations with
Mission: Student Learning

Standard 4 Matching Operations
with Mission: Serving Students

Standard 3 Matching Operations with
Mission: Faculty Performance

Standard 2
Matching Governance with Mission

Standard 1
Managing the Program Strategically

Visual Roadmap

Accreditation Process: Overview



Accreditation Process: Eligibility

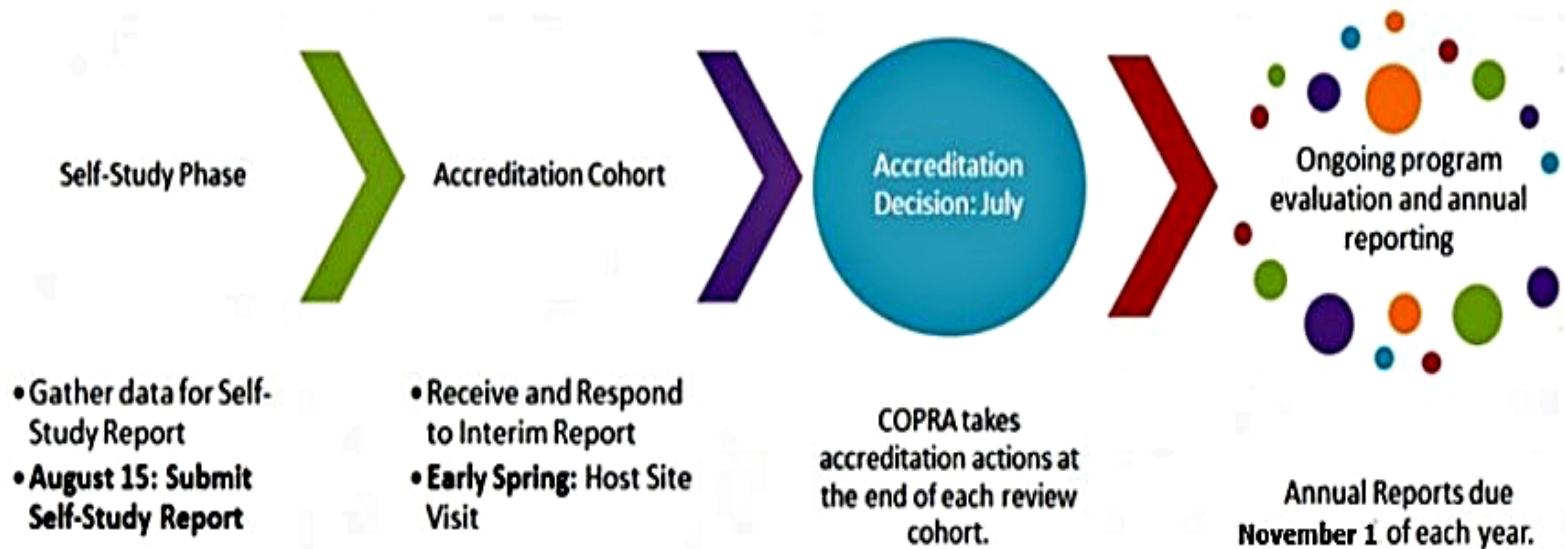
- Programs should be in operation for at least 4 years before proceeding to Eligibility.
- Eligibility is intended to provide direction from COPRA to programs interested in accreditation, including ways for improving the prospects of receiving accreditation.
- The applicant program is given initial feedback on its application directly from COPRA.

Proceed to
Self-Study:
Ready in 1-2 years

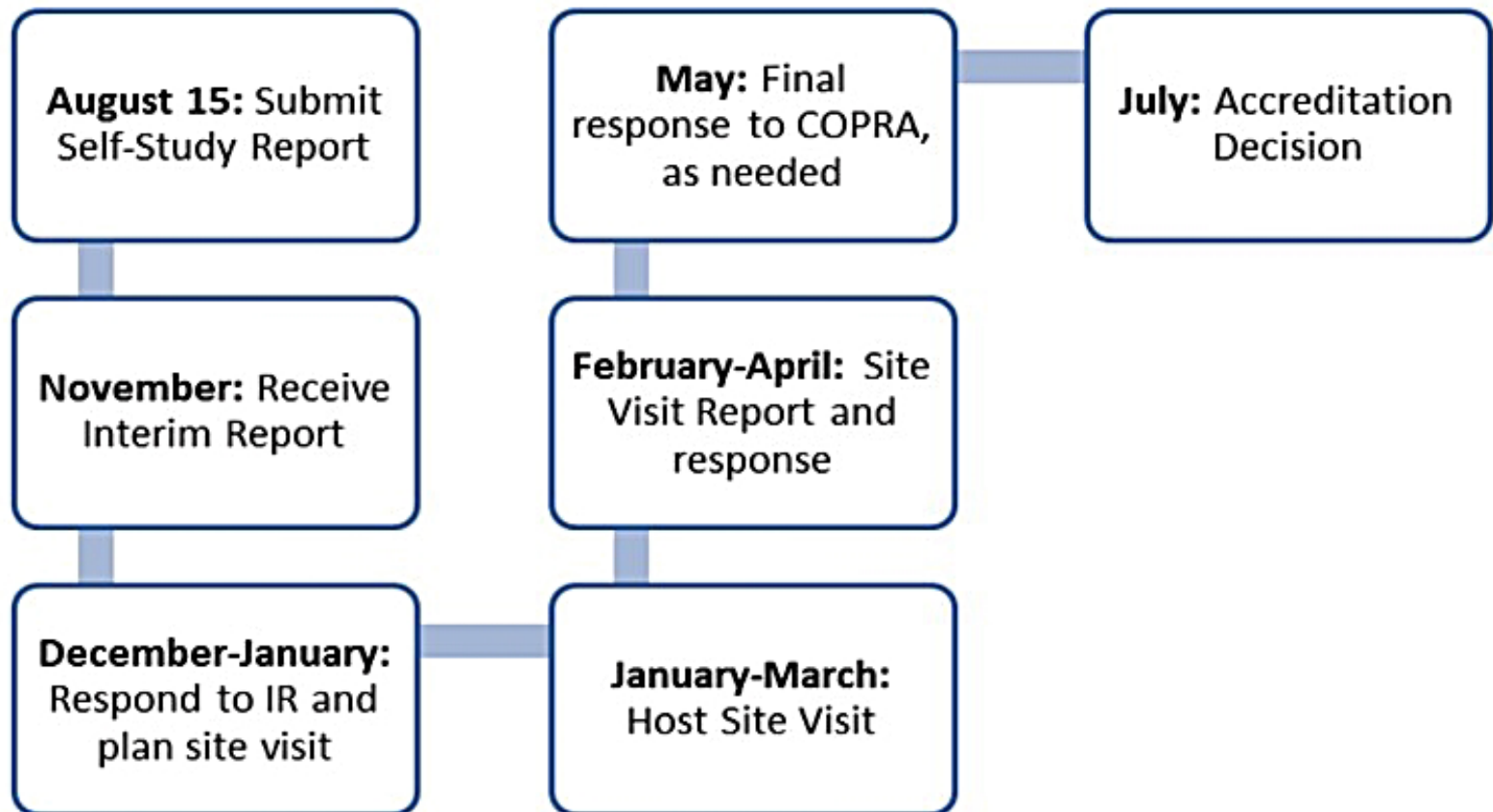
Proceed
with Caution:
Ready in 2-3 years

Do Not
Proceed:
Needs > 3 years

Accreditation Process: Review Year



Accreditation Process: Timeline



Accreditation Readiness

- Program Eligibility – establishes that the program is qualified for and capable of being evaluated.
- **Public Service Values** – the mission, governance, and curriculum of eligible programs shall emphasize public service values.
- Primary Focus – only master's degree programs that prepare students to be leaders, managers, and analysts in the professions of public affairs, public administration, and public policy.
- Course of Study – the normal expectation for students studying for professional degrees in public affairs, administration, and policy is at least **36 semester credit hours** of study.

Accreditation Readiness

- Wide-spread institutional support for (re)accreditation?
- Necessary data?
- Strategic processes?
- Student learning assessment?
- Workload plan – writing, editing the self-study report with focus and clarity?
- Capacity to pay [accreditation fees](#)?

Accreditation Readiness

[2019 Self-Study Instructions](#)

- Detailed descriptions of NASPAA Standards
- Includes detailed instructions for entering the self-study in the NASPAA Data Center ([NDC](#))
- Presents the Basis of Judgment that COPRA uses as a minimum threshold to determine if standards are being met
- Includes illustrative examples to help understand the nuances of the standards
- Available in [Microsoft Word](#) to draft self-study components before entering narrative and data in the NASPAA Data Center.

Accreditation Readiness

- In addition to the Self-Study Report (SSR), COPRA expects the following documents (at minimum):
 - A Logic Model
 - A Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan
 - An Assessment Plan
- Other documents that programs have found very useful:
 - Strategic Plan
 - Program Evaluation Plan
 - Curriculum Map

Site Visit: Purpose

- Site visits aim to not only confirm and clarify information provided in the self-study report, but also provide an occasion for the exchange of information and learning.
- **Note:** Site Visit Teams DO NOT make accreditation decisions, but rather collect evidence for consideration by COPRA, which ultimately is responsible for accreditation determination.

Site Visit: Preparation

- **January – March: Site Visit**
 - Site visit chair and program director agree on itinerary
 - Documents, records, evidence
 - Site Visit Team (SVT) workspace

Site Visit: Meetings

- Program faculty, Visiting/Adjunct Faculty
- Students, Graduates
- Advisory Board(s)
- Assessment Staff/Other Support Staff
- Chairs, Deans, Chief Academic Officer
- Career Counselors
- Internship Advisors, Internship Supervisors
- Other COPRA-requested meetings

Site Visit: Report

- **1 month after Site Visit (SV):** Chair posts draft Site Visit Report in NASPAA Data Center
 - Programs may only correct errors of fact
- **1–2 months after SV:** Final Site Visit Report loaded in NASPAA Data Center
 - Program final response (May)
 - Programs may comment on any aspect of accreditation process.

Accreditation Decision: Process

- **June:** COPRA Summer Meeting
 - Document review:
Self-Study Report, Interim Report, response to Interim Report, Site Visit Report, response to Site Visit Report
 - Group of 3 commissioners, including program liaison, makes initial recommendation
 - Full Commission reviews, discusses, determines final accreditation action

Accreditation Decision: Final Action

Initial Accreditation

- Accredited 7 years, no monitoring
- Accredited 7 years with monitoring
- 1 or 2-year deferral
 - Letter to program outlines areas of concern, nonconformance
 - Program submits second Self-Study Report
 - Second Site Visit
- Denial of Accreditation

Re-Accreditation

- Accredited 7 years, no monitoring
- Accredited 7 years with monitoring
- Accredited 1 year
 - Letter to program outlines areas of concern, nonconformance
 - Program must respond
 - Second SV (perhaps abbreviated) may be required
- Denial of Accreditation

Accreditation Resources

- [2019 Self-Study Instructions-PDF;](#)
- [2019 Self-Study Instructions in Microsoft Word](#)
 - Use to draft the self-study;
 - When final, cut and paste (or retype) to upload final draft for each tab/Standard in the NDC.
- [COPRA Policy Statements:](#)
 - Consult these for any COPRA expectations
 - Official Standards and Policies can be found on the NASPAA [website](#)
- [Peer Examples](#)
- [Standard by Standard Guidance](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Conclusion

Key takeaways from this session:

- Value of accreditation.
- Stages of the accreditation process.
- Keys to determining accreditation readiness.
- Resources that can lead to successful accreditation.



Session 2: Setting the Stage

Standard 1

Mission, Values, and Outcomes

October 19, 2022

Training Objectives

- To discuss the role of the program's mission, public service values, and outcomes.
- To present an example logic model, including how it is used for program evaluation and strategic improvement.
- To conduct an exercise on measuring program success.

Mission Statement:

Standard 1.1

- The program will have a statement of mission that guides performance expectations and their evaluation.
 - The mission states the program's purpose of existence within the context of its respective environment.
 - The mission is fundamental to decision-making and to managing the program strategically, which includes data collection, data analysis, and data use to monitor and improve the program.
 - The mission sets the stage for the accreditation process.

Basis of Judgement: Standard 1.1 (page 45)

- The program's mission fits with its degree title (i.e., MPA, MPP, MNM).
- The mission statement reflects values of public service.
- The program's mission is developed, and consistently reviewed, with input from program stakeholders.

Writing and Reviewing Mission Statements

- Mission statements are written within the context of the program's public service values; the population of students, employers, and professionals the program intends to serve; and the contributions it intends to produce to advance the knowledge, research, and practice of public affairs, administration, and policy.

Writing and Reviewing Mission Statements

- The program will describe the processes used to develop and review the mission statement, how the mission statement influences decision-making, and how and to whom the program disseminates its mission. Include information describing how relevant stakeholders are involved in the mission development and review process.

Public Service Values

- Programs must adopt public service values within the context of its mission.
- Global public service values are important and enduring beliefs, emphasizing the ideals and principles about what is good and desirable such as transparency, accountability, inclusion, and participation.
- Public service values are used to guide decision-making processes around mission, governance, and curriculum.

Performance Expectations:

Standard 1.2

- Programs will establish observable program goals, objectives, and outcomes.
 - While some overlap may exist, there is a fundamental difference between program goals and student competencies.
 - Program goals, which are addressed within Standard 1.2, focus on what the program expects to achieve regarding faculty, staff, students, and alumni with measurable outcomes.
 - Student competencies, which are addressed within Standard 5, focus on learning outcomes that the program expects its graduates to attain within the program's curriculum.

Basis of Judgement: Standard 1.2

(Page 47)

- The mission statement endorsed by the program guides its activities.
- The program has developed clear goals and objectives that are linked to its mission and public service values and have measurable outcomes.
- Program goals extend beyond goals specific to student learning.

Program Goals

- Program goals, which are derived from the program's mission, state in broad terms what the program expects to achieve. For example:
 - The program prepares and produces marketable graduates in rapidly changing employment environments.

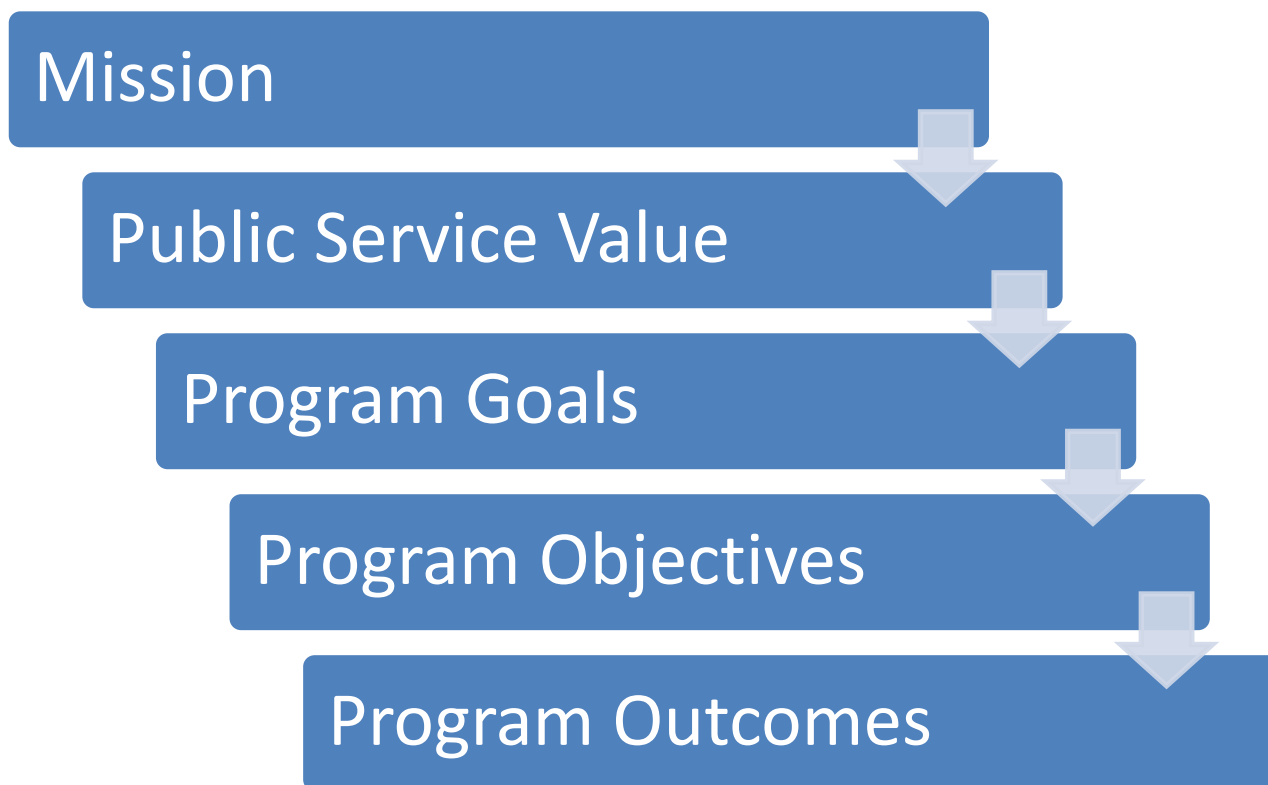
Program Objectives

- Program objectives, which are derived from the program goals, state in quantifiable terms how the respective goals are measured and what the program expects to achieve. For example:
 - 90 percent or more of program graduates are employed in the public sector within 6 months of graduation.

Program Outcomes

- Program outcomes, which are derived from the program objectives, represent the measures for tracking program results, and more importantly, setting the stage for program evaluation – research has clearly shown that organizations are more likely to use data for decision-making when reporting on outcomes. For example:
 - Job placement rate

Program Outcomes



Program Evaluation:

Standard 1.3

- The program will collect, apply, and report information about its performance and its operations to guide the evolution of the program's mission and the program's design and continuous improvement with respect to standards two through seven.

Basis of Judgement: Standard 1.3

(Pages 47 and 48)

- The program's mission and activities bear a clear and compelling relationship to a well-defined community of professionals outside of the university.
- The program's defined performance goals, measures of outcomes, and programmatic improvements align with its mission and allow for systematic program self-evaluation and strategic management of its resources.
- The mission and its related goals and objectives help the program's decision-makers, students, and stakeholders and other constituents understand the program and its operations.

Logic Model

- Logic models, which are required under Standard 1, are designed to help facilitate program review and evaluation on an ongoing basis.
 - Programs track program outcomes that are derived from the program's mission, goals, and objectives.
 - Programs report on program outcomes within the context of logic models, which include inputs, outputs, and outcomes.
 - Programs use these data to determine progress toward their mission, to make data-driven decisions, and to manage the program strategically.

MISSION

The mission of the MPA Program at the University of North Dakota is to instill public service values and to prepare people to enter into or advance in government and related fields.

GOALS/OBJECTIVE

FACULTY OBJECTIVES

STUDENT SKILLS /
KNOWLEDGE GOALS
AND OBJECTIVES

SERVICE TO
NORTH DAKOTA
GOALS/OBJECTIVES

PUBLIC SERVICE
VALUES

INPUTS/ RESOURCES

Faculty

Program
Admin
Stakeholders

Student
Services

Financial

Facilities

ACTIVITIES

Teaching &
Learning

Service to Program

Research

Curriculum

Governance

Admissions

Recruiting

Orientation

Advising

Career Services

EXAMPLES OF OUTPUT & PROCESS MEASURES

Teaching Load

Teaching Quality

Number of Core Service Activities

Amount of Applied/Pure Research

Number & Type of Publications

Course Content:
Public Sector Values, Diversity, &
Universal Competencies

Number of Meetings

Quality of Input

Number of Students in Program

Class Size

Graduation Rates

Enrollment Rates

Graduates in ND

Acceptance Rates

Graduates by Sector

Diversity Data:
Faculty, Curriculum, & Students

Skill of Graduates:
Employer survey,
Alumni & Exit Survey

OUTCOMES

SHORT

Students Equipped
With Public Service
Values

Students Equipped
With Universal
Competencies

Graduates remain in
ND

Faculty & Bureau
Publications

LONG

Program Reputation
Enhanced

Student Career
Success

Diverse Public
Sector/
Representative
Bureaucracy

Strengthen ND Public
Service

Profession is
Enhanced

FEEDBACK LOOPS

ASSESSMENT

OVERALL

ACTIVITIES

Teaching &
Learning
For Assessment Plan
See Appendix 1A

Curriculum
For Assessment Plan
See Appendix 1B

INPUTS

Faculty
For Assessment Plan
See Appendix 2

Student
Services
For Assessment Plan
See Appendix 3

Program
Administration
For Assessment Plan
See Appendix 4

ASSESSMENT

ASSUMPTIONS

Resource Stability – Program Autonomy

CONTEXTUAL CONDITIONS & EXTERNAL FACTORS

Strength of State & National Economies – NASPAA & COPRA Activities

Continuous Improvement

- Programs populate and monitor their logic models at least on an annual basis – best practice.
- Program directors share the information with faculty governance and other stakeholders, focusing on areas that need improvement – best practice.
- Strategies for improvement are identified and implemented within the context of the program's mission and public service values.
- Programs must describe their assessment processes in the SSR, including examples of assessments, actions, and improvements.

Exercise

- What program outcomes are used by your respective programs to document and report on program success?
- Have these program outcomes been used by your respective programs to drive strategic change? If yes, how?

Conclusion

Key takeaways from this session:

- Write an effective mission statement
- Process of identifying program outcomes.
- Use of logic models to promote continuous process improvement.



Session 3: Addressing the Fundamentals

Standards 2, 3, and 4

Governance and Operations

October 19, 2022

Training Objectives

- To discuss the role of program governance and operations, highlighting areas that often challenge programs during the accreditation process and providing guidance for success.
- To conduct an exercise on how programs promote student diversity and inclusiveness.

Administrative Capacity:

Standard 2.1

- The program will have an administrative infrastructure appropriate for its mission, goals, and objectives in all delivery modalities employed.
- Programs often face challenges with this standard, relying on program directors for administrative support. Information needs to be provided on how the program director's workload is managed when this occurs – course release for example.

Basis of Judgment: Standard 2.1

(Page 50)

- The program's administrative infrastructure fits its activities, including geographic location of program delivery, use of technology in program delivery, and type of program (traditional, accelerated, executive).
- The normal expectation is for the program to have an identifiable director who provides an appropriate focus of attention, direction, and accountability.

Faculty Governance:

Standard 2.2

- An adequate faculty nucleus – at least **five full-time faculty members or their equivalent** – will exercise substantial determining influence for the governance and implementation of the program.
- Some programs struggle with demonstrating how these faculty members provide adequate faculty governance. Evidence is needed on how the nucleus faculty governs the policies and procedures of the program, including its role in curriculum development and in the promotion and tenure process.

Basis of Judgment: Standard 2.2

(Page 51)

- The normal expectation is for program nucleus faculty to participate in recruiting, promoting, and awarding tenure to their colleagues, as well as to participate in making other policies related to the design and delivery of the program.
- The faculty nucleus, which is identifiable to parties outside of the program, includes a minimum of five (5) full-time faculty or their equivalent who conduct the teaching, research and service responsibilities entailed in the program's mission.
- COPRA accepts as evidence that (for every location and modality) students are being taught by an adequate faculty nucleus who are engaged in the implementation of the program where: at least 50 percent of the courses are taught by full time faculty (employed by the institution) and at least 50 percent of the courses delivering required competencies are taught by qualified nucleus faculty members employed by the institution.

Faculty Qualifications:

Standard 3.1

- The program's faculty members will be academically or professionally qualified to pursue the program's mission.
- Programs often neglect to provide the necessary detail on being academically or professionally qualified, including how these definitions are in alignment with the program's mission and its promotion and tenure policy.

Basis of Judgment: Standard 3.1

(Page 53)

- Faculty who teach in accredited programs must be academically or professionally qualified.
- The program's decision to use professionally qualified faculty should be consistent with its mission.
- In general, a professionally qualified faculty member will have a terminal level degree in his or her area of responsibility. The burden is on the program to document the qualifications of all its faculty members.
- Where nucleus faculty members come from departments outside the program, clearly defined responsibilities – such as official assignment of duties or joint appointments—should be identified.

Faculty Diversity:

Standard 3.2

- The program will promote diversity and a climate of inclusiveness through its recruitment and retention of faculty members.
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion plans, which are required, must demonstrate how programs promote faculty diversity and how they promote an inclusive environment.

Basis of Judgment: Standard 3.2

(Pages 54 and 55)

- There are program specific goals, steps, and strategies that demonstrate evidence of good practice in recruitment, retention, and support of faculty consistent with its mission and context.
- The program's diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies provide a framework for evaluating the efforts of the program. Evidence can be found in the diversity of the full- and part-time faculty, the research interests of the faculty, the curricular content, as well as other measures.
- The program's data on recruitment and retention demonstrate adherence to the program's diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies.
- The program demonstrates that it appreciates diversity, equity, and inclusion, broadly defined in the context of the program and its mission, as critical in today's workplaces and professional environments.
- The program takes steps to acknowledge and eliminate biases and program cultures that impact faculty recruitment, retention, and development.

Research, Scholarship, and Service:

Standard 3.3

- Program faculty members will produce scholarship and engage in professional and community service activities outside of the university appropriate to the program's mission, stage of their careers, and the expectations of their university.
- Universities often support scholarship activities over engagement activities; therefore, programs should look for ways to support their faculty who pursue engagement activities – research assistants for example.

Basis of Judgment: Standard 3.3

(Page 57)

- Faculty engage in public service scholarship and service, appropriate to the program's mission and goals.
- The program's collective research, scholarship, and service positively impact its community and the public service field.

Student Recruitment and Admissions: Standards 4.1 and 4.2

- The program will have student recruitment practices appropriate for its mission and will apply well-defined admissions criteria appropriate for its mission.
- Programs should address how faculty governance is involved in these two extremely important processes in addition to documenting recruitment practices and admissions criteria.

Basis of Judgment: Standard 4.1

(Pages 58 and 59)

- The program's recruitment efforts should reflect the program's target population, intended applicant "characteristics," commitment to diversity, and student body composition, as defined by the program mission. The rationale for this judgment is that if the preponderance of students applying to the program does not represent the type of student the program covets, then the program would need to reevaluate its recruitment efforts. Recruitment efforts produce a diverse application pool with the potential to support achievement of the program's mission.

Basis of Judgment: Standard 4.2

(Page 59)

- The program implements minimum thresholds for admission and clearly defines, and communicates, these requirements as well as any program prerequisites.
- The program follows its admission policies, which should be based on a combination of indicators appropriate to its mission.
- Admission policies produce a diverse student body that supports achievement of the program's mission.

Support for Students:

Standards 4.3

- The program will ensure the availability of support services, such as curriculum advising, internship placement and supervision, career counseling, and job placement assistance to enable students to progress in careers in public affairs, administration, and policy.
- Programs often point toward other university units as evidence of this support – career services for example. Information is needed on how students are informed of these services and how they interact with them.

Basis of Judgment: Standard 4.3

(Pages 59 and 60)

- The program has established academic continuance and graduation standards, and an advising system to support achievement of those standards, that students are informed of and participate in.
- Evidence that a preponderance of admitted and enrolled students completed the degree.
- The program provides services that help students achieve their educational, internship and career objectives.
- Job placement statistics, internship participation, graduate career opportunities, and employment are in line with the program mission.

Student Diversity:

Standards 4.4

- The program will promote diversity and a climate of inclusiveness through its recruitment, admissions practices, and student support services.
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion plans, which are required, must demonstrate how programs promote student diversity and how they promote an inclusive environment.

Basis of Judgment: Standard 4.4

(Page 60 and 61)

- There are specific goals, steps, and strategies that demonstrate evidence of good practice in recruitment, retention, and support of students consistent with its mission and context.
- The program provides a supportive and inclusive educational climate for a diverse student population.
- The program's recruitment activities reflect a consideration of diversity (with respect to its mission), through its selection of media, audience, and resourcing; and in the eventual composition of its entering students.
- The program's diversity, equity, and climate of inclusion strategies provide a framework for evaluating the efforts of the program. Evidence can be found in the diversity of the student body, the curricular content, as well as other measures.
- The program's data on recruitment and retention demonstrate adherence to the program's diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies.
- The program demonstrates that it appreciates diversity, equity, and inclusion, broadly defined in the context of the program and its mission, as critical in today's workplaces and professional environments.
- The program takes steps to acknowledge and eliminate biases and program cultures that impact student recruitment, retention, and success.

Exercise

- Discuss how your respective programs promote student diversity.
- Discuss how your respective programs promote an inclusive environment.

Conclusion

Key takeaways from this session:

- Reflect upon how the program's mission continues to play a role in the accreditation process.
- Review some of the common challenges found within Standards 2, 3, and 4.



Session 4: Closing the Loop

Standards 5, 6, and 7

Competencies and Transparency

October 19, 2022

Training Objectives

- To present an approach to measure curriculum-based competencies.
- To discuss the transparency requirements of resource adequacy and communications.
- To conduct an exercise on how programs demonstrate a full assessment cycle with competency data.

Universal Required Competencies: Standard 5.1

- The program will adopt a set of required competencies related to its mission and public service values as the basis of its curriculum.

Universal Required Competencies:

Standard 5.1

- The required competencies will include five domains, tailored and operationalized to reflect the program's mission: the ability
 - To lead and manage in public governance;
 - To participate in and contribute to the policy process;
 - To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make evidenced-informed decisions in a complex and dynamic environment;
 - To articulate, apply, and advance a public service perspective;
 - To communicate and interact productively and in culturally responsive ways with a diverse and changing workforce and society at large.

COPRA Expectations for Standard 5.1

- Programs should have completed one full cycle of assessment for student learning outcomes in at least three of the universal competency domains.
- One full cycle for one universal competency domain will be documented in the self-study report.
- If programs move to the site visit phase, they should be prepared to provide the site visit team with evidence of one full cycle for two additional universal competencies (total of 3) and evidence of progress on all.
- Programs should provide a detailed assessment plan, which includes direct outcomes as well a timeline for sustainable assessment of the universal competencies moving forward.

Basis of Judgment: Standard 5.1

(Pages 63 and 64)

- It is expected that all students in a NASPAA-accredited degree program will have the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills on each of the five universal required competencies. The program shows that it requires the five universal competencies of public and nonprofit affairs, policy and administration and links them to the program mission. The program defines each of the required competencies in terms of at least one student learning outcome (but there may be more than one) and demonstrates student achievement of those competencies at the program-level.
- Once the student learning outcome(s) is established, the program should identify where the outcome is measured, what is used to measure it, how the measure is directly assessed, and how the analysis of the resulting data has led to programmatic improvement. Therefore, the result of the assessment of student learning outcomes is demonstrable evidence of how the student performed on the specific student learning outcome (rather than in a course or on an assignment). The feedback loop is demonstrated by how the program used these to make curriculum decisions.

Basis of Judgment: Standard 5.1

(Pages 63 and 64)

- The student learning assessment process should be detailed in a concrete plan for implementation of a long-term, sustainable assessment enterprise, appropriate for the program's mission, goals, and structure. The program should discuss and document its assessment development and provide an assessment plan, which includes the strategies underlining the assessment of student learning outcomes, as well as its approach to programmatic improvement. The assessment plan should further detail direct (and indirect, as needed) measures, the use of rubrics for evaluation, faculty and stakeholder involvement, analysis procedures, and how the analysis is used for overall program improvement.
- The emphasis that a particular program places on each of these competencies is consistent with its mission. An accredited program need not assess all competencies every year or cohort, but rather at a frequency appropriate for its mission and goals. However, assessing each competency only once during a seven-year accreditation cycle would not likely be sufficient for conformance in most programs.

Mission-Specific Required Competencies: Standard 5.2

- The program will identify core competencies in other domains that are necessary and appropriate to implement its mission.
 - Programs have the flexibility to expand upon the universal required competencies within the context of their mission statements.

Basis of Judgment: Standard 5.2

(Page 65)

- The program states each mission-specific required competency and links them to the program mission. The program defines each of the mission-specific required competencies in terms of at least one student learning outcome (but there may be more than one). The emphasis that a particular program places on each of these competencies is consistent with its mission.

Mission-Specific Elective Competencies:

Standard 5.4

- Professional Competencies: The program will ensure that students apply their education, such as through experiential learning and interactions with practitioners across the broad range of public service professions and sectors.

Basis of Judgment: Standard 5.4 (Page 67)

- The program assures that all students will have at least one experiential learning exercise and/or interaction with practitioners. The program may indicate that additional opportunities are available to students, but not required.

Identifying and Measuring Competencies

- There is no one standard process for identifying and measuring competencies; therefore, programs are encouraged to review [peer examples](#).¹
- Identifying and measuring student competency attainment, however, is not the same as assigning course grades.

1. The process of identifying and measuring competencies presented in this training is based on Rivenbark and Jacobson. 2014. Three Principles of Competency-Based Learning: Mission, Mission, Mission. *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 20 (2): 181–192.

Identifying and Measuring Competencies

- The program begins with its mission and public service values, understanding the context for identifying curriculum-based competencies.

Mission	Public Service Values
To prepare public service leaders and create useable knowledge that improves governance	Accountability and Transparency Efficiency and Effectiveness Professionalism, Respect, and Ethical Behavior Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Identifying and Measuring Competencies

- The program identifies the dimensions of the competency that are relevant to its contextual setting – mission and values.

Competency	Student Learning Outcome
To lead and manage in public governance	Critique own personal model of leadership
	Analyze organizations and their environments from multiple perspectives
	Understand how to collaborate across boundaries to build strategic relationships

Identifying and Measuring Competencies

- The program identifies where student learning outcome is measured, what is used to measure it, and how it is assessed.

Competency	Student Learning Outcome	Where measured	What is used	How assessed
To lead and manage in public governance	Critique own personal model of leadership	Leadership course	Reflective paper	Grading Rubric
	Analyze organizations and their environments from multiple perspectives	Organizational Theory Course	Research paper	Grading rubric
	Understand how to collaborate across boundaries to build strategic relationships	Introduction Course	Case	Grading rubric

Identifying and Measuring Competencies

- The program creates an instrument for assessing student attainment for each competency.

Grading Rubric					
Student Learning Outcome	Beginning (1)	Developing (2)	Intermediate (3)	Proficient (4)	Distinguished (5)
Analyze organizations and their environments from multiple perspectives	Is aware of the internal and external forces at play in organizational decision making.	Recognizes basic and obvious internal and environmental factors that influence decision making and courses of action	Recognizes basic and obvious internal and environmental factors that influence decision making and courses of action. Can identify and describe in detail the internal and environmental factors impacting organizations.	Recognizes complex internal and environmental factors that influence decision making and courses of action in a multi-faceted, grey context. Applies different frames (i.e., structural, cultural, procedural, motivational) to organizational diagnostics.	Recognizes complex internal and environmental factors that influence decision making and courses of action in a multi-faceted, grey context and identify cross-relationships among those factors. Uses multi-frame organizational diagnostics to help the organization decide on and implement a course of action

Using Competencies

- An Assessment Cycle
 - Definition of student learning outcome for the competency being assessed;
 - Evidence of learning that was gathered;
 - How evidence of learning was analyzed;
 - How the evidence was used to implement change(s) or the basis for determining that no change was needed, which represents closing the loop.

Using Competencies

- Programs collect their competency data on an annual basis – best practice.
- Program directors share the information with faculty governance, focusing on areas that need improvement – best practice.
- Strategies for improvement are identified and implemented with the context of the program's mission, public service values, and curriculum.
- Programs must describe their assessment cycles as part of accreditation process, including examples of making and not making changes.

Exercise

- Discuss examples of how your respective programs have used competency data to make and evaluate curriculum changes, which represents a full assessment cycle or closing the loop.

Resource Adequacy:

Standard 6.1

- The program will have sufficient funds, physical facilities, and resources in addition to its faculty to pursue its mission, objectives, and continuous improvement.
- Programs must provide contextual information on how this standard is related to standard 2.1 of administrative capacity, standard 4.3 of student support, and other relevant standards.

Resource Adequacy:

Standard 6.1

- Resources can include, but not limited to, budget, information technology, library services, supporting personnel, instructional equipment, offices, classrooms, and meeting areas.
- The transparency aspect of this standard is articulating how program stakeholders are informed on current and future resource needs. Stakeholders include:
 - University administration, departmental administration, faculty governance, students, and alumni boards
 - Ongoing strategies also are identified when interacting with these stakeholders to maintain and expand resources.

Basis of Judgment: Standard 6.1

(Page 69)

- The Commission will rely on the program's analysis of the resources required for initiatives associated with its mission. The Commission is less concerned with the absolute budget amounts allocated to the program, the size of classes, or the arrangements made for program administration. Instead, the Commission is concerned with the extent to which those budget amounts, class sizes and program administration arrangements are sufficient to pursue the program's mission.
- For additional information on this Basis of Judgment see the [2019 Self-Study Instructions](#) (pp. 69-70).

Communications:

Standard 7.1

- The program will provide appropriate and current information about its mission, policies, practices, and accomplishments – including student learning outcomes – sufficient to inform decisions by its stakeholders such as prospective and current students; faculty; employers of current students and graduates; university administrators; alumni; and accrediting agencies.

Communications:

Standard 7.1

- The program will provide student data (ARY-5) as part of the accreditation process on initially enrolled students, graduating within identified time lengths, and total students persisting to graduation (see standard 4.3).
- The transparency aspect of this standard is including these student data, along with the other required information, on the program's website, ensuring that the consumers of these data (prospective and current students) can make informed decisions.
- Data (and links) should be updated at least annually to be considered "current."

Basis of Judgment: Standard 7.1

(Page 72 and 73)

- The program should provide evidence that communications with its stakeholders demonstrate accountability, transparency, and ethical practice in the following ways:
- The courses, specializations, and services the program offers are consistent with the claims it makes, such as in its literature, emails, and webpage, and with its mission.
- The program publicizes its admission policies. Goals, policy, and standards, including academic prerequisites, are clearly and publicly stated. Admission policies should specify differences for pre-service, in-service, and other categories of students and reflect specific concern for diversity.
- The program describes how it assesses competencies and how well students perform on those measures.
- The program reports on the placement and career progress of its graduates and the qualifications and accomplishments of its faculty.
- The program reports on the completion rates of its graduates.
- The program explains to prospective students the cost of attendance (tuition and fees) and ethically communicates information regarding opportunities for financial assistance.
- The program is expected to ensure ongoing accuracy in all external media on an annual basis.

Conclusion

Key takeaways from this session:

- Identify and measure meaningful curriculum competencies and student learning outcomes.
- Ensure that resource adequacy and communications are meaningful dimensions of program management.



NASPAA Accreditation Site Visitor Orientation

October 19, 2022

Training Objectives

- To orient potential site visitors to the NASPAA accreditation process.
- To provide an overview of the site visit.
- To discuss next steps for site visitor readiness.

Accreditation Process

Accreditation Process

For programs continuously evaluating and assessing program success, the strategic program management facilitated by accreditation is ongoing. The formal dialogue with NASPAA typically begins in preparation for the Self-Study Report, at least a year in advance of the deadline. **For site visitors, the dialogue begins in late Fall.**



Accreditation Process

Self-Study Report

*Submitted by
programs:
August 15*

Accreditation Process

Interim Report

*COPRA response
including
questions and
evidence needs:
November*

Accreditation Process



Site Visit Preparations

*Teams are matched,
proposed, and conflict-
checked: November-
December*

Accreditation Process

Site Visit & Report

*2.5 day visits
throughout the Spring;
evidence-based report
prepared post-visit*

Accreditation Process

Final Decision

*Accreditation
Decision Letters
mailed: July*

Site Visit

The Site Visit Team

Each team consists of three experts:

Chair

- Academic with thorough understanding of Standards
- Completed at least 2 site visits

Academic

- Associate level professor or above, from an accredited program
- Understanding of public service program management

Practitioner

- Public service-related graduate degree
- 7+ years in the field of public service
- Appropriate Adjunct for the program
- External viewpoint of "consumer"

Site Visit

Preparation

Before each visit:

- Review Official Standards and Policies, including the Site Visit Manual
- Review and Manage Program Documents
 - Self-Study Report
 - Interim Report and response
- Coordinate with Site Visit Chair
 - Primary responsibilities and required evidence
 - Site Visit schedule, stakeholder meetings
- Prepare questions and observations
- Understand COPRA Priorities (liaison)

Site Visit

Role of the Site Visit

Site Visits are critical to the peer-based accreditation process. They allow the program to more fully demonstrate conformance and the Team to:

- **Confirm and clarify** the program's mission, goals, activities, program evaluation, and student learning assessment.
 - Site Visitors are COPRA's **eyes and ears** - its inquiring arm
- **Understand the program's** unique mission and context.
- **Collect information and evidence for COPRA** to assess if a program is in substantial conformance with the NASPAA Standards and the program's goals and objectives and present via a site visit report.
 - Make no judgment or evaluation on conformance or accreditation.
 - Address COPRA's Interim Report questions and requested evidence.
 - **Use program practices and data as foundation for understanding.**
- **Contribute, Learn, Invest, and Connect!**

Site Visit

The Site Visit Report

- Document the visit: records reviewed, conversations facilitated - use your notes.
- Respond to COPRA questions (Interim Report), verify program's Interim Report response, indicate level of concern.
- Include only information relevant to the Standards.
- **Provide evidence -- make no evaluations/judgments.**
- Draft the report within 30 days of the visit, using the NASPAA Data Center.
 - Incorporate program edits into the report, as appropriate, and submit the report to COPRA .
 - Include commendations and recommendations.

Site Visitor Readiness

Complete Training

- **Please provide contact information on the sign-in sheet. NASPAA will contact you with information to complete site visitor training.**
- Review NASPAA documents: Accreditation Standards, Self-Study Instructions, COPRA Policy Statements, and Site Visit Manual on the NASPAA website (Internet search: NASPAA accreditation).

After the Training:

- Provide information in a NASPAA Data Center profile.
- Upload a current CV or resume to the NASPAA Data Center, indicating language proficiencies and other information.
- Site visitors are matched to programs seeking accreditation, so after training not everyone is assigned right away.

Site Visitor Readiness

Site Visit Team

- NASPAA staff match site visitors to programs seeing accreditation in the fall before site visits
- Staff check for conflicts of interest with program/team
- Dates and travel needs are finalized no later than 30 days prior to their visit
- The site visit chair meets with the program, team, and COPRA to determine site visit goals and schedule
- Site visits take place between late January and April.

Site Visitor Readiness

Site Visit Preparation

Site Visitors should:

- Master all program materials (self-study report, appendices, interim report, interim report response) in the NASPAA Data Center.
- Connect with site visit chair on specific responsibilities while on the visit and when drafting the report.
- Draft questions for meetings with various program stakeholders, based on your responsibilities.
- Coordinate travel, visas with team (and program).

Site Visitor Readiness

The Site Visit and Report

Two and one-half days during the spring semester

- Focus on Mission and Public Service Values.
- Seek evidence to address questions of conformance.
- Review records of program evaluation and assessment, as well as other documents (admissions, meeting minutes, etc.), as relevant.
- Meet with students, faculty, professional staff, university administrators (provost, dean), alumni, advisory board, external stakeholders (employers).
- Draft the report within 30 days of the visit, using the NASPAA Data Center.
 - Incorporate program factual edits into the report, as appropriate, and submit the report to COPRA.

Site Visitor Readiness

Site Visit Expenses

You are expected to exercise the same care in incurring expenses during the site visit that a prudent person would exercise if traveling on personal business.

- All reasonable expenses are reimbursable
- Provide **all** receipts
- Expense Voucher available on website.
- **E-Submit** to NASPAA, *not* the program.

Thanks for Your Time

Thank you!

We look forward to you being trained as a site visitor and matching you to a program in an upcoming accreditation cohort!

Email **copra@naspaa.org** for more information or to be included in the next site visitor training.