

# 2011 Annual Accreditation Data Report



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## I. Introduction

The National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) is releasing a new report on the state of accredited programs in public service education. With 35 years of experience, NASPAA works to ensure excellence in education and training for public service and to promote the ideal of public service, while expanding its efforts to improve the quality of education in this field throughout the world. NASPAA focuses accreditation efforts on master-level programs in public affairs, public policy, and public administration, along with other directly related degrees. This report marks the move toward more quantifiable results: It is the first annual report based primarily on self-reported quantitative data provided in 2011 by programs that are accredited, or that are in the process of accreditation or reaccreditation, and that plan to continue operating beyond the 2011-2012 academic year.

This report provides new analyses to reflect the new NASPAA Accreditation Standards. In support of transparency and accountability in public service education, NASPAA requires each accredited program to “provide appropriate and current information about its mission, policies, practices, and accomplishments... 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.”<sup>1</sup> At an aggregate level, this report provides insight to Standard 2—Matching Governance with the Mission—and Standard 4— Matching Operations with the Mission: Serving Students. Given that this is the first year NASPAA has collected these data, programs are in the process of adapting their data systems. As programs embark on the new accreditation process and quantitative data entry based on the new 2009 Accreditation Standards, future reports will continue to provide more detailed, relevant information for this growing audience.

The information provided in this report is based on data from 175 programs embedded in 165 colleges and universities. Data is extracted from program-level annual accreditation maintenance reports and accreditation self-study reports. The following sections detail program size, faculty nucleus involvement, courses taught by full-time and part-time faculty, and student admissions and employment information, each of which are based on available self-reported data.

## II. Faculty

### *Faculty Nucleus*

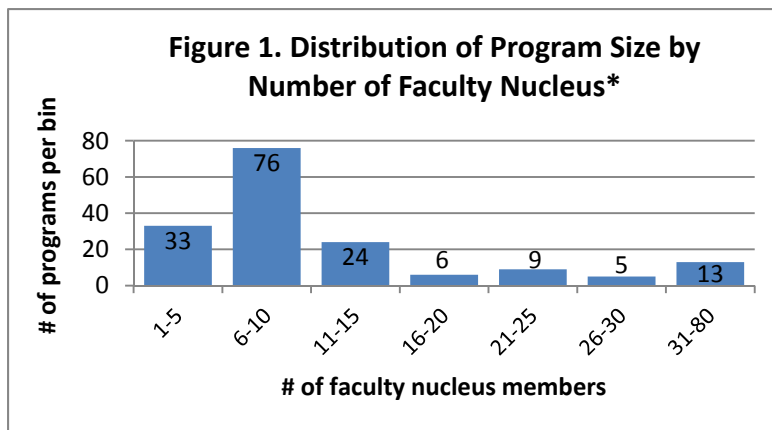
In order to ensure that programs have adequate administrative capacity to support their mission, goals and objectives, NASPAA-accredited programs identify faculty nucleus as those who “accept primary responsibility for the professional graduate program and exercise substantial determining influence for the governance and implementation of the program.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> NASPAA Self-Study Instructions, p.37, January 20, 2011

<sup>2</sup> NASPAA Self-Study Instructions, p.13, January 20, 2011

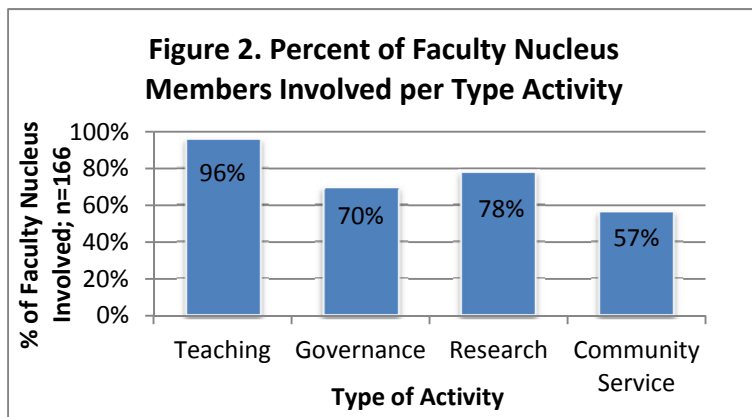
Data from 166 programs reveal that—in terms of faculty nucleus—the average program size is 13, while the median is eight. Programs with a faculty nucleus of 15 or less account for 80 percent of all programs, and 46 percent of programs have between 6-10 faculty nucleus.



\*Bins in 1-30 consist of clusters of five; bin 31-80 includes a cluster of 50

Faculty members often assume multiple roles within their programs. These activities

commonly include a combination of teaching, governance, research in areas related to public affairs, and community service. Figure 2 presents the results from the same group of 166 programs. Teaching is the most common activity, with an average participation rate of 96 percent among faculty nucleus. On average, 78 percent conduct research, 70 percent are active in the governance of the program, and 57 percent participate in community service.



Community service is broadly defined and encompasses a range of activities to support the local public, college or university community, and public service profession. Some examples include policy analysis, program evaluation, training of public managers, and program management. Many faculty members make broader contributions through television,

radio or newspaper media, guiding public discourse in areas like organizing emergency response efforts or improving public financial management. These activities involve the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, and faculty may volunteer or receive compensation.

*Required and Total Course Offerings Taught by Full- and Part-time Faculty*

In addition to the composition and activities of faculty nucleus, the distribution of teaching responsibilities between full-time and part-time faculty is an indicator of administrative capacity. In individual annual reports, programs were asked to provide the percentage of required courses and all courses that are taught by full-time and part-time faculty. Table 1 provides the unweighted average percentage reported by 158 programs in these reports.

**Table 1. Average Percent of Courses Taught by Full-time and Part-time Faculty**

	% Taught by Full-Time Faculty	% Taught by Part-time Faculty
n=158		
All Courses	76	24
Required Courses	83	17

### III. Students

#### Admissions and Enrollment

This section provides information on applications, admissions, and enrollment of students in public service degree programs. It is important to note that, as 2011 was the first year these data were collected, programs are in the process of adapting their data systems to the requirements of the new NASPAA Standards. In the cohort entering in Fall 2010, programs that are accredited or in the process of (re)accreditation with NASPAA enrolled 9,512 new students. As an indication of demand, these programs received 24,441 applications. On average, programs admitted 65 percent of applicants. A breakdown of admissions into quartiles in Tables 2a and 2b shows the variation in selectivity of these programs. Of total admitted students, an average of 60 percent enrolled. When reviewing Tables 2a and 2b, note that total figures may double-count the number of applicants and admitted students, given the possibility that individuals applied to and were accepted by more than one program. Also, it is possible that some programs may have reported total students enrolled in the program rather than the cohort entering the program in Fall 2011, thereby biasing admissions and enrollment rates upward. These results are based on data from 154 programs. With the new data collection methods promoted by NASPAA, trends in admissions and enrollment over time will be more readily accessible to NASPAA, its members, and the general public.

#### Employment of Graduates

A principal interest for prospective and current students in public service education—and useful for program decision-making—is job placement following graduation. These degrees make graduates marketable and productive not only in government, but also in the nonprofit and private sectors. Figure 3 provides a breakdown of employment by sector and subsector six months after graduation for the cohort graduating in the spring of 2010. Government employment, which accounts for 51 percent of employment status, is disaggregated by the following four categories: National/central/federal government, state/provincial/regional

**Tables 2a and 2b. Student Admissions and Enrollment for Cohort Entering Fall 2010<sup>1</sup>**

<b>2a</b> <i>n=154</i>	<b>Applicants</b>	<b>Admitted</b>	<b>Enrolled</b>
	<b>(#)</b>	<b>(#)</b>	<b>(#)</b>
<b>Min</b>	8	7	6
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Quartile</b>	50	37	28
<b>Median</b>	95	58	42
<b>3rd Quartile</b>	171	117	76
<b>Max</b>	2,347	1,118	428
<b>Total</b>	24,441	15,915	9,512

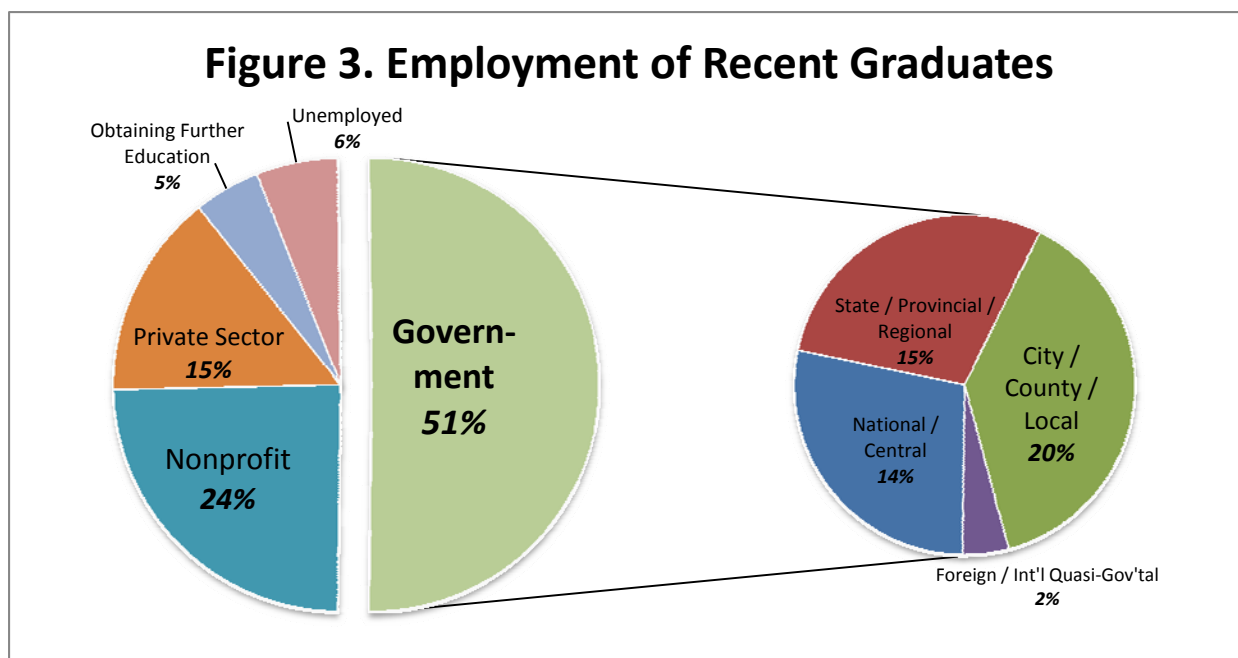
<b>2b</b> <i>n=154</i>		<b>Admitted</b>	<b>Enrolled<sup>2</sup></b>
		<b>(%)</b>	<b>(%)</b>
<b>Min</b>		21%	22%
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Quartile</b>		60%	57%
<b>Median</b>		75%	72%
<b>3rd Quartile</b>		85%	85%
<b>Max</b>		100%	100%
<b>Total</b>		65%	60%

<sup>1</sup> Note possibility of double-counting, as applicants may have applied to, been admitted by, or enrolled in more than one program

<sup>2</sup> Percent enrolled = number enrolled / number admitted

government, city/county/local government, and foreign government, which includes international quasi-governmental organizations. Additionally, more than one-fifth (21 percent) of graduates are working in domestically-oriented nonprofit organizations—more than any other subsector—while another three percent are employed in nonprofits with an international focus. In the private sector, employment is nearly evenly divided between research/consulting firms (seven percent) and other kinds of business (eight percent).

Figure 3 shows that approximately six percent of recent graduates are unemployed.



Unemployment data provided by NASPAA are not necessarily categorized in accordance with unemployment as defined by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (USBLS). NASPAA data include graduates actively seeking employment and those voluntarily out of the workforce for travel, volunteer work, family or other reasons, potentially causing the unemployment rate to appear higher than the true value with respect to the USBLS definition. As programs are not required to provide a breakdown of reasons for unemployment, these data are not available.

On the following page, Table 3 provides a breakdown of employment by program location, clustering subsectors together under the broader areas of government, nonprofit, and private employment. Note that data reflect the location of the program, not necessarily the state in which graduates are employed. To facilitate data analysis, the total number of known and unknown cases by state is provided.

These results are based on self-reported data from 4,702 graduates of 138 (of the total 175) programs that are accredited or that are seeking (re)accreditation, and which also reported 1,474 unknown cases (i.e., number of recent graduates of their program for which they were unable to obtain data). This is not an exhaustive list of all programs in the field of public service. Therefore, figures may not be representative of the entire field of public service.

Table 3. Employment by Location of Program

Location		Percentage per Sector based on Known Cases of Employment					Total Cases of Employment Reported	
State / Territory	# of Programs	Government	Non-profit	Private Sector	Further Education	Unemployed	Known	Unknown
Alabama	4	55%	23%	7%	7%	8%	110	146
Arizona	2	72%	8%	6%	8%	6%	99	5
Arkansas	2	64%	12%	21%	0%	3%	33	2
California	15	70%	14%	12%	2%	2%	529	147
Colorado	1	55%	19%	13%	1%	11%	83	12
Connecticut	1	57%	10%	27%	7%	0%	30	4
Delaware	1	42%	21%	0%	26%	11%	19	3
Florida	6	76%	13%	8%	1%	1%	142	132
Georgia	7	57%	20%	7%	6%	10%	209	266
Idaho	1	67%	27%	7%	0%	0%	15	0
Illinois	6	51%	26%	14%	3%	6%	136	60
Indiana	3	23%	30%	27%	2%	19%	120	56
Kansas	2	92%	4%	2%	2%	0%	48	7
Kentucky	6	52%	19%	18%	9%	2%	139	16
Louisiana	3	61%	14%	14%	4%	7%	56	27
Maryland	3	55%	22%	12%	7%	3%	107	6
Massachusetts	2	34%	46%	9%	4%	7%	74	11
Michigan	3	35%	51%	10%	3%	0%	144	27
Minnesota	1	41%	37%	22%	0%	0%	41	55
Mississippi	2	68%	0%	11%	13%	8%	38	8
Missouri	4	42%	25%	18%	13%	3%	72	18
Nebraska	1	68%	26%	3%	3%	0%	31	15
Nevada	1	76%	7%	7%	0%	10%	29	2
New Jersey	3	51%	19%	17%	4%	10%	140	19
New Mexico	2	68%	6%	15%	6%	6%	34	2
New York	8	30%	42%	19%	4%	5%	699	130
North Carolina	7	51%	27%	11%	5%	6%	132	45
North Dakota	1	42%	33%	8%	8%	8%	12	0
Ohio	6	55%	18%	18%	5%	4%	110	16
Oregon	4	33%	21%	33%	6%	7%	144	14
Pennsylvania	6	43%	29%	14%	6%	8%	192	70
Puerto Rico	1	62%	0%	13%	10%	15%	39	1
South Carolina	2	28%	38%	9%	19%	6%	32	6
Tennessee	2	50%	40%	7%	3%	0%	30	3
Texas	9	56%	13%	19%	5%	7%	301	69
Utah	1	39%	18%	18%	11%	13%	38	0
Virginia	2	60%	14%	16%	2%	8%	154	10
West Virginia	1	47%	27%	13%	13%	0%	15	33
Washington	1	39%	36%	11%	6%	8%	122	16
Washington, DC	5	50%	27%	15%	3%	5%	204	15

#### IV. Looking Forward

NASPAA has worked towards and will continue to pursue its mission of improving the quality of public service education. With over 80 percent of courses taught by full-time faculty, students in NASPAA-accredited programs have direct, regular interaction with the field's leading experts. The dedication of faculty to community service activities demonstrates the core values of public service and has the potential to create lasting impacts. Also, data show that some programs have rigorous admissions processes while others allow more open admission, which reflects the diversity of the missions and communities accredited programs wish to serve.

NASPAA is taking steps to ensure that future data releases build on existing quantitative and qualitative data, the variety and reliability of which will continue to improve as programs adapt to the new NASPAA Standards. Through the new Foundational Survey to be implemented by NASPAA and the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM) starting in 2012, for example, members will submit more specific data that will answer a wider range of frequently asked data-based questions. The collection and analysis of quantitative data will continue to improve as NASPAA moves toward more web-based, searchable data. For further information, please visit the NASPAA website at [www.naspaa.org](http://www.naspaa.org) and the websites of NASPAA-accredited programs.