NASPAA—*The Global Standard in Public Service Education*

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COPRA Policy Statement
November 17, 2016

Based on COPRA decisions made October 2016

At its October 16-18, 2016 meeting in Columbus, Ohio, the Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation (COPRA) held policy discussions and issued interim reports for the 2016-2017 cohort. The following comments build upon previous Policy Statements and provide a window into COPRA's decision-making, as well as continued guidance on the implementation of the 2009 NASPAA Accreditation Standards:

1. **Implementation Schedule for Competency-Based Assessment Conformance on Standard 5.1-Universal Required Competencies:** Unchanged from the expectations for previous cohorts, programs in the 2018-19 and 2019-20 cohorts, whose Self-Study Reports are due August 15 of 2018 and 2019, respectively, should have completed one full cycle of assessment[1] for student learning outcomes in at least three of the universal competency domains. Consistent with previous statements, programs should provide a detailed assessment plan, which includes direct measures as well a timeline for sustainable assessment of the universal competencies moving forward.

2. **Graduation and Persistence Rates**: To enhance the quality and comparability of one of the most critical outcomes of public affairs programs - graduation rates - the Commission will amend student completion data collection to specific collection benchmarks of 2 years, 3 years, and 4 years. To ensure the comprehensive context of students continuing to graduation outside of four years, programs will also be asked to provide a persistence rate[2]. These changes will be effective for self-study reports submitted by the 2017-2018 cohort in August 2017. COPRA expects this change will more closely align with how institutions currently collect completion rates.

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[1] A "full cycle of assessment" means defining a student learning outcome, gathering evidence of learning, analyzing the evidence, and using the analysis to make programmatic decisions.

[2] Student persistence is defined as those students continuing toward completion of the master's degree, consistent with the program's institutional policy regarding continuous enrollment.