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**NONPROFIT FIRST AS GROUNDING FOR NONPROFIT STUDIES
PEDAGOGY, RESEARCH, SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY ACCREDITATION
AND NATIONAL RANKINGS**

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Abstract

The case for nonprofit sector studies as an autonomous field of knowledge is well established. Among the more distinctive characteristics of the field is that it is interdisciplinary and has unambiguous underpinnings of theory and practice drawn from research and education methods that use a “nonprofit first” perspective and pedagogy. To advance institutional anchors of the field, nonintrusive and low cost accreditation based upon NACC indicators of quality and curricular guidelines should be used. A process of accrediting nonprofit academic programs, research center activity and community service programs can also provide a means of rating nonprofit programs nationally.



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My introduction to formal, organized, nonprofit management studies came as a full time member of the first cohort (1989-1991) of the master of nonprofit organizations (MNO) graduate program at Case Western Reserve University. At the time, I also worked as the director of fund development in a community-based arts organization where the lessons of the classroom had direct applications for the work of my job. In addition, I served on the board of a nonprofit mutual benefit professional membership organization in just about every capacity imaginable.

The faculty of the MNO program reflected a variety of research disciplines that included economics, business management specialties, history, social work, statistics, organizational behavior and law just to name a few. The pedagogical frame for the MNO program curriculum placed the nonprofit sector as an independent actor in American civil society, distinctively separate from the purposes and activities of government and business (Hammack, 1998 pp. xi-xiii). Although not explicitly referred to as a “nonprofit first” perspective, course subject matter, case study examples, student research projects and field experiences of the MNO Program emphasized management and leadership developed specifically for the nonprofit organization setting.

OPINION

Nonprofit academic programs are here to stay

The trajectory of academic thinking, original research and educational programming for the study of the nonprofit sector and its institutionalization is upward and well documented. Since the late 1970s, a diverse group of scholars -- many of whom are still active -- took on the hard work of shaping the ideas and theories that have come to define the field of nonprofit sector studies. These pioneering thought leaders -- nonprofiteers engaged in nonproficiency so to speak -- performed the heavy lifting necessary to persuade their colleagues that academic programs devoted to the study of nonprofit organizations were worthy of intellectual space and institutional resources in colleges and universities of the United States.

Over nearly five decades, nonprofit sector academic programs have formed as topical concentrations in existing academic programs, particularly public administration and business management, and more gradually as freestanding interdisciplinary programs drawing on a wide cross-section of disciplines (Wish and Mirabella, 1998; Mirabella, 2007; Young, 1999). Michael O'Neill observed that in the twenty year period of 1980 through 2000, the number of graduate masters degrees with nonprofit concentrations increased from zero to one hundred and from 17 programs in 1990 to 130 in 2006 (Larson and Barnes-Moorhead, 2001; O'Neill 2007). David Horton Smith also noted that ninety five active scholarly journals are devoted to nonprofit topics. He guestimates that anywhere from 8,000 to 20,000 researchers world-wide are in some manner devoted to the study of philanthropy, nonprofit sector, third sector, voluntary sector, civil society, social economy, volunteering, associations, and nonprofit organizations (2013, p. 638).

Today, we can trust that earlier questions of whether or not nonprofit programs should exist have been answered in the affirmative (Young, 1999; Mirabella, 2007). We might also agree as I have said elsewhere, that the case for a distinct field of knowledge and theories dedicated to nonprofit sector institutions, processes, methods of operations is sound and worthy of “a field of its own” (Mendel, 2013).

In 2016, we can turn our attention to those questions yet to be sufficiently answered by the founding generation of scholars. The question is how best to institutionalize nonprofit sector academic programs in existing degree or new program areas? What should be done to make space in the crowded and under-resourced structure of Universities to accommodate a new pedagogical actor?

The case for accreditation of nonprofit sector studies pedagogy is being made - among other reasons - to address these questions.

Sample points of departure for Nonprofit sector studies pedagogy

Among the key features of nonprofit sector organizations are distinct concepts that set the field apart from the institutional forms and purposes of government and business. The key features include: centrality of mission fulfillment; the use and influence of volunteers in governance and social capital; advocacy; fundraising and philanthropy; the role of nonprofits in partnerships, as societal intermediaries and in the facilitation of social, economic and political change; and the creation and stewardship of civil society.

In addition to the features mentioned, nonprofit sector theories traceable to the interdisciplinary nonprofit sector studies inquiry provide a basis for autonomous nonprofit pedagogy (Powell and Steinberg, 2006; DiMaggio, & Anheier, 1990; Bremner, 1988 (1960); Rose-

Ackerman 1996; Fleishman, 2007; Hansmann, 1980). Although theories of the field cover a broad swath of subject matter, I point to three as the most useful in making a case for a field of nonprofit studies that is autonomous from that of business or public management.

The first points to recognition by scholars of the rights of private voluntary boards to govern (Hammack, 1998, p. 126) and the distinctive qualities volunteerism bestows upon governance and organizational character and values (Herman and Renz, 1999; 2008).

The second involves the assignment of public charities to the conditions created in the US Tax codes stretching back to the 1890s and continuing with numerous benchmark advances in the tax code up to the twenty first century (Ludlum, Riley and Stanton, 2008, page 106). The tax code trail eventually intertwines with a third stream of emphasis derived from the Filer Commission on Private Philanthropy and Public Needs of the 1970s, which then stimulated interest in the development of nonprofit organization management epistemology (Brilliant, E., 2001). The findings and recommendations of the Commission were published in a final report entitled, *“Giving in America: Toward a Stronger Voluntary Sector”* (1975). This publication served as a departure point for the pioneering work of the Independent Sector’s Virginia Hodgkinson and were reflected hers and other essays contributed to Walter Powell’s (1987) edited first edition of *The Nonprofit Sector: A Research Handbook* (Young, 2007; 1997) are well known and often cited in the scholarly literature of the field.

Nonprofit first as a criteria for nonprofit pedagogy

For those of us who study nonprofit organizations and their institutional forms in the United States, interdisciplinary approaches for non-governmental, non-business epistemology is a normative characteristic of the field and of “nonprofitness.” While there is a seeming

symmetry to the notion that interdisciplinary approaches to knowledge are necessary to understand and advance the part of society that bridges, mediates and otherwise supports a voluntary commitment to work toward the commons, there is also consequential conflict over the intellectual boundaries of the field.

For example, both the subject matter and the practice of the applied nonprofit studies subfields of nonprofit management and nonprofit collaboration or partnership overlap with public administration theory, public management and to some degree, the business centric social entrepreneurship. The attention scholars of public administration and others have given to the field of nonprofit studies in research journals and books over the past twenty five years has contributed to the sense of blurred sector boundaries (Paton, Mordaunt and Cornforth, 2007; Frumkin and Galaskiewicz, 2004; Dees and Anderson, 2003; Billis, 1993) and questions of which scholarly disciplines actually own the field of nonprofit sector studies (NACC Annual Conference Call for Papers, 2015). The center of gravity for much of the blurred scholarship is typified by applying public management theory written for public managers and nonprofit organizations that interact with government. The research answers public sector centric questions such as: How can public managers modify the behavior of their nonprofit partners? What are the best strategies for holding nonprofits accountable to performance standards and operational efficiencies? What are the best models for drafting service contracts?

In another example, the perspective of research on nonprofit organizations engaged in partnership - an important element of practice for the field of nonprofit organizations and a subfield of inquiry in nonprofit sector studies - is that public management and private sector focused scholarship tends to de-emphasize the important but typically subtle distinctions of collaboration and partnership drivers. Samples include those aspects of partnership such as the

passion for collaboration by a nonprofit's key executive; the wisdom and experience in recognizing and prizing reciprocated values of the executive or other leader; and the necessary alignments in operational culture that must be enacted by their partners. The problem for nonprofit pedagogy is that often the public and private sector theory-framed models lack a sufficient appreciation for exigent partnership circumstances of nonprofits; the importance of alignments of operational culture; mission fulfillment needs of each nonprofit partner organization; and that "just right balance" of enlightened organizational self-interests that tend to move collaboration or partnership to successful outcomes.

So, while the inquiry and knowledge necessary for public managers to perform their work is important and necessary as one piece of their field of practice, the public sector point-of-view for scholarly course material does not accurately portray the risks and rewards to nonprofit actors and therefore does not add much to the theories that inform the nonprofit sector. Consequently, a distinction of nonprofit sector studies including its subfields is that a nonprofit first perspective is the conceptual principle underlying the legitimacy and authenticity of the field.

Principles for accrediting nonprofit sector education pedagogy

An important point of inflection for the institutional autonomy of nonprofit academic knowledge centers in institutions of higher education is the report to the Kellogg Foundation "How Centers Work: Building and Sustaining Academic Nonprofit Centers" funded through the Kellogg Foundations's "Building Bridges between Practice and Knowledge in Nonprofit Management Education Initiative" (Larson and Barnes-Moorhead, 2001). The report documented that nonprofit academic activities take root in their host institutions for many purposes and in many administrative places.

In 2016, the NACC institutional members reflect the diversity of institutional purposes and settings fifteen years after the publication of the report to Kellogg. By their own admission, NACC institutions house and perform combinations of any and all of the following throughout their organizational structures: granting of undergraduate and graduate degrees; performing applied and theoretical research; providing non-credit adult education; performing service to the local or global community in the form of experiential learning.

As membership in NACC grows, a principle of using the NACC Indicators of Quality for Nonprofit Academic Centers (2006) as the baseline criteria for successful applications is taking shape. Organizations that meet the NACC criteria for membership, or other similar institutional membership such as the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance (formerly American Humanics) for example, affords them recognition that they are fulfilling the principles of nonprofit sector ethos. The Indicators of Quality enable the categorization of nonprofit academic centers around specialized functions. Measures for “quality” are self-defined in the application process but are framed by the NACC guidelines so that they are comparable between institutions. This process readily offers a pathway to certify knowledge content of nonprofit academic programs in each area of activity: granting of degrees, research and service to the community.

An end point of the Indicators of Quality process might be a national rankings that accounts for nonprofit academic, research and service programs (see Figure 1). Applying these same principles to a process of accreditation that NACC conceivably would launch, we can envision a certification of nonprofit academic programs, centers for theoretical and applied research, and service to the community that honor base line drawn from the NACC Curricular Guidelines Graduate & Undergraduate Study in Nonprofit Leadership, the Nonprofit Sector and Philanthropy, 3rd edition (2015). Since the underlying principle for accreditation would be that

academic programs adopt a nonprofit-first basis of epistemology, an institution need not be a NACC member but would have affiliation as an institution with nonprofit first professional associations.

I can also envision that to minimize the costs and intrusiveness of nonprofit studies programs accreditation process, reviews of indicators of quality would focus on whether or not the applying institution was following the rules it had devised to accommodate the curricular guidelines.

SUMMATION

The case for nonprofit sector studies as an autonomous field of knowledge is well established. Among the more distinctive characteristics of the field is that it is interdisciplinary and has unambiguous underpinnings of theory and practice concentrated in many subfields of specialization. The subfields include but are not limited to: nonprofit management, nonprofit partnership and collaboration, volunteerism and nonprofit board governance, social innovation, and fund raising and institutional advancement.

Challenges to the distinctiveness of nonprofit pedagogy are addressed by research and education methods that use a “nonprofit first” perspective and pedagogy. To advance the distinctiveness of the field, some form of nonintrusive and low cost accreditation that indicates scholarship, instruction and knowledge generation for the field of nonprofit sector studies that is based upon NACC indicators of quality and curricular guidelines should be used. A process of accrediting nonprofit academic programs, research center activity and community service

programs can also provide a means of rating nonprofit programs nationally which would further advance the institutionalization of nonprofit sector studies as an autonomous field of knowledge.

Recommendations to NACC

NACC is well positioned to design an accreditation process as part of the established trajectory of the field of credit bearing nonprofit studies education programs for undergraduates, graduates and doctorate academic programs; theoretical and applied research programs; and noncredit adult education programs and service learning/service to the community programs involving nonprofit sector field placements.

NACC can use the “Indicators of Quality in Nonprofit Academic Centers” and the Curricular Guidelines for Graduate and Undergraduate Study in Nonprofit Leadership, the Nonprofit Sector and Philanthropy” as criteria for accreditation and rankings of nonprofit academic, research and service programs in institutions of higher education.

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**PHILANTHROPY FIRST: WHY THE TIME IS NOW TO IMPLEMENT
ACCREDITATION FOR PHILANTHROPY AND NONPROFIT ACADEMIC
PROGRAMS AROUND THE WORLD**

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Abstract

The growth in philanthropic and nonprofit education has been well documented by Mirabella (2007, 2016). The field of philanthropy has grown dramatically and unevenly with disjointed and overlapping sets within the academy. In many cases, the academic units are not within the purview of various accreditation protocols, and even when they are, the philanthropy and nonprofit aspects are a minor feature of those accreditation processes. Absent one already focused on philanthropy and nonprofits first, it is time to start one with that as its primary focus and domain.



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Introduction

Given the growth in academic programs focused on the philanthropic sector (including nonprofit management) and given that there is a plethora of accreditation programs, but none of which is focused much, if at all, on the philanthropic sector, it is time to implement a new accreditation process that centers on philanthropy and nonprofits first. Just to get the conversation going, I intentionally argue for “Philanthropy and Nonprofits First”—in that order.

Philanthropy (“voluntary action for the public good” ala Robert Payton) vastly pre-dates formal nonprofit organizations. Philanthropy includes formal volunteerism and informal giving and volunteering (person to person—beyond organized philanthropy through formal intermediaries). If we consider both formal and informal voluntary action for the public good, philanthropy goes back to “time immemorial.” With some notable exceptions¹, nonprofits are a subset of the philanthropic sector. Philanthropy is one of the things that most clearly differentiates nonprofits as a group from for-profits or from governmental agencies.² Finally, philanthropy also includes one of the fastest growing and enduring components of the sector: foundations.

This all being said, the key point of this paper (and most of the others today) is that philanthropy and nonprofits are an important and unique part of our society, our lives, and our educational systems. As programs of such importance, they also merit their own accreditation

¹ The exceptions include: rogue nonprofits, which are really for-profits in disguise; and nonprofits, which could be for-profits but for other reasons elected to operate as nonprofits (e.g., those government subcontractors with only contract and grant income and/or only earned income from the public). See Steinberg (2006) and below.

² I understand that technically the non-distribution constraint is what differentiates charities from for-profits and the government, but to the “person on the street” it is philanthropy that is the difference maker—not the allocation of surplus revenues.

standards and protocols that respectfully understands them and their prominent—yet different—roles in the worlds of the academy and society.

The growth in philanthropic and nonprofit education has been well documented by Mirabella (2007; 2016). These programs have grown conspicuously over the last 10 to 15 years, and even just between Feb. 2016 and April 2016. With 260 academic universities offering graduate courses, including 49 doctoral programs, and 157 offering undergraduate courses, the field of philanthropy has grown dramatically and unevenly with disjointed and overlapping sets within the academy and within and without of the purview of various accreditation protocols. Philanthropy and nonprofit programs are in all types of schools (in alpha-order): arts and sciences, business, liberal arts, public administration, social work, and others (Mirabella, 2016). Many (all?) of these programs are a small subset of a broader school's agenda and operate within the regulatory guidelines of the respective accreditation agency for that much broader and often unrelated field of study. For example, social work, business, and public affairs all have accreditation programs, but their academic focus and accreditation criteria are not closely linked (if at all) to the philanthropic sector. Absent an accreditation focused on philanthropy first, it is time to start one with that as its principle focus and then secondarily how it relates to other academic foci.

We understand that the vast majority of individuals, who currently work in the philanthropic sector, do not have sector-specific education. They worked in various fields and “landed” in the philanthropic landscape whether by intention or circumstances. We also understand that many of the individuals working in the field now and in the future will seek other academic degrees, whether MPAs, MBAs, Social Work, health-care related, or unrelated to

professional orientations. However, there is growing demand for individuals, who have sector-specific training and educational backgrounds. For example, year after year, virtually all of the graduates of the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, who look for jobs in the field, find them before graduation or within a few months of their commencement.

It is also accurate to note that not every nonprofit is also philanthropic, so not all nonprofits are a subset of philanthropy. Some nonprofits earn all of their income and others only receive income from government contracts and grants. In many ways, some nonprofits are pseudo-nonprofits or for-profits in disguise (Steinberg, 2006). Even in organizations for which philanthropy is a relatively small share of total income such as most colleges, universities, and healthcare organizations, philanthropy plays a critically important role as the “margin of excellence” or the “inflection point.” Endowments are a huge explanatory power in academic rankings (Rooney and Wang, 2016). It is also important to recognize that philanthropy is a core value for many individuals and households. It is an important part of our democratic process (small D), and as Bob Payton said before the “field” recognized itself as a field, it should be infused as a part of the curriculum for all!

Philanthropy is America’s most distinctive virtue. There is no other aspect of American life that is so vast in scale, so rooted in tradition, so broadly supported by law and public policy or more gratuitously neglected by the educational community...

The system of charity and philanthropy and voluntary service is at work in almost every aspect of our lives. We give to it, and we receive from it. We use it to help others and to express our ideas about how life could be made better for all of us. Philanthropy is a subject that touches the life of every student and every faculty member at every American college. It is easily related to every discipline of the humanities and social sciences and to professional studies like

medicine, law, and business. It could be taught, and in my opinion it should be taught, but it is not.

— Robert Payton (1983, pp. 1; 15)

Context: Philanthropy Matters

Philanthropy is large in absolute and relative size/scope. For example, we know that total giving in the USA consistently constitutes over 2% of GDP and that total giving almost reached \$360 billion in inflation-adjusted dollars in 2014 and has exceeded \$300 billion each year (in inflation-adjusted dollars) for the last 15 years (*Giving USA*, 2015). We know that 61.1% (or more) households give in any given year and that those who give donate about 4% of their income according to 2011 Philanthropy Panel Study (and in many prior years, an even higher percentage gave something—typically 2/3 of US households). Moreover, the philanthropic sector employs about 10% of the labor force (Salamon, Sokolowski, & Geller, 2012) and creates over 5% of total GDP (McKeever, 2015). The Philanthropic sector employs more workers than any other sector except for manufacturing and retail (Salamon et al., 2012) and has grown more rapidly for the last 20-40 years than the government or private sectors.

Philanthropy has an important role in our lives both as donors and as recipients of philanthropy. There is burgeoning research on the benefits to donors and volunteers, such as enhanced longevity (Konrath, 2014; C. Smith & Davidson, 2014). More importantly, as well depicted in Gaudiani (2003), Konrath (2014) and Smith, and Davidson (2014)'s work, philanthropy touches all of our lives in many ways from birth, throughout our lives (education, training, health and human services, the arts, etc.) to our deaths (hospice). Philanthropy makes a difference in all of our lives and for many, it is a huge “difference maker.” How many of us

benefited from scholarships, fellowships, and research grants that were the result of philanthropy—not to mention the necessities in life like food, clothing, shelter, or imperative medical care?

Philanthropic institutions tackle the most difficult, intractable issues in society—poverty, homelessness, illiteracy, and the effects of such chronic illnesses as cancer, etc.—challenges that for-profits tend to avoid or that are too complicated or too controversial for government to address (or adequately or well). Nonprofits provide most of society's arts and culture opportunities, support education and research, and in many other ways provide for improvements to society.

Since 1974, total giving in the United States has grown 1,232 percent in current dollars and 178 percent in inflation-adjusted dollars (*Giving USA*, 2015). The LFSOP's research shows that the typical American donor family annually contributes about 4 percent of its household income, but many give much more according to 2011 Philanthropy Panel Study and 2014 Bank of America Study of high net worth donors. Two-thirds of American households annually donate to a formal charity, and more than half of Americans donated every year for which the LFSOP has data (Rooney, Wu, & Brown, 2007). The LFSOP's research shows that, when one includes informal gifts (for example, direct gifts to the homeless, a friend, neighbor, etc.), as well as volunteerism, nearly every American is a "philanthropist" in every year (Rooney, Steinberg, & Schervish, 2001; 2004). More people give to or volunteer for formal charities annually than vote in public elections, thus philanthropy and volunteerism are major ways Americans participate in democracy.

LFSOP research shows that the average corporation donates almost 1 percent of its pretax corporate profits (*Giving USA*, 2015). Foundations are legally required to pay out at least five percent of their asset base annually, and almost 10 percent of total giving each year comes from individuals making charitable bequest gifts (*Giving USA*, 2015). According to the Urban Institute (2015), the number of registered nonprofit organizations grew from 1.38 million in 2003 to 1.41 million in 2013. Between 2003 and 2013, the number of foundations grew from about 65,000 to 87,142, a 34 percent increase (Foundation Center, 2004, 2015). While both the nonprofit subsector and the philanthropic sector are growing, clearly philanthropy is growing even more rapidly. Internationally, the growth of nonprofits and civil society is harder to measure concretely but has definitely increased (Salamon, Sokolowski, Haddock, & Tice, 2013), as both the wealth in developing countries has grown dramatically and the social safety net has declined in Europe.

History of the Field

The academic study of philanthropy has grown dramatically in the past few decades. The Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC), which is an organizational membership for the leaders of academic centers in the philanthropic sector, comprises more than 50 institutions today. NACC has developed and revised curricular guidelines for graduate and undergraduate programs several times. In addition, there are more than 1,200 individual members of the Association of Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Associations (ARNOVA), which is the leading scholarly association in the philanthropic sector. This figure does not include the many scholars in other disciplines who do significant work in the area, but tend to publish in more traditional disciplinary journals.

The field of philanthropy comprises a large, complex, heterogeneous body of work that includes both disciplinary and interdisciplinary research. Several refereed academic journals are devoted exclusively to this body of work, including the following: *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*; *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*; *Voluntas*; *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*; *The Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership*; and *The Foundation Review*, as well as scores of academic journals in disciplines that welcome scholarly research in these specialties. The IU Press Philanthropic and Nonprofit Studies Series has published 45 books from 1983 to 2016 (or an average of about two per year). The topics covered range from ethics and board governance to biographies of important figures and historical events in philanthropy.

Today 354 (up from 343 in early Feb.) universities and colleges around the world offer graduate or undergraduate courses, certificates, and degrees in philanthropy and/or nonprofit management (see Mirabella, Seton Hall University website). Most are relatively small programs with only one or a few faculty members involved. While it has been argued in the media and by politicians that philanthropy is a uniquely American tradition, there is strong evidence that, when defined broadly, philanthropy is ubiquitous across societies, cultures, faith traditions, and generations. It is an engine for social change as well as a stabilizing force to maintain existing social and economic structures.

The growth and impact of academic programs is not perfectly measured by the mere counting of degree programs, as quality matters a great deal. However, students will rationally evaluate tradeoffs between quality, price, propinquity, scheduling convenience, time required to complete the degree, time required to be on campus, job placements, (and maybe even starting

salaries), etc. That said, the growth in the number of colleges and universities offering courses, certificates and/or degree programs is extraordinary.

According to data provided by Mirabella (2007, 2016), as seen in the summary table we created below from her data, universities offering undergraduate courses increased from 66 in 1996 to 151 (Feb), which is 129 percent to 157 (April) in 2016 (138 percent). Similarly, the number offering graduate courses nearly doubled as well, growing from 128 to 249 (Feb) (95 percent) and 260 in April (103 percent). The number of institutions with programs also nearly doubled in this time period (179 vs. 343 in Feb., or 92 percent vs. 354 in April or 98 percent). Online courses were not measured in 1996, but have grown exponentially from 10 in 2002 to 83 in Feb. 2016 (730 percent) and 87 in April 2016 (770 percent). Clearly, the playing field has become much more competitive, especially in the last decade. From 2006 to 2016, the number of universities offering graduate courses increased 55 percent (161 vs. 249 in Feb and 260 in April or 61 percent).

Mirabella Data on Nonprofit Management Education (NME) University-Based Programs

	*1996	*2002	*2006	February **2016	April **2016
Universities offering UG courses	66	86	117	151	157
Universities offering graduate course	128	155	161	260	
Universities offering noncredit courses	51	72	75	93	
Universities offering continuing education courses	39	57	56	79	
Universities offering online courses		10	17	83	87
Number of Institutions with programs	179	253	238	343	354
Number of programs	284	380	426		
Joint graduate/undergraduate programs				19	20
Number of colleges/universities offering PhD (philanthropy/np mgmt., etc.)				47	49

* Mirabella, R. M. (2007). University-Based Educational Programs in Nonprofit Management and Philanthropic Studies: A 10-Year Review and Projections of Future Trends. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 36(4), 11S–27S.

**Mirabella, R. M. (2016). NPO Management Programs. Retrieved February 3, 2016, from <http://academic.shu.edu/npo/>.

Likewise, academic and practitioner-facing research has grown as evidenced by the growth in the number of journals and the research documenting the amount of scholarship in this space (Smith, 2013). Training opportunities are burgeoning at both universities (see Mirabella 2016 and 2007 as summarized in table above) and the endless training opportunities offered by both nonprofits and for-profits. These are all signals of a mature or maturing marketplace.

Certifications and Accreditation Seem to Matter

Certifications for individuals in maturing markets are the norm in many, if not most, professional areas (law [ABA], business [AACSB], personal finance [AFCPO], social work [CSWE], public affairs [NASPAA], real estate [REALTOR], engineering [ABET], appraisals [ASA], fundraising [CFRE], etc.). Institutional accreditations tend to follow individual certifications.

For example, business school accreditation developed from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International)'s founding in 1916. Since 1969, more and more schools outside the U.S. earn AACSB credential (Bisoux, 2016). In February, 2016, AACSB International has over 1,500 members and accredits 755 institutions in business across 51 countries and territories (AACSB International, 2016). The AACSB accreditation facilitates collaborations in teaching, research, and outreach and assures learning outcomes of business schools (Bisoux, 2016). Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) was founded in 1970 to promote the global standard in public service education. It has 300 members across U.S. and 14 countries. About 63% of members have accredited programs, with 192 accredited programs in total. NASPAA has **only recently** created a guideline for graduate professional education in nonprofit organizations, management and leadership in

order to stimulate exploration and innovation in curriculum design and content about the nonprofit sector (NASPAA, 2016).

In legal education, the American Bar Association (ABA) has accredited law schools since 1952, and now 207 institutions are ABA-approved in the U.S. (ABA, 2016). The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) was founded in 1952 as the accrediting agency for social work education in the U.S. Now, it represents more than 2,500 individual members and graduate and undergraduate programs of professional social work education (CSWE, 2016). The Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) was founded in 1932 and accredits college and university programs in the disciplines of applied science, computing, engineering, and engineering technology at the associate, bachelor, and master degree levels. Currently, it has 35 member societies that provide experts and sets the standards for the accreditation process. ABET accredit 3,569 programs at 714 colleges and universities in 29 countries (ABET, 2016).

If we assume that individuals are rational, and if we assume that rational individuals lead organizations, and that boards of organizations provide any reasonable checks and balances on investments of time and money, then it is self-evident that seeking certifications for individuals and accreditations for institutions is a valuable effort. Otherwise, it would not be occurring so rampantly. If this is deemed by the marketplace to be a good thing for small and large submarkets of individuals and institutions, then would it not also be good for one of the largest, most important segments of society—the philanthropic sector?

Upside of Accreditations vs. Downside Risks?

One of the key problems in the marketplace is asymmetric information. This is one of the reasons the philanthropic sector exists (Steinberg, 2006). Sellers of goods and services have more complete information about the true quantity and quality of the goods and services they are providing, yet they have incentives to provide the information in the most favorable light. The sunk costs of higher education may be even more problematic than that for most goods for which there is at least a secondary or re-sale market for items such as cars and iPhones. For example, often one can transfer some credits from one institution to another—but only so many credit hours, and even then they may be “undistributed credits,” which is about as helpful as “inheriting” an undesirable item.

The rampant growth in the establishment of for-profit educational institutions and enrollments in them suggests that the for-profit sector sees an opportunity to meet a market demand at a profit (e.g., University of Phoenix). This is just starting in the philanthropic space with the “Claremont Lincoln University”, which offers master programs in ethical leadership, interfaith action, and social impact (Claremont Lincoln University, 2016), and perhaps others.

One of the values of accreditation is the establishment of minimal standards to be an accredited institution. An accreditation may signal to the marketplace that the accredited institution has met or exceeded the minimally accepted standards the field has determined to be necessary to offer degree programs (or courses or certificates, etc.). While this may be uncomfortable for some, it helps students, parents, and other providers make decisions about the very significant investments of time and money that students make when selecting which college or university to attend.

Another benefit of accreditation is the branding and co-branding of peer institutions with the accrediting agency and their peers. While we may disagree about the exact value of accreditation and its process, how many prominent business schools are AACSB accredited? Similarly for other professional degree programs such as engineering, social work, law, and public administration. The institutions that are accredited boast about it prominently on their websites and other propaganda in their efforts to recruit faculty, staff, and students. There is a reason for this: it conveys information and it is perceived to elevate the institution by its association with its peers and the accreditation agency and its concomitant standards—or at least perceived standards.

There are reasons that accreditation has not happened already. Mostly there are time and money costs associated with any accreditation process. There may have been social or peer resistance to creating standards in a field that is still relatively nascent and by nature tends to self-select for nice, caring people (author obviously excluded). There would also be concerns about the duplicative costs for institutions that are already accredited by other agencies such as AACSB or NASPAA. However, these costs can be readily attenuated by allowing such organizations to incorporate much of these materials in the NACC accreditations. A final concern might be misperceptions that all accredited institutions offer similarly quality programs. This will need to be communicated carefully, but not all business programs or PA programs are the same quality, but the accreditation assures consumers that they have met the minimal standards.

Conclusion: Why here and now?

The field has evolved in many ways: NACC has grown and become more international in its composition and has an affiliated journal; ARNOVA has grown in its membership, its conference attendance, and, notably, the impact of its affiliated journal; ISTR has seen growth in its membership and attendance as well; and three years ago, the IU Lilly Family School of Philanthropy became the first school in the world with its primary focus in philanthropy (broadly defined) first! Our field has reached a level of critical mass and complexity that it could benefit from the accreditation process both to help students and parents in selecting programs. It would also help aspiring programs to understand the minimally-expected criteria to be attained in order to be accredited. This will evolve—just as it has for other professions and fields. It should evolve. However, in order to evolve, it must have a starting point. Let's create that starting point right here, right now.

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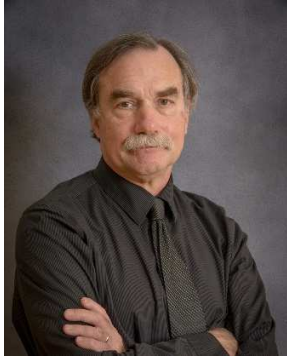
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**ACCREDITATION OF NONPROFIT CERTIFICATES AND DEGREE PROGRAMS:
WHY PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IS NOT THE 'BEST FIT'**

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Abstract

Nonprofit certificate and degree programs are in need of the institutional support provided by credentialing to establish and maintain their quality and to support the development of an emerging field of study. NASPAA, the presumptive candidate, has a disciplinary orientation and primary responsibility to public administration that hinders its ability to fulfill this role. Academic programs in public administration that have spun off nonprofit certificates and degrees have not fully accommodated the curricular demands of nonprofit studies, which curricular certification by a nonprofit membership organization would support. Finally, the body of knowledge within public administration presents an incomplete picture of nonprofits, including their roles in relation to the administrative state and in the economy. Therefore, public administration institutions are not positioned to support nonprofit academic program credentialing. NACC should begin the process of becoming a full-fledged accrediting body with curricular certification.



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I completed a Ph.D. in public administration and policy at a time when public administration programs imparted little awareness of how the field intersected with the nonprofit sector. My thesis was a study of nonprofit organizations engaged in HIV prevention, both in the United States and the Caribbean with an organization theory framework. I was interested in seeing how executive directors manage the disparate demands of generating programs that embody the culture and values of a client population while also mirroring the norms and values of donors in order to sustain funding.

I was hired in 1993 by the Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University and shortly thereafter began a study of how the federal policies of welfare reform and devolution were affecting human service nonprofits in Cuyahoga County. One of the resulting articles, co-written with Camilla Stivers and Renee Nank, received the ARNOVA award in 1999 for best article of the year. Shortly thereafter, I co-founded the Center for Nonprofit Policy and Practice (CNP&P) with Stuart Mendel. We established a mission for the CNP&P to serve the local nonprofits through capacity building with attention to the unique political contributions of community-based nonprofits. We understood the importance of management capacity and also how professionalization was slowly occluding the political character of nonprofit associations and their role in democracy. Over the course of twelve years, we engaged in a steady stream of consulting and research projects with local nonprofits. We also developed and conducted two rounds of a leadership institute focused on organizational change that began with a weekend retreat for key organizational members followed by 40 hours of consulting delivered over the subsequent 18 months.

I served as director of the nonprofit studies degree programs (2003-2011) and director of the MPA program (2008-2011). In this capacity, I developed a series of nonprofit academic programs including an M.S. in Nonprofit Administration and Leadership, a specialization in nonprofit management within the MPA, a graduate certificate in nonprofit administration and leadership, and an undergraduate degree in nonprofit leadership and administration. I was responsible for re-accreditation of the MPA in 2010. I developed and managed a service learning program adapted from Seton Hall to augment the connection between local nonprofits and graduate education across campus. Most often the service learning projects generated marketing plans, revisions of by-laws and grant proposals. One of the more unusual products was a GIS map of Cuyahoga County indicating lead levels that was generated for an environmental organization.

In 2011 I was awarded a Fulbright Senior Scholar fellowship at La Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá, Colombia, where I conducted research on nonprofit organizations engaged in human rights activity. I was interested in learning whether NGO's were confronting the identity shift reported in the scholarship and a loss of their autonomy as actors in development. This experience imparted a deeper understanding of how nonprofits with a civil society focus challenge powerful interests are heavily reliant on internationally recognized transnational organizations for legitimacy and protection. More than 50 nonprofit staff were killed in Colombia the year I conducted this research. When I returned to the U.S., I accepted a position in the College of Public Policy at the University of Texas at San Antonio where I am a professor in the nonprofit graduate

level courses, and conduct research on a nonprofit community whose history and demographics are dramatically different than Cleveland and Ohio.

My understanding of nonprofits, their challenges, contributions to our political economy, and their relationship with public administration is informed by my research, work with nonprofit executive directors through the CNP&P, experiences as a program director of nonprofit and public administration graduate degrees, and as a professor in graduate level courses at CSU and now at UTSA.

A. OPINION

After working at the interstices of these two fields of study for the past 25+ years, it is evident to me that nonprofit academic programs are ripe for quasi certification, if not accreditation, from an organization wholly dedicated to the field of nonprofit studies. I will detail why this is so.

Accreditation marks a critical step in the recognition and legitimation of a field of study. It indicates that there is a consensus regarding a core body of knowledge that encompasses theory and practice in the field, and that certain minimal curricular and faculty standards are necessary to prepare for the practice of a profession (Daniels & Johansen, 1985:420). It is also a forward thinking endeavor because it involves a commitment within a field of study to engage in an ongoing articulation of what constitutes relevant education for a profession. Accreditation of a specific academic area is a voluntary, peer driven, regulatory process that addresses program capacity holistically and is intended to elevate the credibility and professionalism of member organizations (Knapp, 2000). It provides an assurance to stakeholders that a program has met a minimal level of quality and accountability with regard to designated program components that most often include: curriculum, strategic plan, funding, faculty credentialing, student recruitment and retention, and assessment of outcomes. Arguments have been proffered that accreditation is costly, time consuming for faculty, and it limits curricular flexibility by imposing a set of prescribed standards and can be “detrimental to institutions in a resource constrained environment,” most particularly smaller universities (Julian and Ofori-Dankwa 2006:225). However, the counterpoising argument is that accreditation standards provide some assurance and accountability around educational quality. At an instrumental level, accreditation standards

provide a critical and independent source of support to university administrators when they seek the resources necessary to sustain the quality of academic programs.

The question is then, what organization is best positioned to accredit nonprofit studies? Central to this question is another that must be answered: what organizational candidate has a commitment to shepherding the ongoing development of nonprofit studies as a field of both theory and practice? In an emerging field that is subject to alteration in character, one that draws on multiple disciplinary roots, it is particularly critical that the accrediting body be one that is dedicated primarily to the development of the field on its own terms rather than viewing it as an accessory to its primary charge. The purpose of credentialing is to determine not only the elements of a quality education in the present but also to guide its development in the future.

Nonprofit Academic Studies (NAS) must be the primary mission of the accrediting body

A prime candidate is the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) and its accrediting arm, The Commission in Peer Review Accreditation (COPRA), the accrediting body for schools of public service education. NASPAA-COPRA has the advantage of being an established and respected credentialing body with significant administrative capacity. It has been formally recognized as the specialized accrediting agency for Masters of Public Administration (MPA) programs since 1986 when it was recognized by Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA) and its successor, the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). NASPAA has found itself in a position to consider accreditation of nonprofit academic programs in the natural course of following the trajectory of public service education over the past decade. Specifically, in 2009 NASPAA-COPRA undertook a review of their standards in light of how the field of public affairs and public policy was changing. Salient trends included that fully 30% of all MPA graduates were finding work in

the nonprofit sector; there was evidence of a progressive blurring of the sectors (Hall, 1996; Frumpkin & Galaskiewicz, 2004) and NASPAA recognized the need to prepare MPA students for the demands of a multi-sectoral work force. With the proliferation of new degrees and subspecialties emerging within public policy and public administration programs, COPRA determined that degree nomenclature was no longer of importance and began wrangling with competency models for a host of new sub-specialties: budgeting and finance, international development, and nonprofit management. By all indications, NASPAA's language and philosophy regarding the accreditation of nonprofit curricula to date has made it evident that this is a subspecialty, subordinate to their primary responsibility which is public administration.

1. NAS certificates and degrees within public administration are under resourced and incomplete

An additional argument that will be lodged in support of NASPAA as the presumptive candidate is that nonprofit programs have a natural home in public administration. Few nonprofit academic programs will reach a critical mass sufficient to become free standing departments or have faculty solely dedicated to their curricula. Scholars have argued that nonprofit studies find a strong academic fit with public administration (Salamon, 1999; Young, 1999; Wish and Mirabella, 2000). More specifically, both fields draw on the same academic disciplines (political science, business, history, social work, economics, sociology, law); they both require that managers become 'professional citizens' and share a similar ethos of public service (Salamon, 1999; Cooper, 2012). Moreover, policy changes that generated the expansion of the nonprofit sector have imbricated the two sectors in myriad ways. There is considerable sector cross-over among managers, work is increasingly shared, and the demand for professionalization in nonprofits has been a driving force behind degree programs and certificates (Mirabella, 2015).

When curricula between the two sectors do not overlap, and they are significant, nonprofit studies have not been well served. Young argued thirty years ago (1987) that public management programs largely focus on “inside” functions,” those management processes that are internal to both public and nonprofit organizations, and few MPA programs have courses that address boundary spanning responsibilities: fundraising, marketing, entrepreneurship, advocacy, policy, community organizing or even the management of partnerships and collaborations. This remains true. In the resource constrained environment of higher education, a number of MPA programs have shored up nonprofit certificates and degrees with standard public administration courses of human resources, public budgeting, organization theory and behavior, and strategic planning without requiring that faculty include nonprofit related topics, readings or case studies in cross listed courses. Indeed, faculty may lack foundational knowledge of nonprofits and few programs have a critical mass of nonprofit faculty poised to authoritatively make a case for how and why the curriculum should be expanded to accommodate this subject matter. In the meanwhile, MPA programs that offer nonprofit certificates have benefitted from healthy increases in their enrollment often without the requisite attention to subject matter. In fact, there has been little, if any, institutional pressure from within or without to ensure the *bona fides* of nonprofit certificates or degrees. Absent a membership organization dedicated to nonprofit accreditation, it is unlikely that MPA programs will feel sufficient pressure to fully integrate critical subject matter in their nonprofit related courses.

Thus far, I have argued that NASPAA’s commitment to public administration impedes its institutional ability to fully serve the accreditation responsibilities of nonprofit academic programs. Second, while public administration/management remains a good fit for nonprofit studies, many, if not most, MPA programs have not expanded their curricula to offer courses

necessary for preparation of nonprofit leaders and managers for reasons that pertain to resource constraints, lack of knowledge base of current faculty, and lack of institutional pressure to do so. These two points support the value of an accrediting body dedicated to nonprofit studies.

2. Public administration does not prepare scholars for understanding nonprofit organizations

Finally, I draw attention to a conceptual shortcoming that sits at the core of the challenge for NASPAA to accredit nonprofit academic programs and it will not be easily overcome. The body of scholarship in which most public administration scholars are educated is remarkably ahistorical and management oriented. Accordingly, it, does not address the varied character of nonprofit organizations or their historic relationship to the public sector. Even as the nonprofit sector and the administrative state have been actively joined in a complementary relationship of governance for well over a hundred years, there is little recognition in the public administration scholarship of the interdependence of the two sectors. The role of nonprofits is so marginalized within public administration that most introductory texts do not include the word 'nonprofit' in the index and any attention to the third sector would most often be found in a section on 'privatization of government.' Within the literature of public administration, nonprofits are most commonly regarded as service vendors, a low cost, short term alternative to an expanding public sector. The picture of nonprofits within public administration is a reflection of itself.

Alexander and Norris-Tirrell (forthcoming) conducted a study of nonprofit focused articles published in the top ten generalist public administration journals over a 25 year period (1990-2015) and found that 43% of the articles published that pertained to nonprofits focused on management, including third party government, interorganizational relationships, new dimensions of accountability, and human resource challenges. Only 12% of the articles focused on nonprofits as active generators of citizenship, civil society, civic education, interpreters of

policy, or mediating institutions that advocate on behalf of clients. By contrast, a mirror study of scholarship published in the top three nonprofit journals over the same period revealed that the political capacities of nonprofit organizations are a far more prominent aspect of their identity (Alexander and Norris-Tirrell, forthcoming). The authors found that nearly a third (31%) of the scholarship in the top three nonprofit journals addressed the political contributions of nonprofits to governance including ways in which nonprofits influence the public sector.

Ebrahim (2010) lamented the lacunae in curricula that leaves students ill prepared to understand the nonprofit sector. He noted that policy schools provide an orientation to policy formation and implementation, but students lack a background in the management of public organizations. Business schools and public management build management competencies focused on the organization as the central unit of analysis but fail to prepare students to deal with the boundary spanning activities of the external environment. The asymmetric relationship between public administration and nonprofit studies has institutional support through NASPAA and university academic programs that generates an isomorphism with the dominant field of study. Unfortunately, public administration both as an academic endeavor and a practice is largely blind to how the administrative state is supported by associational life and the more encompassing character of the nonprofit sector that extends beyond their relationship with service vendors. For these reasons, I argue that the field of nonprofit studies has reached a point in its evolution that merits an accrediting body with an intellectual orientation that will support the evolution of the field.

Is NACC administratively prepared for the task of accreditation? NACC has taken a fundamental role in establishing and revising curricular guidelines since 2000, one of the central components to accreditation. The process of becoming an accrediting body is a demanding and

multi-faceted undertaking that will require careful planning and years to accomplish. It will require a critical mass of potential membership organizations, recognition by CHEA, and should be pursued in stages, beginning with the initial steps of quasi-credentialing or curricular certification.

B. SUMMATION

Nonprofit certificate and degree programs require the institutional support provided by credentialing to establish their quality and to support the development of an emerging field. NASPAA is considering the accreditation of nonprofit studies as a sub-specialization, however, their primary responsibility is to public administration. Academic programs in public administration that have spun off nonprofit certificates and degrees have not fully accommodated the curricular demands of this new field, which curricular certification would support. Finally, the field of public administration presents an incomplete picture of nonprofits, their roles in relation to the administrative state and in the economy. Its institutions are not positioned to support the development of this new field of study. NACC should begin with curricular certification and move to accreditation as it develops the institutional infrastructure to carry out the task.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A study should be conducted with key stakeholders to determine the level of support for the development of an accreditation system for nonprofit academic program and to assess and identify the resources needed to serve as an accrediting body.

2. Conduct an inclusive review of the existing body of knowledge for undergraduate, master and doctoral programming to ensure its currency.
3. Develop a 'certification' program to formally recognize nonprofit academic programs that are aligned with the current NACC body of knowledge similar to the certification programs developed by other professional societies, e.g., Society for Human Resource Management, or Chartered Financial Analysts Institute. This would be an intermediary step while a full accreditation process is in development.
4. Develop a mission-based set of standards used to accredit nonprofit academic programs. These standards might include the traditional areas currently covered by accrediting bodies such as strategic planning, organizational resources, curricula, program assessment, faculty qualifications, and academic processes and policies.
5. Develop the process for accreditation: This would include the initial accrediting process and the maintenance of accreditation process. These steps would lead to implementation of an accreditation process relevant for stakeholders of nonprofit academic programs.

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A CRITICAL (THEORY) PERSPECTIVE ON NONPROFIT ACCREDITATION

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Dr. Eikenberry's research has been featured on National Public Radio's All Things Considered and in the Stanford Social Innovation Review. Her book, *Giving Circles: Philanthropy, Voluntary Association, Democracy* (Indiana University Press) won CASE's 2010 John Grenzebach Research Award for Outstanding Research in Philanthropy. She was recently awarded a 2014-2015 Fulbright Scholar Award to conduct research on giving circles in the UK, affiliated with the University of Birmingham Third Sector Research Centre.

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**MAKING DIVERSITY MATTER IN A NONPROFIT ACCREDITATION PROCESS:
CRITICAL RACE THEORY AS A LENS ON THE PRESENT AND FUTURE
OF NONPROFIT EDUCATION**

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Abstract

The nonprofit sector has a diversity deficit. Multiple studies have highlighted that the staff and board of U.S. nonprofit and philanthropic organizations severely underrepresent the diversity of the U.S. population. As the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC) considers accreditation, we argue that any accreditation process that seeks to elevate the quality and legitimacy of nonprofit education must place diversity at the center of the process. As educators who are preparing students to study, research and work in nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, an emerging accreditation process offers an opportunity, and a responsibility, to address the deficits in the sector and in our institutions. At the same time, we argue that accreditation alone will not address the long-standing and persistent educational structures, policies and discourses that contribute to the exclusion and marginalization of diverse students in nonprofit and philanthropic education, and in the sector at large. Following the concerns of the editors of a recent special issue of *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* who express impatience with approaches to essentialist, hierarchical and reductionist notions of diversity (Weisinger, Borges-Mendez & Milofsky, 2016), we use critical race theory extend our focus to the inclusion and full participation of diverse individuals in a group or organization, and to greater equity in the procedures, processes and distribution of resources within institutions or systems. Drawing from examples of other disciplines' emphasis of diversity in their accreditation, we conclude with a discussion of the implications of foregrounding more diverse perspectives into nonprofit and philanthropic education through the process of accreditation.



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Introduction

The nonprofit sector has a diversity deficit. Multiple studies have highlighted a lack of racial and ethnic diversity on the staff and boards of nonprofit and philanthropic organizations in the United States. While people of color represent thirty-six percent of the U.S. population and thirty percent of the U.S. workforce, just 8% of philanthropic organizations, 10% of nonprofit boards, and 11% of nonprofit organizations are led by people of color (BoardSource, 2014; D5, 2014). The issues are not just at the executive level. In 2015, Community Wealth Partners and the Annie E. Casey foundation concluded that while “people of color represent 30% of the American workforce, just 18% of non-profit staff and 22% of foundation staff is comprised of people of color” (Gross, 2015). Unfortunately, there is scant evidence that implicit biases in the practices around attraction, recruitment, retention, and advancement of people of color in nonprofit and philanthropic organizations are shifting (Gross, 2009).

This diversity deficit is not limited to race and ethnicity. Studies have also highlighted gender bias in hiring and compensation in the sector. In 2015, GuideStar reported that just 18% of nonprofits with budgets of more than \$50 million had female CEOs in 2013. Salaries for women continue to lag behind men in comparable positions at nonprofits of all budget sizes with the gap most pronounced for women chief executives at groups with budgets of \$2.5 million to \$5 million, who take home 23 percent less than their male peers. While we do not have accurate data on the gender pay gap for women of color specific to the sector, we do know that women of color face an even larger pay gap in the general workforce (Leber, 2015). The LGBTQ community and people with disabilities are also effected. While the LGBTQ community represents 5-10% of the population, they represent just 2% of foundation board members (D5 Coalition, 2011). And while 12% of the U.S. population is disabled, just 1% of foundation board and trustee members are people with disabilities (ibid).

As the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC) considers accreditation, we argue that any accreditation process that seeks to elevate the quality and legitimacy of nonprofit education must place diversity at the center of the process. As educators who are preparing students to study, research and work in nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, an emerging accreditation process offers an opportunity, and a responsibility, to address the deficits in the sector and in our institutions. Diversified educational environments have been found to promote students' openness to cultural, racial and values diversity (Pascarella, et al., 1996), develop critical thinking skills (Jayakumar, 2008; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), enrich the environment for teaching and research, and add to the "strength, productivity, and intellectual capacity" of the institution at large (WISELI, 2010). By incorporating a wider range of voices and perspectives in undergraduate and graduate nonprofit education, our programs will be better equipped to prepare students to fulfil the promise of the sector and meet the needs of a diverse world. Accreditation may signal the importance of greater diversity in the discipline, and may provide some leverage for program directors to increase attention to diversity, inclusion and equity within their programs.

Yet, we also argue that accreditation alone will not address the long-standing and persistent educational structures, policies and discourses that contribute to the exclusion and marginalization of diverse students in nonprofit and philanthropic education, and in the sector at large. Thus, even as we call for a centering of diversity within nonprofit educational standards, we follow the concerns of the editors of a recent special issue of *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* who express impatience with approaches to diversity that reinscribe essentialist, hierarchical and reductionist notions of identity. We underscore the editors' call to move "well beyond a managerial approach" to include a deep attention to the complexities of identity and

power dynamics in the dynamics of volunteering and structuring of nonprofit organizations (Weisinger, Borges-Mendez & Milofsky, 2016, p. 3S). Drawing from the work of the D5 Coalition, a five-year coalition advance philanthropy's diversity, equity, and inclusion, we extend our focus on diversity to the inclusion and full participation of diverse individuals in a group or organization, and to greater equity in the procedures, processes and distribution of resources within institutions or systems (2011).

Fortunately, we are able to draw on critical perspectives of nonprofit education that encourage us to broaden the focus of our classrooms beyond a narrow set of social concerns and technical skills to a wider range of critical perspectives that equip students to examine knowledge, ethics and power in organizational goals and practices (Srinivas, 2009); to counter market-based ideology and develop alternatives that emphasize greater diversity of perspective and engagement (Eikenberry, 2009); and explore the ways that even the most well-intentioned organizations may suppress social movements and perpetuate social inequality (Ogbor, 2001; Smith, 2007). As Mirabella argues, we need critical theory as we work with students to become "nimble, agile, creative, and above all, intellectually able" (2013 p. 101).

In this paper, we build and extend on these concerns by using critical race theory to consider the state of nonprofit education in the United States today. We turn to critical race theory as a "powerful theoretical and analytic framework" that allows us to illuminate challenges and opportunities for critical perspectives on diversity and equity inside and outside of the classroom (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004). Rather than viewing the curriculum as neutral or objective, critical race theory posits that race and its intersections with gender, class, language and immigration status inform curriculum at all levels, from pre-kindergarten through post-secondary education (Yosso, 2002). We begin with a background of critical race theory, apply

and discuss its potential implications for nonprofit and philanthropic education, and conclude with a discussion of the implications of foregrounding more diverse perspectives into the field through the process of accreditation.

Critical Race Theory in Education

Critical race theory (CRT) is built on the observation that racism is a deeply-rooted force in American society, and is so enmeshed in the fabric of our social order that it appears both normal and natural (Delgado & Stefancic, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1998). According to Hilliard (1992), racism is the “encompassing economic, political, social, and cultural structures, actions, and beliefs that systematize and perpetuate an unequal distribution of privileges, resources and power between white people and people of color” (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 56). Race and racism shape our institutions and our social relations, whether explicitly or implicitly (Omi & Winant, 1986) and result in disparities in health, housing, employment, financial security, incarceration and education for people of color in the United States and around the globe (W.K. Kellogg, n.d.).

Within the academy, critical race theory is also rooted in a “long tradition of resistance” to the unequal distribution of power and resources based on race and other forms of oppression (Taylor 2009, p. 1). As a body of scholarship, CRT first formally emerged in the academy in the 1970’s when legal scholars responded to a perceived stalling of traditional civil rights litigation in the United States. Early legal scholars, concerned with the lack of critical vocabulary for articulating the role of race and power in the law, began by highlighting weaknesses in mainstream definitions of objectivity, methods of empirical verification and claims of colorblindness in American liberalism (Bell, 1992; Taylor, 2009). CRT legal scholars developed a rich and varied scholarship that highlighted historical connections between whiteness, property

and citizenship (Bell, 1987; Harris, 1993), critiqued the traditional legal system and its role in legitimizing oppressive social structures (Bell, 1992) and challenged the slow and unequal process of gaining civil rights for people of color (Delgado & Stefancic, 2000).

Critical race theory migrated to the field of education in the 1980's and 1990's when scholars began using race as an analytic tool for understanding the role of racism in educational institutions and systems (Ladson-Billings, 2011; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solórzano, 1997). Early scholars, frustrated with the stalled civil rights reforms in schools including re-segregation in many school districts and the growing racial achievement gap across the country, argued that racism hinders the educational pathways of students of color, and damages their educational outcomes (Savas, 2014; Taylor, 2009). Drawing from a broad base of critical theory in law as well as sociology, history, feminist theory and ethnic studies, CRT in education developed a racial analysis that challenges dominant notions of meritocracy and objectivity, and requires a close examination of the racialized structures, processes and discourses embedded in educational institutions (Solórzano, 1997; Yosso, 2002). An extensive body of scholarship has documented the impact of race-based inequalities, such as processes that are more likely to place white students into the safest, best equipped schools with the highest quality curriculum (Contreras, 2005; Smith, Altbach, & Lomotey, 2002), and less likely to recognize students of color as gifted and eligible for advanced learning at the primary, secondary and postsecondary level (Gándara, 2002; Oaks, Rogers, Lipton & Morrell, 2002). Scholars adopted and expanded on the early CRT emphasis on alternative methodologies such as counter-storytelling and narrative to highlight the experiences and perspectives of students of color in the classroom and inform new educational strategies. While centering a racial analysis, CRT scholars also focused on the intersections with gender, class, and other forms of oppression, and highlighted the ways

that difference can be transformed into a source of empowerment and reconstruction (Crenshaw, 2016; Taylor, 2016).

As we consider the implications of CRT for nonprofit and philanthropic education, we apply five tenets of CRT as follows: (1) uncovering exclusionary structures and practices; (2) challenging the dominant discourse; (3) honoring of the experiences of marginalized people (4) troubling whiteness and (5) embracing an interdisciplinary approach.

(1) Uncovering Exclusionary Structures and Practices

Critical race theory encourages us to recognize the reality of racism in nonprofit and philanthropic education, and to consider structures and processes that lead to the exclusion or marginalization of students of color within our institutions and programs. As a field of study, we need a fuller understanding of the scope of the problem. Following efforts to document the intersection of race and leadership in the nonprofit sector (Kunreuther, n.d.) and the diversity deficit in philanthropy (D5 Coalition), NACC could be a leader in gathering data on diversity in the undergraduate and graduate student populations of nonprofit education programs in the U.S. and around the world.

At the same time, we do not have to wait for that data in order to examine how recruitment, admissions and financial aid processes may be discouraging or excluding racially diverse candidates within our varied academic programs. We can also pay attention to the stereotypes and biases that may be present in our classrooms, curricula and programs. When we are recruiting, who do we envision as the ideal candidate? Which cultural traditions, linguistic practices and social mores are considered desirable than others? Are students of color receiving

equal access to honors courses, mentorship, awards and recognition, or are they discouraged from pursuing certain opportunities?

This attention to exclusionary structures and practices within educational institutions must be accompanied by an analysis of subtler forms of racial exclusion that may be operating in our programs. As has been well-documented, racial and gender stereotyping and bias can have profound effects, hindering students' academic performance (Ganley, et al., 2013; Steele & Aronson, 1995). Researchers have also documented the alienation and isolation that students of color in predominantly white educational settings may experience when they receive explicit and implicit messages that their cultural traditions, linguistic practices and social mores are less desirable than their white peers (DeCuir and Dixson, 2004). Implicit messages in the classroom often come in the forms of microaggressions, subtle insults or slights directed at people of color that may be overt and intentional, or covert, unconsciously rendered and more elusive. (Solórzano, Ceja & Yosso, 2009; Sue, et al, 2007; Suarez-Orozco, et al., 2015). Cumulatively, microaggressive events can have a negative impact on campus and classroom climate, and a profound effect on the experiences of students of color, correlating with anxiety, depression and anger, distraction and disruption of attention, and disempowerment and disengagement from school (Sue, 2010).

(2) Challenging the Dominant Discourse

A second strategy of CRT scholars has been to unmask and expose racism in its multiple forms in the academy by paying close attention to the dominant racial discourses that circulate within the curricula. This attention to discourse highlights the role that language plays in constituting and reproducing hierarchies of social status based on race, gender and other

marginalized identities (Flowers, 2010). As educators, our responsibility is to examine the use of language as a “racial instrument” that validates the assumptions embedded in the ideology of white supremacy over other racialized identities (ibid, p. 275). As early CRT scholars highlighted, the English language has a long history of establishing and reinforcing a false binary that equates positive traits with whiteness and negative traits with blackness. Ladson-Billings explains,

“Conceptual categories like 'school achievement,' 'middle classness,' 'maleness,' 'beauty,' 'intelligence,' and 'science' become normative categories of whiteness, while categories like 'gangs,' 'welfare recipients,' 'basketball players,' and the 'underclass' become the marginalized and delegitimated categories of blackness.” (1998, p. 9)

This racial hierarchy may be conveyed explicitly, with the use of words, letters, sounds and symbols that overtly attack, demean and degrade people, or more implicitly using less overt “racially coded” language that conveys a message of inferiority and degradation towards marginalized groups (Hill Collins, 1998). Whether explicit or implicit, racialized language wields a high level of conceptual and metaphorical power to signal and disguise social and economic divides as natural or normative realities (Morrison, 1992).

Such assumptions have been historically institutionalized into patterns of knowledge within a wide range of academic disciplines (Foucault & Sheridan, 1972). Within nonprofit and philanthropic studies, we have an opportunity to consider how our programs may be replicating and reproducing racialized discursive practices. As others have noted, nonprofit and philanthropic organizations have a long tradition of drawing from, and at times resisting, a language of deficits to describe the needs of the communities they serve and the need for the services their organizations provide. Assuming that stereotypical images of race and poverty may

“stimulate recognition and, potentially, donations from the general public” (McCambridge, 2015), many nonprofits rely on racially coded language and images to generate support from donors, such as fundraising appeals with stereotypical images of poor black children that reinforce historical and paternal notions of Third World populations as being needy and helpless (Burman, 1994), or with stereotypical, individualized, and depoliticized images of homeless people (Breeze & Dean, 2012).

Here, applying critical theory to nonprofit education becomes paramount. A critical race lens asks us to expose and examine “the hidden curriculum”, that is how stereotypes are embedded and circulated in our own curricula and classrooms (Margolis & Romero, 1996; DeCuir and Dixson, 2004). Turning a critical eye to our own classrooms, we need to ask hard questions about the impact that these stereotypes and biases are having on all of our students. We will also need to accelerate a shift away from presenting nonprofit and philanthropic education as training in the range of technical and managerial skills currently in use in the field. Rather than instructing our students to replicate the fundraising appeals described above, for example, we will teach our students the critical thinking and research skills needed to interrogate the assumptions embedded in widely adopted nonprofit tactics, and to develop new solutions to longstanding practice.

(3) Honoring the Experiences of Marginalized People

Critical race theory calls for educators to widen the scope of the curriculum to include the experiences and perspectives of marginalized people who have been distorted by the dominant discourse, or excluded from the academy altogether (Yosso, 2002; Mazzei, 2007). We know that these distortions and exclusions have a direct impact on students of color, who may not see their

lives and histories accurately reflected in their academic programs, and on faculty who may feel unprepared and inexperienced to discuss “the undiscussable,” resulting in a culture of “silence and fear” in the classroom (Rusch & Horsford, 2009, p. 303). When issues of race and diversity are addressed within academic programs, the topic is too often limited to single course offerings and taught by small subset of the faculty (Hawley & James, 2010; Diem & Carpenter, 2012). As nonprofit and philanthropic education initiates a more intentional focus on diversity and inclusion, the question becomes how to incorporate diverse perspectives across the curriculum.

CRT scholars argue that educators must actively seek out the voices of marginalized people and center them in our curricula (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2000). To do so, we may need to incorporate a wider range of sources of knowledge in our courses, such as personal narratives, autobiography, and testimonials. We may also need to expand the methodological approaches that are considered valid forms of knowledge in the discipline (Baumgartner, 2010), embracing more qualitative methods that underscore the subjective nature of knowledge (Porter, 2013) and foregrounding lived experiences of marginalized people (Priessle, 2006). This emphasis on “counterstories” may also serve to cast doubt on the validity of longstanding racialized assumptions or myths, particularly those held by the majority (Delgado, 1989).

Furthermore, we need to expand the pedagogical approaches we use to include an emphasis on dialogue, reflexivity and positionality (Misawa, 2010). We may encourage students to use critical autoethnography, a method that requires extensive and often longitudinal journaling and interrogation, or participatory action research, to reflect on the ways that their own positionality shapes their research and their practice (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2010; Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Torre, 2008). Portraiture and narrative methods also makes space for personal

stories, and includes “a holistic perspective, not only during the study but also during the writing process” (Quiqley, 2013, p. 842). An emphasis on dialogue over traditional didactic approaches allows students to grapple with the complexity of issues related to gender and diversity (Winston & Piercy, 2010).

Expanding the sources, methodologies and pedagogical approaches we use in the curriculum encourages faculty and student to become more aware and responsive of the perspectives of marginalized people, to expand their tolerance for discomfort, and to participate in “challenging, but necessary, conversations” connecting to issues of racism and other forms of subordination (Rusch & Horsford, 2009, p. 303), all skills necessary to navigate the diversity inside and outside of the nonprofit sector.

(4) Troubling Whiteness

If language can be used as a racial instrument, it can also be used as an “instructional tool” that facilitates “a critical dialogue regarding race and racism” (Flowers, 2010, p. 275). One of the interventions that critical race theorists recommend is for educators to encourage frank discussion about the social, political and cultural construction of whiteness, and the structures and processes that reinforce the ideology of white supremacy in the United States. Whiteness has a long history of being tied to the accumulation of economic privilege, property, equity and wealth in the United States (Roediger, 2005; Brodtkin, 2006) operating both as a “location of structural advantage” and as a “standpoint... from which white people look at ourselves, at others, and at society” (Frankenberg, 1993, p.1). As the cultural practices of whiteness are usually unmarked and unnamed, and white identity is often socially invisible (Matias, et al., 2014), it becomes critical for educators to “trouble whiteness” by helping all of our students, and

white students in particular, to render visible the assumptions and norms that underpin their identities (Gillborn, 2016, p. 45).

We recognize that open conversations about race and white identity may be difficult to sustain in the classroom, particularly among white students. According to critical race theorists, white people enjoy a “deeply internalized, largely unconscious sense of racial belonging in U.S. society” (DiAngelo, 2015). As whiteness is considered the norm in U.S. society, white people live in a social environment that protects and insulates them from race-based stress and builds white expectations for “racial comfort” (Fine, 1997; DiAngelo, 2011) Unlike their colleagues of color, white students, faculty and administrators have a choice whether or not to acknowledge a racialized identity (Diem & Carpenter, 2013). Baumgartner (2010) explains, “I can discuss race and White privilege without people assuming I have ‘an agenda.’ I can arrive at my office early in the morning and stay late without campus police questioning me. My scholarship is not seen as ‘too White.’ My credibility as an instructor is not questioned because of my race. The [] literature is replete with accomplishments of White people. At [] conferences, I see many people who look like me. However, my White privilege comes at a price paid by people of color, Whites, and the [discipline].” (p. 106)

Since many white students have not had opportunities to build tolerance for the discomfort that may come with race-based exchanges, an invitation or requirement to reflect on race and racism may prompt a range of strong reactions, including feelings of anger or guilt (Giroux, 1997; Diem & Carpenter, 2012); fear of being labeled, excluded and oppressed (Ladson- Billings, 1996; Mazzei, 2007); avoidance and resistance to potentially uncomfortable

race-related exchanges (Ladson-Billings, 1996); fear of ultimately losing status or privilege (Mazzei, 2007); and/or a deep desire be seen as good (DiAngelo, 2011). As

The realities of this “white fragility” (DiAngelo, 2011) can reinforce the pressure on educators to sustain a campus ecology of social comfort (Cabrera, Watson, & Franklin, 2016) and to avoid directly addressing the connections between whiteness and racism. To truly diversify the curricula, a wider range of faculty and administrators, and white faculty and administrators in particular, will need to take intentional action to educate themselves about their positionality and practice the skills needed to facilitate conversations about what can be “extremely sensitive and often elusive” topics (Ray, 2010, p. 77). Such intentional action will have significant payouts when we are better equipped to assist our students to “build the stamina to sustain conscious and explicit engagement with race” and other forms of subordination (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 66).

(5) Embracing an interdisciplinary approach

Interdisciplinarity is a central tenet of critical race theory, and CRT scholars have traditionally drawn from a wide range of disciplines within the academy, including literature, art, political science, law, sociology and education. They have also drawn from the perspectives and experiences of community-based organizations to reclaim community history, make clear links between theory and practice, highlight the need for critical race research, and connect the struggles to eliminate racism and other forms of subordination with the goals of the academy (Ladson- Billings, 1999; Yosso, 2002).

This embrace of interdisciplinarity is in line with the field of nonprofit and philanthropic studies. As individual programs work towards greater diversity, they can and should draw from

the scholarship and conversation that exists in their respective disciplinary traditions. For example, social work has a long tradition of integrating concerns about diversity, cultural competence and social justice into their curricular standards. The Council on Social Work Education created a diversity standard in 1986 that mandated that all accredited social work programs "make special, continued efforts to enrich its program by providing racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity in its student body and at all levels of instruction and research personnel, and by providing corresponding educational supports" (Bowie, Hall & Johnson, 2011, p. 1082) As Majumdar & Adams (2013) highlight, public administration scholars have argued that diversity helps to promote democratic citizenship (Gurin, Nagda, & Lopez, 2004), and that students' exposure to diverse perspectives helps to enrich their learning experiences and enhances their competence as public service practitioners (Brintnall, 2008; Rice, 2007; Rivera & Ward, 2008). In its accreditation standards, the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) emphasizes the diversity of faculty, staff and students, and requires programs to promote a climate of inclusiveness through recruitment, faculty retention, admissions and student support services, and holds programs accountable for the student competency of "communicating and interacting productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry" (NASPAA, 2009).

The Promise and Limits of Accreditation

We began this paper with the argument that any accreditation process undertaken by NACC must place diversity at the center of process. We approach accreditation as a process that has the potential to encourage and assist nonprofit and philanthropic academic programs to increase diversity in their curricula. As a means of certification and distinction that reduces the

“structural uncertainties” of the academic market within which we all operate (Cret, 2011), accreditation may enable potential students to collect relevant information about the quality and commitment of our programs’ to greater diversity, inclusion and equity inside and outside of the academy. As we communicate with internal decision-makers, accreditation may also operate as a means to make the direct connections between the legitimacy of the field of study and an ongoing commitment to diversity, and to successfully secure the resources we need to make that commitment a reality. As leaders in our own institutions, we may also use the accreditation standards as a “catalyst” as we work with faculty, students and administrators to center greater attention to diversity in our curricula (ibid).

However, accreditation alone will not bring diversity to the field of nonprofit and philanthropic education. As Cret states in his 2011 study of business schools in Europe, accreditation is a “necessary but not sufficient condition to introduce change” (p. 423). The limitations of accreditation are reflected in the research on accreditation policies that include a focus on diversity. In their study of public affairs programs, Majumdar & Adams conclude that despite the recommendations, the concept of diversity has been “relatively neglected” in the field (p. 218). Similarly, a study of the impact of diversity standards in social work found that even years after implementation “there has been a systematic lack of meaningful and/ or effective efforts to integrate diversity and multiculturalism content into graduate social work curricula” (Bowie, Hall & Johnson, 2011, p. 1099). While progress has been made sporadically, it has occurred “very slowly” (ibid).

Such slow curricular change is not being tolerated by many students today. As we write this, students on campuses across the U.S. are demanding change, from undergraduates at Yale calling for the decolonization of the curriculum to graduate students at Harvard Law advocating

for increased racial equity on campus (Duehren & Ramsey Fahs, 2015; Wang, 2016). This spring, in Washington State alone, students have organized and called for administrators and faculty to take concrete steps to strengthen diversity in the curriculum and on the campuses of Seattle University, the University of Washington, Seattle Pacific University and Western Washington University (Hertz, 2016). We also know from highly publicized cases that critical approaches to race and other forms of subordination may be met with resistance and controversy, such as the succession of legal decisions and state laws that have increasingly restricted the tools colleges and universities can use to diversify their student populations, including U.S. Supreme Court decisions on affirmative action that limit the ability to consider race in admissions, and the polarized reactions to efforts to educate faculty to curb microaggressions and foster inclusive practices on campuses across the U.S. (Kingkade, 2015).

Centering diversity in nonprofit and philanthropic studies will require more than an accreditation process. As Mirabella and Balkun (2011) highlight, curricular change requires close attention not just to the formal and visible rules, but also to the more informal dynamics underpinning organizational change relating to the affective, psychological, social and political characteristics of our particular institutions. Encouraging faculty, staff and students to engage in authentic dialogue and sustained study of the role that race plays in our classrooms and in the sector will require leadership, awareness, humility and persistence. Given the disparities that currently exist, and the wide ranging educational benefits that racial and other forms of diversity bring to campuses, we believe our programs need to seize this moment, critically analyze our current practices, and adopt new strategies and approaches that encourage greater diversity in nonprofit and philanthropic education.

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**CURRICULUM MAPPING MODELS AND OTHER PROCESSES
THAT MIGHT WORK FOR NONPROFIT AND PHILANTHROPY ACCREDITATION**

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Abstract

This paper takes into the consideration the historical and multidisciplinary nature of nonprofit management education and discusses three curriculum mapping options from three different disciplines that have pre-established accreditation standards, which include Business, Public Administration, and Social Work. The paper provides a short description of the established accreditation process and an overview of the accreditation standards. The paper then explains the accreditation standard(s) that cover curriculum mapping along with an example (or two) that would be most relevant or transferable to the NACC accreditation curriculum mapping process.



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The Opinion Reflecting Arguments for Support

In 2015, the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC) voted to explore accrediting nonprofit-focused master's degree programs. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of nonprofit-focused master's degree programs, accreditation is a complex endeavor. The author's previous inventory of the U.S. based master's degrees associated with NACC show that the following types of master's degrees are granted (see Carpenter, 2014):

- Master of Nonprofit Management or similar
- Master of Public Administration or similar
- Master of Social Work or similar
- Master of Business Administration or similar
- Master of Public Policy or similar
- Master of Human Services or similar
- Master of Philanthropic Studies or similar

In some cases, more than one master's degree program at a university is associated with a NACC member center. For example, at several universities both a master's of nonprofit management and a master's of public administration degree program are associated with a NACC member center. Moreover, master's degrees associated with NACC are housed in a variety of colleges, schools, and departments and covered a broad range of academic disciplines. Because of the diverse academic disciplines that often house nonprofit-focused master's degree programs, there has been much debate over where nonprofit management education degree programs should be housed (Long, 2010; Mirabella & Wish, 2000). In addition, there is a long

debate of what types of curriculum should be provided within these programs. NACC must take into consideration the variety of disciplines where NACC programs are housed as well as the historical context of nonprofit management education.

Although nonprofit organizations can be traced back to the beginning of the United States, the development of the academic discipline of nonprofit management education began about 110 years ago. The earliest form of nonprofit management education can be traced back to the Bachelor and Master of Humanics degree established by Springfield College in 1905 and the Bachelor of Association Science established by Chicago YMCA College in 1911 (Lee, 2010).

In 1954, the American Humanics program was established to certify undergraduates and prepare them for careers within youth and human service organizations (Ashcraft, 2001). Additionally, other colleges and universities established master's degrees in hospital administration (O'Neill, 2005). Even with the establishment of these early programs, there is widely held consensus that *formal* nonprofit management education programs were not established until in the early 1980's and that the programs that were started earlier can be considered "industry-specific" education (O'Neill, 2005). In addition, the major growth of nonprofit management education programs occurred in the 1990's to present. These historical contexts must be understood in the context of moving forward with accreditation.

Keeping the demographic and historical context in mind, NACC must take into consideration the interdisciplinary aspect of the field and can utilize pieces of established curriculum mapping processes from existing accrediting bodies.

Curriculum Mapping Processes by Discipline

This section discusses three curriculum mapping options from three different disciplines that have established accreditation standards, which include Business, Public Administration, and Social Work. These disciplines were chosen for their strong connection to nonprofit and philanthropy education and the fact that master's degree programs affiliated with NACC member centers are housed within schools of business, public administration and social work.

Business

There are approximately 4 master's degree programs affiliated with NACC that are housed within business schools or business departments. There are two national accrediting bodies for the business field: 1) AACSB International—"The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business is a global, nonprofit membership organization of educational institutions, businesses, and other entities devoted to the advancement of management education" (2016a, par 1); and 2) "The Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) is a leading specialized accreditation association for business education supporting, celebrating, and rewarding teaching excellence" (ACBSP International, 2016a, par. 1).

The main way to distinguish between the two is, ACBSP provides accreditation to programs (i.e. MBAs), whereas AACSB provides accreditation to departments and schools.

AACSB explains their accreditation process:

The AACSB Accreditation Process includes rigorous self-evaluation and peer-review elements.

The process begins with the submission and approval of an Eligibility Application. Once a school's Eligibility Application has been approved, it will enter the Initial Accreditation phase. If a school is able to meet all of AACSB's Accreditation Standards and completes the

requirements, it will be recommended for Accreditation. All AACSB-accredited institutions must enter the Continuous Improvement Review process every five years (AACSB International, 2016b).

AACSB's accreditation includes 15 standards across two sections. Section 1 focuses on core values and guiding principles. Section 2 focuses on the standards for accreditation which are separated into four different categories: Strategic management and innovation; students, faculty and professional staff; learning and teaching; and, academic and professional engagement. The Learning and Teaching category includes four standards (8-11) that specifically discuss the curriculum mapping process:

Learning and Teaching

Standard 8: The school uses well-documented, systematic processes for determining and revising degree program learning goals; designing, delivering, and improving degree program curricula to achieve learning goals; and demonstrating that degree program learning goals have been met. [CURRICULA MANAGEMENT AND ASSURANCE OF LEARNING]

Standard 9: Curriculum content is appropriate to general expectations for the degree program type and learning goals. [CURRICULUM CONTENT]

Standard 10: Curricula facilitate student-faculty and student-student interactions appropriate to the program type and achievement of learning goals. [STUDENT-FACULTY INTERACTIONS]

Standard 11: Degree program structure and design, including the normal time-to-degree, are appropriate to the level of the degree program and ensure achievement of high-quality learning outcomes. Programs resulting in the same degree credential are structured and designed to ensure equivalence. [DEGREE PROGRAM EDUCATIONAL LEVEL, STRUCTURE, AND

EQUIVALENCE] (AACSB International, 2016c, p. 29).

To summarize, AACSB's curriculum mapping process involves schools and programs coming up with their own process for creating and maintaining learning goals, which are also appropriate for the type of degree. Next, ACBSP curriculum mapping will be discussed.

ACBSP explains their accreditation process:

The accreditation process begins with determining that the institution meets the eligibility requirements, budgets for anticipated costs on the timetable established to complete the process, and files an Application for Candidacy Status (ACBSP, 2016b, par 1).

Its 6 standards for accreditation include: Leadership, Strategic Planning, Student and Stakeholder focus, Measurement and Analysis of Student Learning and Performance; Faculty and Staff Focus and Educational and Business Process Management. The sixth standard: Educational and Business Process Management specifically discusses the curriculum mapping process.

Education and Business Process Management

Criterion 6.1.1: Educational Design: Programs must describe and explain approaches to the design of educational programs and offerings, its method(s) of making curricular changes related to the business school's or program's mission statement and strategic plan, and its use of student and stakeholder input in these processes.

Criterion 6.1.2: Degree Program Delivery: Describe the degree program delivery for each degree program to be accredited. To fulfill this criterion, you must provide the following information: a. the length of time that it takes for a full-time student to complete the degree (both as cataloged and actually, on-average);

- a) the program delivery methods employed in each program (classroom, competency based, independent study, online, etc.);
- b) the number of contact (coverage hours or equivalent) hours required to earn three (3) semester hours (four (4) quarter hours) of credit or equivalent; and

Criterion 6.1.6 Curriculum Design in Graduate Programs: Master's degree programs in business should require at least 30 semester credit hours or 45 quarter hours (or equivalent) of graduate level work in business coverage beyond the basic undergraduate Common Professional Component (CPC). The undergraduate CPC (excluding the comprehensive or integrating experience) may be determined through a competency based evaluation or by completing undergraduate or graduate courses. The 30 semester credit hours (45 quarter hours) of graduate-level work beyond the CPC topics normally should be in courses reserved for graduate students.

6.1.3 Undergraduate Common Professional Component (CPC):

Programs that include a B.A. (with a business major), B.S. (with a business major), B.B.A., B.S.B.A., or objectives that imply general business preparation with or without a functional specialization must include coverage of the Common Professional Component (CPC) at the level prescribed by the ACBSP. The CPC as outlined below must be included in the content of the courses taught in the undergraduate programs of all accredited schools and programs. Each CPC area must receive a minimum coverage of two-thirds of a three (3) semester credit-hour course (or equivalent) or approximately 30 coverage hours.

Functional Areas

- a) Marketing
- b) Business Finance

- c) Accounting
- d) Management, including Production and Operations Management, Organizational Behavior, and Human Resources Management;

The Business Environment

- e) Legal Environment of Business
- f) Economics
- g) Business Ethics
- h) Global Dimensions of Business

Technical Skills

- i) Information Systems
- j) Quantitative Techniques/Statistics

Integrative Areas

- k) Business Policies or
- l) A comprehensive or integrating experience that enables a student to demonstrate the capacity to synthesize and apply knowledge and skills from an organizational perspective (ACBSP, 2016c, p.43-45).

In summary, ACBSP is more specific in its curriculum mapping request. Programs must explain the number of hours to earn course credits as well as the ways in which the curriculum is delivered. An example of course hour coverage of common professional components is shown in figure 1.

Figure 6.5
Example - Table of Undergraduate Common Professional Component (CPC)
Compliance

CORE COURSES	Hour Class Sessions by CPC Topic											Total
	a. MKT	b. FIN	c. ACC	d. MGT	e. LAW	f. ECON	g. ETH	h. GLO	i. IS	j. QM STAT	k. I. POL/ COM P	
MATH 1203		6								45		51
AOCT 2143			45		2		2		2			51
AOCT 2243	8	2	45	15			2					72
BUAD 2153			3						45	2		50
BUAD 2203									5	45		50
ECON 2333			2		3	45	3	4		2	10	69
ECON 2433	2	1	2	9	2	45	1	4		1	1	68
MGMT 3013		1	1	45	4	1	4	4	3	1	2	66
MGMT 3113	3	2	3	8	1	1	2	2	45			67
BUAD 3233					45		6					51
MKTG 3723	45			4	1	2	1	2		2		58
FINC 3733		40	8		2	10	1		7			68
MGMT 4853	3	3	8	10	3	2	3	4	9	5	45	95
TOTALS	61	55	117	91	63	106	25	20	116	103	58	

*Note: **The totals that are less than 30 on this table would require additional coverage.** The substance of this requirement also applies to schools measuring coverage by percentage of a three credit-hour course.*

Figure 1. Common Professional Component Curriculum Mapping Example (Retrieved from ACBSP, 2016c, p.45).

Although the Common Professional Component is undergraduate focused, NACC could potentially revise this concept for graduate level education and align it with the NACC curriculum guidelines. For example, NACC curriculum mapping requirement could include:

NACC Common Professional Component (CPC):

Programs must include coverage of the Common Professional Component (CPC) at the level prescribed by NACC. The CPC as outlined below must be included in the content of the courses taught in all NACC accredited programs. Each CPC area must receive a minimum coverage of two-thirds of a three (3) semester credit-hour course (or equivalent) or approximately 30 coverage hours for stand-alone programs or *5 coverage hours for specialization programs*.

A stand-alone nonprofit master's degree program could potentially use the common professional component and document 30 hours of nonprofit curriculum. The nonprofit concentration program could potentially use the common professional component and document 5 hours of nonprofit curriculum. Here is an example of a stand-alone nonprofit master's degree program mapping CPC hours coverage using the NACC curricular guidelines.

PA614			15	6													9			30
Organizational Theory																				
PA660 Philanthropy and the Nonprofit Sector: History and Ethics	12	12	12	30																66
PA661 Nonprofit Management	6		6	10	3	3			3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3				52
PA662 Financial Management			3	3					15	18										39
PA667 Fund Development				3						42										45
PA669 Leadership Capstone	6	3	3	3	9								42							66
Totals	24	18	39	64	18	3	0	8	27	63	12	45	51	3	15	33				

The column totals (shown in Table 1) that are below 30 need to be addressed, and coverage needs to increase to at least 30 hours. NACC guidelines are used as an example, however, programs could use their own competencies or competencies determined by NACC. Or programs could use curricular guidelines utilized in the field of public administration.

Public Administration

There are approximately 19 master's degree programs associated with NACC that are housed within schools of public administration. NASPAA – the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration is the accrediting body for public administration and public policy graduate degree programs. (NASPAA, 2016a).

NASPAA explains their accreditation process:

Accreditation promotes the field by fostering and maintaining educational quality for professional public service degrees. NASPAA accreditation recognizes that a master's program in public policy, affairs, or administration has undertaken a rigorous process of peer review conducted by the Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation (COPRA). All NASPAA accredited programs have successfully met the NASPAA Accreditation Standards for Professional Master's Degree Programs in Public Affairs, Policy and Administration” (NASPAA, 2016b, Par 1).

Their accreditation process involves seven standards, which include, Managing the Program Strategically, Matching Governance with Mission, Matching Operations with Mission: Faculty Performance, Matching Operations with Mission: Serving Students, Matching Operations with Mission: Student Learning, Matching Resources with Mission, and, Matching

Communications with Mission. More specifically, Standard 5: Matching Operations with the Mission: Student Learning discusses the curriculum mapping process.

Standard 5 Matching Operations with the Mission: Student Learning

Universal Required Competencies: As the basis for its curriculum, the program will adopt a set of required competencies related to its mission and public service values. The required competencies will include five domains: the ability

- to lead and manage in public governance;
- to participate in and contribute to the policy process;
- to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make decisions;
- to articulate and apply a public service perspective;
- to communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry.

5.2 Mission-specific Required Competencies: The program will identify core competencies in other domains that are necessary and appropriate to implement its mission.

5.3 Mission-specific Elective Competencies: The program will define its objectives and competencies for optional concentrations and specializations.

5.4 Professional Competencies: The program will ensure that students learn to apply their education, such as through experiential exercises and interactions with practitioners across the broad range of public affairs, administration, and policy professions and sectors (NASPAA, 2014, p. 7).

In summary, NASPAA’s competency based approach to curriculum mapping provides a lot of flexibility to schools and programs. NACC could potentially encourage programs to define mission-specific required competencies and mission-specific elective competencies.

In 2014, the NASPAA accredited Master’s of Public Administration degree program within the School of Public, Nonprofit and Health Administration at Grand Valley State University used the NACC curricular guidelines to determine which standards were being covered within each course. Our program coordinator, Salvatore Alaimo created a rubric (shown in figure 2), where 0 = curricular guideline not covered or minimally covered, 1 = curricular guideline specifically covered but not emphasized 3= curricular guideline emphasized and assessed. Members of the nonprofit program committee then reviewed each syllabi and completed the rubric.

PA COURSES																			
Rubric: 0 = not covered or minimally covered; 1 = specifically covered, but not emphasized or assessed; 2 = emphasized and assessed																			
0 Comparative Perspectives on the Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action and Philanthropy	520	535	611	612	614	619	640	641	643			660	661	662	663	664	665	670	
1 The impact of global social, economic and political trends on the role and function of voluntary action, civil society, the nonprofit sector and philanthropy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	1	1	2
2 How individual philanthropy, voluntary behavior and volunteerism is expressed in different cultural contexts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
3 The structure and regulation of philanthropic and voluntary behavior within different	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
0 Scope and Significance of the Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action and Philanthropy	520	535	611	612	614	619	640	641	643			660	661	662	663	664	665	670	
1 The role and function of philanthropic, nonprofit, voluntary and civil society organizations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	0	2	2
2 The size, impact of, and trends in philanthropy, voluntarism and the nonprofit/nongovernmental sector	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	1	0	0	1	2
3 The diversity of types, forms and language that is used to describe voluntary action within society	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	0	0	1	2
4 The diversity of activity undertaken by nonprofit, voluntary and civil society organizations, including both charitable and mutual benefit organizations, as well as those formally and informally structured	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	1	2
5 The relationship and dynamics among and between the nonprofit, government and for-profit sectors	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	1	0	2	1	0	2
0 History and Theories of the Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action and Philanthropy	520	535	611	612	614	619	640	641	643			660	661	662	663	664	665	670	

Figure 2. A MPA Program Mapped to NACC Curricular Guidelines

The mapping process identified strengths and gaps and allowed the MPA program to make syllabi changes.

Another piece of the NASPAA curricular process that is relevant to NACC is the statement within professional competencies, “the program will ensure that students learn to apply their education, such as through experiential exercises and interactions with practitioners.” (NASPAA, 2014, p. 7). While experiential education is not specific to the public administration, but NASPAA is one of the few accrediting bodies that emphasizes the application of education through experiential exercises and interactions with practitioners. Previous research of master’s degrees associated with NACC member centers shows these programs are engaged in a variety of experiential education activities (Carpenter, 2014).

If NACC were to add experiential education as an accreditation standard, programs could use the previous two curriculum mapping examples provided to determine the coverage of experiential activities. Programs would need to keep in mind the various types of experiential education approaches occurring within nonprofit-focused master’s degree programs such as capstone, internship, experiential learning, practicums, fieldwork and simulations. An example of experiential education coverage is shown later in the paper.

Social Work

Approximately one social work master’s degree program is affiliated with NACC, although many social work program directors are affiliated with the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA) and could potentially seek NACC accreditation status in the future. The accreditation body for social work is “The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), a nonprofit national association representing more than 2,500 individual members, as well as graduate and undergraduate programs of professional social work education” (CSWE, 2016a, par 1). They explain their accreditation process: “CSWE Office of

Social Work Accreditation (OSWA) administers a multistep accreditation process that involves program self-studies, site visits, and COA reviews” (CSWE, 2016b, par 1.)

There are four major accreditation standards, which include: program mission and goals, explicit curriculum, implicit curriculum, and assessment. Curriculum mapping is specifically discussed within standard 2: Explicit curriculum and covers curriculum mapping for stand-alone programs.

Accreditation Standard B2.0—Curriculum

The 10 core competencies are used to design the professional curriculum. The program

B2.0.1 Discusses how its mission and goals are consistent with generalist practice as defined in EP B2.2.

B2.0.2 Identifies its competencies consistent with EP 2.1 through 2.1.10(d).

B2.0.3 Provides an operational definition for each of its competencies used in its curriculum design and its assessment [EP 2.1 through 2.1.10(d)].

B2.0.4 Provides a rationale for its formal curriculum design demonstrating how it is used to develop a coherent and integrated curriculum for both classroom and field (EP 2.0).

B2.0.5 Describes and explains how its curriculum content (knowledge, values, and skills) implements the operational definition of each of its competencies (CSWE, 2008, p. 8).

CSWE also provides curriculum mapping for graduate programs with a social work concentration:

Accreditation Standard M2.0—Curriculum

The 10 core competencies are used to design the foundation and advanced curriculum. The advanced curriculum builds on and applies the core competencies in an area(s) of concentration.

The program

M2.0.1 Identifies its concentration(s) (EP M2.2).

M2.0.2 Discusses how its mission and goals are consistent with advanced practice (EP M2.2).

M2.0.3 Identifies its program competencies consistent with EP 2.1 through 2.1.10(d) and EP M2.2.

M2.0.4 Provides an operational definition for each of the competencies used in its curriculum design and its assessment [EP 2.1 through 2.1.10(d); EP M2.2].

M2.0.5 Provides a rationale for its formal curriculum design (foundation and advanced), demonstrating how it is used to develop a coherent and integrated curriculum for both classroom and field (EP 2.0)

M2.0.6 Describes and explains how its curriculum content (relevant theories and conceptual frameworks, values, and skills) implements the operational definition of each of its competencies (CSWE, 2008, p. 8).

Figure 2 shows an example of a Social work competency mapped to the curriculum.

Competency	Practice Behavior and Course Content	Courses	Course Objectives (# in syllabus)	Course Units or week covered	Assignments
Critical Thinking	Distinguish sources of knowledge: Basic research methods; Distinguish practice wisdom from empirical fact; Associational vs. casual relations; Procedures for evaluating of own practice. Engage alternate theories of human behavior; Understand what constitutes "data" in various theories; Develop ability to communicate understanding of theories in writing; Distinguish environmental vs. intrapersonal variables. Relate theories of human behavior to client work; Assessing and integrating sources of knowledge from client interviews; Demonstrate relationship of client variables to theory writing; Demonstrate ability to distinguish sources of knowledge in writing. Knowledge of structure of US social policy; Understand how policy influences services received; Distinguish policy components related to prevention, assessment and intervention; Understand how values shape social policy. Demonstrate ability to communicate in writing contact and experience with client; Demonstrate understanding of interview procedures in writing; Apply human behavior theories to particular client contact; Demonstrate rudiments of assessment in written form.	Rsh I	1,2,4	1,3	2,3
		HBSE I	2,3	2,4	1,3
		Practice I	2,3	2,4	All
		Policy I	2,4	3,5	All
		Field I			Process Recording
		Field I			Process Recording
	Analyze models of Assessment <i>(Develop as above)</i>				
	Effective Communication <i>(Develop as above)</i>				

Figure 2. Social Work Competency Mapped to Curriculum (Retrieved from CSWE, 2008, p. 8).

In summary, the Social Work accreditation is a competency based model and provides a lot of flexibility on the program to explain how the competencies are being integrated into the curriculum. Both stand-alone nonprofit master's degree programs and concentrations could

potentially use the social work curriculum mapping process. Although NACC standards aren't meant to be competencies, programs could potentially map NACC standards to course syllabi, learning objectives and assignments. Table 3 shows an example of a stand-alone nonprofit program mapping its core courses to the NACC guidelines.

Stand Alone Program Central Core (30 Credits)

NPM-501 Strategic Planning in the Nonprofit Sector (3)

NPM-510 Leadership and Organizational Development in Nonprofits (3)

NPM-520 Board Development and Human Resource Management in Nonprofits (3)

NPM-545 Fundraising and Grant Writing (3)

NPM-531 Managing Financial Resources in Nonprofits (3)

NPM-551 Government – Nonprofit Relationships (3)

NPM-560 Nonprofit Law and Ethics (3)

NPM-570 Nonprofit Marketing (3)

NPM-580 Program Evaluation Methods (3)

NPM-690 Masters Project Seminar (3)

Table 3.

Stand-Alone nonprofit master's degree curriculum mapping example

Competency	Practice Behavior and Course Content	Courses	Course Objectives	Course Units or Weeks Covered	Assignments
------------	--------------------------------------	---------	-------------------	-------------------------------	-------------

5.0 Nonprofit Governance and Leadership	5.1 Role of nonprofit boards and executives in providing leadership at the organizational, community and societal levels through various structures and authority models	NPM-510	2,3,4	3	Final paper
		NPM-520	1	1	Board Assessment Project
	5.2 Theories of nonprofit boards and governance	NPM-510	1	1	Case Analysis of one theory of nonprofit governance
		NPM-520	2	1	Midterm Exam Question

Field Work CSWE

CSWE is also very specific in how programs provide field education, which is also covered in Standard 2.

Accreditation Standard 2.1—Field Education

The program discusses how its field education program

2.1.1 Connects the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practice setting, fostering the implementation of evidence-informed practice.

B2.1.2 Provides generalist practice opportunities for students to demonstrate the core competencies.

M2.1.2 Provides advanced practice opportunities for students to demonstrate the program's competencies.

2.1.3 Provides a minimum of 400 hours of field education for baccalaureate programs and 900 hours for master's programs.

2.1.4 Admits only those students who have met the program's specified criteria for field education.

2.1.5 Specifies policies, criteria, and procedures for selecting field settings; placing and monitoring students; maintaining field liaison contacts with field education settings; and evaluating student learning and field setting effectiveness congruent with the program's competencies (CSWE, 2008, p. 9).

NACC could potentially emphasize the importance of experiential education during accreditation. This would entail master's degree programs demonstrating the variety and frequency in which experiential education happens throughout the program. Table 4 provides an example of a stand-alone nonprofit program demonstrating the frequency with which the experiential education is provided throughout the program.

Master of Arts in Leadership Studies – Nonprofit Leadership and Management

LEAD 501 Nonprofit Sector and Management Fundamentals (3 units)

LEAD 550 Leadership (3 units)

LEAD 500 Research, Design and Evaluation of Nonprofit Programs (4 units)

LEAD 502 Leadership and Ethics (3 units)

LEAD 503 Nonprofit Finance (3 units)

LEAD 505 Organizational Theory and Change (3 units)

LEAD 506 Resource Development and Fundraising (3 units)

LEAD 507 Community Organizing & Change (3 units)

LEAD 510 Board Management and Leadership (2 units)

LEAD 509 Legal Issues for Nonprofit Corporations (1 unit)

LEAD 504 Human Relations for Leaders (1 unit)

LEAD 511 Strategic Planning and Positioning (3 units)

Table 4.

Experiential Education Mapped to MA in Nonprofit Leadership and Management degree program

Core Courses	Experiential Learning	Fieldwork	Simulation	Practicum	Internship	Capstone
LEAD 501	X		X			
LEAD 550						
LEAD 500	X					
LEAD 502						

LEAD 503	X
LEAD 504	X
LEAD 505	
LEAD 506	
LEAD 507	X
LEAD 509	
LEAD 510	
LEAD 511	X

In addition, NACC could request programs to document and the number service hours performed by students within nonprofit-focused graduate degree programs. These hours could be documented within and/or outside of the classroom setting. Many programs are already documenting service related activities as required by their university. Moreover, NACC can consider requesting programs to create and maintain established procedures for experiential education, which is included but not limited to: Letters of Understanding between faculty, students and community organizations, a database of community organizations where experiential education is conducted, student guidebook for experiential education, and sample syllabi and experiential education approach guidelines.

In conclusion, this paper discussed three curriculum mapping options from three different disciplines, which included business, public administration and social work. The curriculum mapping examples included documenting:

1. Curricular hours for professional components;
2. General coverage of nonprofit curriculum, and;

3. Learning objectives and assignments that include nonprofit curriculum.

In addition, an experiential education curriculum mapping example was also provided because it was emphasized by two out of the three accrediting processes. The examples provided in this paper could be potentially useful during the NACC accreditation curriculum mapping process.

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**MOVING ACROSS ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES:
THE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF OPERATIONALIZING
COMPETENCY-BASED DESIGN**

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Prepared for the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council
Accreditation Summit
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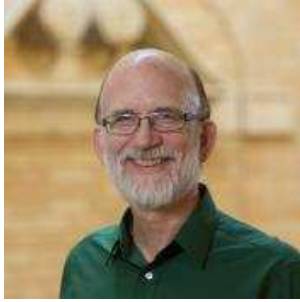
ACCREDITATION: SEVEN PERSPECTIVES FROM OUTSIDE ACADEMIA

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Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership

Abstract

This essay looks at the question of nonprofit academic program accreditation from the perspective of various groups external to the academy. How do those who are not program and center directors look at accreditation? What are persons without academic titles like professor or senior lecturer, the everyday person, likely to say? What about the constituents we consider important to academic nonprofit programs such as students, parents, nonprofit organizations, donors and legislators. The thoughts expressed here are not based on extensive literature reviews or scientific research but rather a compilation of various discussions over the years, experiences getting support for starting and maintaining programs, and listening to public comments and observations in the media. Perhaps they will stimulate thought on the topic; and if so, then they are worthwhile.



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NONPROFITS

Employment

An important outcome of academic nonprofit programs is the employment of its graduates in the sector. What has always characterized the sector is its emphasis on a college or university degree rather than a particular degree. In fact, I do not know of a single nonprofit at the local, regional, or national level that gives preferential hiring considerations to graduates of nonprofit academic programs at the undergraduate or graduate level. Why would they? Why not just hire persons with the skills and knowledge needed. There is considerable employment mobility between the sectors and it is not likely to change. In fact, there are those who are very vocal in saying that nonprofits should be run more like businesses.

Maybe the real contribution of nonprofit education programs is not the employment of its students. Perhaps it is the insight and understanding of nonprofit organizations imparted to students who take nonprofit courses (including volunteerism, and philanthropy) and wind up sitting on boards or volunteering for parent teacher organizations, soccer clubs, churches, and other community based organizations.

Workshops and Training

Would nonprofit academic program accreditation make a difference in the offering of workshops and training provided to volunteers and employees of nonprofit organizations? Probably not. National nonprofits such as the Boy Scouts of America have their own training units. Besides their own in-house training programs, nonprofit organizations just like corporate America use an array of consulting firms who do a multi-million dollar business. Is accreditation likely to impact on this? Probably not.

Proprietary Research

Many nonprofit organizations conduct proprietary research for any number of reasons including program evaluations required by government and private foundation grants.

Nonprofits sometimes turn to academic institutions for their research needs but often use consultants and private research firms. Their selection is based on a variety of criteria and the most crucial may be the track record and reputation of the persons or organization who will do the work for them. Would accreditation indicate critical expertise for doing research? Maybe.

PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

Undergraduate Major

Undergraduates generally comprise the entry level professionals for nonprofit programs. What we know is that most undergraduates do not consider the possibility of working for a nonprofit when they enter colleges and universities. Would it matter to the typical undergraduate student if the nonprofit program at their school of choice was accredited? Probably not unless one had to graduate from an accredited undergraduate program to enter a graduate program. This is the case in some fields such as social work where graduation from an accredited program makes a difference at the graduate level.

Graduate Programs

In programs such as engineering where both undergraduate and graduate education is accredited, graduate programs will only accept applications from those with degrees from accredited undergraduate programs. Since nonprofit graduate programs often have persons making career changes or hoping for career enhancement, would it make sense to accept only students with undergraduate degrees from accredited nonprofit programs? Graduate business

schools often require extensive undergraduate work from those without business degrees. If nonprofit program accreditation sets minimal standards for student acceptance into programs, will nonprofit accreditation follow a course similar to engineering and business schools?

The perception by students may well be that unnecessary hurdles are created. Would non-program students be allowed to take nonprofit courses or would they only be available to students in the program? Is this a way to protect the use of scarce resources like full-time faculty? For whom does limiting enrollment increase the perceived status of the program and what does that mean for external audiences? Perhaps it doesn't mean much except to exclude potential students many of which might be highly motivated and have good academic credentials. In a field promoting civil society, do we want exclusionary academic programs?

Certificate Programs

Many colleges and universities offer certificate programs in nonprofit management, volunteerism, and philanthropy. In addition, a large number of community colleges offer certificate programs. Many persons in certificate programs are taking them to gain practical knowledge like how to raise funds for their nonprofit. The proof of the courses and certificate programs is the utility of the learning. Accreditation could possibly make such programs more difficult to offer by establishing instructor qualification and student admission criteria as well as content requirements. Is local or regional reputation more important than a national accreditation for certificate programs some of which are already under the auspices of organizations such as the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance or Association of Fundraising Professionals?

FOUNDATIONS

Preference for Funding

If nonprofit academic programs become accredited, will the accreditation become a requirement for consideration of grant requests? Some state nonprofit associations have at one time or another tried to convince foundations in their state that only nonprofits meeting certain standards should be considered for funding. If there is an accrediting body for a grant applicant to a foundation, might the foundation only consider grants from an accredited program? While we normally think of the intended outcomes of accreditation like conveying high standards, the unintended outcomes should also be considered.

BUSINESSES

Association Membership

Businesses form associations to promote their interests. For example, the American Truckers Association is committed to developing and advocating innovative, research-based policies that promote highway safety, security, environmental sustainability and profitability. What would the accreditation of nonprofit academic programs mean to business associations? It might indicate centers and programs that they would feel comfortable turning to for consultation and research, and to employ graduates. However, they might also turn to non-accredited programs. This would be an interesting research area.

Licensing

Licensing to practice a profession or offer a service is sometimes related to program accreditation. Teachers must graduate from accredited schools of education in order to be licensed. The same is true for many professions. One reason for this is the importance attached

to the services provided. Graduates of accredited nonprofit programs would not be solo practitioners but work in organizations. There would seem to be no relationship to licensing if accreditation were established for nonprofit academic programs

GOVERNMENT

Quality Education

Accreditation in the public's mind is often equated with quality and this is reflected in political bodies like state higher education boards who sometimes require programs to be accredited if there is an accrediting body in a programs area. If not accredited, then programs may be terminated. What happens is that the program and its institution bear the cost of meeting the accreditation guidelines often without any financial support from the state higher education board. Do we want to limit nonprofit education programs to affluent programs and their colleges and universities?

Accountability

Just as the public perceives accreditation as implying quality, it also perceives accreditation as implying accountability. One means of judging accountability is whether graduates of programs get employment in the sector; yet many program directors and faculty consider employment of program graduates not really their concern. Nonprofit employment has previously been discussed. Consider the parents, students taking loans, and persons hoping to advance their careers. Does program accreditation mean a good job with ability to pay off loans and receive a good return on investment? Maybe it does but maybe it does not. Is an ambivalent response being accountable? I suggest not.

POTENTIAL DONORS

Why do donors give? We know the most common reason: They believe passionately in something. Will accreditation make them more or less passionate about supporting a nonprofit academic program? Probably not. Passion will come from a nurtured relationship with the program director and/or faculty of the program, the programs activities, and encounters with students. Would it be nice to share with a donor that the program is accredited? Of course it would.

MEDIA

Standards and Legitimacy

Media often embrace credentials because they convey expertise, legitimately held ideas and practices, as well as standards. Credentials such as accreditation lend credence to news stories. If nonprofit academic programs are accredited, then the accrediting organization will likely be viewed by the media source and public to be as responsible as the nonprofit program or faculty member for the information incorporated in the story. In a sense, all programs accredited by the organization will likely be viewed as legitimate conveyers of acceptable practices, valid research, and commentators on policy thus making an intrinsic link back to the accrediting body with all its implications of risk.

Evaluation and Accountability

Media will view accredited programs as representing the nonprofit studies field. As such, accredited programs may be asked to make judgements about the actions of nonprofits and nonprofit professionals. The programs may be called upon to evaluate actions and practices

based on the literature and careful research. This should be a positive outcome of the accreditation of programs.

CONCLUSIONS

What conclusions might be drawn from this synopsis of various discussions over the years, experiences getting support for starting and maintaining programs, and listening to public comments and observations in the media? The following are suggested:

What Accreditation Means

1. Accreditation would indicate expertise for those seeking a program to do proprietary research.
2. Accreditation would likely create unnecessary hurdles for enrolling in programs with a potential for excluding highly motivated students with good academic credentials.
3. The accreditation process cost may limit programs to affluent colleges and universities because many institutions have had strained budgets since the economic depression of 2007.

What Accreditation Does Not Mean

1. Graduates of accredited programs will be in demand on the job market.
2. Foundations will make accreditation a preference for funding
3. Accreditation will enhance relations with the business sector.
4. Donors will be impressed
5. Enhanced accountability for student loans and other types of public investment in nonprofit academic programs.

The intended and unintended outcomes of program accreditation must be considered. Is there an unequivocal answer to accreditation based on the view from outside the academy? No. What other considerations need to be raised and explored from outside the academy when it comes to the accreditation of nonprofit academic programs broadly defined to include volunteerism and philanthropy?

Presentation:

**AACSB: THE BUSINESS SCHOOL PROCESS
AND APPROACH TOWARD ACCREDITATION**

David Renz
University of Missouri, Kansas City

Presentation Prepared for the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council
Accreditation Summit
July 12-14, 2016
Texas A&M University



David Renz
University of Missouri, Kansas City

David Renz is the Beth K. Smith/Missouri Chair in Nonprofit Leadership and the Director of the Midwest Center for Nonprofit Leadership, an education, research and outreach center of the Department of Public Affairs in the Henry W. Bloch School of Management at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. During his career, Renz also has served as a senior government executive, including five years as Executive Director of the Metropolitan Council of the Twin Cities and six years as assistant commissioner for the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry. Renz received his Ph.D. in organization theory and administration and a Master of Arts in industrial relations, both from the University of Minnesota.

Renz's research focuses on the leadership and management of nonprofit and public service organizations, with emphasis on governance, the leadership of organizational innovation and transformational change and organizational effectiveness. He also conducts research on the development and institutionalization of university-based nonprofit academic centers. Recently, he has been engaged in an innovative leadership development collaboration with the faculty of the University of the Western Cape in South Africa.

Renz is a nationally recognized leader and award-winning educator. He also has provided leadership for several national capacity-building initiatives, including the founding of the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council and the Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers. Renz has written and co-authored more than 110 articles, reports and chapters for scholarly and practice-oriented publications, and he has led the design of several path-breaking national conferences on nonprofit governance and effectiveness. His publications have appeared in *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, *Public Administration Review*, *The Nonprofit Quarterly*, *Strategic Governance*, *Public Productivity and Management Review*, *The American Review of Public Administration* and *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*.

His areas of expertise include: Nonprofit governance, organization, and accountability, social entrepreneurship, nonprofit sector in Kansas City, public service leadership and management of governmental agencies.

**NASPAA: THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION PROCESS
AND APPROACH TOWARD ACCREDITATION**

**Kathleen Hale
Auburn University**

Prepared for the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council
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July 12-14, 2016
Texas A&M University

Abstract

This paper examines the public administration approach to accrediting nonprofit and philanthropy programs by exploring the NASPAA (Network of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration) framework used to accredit many graduate programs in public administration, public affairs, and public policy. The paper begins with a descriptive overview of the NASPAA accreditation approach including requirements, architecture, and process. Next follows a discussion of the ways in which the NASPAA approach can fit the accreditation needs of nonprofit and philanthropy programs, and observations about the unique utility of the NASPAA approach as well as potential drawbacks. The paper concludes with observations about the public administration discipline and related fields of public affairs and public policy, and the role of nonprofit and philanthropy courses in professional public service programs.



Kathleen Hale
Auburn University

Dr. Hale teaches graduate courses in intergovernmental relations, nonprofit law and management, and election administration. Her research focuses on intergovernmental systems and the influence of information on policy innovation. Recent books include *Applied Research in Public and Nonprofit Organizations* (Wiley 2014) and *How Information Matters: Networks and Public Policy Innovation* (Georgetown University Press 2011). She has served as a member and chair of the Executive Council of NASPAA's Nonprofit Education Section and serves on its Task Force for Quality Assurance in Specializations. As part of a broader applied research agenda, Dr. Hale also directs Auburn's Election Administration outreach program to professionalize public administration of elections in conjunction with the national certification program of The Election Center (Houston, TX).

NASPAA: The Public Administration Process and Approach Toward Accreditation

NASPAA (Network of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration) is an international membership organization that accredits graduate programs in public administration, public affairs, and public policy.¹ Of its approximately 300 member programs, some 60% of NASPAA have a nonprofit or philanthropic curricular component, and the percentage of graduates from NASPAA schools obtaining post-degree employment in the nonprofit sector has increased considerably in recent years. This paper explores the NASPAA approach to accreditation of public service content and the suitability of that approach for accrediting nonprofit and philanthropy content.

NASPAA accreditation of nonprofit and philanthropic content has been considered explicitly over the past decade. Members of the NASPAA Nonprofit Education Section have facilitated and delivered an increasing number of conference presentations at NASPAA and ARNOVA in recent years, and have been an integral part of the NACC dialogue on this topic. In 2015, following its annual meeting, NASPAA convened a President's Task Force on Quality Assurance in specializations with an initial focus on the nonprofit specialization.² The Task Force was charged with exploring the specialization review process specified for NASPAA accreditation; establishing a plan for 2016 that could lead to voluntary specialization review, and conducting a market analysis of programs interested in specialization review over and above the standard NASPAA accreditation standards. The final report of the Task Force is forthcoming; pertinent recommendations from its Interim Report are reflected in this paper.

¹ Formerly, the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration.

² Members of the NASPAA Task Force on Quality Assurance in Specializations include Lilliard Richardson, Chair (SPEA at IUPUI), Mohamad Alkadry (FIU), David Birdsell (Baruch, CUNY), David Campbell (Binghamton, SUNY), Jo Ann Ewalt (College of Charleston), Kathleen Hale (Auburn), Jack Meek (LaVerne), David Springer (UT Austin), and Melissa Stone (Minnesota).

Overview of NASPAA Accreditation

The NASPAA website describes its accreditation as “the peer review quality assurance process for graduate-level, master’s degree programs in public policy, affairs, and administration” (2016). NASPAA accreditation is awarded at the program level for graduate master’s programs, but is not available for schools or institutions.

NASPAA offers professional accreditation and requires that its member programs be housed in institutions that are themselves accredited or similarly approved by a recognized regional, national, or international organization. Criteria are established by the Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation (COPRA) and adopted by the NASPAA Executive Council, both of which are composed of representatives of NASPAA-member institutions. COPRA is recognized by the Council for Higher Education (CHEA) body for graduate degree programs in public policy, administration, and affairs, globally.

The NASPAA accreditation process is directed at programs whose primary purpose is public service education broadly defined; in terms of content, eligible programs must “contribute to the knowledge, research, and practice of public service” and must “demonstrably emphasize public service values.” Typical program titles include MPA (Master of Public Administration) and MPP (Master of Public Policy); however, the articulation of fields of study such as public administration or public policy is not limiting. NASPAA accreditation does not restrict where a program is located within its home institution. An MPA program, for example, might be housed within a Department of Political Science or Public Administration, a School of Social Work, as a separate school, or elsewhere.

Once conferred, NASPAA accreditation remains in force for 7 years and must be renewed to remain active. Various fees are required. These include a one-time initial eligibility

fee of approximately \$1,000, an accreditation/reaccreditation fee of approximately \$5,000, and annual accreditation fees on a sliding scale based on program size (\$510-\$715, with most at the lower end of the range). Accreditation expenses also include site visit expenses that depend on location but range from \$1,500-3,500. Additional fees may be involved for program complexities such as multi-campus programs, international programs, distance programs outside the home country, multiple delivery modalities, and executive education, although these are not common to most programs at this time.

Principles and Standards of the NASPAA Accreditation Process

Several principles define the broad parameters of the current NASPAA accreditation approach.³ First, the NASPAA accreditation approach is mission-driven. Within the broad umbrella of public service, each program organizes around its unique, self-defined public service mission, the purpose of which is to reflect the particular characteristics of its student body, stakeholder needs, and post-degree employment options. A program proximate to Washington, DC, for example, may focus on preparing students for public service in the federal government and national professional associations; a program in suburban Atlanta may focus on preparing students to enter public service in a wide variety of county governments and social service nonprofit organizations. The mission guides program activities as well as the accreditation process.

Second, the NASPAA accreditation approach is outcome-based. It focuses on mission-related outcomes for programs and mission-related outcomes for students. Programs are required to establish and utilize program-level goals and must use program performance information to

³ The current approach was adopted by NASPAA in 2009 (see Calarusse and Raffel 2007 for extensive background).

identify and implement program improvements. Programs also must establish student learning outcomes and demonstrate that students have achieved program-specific learning objectives in key domains that are essential to public service.

NASPAA defines these key domains for all programs through five “universal” competencies. Competencies are essentially collections of knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors that define successful performance. Competencies involve more than knowledge and include habits of analysis and actions that convey ability in an area.

As a threshold, NASPAA-member programs demonstrate that their students have mastered five Universal Competencies and thereby possess the abilities to: 1) lead and manage in public governance; 2) participate and contribute to the policy process; 3) analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions; 4) articulate and apply a public service perspective; and 5) communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry. NASPAA does not mandate specific curricula to accomplish student competencies in these areas, and so curricula vary by program. Programs define each of the Universal Competencies through specific sub-elements that align with program missions and that translate into learning outcomes. Programs map their curricula by course to illustrate the ways in which their mission-specific definitions of the Universal Competencies are introduced, reinforced, and mastered.

Last and not least, the NASPAA accreditation process revolves around self-evaluation and peer-review against seven accreditation standards. These standards are: 1) a strategic management approach based on a public service mission and public service values; 2) administrative support and faculty governance that is adequate to support the program and matches the mission; 3) faculty qualified to deliver the mission including their academic and/or

professional qualifications, diversity, and scholarship; 4) administrative practices in recruitment, admissions, internships, and job placement that are appropriate for the mission and that support students in reaching their goals in a climate of inclusiveness; 5) student learning measured against the five Universal Competencies and other competencies identified by the program including mission-specific required and elective competencies and professional competencies; 6) resource adequacy; and 7) communications about mission, policies, practices, student learning outcomes, and accomplishments that are sufficient to advise stakeholders and inform their decisions relative to the program.

NASPAA protocols further articulate each standard. Two points merit mention in the accreditation discussion. Standard 2 (adequate faculty governance) requires a minimum of 5 full time faculty (or equivalent) who must exercise “substantial determining influence for the governance and implementation of the program.” Standard 5 (student learning outcomes) essentially institutionalizes assessment of competency-based student learning around program definitions of the Universal Competencies. Currently, NASPAA accreditation does not mandate the development of specific learning outcomes for optional program specializations or concentrations. Over the past decade, discussions have intensified within the NASPAA membership and between the Nonprofit Education Section and NASPAA’s executive leadership about how to develop these and what they should include.⁴ These discussions led to the formation of the NASPAA Task Force on Quality Assurance in 2015.

The NASPAA Accreditation Process

Programs seeking accreditation (or re-accreditation) engage in a multi-faceted process of peer-review that includes a self-study and site review as well as peer-review through COPRA.

⁴ The history and content of these discussions has been chronicled by the Nonprofit Education Section (Appe, Gelles and Hale 2015).

The structured process occurs over a two-year period. The first year involves a self-study; the second year involves a site-visit. The two-year period culminates with a decision from COPRA that awards accreditation or not. Throughout, the process provides numerous opportunities for dialogue and interaction between program directors, site visit team chairs, and the COPRA liaison assigned to each program moving through accreditation/reaccreditation. NASPAA staff provide support at every stage.

In the self-study, program faculty evaluate their programs against the NASPAA accreditation standards. COPRA reviews the self-studies and provides programs with its observations about how the programs align with the standards. Programs have the opportunity to respond, following which COPRA determines whether and when programs will proceed to the site visit stage.

Site visit teams are selected following processes that screen for conflicts of interest and appropriate knowledge. Each three-member team is composed of an academic chair, an academic who often possesses particular academic expertise, and a practitioner. Program directors work with the site visit chair and NASPAA staff to schedule visits. The typical site visit occurs over three (3) days and includes review of program records and interviews with faculty, students, administrators, and stakeholders outside the program such as advisory boards.

The site visit team is guided by the COPRA report and the program's responses, and examines the issues raised by COPRA. The site visit team also examines the program's practices for examples of excellence, and may make other observations or recommendations. The site visit team files a report, and the program has the opportunity to respond. To conclude the process, COPRA reviews the site visit report and the program's response, and makes its decision.

NASPAA Accreditation of Nonprofit and Philanthropy Programs

Several considerations indicate that the NASPAA accreditation framework applies well to nonprofit and philanthropy content whether designed as full degree programs, as graduate certificates, or as specializations within NASPAA-accredited MPA or MPP programs. One consideration is the content alignment between nonprofit and philanthropy programs and NASPAA member programs; the other is the general institutional context of NASPAA and COPRA.

1. Content Alignment - Public Service Values Focus

Nonprofit and philanthropy programs focus on public service and public service values. In fact, it is difficult to imagine areas of scholarship or practice more intimately intertwined with public service theory, design, implementation, or evaluation. Public service is a threshold issue for NASPAA members. Only programs that focus significantly on public service and public service values are eligible for NASPAA program membership; public service is not simply one of many accreditation requirements.

NASPAA members have not yet articulated specific competencies for nonprofit or philanthropy content. However, the NASPAA Universal Competencies lend well to adaptation for nonprofit- or philanthropy- focused specific public service missions. Programs with considerable (or exclusive) focus on nonprofit or philanthropy content could articulate missions that would, in turn, guide the rest of the accreditation process. Although NASPAA has yet to accredit a free-standing degree program in nonprofit or philanthropic studies, the Nonprofit Education Section has collected numerous illustrations of how accreditation of this content can

proceed, either for full degrees or specializations; these illustrations have been the subject of panels at NASPAA and ARNOVA for the past several years.⁵

2. Institutional Context of NASPAA Accreditation

It is also important to consider the NASPAA institutional context for accreditation and whether that provides a “willing host” for these programs or specializations. Several features of the NASPAA approach may be relevant:

Professional accreditation. As a professional accreditor, NASPAA is responsible to students and accountable to the profession. What this offers nonprofit and philanthropy programs or specializations is assurance that stakeholder employers are engaged in the larger conversation about what students should know and know how to do. These conversations take place in NASPAA-accredited programs now with advisory boards and other similar stakeholder groups.

Developmental approach. NASPAA accreditation fosters growth and development among program members. The orientation is to educate programs to succeed, rather than to exclude programs or focus on elite programs. NASPAA provides accreditation education and training for members, including an “academy” at its annual meeting. NASPAA staff provide considerable support at all stages of the accreditation process.

Peer-review: Peer-review is central to the NASPAA approach; this importance is reflected in the name of the Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation, whose members are NASPAA

⁵ See Appe, Gelles, and Hale (2015) for a chronology of these and similar presentations.

program representatives. NASPAA accreditation relies extensively on its members to conduct peer-reviews through site visits. Faculty in some member programs are both academically and professionally qualified in the nonprofit and philanthropy fields. And yet, greater numbers of qualified faculty are needed. The Task Force Interim Report (March 2016) recommended increasing the number of site visitors and COPRA representatives who are well-versed in nonprofit and philanthropy programs and who have the expertise and qualifications to assess program issues.

Resource limitations. Considerable detail about NASPAA's accreditation process has been articulated in this paper to lend legitimacy to comments about the resource constraints that NASPAA programs face under its assessment-focused accreditation approach. These constraints are amplified by the now-ubiquitous assessment environment that permeates higher education. Whether required by an accrediting body or an institution, assessment involves the exercise of faculty judgment in developing pedagogical frameworks and evaluating student work. For the most part, these are responsibilities that properly rest with faculty rather than with administrative staff. Program faculty face real limitations in meeting accreditation assessment requirements along with program governance obligations and the necessary (and very desirable) requirements for quality teaching and publication, all in addition to the inevitable assessment requirements of their home institutions. This is particularly true in programs with fewer faculty.

The NASPAA Task Force surveyed members in early 2016 and reported that there is insufficient interest to sustain a separate specialization accreditation review without financial subsidy from NASPAA. Primary barriers included resource concerns as well as lack of agreement on specialization competencies.

Rebooting the Public Service Approach to NASPAA Accreditation

Another way to think about accreditation of nonprofit and philanthropy content (whether full graduate degrees or housed in concentrations or certificates) is to address the essential nature of this content against our current understanding of public service and the boundaries of the public sector. In broad evolutionary strokes, public administration graduate education reflects our understanding of the public administration discipline, which emerged to ground government administrative activities in neutral competence in contrast to patronage and the exercise of political influence. One legacy of this beginning is that a significant portion of the study of nonprofit organizations evolved along paths that were separate from the study of government agencies.

Today, we understand the discipline of public administration and its related disciplines of public policy and public affairs much differently. The institutional arrangements that constitute and affect public service are now well understood as much more than simplistic hierarchical silos or bureaucratic black boxes. We now study networked arrangements that cross the boundaries that we defined previously between the public (government) sector and the nonprofit sector, and in some cases the private for-profit sector. Today, mainstream public administration scholarship poses questions about networked governance, contracting relationships for service, and the role of nonprofit organizations in policy innovation. Graduates from NASPAA-accredited programs engage in careers that move between government and nonprofit organizations in an environment that recognizes that these institutions are integrally linked in providing solutions to public problems. Moreover, public service is not limited to paid employment—graduates also serve their communities throughout their lives as board members, fundraisers, and service volunteers.

Recognizing this changed environment, the NASPAA Task Force acknowledged that

NASPAA has not focused on the integral nature of nonprofit and philanthropy content to public service, and recommends in its Interim Report (March 2016) that NASPAA increase its attention to nonprofit education as a central dimension of public service education. In considering accreditation of nonprofit and philanthropy programs and specializations, it is critical to consider at least two broader questions: 1) what are the essential elements of public service education? 2) how can these be demonstrated in programs with and without formal nonprofit elements?

How we conceptualize public service is at least as important as how we articulate the competencies that students should possess. With NASPAA support, its programs can be better positioned to meet this challenge. That support should include consideration of the faculty time commitments necessary to maintain assessment-based accreditation as a thoughtful dimension of pedagogy, and structured engagement on these broader questions.

THE SOCIAL WORK ACCREDITATION PROCESS AND APPROACH

David Springer
University of Texas at Austin

Prepared for the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council
Accreditation Summit
July 12-14, 2016
Texas A&M University



David Springer
University of Texas at Austin

Social change and leadership are inextricably linked. Educating future leaders about justice and equity is vital to creating lasting policy and systems for the betterment of society. Such an education requires a mixture of intellectual reflection, opportunities to work within communities, and ongoing dialogue. As Director of the RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service and University Distinguished Teaching Professor at The University of Texas at Austin, Dr. David Springer actively pursues each of these imperatives. His commitment to building knowledge about just systems and educating students and practitioners about the ways in which they can contribute to the public good have expanded beyond the borders of Austin to global communities.

In his own research, Dr. Springer focuses on the improvement of systems to more effectively deliver services to youth and families, especially at the intersection of juvenile and criminal justice research in the United States and Latin America. In so doing, he brings expertise with the perspective of someone engaged with the nonprofit sector and the community to change systems through research, teaching, policy, and mentorship. Furthermore, the research conducted at the RGK Center matches expertise to practice as it provides sophisticated tools to students and professionals navigating the complex problems that affect our social systems. The multidisciplinary research team approaches local and global problems using multiple lenses and thus finds many solutions to some of the world's most pressing issues. Indeed, Dr. Springer's leadership and work are translating into real outcomes for society. Spanning across direct practice, policy practice, community building, nonprofit management, system reform, research, and leadership, Dr. Springer and the RGK Center have a vision for the future that empowers all members of society.

Springer has conducted research funded by various sources, including the Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, National Institute of Mental Health, National Institute on Drug Abuse, SAMHSA, and the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health. He has co-authored or co-edited ten books, with his most recent book entitled *Juvenile Justice Sourcebook*, 2nd edition (published by Oxford University Press). Most of his research and scholarship has coalesced around effective community-based services for youth and families, and he has been recognized as one of the 100 most influential social work journal authors by the *British Journal of Social Work*.

Springer currently serves as the Principal Investigator of *Restore Rundberg*, a 3-year, \$1 million grant from the Department of Justice to improve the quality of life, health, safety, education, and well-being of individuals living and working in the Rundberg neighborhood in Austin. Part of the Obama administration's Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative, innovative and sustainable community engagement is at the core of this effort.

Springer has been the professor of many graduate courses over nearly two decades of teaching at UT Austin, including *Leadership as a Catalyst for Community Change*. At the undergraduate level, he developed and teaches a Freshman Seminar entitled *The Art of Being Human: Constructing a Life with Meaning*, where students explore how individuals create a meaningful and happy existence. He has received a number of university-wide teaching awards for recognition of excellence in teaching and advising, including the Outstanding Graduate Teaching Award, the Outstanding Graduate Adviser Award, the DAD's Centennial Teaching Fellowship, and selection into the Academy of Distinguished Teachers.

In 2007, he served as Chair of a Blue Ribbon Task Force (see Blue Ribbon Task Force Report – Transforming Juvenile Justice in Texas) consisting of national and regional leaders, which was charged with making recommendations for reforming the juvenile justice system in Texas. In recognition of his work with the Blue Ribbon Task Force, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), Texas Chapter/Austin Branch selected Dr. Springer as the Social Worker of the Year. Today, he continues to work with community leaders to improve the juvenile justice system.

He currently serves on the National Advisory Board of Girls and Gangs for the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, the Advisory Council for Great Wall of China and Children of All Nations Adoption, and the National Advisory Council for the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health. He previously served as the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Graduate Advisor (from 2001 to 2011) in the UT Austin School of Social Work and as the Director of the Inter-American Institute for Youth Justice. Springer was also Dean of the School of Social Work at Portland State University before returning to UT.

In his free time, Springer enjoys surfing and stand-up paddle boarding. He is also an avid trail runner and has participated in ultramarathons, including the Leadville 100, where he and other runners race for 100-mile distances on trails and across mountains.

His professional interests include: Juvenile Delinquency and Juvenile Justice Reform; Leadership in Human Service Systems; Community-Based Interventions with At-Risk Youth; Community-Based Research and Intervention Research; Applied Psychometric Theory and Scale Development.

**STAND-ALONE NONPROFIT AND PHILANTHROPY
PROGRAM AND ACCREDITATION**

**Robert Ashcraft
Arizona State University**

Prepared for the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council
Accreditation Summit
July 12-14, 2016
Texas A&M University

Robert Ashcraft
Arizona State University

Interviews with Dennis Young, Jeffrey Brudney, & Alan Abramson

On the Subject of INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION

Erin Vokes

**Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs
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Prepared for the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council
Accreditation Summit
July 12-14, 2016
Texas A&M University



Erin Vokes
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Erin Vokes earned an MS in Urban Studies and Nonprofit Management Certificate from Cleveland State University, having special interest in neighborhood and community development. She currently works as a Coordinator for Research Centers at CSU; specifically, the Center for Nonprofit Policy and Practice, and the Center for Emergency Preparedness. Through her position at Cleveland State University, which serves as the host institution for the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council, she works to advance the mission of NACC. She also is a member of the Board of Trustees for All Faiths Pantry, and she sits on the Associate Board for the Beck Center for the Arts. She was recently elected as President of the West End Lakewood District, which establishes and performs neighborhood planning and community development initiatives.

1**PERSONAL BACKGROUND & DISCIPLINARY BIAS**

“Where do you fall within your academic training, and how does that influence the way you look at the nonprofit sector? *The nonprofit sector is interdisciplinary. From which discipline do you originate? Do you have or what is your disciplinary bias?*”

Dennis Young

Dennis Young obtained his Ph.D. in engineering economic systems at a time before there was anything called nonprofit studies. He spent some time in graduate school and mostly thereafter learning economics, and as such, economics & engineering define his background. Through his first job at the Urban Institute and again later in life, he worked closely with economists like Richard Nelson and others at Yale. Upon his entry into academia, he has been associated with programs of an interdisciplinary nature, including public policy programs. His work led him to Stoneybrook, which was very interdisciplinary, to Case Western, where he held a joint appointment between social work and economics. Following this, he worked with many schools and faculty of different disciplines, including Georgia State, which focused on public policy and administration, but also talked about nonprofit and nonprofit organizations. His field of work and teaching is nonprofit management and economics, and he is now employed at Cleveland State University. Thus, his background has been very interdisciplinary, but is mostly related to economics and nonprofit, which evolved from his background in engineering.

Jeffrey Brudney

Jeffrey Brudney was originally trained in political science, and within this field, one of his areas of interest was public administration. Upon receipt of his graduate degree, he began to teach and research within a university context, and began to make contacts outside the university. Through his external connections, he discovered that his interests were not truly satisfied by the

field of public administration. He does not believe there is anything wrong with public administration, or that it is not right or comprehensive enough; but he found that it is not as fully focused in community-building aspects, in how people are providing their own services, or in how people contribute to their own quality of life within their own community. Rather than ascertaining how government agencies can do things *for* the public, he prefers a focus on how the government can do things *with* the public. Through his work, he found other organizations which examine how services are delivered beyond government, and this led to his interest in nonprofit. Thus, disciplinarily, Dr. Brudney's background is of trans-political science and public administration origins; through research, study, and teaching, he saw a lot going on within the community with regard to driving service delivery and quality of life on their own, through which he saw nonprofit was mightily engaged.

Alan Abramson

Alan Abramson obtained his Ph.D. in political science. He presently teaches a public administration program at a school that includes both a public policy and public administration focus. All three inform his thinking.

2**INTERNATIONAL NONPROFIT ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

“What do you know about nonprofit academic programs outside the US? What are their needs and differences? What do they emphasize? What theories do they depend upon?”

Dennis Young

Overview

There are substantial academic centers now around the world, although this was not always the case. However, internationally, the conception of what the third sector is about is different, particularly in terms of what they are studying, what organizations they are serving, and what kind of organizations in which students might work.

In the UK, they call the nonprofit sector the voluntarily sector (or have, historically). In continental countries of Europe, or Quebec in Canada, or maybe even Latin American, the framing is on what they call the “social economy.” Internationally, they are less concerned with “nonprofits,” as we would strictly describe them as organizations that are not allowed to distribute profits. Rather, they place more of an emphasis on organizations that are limited in their profit making, are more focused on public good and being democratically run, and they are established for carrying out a common objective. Internationally they talk about social economy, not the nonprofit sector, and would include nonprofits plus collaboratives and various other hybrid forms. In the US we do not talk about collaboratives.

When you go to countries of British influence, most of Canada, and even maybe Australia, they have a similar concept to what we have in the US; although, this is partially due to the fact that we generally speak the same language.

By Region

--UK

The first academic nonprofit center was established in the UK before it ever was in the US. There are a large variety of types of nonprofit academic degree programs there. Often times, areas like social policy undergird academic programs; some are more business oriented, and social enterprise is a big theme, as can be seen with Oxford's program, for example. Open University in the UK has a very straightforward management focus.

--Europe

There are also substantial programs on the European continent; particularly (Liege, Louvain University (one is French and one is Flemish)—professors. In Belgium, in the School of Management in Liege (like an MBA program), there is an emphasis on social enterprise. Comparable programs also exist in Switzerland, Sweden, and Italy. Programs at Stockholm University tend do have an economics focus, as do those in Trento and Bologna in Italy. There is also an academic center in Heidelberg that emphasizes the study of civil society. Here it is less management-oriented, and more focused on social science.

--Spain, Latin America, and the Spanish speaking world in general

The Spanish speaking world features many nonprofit-related programs. Barcelona at one point offered two degrees: Corporate Responsibility, and Social Economy. There are also programs in Costa Rica, which have more of a corporate focus on issues of sustainability, responsible corporate activity, and social enterprise.

--Japan, China, and India

There are very good programs in Japan, which has a strong research community as well as a scholarly association like ARNOVA called the Japan NPO Research Association

(JANPORA). JANPORA has its own journal, and its representatives often participate in ARNOVA and ISTR. There is much activity occurring with regard to education in Japan. Business schools often have a voluntary sector presence, although theirs is more of a focus on social enterprise. They also have public administration type programs that focus more on the nonprofit sector. Japan may be more comparable to the US relative to other regions. Similar activity might be happening in China. This is especially true of Hong Kong, which has nonprofit related graduate degree programs, although the detailed curricular content of these programs is unknown. There is not a lot of communication with India, as it is a relatively closed community in terms of scholarship; but it seems to have a strong tradition of third sector voluntary work.

--Israel, Tel Aviv, and Beersheba

There is quite a bit of third sector related activity occurring in Israel. Hebrew University has long held a nonprofit related program within its social work degree. Tel Aviv likewise has a program through its MBA degree. Beersheba (Ben-Gurion University) is also actively involved with the third sector field.

--Geographical Areas lacking nonprofit-related activity: Russia, Hungary, Egypt, Arab nations

A big question mark surrounds countries like Russia, and Hungary, as well as other countries that have become autocratic, such as Egypt, and certain Arab nations. Certain parts of the world experience struggle between government and nonprofit sector—as a country becomes more autocratic, the sector is put under more pressure, and this makes it difficult for the sector to survive. Russia is emblematic of this. It would seem democracy and growth of third sector is being quashed in such regions. Hungarian & Russian Universities were beginning to blossom,

and now they are under siege. Arab nations, meanwhile, are a blank slate. There may be nothing going on, or there could activity occurring in the more liberal Arab nations.

Jeffrey Brudney

Internationally, they would never use the term “nonprofit;” this is a US term. Rather, they would use the term “non-governmental organizations.” Our nonprofit sector tends to be defined legalistically in terms of the IRS tax code, whereas from an EU perspective, the sector is defined more according to where the action originates. Thus, a nongovernmental organization would be an organization that is not directed or connected formally to the government or private sector. In this context, their sector is larger than ours, and also more political.

Internationally, they are also more interested in how sectors in society come together to provide the services needed by the people or the population. Here in the US, we are more concerned with how to manage these organizations; that is, how to take academic learning and apply it to nonprofits. Our focus on application management is not nearly as felt in EU. We also talk about civil society in the US, but internationally it is a much bigger deal. In US we create civil society through intermediary institutions that stand between people and their government. That view is not necessarily appreciated or applied outside the US. Rather, they look at how these institutions can create a “safe place” for advocacy, engagement, or for organizing interests. Within the context of education, their master’s programs are often connected with employment opportunities. Further, they have hybrid programs that are interconnected and linked, even if it is just one person or faculty person leading the whole charge.

Alan Abramson

(No comment)

Summary/Opinion

There are many regions internationally which participate in nonprofit-related activity, although the term “nonprofit” is largely a US term, with the “voluntary sector” or “nongovernmental institutions” being preferred terms internationally. Further, while nonprofits in the US are defined legalistically according to the tax code, and while they tend to focus more on management application, internationally there is more of a focus on civil society and social enterprise, or the social economy. Further, these organizations internationally are often more hybridized and involve collaboratives, and yield a more direct connection to employment opportunities for students.



CAPABILITY AND PROCESS

“Is NACC capable of accrediting international/non-North American nonprofit academic programs? *Would US standards applicable to international nonprofit academic programs?*”

Dennis Young

It would probably be a very big challenge. The field is crowded, and the process is expensive. Also, accreditation may not be of interest to people, or some schools might already be part of an accreditation process, such as NASPAA; thus, there might not be a wide-spread need for accreditation. It is also questionable if international nonprofit academic programs would be benefited by a NACC accreditation program or if it will help them grow. Many international scholars are well respected in their field, and while they have spent a lot of time studying what the US is doing with regard to the nonprofit sector, they might not have any particular use for American good-housekeeping, especially as their focuses are different from ours.

Similarly, NACC in its current state is not diverse enough in its membership or directors to accredit internationally. Further, the language barrier will inhibit information flow. In Europe, China, and Japan, the language barrier would not be much an issue; but in the Spanish-speaking world it would be challenging.

Jeffrey Brudney

Accreditation is inevitable. When fields get established, someone eventually wants to certify the knowledge. The benefit is that when someone dispenses the knowledge, others know its credibility or expertise rests on more than just one person's thought. Since the inception of the nonprofit field roughly 40-50 years ago, there has been enough time and development to where people believe there is a real field called nonprofit studies. Thus, there is a reason to give more legitimacy to field. The fact that people are so interested now is an optimistic sign. Even fields of natural sciences have gone through this epic movement to validate its field of knowledge.

While an accreditation movement is inevitable, and while NACC could be the body to generate it, it will be an expensive, time-consuming, and painstaking effort to do so. Schools are already capped for the time and resources it would take to begin accreditation. It would be difficult enough to incur by larger institutions that have assistance in staff, marketing, financing, and travel ability, let alone the smaller more typical nonprofit programs which only have two or three faculty members providing all nonprofit education for their institutions. NACC would have to find ways to entice these people to go through the accreditation process, and NACC will have a difficult time doing so, because most programs are already busy working to bring in grants and such. It will be viewed as worthwhile, but they have too many other things to get done.

Further, an accreditation process implemented by NACC might not apply internationally, particularly in Europe. Additionally, not all international regions involved with the third sector have standard education or comparable educational objectives. For example, US education typically points to a path of obtaining an undergraduate degree to a graduate degree to a Ph.D., whereas other countries are less trajectory. People interested in civil society internationally seem to use what they learn to advance practice. Ultimately, the emphases are different between the US and internationally. At the same time, the revised NACC curricular guidelines, for example, are ambitious enough for US academic centers, let alone for international countries.

Alan Abramson

Thinking about accreditation is interesting and important, but even in just the US, it would be difficult due to varying types of programs that exist in the field, as there is such a variety of ways that people teach nonprofit management. At times it can be part of an MPA degree or other degrees; at times it is a concentration within a degree. Ultimately, there are not that many stand-alone nonprofit degrees, and accrediting concentrations in other programs is problematic and hard to do. Internationally, there are more concerns, as philanthropic traditions vary across countries. What skills and knowledge nonprofit leaders need regarding philanthropy and fundraising varies quite a bit between countries. NACC would thus need to maintain a fair bit of flexibility in accrediting internationally.

Further, it is questionable if accreditation is of value or if it will make a difference. It may be sound to find evidence regarding the impact accreditation makes in a field. Questions to ask include: Is it just busy work that will sit on the shelf? Will it generate revenue for the accrediting

body? Does it have a positive impact? Does it raise the bar on quality education? Does it give students a leg up?

Summary/Opinion

While nonprofit accreditation may be inevitable and while it would certainly provide legitimacy to the nonprofit field, it would be very difficult to establish an accreditation process for a number reasons. Firstly, there are language barriers, and NACC is currently lacking international diversity with respect to its membership and board composition. NACC would need to become more involved at an international level in order to apply itself to international programs. Secondly, it is quite possible that standards and nonprofit emphases set by NACC would not be applicable or relevant to international programs. The types of focuses in the US are different from those of international origins. Further, it would be challenging for NACC to compete with current accrediting bodies, and it would be very difficult for nonprofit academic programs in the US to undergo a time- and resource-consuming accreditation process.

4 **NON-INTRUSIVENESS** **“How could we make the accreditation process non-intrusive?”**

Dennis Young

The process must be voluntary, and it has to contribute something to the field. The process should involve some kind of visitation and review comparable to what NACC does now for membership. Following this, NACC can provide feedback to the institute so they can learn

something new, make changes as needed, and gain support by showing their universities they are doing something worthwhile.

Stay away from the word “accreditation.” It sounds harsh, and it sounds very competitive with other accreditation processes like NASPAA. This process should be made available to schools of business, social work, and public policy—all of which have their own accreditation that should not be interfered with, but can be added to. Instead, NACC can offer a “star on their lapel” that no one else has. An organization called “B Lab” is a good example: B Lab is a nonprofit organization that will go out to any organization that applies, and assesses whether the organization is being environmentally and socially responsible to its community and work force. Corporations are motivated to go through this process to say they are B Lab certified, because they believe it gives them a competitive edge in the market place. B Lab is rigorous, serious, and requires financial resources. But it is also very popular and in high demand. NACC could follow a similar model.

To get it started, NACC could approach the top ten recognized programs in the country (e.g. Indiana University, Syracuse, Georgia State), and offer to have them go through this process in a relatively fast and economical way. These programs will then act as the exemplars, and they will project that they are NACC certified. These programs can essentially go through an abridged process because they already meet the standards. Following this, approach all other programs and using the certified programs as a model. Then charge as much as you need to cover the process. This could become a viable income stream, because people want to be like those organizations. If you did this process out cold, no one would apply, especially as some of the schools are already represented in NACC. Just use top programs as guinea pigs for NACC

certification, approve them, and then offer to the rest of the world. A conference would not even be needed.

Also, figure out what NACC can bring to this process. NACC has already created curricular requirements and standards that people recognize as useful, but these must be kept current and updated. Membership can help exemplify this, and it could be made available elsewhere. The risk of course is that the “non-guinea-pig” academic programs may ask why certification was automatically granted to some and not others. But it could be argued that the process has to be incremental and has to start with a core group of schools that have already been recognized and clearly meet the standards. This is just a way to get started. Everyone can follow suit later, and can make whatever changes they have to make to meet the standards.

Jeffrey Brudney

The requirements would be similar to the revised NACC curricular guidelines, assuming those are the foundation for accreditation. Formulate a questionnaire of 100 questions at most, utilizing as many yes no questions as possible so the responses are as easy as possible. It would have to be something a very busy faculty person could do in a half an hour to an hour. NACC could collect as many completed questionnaires as people are willing to take. Following this, NACC could begin to write position papers on their accreditation progress. Rather than a graded process, invite representatives of the academic programs to take part in this ground breaking effort to understand what accreditation might mean for the field, so they have some stake or partnership with NACC. Spend a year or two just to get responses, then push results to field, demonstrating its impact on the field. NACC need not go on visits. NACC can simply move

toward standards to improve the field, rather than offer a punitive process or another hoop to jump through.

Alan Abramson

One of the biggest challenges of the accreditation process will be the amount of time and money it takes to get accredited. Keeping those to the minimum would be key. Programs around the world are of modest size and are often fragile. An expensive, time-consuming accreditation process will not work. Typically, the accreditation processes require self-study, self-assessment, and self-evaluation; this is what takes up a lot of time. NACC should think of ways to do some of that work for institutions.

Summary/Opinion

If NACC were to move forward with becoming an accrediting body, it would need to establish non-intrusive methods, and should consider alternatives to accreditation, such as a certification or endorsement. The amount of time and resources required to become accredited must remain minimal, as programs are already fragile and often struggle to maintain sustainability in their present conditions. The process ought to be voluntary and inclusive, and it should utilize the NACC curricular guidelines as its foundation. Further, the process must contribute something to the field, and be attractive or desirable to nonprofit academic centers.

5**RECOMMENDATIONS****“What should NACC do (in your opinion) and what recommendations do you have?”****Dennis Young*****Alternatives to Accreditation***

NACC need not be an official accrediting body. Rather, offer something like an endorsement, certification, or seal of approval that indicates the programs meet the standards of NACC; such an endorsement would be attractive to these programs. This endorsement would indicate that these programs have been examined, assessed, evaluated, and visited by members of this association which has set the guidelines for what constitutes a quality program. NACC can allow them to feature its logo to illustrate they are a NACC approved program. Programs will then claim to have NACC approval or certification which they believe gives them a competitive edge, and other programs will want it, too.

Emphasis on Social Purpose Organizations and on Education

NACC should start talking about “social purpose organizations.” This will put NACC on the frontier. NACC should also lessen its emphasis as a research association; it is out of its league, especially with respect to ISTR. NACC’s specialty is now education, not research. Research has become an ancillary activity of education; the research element can remain, but it should center around curriculum. NACC can also address how best to train leaders. NACC cannot compete with general studies about the nonprofit sector. It is okay to have members that are focused more on education as opposed to research. NACC eligibility has evolved. NACC membership has decreased for two reasons: (1) It is no longer a good place for academic centers leaders to come together to talk about their problems, because it has become too big and too

diffuse; (2) NACC has placed too much emphasis that a center has to have research. This is the past. NACC is in a different position now.

Widen the Scope

Also, NACC ought to widen its view of the kinds of people and disciplines that could come together. Lines are blurred and hybridized; groups from other traditions may also have something to contribute. The nonprofit cannot have concrete walls around it, and NACC can cross these lines that currently are not crossed. It could offer rankings across fields, such as MPA programs, public administration programs, and nonprofit programs, for example. Additionally, NACC can look beyond NACC membership and reach out to accessible, important academic leaders in the US, such as Lester Salamon and Sharon Oster. They will have a different point of view, and NACC should bring them under the umbrella somehow.

Additionally, NACC should identify people in international locations and get suggestions from international individuals. Britain and the UK are rich with possibilities. Israel, Belgium, France, Italy, and Japan may also be good sources. Israel has many programs with similar characteristics as the US. Representatives from these programs regularly attend ARNOVA and ISTR conferences. They may not have many resources, but they would be good contacts, as there are many leading scholars in the sector there. Indiana University is connected with Costa Rica and Mexico; there may be opportunity there as well. But with respect to broadening NACC's international reach, do not just go out there. Get good information and advice from advisory or focus groups from different associations and leaders of different institutions of different countries, and do some groundwork.

A good starting point would be to consult with Lester Salamon, as he has been involved with an international program (ISTR) for decade now and is making international connections all

the time. If NACC is serious about expanding its international reach, it should be representative internationally. For example, NACC could become involved with other international groups: EMES, an International Research Network of Europe, which also has ties with Centre d'Economie Sociale of the Université de Liège; JANPORA in Japan; and the Association of the South Pacific, which includes representation from Australia and New Zealand.

Nonprofit Law

NACC could also examine and reach out to programs of various disciplinary specializations around the world, in particular, law programs with a focus on nonprofits. For example, there is a program in Queensland in Australia that has a strong legal orientation. Other institutions with scholars and programs of a nonprofit and legal focus include NYU, Trinity College of Ireland, and the MSAS Case MNL program.

There are several centers and scholars around the world with a legal focus, and they would have a whole different take on what nonprofit programs need to know or should be taught about law. Some of the most prestigious leaders in the nonprofit field are legal scholars, such as John Simon, Evelyn Brody, Miles McGregor Lounds, Harvey Dale, Paul Feinberg, and many others around the world. Their programs do not need the accreditation, but they do have something to say about what should be included in the nonprofit curricula. Lawyers of course know the law, and what defines tax exempt; in addition, they are by trade intelligent. Meanwhile, they have an understanding of the sector as well as policy issues, but they have yet to become a part of NACC.

Further, it has been challenging to incorporate nonprofit law into law school programs. If NACC could assist with that, people would be very much interested in this. NACC could target law schools that would want the NACC approved logo. This has been found to be true at Case

Western Reserve University, and at Georgia State University. NYU might be a little different, but rarely do they have faculty that practices or teaches nonprofit law. A faculty person who could teach two different versions of nonprofit law (one for law students, and one for nonprofit students) would be welcomed. It would not take too much effort to develop. There has already been examples and discussion of a Nonprofit Law Clinic, as demonstrated by Yale, Case, and Georgia State. But nearly all of the programs across the country do not yet have such a thing. One issue is getting law schools to hire faculty with knowledge in the nonprofit area, as they hesitate to place strain on public interest lawyers. To begin, NACC would need to gather together three or four legal scholars. Some questions NACC should consider include: Can we do anything in this area to ensure nonprofits are represented in law school curricula and faculty? And would it help a law school to say they have NACC standards for law school nonprofit specialization?

Jeffrey Brudney

Minimally Invasive and Inclusive Accreditation Process

In some fields, accreditation has become so burdensome and intrusive that rather than go through the process, people often opt out and live with the consequences. NACC should be mindful that as they proceed on this path, understand that if it can build a large enough coalition and bring people along, it will be easier, and even help the institution. But if too much effort is required, or if it is too punitive, nonprofit academic centers will never partake.

If or when establishing the accreditation process, invite people in to be a part of it, including nonmembers. NACC could start at all types of professional meetings or conferences, whether nonprofit or not. NACC could form panels and colloquia to get people together on the

matter, even if they do not like the idea. Give those with a dissenting view a place to vent and speak about it so they feel like they have been heard. NACC should aim to get dialog out of it, and inform others that it would like to work with them to build a rubric for accreditation.

Diversification of Nonprofit Specializations and Courses

NACC ought to coerce programs to diversify what is taught. For example, no one is instructing on the topic of liability. Conversely, nearly everyone is offering courses on nonprofit history, and this area has become saturated. Examine what is being taught and what is not being taught, and encourage programs to feature diverse varieties of course offerings and specializations.

Alan Abramson

Do Not Squelch Innovation

NACC ought to question if accreditation would concretize standards, thereby discouraging innovation. As such, it must address ways to handle this. Do not put too much of a straightjacket on programs which would inhibit them from trying out new things.

Student-Focused Approach

One approach to accreditation would include making it beneficial to students. If students go to an accredited program or receives an accredited certificate, it could give them a leg up in the workplace. This would require a fair bit of marketing by NACC, however. NACC would have to spend some resources on alerting people around the world that this accreditation means this student is special, and should be employed, or be eligible for better jobs. In other words, NACC would need to establish some process for alerting employers that the student has an accredited certificate, thereby giving them an advantage over students who do not.

Applicability Across Borders

Some potential benefits of accreditation internationally would be courtability across borders. In other words, if students or younger people were moving around a lot between country to country and had an accredited certificate that had recognizable value across different countries, it would be a benefit. Although it may be the case that nonprofit managers do not often move around much from country to country.

Summary/Opinion

In general

NACC should consider widening its horizons and include other relevant disciplines in its membership and processes. Further, if it wishes to be more relevant internationally, whether accrediting or not, it should connect to international scholars and organizations, and have more of an international presence and involvement. NACC can also lessen its emphasis on research and instead focus more on education. It can also pioneer the notion of social purpose organizations, and advocate for the advancement and development of nonprofit law programs. In addition to this, it can encourage nonprofit academic programs to widen its programmatic offerings, and diversify the specializations or courses being taught, while discouraging those programs which have become oversaturated or redundant.

With particular respect to accreditation

NACC should consider alternative methods of giving legitimacy to the field such as certification or endorsement; it has already paved the path with its curricular guidelines. Further, if it does seek to become an accrediting body, it should make the accreditation process an inclusive one which involves the insight of nonmembers, those with dissenting views, and

representatives or institutions of varying disciplines. Meanwhile, the accreditation process must not be overly demanding of time and resources, and it should not squelch innovation. Value can be added to the accreditation process if it brings people together, can be recognizably applicable at international levels, and if it gives institutions and even students specifically an advantage in the market place.

**A TEMPLATE FOR AN ACCREDITATION PROCESS
FOR UNIVERSITY-BASED NONPROFIT AND PHILANTHROPY PROGRAMS**

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Abstract

Given the robust growth of nonprofit programs in higher education over the past decades, prospective students now have many options, from high-quality programs with extensive nonprofit and philanthropy coursework; to programs with virtually no nonprofit content, yet with “nonprofit” in the degree title. The presence of low-quality or even fraudulent programs creates a reputation risk to all programs in our field. Accreditation -- the result of the maturation of a professional field -- provides a signal of quality to students as they select a university. Yet traditional accreditation processes are, for faculty and administrators, a burdensome drain on resources. We propose a streamlined process that examines issues of quality and critical mass of coursework for certificates and degree programs. The process would differ from traditional accreditation procedures, featuring coordination with allied fields’ accreditation processes and the elimination of the site visit.



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Opinion

Motivation for Accreditation

The professionalization of the third sector compels a curriculum that takes into account the unique features of nonprofit and philanthropic sectors. These include but are not limited to; controls placed on spending due to donor and grantor stipulations, managing a volunteer workforce, raising donated funds, measuring performance when outcomes are complex and difficult to measure, raising donated funds, tiered (board of directors) versus hierarchical decision making, operating in a low-overhead environment, balancing mission goals with financial sustainability concerns, and many other concerns.

The Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC) is currently constructing an accreditation process that could work for our field. NACC serves universities with extensive nonprofit and philanthropy curriculum, research, and community engagement. The organization has been instrumental in building the field by publishing their Curricular Guidelines for graduate and undergraduate programs (2007, 2015), and by providing a forum for administrators of nonprofit and philanthropy programs – regardless of their academic home base at their institution – to grown their own programs and foster development of the field.

The following accreditation process focuses sharply on investigating whether the program has what they advertise. Is this truly a program with nonprofit/philanthropy curriculum, and faculty who have expertise in the area? Or is this a program that is nonprofit in name only? The reason for these blunt questions lie in strong student demand for programs. Universities of all types are under pressure to fill graduate seats in their programs, and are introducing “good enough” programs with nonprofit in the title but with very little nonprofit content. This practice could arise from:

- **Academic naiveté** about the nonprofit and philanthropic fields (firmly entrenched in their own field and unaware of developments in a new field of study),
- **Academic hubris**; assuming one's own academic field provides the right curriculum for students going into nonprofit sector careers, even though that curriculum may be largely irrelevant for nonprofit and foundation professionals,
- **Aspirational programming** – wanting to gear up over time and launching a “nonprofit” program with existing resources that are inadequate,
- **Academic fraud**; seeking tuition-paying students by introducing “nonprofit” programs without appropriate faculty or curriculum.

Thus, in this early draft of an accreditation process, much emphasis is placed on reviewing material that a sharply observant prospective student might investigate, from the advertised coursework to availability of the courses and credentials of the faculty.

There is room for programs of different academic emphases, whether the programmatic focus be philanthropy studies, nonprofit theory, social economy and cooperative enterprise, human services, nonprofit management, and social entrepreneurship/impact investing, and so on. Regardless of the academic slant of the program, the curriculum must support the stated mission and focus of the program, with a critical mass of coursework. It is not enough to have “and nonprofit” in the title of the degree program, and to offer only a couple of nonprofit- or philanthropy-specific courses. It is not enough to present coursework primarily intended for students in other sectors and state that these courses are “also relevant for nonprofit students.”

Motivation against Accreditation

Most current nonprofit and philanthropy programs are affiliated or housed within home fields of study such as public administration, business, and social work, which have robust existing accreditation systems. The processes for gaining and renewing accreditation in these fields are onerous and expensive, costing \$2000 to \$7000 annually, and also costing hundreds of hours of work for each university's busy faculty and administrators. Adding another accreditation burden to the mix would be highly unwelcome.

Any nonprofit/philanthropy-centered accreditation process must be designed from the start with this burden in mind: How can our process link to current accreditation processes, to reduce duplicative effort? Can our new process avoid duplicating the overly burdensome format of existing accreditation systems? If so, could a nonprofit/philanthropy accreditation system actually serve as a model in the future for streamlining the mainstream accreditation systems?

Meta-accreditation by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)

CHEA serves as the accreditor of accreditors. Any launch of an accreditation system by NACC should bear in mind the best practices structures that CHEA requires in order to be accredited by CHEA. Accreditation by CHEA will be several years in the making, as is common practice. It should be pointed out, for example, that NASPAA member MPA programs have been undergoing accreditation since 1980, yet NASPAA did not become accredited by CHEA until 2004, 24 years later. Basic rules for accreditation by CHEA include (CHEA, 2010):

- The accreditor is fiscally separate from the organization serving the member universities.

Thus, although an accreditation process could start within NACC, it would eventually need to have a separate entity conducting the accreditation process, at least fiscally.

- The accreditation process must include public input.
- The process for evaluating the accreditation materials and making a decision (and any appeals process) must have clear criteria.
- The accrediting agency must have financial stability.
- The accreditation process must include a site visit or has alternative processes that CHEA considers to be valid.

The proposed structure outlined below will need considerable development over time before it fulfills CHEA requirements.

Structure

The following form illustrates the focus and scope of a proposed accreditation process. There are several notable features about this proposed accreditation structure that universities should consider:

- The process does not require an on-campus site visit. Because this accreditation process concentrates heavily on information that is largely verified by an extensive website review, the site visit is not imperative. This will significantly reduce the costs of the accreditation process for the home institution. Review by distance is an innovation that we think CHEA should move toward, in particular because many graduate programs are moving to online formats.
- The process will mature over time. Reviewing outcomes of programs is critical to a well-designed accreditation process. We recognize that an outcomes review would be embryonic at first. We envision a trial phase of several years, where self-reported outcomes

measurement by universities leads us to later design more formalized criteria for outcomes reporting.

- Left unstated are thresholds of “adequate” coursework and faculty covering the nonprofit/philanthropy curriculum. Baseline thresholds of quality indicators such as the following will emerge:
 - number of full time versus part time faculty,
 - faculty full-time-equivalents per student
 - credit hours of instruction, and
 - percent of nonprofit/philanthropy-specific course contents in the program mix.

Recommendation I: Sample Accreditation Form

Name of your university: _____

Name and email of the main contact for this report:

1. Check the type of program seeking accreditation:

Full doctoral program

Full master's program

Full undergraduate program

Graduate certificate program and/or concentration within another graduate degree program

(list the degree): _____

Undergraduate minor

Other (please describe): _____

2. Your program's **mission** (emphasis, goals):

3. Please provide the URL link to your **program requirements** (required and elective courses):

http://

4. If any of the courses listed in the link above are NOT offered at least once annually, indicate when and how often they are offered:

5. Please **provide a link to all syllabi** for the courses listed above (a combined site with all syllabi, or a link for each course syllabus):

http://

6. Please list the **faculty members responsible for teaching at least 80% of your program curriculum**, and provide a URL for each faculty member that describes his or her qualifications. This link should show a curriculum vitae or resume.

Faculty member name	URL
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7. Please provide the URL link to your university's current course offerings (**searchable class schedule**): http://

8. Please provide the URL link to your university's **class schedule for the most recent four semesters or six quarters**: http://

9. How many students (full and part-time) are currently enrolled in your program? _____

10. How many students graduated from your program in the prior year (define prior year)? _____

11. Describe how you **measure outcomes** for your program:

12. Please **report results from your measurement of these outcomes** (written summary or table of results).

13. Provide a short summary indicating **what you learned from these outcomes** and what you might change in your program, based on what you learned.

14. What are your aspirations as a program?

Recommendation II: Implementation

The university first ensures that the needed information is on the university's website. After filling out the above form, the university sends out the accreditor's survey to their students and graduates, with the results reported directly to the accreditor.

The current student and graduate surveys could query students on their opinions regarding the adequacy of the curriculum, their preparation for careers with nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, the quality of the faculty and classroom (including online) experience, and the perceived rigor of the program overall. Due to FERPA restrictions, the survey of current students and graduates may be difficult to carry out. Ensuring the confidentiality of the respondent will be important, and an option to allow students to reveal their contact information (if the student wishes) to the accreditor would allow the accreditor to both verify some of the responses and follow up with the student if needed.

Accreditation organization staff members then complete the following:

1. Review mission
2. Review program website
3. Review program's curricular requirements
4. Review faculty credentials
5. Verify consistent scheduling of courses
6. Review syllabi
7. Read and tabulate results of current student survey; should be 70% of student census or greater.
8. Read and tabulate results of recent graduate survey; should be 50% of graduates or greater.
9. Report preliminary findings to program staff and faculty

The university writes a short response to the preliminary findings (clarification, etc.). The accreditor reviews this response and issues a final recommendation, with written summary of the program's unique features, weaknesses and strengths.

Summary Concerns and Aspirations

Because faculty members teaching in nonprofit and philanthropy programs are often allied with other professional schools (business, social work, public administration, etc.), the prospect of adding another accreditation process is disheartening. Originators of the accreditation process are similarly burdened, and motivated to keep any accreditation process as streamlined as possible. Given the widely divergent quality of programs in our field however, it is clear that actions in our field must go beyond peer-recommended guidelines for launching nonprofit programs. We need at this point the stronger hand of accreditation to ensure quality in our nascent academic field.

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