

# NASPAA Accreditation Workshop

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# 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    NASPAA
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

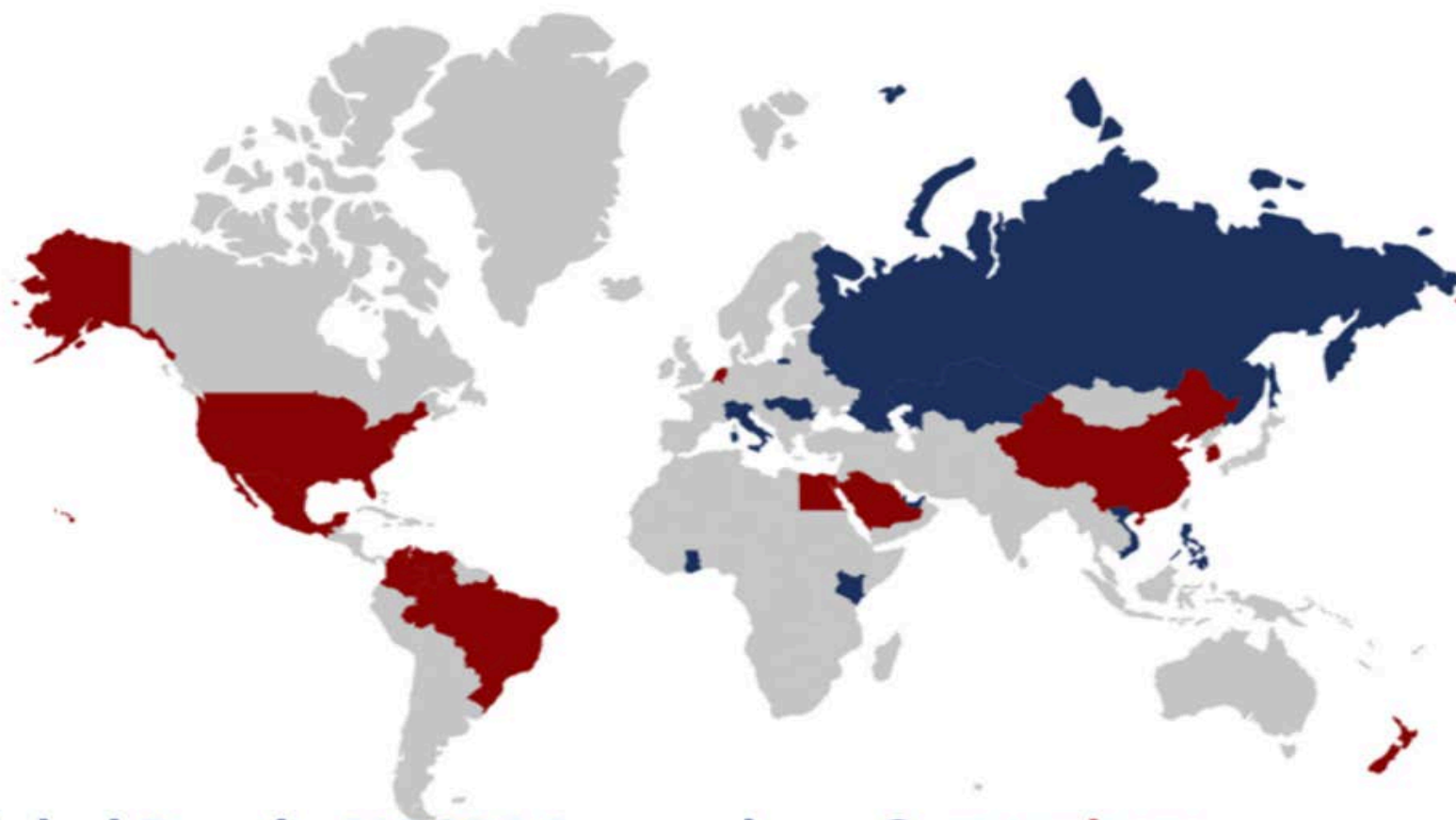
# Topic 1: NASPAA And The Value Of Accreditation

# 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**



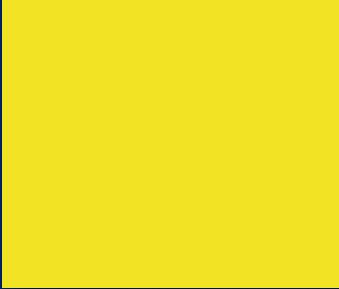
# COPRA: Accreditation Process Oversight

- 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

Public Service Value	Programmatic Application
Accountability	Our program emphasizes public service professionals' accountability to community stakeholders
Transparency	We value transparency in carrying out public work
Effectiveness	We believe in striving for the highest level of effectiveness in the delivery of public services

# Public Service Values Examples

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

# 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

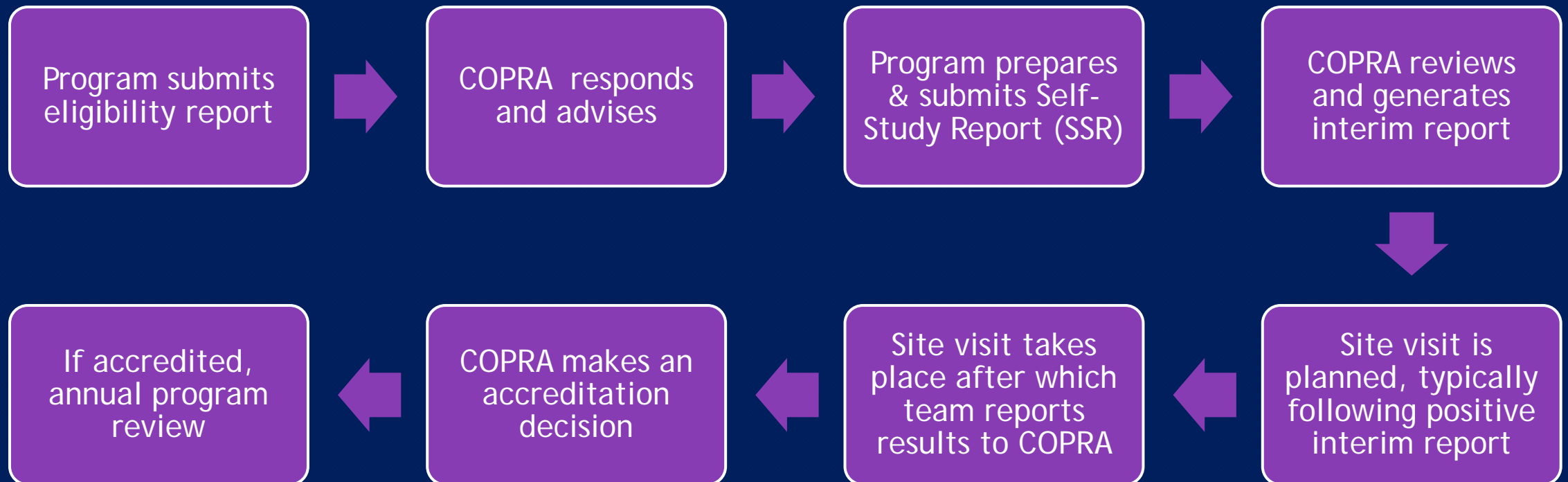


# The Accreditation Process...

- 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



# Program Role in Accreditation Process

- 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

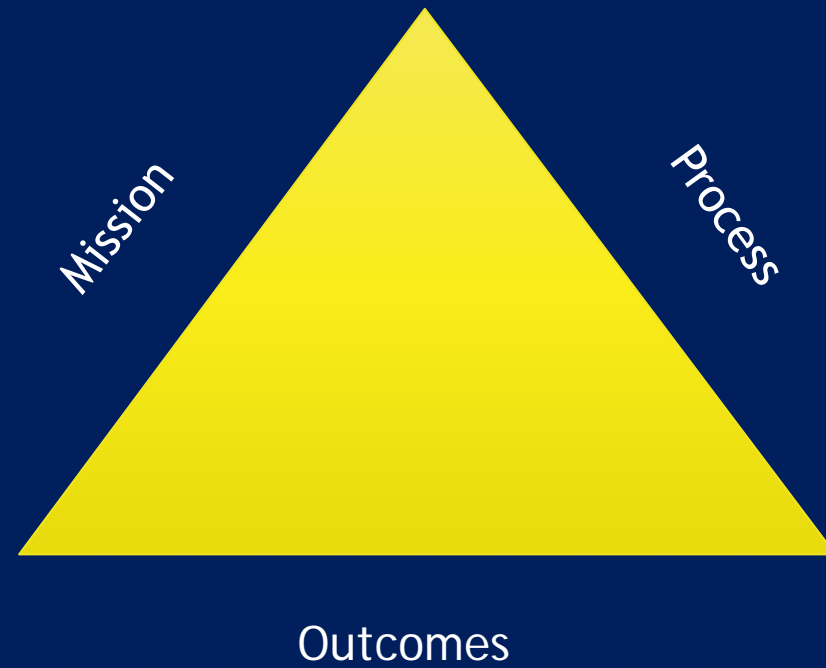
# Time Frame

- 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



# 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

Value	Application to NASPAA Standard
Transparency, Accountability	Standard 7.1 Communication
Diversity and Inclusion	Standards 3.2, 4.4
Effectiveness	Standard 5.1 Core Competencies and Assessment

# 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

Goal	Data Sources
Graduates are prepared for leadership roles in government	Student employment data Alumni perceptions survey
The program has strong partnerships with local stakeholders	Campus events Community partnerships
Faculty conduct high profile research	Faculty research grants Number and type of faculty publications
Government and other stakeholders perceive the program as delivering on mission	Stakeholder survey

# 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

# Using the Five Universal Competencies

- 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

ACTIVITY	EXCEEDS	MEETS	FAILS TO MEET
Identifies salient challenges	Identifies all salient challenges, substantiated with available conceptual and quantitative evidence	Identifies all salient challenges	Overlooks salient challenges
Applies analytical tools/concepts from the course/text	Applies analytical tools/concepts appropriately to relevant information. Draws correct inferences. Identifies non-obvious problems and relationships.	Applies chapter analytical tools/concepts appropriately to relevant information from the case. Draws correct inferences.	Does not apply analytical tools/concepts. Fails to use relevant information. Draws incorrect inferences.

# 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

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

# 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

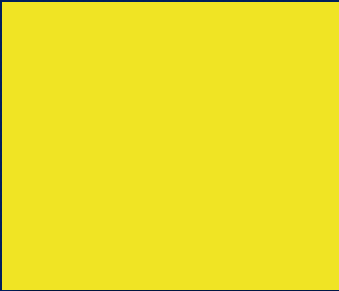
- Using the definition of diversity you developed earlier:
- Identify up to two strategies you would use to address:
  - Faculty diversity
  - Student diversity
- Share your strategies with the others in your group

## 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

Thank youf!

Questions?

Contact [hamilton@naspaa.org](mailto:hamilton@naspaa.org) or visit  
[accreditation.naspaa.org](http://accreditation.naspaa.org)

Beijing Accreditation Institute  
 April 2018  
 Exercises and Handouts

Session Exercises	Purpose	Handout
Session 1: Discussion of participants' interest in the session and in NASPAA	<p>To familiarize participants with each other</p> <p>To clarify participants' expectations</p>	No handout
<p>Session 2: Identification of an accredited program's public service values, using its mission statement.</p> <p>Identification of 1-2 public service values from participants' programs.</p>	<p>To provide participants with examples of accredited program's mission statements.</p> <p>To establish the connection between a program's mission and its public service values.</p> <p>To enable participants to reflect on and identify core values that guide their programs.</p>	<p>Binghamton University mission statement</p> <p>Renmin University mission statement.</p>
Session 2: Logic Model: Review of Renmin Logic Model	<p>To provide participants with the opportunity to draw the connection between the logic model and the strategic management process.</p> <p>To provide an example that participants could use as they develop their own logic models.</p>	<p>Binghamton Logic Model</p> <p>Renmin Logic Model</p>
Session 3: Review of accessibility of program information	To provide an example of how programs organize information consistent with standard 7.1, that is accessible and usable for key stakeholders (largely students).	No handout. Review of key data on the Binghamton University website.
Session 4: Operationalization of Core Competencies	<p>To provide participants with the opportunity to apply two concepts from standard 5.1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The operationalization of core competencies</li> <li>• The identification of measures for assessing those competencies.</li> </ul>	Adapted Fall 2017 Institute Handout on Student Learning Objectives



Session Exercises	Purpose	Handout
Session 5: Defining diversity	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.	No handouts needed
Session 6: Accreditation Readiness Assessment	<p>To provide participants with the opportunity to assess their readiness for accreditation.</p> <p>To provide participants with one final opportunity to identify and raise questions about the accreditation process.</p>	Assessment form