

EXTERNAL REVIEW OF NACC'S CURRICULAR GUIDELINES

Recommendations and
Options to NACC

PRESENTED TO

Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC)

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INTRODUCTION

Executive Summary

The nonprofit and philanthropic sector plays a significant role in the development and improvement of communities by providing essential services and a voice to the most vulnerable people (Weisbrod, 1975; Hansmann, 1980). The Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC) was formed in 1991 to support and strengthen institutions of higher education that study nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations, voluntary action, and philanthropy. NACC has two flagship products, the Indicators of Quality (IQs) and the Curricular Guidelines (CGs). These serve as a model curriculum for graduate and undergraduate degrees in nonprofit leadership, nonprofit organization management, nonprofit sector studies, and philanthropy. The IQs and CGs products were last updated in 2006 and 2015, respectively, and NACC would like to update them to reflect the evolving knowledge in the field.

NACC requested that the Bush School of Government & Public Service conduct an external review of the IQs and CGs. The Bush Capstone Consulting Team (the Team) reviewed NACC's products and supporting material, researched nonprofit and philanthropic (NPP) academic programs, reviewed relevant scholarly literature, and worked with NPP organization stakeholders to develop recommendations. This report reflects an information gathering process that delivers a body of knowledge to help NACC make decisions about product updates needed to reflect the current and future needs of NPP professionals and their organizations (Kuhn, 1970).

Project Development and Methodology

In consultation with NACC board members and NPP experts, the Team developed a multi-method qualitative research methodology. The Team was primarily driven by the following research questions:

1. How can NACC better market itself to a global academic community?
2. How do NACC's Curricular Guidelines contribute to the sustainability of nonprofit and philanthropic programs?
3. What are the best practices for member associations to increase the long-term expansion and retention of members?

To answer these questions, the Team pursued three main areas of research.

First, the Team produced literature reviews for each topic domain of the CGs. Separate literature reviews addressed inclusion, diversity, equity, and accountability; member association best practices; and academic program indicators of quality. Each literature review was organized to synthesize information on the topic's background, trends, debates, gaps, and recommendations.

Second, the Team conducted eight focus groups with 34 expert academics and practitioners in the fields relating to NPP sectors. The results helped refine and reinforce knowledge obtained in the literature reviews.

Finally, the Team analyzed NACC's Indicators of High-Quality Education (Section C of the Indicators of Quality Initiative) to operationalize and enhance its measures. The results of this work are presented in a separate report.

Recommendations and Options

The Team's research methods determined that the CGs and IQs are useful products for the education of NPP professionals. The topics covered in these products are mostly reflective of the themes that emerged from the literature reviews and focus groups. Additionally, the Team identified eight recommendations and four options for change. Recommendations are supported by evidence from both the literature reviews and focus groups while options are supported by evidence from only one.

Recommendations About Curricular Guideline Substance

Recommendation 1: To incorporate service learning in graduate level coursework and emphasize it as an effective pedagogical approach in the introduction of the CGs.

Recommendation 2: To add critical perspectives of nonprofit and philanthropic organizations in a social, historical, and economic context to graduate Domain 2 (Scope and Significance of the Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action, and Philanthropy).

Recommendation 3: To include the practice of collaboration and partnerships within and across sectors to graduate Domain 6 (Public Policy, Advocacy, and Social Change).

Recommendation 4: To include operational strategy development in graduate Domain 12 (Leadership, Management, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship).

Recommendation 5: To include planning and implementation of strategic human resource management and strategic volunteering framework in nonprofit organizations to graduate Domain 13 (Nonprofit Human Resource Management).

Recommendation about Curricular Guideline Structure

Recommendation 6: To move guidelines related to leadership to graduate Domain 5 (Nonprofit Governance and Leadership), leaving a separate, new domain titled "Organizational Management" (graduate Domain 12) that contains all guidelines specific to nonprofit management.

Recommendations about NACC as an Organization

Recommendation 7: To take a leadership role in the development of nonprofit performance measurement systems, theoretical models, and best practices to address the sector's need for comprehensive performance evaluation.

Recommendation 8: To expand the roles and responsibilities of NACC and enhance the benefits offered to NACC members.

Options

Option 1: To move social entrepreneurship and social enterprising themes from graduate Domain 12 (Leadership, Management, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship) to graduate Domain 8 (Nonprofit Economics) to provide students a better context for understanding these market approaches.

Option 2: To combine graduate Domain 2 (Scope and Significance of the Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action, and Philanthropy) with graduate Domain 3 (History and Theories of the Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action, and Philanthropy) and move guideline 2.6 to graduate Domain 1 (Comparative Global Perspectives on the Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action, and Philanthropy).

Option 3: To emphasize the importance of using a systems thinking approach in the introduction section of the CGs.

Option 4: To encourage member programs to offer special topic courses that focus on the study of the nonprofit sector in non-Western countries.

Future Work

Future research can build on the methods and findings used in this project to direct surveys and focus groups with participating NACC programs and NPP organizations. Future work can also help build a nonprofit code of ethics, support international nonprofit academic programs, and explore student perspectives.

Introduction

The nonprofit and philanthropic sectors play a significant role in the development and improvement of communities by providing essential services to the most vulnerable people (Weisbrod, 1975; Hansmann, 1980). Today, the nonprofit sector is the voice of the people they serve. Nonprofit organizations work to enhance people's lives through a variety of social missions. Cities are revitalized, education, health, and social systems are transformed, and civic and cultural institutions are strengthened. At the same time, they meet many of the most basic daily requirements of individuals and communities. But, perhaps most crucially, they continue to fulfill their historic mission of assisting the poor and disadvantaged (Berman, 2002).

The nonprofit sector contributes a significant amount to the economy. There are more than 10 million nonprofit organizations worldwide and approximately 1.54 million nonprofits are registered in the United States. The nonprofit sector contributed an estimated \$1 trillion to the U.S. economy, accounting for 5.6 percent of the total country's gross domestic product (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2020). The American nonprofit sector employs approximately 11.9 million people (one out of every 10 working Americans), making it the third-largest employment industry in the country, behind only retail and manufacturing (Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society, 2020). Some 25 percent, or 63 million, adults in the United States performed 7.7 billion hours of volunteer work in 2019 (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2020). The nonprofit sector is a significant service provider and a contributor to the U.S. GDP.

The size and importance of the nonprofit sector organizations lead naturally to a connection between education and practice. This connection is built in universities which are key institutions for analyzing, understanding, and sustaining the sector. By studying in nonprofit programs, students and future leaders of the nonprofit sector will have the opportunity to learn the theory and practice to lead nonprofit organizations, to strengthen their communities, and to think critically about the results achieved.

The Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC) was formed in 1991 by nonprofit leaders, managers, and scholars to support and strengthen the institutions of higher education that focus on the study of nonprofit/nongovernmental organizations, voluntary action, and philanthropy (NACC, 2015). In 2006, NACC published the Indicators of Quality (IQs) and in 2015, updated the Curricular Guidelines (CGs) for nonprofit education at the undergraduate and graduate levels. These serve as resources for NACC affiliated programs and support quality nonprofit programs (NACC, 2015). Since 2015, evolving knowledge of the field, technological advancements, and contemporary issues facing the global nonprofit sector make it important for the curricula to reflect sector changes and enable continuous updates and improvements (Lattuca & Stark, 2009). NACC wants to update the CGs and IQs to meet the changing demands of the nonprofit sector in an increasingly globalized world. NACC has also expressed its interest in expanding its presence

to support nonprofit programs globally. Such expansion requires understanding global nonprofit structures, acquiring more international members, and enhancing the value of membership benefits (Larson & Barnes-Moorehead, 2001).

The Bush School of Government & Public Service consulting team (the Team) conducted a review of NACC's resources for nonprofit programs by reviewing relevant scholarly literature and working with nonprofit organization stakeholders. Overall, the project found broad support for the CGs as a tool for academic programs. Programs that use the CGs will prepare students well for the challenges and opportunities of working in the nonprofit and philanthropic sector. However, the report does offer some recommendations and options on how NACC can continue meeting the needs of its members. This research can help NACC make decisions about updates that may be needed to better reflect the changing environment of the sector.

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OBJECTIVES

Objectives

NACC asked the Team to conduct a review of the IQs and CGs to ensure their guidance reflects current knowledge in the field. These research questions guided the research process:

1. *How can NACC better market itself to a global academic community?* International participants were included in focus groups, providing different perspectives from Armenia, Australia, England, Guatemala, and Romania. Based on collected data from literature reviews and focus group discussions, a recommendation was developed.
2. *How do NACC's Curricular Guidelines contribute to the sustainability of nonprofit and philanthropic programs?* The literature reviews and focus groups provide updated information regarding the knowledge nonprofits need for long-term sustainability. Incorporating the recommendations into the CGs can enable nonprofit academic programs to provide an education with a competitive advantage of closing any gaps between academic work and practitioners' needs. This produces a reinforcing system whereby students receive an educational experience that translates effectively to the field, providing greater credibility to the program. Recommendations and options related to the CGs are presented.
3. *What are the best practices for member associations to increase the long-term expansion and retention of members?* The focus groups confirmed research from the literature review on member associations, resulting in a recommendation including best practices for member associations like NACC.

Additionally, the Team also explored the following research questions but decided not to pursue them.

What are the current global needs, values, norms, and cultural perspectives of the nonprofit sector? The Team was assured by expert interviews that work on this area was already in progress; no recommendations are provided regarding this question. Scholars who have found an interest in this area have found data and continue to expand it. In the future, based on collected data the public can have access to information on the nonprofit sector globally and in specific regions.

How can measurable guidelines that include components of inclusivity, diversity, equity, and accessibility be integrated? It is important to offer course content on inclusivity, diversity, equity, and accessibility to strengthen complex thinking skills and cultural awareness, preparing students to be effective in a diverse and global society (Sciame-Giesecke et al., 2009; Feit et al., 2017). Although this topic was addressed in focus groups, no recommendations are made.

What curriculum is required for undergraduate and graduate programs? There is limited research discussing the process of creating and choosing an appropriate curriculum for undergraduate versus graduate students. Since the focus groups did not highlight differentiation of curriculum as a challenge, the Team decided not to pursue the topic

Research questions about NACC's IQs are addressed in the separate Indicators of Quality Framework deliverable.

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METHODOLOGY

Methodology

Data Collection

The results discussed in this report are informed by literature reviews and focus groups. Literature reviews were conducted for each of NACC's CG domains and their IQs. The Team identified 18 unique subject matter domains from CG and an additional 5 domains related to the IQs and research needed to support the project (see Appendix A for a list of identified domains). Additionally, the Team searched for the best practices in the literature about inclusion, diversity, equity, accessibility, and membership associations. Focus groups were chosen as the primary data collection method so that professional and academic perspectives could be analyzed in conjunction with literature review findings. NACC's CGs were last updated in 2015 and their IQs were last updated in 2006, therefore, reviewed literature was focused on the date range of 2007 - 2022. The Team used the Texas A&M University Library to find literature through the Google Scholar and Academic Search Ultimate databases. Each CG domain's literature review was organized to provide information on the domain's background, trends, debates, conflicts, contradictions, gaps, and potential recommendations.

The Team conducted eight focus groups of 22 expert academics and 12 practitioners in nonprofits and philanthropy. As in the literature reviews, the Team sought to identify patterns, trends, and gaps in nonprofit education through these groups to inform recommendations to NACC. The focus groups were conducted via Zoom over three weeks in February 2022. Each focus group was organized by participant expertise and academic or practitioner status. Nonprofit sector experts were chosen to participate in the focus groups, and outreach emails and a screening questionnaire were sent to the potential participants. Academic experts were defined as individuals serving as nonprofit management education center directors or faculty members with publications in nonprofit management journals with a minimum h-index of ten. Practitioner experts were defined as active nonprofit organization professionals serving in managerial capacities with at least five years of domestic or international nonprofit organization management experience. Exceptions were made to the h-index criteria for academics with substantial prior experience in the nonprofit sector. Individuals who met the inclusion criteria and passed the qualification verification check were invited to participate. In total, thirty-four nonprofit sector experts participated.

Questions asked in the focus groups were informed by scholarly and professional research regarding focus group best practices. The questions were identified based on the overarching research questions and the goal of identifying gaps, issues, and patterns in each domain.

Data Analysis

The purpose of the data analysis was to create recommendations that are useful to NACC. After coding and discussing themes from the literature reviews and focus groups, the Team

cross-analyzed the evidence to create findings. A finding is the rationale that a change should be made to the CGs, IQs, or another NACC product or process. If a finding is supported through combined evidence from literature reviews and focus groups, it results in a recommendation. Options are changes that the Team feels strongly about but do not meet every criterion of the findings framework.

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RECOMMENDATIONS AND OPTIONS

Recommendations and Options

The Team's research methods determined that the CGs and IQs are useful products for the education of NPP professionals. The topics covered in these products are mostly reflective of the themes that emerged from the literature reviews and focus groups. Additionally, the Team identified eight recommendations and four options for change. These recommendations and options are designed to provide feedback, guidance, and best practices for NACC as an international nonprofit educational organization. Recommendations are organized by three themes: Recommendations about CG substance, recommendations about CG structure, and recommendations about NACC as an organization. Options reflect these same themes but are presented as one group.

See Appendix B for Focus Group Pseudonym Designation.

Recommendations About Curricular Guideline Substance

Recommendation 1

To incorporate service learning in graduate level coursework and emphasize it as an effective pedagogical approach in the introduction of the CGs.

The Team's research emphasizes the benefits and importance of service learning for nonprofit management students to gain real world experience. Service learning is a reflective pedagogical approach that focuses on developing interaction between the knowledge and skills students have gained in the classroom and the needs and goals of nonprofits in their communities (Hatcher et al., 2004; Dicklitch, 2005; Annette, 2015; Olberding & Hacker, 2016). Within nonprofit management education, service learning enables students to gain real world experience in the context of the nonprofit sector and helps to increase students' grasp on course theories and their awareness of social issues (Govekar & Rishi, 2007; Olberding & Hacker, 2016). Similar to themes found in the literature, focus group findings stress the need for service learning to be better incorporated into nonprofit management education. Across all eight focus groups, 28 individual mentions of service learning or the importance of theory-practice coursework were identified. Ms. Flint, a focus group participant, noted "...it's that practice piece. I found that service learning and civic engagement piece makes it so the students can apply the theory when they're in class, but when they graduate also." Currently, NACC's CGs discuss service learning in undergraduate Domain 6 (Community Service and Civic Engagement). However, incorporating service learning into the introduction of the graduate CGs can better prepare students for engaging with the sector once they graduate.

Recommendation 2

To add critical perspectives of nonprofit and philanthropic organizations in a social, historical, and economic context to graduate Domain 2 (Scope and Significance of the Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action, and Philanthropy).

Critical perspectives draw from the range of economic, sociological, political science, and nonprofit literature to examine how organizations might have negative impacts on their communities. Teaching students about historical and contemporary harms helps prepare them to be effective leaders in the sector. Students can learn from the mistakes of other organizations and implement change that aligns with their values.

Much of the literature emphasizes economic and social harms in the nonprofit sector, although professors may choose to draw on others. Studying critical perspectives of nonprofit sector practices will help students understand the significance and impact of sectoral practices. For example, philanthropy's independence may allow it to undermine democratic institutions by giving wealthy individuals a larger influence in public matters (Eikenberry & Mirabella, 2018; Saunders-Hastings, 2018; Hall, 2013). Additionally, new forms of philanthropy, including philanthrocapitalism, can reinforce some of the power dynamics and practices that harm people and communities (Kumar & Brooks, 2021; Morvaridi, 2012; Nickel & Eikenberry, 2009). Focus group participants identified a need for various perspectives and values in nonprofit education. Others point to the limitations and problems associated with professional and business influences in the sector. Dr. Jones stated "We've drank the Kool Aid of professionalization and becoming more businesslike. It's important to have good management, but we've lost a lot of our sense of moral integrity." Dr. Craig stated, "What we gain in one hand, we are losing in the sense of community ethos." NACC can add critical perspectives of nonprofit and philanthropic organizations in a social, historical, and economic context to graduate Domain 2 (Scope and Significance of the Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action, and Philanthropy) to provide students with tools to evaluate different perspectives. This recommendation does not prioritize any perspective over another and, although this report mentions specific critical perspectives, professors can draw on a range of topics that fit the needs of their programs and communities.

Recommendation 3

To include the practice of collaboration and partnerships within and across sectors to graduate Domain 6 (Public Policy, Advocacy, and Social Change).

The importance of collaboration in advocacy and other nonprofit activities has been emphasized in literature and focus groups. Dr. Chris affirmed this by stating during a focus group, "I think one trend that we haven't mentioned yet is just how critical now it is for organizations to work collaboratively across sectors rather than just across organizations within the same sector." One nonprofit alone can create change for the betterment of the people it serves. However, once more

nonprofits and entities from other sectors gather, the impact developed is magnified. Collaborative networking, memberships, associations, and coalitions have proven to increase nonprofits' involvement in policy advocacy (Leroux & Goerdel, 2009; Mellinger, 2014). Seven out of eight focus groups discussed nonprofit-government partnerships, intersectoral collaboration, and perceived the nonprofit sector as a bridging opportunity within and across sectors. Government and political actors can achieve more regarding policy issues when they are addressed by organizations in the nonprofit sector (Smith, 2012). Preparing students to collaborate and partner within and across sectors could improve policy change and implementation that benefits their nonprofit organization and those they serve. Although NACC's graduate Domain 6 (Public Policy, Advocacy, and Social Change) highlights the key points from the collected data, NACC can introduce a guideline that includes the practice of "collaboration and partnerships within and across sectors", similar to that of guideline 12.5 in graduate Domain 12 (Leadership, Management, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship).

Recommendation 4

To include operational strategy development in graduate Domain 12 (Leadership, Management, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship).

The guidelines for graduate Domain 12 (Leadership, Management, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship) primarily detail theories and roles related to management but do not explicitly outline skills related to strategic management. Managers deal with complexity through planning, building, and directing organizational systems and will benefit from related instruction (Algahtani, 2014; Wren, 2013). Ms. Marie, a focus group participant, mentioned that teaching students operational strategies will help them, "... to demonstrate consistency, leadership, and growth... help their organization develop over 2-3-5 years ... not just reacting." Some focus group participants noted pride in the resiliency of the sector during the COVID-19 pandemic while others noted that small nonprofits were not prepared to handle the challenge. Nonprofits have cared for the most vulnerable during the pandemic, facing unforeseen staffing and resource challenges. Students with skills in building long-term strategies that are adaptable to a shifting environment will be key in helping their organization navigate economic downturns. Grizzle et al. (2015) corroborates this idea by noting the importance of having a strategy for contributing to operational reserves, a key component of organizational resiliency. Additionally, Haupt and Azevedo (2021) discuss the importance of nonprofit engagement in crisis communication planning and strategy. The inclusion of a guideline on developing operational strategies will provide students with research-based tools to direct their organization through adversity and unexpected challenges, elevating the skill and status of the nonprofit sector.

Recommendation 5

To include planning and implementation of strategic human resource management and strategic volunteering framework in nonprofit organizations to graduate Domain 13 (Nonprofit Human Resource Management).

The importance of strategic human resource management and a strategic volunteering framework has been emphasized in literature and focus groups. Human resource management is crucial in dealing with the challenges that nonprofit organizations face (Ridder et al., 2011). Nonprofit organizations succeed thanks to the employees and volunteers and their commitment, intelligence, skill, motivation, and participation in the decision making process. For that reason, nonprofit organizations need to recognize that employees are the organization's most important assets. The most significant source of competitive advantage comes from having the best systems in place for attracting, motivating, and managing the organization's human resources (Mesch, 2010). Those systems can be established through strategic human resource management and implementing a strategic volunteering framework that defines the direction in which human resource management intends to go. Strategic human resource management aims to improve employees' skills, motivation, and performance as a fundamental source of competitive advantage for organizations (Liao et al., 2009). Dr. Ray, a focus group participant, stated "Nonprofit programs need to emphasize human resource management and make it a priority", while Dr. Frost, another focus group participant, said "Human resource management skills and knowledge have not changed within the past 25 years". The need for teaching a strategic volunteering framework is needed because the volunteers are the organization's most important resources, especially in times of crisis. Adding a guideline on strategic human resource management and a strategic volunteering framework will prepare students to confront challenges that nonprofit organizations face in the area of nonprofit human resource management.

Recommendations About Curricular Guideline Structure

Recommendation 6

To move guidelines related to leadership to graduate Domain 5 (Nonprofit Governance and Leadership), leaving a separate, new domain titled "Organizational Management" (graduate Domain 12) that contains all guidelines specific to nonprofit management.

Management and leadership are separate disciplines (Algahtani, 2014; Clements, 2013; Golensky & Hager, 2020; Wren, 2013). This sentiment is affirmed by Dr. Fisher from one of our focus groups, who stated, "Management skills and leadership skills are related, yet arguably distinct." There appears to be a connection between leadership and governance. This includes not only the role of leadership on boards, but also the role of executive-level leadership, including executives and directors, as part of the system of governance (Cornforth, 2011). The sum of the Team's findings leads to the recommendation that NACC should move all components related to leadership in graduate Domain 12 (Leadership, Management, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship) to graduate Domain 5 (Nonprofit Governance and Leadership). All guidelines related to management can be left under Domain 12, which can be renamed "Organizational

Management”. This will help distinguish between the important roles of both management and leadership as separate, yet important disciplines in nonprofit management.

Recommendations About NACC as an Organization

Recommendation 7

To take a leadership role in the development of nonprofit performance measurement systems, theoretical models, and best practices to address the sector’s need for comprehensive performance evaluation.

NACC’s role in the nonprofit academic community could be leveraged to create new curricular requirements, promote research that improves evaluation methods in the nonprofit sector, and provide a means for practitioners and academics to coordinate on the development and testing of best practices. Nonprofit organizations are strengthened when they perform detailed assessments and evaluations on the organization’s activities and impacts that account for their social, financial, and managerial outcomes (Lynch-Cerullo & Cooney, 2011; Jones & Mucha, 2014; Mulvaney, Zwahr, & Baranowski, 2006). Graduate Domain 16 (Assessment, Evaluation, and Decision-Making Methods) and undergraduate Domain 12 (Assessment, Evaluation, and Decision-Making Methods) in the CGs provide details on performance measurement and evaluation but the nonprofit sector still lacks the capacity and tools to implement these evaluations. The research stresses the significance and continued difficulties of performance measurement and evaluation in the nonprofit sector. Findings from all eight focus groups highlight the concern from both the academic and practitioner participants for the need for nonprofit performance measurement systems (PMS) and the core competencies required to develop and implement these evaluations. The Team identified 103 individual instances in which evaluation and measurement skills were mentioned in the focus groups. This theme was the second most mentioned theme and the only theme to be addressed by all focus groups. According to the focus groups, nonprofit organizations and professionals lack the capacity and willingness to perform programmatic reviews and performance evaluations. These skills are missing in the sector despite the research and problem-solving skills emphasized in academic programs. A comment made by a focus group member encapsulates this idea: Dr. Chris stated, “... things that academic institutions can do is really empower some of the students to do some more [of] that assessment”. The literature echoes the importance of PMS training and the lack of implementation across the sector (Jones & Mucha, 2014; Lynch-Cerullo & Cooney, 2011; Smith, 2017; Thomson, 2010). Researchers also highlight the gaps in the theoretical framework of nonprofit PMS and the sector’s over-reliance on ineffective economic models (Carnochan et al., 2014; Costa & Andreaus, 2020; Liu, 2018; Lynch-Cerullo & Cooney, 2011; Molecke & Pinkse, 2017; Moura et al., 2019; Shumate et al., 2017). The sector requires more trained evaluators and theoretical frameworks to accurately track and report on their organization’s impact. NACC should develop an evaluation community of practice to lead the development of solutions to

address these systemic problems. A community of practice is an effective way for nonprofit professionals to receive needed PMS training to evaluate and promote their organizations (Hemmasi & Csanda, 2009; Kirkman et al., 2011).

Recommendation 8

To expand the roles and responsibilities of NACC and enhance the benefits offered to NACC members.

Member associations provide benefits to their members, such as opportunities for knowledge sharing, networking with organizations that have similar missions and values, and academic credibility (Mook et al., 2007; Hager, 2014; Seaworth, 2012; Gassman & Thompson, 2017). If NACC were to expand its roles and responsibilities within academia and the nonprofit sector it may increase NACC's status. NACC can expand membership by marketing NACC's CGs and IQs to nonprofit academic programs, increasing membership benefits, and creating networking opportunities for member institutions.

Beyond marketing their CGs and IQs, NACC can provide member benefits that enhance communication between NACC board members and participating accredited programs. A communication channel could facilitate program-to-program collaboration, networking opportunities, and increased engagement between the member association and its members. In addition to the communication channel, NACC could provide its members access to the IQs framework and offer the opportunity to receive individualized feedback from NACC on their performance indicators. As NACC expands its roles and responsibilities within the nonprofit sector and accreditation programs, it can help bridge the gaps between the nonprofit sector and academia while also increasing NACC's status.

Options

Option 1

To move social entrepreneurship and social enterprising themes from graduate Domain 12 (Leadership, Management, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship) to graduate Domain 8 (Nonprofit Economics) to provide students a better context for understanding these market approaches.

Social entrepreneurship and social enterprising require for-profit strategies and management to be effective (Bruneel et al., 2020; Jäger et al., 2013). Social entrepreneurship involves the identification of social problems and taking an innovative approach to addressing the problems through for-profit means (Audretsch et al., 2020; Farinha et al., 2020; Wiley & Berry, 2015). Social enterprising is the process whereby nonprofits reconfigure their operation models and

introduce new functions to integrate commercial revenue streams in support of their mission (Ko & Liu, 2020; do Adro, 2020; Farinha et al., 2020). As hybrids, these organizations evolve as the market evolves and have a structure distinct from traditional nonprofit organizations. Students will benefit most from learning about these organizational models in the context of nonprofit economics, a field that compares and contrasts for-profit and nonprofit structures, functions, and theories of nonprofit existence. NACC can move guidelines related to social entrepreneurship and social enterprising, currently part of undergraduate Domain 12 (Leadership, Management, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship), to graduate Domain 8 (Nonprofit Economics).

Option 2

To combine graduate Domain 2 (Scope and Significance of the Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action, and Philanthropy) with graduate Domain 3 (History and Theories of the Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action, and Philanthropy) and move guideline 2.6 to graduate Domain 1 (Comparative Global Perspectives on the Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action, and Philanthropy).

The history of the nonprofit sector is engaged with many social issues across the world. Studying nonprofit sector history allows students to reflect on past, present, and future trends in nonprofit organizations to determine the sector's role in providing goods and services to communities in need, while also informing how these societal goods and services are delivered. For instance, Yob (2018) argues that “much of society can be understood through its power structures—who holds power and who is powerless— [and] how those power structures can influence every aspect of the lives of all in that society”. Nonprofit management students will better understand the sector's scope and significance in today's society and have the tools to assess its impact across the globe.

Although learning about the nonprofit sector's history leads to discussions on the sector's significance, NACC currently has these two topics in separate domains, graduate Domain 2 (Scope and Significance of the Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action, and Philanthropy) and graduate Domain 3 (History and Theories of the Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action, and Philanthropy). The connection between these two areas of study, however, warrants that Domains 2 and 3 be combined.

NACC may also consider moving guideline 2.6, “comparative global trends distinguishing civic engagement and voluntary action from nonprofit direct service providers and other nonprofit/nongovernmental forms,” to graduate Domain 1 (Comparative Global Perspectives on the Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action, and Philanthropy).

Option 3

To emphasize the importance of using a systems thinking approach in the introduction section of the CGs.

Systems thinking is important for the nonprofit sector because it helps practitioners approach challenges in a manner that reveals how different issues influence one another (Ecochallenge, 2022). Globally there is an emergence of social issues that invoke action by the nonprofit sector. These social issues are multifaceted, rise from several different causes, and have numerous effects (Yob, 2018). To respond to these complex issues, nonprofit organizations need multifaceted solutions. For example, a systems thinking approach allows an individual to see all the factors and implications of an issue, rather than trying to narrow it down. This approach was highlighted throughout literature and by four focus groups where it was brought up more than twenty times. Dr. Jones addressed the need for programs to include “teaching systems thinking and an interdisciplinary perspective” across all topics to see how different parts and skills “individually work together to create more than” the intended result.

The systems thinking approach is alluded to in NACC’s CGs. To help ensure that academics are implementing systems thinking, NACC can suggest that programs employ a systems thinking approach for students to be better prepared as practitioners.

Option 4

To encourage member institutions to offer special topic courses that focus on the study of the nonprofit sector in non-Western countries.

NACC can encourage member institutions to offer special topic courses that focus on the study of the nonprofit sector in non-Western countries. Such offerings would introduce nonprofit management students to comparative perspectives on the global nonprofit sector. Students can develop a better understanding of global nonprofits concerning cultural history and alternative philosophical approaches to articulate their role and scope of significance in their respective communities and regions. Although current NACC CGs and IQs allow programs to offer special topic courses, few classes address the sector in non-Western regions and their operating contexts.

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DISCUSSION

Discussion

These findings provide NACC with recommendations and options to update the CGs and support organizational sustainability. The recommendations and options address NACC's CGs, IQs, pedagogical and instructional practices, and NACC membership expansion strategies.

Limitations

A limitation exists in understanding how NACC-affiliated institutions use the CGs. Additionally, there is no historical information describing NACC's methods for creating and revising their CGs and IQs in the past. Despite these limitations, the Team found research related to the current CGs, synthesizing it in literature reviews that reflect current trends and gaps in the research.

There are gaps in the literature regarding international nonprofits, especially nonprofits in non-Western countries. Research revealed that scholarly literature on some nonprofit-related topics lacks the same research saturation as similar for-profit topics. Researchers across the sector agree that the nonprofit sector cannot rely on for-profit research, as the different organizations exist for specific and different reasons. Expanding support for ongoing research for nonprofits can support the growth and sustainability of the sector.

To address NACC's desire to grow its international membership, the Team began to collect data on international nonprofit academic programs. The Team later found that a well-known scholar is already researching international nonprofit programs, removing the need for the Team to fill this gap. Instead, the Team evaluated NACC's role as an accrediting body for international nonprofit programs. NACC is positioned to serve as a resource for the international nonprofit academic community; however, a unified set of CGs for all countries may not accurately reflect each unique context and culture. In addition, the nonprofit sector and its specific terminology, purpose, and ability vary from region to region (Casey, 2019; Mirabella et al., 2007; Ozolinš, 2017). NACC's prominent role in the global nonprofit community may be as an advisor to support international institutions as they embark on creating their own CGs and IQs, with the support focused on preventing hegemony within the international nonprofit sector.

Future Work

As the Team's methods and processes changed during this project, we recognized potential future projects and collaboration options. For NACC to continue improving and ensuring their members that the CGs reflect the sector's current knowledge and practices, it is important to understand how universities and academic programs use the CGs and IQ. NACC can seek broader input from nonprofit organizations and the information can be collected through surveys and focus groups with participating programs, universities, and organizations.

NACC can provide networking opportunities to strengthen interactions between members to promote collaboration and the sharing of best practices. By promoting such partnerships among its members, NACC could gain more insight into the needs of its members and continue to grow as a leading institution in the nonprofit sector.

Future research that identifies student perspectives would be useful and enhance the conversations regarding nonprofit programs. NACC could form a student advisory council to allow for the integration of student participation in NACC's meetings and to ensure that student perspectives are included in discussions. Implementation of student perspectives could support NACC's goal of increasing members and expanding program-to-program collaboration.

Conclusion

Since 1991, NACC has been a prominent feature in the nonprofit sector landscape. This report is intended to help NACC expand its role and impact within the sector. There are eight recommendations and four options that are intended to address the CGs and NACC as an organization. As NACC grows as a member association, it will be able to continue accrediting nonprofit programs and enhancing student outcomes, while simultaneously being a voice for the sector.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A - Subject Matter Domains

Curricular Guidelines Domains:

- Comparative Global Perspectives on The Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action and Philanthropy
- Scope and Significance of The Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action and Philanthropy
- History and Theories of The Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action and Philanthropy
- Foundations of Civil Society, Voluntary Action and Philanthropy
- Ethics and Values
- Nonprofit Governance and Leadership
- Public Policy, Advocacy and Social Change
- Nonprofit Law
- Nonprofit Economics
- Fundraising and Resource Development
- Nonprofit Finance / Nonprofit Financial Management and Accountability
- Leadership, Management
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Nonprofit Human Resource Management
- Nonprofit Marketing and Communications
- Information Technology, Social Media and Data Management
- Assessment, Evaluation and Decision-Making Methods
- Professional and Career Development

Project Research Domains:

- Member Association Structure and Function
- Difference Between Undergraduate and Graduate
- Idea (Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility) Integration
- Indicators of Quality and Performance Measurement
- Service Learning / Community Service and Civic Engagement

Appendix B - Focus Group Pseudonym Designation

Pseudonym Name	Expert Designation
Dr. Chris	Academic
Ms. Flint	Academic
Ms. Marie	Practitioner
Dr. Ray	Academic
Dr. Frost	Academic
Dr. Jones	Academic
Dr.Craig	Academic



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