Introductory Question

• At your table, discuss:

• What led you to come to today‘s workshop?

• What made you want to learn about NASPAA and the accreditation process?

• What do you hope to get out of today‘s session?
Accreditation Workshop Overview

1. NASPAA and the Benefits of Accreditation  
2. What You Need to Know about Accreditation before Pursuing it  
3. Fundamentals: The Standards and How to Apply Them  
4. Student Learning Assessment  
5. Other Major Accreditation Themes  
6. The Self-Study and Site Visit Questions and Answers
What We Hope You Will Learn Today

1. What the value of accreditation is and how the process works.
2. The strategic management philosophy at the core of the accreditation process.
3. The major themes in the NASPAA standards
4. How to approach the most complex standards
5. Effective strategies for managing the accreditation process successfully
Topic 1: NASPAA And The Value Of Accreditation
NASPAA

- **NASPAA**
  - Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration

- **What is NASPAA**
  - Global standard in public service education.
  - Membership organization of graduate education programs in public affairs
  - Over 300 members primarily in the US, but 14 other countries

- **NASPAA Mission? NASPAA**
  - To ensure excellence in education and training for public service
  - To promote the ideal of public service.
International Outreach of NASPAA

- The European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA)
- The Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee)
- The Inter-American Network of Public Administration Education (INPAE)
- NASPAA and Chinese MPA Committee agreed on the importance of ensuring quality of public service education globally.
Global Reach: NASPAA members & members active in accreditation
COPRA: Accreditation Process Oversight

• COPRA stands for Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation

• The accreditation body for graduate degree programs in public policy, administration, and affairs, globally.

• COPRA consists of 14 members, 13 of whom are academics, one whom is a practitioner. Membership turns over every three years.
Why NASPAA Accreditation?

• The accreditation process and outcomes strengthen programs.

Accreditation:

• Enhances your global reputation

• Demonstrates your commitment to quality public service education.

• Enables programs to continue to develop and improve.
Topic 2: What You Need To Know About Accreditation Before Pursuing It
What Do You Need to Know Before Starting?

1. Strategic Management

2. Preconditions

3. The Accreditation Process
Accreditation is a Strategic Management Process

• Accreditation goal: Quality public service education

• Strategy for achieving goal: Effective program management and continuous improvement

• Strategic management building blocks:
  • Mission
  • Goals
  • Values
  • Evaluation
Strategic Management in Accreditation

• Clear program mission, goals and public service values developed by faculty, with input from key stakeholders.

• Program policies, curriculum, resource allocation, student support efforts reflect mission, goals and public service values.

• Processes in place for ongoing performance assessment, relative to mission, goals, public service values.

• The accreditation self study and annual reports document that these processes are in place.
Binghamton University Example

• Handout with BU Goals

• Strategic management and accreditation processes ensure that the program organizes its work to advance its mission, goals and public service values.
Preconditions

1. Program Eligibility
   • University accreditation

2. Course of Study
   • 36-48 credit hours

3. Primary Focus
   • Programs that prepare students for careers in public affairs, administration or policy analysis.

4. Public Service Values
Public Service Values and NASPAA Programs

- Public service values are enduring beliefs, ideals and principles shared by a community about what is good and desirable and what is not.

- Eligible programs must demonstrate that public service values guide the education the program provides to students. They must be evident:
  - In your mission;
  - how you govern your program;
  - your curriculum.
## Public Service Values Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Service Value</th>
<th>Programmatic Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>Our program emphasizes public service professionals’ accountability to community stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency</td>
<td>We value transparency in carrying out public work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>We believe in striving for the highest level of effectiveness in the delivery of public services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Public Service Values Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Service Value</th>
<th>Programmatic Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness</td>
<td>We teach students to be responsive to the concerns of the communities they serve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity and inclusion</td>
<td>We embrace the value of many different voices in carrying out the work of the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity</td>
<td>We believe that effective public service requires professionals to be fair in their treatment of all members of the community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Public Service Values

• Sustainability
• Efficiency
• Ethical behavior
• Evidence-based decision-making
Exercise

1. We have provided three mission statements from NASPAA accredited programs. Pick one and identify public service values that guide that program.

2. Identify one public service value that guides your program and discuss it with the others at your table.
Strategic Management Involves Key Stakeholders

- Program management led by program faculty

- Other stakeholders regularly consulted on relevant goals/activities:
  - Government officials associated with the program
  - University leaders
  - Alumni
  - Community partners
Logic Models: Visualizing Strategic Management

• Clarify desired outcomes

• Clarify the resources you put in and the activities you undertake that contribute to those outcomes

• Provide the basis for evaluating success and making adjustments as needed.
Two Logic Models

• Renmin University of China

• Binghamton
The Accreditation Process...

- Is designed to be gradual and deliberate
- Focuses on continuous learning
  - Ongoing emphasis on learning and improvement
- Is not structured to earn accreditation quickly

*First-time applicants are often not successful right away and that's okay!*
The Accreditation Process

1. Program submits eligibility report
2. COPRA responds and advises
3. Program prepares & submits Self-Study Report (SSR)
4. COPRA reviews and generates interim report
5. Site visit is planned, typically following positive interim report
6. Site visit takes place after which team reports results to COPRA
7. COPRA makes an accreditation decision
8. If accredited, annual program review
The accreditation process involves give and take between COPRA and applicant programs.

Programs respond to COPRA throughout the process:
- Interim report
- Following site visit
- On annual program reviews
Time Frame

- Eligibility Application and Review (1 year)

- Self-Study covers the academic year before accreditation application
  - One application cycle/year; self study due in August

- Review process: August to August (1 year)

- Programs may take up to 3 years post eligibility review to complete their self-study
Key Participants in the Process

- Program leaders initiate
  - Seek support from university leaders

- Program may create an accreditation committee to lead the process.

- Self-study written by core, senior faculty, others with English language proficiency

- Program staff collect relevant data

- Students, alumni, advisory board, other stakeholders involved in relevant processes (mission review, etc.)
The Accreditation Triangle

Mission

Process

Outcomes
Topic 3: Accreditation Fundamentals: The Standards and How to Apply Them
Accreditation Framework

• Preconditions

• Standards
  • Expectations for all NASPAA-accredited programs
  • Seven standards

• Program architecture
  • The elements guiding the choices programs make to conform to standards.
  • Mission, Vision, Values, Goals
Accreditation Standards

• Standard 1: Managing Programs Strategically
• Standard 2: Matching Governance with Mission
• Standards 3-5: Matching Operations with Mission
  • Standard 3: Faculty Performance
  • Standard 4: Serving Students
  • Standard 5: Student Learning
• Standard 6: Matching Resources with the Mission
• Standard 7: Matching Communications with the Mission
Standards Review Plan

• Key themes

• Standards that typically challenge new programs

• Standards that illustrate the philosophy of accreditation and prepare you for the accreditation process.
## Public Service Values Guide Accreditation Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Application to NASPAA Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transparency, Accountability</td>
<td>Standard 7.1 Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity and Inclusion</td>
<td>Standards 3.2, 4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>Standard 5.1 Core Competencies and Assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Values Guide Accreditation: An Example

• Transparency (Standard 7.1)
Communication Demonstrates Transparency and Accountability

• Standard 7.1: Matching communication with mission

• Programs must make *key program information* regularly and publicly available to its stakeholders, on its website.
Rationale: Informed Decision-Making

• Students need specific information to make good decisions about whether to apply and enroll in the degree program.

• NASPAA requires transparency and accountability so that students can make informed choices about their education.
Communication Requirements for Standard 7.1

• Provide links to program information available online to students.

• Program Information Defined as “Key”
  • Mission
  • Important policies and practices
  • Mode of program delivery (in person, online)
  • Number of credit hours needed to graduate
  • Length of degree
  • Number of faculty
  • Tuition and fees (program costs)
  • Admission criteria
  • Student learning outcomes and program accomplishments, such as completion rate and graduate employment
Examples

• Renmin University of China:
  • http://spap.ruc.edu.cn/
  • http://en.spap.ruc.edu.cn/

• Tsinghua University:
  • http://www.sppm.tsinghua.edu.cn/english/Admission/MPA/
  • http://www.sppm.tsinghua.edu.cn/xwjy/mpa/

• Binghamton University
Exercise

• Using the Renmin, Tsinghua or Binghamton websites, find the following information:

1. Program Mission
2. Length of Degree
3. Admission Requirements
4. Employment Information About Graduates
Topic 4: Student Learning Assessment
Student Learning Assessment
Demonstrates Accountability and Effectiveness

- Two standards address student learning assessment:
- Standard 1.3: Strategic Program Management
- Standard 5.1: Universal Required Competencies
Program Assessment: Key Elements

- Program evaluation plan developed and implemented
- Program competencies defined, measured, analyzed and used for program improvement.
Strategic Program Management
Standard 1.3

• Focus: Development and implementation of a plan to assess the program’s progress toward goal achievement.

• Key elements
  • Goals aligned with program mission
  • Data sources that provide information responsive to those goals
# Strategic Program Management Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Data Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduates are prepared for leadership roles in government</td>
<td>Student employment data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alumni perceptions survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program has strong partnerships with local stakeholders</td>
<td>Campus events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty conduct high profile research</td>
<td>Faculty research grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number and type of faculty publications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government and other stakeholders perceive the program as delivering on mission</td>
<td>Stakeholder survey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student Learning Assessment: Rationale

• Accountability: Programs must demonstrate they are accountable for the promise to prepare students as public service professionals.

• Accountability: Programs are responsible for delivering on their distinct public service mission.

• Effectiveness: Programs must demonstrate they are committed to continuous learning and using that learning for improvement.
Student Learning Assessment Challenge

• What data make it possible for us to be accountable and effective?

• Some traditional data sources are *useful*, but **insufficient**:
  • Course grades
  • Assignment grades
  • Thesis grades/defenses
  • Student satisfaction surveys
Student Learning Assessment: Competencies-Based

• Why Competencies?
  • Competencies tell what knowledge and skills we expect students to acquire
  • Competencies are what we will hold ourselves accountable for to students, employers and others who depend on our alumni.

• Competencies enable us to assess whether students can:
  • demonstrate knowledge and understanding
  • apply knowledge, understanding, and problem solving abilities
Competencies-Based Assessment

• Competencies-based assessment provides programs with information:
  • To assess the extent to which our graduates leave with those skills
  • To consider what steps we need to take to improve our performance

• NASPAA requires accredited programs to define competencies in five areas.
Five Universal Competencies

1. Lead and manage in public governance
2. Participate in and contribute to the policy process
3. Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions
4. Articulate and apply a public service perspective
5. Communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry
• Operationalize each for your program based on your mission
• Develop operationalized statements with faculty input
• Identify appropriate learning outcomes associated with each competency.
Accreditation Expectations

1. Operationalization of five universal competencies
2. Measures for each of the five universal competencies
3. Evidence of assessment of three of the five competencies
4. Indication of how the program has analyzed and used that assessment to improve the program.
5. An ongoing plan for competency assessment
Key Considerations: Curriculum Map

• A curriculum map can help you to identify the courses in which students will acquire knowledge and skills that demonstrate the competencies.

• List all required courses
• Indicate which competencies students will learn in each course
• Identify gaps or excessive coverage
• Assess gaps relative to mission
• Make curriculum adjustments as needed
Curriculum Map Example

- Binghamton University Curriculum Map Handout
Exercise

• Using the worksheet “Assessment Cycle of Student Learning”:

1. Operationalize 1-2 core competencies for your program.

2. (We will complete other sections of this worksheet later in this session)
Competency Assessment

• What measures are most useful in assessing competencies?

• Direct measures
• Indirect measures
• Use rubrics with multiple assessors to maximize knowledge
• Attend to reliability and validity

• Note: Students grades are too generic to assess competencies
Worksheet

• Identify what data sources you would use to learn how your students are doing in achieving the competencies you have specified.
Sources of Evidence: Direct, Indirect

- Direct
  - Student presentations
  - Case study analysis
  - Course assignments
  - Examinations
  - Final projects/theses
  - Internship reports
  - Blog, journal postings
  - Role play/simulation
  - Policy analyses

- Indirect
  - Exit interviews with graduates
  - Focus groups with students, alumni, employers
  - Student self-assessments
  - Employer surveys
  - Student surveys
  - Alumni surveys
Value of Rubrics as Assessment Tools

• Clearly describe the expected knowledge, skills and abilities the student work should demonstrate

• Articulate the differences between exceptional, acceptable, and unsatisfactory demonstration of the competency

• Provides specific information, that grades do not
Ensuring You Have a Usable Rubric

• Reliability
  • Multiple evaluators (inter-rater reliability)
  • Shared understanding of the categories, ratings

• Validity
  • Face validity (advisory board)
  • Multiple measures of each competency
# Partial Case Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>EXCEEDS</th>
<th>MEETS</th>
<th>FAILS TO MEET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identifies salient challenges</td>
<td>Identifies all salient challenges, substantiated with available conceptual and quantitative evidence</td>
<td>Identifies all salient challenges</td>
<td>Overlooks salient challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applies analytical tools/concepts from the course/text</td>
<td>Applies analytical tools/concepts appropriately to relevant information. Draws correct inferences. Identifies non-obvious problems and relationships.</td>
<td>Applies chapter analytical tools/concepts appropriately to relevant information from the case. Draws correct inferences.</td>
<td>Does not apply analytical tools/concepts. Fails to use relevant information. Draws incorrect inferences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Final Comments: Expectations & Best Practices

• Have a plan!
• “Close the loop” on three competencies
• Ongoing process for analyzing data, discussing results, making adjustments and sharing what you’ve done.
• Develop a reasonable, regular timetable for assessing each competency
Topic 5: Other Major Accreditation Themes
Other Major Themes

- Faculty Governance
- Diversity, Inclusion and Cultural Competence
Faculty Role in Program Governance

- “Substantial Determining Influence”

- “An adequate faculty nucleus” (5), “will exercise substantial determining influence for the governance and implementation of the program.”
“Substantial determining influence” examples

• All program faculty play a role in:
  • Development of program mission and goals
  • Design of program and courses in the curriculum
  • Hiring of new faculty
  • Development and implementation of program admission standards
  • Program evaluation and student learning assessment
Faculty Governance

• Governing choices align with
  • Mission
  • Vision
  • Public Service Values
Who are your program’s stakeholders

- Faculty
- University leaders
- Students
- Government leaders
- Employers
- Alumni
- Community leaders
Diversity, Inclusiveness & Cultural Competence

- NASPAA Standards: 3.2, 4.4, 5.1

- Two dimensions
  - Diversity of faculty and students
  - Climate in which all people, regardless of differences, are included
  - Ability of students to communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry.
Rationale

• Programs must prepare students for a diverse and changing workforce

• Experience with students and faculty from diverse backgrounds makes it possible for graduates to do public service with a wide range of people.

• What counts as diversity and inclusion is different for every school and context.
NASPAA Expectations

• Program-specific definition of diversity
  • What kinds of diversity are necessary to prepare your students to become effective public service professionals?

• Alignment of definition with program mission

• Diversity plan for achieving diversity and inclusion goals
## Forms of Diversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Program Interest/Concern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Under representation of women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region/Country of Origin</td>
<td>Under representation of people from different regions within a country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity</td>
<td>Under representation of people of different races or ethnicities who are part of the population graduates will serve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income-level</td>
<td>Under representation of people of limited means</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>Under representation of people with physical disabilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise

• In an ideal world, what would your program look if it had a diverse representation of faculty and students? What groups would it include?

• How would your program define diversity?
Cultural Competence

• Preparing students to work in a diverse and changing workforce
• Demonstrate program commitment to making students competent to provide public service effectively, in context of cultural differences.
• Provide opportunities for students to:
  • Learn from people with backgrounds and experience different from theirs
  • Acknowledge any biases they bring to public service
  • Example: What is the experience of women in male-dominated world of public service? How do we ensure public service professionals are sensitive to the experiences of men AND women
Accredited Programs Require Diversity Plans

• Key Elements

• Define diversity for your program.
• Goals: What are your program’s goals for faculty and student diversity?
• Strategies: What steps will your program take to achieve faculty and student diversity?
Goals/Strategies Dimensions

• Recruitment
• Retention
• Advancement-Creating an inclusive environment
• What? How? On what schedule?
Key Considerations

• You must have a **written plan**

• Goals and objectives must be **measurable**

• You must be able to **monitor and assess** progress toward goals
Exercise

• Using the definition of diversity you developed earlier:

• Identify up to two strategies you would use to address:
  • Faculty diversity
  • Student diversity

• Share your strategies with the others in your group
Potential strategies

- Distribution of job announcements
- Personal networks
- Program recruitment materials and activities
- Website images and content
- Limited service responsibilities for junior faculty
- Mentoring programs for faculty and students
- Collaboration with other programs in other regions
- Guest speakers (in person or virtual)
- Service learning in diverse settings
- International experiences
Topic 6
The Self Study and Site Visit
Preparing for the Self Study

- Institutional support for accreditation
- Identify required data
- Determine strategic processes required
- Student learning assessment status and future work
- Identify who will be responsible for key tasks
Strategic Management Processes

• Are these elements in place:
  • Mission review; program logic model.
  • Clarity about program goals, public service values
  • Are your activities aligned with your mission, goals and public service values?
  • Do you have evaluation processes in place?
Student Learning Assessment

- Written Assessment Plan
- Define the 5 required Universal Competencies
- Assess at least 3 competencies
  - Data
  - Analysis
  - Close the loop - use information for program improvement
Exercise

• Worksheet: Preparing for eligibility and self-study: Are you ready?

• Take 5 minutes - work through the list and assess your program’s readiness.
Accreditation Process: Timing

- August 15: Self Study Due
- October: COPRA review
- October - November: Interim Report
  - COPRA liaison
Accreditation Process

• January: program response to the Interim Report
• November-December: Site Visit Team assembled
• January 15: Site Visit dates set
  • Availability of university stakeholders
Site Visit Team Meetings

- Program faculty, staff
- Students
- Advisory Board(s)
- Chairs, Deans, Chief Academic Officer
- Career counselors
- Internship advisors
- Other COPRA-requested meetings
The Site Visit

• A few weeks prior: SV Chair, Program Director agree on itinerary
  • Be prepared to be flexible

• January - March: Site Visit
  • Documents, records, EVIDENCE
  • Site Visit Team work space
Site Visit Norms

• Site visit team are neutral

• Importance of avoiding perceived conflicts of interest

• Be welcoming hosts, but avoid gifts that could be misinterpreted
Accreditation Process

• 1 month after visit: Chair posts draft report in NASPAA online system
  • Programs may only correct errors of fact

• 1-2 months after visit: final report uploaded in NASPAA online system
  • Program response
Accreditation Process

- COPRA Summer Meeting: June
  - Review documents relevant to process
  - Liaison and subgroup makes initial recommendation
  - Full Commission reviews, discusses, determines final action
Accreditation Process: Possible Outcomes

• Accredited 7 years, no monitoring
• Accredited 7 years with monitoring
• Deferral
• Denial of Accreditation
Accreditation Process Questions

• Take 5 minutes, talk at your table about your questions, worries, concerns about the accreditation process

• Choose a spokesperson to report
Questions?

Contact hamilton@naspaa.org or visit accreditation.naspaa.org
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Exercises</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Handout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session 1</td>
<td>Discussion of participants’ interest in the session and in NASPAA</td>
<td>To familiarize participants with each other To clarify participants’ expectations</td>
<td>No handout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identification of an accredited program’s public service values, using its mission statement. Identification of 1-2 public service values from participants’ programs.</td>
<td>To provide participants with examples of accredited program’s mission statements. To establish the connection between a program’s mission and its public service values. To enable participants to reflect on and identify core values that guide their programs.</td>
<td>Binghamton University mission statement Renmin University mission statement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 2</td>
<td>Logic Model: Review of Renmin Logic Model</td>
<td>To provide participants with the opportunity to draw the connection between the logic model and the strategic management process. To provide an example that participants could use as they develop their own logic models.</td>
<td>Binghamton Logic Model Renmin Logic Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 3</td>
<td>Review of accessibility of program information</td>
<td>To provide an example of how programs organize information consistent with standard 7.1, that is accessible and usable for key stakeholders (largely students).</td>
<td>No handout. Review of key data on the Binghamton University website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 4</td>
<td>Operationalization of Core Competencies</td>
<td>To provide participants with the opportunity to apply two concepts from standard 5.1: The operationalization of core competencies The identification of measures for assessing those competencies.</td>
<td>Adapted Fall 2017 Institute Handout on Student Learning Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session Exercises</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Handout</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 5: Defining diversity</td>
<td>To provide participants with the opportunity to identify, then discuss, the aspects of diversity most important to their program, in the context of the standard’s goal of preparing students for work in a diverse and changing workforce.</td>
<td>No handouts needed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 6: Accreditation Readiness Assessment</td>
<td>To provide participants with the opportunity to assess their readiness for accreditation.</td>
<td>Assessment form</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To provide participants with one final opportunity to identify and raise questions about the accreditation process.</td>
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