



**NASPAA Standards Colloquium Steering Committee
Report to the Executive Council**

**March 7, 2019
Chandler Stolp, Chair**

Overview

In July 2017, the NASPAA Executive Council launched the NASPAA Standards Colloquium and charged the Standards Committee and Colloquium Steering Committee with gathering NASPAA members and stakeholders to discuss the NASPAA Accreditation Standards and explore ways to ensure they remain relevant and fully comprehend the diverse ambitions of our accredited programs. Through a series of workshops held around the globe, direct conversations with relevant stakeholders, as well as a survey, the Committee sought feedback and insight into important questions about the scope of the accreditation standards and their impact on public service, and in particular on the the themes of global accreditation and new developments in our field.¹

Overall feedback from the Colloquia was positive. Stakeholders focused comments less on how to significantly change the Standards and instead on how to target changes to sharpen areas critical to global public service over the next 10 years. This held consistent across both in-person listening sessions and the online survey.

The evidence gathered focused primarily on the need for clarity in public service values, including those related to behavioral norms, accountability, and inclusion, and an emphasis on nonprofit management and cross-sectoral skills. Much of this feedback tied directly to current facets of the Standards. Working across sectors requires critical thinking, accountability, communication, and ethical awareness. Yet, as students are increasingly moving across boundaries - be they geographic or sectoral - there is an opportunity to more explicitly match the language of the Standards and universal required competencies to emphasize the importance of the full spectrum of policy development, implementation, and service delivery inherent in public service today.

Working in a globalized system also translated to an emphasis on cultural competency and inclusion, as opposed to a singular focus on diversity. Shifting to cultural competency allows the Standards to both acknowledge the variances in regions across the world, as well as support student competency in a globally sensitive and equitable manner.

The Committee also heard references to specific policy or competency areas, including mainstays in public administration (budgeting), as well as those addressing new trends, such as data science, cyber security, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which signaled a need to ensure that the competencies encourage programs to innovate and adapt to ensure students have the mission-based skills to address new challenges.

Based on the above, the Committee focused its recommendations in six areas:

1. public service values and inclusion
2. globalization and cultural competency

¹ July 2017 Dear Colleagues Letter:
<https://naspaaaccreditation.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/dear-colleague-letter-july-2017.pdf>

3. nonprofit management and boundary spanning
4. managing in a time of rapid change
5. transparency
6. critical analysis

Within each of these areas, the Committee offers recommendations to enhance the inclusivity and global competency of the Standards, while retaining their flexibility and wide applicability. Changes are recommended not only to the NASPAA Standards, but also suggested to the Self-Study Instructions, and other available resources to ensure accredited programs have clear guidance related to conformance.

The bulk of the recommendations, outlined by area of focus below, tie to the Preconditions and Standard 5.1. The Preconditions serve as the framework for the Standards, and thus are appropriate for outlining accreditation's attention to specific public service values, global public service, and the intersectoral policy arena. The competencies themselves - Standard 5.1 - serve to push the field forward, and changes to those ensure the field continues to grow. Other changes recommended aligning the self-study instructions and other documents with the spirit of the targeted changes to the Standards themselves.

Areas of Focus

Public Service Values and Inclusion

Summary of Feedback

Survey respondents and focus group and discussion participants engaged with the question of how to articulate a set of public service values that were both universal and applicable in many varied political and cultural contexts. Respondents consistently flagged three broad dimensions of public service values. One dimension emphasized behavioral norms that promote effectiveness in public service, including objectivity, evidence-based policymaking, ethical awareness, professionalism, and integrity. A second dimension related to accountability, including service to the public good, transparency and other process norms. A third dimension focused on a set of norms around inclusion, including diversity and cultural competence, equity and social justice, human dignity, and human rights. Of particular note here was a commonly expressed desire to prioritize inclusion "above and beyond diversity", and as a "critical public service value, one that embraces cultural contexts and serves modern public servants."

These three dimensions are closely aligned with the values set out in the UN's Sustainable Development Goal #16, to "build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels." Since virtually all countries in the world (193 of 195) have now signed on to the UN goals, this alignment will make it straightforward to require programs in all countries to adhere to this set of values, despite the very different political and cultural contexts in which they operate. This addresses a desire expressed in some of the conversations to strengthen or better define the enduring and broad set of shared values across

NASPAA schools, while maintaining the flexibility and autonomy for schools to be more specific in their own contexts.

An interesting point raised in one of the conversations with respect to the current standards related to the potential meaning of the word “community,” specifically as it relates to shared values in the Eligibility standards. Is the community the program’s stakeholders, or is the shared community of all accredited programs at NASPAA? How antithetical can a program’s values be from its university and context and still make sense for accreditation? This could merit clarification in future revisions to the standards.

Assessment of Needed Changes

The Committee agrees with the broad consensus that it has seen emerge in the Colloquium process that there is a need for NASPAA to more clearly define its public service values with respect to the three dimensions of behavioral norms, accountability, and inclusion noted above. These values may be most effectively expressed with direct reference to the UN’s SDGs, especially to SDG #16.

The issue of “community” is more difficult to nail down, despite the fact that it is woven throughout discussions of global values and inclusion. It is not clear how to link it concretely to the existing standards, but the Committee agrees that it merits discussion.

Recommendations

- The Committee has identified the following documents and sites in which a crisp statement of (or pointer to) NASPAA’s public service values has a place:
 - The NASPAA Accreditation Standards Document
 - Specifically reference SDG16 in Eligibility Precondition #2
 - More directly Incorporate inclusion-based values into Standard 3.2 on Faculty Diversity and Standard 4.4 on Student Diversity
 - NASPAA Self-Study Instructions Document: align with above recommended changes to the Standards
 - In the SSI rationale for Standard 1.3
 - The sections on Standards 3.2 and 4.4, including the instructions for developing a diversity plan
 - The SSI Glossary: define terms such as diversity, inclusion, and cultural competency
 - Develop examples in the Appendix of the SSI Instructions that could be used to communicate how public service values can be integrated into student competencies

- The Committee does not believe that the pressing need to develop an expression of the organization's public service values rises to the level of needing to create a new competency domain (or to split the existing 5th competency into a cultural competency domain and a communications domain).

Globalization and Cultural Competency

Summary of Feedback

The standards review process resulted in feedback on two key aspects of the globalization and cultural competency theme. The first refers to the applicability of the standards to programs outside the United States as a core challenge of NASPAA's global accreditation policy. A leading concern relates to the tension between western-centric standards that reflect democratic and plural political systems, and broader, more universal values that are applicable to diverse cultural and political contexts. Stakeholder feedback generally advocates for standards that incorporate global public service values which transcend regime type, led by accountability, inclusion, public service and ethics. At the same time, there is also wide agreement that program accreditation outside the United States requires flexibility, allowing public service values to be interpreted and refined in different contexts within the parameters established by COPRA's overarching standards.

The second line of input relates to concern over whether programs adequately prepare students for an interconnected world and for the exercise of public service in contexts that are enmeshed with global dynamics and processes. On this point, there is consensus that two sets of interrelated competencies be made an explicit part of the standards: cultural and global. Cultural competency would enable programs to consider inclusion, social justice and intercultural understanding and sensitivity in its public governance learning objectives. Stakeholders also favor programs that equip graduates with international competencies such that they can be effective decision-makers in the public and non-profit sectors that are increasingly shaped by globalization, global institutions and issues of public governance that are transnational in nature.

Assessment of Needed Changes

Graduates of our programs will spend their working lives in an increasingly interconnected world. As global citizens, graduates need to be prepared to think about policy from a global perspective, having in mind the impact of their actions, respect for diversity, and the room for collaboration across boundaries. Our Standards need to reflect this significant and accelerating change in our graduates' career paths since the last Standards were adopted in 2009.

At the same time, only a small minority of our students will take degrees in international affairs per se. We cannot and should not expect that the large majority of our masters programs will make globalization the centerpiece of their curricula. Instead, programs otherwise domestically focused should provide some orientation to global perspectives in covering public service values -- explicitly

recognizes differences as well as points of commonality -- and ensure that graduates are aware of and sensitive to differences in culture and able to work effectively in diverse social and institutional environments.

Recommendations

We believe that adequate recognition of the imperative of global understanding should begin with changes to the Preconditions for Accreditation Review, beginning with the preamble. “[P]ublic affairs, administration, and policy . . .” in the second sentence should recognize the participation of non-state actors in public service, including but not limited to domestic NGOs and transnational organizations. Item 2, “Public Service Values,” should be amended to note that PSVs can be developed and recognized not only within communities, but across communities. Perhaps the best example, and one that speaks to literally all NASPAA member and accredited institutions, is the United Nations’ set of 17 Strategic Development Goals. We believe that the SDGs should be referenced specifically in Item 2 and that the word “global” should appear in both the “Preconditions” and throughout the Self Study Instructions in exemplary materials.

We also believe that standard 5.1 should be amended to include an appreciation for cultural diversity and diversity in PSVs. Bullet 4, for example, could be amended as follows:

“to articulate and apply a public service perspective **and to recognize how those values are and are not shared across institutions and jurisdictions**”

Bullet 5, which covers a wide range of issues, could be reframed to feature culture alongside the existing emphases on communication and diversity, e.g.,

to communicate and interact productively **and in culturally sensitive ways** with a diverse and changing **populations in the workforce and citizenry and society at large.**

We are not here tied to the language, but want to suggest ways to raise the profile of culture without adding a bullet to 5.1, though we are open to that possibility as well.

Nonprofit Management and Boundary Spanning

Summary of Feedback

An interest in incorporating nonprofit perspectives has been one of the most consistent findings from the colloquia. Perhaps as revealing, there was no push-back on making nonprofit interests more visible in the Standards.

Assessment of Needed Changes

There is NASPAA-wide interest in embracing nonprofit management as a core tenet of public service education. NASPAA has itself adopted a “nonprofit-to-the-core” initiative to emphasize the centrality of nonprofit concerns in the public service issues that animate the vast majority of the membership. NASPAA has in the last year successfully accredited a Master of Nonprofit Management degree.

NASPAA data show the widespread employment outcomes of currently accredited degrees: of known graduates, 49% government (local 19%, State 15%, National 9%, foreign 3%), 25% nonprofit, 19% private.²

Some aspects of accreditation, including the competencies, are limiting, with a focus on public, but cross-sectoral competencies are critical as graduates move and/or collaborate across sectors throughout their careers. Public service was voiced as an inclusive term for broadening the competencies, especially as perceptions of the nonprofit field can vary greatly across countries, but non-governmental activities are widely recognized across the globe and explicitly embraced in the SDGs.

The question at this point in time is not whether to accredit programs focusing on nonprofit management, but whether public service programs can be credible without attention to the nonprofit institutions that deliver the many social services under contract with government entities.

Recommendations

- Add “nonprofit” to all references to “public affairs, administration, and policy” or “public affairs, public administration, and public policy” (and related phrases) throughout the Standards and Self-Study Instructions; for example, in the Preconditions for Accreditation:

The degree program's primary focus shall be that of preparing students to be leaders, managers, and analysts in the professions of public **and nonprofit** affairs, ~~public~~ administration, and ~~public~~ policy and only master's degree programs engaged in educating and training professionals for the aforementioned professions are eligible for accreditation. (SSI, p. 4)

Or related to Standard 1 on Mission:

its purpose and public service values, given the program's particular emphasis on public **and nonprofit** affairs, administration, and policy. (SSI, p. 7)

The “and” indicates today's necessity for including nonprofits to be relevant to public service education. We encourage the Standards committee to follow this pattern everywhere public admin/affairs/policy, or related, is named.

- Broaden the universal required competencies to be more inclusive of nonprofit management competencies:
 - To **strategically** lead and manage in public **service** governance

² 2016-17 Annual Accreditation Data Report:
<https://www.flipsnack.com/naspaa/2016-17-naspaa-accreditation-data-report.html>

- To articulate, ~~and~~ apply, and advance a public service perspective
- Emphasize intersectoral service delivery in the Standard 5 rationale:

"...Graduate students should be able to apply their knowledge, understanding, and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments, across all sectors involved in service delivery, and within broader or multidisciplinary contexts related to public and nonprofit affairs, administration, and policy. They should have the ability to deal with incomplete information, complexity, and conflicting demands. Graduate students should reflect upon social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgments."
- Expand the illustrative examples in the SSIs to include more nonprofit- or cross-sector focused examples, including student learning outcomes focusing on civic engagement and advocacy.
- Submit a change of scope request to the Council of Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) regarding COPRA's recognized scope of accreditation, which is currently "NASPAA-COPRA accredits Master's degree programs in public policy, affairs, and administration globally."

Managing in a Time of Rapid Change

Summary of Feedback

One of the founding charges of the Colloquium included exploration of new developments in the field, and the ability of the Standards to prepare students to not operate within the context of these new developments, but those we cannot yet anticipate. The idea of adaptability emerged throughout the colloquium, and is reinforced by related external sources (OECD³, World Economic Forum⁴) who focus on not only adaptability, but creativity and the ability to make "sound decisions and exercising good judgement under uncertainty" (AACSB⁵). Graduates must be prepared to move with cultural sensitivity in the rapidly changing, digitized world.

Assessment of Needed Changes

There are several competencies tied to the ability of students to manage in a time of rapid change. While some are already referenced in the Standards and discussed elsewhere in this report (critical thinking, analysis, crossing boundaries), other competencies are important to support the ability of modern public servants to work in new or unfamiliar environments, or across contexts, including creativity, flexibility, negotiation, adaptability, foresight. However, managing in a time of rapid change not only demands new skills, but also a focus on the public service values discussed above, those that emphasize ethical awareness and cultural sensitivity, which are an important framework for graduates preparing to manage new developments and technologies, and their impact on the public.

³ <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisa-2018-global-competence.htm>

⁴ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/the-10-skills-you-need-to-thrive-in-the-fourth-industrial-revolution/>

⁵ <https://www.aacsb.edu/accreditation/standards/business>

Recommendations

- We recommend integrating the need to adapt, think creatively, and handle complexity into the Standard 5.1 competencies. Suggested revisions include:

To lead and manage **with adaptability** in public governance

To analyze, synthesize, think **creatively and** critically, solve **complex** problems and make decisions

Transparency

Summary of Feedback and Assessment of Needed Changes

Transparency in the Defining the Standards. Feedback raised the issue of how transparency is reflected in the current standards, especially as it relates to articulating public service values. The concept of transparency as a component of the NASPAA standards was minimally mentioned in the listening sessions. However, in the November 2018 survey, a quarter of the respondents noted that “transparency/openness/democratic process/communication” as important component of public service values. There may be an opportunity to provide some context in the revised standards to more clearly define what does transparency mean in the public sector and global context. Three illustrative comments from the listening sessions and survey feedback include:

- Transparency needs to be clearly identified so that political influence is not interpreted as transparency.
- Certain fundamental values may transcend regimes and an alternative way to think about public service values, identifying key values that in the absence would tarnish what public administration is at its base and lead to lack of transparency, corruption, patronage, or abuse of power. The Sustainable Development Goals emphasize these values, as well.
- Transparency and accountability could be more explicitly articulated through standards. For example, the question is do we teach these public service values in the classroom? Do the students have those values in their heart? Are competencies such as transparency, etc. present in the classroom? Do the students take those values into their careers?

Transparency in the Standards Reporting. The current accreditation standards reflect “NASPAA’s commitment to support programs for professional education that 1) commit to the values of public affairs, administration, and policy and model them in their operations; 2) direct their resources toward quantitative and qualitative outcomes; and 3) continuously improve, which includes responding to and impacting their communities through ongoing program evaluation.” As some survey respondents and listening session participants noted, the current accreditation process emphasizes process transparency through the self-study report and site visit. Program evaluation outcomes, assessment of student learning outcomes, initiatives to promote diversity and inclusion are captured in the overarching programmatic evaluation activities. However, the outcomes themselves are not evaluated by COPRA. This reflects some potential challenges for programs to document conformance to the standards, as the

emphasis shifts from content to process. The aim is to allow programs to coherently articulate continual improvement process that is both transparent and reflects the distinct contexts.

Transparency in COPRA Review and Decision Outcomes. Various stakeholders noted the need for greater transparency the accreditation process broadly and in the COPRA review and decision process specifically. This is summarized by one perspective that acknowledging COPRA's process is peer-based presents an opportunity for COPRA to better record 'case law' and precedent -- to build institutional memory on the Commission. This would support consistency and provide a window into decision making among evolving COPRA commissions. The legitimacy and value of the NASPAA Accreditation process reflects the public service values embedded in the standards and the accreditation principles embedded through the accreditation community (e.g. CHEA). The balance is acknowledged by the ideal to retain the privacy and confidentiality of peer-based, trust-based, judgment-based system of collegial self-regulation, supported by CHEA.

Recommendations

Illuminating Transparency and Public Service Values. The current language defining public service values within the NASPAA standards includes: "The mission, governance, and curriculum of eligible programs shall demonstrably emphasize public service values. Public service values are important and enduring beliefs, ideals and principles shared by members of a community about what is good and desirable and what is not. They include pursuing the public interest with accountability and transparency..." A couple of ways to make transparency more explicit in the standards include:

- Review Public Administration Code of Ethic in various global contexts to identify potential key definitions of transparency. For example in the ASPA Code of Ethics notes " Be open, transparent and responsive, and respect and assist all persons in their dealings with public organizations."
- Integrate the Sustainable Development Goals into the statements on values in the Preconditions.
- Provide examples for how transparency may be included in assessment of student learning outcomes, especially as it relates to ensuring fair and transparent processes, disseminating information in a timely and responsive manner.

Update Self-Study Instructions to Emphasize Process Reporting. One of the challenges for programs and the COPRA Commission is how to present the distinct process for achieving conformance to the standards in a mission-based, competency-focused approach that emphasizes continual program evaluation. The self-study instructions may be revised to direct programs to more explicitly articulate their process.

Review Current COPRA Policies in Alignment with CHEA Standards. Accreditation expectations are evolving within the broader accreditation community. COPRA is a Council for Higher Education (CHEA) recognized accreditor. The issue of balancing transparency with confidentiality is salient in the accreditation community. COPRA should adapt its policies and procedures to come into conformance

with CHEA's expectations, specifically regarding increased transparency in public information through the release of reasons for accreditation decisions.

Critical Analysis

Summary of Feedback

Critical analysis in myriad guises (e.g., critical thinking, data analytics, big data, appreciation for evidence, etc.) appears on many respondents' list of desiderata for strengthening our curricula if not the Standards per se. At the same time, some respondents expressed concern about adding specific burdens under analysis. Very few respondents used the terms "machine learning" or "artificial intelligence." "Big data" was mentioned more frequently, but more than once as something to be concerned about were an understanding of big data to be imposed in Standards rather than as something all programs should at least consider teaching.

Assessment of Needed Changes

We believe that critical analysis is a vital concern of all practitioners in the fields for which we prepare students and that it needs to be an equally central concern of ours in revising Standards. The current language under 5.1, "to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions," could, as many respondents observed, cover programs requiring students to take deep dives in machine learning and quantitative science while also giving comfort to programs that offered no analytical tools beyond those required in an organizational case study. That is a range so broad that it imperils both the fact and the perception of a coherent standard of preparation among MPA (and similar) graduates in this area. We believe that, in an era when almost every government and major organization in the world uses machine-gathered data to assess everything from citizen participation to institutional performance to disease outbreaks to managing traffic to success in policing crime; when artificial intelligence systems are taking actions based on "judgments" programmed or outsourced by agencies that used to assign those tasks to human agents; and when employers increasing prize and reward quantitative competencies in the workplace; we need a more robust definition of critical analysis. At the same time, we do not want to suggest narrow content areas in a field that is evolving at dizzying speed.

Recommendations

- We recommend changes to the third required competency to increase its rigor. Programs should be required to present, somewhere in their core curricula, an introduction to the range of analytic tools appropriate for given tasks. For instance:

to use leading analytic practices, covering qualitative and quantitative methods and involving machine-stored, generated, or processed information, to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make and defend decisions.

- Supporting materials, particularly the Self-Study Instructions, could be modified to include cases where students would benefit from flexibility and breadth in their analytical preparation in their

careers. A person in migration services, for example, would ideally marry the qualitative savvy of an anthropologist to the population insights of a demographer in crafting effective programs in a range of needs for newly arrived or migrant populations. Examples abound. Because this is an area that excites a good deal of anxiety among the membership, NASPAA could also offer workshops, both free-standing and attached to the annual conference, to explore these issues and related pedagogies.

Conclusion and Next Steps

With the Council's endorsement, the Committee suggests the Standards Committee work with COPRA to consider, and ultimately integrate, the above recommendations into the NASPAA Standards and Self-Study Instructions. The recommendations reflect current thinking and the Committee expects the Standards Committee will further refine these recommendations and ensure alignment across official documents.

As this mostly concludes the work of this committee, we want to thank those who have served for their commitment to public service education, their work synthesizing stakeholder feedback, and the deftness with which they navigated complicated issues related to global accreditation.

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Chris Reddick, The University of Texas at San Antonio

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Appendix One
Colloquia Sites

Location	Conference	Date	Moderators
Shanghai, China*		September 2017	Various
Washington DC	NASPAA Annual Conference	October 2017	Chandler Stolp, Jack Meek, David Birdsell, Jeff Osgood
Doha, Qatar*	NASPAA Regional Conference	November 2017	Various
Cairo, Egypt*	NASPAA Regional Conference	February 2018	Various
Los Angeles, CA	COMPA Annual Conference	February 2018	Jack Meek, Rajade Berry-James, Gloria Billingsley
Denver, CO	ASPA Annual Conference	March 2018	David Birdsell, Gloria Billingsley
Beijing, China*	NASPAA Regional Conference	April 2018	Crystal Calarusse
Guadalajara, Mexico*	INPAE Annual Conference	May 2018	Nadia Rubaii
Birmingham, AL	SECoPA Annual Conference	September 2018	Christine Rush
Baltimore, MD	ICMA Annual Conference	September 2018	Greg Bielawski, Crystal Calarusse
Austin, TX	ARNOVA Annual Conference	November 2018	David Campbell, Chandler Stolp

*conversations reflect broader discussions than only those of the colloquium

Appendix Two

Recap of Colloquium Listening Sessions

- **Shanghai, September 2017, and NASPAA Annual Conference, October 2017 (Washington DC):**

The first conversations of the Colloquium began in Shanghai in and continued at the NASPAA Annual Conference. Initial feedback and questions from these sessions underscores the importance of the two topics on which the colloquium is centered, but also introduced a few additional areas of conversation:

 - Public Administration in a Global Context: values, motivation, and competencies
 - Are the values NASPAA promotes the same today as they were 10 years ago? 20 years ago?
 - Public servant's decision-making process has changed because of globalization
 - More work outside the organization is occurring
 - Are there universal public service values?
 - What skills and values do governments need to know?
 - What values are in tension? How does this affect values?
 - Difference between collective and individualistic values
 - How does context affect the standards NASPAA should be promoting (i.e., U.S. is more NGO focused than other countries)?
 - New Skills for Students: complexity, critical thinking, data, blurred sectors
 - What new skills do students need to know?
 - Are some skills being taught obsolete?
 - Programs should prepare students for value-based professions
 - There needs to be a balance between the realities of what students will face, versus what we wish the realities to be. How does this affect the relationship between theory and practice?
 - Technology, Adapting, Managing across sectors, collaboration, conflict management
 - Different dynamics in different sectors
 - Nonprofits and private sectors more incorporated – need to know how to work with them
 - Diversity and inclusion, cultural competency
 - Moving more toward “inclusion” instead of “diversity”
 - Organizations are more diverse than ever before, but how do public servants use diversity?
 - Does cultural competency exist in the Standards?
 - Stakeholder engagement: non-academics, etc.
 - Need to include more global representatives at the decision-making table
 - What should be the relationship between academics and practitioners?
 - Does NASPAA need to be more proactive in bringing in practitioner's perspective?
 - Challenges with the Standards
 - More specific content in standards, but need flexibility too

- Need to clarify standards
 - Move away from compliance and more toward promotion
 - How is NASPAA defining outcomes? Is performance measurement too time-intensive and labor-ridden?
 - Do standards cross countries? Should they cross countries? Should standards be broad or tailored to each country?
 - NASPAA in need of empirical work to reinforce standards
- **NASPAA Regional Conferences, November 2017 and February 2018 (Doha, Qatar and Cairo Egypt):** NASPAA provided information to programs regarding the accreditation process and how the standards can be operationalized in a global context, particularly focusing on public service values and diversity. The Doha Institute presented on their own efforts to set their program up with an eye towards accreditation as well as how they've implemented assessment and program evaluation across their institution. While others such as those from Morocco, and Tunisia, asked where they should begin in setting up programs that are accreditable in the future. NASPAA representatives pointed to our mission based accreditation, faculty nucleus responsible for the program and stakeholder involvement as early steps for those interested in accreditation. When asked, participants did not identify any needed areas of improvement with the current standards. Schools present stressed that they view their degrees as professional and they value hands-on skills, such as teamwork, and written/oral communication.
- **COMPA Annual Conference, February 2018 (Los Angeles, California):** Led by Jack Meek, Rajade Berry-James, and Gloria Billingsley, 15 faculty, PHD students, and practitioners, representing both accredited and non-accredited programs participated in discussions surrounding globalization, diversity and inclusion, skills, and resource adequacy. Feedback focused on the difference between diversity and cultural competency, the prevalence of technology, data, and virtual relationships as the field grows, blurred sectors, importance of stakeholder engagement, and the critical thinking and adaptation skills students need to be successful in complex environments. The conversation also emphasized how the fifth competency domain (to communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry) emphasizes two different competencies, as well as the need of programs to adapt to a more specialized marketplace and limited resources.
- **ASPA Annual Conference, March 2018 (Denver, Colorado):** Co-moderated by David Birdsell and Gloria Billingsley, a mix of about 20 faculty from US-based and non-US programs (both accredited and non-accredited) participated in a robust discussion about the universality of public service values, the importance of cultural competency, and the impact of globalization on conformance to the Standards.
- **SECoPA Annual Conference, September 2018 (Birmingham, Alabama):** Moderated by Christine Rush, the SECoPA dialogue significantly focused on the importance of considering inclusion above and beyond diversity. The session also touched on the implications of accredited globally with regard to governance and diversity, as well as the skills needed to be successful professionally (experiential learning, professional etiquette). This was one of our smaller sessions, with only 3 participants.
- **ICMA Annual Conference, September 2018 (Baltimore, Maryland):** Moderated by Greg Bielawski and Crystal Calarusse, this session was attended solely by practitioners in local

government. The vast majority of the session focused on the competencies needed to be successful coming out of a MPA program: communication skills, interpersonal skills, soft skills, working across sectors, inclusivity, etc. with varying opinions of how well they are addressed in the standards. Internships were discussed as an important opportunity to develop these skills. The group also touched on the diversity in program needs (types of student served, global contexts, university missions), acknowledging the need for the Standards to serve a variety of programs.

- **NASPAA Annual Conference, October 2018 (Atlanta, Georgia):** Led by Chandler Stolp, the Committee presented its findings since the NASPAA 2017 conference, and heard from the Council and Research Committee on important themes such as SDGs and managing data and technology. Representatives of programs also spoke about how to balance changes to the Standards with the questions of global public service, values, and intersectoral careers.
- **ARNOVA Annual Conference, November 2018 (Austin, Texas):** Led by David Campbell and Chandler Stolp, academics from the nonprofit sector built upon conversations started at the Nonprofit Section meeting at the 2018 NASPAA Annual Conference. The main takeaways from this session were: 1) there is consensus among participants that the term “public service” is inclusive of the nonprofit field; 2) advocacy skills are needed to succeed in public service, whether they are called negotiation, engagement, or facilitation skills, and need to be included in the competencies; 3) perceptions of the nonprofit field vary greatly across countries: such perceptions may interfere with the ability of graduate programs in certain countries to seek and earn accreditation.

In addition to the above, in conjunction with two NASPAA-sponsored conferences on accreditation and strategic program management, targeted colloquium conversations were held in both Beijing and Guadalajara.

- **Renmin University, April 2018 (Beijing, China):** Moderated by Crystal Calarusse, with an audience of mostly Chinese academics unfamiliar with accreditation. Generally, it was communicated that local context and globalization are important when considering diversity and inclusion and that the current strategy for competencies is strong.
- **INPAE Annual Conference, May 2018 (Guadalajara, Mexico):** Moderated by Josefina Bruni Celli, Rex Facer, Palmira Rios, Nadia Rubaii, about 25 representatives from over 20 (unaccredited) institutions across Latin America participated. Participants engaged more broadly on the Standards, emphasizing that accreditation is resource-intensive, requiring institutional support, but well-aligned with some national efforts, and supportive of program delivery.

Overall, feedback continues to be positive, with comments focusing less on how to significantly change the Standards and instead on how to sharpen areas critical to global public service over the next 10 years.

Key Lessons: NASPAA Standards Colloquium In-person sessions

These initial takeaways stem from an initial staff analysis of discussions and in-person surveys from the in-person sessions since October 2017. The takeaways below represent the most frequently referenced topics across all sessions, based on a raw count of participant feedback.

Public Service Competencies

- **Cultural Competency:** There is significant energy surrounding making cultural competency a more explicit part of the Standards. Cultural competency enables programs to move past diversity counts and considers inclusion, social equity, social justice, cultural sensitivity, etc.
 - Cultural competency discussions are often tied to globalization, as students must learn to adapt to a global society.
- **Communications skills:** Linked to cultural competency through the fifth universal required competency (to communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry), communication skills are the second most mentioned competency area, behind cultural competency. *There is strong interest in ensuring that both sets of competencies are explicitly and separately emphasized.*
- **International, Cross-sectoral skills:** Discussed from many different points of view, there is a recognition that public servants today are crossing boundaries, be they geographic or sectoral. Modern skills sets should enable graduates to understand the complexity and varying contexts of the different environments they may encounter.
- **Other competencies:** several other competency areas have been consistently discussed at colloquia, specifically: data/data analysis, critical thinking, leadership and management, technology, budgeting and finance, and applied skills.

Public Service Values

- **Inclusion:** Hand-in-hand with cultural competency, inclusion is repeatedly highlighted as a critical public service value, one that embraces cultural contexts and serves modern public servants. As noted below, participants note that flexibility with regard to diversity and inclusion supports a global framework.
- **Ethics:** Ethical behavior shapes public servants across the globe, regardless of political context.

Accreditation Process

- **Flexibility:** retaining flexibility is a common theme across colloquia participants, both with regard to the entire process and specifically to navigating topics such as diversity and public service values in a global context. There is some interest in NASPAA providing more guidance with regard to values, while still providing space for programs to define their own.
- **Value:** Programs point to various parts of the process as supporting program growth, mainly program evaluation and student learning assessment, and the resource adequacy support provided in the Standards.
- **Scope of Change:** while feedback thus far has pointed to opportunities for targeted changes, interest in significant change has not been voiced.

Appendix Three Summary of Online Survey Results

To supplement the feedback gathered at in-person listening sessions over the course of the past year, the committee also developed a survey - which was open from September 12 through November 15 - to ensure widespread, global engagement. The survey was sent to internal and external NASPAA stakeholders - faculty, students, and employer groups, included below - and shared publicly.

- American Society for Public Administration (ASPA)
- Asian Association for Public Administration (AAPA)
- Association for Public Analysis & Management (APPAM)
- Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA)
- Canadian Association of Programs in Public Administration (CAPPA)
- Conference on Minority Public Administrators (COMPA)
- Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration (EROPA)
- European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA)
- Federal Executive Boards (FEB)
- Inter-American Network of Public Administration (INPAE)
- International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA)
- International City/County Management Association (ICMA)
- International Hispanic Network (IHN)
- Latin American Group for Public Administration (LAGPA)
- National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA)
- National Forum for Black Public Administrators (NFBPA)
- Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee)
- Presidential Management Fellows (PMF)
- The Institute for Public Procurement (NIGP)
- National Council of Nonprofits

A total of 397 completed surveys were received, from respondents in 25 countries:

Total Respondents^[1]	397
Faculty	163
Practitioners	123
Current Master's Students	94
Doctoral Students	16

Prospective Students	Master's	1
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The results mirror the main takeaways from the listening sessions, with the most frequently cited in-person aligning with survey responses:

Key Public Service Values

Public Service Value	Percent of Respondents ^[2]
Accountability	39.90%
Diversity, inclusiveness, and cultural competence	24.87%
Serve the public/community [service to public good]	23.83%
Ethical awareness/standards/norms	23.32%
Transparency/democratic process/openness/communication	23.06%
Integrity/character	22.54%
Equity/reduce disparities/social justice	21.50%
Objectivity/critical thinking/analysis/evidence-based decision making/unbiased	20.21%

The survey also asked those familiar with accreditation (site visitors, accredited faculty) to indicate if the Standards should *require* specific public service values -- 83% of those completing the question said yes, but with varied answers as to which!

Key Competency Areas

Competency Area	Percent of Respondents^[3]
Critical thinking	51.04%
Decision making/problem solving	47.41%
Communication skills (written and oral)	47.41%
Leadership	30.05%
Budgeting and financial management	28.50%
Policy analysis	22.02%
Teamwork	21.76%
Adaptability	21.50%

(Technology-based and data analysis skills (data analytics: 18.65%, statistical analysis: 12.44%) were also highlighted in listening sessions).

The survey asked respondents familiar with accreditation to comment on if their key competencies were reflected in the five universal required domains. 84% of respondents said yes.

The survey also included several open-ended questions to give respondents an opportunity to suggest changes to the universal competencies, or comment on different aspects of the Standards and accreditation process. These responses were available to subgroups as the committee moved into drafting recommendations.

Overall, the survey reinforced that stakeholders are relatively pleased with the current Standards and there are key areas that are remain of critical importance to the field.

^[1] Excluding 26 blank surveys.

^[2] Includes 20% or more of respondents only

^[3] Includes 20% or more of respondents only