Managing Multiple Missions

The Development of Accreditation of Public Policy
and Administration Programs in Canada

Leslie A. Pal (leslie_pal@carleton.ca)
Susan Phillips (susan_phillips@carleton.ca)

School of Public Policy and Administration
Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5B6
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Abstract

The challenges that the Canadian accreditation process faces are somewhat different than those of either the United States or Europe. The number of graduate programs is relatively small and highly diverse with little consistent core content (Gow and Sutherland 2004; Geva-May and Maslove 2007). Consequently, the development of standards, at least initially, was seen as inappropriate, and a mission-based approach adopted. After only the first appraisal, however, the rigor of an individualistic mission-based approach has been questioned, and the desirability of establishing some minimal standards has been re-opened. A key issue for the Canadian context is whether standards are feasible in a small pool, and whether a mission-based model can gain credibility quickly enough to demonstrate value added of the process.

Although quality control, particularly of small emerging graduate programs was a concern behind the development of the Canadian accreditation system, another driver was raising the profile of the profession of public administration and promoting greater cohesion among the educational community – or more accurately, warding off increased fragmentation should some of the larger schools look south and seek accreditation from National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) when that becomes available. Creation of a home-grown accreditation system was thus deemed important. What will it take for the Canadian association responsible for accreditation to succeed in promoting the professionalism, visibility and cohesion of the field? How will internationalization of accreditation affect the field in Canada?

This paper describes the development of the Canadian system of accreditation in public policy and administration and critically assesses its ability to achieve the multiple missions that underpin its creation.

Introduction

Accreditation has been a growing international trend in public administration, following much more established accreditation systems in business administration and engineering, for example. It appears to be driven in large part by an appreciation of the importance of common standards of excellence and content which are of particular concern to the more "practical professions." Philosophy or literature programs will have much more tolerance for national and even regional diversity, but a bridge should meet certain specifications if it is to be functional,

and accountants should be able to talk to each other in at least a minimal common language if financial transactions are to be efficient (or, as we have seen in the recent financial collapse and the accounting acrobatics around Greece's debt, efficiently duplicitous).

The drivers behind standardization are complex (Brunsson and Jacobsson 2000), especially in the public administration field. On the one hand, there has been a global public sector reform movement since the 1990s that has tried to spread "best practices", and globalization itself has contributed to the cross-pollination and eventual convergence of standards in what counts as good public administration (Pal and Ireland 2009; Lodge 2005). This has created an appetite among the main "clients" of public administration programs – states – for certain putative skill sets. Internationally, as developing countries establish programs, the easiest way to garner credibility is to either partner with existing programs in the west (this is a hallmark of many new MBA programs), or seek accreditation. In other cases, such as the EU, the creation of a regional block and the interest in creating common "spaces" (e.g., the EU educational space) is driven by less by the institutions themselves than by bureaucrats in Brussels with an interest in mobility and standardization.

Since, with the exception of the United States, which has a well-institutionalized accreditation system going back 30 years, the accreditation trend is relatively recent, we need to understand its dynamics. This paper attempts to contribute to that understanding by examining the Canadian case. Canada, through its Canadian Association of Programs in Public Administration (CAPPA) began to research the question in 2003 (Gow and Sutherland 2004), and finally agreed to launch an accreditation board in 2006. For CAPPA, the core objectives were to develop a Canadian brand of accreditation before the US, through NASPAA, entered the field, potentially further fragmenting an already fragmented educational field, and to encourage higher standards in Canadian MPAs through the sharing of innovation and promotion of continuous learning. It also sought to raise the visibility of the professional administration community in Canada, forge stronger linkages between universities and public administration professionals, and strengthen CAPPA itself. The Board's mission was to create a credible and respected process, facilitate transparency among programs, and develop a national conversation about MPAs and their strengths and weaknesses. For the programs themselves, some possibly saw accreditation as a means to acquire a competitive edge in an increasingly crowded market, or as a bargaining chip within their own institutions to claim additional resources in order to

address any weaknesses or shortcomings identified in accreditation reports. The experience so far has been mixed, with only a relatively few programs undergoing accreditation, but nonetheless with momentum building. There have been tensions between diversity and core standards, and whether accreditation reports should be entirely in the public domain or confidential. In these and other issues, the process has been infused with multiple missions and is still struggling to resolve them.

The paper begins with a discussion of accreditation of MPA programs within the larger context of standard-setting and globalization of state practices. It then moves to a brief overview of the MPA system in Canada – the number and types of schools and programs, and an overview of courses. It demonstrates a loose core of programmatic foci, but a great deal of diversity. The next section discusses in brief the background to the decision to embark on accreditation. This is followed by a narrative on the first three years of the Board's experience, from the perspective of both the Board and the schools that have been accredited to date. We then conclude with some reflections on the larger issues raised by accreditation, and what its future in Canada might be.

Accreditation, Professionalization, and Globalization

Professional MPA programs in the United States began to develop after 1914 by breaking away from political science programs that had taught administration as just one of many academic fields. Henry (Henry 2007: chapter 2) argues that the critical period was 1956-70, when a new pride among public management professionals led to the establishment of the National Academy of Public Administration in 1967, and renewed calls for independence from political science led to the creation of NASPAA in 1970. He points out that the process of secession has continued to the point that about half of all public administration programs in the U.S. are free-standing schools, departments, or institutes of public administration (ibid.). NASPAA began listing programs from 1977, and formal accreditation commenced in 1986. Cleary (Cleary 1990) surveyed 173 programs and at the time did not find a major convergence due to accreditation. Nonetheless, he found that there was a tendency of a common curriculum consisting of public administration, research methods, public finance, policy analysis, personnel, and political institutions and processes. Indeed, about half the respondents had more or less the same core, and he observed that this "provides support that an inner curriculum does exist among NASPAA members" (Cleary 1990: 665). If the standard were relaxed to five of those six

courses, then 106 out of 173 programs had a same "inner core." In a survey some ten years later, Breaux et al. (Breaux, Clynch, and Morris 2003) argued that there was now evidence of greater convergence among programs.

The situation in the Europe was different. Commonality of educational standards was only ratified in the Bologna Declaration in 1999, and it was not coincidental that the European Association for Public Administration Accreditation (EAPAA) was established the same year and began to undertake accreditation reviews in 2001. Moreover, the historical roots of public administration education were different in continental Europe than in North America. Public administration emerged as a separate discipline much later, and it was taught as part of law programs (Verheijen and Connaughton 2003: 836). Nonetheless there has been some convergence among programs, in part due to the development of the concept of a common "European Administrative Space," and the efforts of professional bodies such as the European Group of Public Administration (EGPA) and the Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee) (Geva-May and Maslove 2007)

The larger issue of "soft governance" through the spread of regulatory standards is too complex to take up here, but should not be ignored. Part of the reasoning behind the establishment of the CAPPA Accreditation Board was the worry that NASPAA would begin to offer accreditation services north of the border. A similar concern drove the establishment of the European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS) for business schools – the Europeans were worried that the American Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business would move into the European accreditation business (Hedmo, Sahlin-Andersson, and Wedlin 2006). By July 2005, eighty-seven education providers had received EQUIS accreditation, in Europe, North and South America, Africa, Australia, and Asia. Standardization is a crucial element in modern global order. And a key element of this standardization is the spread of governmental, democratic and public management standards (Brunsson and Jacobsson 2000).

> Rule-making has traditionally been associated, in a Westphalian world, with the coercive power of the nation-state. As such it has generally been expressed in "hard laws" and directives. A broadening conception implies a move towards legally binding "soft" rules such as standards and guidelines. This move follows and comes together with the explosion of regulatory actors but it also impacts on states (Djelic and Sahlin-Andersson 2006: 5).

Programmatic standards for Canadian MPA programs (see tables) may seem dry and devoid of much theoretical import. But standards in a globalized world have several important characteristics. First, they are no longer entirely national. For example, shortly after it was established, the Canadian CAPPA Accreditation Board (naturally) made contact with NASPAA and the EAPAA, and the three organizations now have reciprocal links on their respective web pages. Second, in the case of public administration and MPA programs, the more similar they become, the more that states tend to operate in the same way, which is a powerful mechanism of loose global coordination. NAPSAA, for example, has launched a global MPA portal (www.globalmpa.net) to promote MPA/MPP programs nationally and internationally. NISPAcee was explicitly established to raise the quality of the study and teaching of public administration in the former Soviet Union, and do so according to "international standards" – NASPAA was an important contributor to that effort, as was the Open Society Institute.[1] Third, the accreditation mechanisms that accompany standard-setting are going global as well. Again, NASPAA is an interesting case. It explored internationalizing its accreditation services in the early 2000s (largely because of overseas requests), but ultimately pulled back because it feared that it lacked the expertise and capacity. But the international issue has come back on the agenda:

> With the launch of NASPAA Standards 2009, the first major revision of accreditation standards in more than a decade, the issue of international accreditation has arisen again. One of the newest trends is requests from "hybrids" for accreditation– American programs with overseas branches, explicitly American-style programs on other continents, and "full faith and credit" partnerships between American schools and programs in Europe or Asia. These requests have been less oriented towards internationalization than by a desire to have an American-style program assessed by NASPAA.[2]

The most recent example of a truly global attempt at developing standards for public administration teaching comes from the UN Department of Economics and Social Affairs, in cooperation with the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Public Administration (IASIA), in its *Standards of Excellence for Public Administration Education and Training*.[3] The exercise began in 2005 with a joint task force, yielded a book (Rosenbaum and Kauzya 2007),

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[1] For a review of the role of the Open Society and the Soros Foundation in central and Eastern Europe's development of political science and public administration, see (Eisfeld and Pal 2010)
[2]http://www.naspaa.org/accreditation/document/NASPAAWhitePaperonInternationalAccreditationIssuesbyLaurel.pdf, accessed February 27, 2010.
[3] http://www.iias-iisa.org/iasia/e/standards_excellence/Pages/default.aspx, accessed on February 27, 2010.

and several other studies. While acknowledging that these standards might not be "uniformly applicable or equally relevant in all situations" the report nonetheless claimed that "most of them are relevant in most situations." The report posed eight standards as a path for self-study and evaluation (see Appendix D). These are accompanied by detailed measurement criteria.

The Canadian experience reflects most if not all of these dynamics. It was in part a defensive reaction against the potential globalization of standards (i.e., the possible move by NASPAA into Canada), but it also reflected an appetite for convergence around some inchoate sense of what is excellent and common to public administration training and teaching. At the same time, it needed to be pragmatic in managing an accreditation system in a relatively small academic community on a very tight budget. The next section provides a snapshot of Canadian MPA landscape, and then we move the accreditation story.

Canadian MPA and MPP Programs: The Scene in 2008[4]

Canada has a federal system in which education is the jurisdiction of the ten provinces. There is no national ministry of education, though the federal government has been involved in providing fiscal transfers for educational purposes (spent by the provinces as they see fit), and funding of research. Each province has its own university system, with different approaches to accreditation and review of academic programs. Ontario, the largest province, until recently had a single body (managed by the universities themselves) for the oversight of graduate programs – the Ontario Council of Graduate Studies (OCGS). It conducted quality reviews of graduate programs, but as of 2010 that has been devolved to universities. Some types of degree programs undergo national and international accreditation – MBAs and engineering, for example, but these are parallel to and distinct from any provincial quality assurance procedures. Up until 2006, there had been no national mechanism for the review of MPA programs, which are present in every province.

Table 1 lists the universe of masters programs in public administration, public management, and public policy in Canada as or 2008.[5] We include hybrid programs in order to

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[4] This section draws on (Pal 2008)

get a broader sweep of available Canadian graduate programs in the field. We divide institutions/programs into two types. The first is those institutions offering a traditional MPA as a distinct degree (along perhaps with other programs); the second is those institutions offering what we call "hybrid" programs – public administration and something else (usually public policy), and MAs in political science with a concentration in public administration. Using this method we arrive at 12 institutions that offer either MPAs or MAs in Public Administration. The two MA programs are Carleton's and the University of Ottawa's, both located in the nation's capital. The other 10 offer MPAs.

Table 1 about here

While programs can reasonably be categorized into these three types, Table 1 also indicates that there is a much richer field of MA (Public Administration) and MPA programs. Looking only at institutions that offer this more traditional degree, we can see that they also offer, in total, 7 other programs that combine the MPA with management (business), law, or executive education. Turning to the hybrids, we have 8 institutions offering 9 programs (York has two hybrids, in addition to a traditional MPA) with concentrations in public administration, some combination of public policy and administration, or an MPP. Once again, some of these institutions offer joint programs with law or business (York's Atkinson program is a Masters in Policy, Administration and Law). If we stand back from both lists, it seems that Canada has a total universe of 30 CAPPA-member programs in public administration, management and/or public policy. This is certainly an underestimation of the total number of programs in the country for several reasons. First, the calculation is only for CAPPA members. Unfortunately, resources did not permit canvassing non-CAPPA member programs, but casual observation suggests that there are quite a number of new programs being developed that combine administration or management or governance with highly focused areas such as health, bio-science, or Aboriginal

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[5] The list of programs comes from the CAPPA membership list for 2007-08, http://www.cappa.ca/about/membership.html , accessed February 22, 2008. Several CAPPA members offer only undergraduate degrees (Athabasca University, Laurentian University, Memorial University, Mount Royal College, Ontario Public Service, UQAM, University of Toronto - Scarborough's Department of Management, University of Toronto Department of Political Science). The Humber Business School offers a postgraduate program, but not an MPA; rather, it is a three-semester Ontario Graduate Certificate program. The University of British Columbia's Institute of Asian Research is a CAPPA member, and offers a somewhat unusual program entitled Masters of Arts, Asia Pacific Policy Studies, that can also be done jointly with a law or a business degree. It was decided to keep the program in the sample, since while it has a unique focus (regional studies), it is by no means any longer unusual.

affairs. Second, beyond Masters level programs, several institutions offer postgraduate diplomas (Carleton) or certificates (Humber).

Table 1 also shows the program location, either a stand-alone school or department or embedded in an academic unit not devoted to public administration (e.g., a political science department or a business school). Location matters (Gow and Sutherland 2004; Cleary 1990) – stand-alone programs tend to be more demanding in terms of core curriculum, and core curriculum was more uniform across those institutions. The stand-alone units, in alphabetical order, are: Carleton's School of Public Policy and Administration, Dalhousie's School of Public Administration, ENAP (as an entire school devoted to public administration in Quebec), Moncton's Department of Public Administration, Ottawa's School of Political Studies, Queen's School of Policy Studies, Regina's School of Policy Studies, Ryerson's Department of Politics and Public Administration, Toronto's School of Public Policy and Governance, Victoria's School of Public Administration, and York's School of Public Policy and Administration (Atkinson) and School of Public Affairs (Glendon). The remaining institutions tend to be departments of political science (Laval, Manitoba/Winnipeg, Western, Brock, Concordia, and Guelph/McMaster (York's MPA is located in the Schulich School of Business).

We can make two final observations based on Table 1. First, 7 of the 12 MA (Public Administration) or MPA programs offer concentrations. These are not simply alternative capstone courses (Guelph/McMaster, for example, gives students a capstone choice of either public sector management or organizational theory), but actual field designations. This is true of the hybrid programs as well, and there seem to be two approaches. One is to simply designate one of public administration/management or public policy (Ottawa, Regina), and the other, more common one, is to provide several more specific management fields (e.g., ENAP's human resource management; Laval's public finance), or policy fields (e.g., Queen's health or social policy; Carleton's international and development and innovation, science and environment). A second, cautious observation is that the newer programs tend to tilt slightly more towards public policy than purely public administration/management. Simon Fraser and Toronto both introduced MPP programs (Toronto's more recently); Ryerson's is a degree in public policy and administration; and York's Atkinson includes policy and law, while Glendon combines policy and international affairs. The University of Ottawa's Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral

Studies launched in 2008 a new MA in Public and International Affairs (it was not included because it is not a CAPPA member). The website states: "The degree awarded is the Master of Arts (MA) in Public and International Affairs. The program has three fields of concentration: public policy; international affairs; and development studies."[6] Carleton's program, while retaining the MA (Public Administration) designation, in practice has a stronger emphasis on public policy than management or administration per se.

Table 2 summarizes degree requirements. There is so much variety in the table that it is difficult to say much about it. In terms of length of program, combined or joint degrees typically take longer (between three and four years). Full-time MPA study in most programs seems to require about two years (e.g., Carleton, Dalhousie and Victoria), though there is more variation in the hybrid programs, with (as Gow and Sutherland observed) political science based programs being typically shorter, though the Queen's MPA is a one-year program. Part-time study seems to take an average of four to eight years, with possibly an average of four to five. It is impossible to say anything about credit requirements, since institutional definitions of what constitutes a credit vary so widely. As befits a professional degree, most programs do not demand a thesis, but will offer it as an option, along with a major research paper or research essay. As we noted above, the majority of students in these programs will graduate and pursue professional careers, so there is less emphasis on preparing them to do extended research projects.

Table 2 also highlights the importance of internships or cooperative education courses. It was not possible to tell in all circumstances, but most of these would be paid internships that provide both job experience and income for students, not to mention possible contacts and potential future employment opportunities. Most of these were optional, but programs like Simon Fraser's MPP and the University of Toronto's MPP make them mandatory. Mandatory internships are usually designated as courses, and so typically have a research paper/report requirement.

It was not possible to do a careful and detailed analysis of elective courses. Longer programs (outside of the joint degree programs) typically had a greater number of electives.

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[6] University of Ottawa,
http://www.grad.uottawa.ca/Default.aspx?tabid=1727&monControl=Renseignements&ProgId=678 ,
accessed February 27, 2010.

Carleton, for example, requires 7.5 credits, or 15 half courses, of which 3.5 credits or 7 courses are core. Students are also required to take 4 courses in order to achieve a concentration, so the de facto "core" is 11 courses, leaving four electives, or a ratio of 26% of the total course load. If we look just at MA (Public Administration) and MPA programs (in other words, exclude the hybrids programs), the proportions (calculated either on the basis of credits or of courses – Western and University of Ottawa could not be calculated) are as follows: Dalhousie 38%, ENAP 72%, Laval 58%, Manitoba 43%, Moncton 55%, Queens 50%, Regina 50% (course based option), Victoria 18%, York (Schulich) 30%. The modal category seems to be somewhere close to half the course/credit load, with the lowest proportion of options at Victoria and the highest at ENAP. These figures have to be treated cautiously, however, since some programs have credits for thesis or extended papers, and this would skew the results.

This brief synopsis of Canadian programs shows how varied they are. As a federal state where education is a provincial jurisdiction, it would be expected that programs would differ regionally, but they also differ quite significantly within provinces. In part, the interest in accreditation by CAPPA in 2003-4 was driven by concerns about this degree of fragmentation and lack of a strong degree "brand," especially in a labour market with increased mobility among people claiming to have the same "MPA" designation. We now turn to the more detailed origins and conundrums of the accreditation decision in 2006.

Deciding on Accreditation

Acceptance of accreditation by public administration and policy programs was not a sure thing, so CAPPA proceeded slowly in an attempt to build a community of support. At the January 2005 annual meeting, CAPPA members agreed to examine accreditation more closely, and a small (3 person) working group was established and background study on accreditation commissioned (Uram March, 2005). Informed by the background study, the working group recommended, and the membership agreed in May 2005, that CAPPA should adopt a made-in Canada, "mission-based accreditation regime for masters programs in public administration and public policy provided that CAPPA has the administrative and financial capacity to do so" (Canadian Association of Programs in Public Administration,Working Group on Accreditation Implementation 2006: note 1). The next step was to move from principle to figuring out how

such a system might work and what the costs would entail. For this, a second small working group was established.

This Implementation Working Group designed a process with four different audiences, and hence four distinctive sets of objectives, in mind:

1) *Prospective students*: enabling them to make more informed decisions in regard to their professional education by providing better information in a consistent format and through a single portal.

2) *Public administration/policy schools and programs*: promoting self-review, innovation, improvement, development of appropriate indicators of effectiveness, and sharing of good practices, thereby enhancing the quality of graduate education in the field. In an environment of outcome-based measurement, it was recognized that the public administration community would be better off developing its own set of indicators, rather than risking that provincial governments or third parties would impose their own indicators. There was also genuine, perhaps naïve enthusiasm (given the competition among programs) for the development of a body of smart practices that would come through the sharing of innovations and indicators among programs or as developed by CAPPA as part of its value-added to the public administration community.

3) *The public administration profession*: enhancing the credibility and visibility of public administration programs within the profession, in government circles, and within universities themselves so as to produce a stronger professional community with greater capacity for self-governance. The Working Group explicitly acknowledge the concern about fragmentation, noting, "A CAPPA-led accreditation process would avert potential fragmentation of the Canadian community should the larger schools choose to align with a non-Canadian association such as the American-based NASPAA."

4) *The relationship between universities and the Canada School of Public Service* (CSPS): facilitating better alignment of programs delivered by the CSPS (the federal government's training arm) with university curricula. The recognition of certain CSPS training courses for university credit had long been a sore point as some programs gave credit for these while others did not, and accreditation was seen by the CSPS as a means of at least facilitating a discussion, if not actively promoting greater alignment.

The design of the accreditation system also had to square two important constraints with these multiple objectives. While the Working Group looked to international experience for guidance, the reality of these constraints meant that the system would be distinctively home grown, and in some respects, more satisficing than optimal. First, the system explicitly had to recognize the diversity and distinctive characteristics of existing programs. Particularly among new and small programs, there was no appetite for homogenization. By implication, then, the

focus would be on providing incentives for self-assessment and improvement, and accreditation would be voluntary and mission, rather than standards, based.[7] As recommended by the Working Group (2006: 11), "the only standard of assessment should be a demonstration that the mission and objectives are being achieved, including the appropriateness of the objectives in the first place." It made a strong case – which has been questioned ever since – that a mission-based approach can be rigorous. It also recognized that the process would evolve, and thus explicitly left the door open to the development of standards at a future date.

Second, the process had to be as economical and non-bureaucratic as possible. CAPPA is essentially a volunteer organization with a very small budget, and the main opposition to accreditation was based on concerns about the costs and additional reporting burden it could create, particularly for small programs. The practical implication was that accreditation should be tied as much as possible to the existing provincial and university approval systems: that the CAPPA cycle (set at seven years to match with provincial systems) could be harmonized with existing review processes so that programs could select their timing to coincide with other mandatory reviews and make use of the same information for both processes. While the value of site visits was recognized, they could not be supported with the level of fees that programs were willing to bear.

Accreditation would be the responsibility of an arms-length five member Accreditation Board (comprised of at least one practitioner and at least three academics) that would be appointed by and report to, but operate independently of, CAPPA's Board of Directors. The Accreditation Board would be the guardian of the integrity of the process and would make decisions on program accreditation based on recommendations from independent (three person) review panels.   In terms of public access to information, the Working Group took a middle ground between complete openness and the NASPAA practice in recommending that, as a matter of routine, certain basic information about the program and the executive summary of the report of the review panel be posted on the website, and that the other input information and full reports of the review panels be disclosed at the discretion of the

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[7] The premise is also that Masters programs, rather than units, are the focus of accreditation. Doctoral programs were excluded because at the time there was only one (Carleton).

program.[8] As discussed in the next section, the issue of the public nature of assessments quickly became an issue for the Accreditation Board.

The process was intended, in steady state, to be self-financing with the costs of accreditation supported by a $2,000 fee from the program under review, a slight overall increase in CAPPA membership dues, and an initial contribution from CSPS. The anticipated involvement of CSPS in supporting CAPPA through the implementation of the accreditation system, not only financially but collaboratively as a key stakeholder in the professional community, was an important premise and, given constructive relationships at the time, was a realistic expectation. As we will see, perhaps the most disappointing aspects of the Canadian accreditation system – and which make it fragile – have been the inability to build CAPPA into a stronger institution and the lack of sustained interest by CSPS.

In 2006, the CAPPA membership voted in favour of implementing the proposals of the Working Group, albeit still with some hold-out opposition from directors concerned about the additional administrative burden that it would impose or with questions about its value-added and likely effectiveness.

The Accreditation Process, 2006-2009[9]

Once the decision to move ahead on accreditation was made, CAPPA accepted nominations for the five Board positions, elections were held at the CAPPA Board meeting in August, and the Board was constituted. A Chair was selected from among the five members. CAPPA had decided that the Board membership should have staggered terms, with two members elected for three years, two for two years, and one for one-year.[10] Given the fact that the public administration community in Canada, as elsewhere, consists of academics as well as

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[8] Note that in the NASPAA system, mission-based accreditation information is not publicly disclosed, nor are reports of government accreditation bodies equivalent to the OCGS. The discussion among CAPPA members leaned toward greater disclosure of accreditation information; however, the Working Group took a middle ground.

[9] This section is based on personal reflections of the first Chair of the Accreditation Board, Leslie A. Pal (co-author of this paper). Formal documents, minutes and annual reports for the Board may be found at the CAPPA site: www.cappa.ca/accreditation.html , accessed on February 27, 2010.

[10] Leslie Pal (Chair, 3 years), Janice Cochrane (Vice-Chair, 3 years), Mark Sproule-Jones (2 years), Allan Tupper (2 years), Iain Gow (1 year).

practitioners, the Board agreed that a Vice-Chair should be appointed, and that she be from the practitioner community. As it happened, the first Board had a preponderance of academics – four out of five positions. This was not a constitutional requirement, but was probably the natural result of CAPPA being an academic organization and the spearhead for accreditation of academic programs. Even the terms of reference for the Board's activities that had been designed by CAPPA determined that review committees for accreditation would have to consist of two academics and one practitioner.

The first year of the Board's existence, 2006-2007, was essentially consumed with routine institution-building, though with the somewhat unusual constraint that there were no resources. The original idea behind accreditation was that it would ultimately pay for itself through accreditation fees (more on that below), but at the very beginning there were no fees to draw upon. Moreover, CAPPA is a shoe-string operation with a very modest budget consisting almost entirely of (low) fees paid my member institutions and the occasional infusion of cash for specific projects and events by CSPS.[11] Much of its organizational infrastructure (e.g., its website) is supplied by the Institute of Public Administration of Canada. In essence, the accreditation process was launched with five individuals (spread around Canada) constituting a Board, and really nothing else in the way of support or infrastructure. Fortunately, in the first year, a very capable student volunteered to handle correspondence and keep records for the Chair on behalf of the Board. In the second and third years, the Chair's home institution (the School of Public Policy and Administration at Carleton University) agreed to allocate some of the time of one of its staff to support the Board. The Board never met physically – it had to conduct all its meetings (three in the first year) via teleconference.

There were several obvious, if essential, tasks that had to be undertaken in the first year:

1. Canvass CAPPA members with MPA and MPP programs and invite them to volunteer for accreditation sometime over the following three years. The idea was to build a roster and a reasonably manageable schedule of accreditations on a rolling basis. Of the schools that were contacted, seven indicated that they would be open to accreditation either in the next year, or sometime in the three-year cycle. Most of

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[11] The 2006 AGM report noted annual membership revenues of $7,000, and $15,500 from a contribution agreement with the Canada School of Public Service. In 2009, CAPPA had $31,000 in reserves.

these commitments were hedged with uncertainty about budgets and university approvals.

2. Develop a roster or pool of potential reviewers who could constitute review committees. This was somewhat delicate, since review committees would have to consist of prominent academics and practitioners, with solid credentials, or the whole accreditation process would lose legitimacy. Doing a "national call" for reviewers thus was out of the question, and the Board decided to develop its own list – in consultation with senior colleagues – and eventually arrived at 30, of whom 16 agreed to serve. This process was complicated by the usual representational issues: regions, gender, language, and a mix of academics and practitioners.

3. Draft Terms of Reference for review committees. These had not been developed by CAPPA, though it had passed a set of Principles of Accreditation in 2006 (See Appendix A). The Board used these principles to develop a ten-point TOR for committees (see Appendix B). A key point was that accreditation was "mission-based." "Programs are evaluated on whether they are achieving the objectives set out in their mission, and are expected to explain and justify that those objectives are appropriate." The TORs called on programs being accredited to provide relevant materials (e.g., mission statements or equivalents, lists of faculty and credentials, curricular materials, etc.). Reports would be submitted to the Board, with an opportunity for comment by the program. Once the results were agreed, they would be posted on the CAPPA website. Each of these caused problems as the actual reviews were undertaken.

As noted in previous section, there was debate within CAPPA about the advisability of a national accreditation process, and even though accreditation was eventually approved, some of these reservations evinced themselves in the first year. For example, less than half of the 20 programs contacted about scheduling an accreditation review responded positively. Some schools did not respond at all, and had to be approached several times for some indication of whether they would engage in accreditation. The École Nationale d'Administration Publique (ENAP) in Quebec politely declined to get involved in accreditation since, as a "state university" system with multiple campuses throughout the province of Quebec, it graduates more MPAs per

year than the rest of the country combined.[12] Another non-Quebec school simply refused to participate on the grounds that accreditation would be yet another administrative burden with little point, and moreover that the MBA and MPA examples from the US indicated that "the best schools never submit to accreditation."

Nonetheless, by fall of 2007 the Board felt reasonably pleased with its first year of operation. Understanding that the credibility of the process hinged on showing early momentum, the Board was fortunate in that Carleton's MA program offered to be the first program to undergo an accreditation review.[13] As well, on paper, it had five other programs which had volunteered for reviews in 2008 (Dalhousie University, University of Guelph/McMaster University, University of Ottawa, Ryerson University, and University of Winnipeg), as well as two slated for 2009 (Simon Fraser and University of Victoria). It has a roster of reviewers, had developed TORs, appointed a committee to conduct the Carleton review, and had renewed itself by replacing its one-year term position (Prof. Lucie Rouillard succeeded Prof. Iain Gow).

If the first year was preparatory, the second year (fall 2007 to fall 2008) saw two completed accreditations and a host of new issues that had not been anticipated when the Board had been established. For a variety of reasons, Carleton's accreditation process stalled in the fall of 2007 and winter of 2008. First, some basic parameters for a review were unclear – neither the review committee nor the School really knew what kinds of materials should be requested and supplied. That negotiation and discussion took some time. Second, once the parameters for these materials were agreed (e.g., lists of faculty with qualifications, publications, student data, completion rates, etc.), gathering them proved more difficult than initially anticipated. In addition, the very fact that there was no regular accreditation or review process in the country[14] meant that Carleton, like the vast majority of its sister programs, does not keep regular, detailed

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[12] As well, though this was never mentioned explicitly, and this is a conjecture by the authors, CAPPA is a "Canadian" collection of almost exclusively Anglophone programs. It would have been unacceptable for an institution like CAPPA to review and accredit what is effectively a state institution of Quebec. However, francophone colleagues were very helpful, and programs like the one at Laval were interested in accreditation.

[13] Susan Phillips (co-author) was the Director of the School at the time, and as the previous section pointed out, the chair of a CAPPA committee that eventually recommended accreditation. That the Chair of the Board and the Director of the first program to volunteer for a review happened to be from the same School was purely serendipitous, but helpful in moving the process along.

[14] At the time, Ontario had a seven-year cycle of reviews of graduate programs, including MPAs, but the last one for Carleton's MPA had been completed in 2003.

programmatic data. Moreover, it had decided to take the mission-based approach seriously, rather than recycling the report submitted to the provincial review, which meant collecting considerable new data. By the time everything was in place, two members of the review committee had to resign due to other commitments, and so the committee was constituted in June 2008 with a fresh committee.

In the meantime, Ryerson had decided to go ahead with accreditation, and a review committee was struck in February 2008. The committee submitted its report in August 2008,[15] but as well submitted a supplementary report with reflections on the accreditation process itself. That report contained a very helpful list of materials that the committee suggested should be part of any accreditation review (see Appendix C). It also raised two more fundamental issues. The first was the importance of a site visit. As we noted earlier, CAPPA itself is impecunious, and so had no resources, financial or otherwise, with which to support the Board and the accreditation process. Indeed, the Principles of Accreditation stated (principle # 7): "The accreditation process is conducted in as economical a manner as possible. E-mail, conference calls, and video-conferencing will be used in preference to face-to-face meetings." The Board's assumption had been that accreditation reviews would be conducted on the basis of submitted materials, some conference calls, and e-mail communication. The accreditation fee of $2,000 would, in normal circumstances, not cover even a two-day site visit with costs for travel as well as accommodation and per diems. Nonetheless, the Ryerson committee asked the Board about the feasibility of a site visit. It turned out that the Chair was based in Montreal, and another member made regular visits to Toronto (where Ryerson is located) on business. The third member was in Halifax, which would entail travel costs, but it was eventually agreed that a two-day site visit could be feasibly conducted by the other two members and not incur major costs. The committee found the experience so helpful in the review process that it recommended the following to the Board:

1. We are mindful of the need to conduct the accreditation process in an economical a manner as possible. Still, we found that a site visit most useful in the assessment process.
2. We suggest that a site visit, and face to face meetings with faculty and students of the Program under review, become a standard practice in the accreditation process.

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[15] The full text of the report may be found at www.cappa.ca/accreditation.html , accessed on February 27, 2010.

3. We suggest that CAPPA work toward obtaining funding for site visits and ensure that at least one member of the review team be close enough to the site to enable him/her to make a visit.

The second issue concerned the "mission-based" approach to accreditation. As the previous section pointed out, CAPPA members were concerned to protect the diversity and autonomy of programs, and did not want some system of national standards to emerge from the accreditation process. "Mission-based" reviews in principle meant that each program would be assessed on its own terms. For example, if a program claimed that it was emphasizing practical management skills more than academic preparation (or vice-versa) in principle one could review the program and see if it was actually performing as advertised. However, the Ryerson committee raised the perfectly valid point that the majority of degrees had the same designation – Master of Public Administration – and that applicants to these programs as well as potential employers had reasonable expectations that a common name meant some sort of common core or common set of standards on curriculum and pedagogy. Though the committee did not put it this way, from an epistemological perspective, it is not clear that a process of assessment and judgement (which is what accreditation is) can rely completely on "local" standards. Some form of "Platonic universals" would inevitably creep in. This was not an issue that could be decided by the Board, and so it was referred to CAPPA for a policy discussion.

Exactly the same issues arose with the second review committee struck to assess the MPA at the University of Western Ontario. At this point the site visit to Ryerson had already taken place, possibly setting a precedent. To the Board, the Ryerson site visit had been accepted because it could be done cheaply, but the Western Ontario review committee insisted that a site visit was absolutely necessary. The Board finally agreed, though in the knowledge that this could mean a major change in the economic model that had underpinned the original design of the accreditation process. The committee also raised the issue of external standards – it recognized that formal external standards did not exist, but pointed out that inevitably committee members would bring their own considerable experience to bear in assessing a program's strengths and weaknesses.

A completely new issue arose in the context of the Western Ontario review as well as the Carleton review, which eventually was completed in March 2009 – the publication of reports and responses. In the case of Ryerson, the entire report as well as the program's response were placed

on the CAPPA web-site. This reflected the Board's mission of developing a national conversation about MPA programs, comparing standards and approaches, and making those programs more transparent. Indeed, the Board's second annual report referred specifically and hopefully to this result from the Ryerson review:

> More importantly, it is clear from the Ryerson report that this is an extremely helpful exercise in several ways. First, it helps programs reflect on their mission and their capacity to deliver on that mission. Second, it facilitates a conversation among the applicant institution's faculty, students, and administrators, and the review team. We have ensured that the review teams consist senior, experienced, and respected scholars and practitioners, and so that conversation is likely to be more focused and more substantive than the typical external review. Thirdly, once we begin to accumulate a body of accreditation reports, it will give the public administration community in Canada, including students considering where to take their degree and why, a rich storehouse of information about courses, program structures, and regional and institutional differences and similarities. Finally, it signals a strong element of accountability within the profession and the field in Canada.

Both the Western Ontario and the Carleton committees felt strongly that full disclosure of the accreditation reports would compromise the process, since programs being accredited possibly would be less than frank if they thought that every blemish would be exposed to national and international scrutiny. Also, in the Carleton case, the committee's report was divided into two parts: the first was based on solid evidence (and was very affirmative of the program) and the second, as acknowledged by the committee, was more impressionistic and suggestive in nature. Both the committee and the program had concerns about the veracity of this second, supplementary part of the report. The Board's third annual report summarized the issue:

> The third issue was the format and content of the review reports. Again, the original CAPPA protocol for this was that a review would be submitted to the AB, that the program in question would respond, and both these reports (barring an appeal or a substantial dispute) would be posted on the CAPPA website. This is what happened with the first review, though the report was very lightly edited in light of the institutional response. The next two reviews invited deeper philosophical reflection. One committee submitted a strong, frank report that ultimately recommended accreditation but pointed out some important challenges. The committee seems to have been unaware of the original CAPPA protocol, and was stunned to learn that the report should be posted, reasonably remarking that the information that faculty members and administrators had provided was assumed to be privileged. There were only three or four parts of the report that could have been considered sensitive, and the AB suggested some light edits, but this was refused as a "whitewash." The third review committee decided on a strategy (common among audit committees) of submitting two reports, a short, informative but

bland review for public consumption, and a longer, more detailed report for the eyes of the program Director only.

The issue of principle here goes back to what we believe was part of the original CAPPA vision for accreditation. With full reports posted on the CAPPA website, over time there would be a repository of detailed descriptions of MPA programs across the country, a repository that could be used by prospective students to better understand the programs to which they might apply, and the beginnings of a national professional and academic dialogue about what constitutes the teaching and practice of public administration in Canada.

The committees, however, had a point. A rigid commitment to transparency can be embarrassing, and moreover self-defeating in that programs, fearing that every blemish will be in the public domain, will guard otherwise useful information.

The terms of office for three Board members ended in August 2008, but CAPPA failed to appoint replacements, so for its last year the Board consisted of the Chair and Vice-Chair, who together received and commented on the review reports for Western Ontario and Carleton. Their terms ended in August 2009. A completely new and revitalized Board was appointed, with Ian Clark (University of Toronto), as Chair.

Reflections from the Accredited Programs

The three programs accredited by 2009 reflect the diversity of public administration education in Canada: one is part of a Political Science program with a niche market in municipal management (Western Ontario); one a hybrid (Ryerson); and one typifies the large, multi-disciplinary, independent schools (Carleton). Interestingly, all three programs are situated in the same province, and their willingness to step up early in the CAPPA process is in part related to their familiarity with a mandatory external appraisal process. Reflections provided by the directors of the three programs indicate that each found the experience to be useful and positive, although each program took a somewhat different approach to it.

Because the timing of the Ryerson assessment coincided with its provincial review, it could reuse the same material, and so little additional information gathering was needed. The matter of exactly what kind of information was required and the "official" status of the report to be submitted (whether it had been approved as an official university document or was a more personal, candid reflection) was an issue for the University of Western Ontario. The director noted that had expectations been clearer, a different kind of document might have been

submitted. The Carleton program had the advantage – and, in a sense, the distinct disadvantage – that its director had chaired the Implementation Working Group, and thus was attuned to the skepticism among some CAPPA members of a mission-based approach and aware of the concerns raised about the absence of standards for the previous reviews. Carleton thus set out to take a mission-based assessment very seriously, devising a template that was quite different from the one used for the provincial review in the hope that it might seen as rigorous and could be useful for other programs. Its timing was also several years out of sync with the OCGS assessment, during which time major program changes had been made, so extensive new data needed to be collected. This meant starting from scratch, including the articulation of a mission statement which the faculty soon realized did not exist in any meaningful way. In developing a template, Carleton looked very closely at some of the NASPAA (and business school) submissions, and took a similar approach with defining goals, objectives, inputs, indicators and short and long term outcomes. When it came to assessing faculty and curriculum content, Carleton also explicitly looked to, and where possible applied, the NASPAA criteria in an attempt to measure up to international expectations. Given that the Carleton program is large by Canadian standards, applying the NASPAA criteria was not problematic. From the director's perspective, the clear value lay not in comparison to US standards but in helping the school identify better indicators and begin more systematic data collection.

The site visits were highly valued by all three directors, and there is consensus that the assessment would not have been very meaningful without direct interaction with reviewers, thereby setting expectations for future CAPPA reviews. The need to clarify expectations at the outset, particularly in regard to the type of information requested and what would become public, was evident in all three reviews. Finally, these early reviews provided a reminder that the public administration community in Canada is really quite small, as the ability to find reviewers who did not have a conflict of interest because they are actively engaged in projects with faculty of the programs proved in several cases to be a challenge.

Conclusions: Toward Meeting Multiple Missions

The Canadian accreditation of MPA programs is still very much a work in progress. A new board was appointed in the fall of 2009, and it is exploring new avenues of connecting the accreditation process more directly to expected public management competencies in the public service. But we can still draw some conclusions from the brief history of Canadian accreditation to date, in the context of the larger movement towards standardization of all types around the world.

Experience with accreditation systems in other sectors points to several key factors of success. The first is to ensure adequate take up in the early stages to provide momentum until a critical mass is built. This involves establishing legitimacy and collective norms, and enmeshing those norms into the choices of individual actors (Cohen 2004; Bernstein and Cashore 2007). This cannot be counted on to happen automatically; rather, at least in the private sector, it has depended on strategic use of the "supply chain" by which governments, funders, partners and consumers demand or encourage certification. It also depends on the governance capacity of the accrediting body to be able to undertake active "field building" by strengthening networks, raising awareness and promoting ongoing learning (Koehler 2007). This often takes outside help. In the certification of sustainable forestry practices, for example, foundations played a key role in funding the Forestry Stewardship Council to build such capacity (Bartley 2007). So, too, for NASPAA which has received support from various foundations over the years and relies on an extensive network of committed individuals to support its work (Raffel 2010).

Will the Canadian system of accreditation be able to meet its multiple missions of greater transparency, stronger more innovative programs, a more cohesive and visible public administration community, and closer connections between universities and practitioners? The next two years will be critical for CAPPA as enough programs have to come forward for accreditation to promote its legitimacy and instill collective norms. What is evident from the first round is that accreditation cannot be done on the shoestring that it was initially planned: site visits are seen as essential; programs need considerable guidance and support through the process; and the operation of the board process itself takes some resources – even keeping the

website up-to-date is problematic. Preparing a good mission-based self-assessment takes time and effort, and without pressure from the 'supply chain' – of governments, partners, potential students and other stakeholders – the incentives for schools and programs to invest the requisite effort may be in question.

The pressing challenge, then, is to build the governance capacity within CAPPA in order to engage in active field building and promote better information sharing and ongoing learning. So far, CAPPA has not been able to become the stronger, more dynamic organization that many early proponents of accreditation had hoped for and, given a certain degree of its own internal disarray, CSPS has not continued as an active partner or funder as it had initially showed signs of being. In addition, neither provincial governments nor the Canadian foundation sector, as relatively small and undercapitalized as it is, have engaged the process.

At the same time, the movement for accreditation at an international has accelerated, led by both NASPAA and IASIA, albeit met with some resistance from Europe. Would the creation of a truly international system of accreditation for public administration and policy programs be so bad for Canadian programs? As the originators of the CAPPA process imagined, it would undoubtedly sort out the small from the large programs with the latter seeking international accreditation to which small or niche programs could not aspire. And, it probably would do little to build and promote the public administration profession with governments, potential students and other stakeholders within Canada. One objective of Canada's experimentation with accreditation was not only to prevent greater fragmentation but, more positively, to enhance the cohesiveness, visibility and innovation of the public administration education community and profession. No matter what happens internationally, there is still much to do at home.

Table 1: Degree Emphasis for Canadian Master's Programs in Public Administration, Public Policy and Public Management

University	Location	Degree	Concentration
MPA programs			
Carleton	School of Public Policy and Administration (Faculty of Public Affairs)	MA (Public Administration)	- Public Management - Policy Analysis - Innovation, Science and Environment - International and Development
Dalhousie	School of Public Administration (Faculty of Management)	MPA MPA (M) MPA / LLB MPA / MLIS	
ENAP	Université du Quebec	MPA	MPA (Managers) - Public management - International management - Municipal management MPA (Analysts) - International administration - Organizational analysis and development - Program evaluation - Human resource management
Laval	Department of Political Science	MPA	- Analysis and evaluation - Public Management - Public finance - Research
Manitoba & Winnipeg	Department of Politics (Winnipeg) and Department of Political Studies (Manitoba)	MPA	
Moncton	Department of Public Administration	MPA MPA / LLB	
Ottawa	School of Political Studies	MA (Public Administration)	Public Management

University	Location	Degree	Concentration
			Public Policy
Queen's	School of Policy Studies	MPA PMPA MPA / LLB	Health Policy Social Policy Defence Management Global Governance The Third Sector
Regina	Johnson Shoyama School of Public Policy	MPA	Public Management Public Policy
Victoria	School of Public Administration	MPA	
Western	Department of Political Science (Local Government Program)	MPA	
York	Schulich School of Business	MPA MPA/MBA	Public Management (Built-in specialization)
Hybrid programs			-
Brock	Department of Political Science	MA (Political Science)	- Canadian Politics - Comparative Politics - International Relations - Political Theory/Philosophy - Public Administration and Public Policy
British Columbia	Institute of Asian Research	MAPPS MAPPS / LLB MAPPS / MBA	- Infrastructure Policy - Governance and Human Rights - Gender and Development - Economic & Social Change

University	Location	Degree	Concentration
Concordia	Department of Political Science	MPPPA	- Public Administration and Decision Making - Public Policy and Social and Political Theory - International Public Policy and Administration - Political Economy and Public Policy - Comparative Public Policy - Geography and Public Policy
Guelph / McMaster	Departments of Political Science	MPPA (Joint)	
Ryerson	Department Public Administration and Governance Faculty of Arts	MA (Public Policy and Administration)	
Simon Fraser	Public Policy Program Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences	MPP	Advanced Policy Analysis
Toronto	School of Public Policy and Governance	MPP	Social and Economic Policy Global Public Policy
York	School of Public Policy and Administration (Atkinson)	MPPAL	MPPAL: - Public Management and Finance - Law and Ethics - Public Policy and Analysis
	School of Public Affairs (Glendon)	MPIA	

Table 2: Degree Requirements

University	Duration		Credits/ Courses	Comprehensive Examinations	Thesis	Internship
	Full-Time	**Part-Time**				
MPA programs						
Carleton	2 years	5 – 8 years	7.5 credits	-	Research essay (1.0 credit) OR Thesis (2.0 credits)	Co-op option (+ 1 course) is available for full time students
Dalhousie	2 years	7 years	18 credits	-	-	-
	MPA (M)					
	3 – 4 years	-	14 credits	Minimum of 5 years of management experience.	-	-
	MPA/LLB					
	4 year	-	L.L.B component = 9 classes + 39 credit hours + MPA component = 14.5 credits	-	-	✓Paid internship option (after the first year of Public Admin. Classes)
	MPA / MLIS					
	3 years	-	27 credits (15 MPA and 12 MLIS)	-	-	✓
ENAP	2 years	4 years	45 credits	-	✓ optional	✓ optional, but required for Management stream
Laval	2 years	-	45 credits	-	✓	✓
Manitoba & Winnipeg	1 – 2 years	6 years	48 or 24 credits*	✓ written and o... OR	✓ optional	✓ optional (full time)

University	Duration		Credits/ Courses	Comprehensive Examinations	Thesis	Internship
	Full-Time	Part-Time				
Moncton	2 years	-	60 credits	-	-	✓
	MPA / L.L.B					
	4 years	-	123 credits	-	-	-
Ottawa	1 – 2 years	2 – 3 years	24 credits		Research paper OR Thesis	✓ optional + research report
Queens's	1 year	-	12 half-course credits	-		✓ option (2 credits)
	PMPA					
	2 - 3 years	-	10 half course credits	-	-	✓ option (2 credits)
	MPA / L.L.B					
	4 years	-	12 half course credits + L.L.B require	-	-	✓
Regina	1 year	2-5 years	10 courses	-	✓	-
Victoria	2 years		19.5 credits		✓ Advanced Management or Policy Report OR ✓ Thesis	Co-op (on-Campus students only)
Western	1 year	-	15 courses	-	✓ research paper	
York (Schulich)	**MPA & MPA / MBA**					
	8 – 24 months	-	60 credits	-	✓ research paper (optional)	-
Hybrid programs						

University	Duration		Credits/ Courses	Comprehensive Examinations	Thesis	Internship
	Full-Time	**Part-Time**				
Brock	3 years	-	11 courses	-	Thesis + 4 half credits and 1 seminar course OR Research paper + 6 half credits and 2 seminar courses	-
B.C.	**MAPPS**					
	12 – 18 months	18 – 24 months	36 credits	-	✓ optional	✓ optional
	MAPPS / LLB					
	3 years	-	116 credits (86 = LLB 30 = MAPPS)	-	✓ optional	✓ optional
	MAPPS / MBA					
	2 years	-	75 credits (45 = MBA 30 = MAPPS)	-	✓ optional	✓ optional
Concordia	1 year	3 years	45 credits	✓	Extended research essay (6 credits) OR Thesis proposal (3 credits) + Thesis (21 credits)	Internship option (+ research paper) (15 credits)
Guelph / McMaster	1 year		10 courses	✓	Major research paper	-

University	Duration		Credits/ Courses	Comprehensive Examinations	Thesis	Internship
	Full-Time	Part-Time				
Ryerson	12 – 18 months (Max 24 months)	20 – 28 months (Max 36 months)	10 courses		Thesis + 2 courses <u>OR</u> Major research paper + 4 courses	-
Simon Fraser	2 years		14 courses			✓
Toronto	20 months		15 courses			✓ + research paper
York	**MPPAL (Atkinson)**					
	-	2 years	27 credits	-	-	-
	MPIA (Glendon)					
	2 years	-	48 credits	-	✓research paper	✓

Principles of Accreditation
CAPPA 2006

1. Accreditation is mission-based. Programs would be evaluated on whether they are achieving the objectives set out in their mission, and would be expected to explain and justify that the objectives are appropriate.

2. Accreditation is available to Masters level programs in public administration and public policy that are members of CAPPA and that provide degrees, diplomas, or other recognized qualifications.

3. Accreditation is valid for seven years. The accreditation cycle is tied as closely as possible, at the discretion of the school or program, to mandatory periodic appraisals conducted by provincial or university review bodies.

4. The CAPPA accreditation process, to the greatest extent possible, uses information provided by schools and programs for other quality assessment processes, such as those conducted within the university or by provincial bodies.

5. Accreditation information is posted on an accreditation page to be established on the CAPPA website. Schools not wishing to be accredited by CAPPA are permitted to post the results of quality assessment processes they have recently undergone, as well as provide brief statements of their reasons for not going through CAPPA's process.

6. The accreditation process is overseen by a five-person Accreditation Board, whose members are chosen by the board of directors of CAPPA. The Accreditation Board operates at arm's-length from CAPPA. It establishes rules for the process, chooses three-person panels (normally including two academics and one practitioner) for each program under consideration for accreditation, adjudicates any potential conflicts of interest, makes decisions on the recommendations of the review panels, and reports annually to the CAPPA board.

7. The accreditation process is conducted in as economical a manner as possible. E-mail, conference calls, and video-conferencing will be used in preference to face-to-face meetings. While the chair of the Accreditation Board may receive a stipend during the years when the process is being established, members of the accreditation board and review teams generally do not receive honoraria.

8. The accreditation process, in steady state, is self-financing from CAPPA dues charged to professional graduate-level programs as well as fees charged to programs in the year they are being reviewed. CSPS has been asked to provide some start-up some funding for the process.

9. The accreditation framework and process is subject to regular review by CAPPA and can be adapted as CAPPA learns from the process and as educational and professional needs change. The assessment framework is explicitly mission-based, rather than standards-based, but is sufficiently flexible so that specific standards could be introduced over time if CAPPA members so choose.

APPENDIX B

Terms of Reference – Accreditation Committees
Accreditation Board, 2006

1. The accreditation process is governed by the Principles for Accreditation adopted by CAPPA in 2006, and the Final Report of the CAPPA Working Group (January 2006). Accreditation is mission-based. Programs are evaluated on whether they are achieving the objectives set out in their mission, and are expected to explain and justify that those objectives are appropriate.

2. The CAPPA Accreditation Board shall maintain a list of highly qualified assessors from which it shall select committees of three members (two university members and one experienced practitioner) to assess Masters degree programs at Canadian universities. One member of the Accreditation Committee will be invited to chair the panel by the Board. The Accreditation Committee will review the program in question, assess its quality, and advise the Board on accreditation.

3. The Chair of the Accreditation Board shall, in consultation, seek the agreement of the participating university or college unit to an evaluation of its particular masters level program and request and receive all documentation from that unit.

4. The Chair will forward to the Accreditation Committee all relevant documentation, and shall communicate the names of members of the Accreditation Committee to the director of the program under assessment.

5. Programs seeking accreditation will provide such materials as written mission statements or their equivalents, lists of faculty and their credentials, curricula materials and other such documentation as may be requested from the Board in the light of its Principles and Practices.

6. The Accreditation Committee will review such documentation, consult as required and reach agreement on its assessment. The Committee may seek other information as required.

7. The Chair of the Accreditation Committee shall forward a report to the Board, with copy to the director of the unit under assessment within 20 days after receipt of the documentation.

8. The unit offering the program under assessment will be invited to comment on the accreditation report prior to any recommendations of the Board.

9. The Board will post the accreditation results on the CAPPA website.

10. Programs that wish to appeal the accreditation results may do so through a process that draws upon a new committee of assessors.

CAPPA Accreditation Criteria

Proposed by Review Committee for Ryerson University, August 2008

CATEGORIES FOR CONSIDERATION

Program

1. Structure
2. Core courses
    - 2.1 number
    - 2.2 subjects
    - 2.3 format
    - 2.4 other
3. Electives
    - 3.1 number
    - 3.2 areas covered
    - 3.3 electives from cognate academic units
    - 3.4 other
4. Practicum/internship/field placement
    - 4.1 credit load
    - 4.2 course requirements
    - 4.3 supervision
    - 4.4 school/department relationship with host institution
    - 4.5 school/department relationship with host supervisor
    - 4.6 other
5. Alternative course features (e.g. major research project, thesis)
6. Unique or interesting features of program
7. Omissions from program
8. Student assessments of program
9. Graduate assessment of program
10. Program governance
11. Program review

Students

1. Entrance requirements
2. Student mix
    - 2.1 gender
    - 2.2 home base
    - 2.3 previous university
    - 2.4 prior academic experience

    2.5 entering academic grade levels
    2.6 FT/PT split
3. Student retention/completion/attainment
    3.1 withdrawals
    3.2 graduation
    3.3 average years to completion
    3.4 grade levels

4. Enrollment

5. Financial support
    5.1 scholarships
    5.2 teaching assistantships
    5.3 research assistantships
    5.6 other

6. Estimated student costs per year
    6.1 accommodation
    6.2 personal computer costs
    6.3 books
    6.4 other academic costs

7. Computer resources

8. Graduate placement
    - facilities for job search
    - 10-year record of placements
    - geographic and institutional location of placements

9. Dedicated facilities for students

Courses

1. Core courses
  1. Format
  2. Hours per week
  3. Size of classes
  4. Quality/depth/currency
  5. Relevance of class sessions to topic
  6. Introduction of professional communications methods
  7. Introduction of professional ethics issues

2. Electives
  1. Format
  2. Hours per week
  3. Size of classes

4. Quality/depth/currency
5. Relevance of class sessions to topic
6. Introduction of professional communications methods
7. Introduction of professional ethics issues

3.   Student ratings of courses
1. Classroom facilities
2. Lecturers
      - knowledge of field
      - clarity
      - willingness and ability to assist
      - accessibility
3. Teaching assistance
      - competence
      - availability
4. Learning materials
      - availability
      - relevance
5. Assignments
      - pedagogical utility
      - relevance to professional context
      - simulation of professional communication methods

4. Other learning opportunities

1. Participation in conferences
2. Teaching assistantships
3. Practicum

Faculty

1. Qualifications
2. S/F ratios
3. FT/PT
4. Gender representation
5. Representation of core professional fields (e.g. political science, economics, financial management)
6. Experience in government
7. Joint appointments
8. Research strength
      - special interests
      - research support
9. Distinctions
10. Teaching loads

University support for the progam

1. Budget support in comparison to other, similar unties
2. S/F ratio in comparison to similar programs
3. Research and teaching computing resources available to the program
4. Library resources
External support for the program

1. Advisory boards or similar institutions
        - level of representation on boards
2. Affiliation with and support from professional organizations
        - including activities jointly undertaken with such organizations
3. Graduate support
        - graduate association
        - graduate financial support
        - graduate feedback

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs/
International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration
Standards of Excellence for Public Administration Education and Training

1. Public Service Commitment: The faculty and administration of the program are defined by their fundamental commitment to public service. They are in all of their activities (teaching, training, research, technical assistance and other service activities) at all times absolutely committed to the advancement of the public interest and the building of democratic institutions. This is true within all facets of the program including internal organizational arrangements as well as programmatic activities at local, regional, national and international levels.

2. Advocacy of Public Interest Values: The program's faculty and administration reflect their commitment to the advancement of public service by both their advocacy for, and their efforts to create, a culture of participation, commitment, responsiveness and accountability in all of those organizations and institutions with which they come into contact. In so doing, both by pedagogy and example, they prepare students and trainees to provide the highest quality of public service.

3. Combining Scholarship, Practice and Community Service: Because public administration is an applied science, the faculty and administration of the program are committed to the integration of theory and practice and as such the program draws upon knowledge and understanding generated both by the highest quality of research and the most outstanding practical experience. Consequently, the faculty, administration and students of the program are actively engaged through its teaching, training, research and service activities with all of their stake holder communities from the smallest village or city neighborhood to the global community at large.

4. The Faculty are Central: The commitment and quality of the faculty (and/or trainers) is central to the achievement of program goals in all areas of activities. Consequently, there must be, in degree granting programs, a full time core faculty committed to the highest standards of teaching, training and research and possessing the authority and responsibility appropriate to accepted standards of faculty program governance. This faculty must be paid at a level that allows them to devote the totality of their professional activities to the achievements of the goals and purposes of the program and must be available in adequate numbers consistent with the mission of the program. In that regard, a ratio of 1 faculty member per 20 graduate level students and at least 4 full time faculty would represent typical minimum requirements. Faculty teaching responsibilities should not be greater than two academic courses (or their equivalent in a training institution) at any time in the calendar year in order to allow for necessary involvement in research, training, service and technical assistance activities.

5. Inclusiveness is at the Heart of the Program: A critical element in the achievement of excellence in public administration education and training is an unwavering commitment on the part of faculty and administration to diversity of ideas and of participation. The people who participate in programs, including students, trainees, trainors, administrators and faculty, should

come from all the different racial, ethnic, and demographic communities of the society. The ideas, concepts, theories and practices addressed in the program should represent a broad variety of intellectual interests and approaches. Inclusiveness in terms of individual involvement (including sensitivity to issues of ethnicity, nationality, race, gender orientation and accessibility to all) within a program serves also to encourage inclusiveness in terms of ideas. Both forms of inclusiveness, intellectual and participatory, are the hallmarks of excellent programs.

6. A Curriculum that is Purposeful and Responsive: A principal goal of public administration education and training is the development of public administrators who will make strong, positive contributions to the public service generally and, in particular, to the organizations they join, or to which they return. This requires public administration education and training programs to have coherent missions which drive program organization and curriculum development. In addition, it is critical that those who educate and train public administrators communicate and work with and, as appropriate, be responsive to the organizations for which they are preparing students and trainees. It also requires that the student and/or trainee be inculcated with a commitment to making a difference and that their education and training prepare them to effectively communicate (both verbally and in writing) with those with whom they work.

7. Adequate Resources are Critical: An important prerequisite to creating a program of excellence in public administration education and training is the availability of adequate resources. Many different kinds of resources are required including facilities, technology, library resources and student services (in terms of assistance with meeting such basic needs as housing, health care, etc.). The availability of these resources is obviously a function of the availability of adequate financial resources. Those financial resources must be such as to sustain full time faculty and/or trainers, provide needed assistance to students and faculty (such as funding to participate in international conferences, etc) and insure the availability of adequate classroom, research, training and meeting space as well as individual offices for each faculty member and as needed for students.

8. Balancing Collaboration and Competition: Finally, and most importantly, their must be among the program faculty, trainers, administrators and students or trainees a sense of common purpose and mission deriving from the program's commitment to the advancing of the public interest. There must also be a sense of determination, indeed even competitiveness, that drives the program to be the best and creates a desire to meet and exceed world class standards of excellence.

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