# PUBLIC SERVICE CURRICULUM PROJECT TAKEAWAYS

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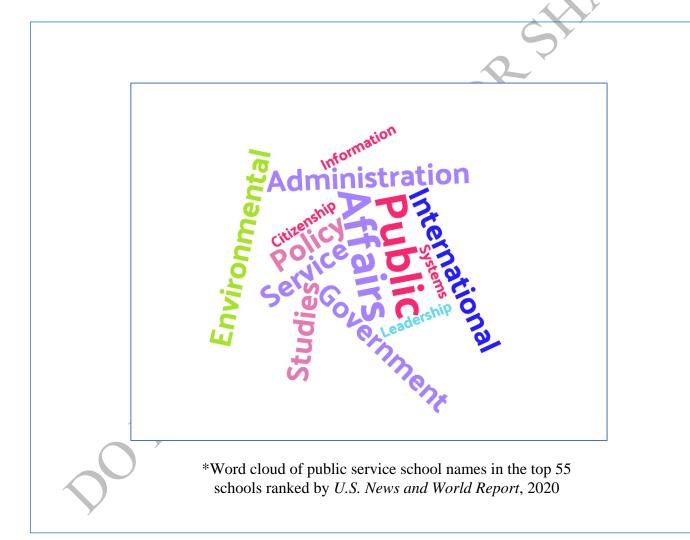


*Word cloud of public service school names in the top 55
schools ranked by *U.S. News and World Report*, 2020

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# A. INTRODUCTION

This report provides a broad portrait of the state of public service education today. It is built upon data collected from a range of sources described below, and provides an overview of basic questions about the nation's top public affairs schools as ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* in 2019. The project was supported by the Volcker Alliance and NYU's Robert F. Wagner School of Public Service. The project began in late 2019 with an early analysis of the *U.S. News* top 25 schools and expanded to 77 schools in May 2020.

Readers should note that the list of top schools includes ties. In the 2020 rankings, for example, there were 12 schools in the top ten, with two schools ranked at number 1, three at number 2, two at number 6, two at 8, and three at 10. Readers should note that the 77 schools covered in this report account for less than a third of the 275 schools ranked in 2020, but almost half of the students who graduated in the class of 2018-2019. As the word clouds below show, they also account for a remarkable range of degree names and certificate titles. Readers are encouraged to benchmark their own schools as they wish by simply adding their own percentages and counts to the tables presented below. Each table also contains a key finding highlighted in torquiose and summarized as a takeaway after the table is presented.

This report provides data on seven questions about public service education:

1. Where is the education occurring? Here, the research team focused on simple measures of location and status—east or west of the Mississippi, in a school named in honor of someone, and in a land grant university tasked under the law with a public-service purpose. (The data sources and topline variables used to build the topline tables are summarized in the text boxes below.)

2. How are the schools ranked against their peers? Here, the research team created three roughly-equal tiers between the top and bottom of the rankings and a very simple indicator of the most recent rankings and

movement up and down the levels over the past decade. This analysis also includes an assessment of website usability based on a simple version of user-centered heuristics.

3. Who is doing the teaching? These data focus solely on tenure and tenure-track faculty, thereby excluding adjuncts, lecturers, visiting faculty, professors of practice, emeritus faculty, clinical, honorary, and part-time professors. The research team pursued three measures of diversity across the schools: (1) gender, (2) race, and (3) doctoral field of study. Information on all three measures of who is doing the teaching among the 2,500 faculty identified as tenured or tenure-track was collected through hand-coding of faculty biographies, website information, dictionaries of last names, photos, and pronoun use/preferences, and further internet searches as needed. Following the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) benchmarking history, this study refers to faculty and student race as either white or "persons of diversity."

4. Who is doing the learning? Here, the research team focused largely on student diversity with just one question on student borrowing. The student diversity data for the 77 schools comes from the National Center for Education Statistics database for the academic year 2018-2019, which included a nine-category racial diversity variable, while the Department of Education College Scorecard database provided the data on the number of "federally-aided students completing college." This measure refers to students who borrowed from the federal government at some point in their college careers, either before and/or during graduate school. The data on the percentage of international students in each program also comes from the Center's count of "non-resident aliens."

5. How are students learning? Most of the data on the organization of learning across the 77 schools came from hand-coding of websites and program descriptions, including the number of required courses, the type of core curriculum (flex or fixed), number of MPA and MPP specializations across MPA. Additional information on the average percentages of econ/quant courses, graduation requirements, and joint curricular options came from the Atlas of Management database, while the number of schools with

significant curricular content and activity on social innovation was built on hand-coding of available records.

6. How is learning organized? Data on learning options such as the number of masters programs, number of certificate programs, undergraduate options, and online options were collected from websites. Additional information on full-time and part-time learning came from the NASPAA database, which was supplemented for the non-accredited programs through hand-coding.

7. What is the impact? The ultimate impact of public-service education is difficult to measure in the kind of data fields presented here, but the project team narrowed the search to the number of graduates, first jobs, first-year earnings. The data on the number of graduates and first-year earnings came from the National Center for Education Statistics, while the first-job destinations came in part from the NASPAA database of accredited schools, albeit heavily augmented by direct requests to deans and program directors. As the final table in this topline report shows, almost one-third of the top 77 schools either could not or would not provide data on where students started their post-graduate careers.

*Word clouds of 116 master's degree titles (left) and 105 certificate titles (right) from the top 32 schools in 2019. These word clouds contain the names of all degrees and certificates such as social work, criminal justice, and data analytics that are housed within the 32 schools but are not part of the analysis of the public service degrees discussed in this analysis. As such, the clouds demonstrate the range of programs in many of the nation's top-ranked public service programs.

Readers are encouraged to consult Table 1 for recent trends in public service education. According to data from the National Center for Educational Statistics, recent trends show a flattening of interest in public-service fields such as public administration, public policy, and social work, a steep decline in law and a flattening in business administration. As the table shows, enrollments surged in the lead up to the Great Recession and the arrival of Obamacare, continued to rise from 2009-2013 and were beginning to stall before the Trump administration arrived. The number of universities offering public administration and policy degrees has grown slightly in recent years, but the number of degrees has dropped slightly.

Readers are also encouraged to review Table 2 for an inventory of the data sources used in this report and Table 3 for a brief introduction to the five variables used to structure the tables presented in this inventory. Much of the work involved hand-coding of program websites, faculty biographies, and informal requests to the schools for information on student destinations and copies of core syllabi. Readers are free to compare their own programs to the different types of public service programs described in the tables by simply penciling in their own statistics to the open row at the bottom of each data table presented below.

# B. TRENDS, SOURCES, AND TOPLINE MEASURES

## TABLE 1: TRENDS IN PUBLIC-SERVICE EDUCATION, 2004-2018

| Degree type | Degree activity | Degrees conferred July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005 | Degrees conferred July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009 | Degrees conferred July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013 | Degrees conferred July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018 | 2004-2013: change | 2013-2018: change | 2018-2020: change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Master of Public Administration | # of Universities offering degree | 280 | 304 | 368 | 388 | 31.4% | 5.4% | |
| | # of degrees conferred | 9,055 | 9,988 | 13,605 | 12,236 | 50.2% | -10.1% | |
| | Average # of degrees conferred | 32 | 33 | 37 | 32 | 14.3% | -14.7% | |
| Master of Public Policy | # of Universities offering degree | 50 | 67 | 83 | 107 | 66.0% | 28.9% | |
| | # of degrees conferred | 1,866 | 2,209 | 2,990 | 2,935 | 60.2% | -1.8% | |
| | Average # of degrees conferred | 37 | 33 | 36 | 27 | -3.5% | -23.9% | |
| Public Service Degrees Total (MPA + MPP) | # of Universities offering degree | 311 | 344 | 431 | 446 | 38.6% | 3.5% | |
| | # of degrees conferred | 10,921 | 12,197 | 16,595 | 15,171 | 52.0% | -8.6% | |
| | Average # of degrees conferred | 35 | 35 | 39 | 34 | 9.6% | -11.7% | |
| Juris Doctor | # of Universities offering degree | 204 | 209 | 218 | 218 | 6.9% | 0.0% | |
| | # of degrees conferred | 44,003 | 44,703 | 47,544 | 34,820 | 8.0% | -26.8% | |
| | Average # of degrees conferred | 216 | 214 | 218 | 160 | 1.1% | -26.6% | |
| Master of Business Admin | # of Universities offering degree | 871 | 959 | 1,157 | 1,200 | 32.8% | 3.7% | |
| | # of degrees conferred | 88,975 | 105,617 | 126,035 | 125,137 | 41.7% | -0.7% | |
| | Average # of degrees conferred | 102 | 110 | 109 | 104 | 6.6% | -4.3% | |
| Master of Health Admin, etc. | # of Universities offering degree | 155 | 207 | 247 | 324 | 59.4% | 31.2% | |
| | # of degrees conferred | 3,443 | 5,305 | 7,497 | 10,166 | 117.7% | 35.6% | |
| | Average # of degrees conferred | 22 | 26 | 30 | 31 | 36.6% | 3.4% | |
| Master of Public Health | # of Universities offering degree | 175 | 212 | 276 | 367 | 57.7% | 33.0% | |
| | # of degrees conferred | 6,406 | 8,336 | 11,384 | 14,933 | 77.7% | 31.2% | |
| | Average # of degrees conferred | 37 | 39 | 41 | 41 | 12.7% | -1.4% | |
| Master of Social Work | # of Universities offering degree | 200 | 227 | 252 | 318 | 26.0% | 26.2% | |
| | # of degrees conferred | 17,024 | 19,388 | 23,675 | 29,700 | 39.1% | 25.4% | |
| | Average # of degrees conferred | 85 | 85 | 94 | 93 | 10.4% | -0.6% | |

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TABLE 2: DATA SOURCES

1. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2018-2019 provisional database from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), including school status, location, participation in federal student aid programs, degrees awarded, student race, and gender.

2. U.S. Department of Education *College Scorecard* database on student finances such as earnings, debt load, and debt repayment for 2015-2016 and 2017-2018. The data used in this topline were accessed in April 2020.

3. The Atlas of Public Management database for the core course distribution in leading MPP and MPA programs for a multi-year research project published in 2015. The databases on course types were built in a multi-year research project funded by the Government of Canada.

4. Occasional contacts with deans and program directors to collect information on first full-time job destinations for the most recent graduate classes, core curriculum requirements, and fill in missing data from other databases.

5. Publicly available data on accreditation, some student destinations, online learning options, and program details from the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) Data Center.

6. Hand-coding of school websites to collect core-syllabi, specialization and degree names, learning options, faculty names, race, gender, and Ph.D. field of study.

TABLE 3: TOPLINE MEASURES

1. School status: Is the school part of a public or private institution?

2. School type: Does the school only offer a Masters of Public Administration (MPA) degree, only a Masters of Public Policy (MPP) degree, or both (blended)?

3. NASPAA accredited: Does the school have a degree program accredited by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA)?

4. Top 25 ranking. Is the school ranked among the top 25 by *U.S. News & World Report* in its 2020 "Best Graduate Public Affairs Programs" issue?

5. Percent of schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average): Is the *College Scorecard* mean federal loan debt for all MPA and/or MPP degree holders from the Academic Year 2015-2016 and Academic Year 2016-2017 cohort in each school above the mean for all 77 covered by the analysis?

## C. CORE SPREADSHEETS

The spreadsheets used in this analysis were created through the data mining of the sources listed above. Some of the data is fully public, others are confidential to the schools, and still others are the product of outreach to specific schools. As a result, some of the data revealed in this topline report are fully anonymized to product the schools, while other data are open for public review.

1. Organizational Demographics (not anonymized; some data only available for first 32 schools)

| University | Geographic Location | Public or Private Status | Morrill Yes University | Namesake | Undergraduate Degree Program | Master's Degree Program | Certificate Progra |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Indiana University, Bloomington | East | public | No | named | 5 | 5 | 6 |
| Syracuse University | East | private | No | named | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| Harvard University | East | private | No | named | 0 | 4 | 1 |
| University of Southern California | West | private | No | named | 3 | 8 | 17 |
| University of Georgia | East | public | Yes | not named | 4 | 3 | 0 |
| University of Washington | West | public | No | named | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| New York University | East | private | No | named | 1 | 4 | 0 |
| University of California, Berkeley | West | public | Yes | named | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| University of Michigan--Ann Arbor | East | public | No | named | 1 | 3 | 5 |
| Princeton University | East | private | No | not named | 0 | 2 | 3 |
| University of Chicago | East | private | No | named | 0 | 6 | 13 |
| University of Minnesota--Twin Cities | West | public | Yes | named | 0 | 6 | 6 |
| University of Texas at Austin | West | public | No | named | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| American University | West | private | No | not named | 6 | 7 | 3 |
| Arizona State University | West | public | No | not named | 4 | 2 | 4 |
| Carnegie Mellon University | East | private | No | named | 1 | 13 | 3 |
| George Washington University | West | private | No | named | 0 | 3 | 4 |
| Ohio State University | East | public | Yes | named | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| University of California--Los Angeles | West | public | No | named | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| University of Kansas | West | public | No | not named | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Columbia University | East | private | No | not named | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| Georgia State University | East | public | No | named | 7 | 7 | 2 |
| University at Albany--SUNY | East | public | No | named | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| University of North Carolina--Chapel Hill | East | public | No | not named | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Duke University | East | private | No | named | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| Florida State University | East | public | No | named | 0 | 1 | 5 |
| Georgetown University | West | private | No | named | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| University of Colorado--Denver | West | public | No | not named | 2 | 2 | 8 |
| University of Kentucky | East | public | Yes | named | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| University of Maryland--College Park | East | public | Yes | not named | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| University of Nebraska--Omaha | West | public | No | not named | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| University of Wisconsin--Madison | East | public | Yes | named | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey--Newark | East | public | No | not named | | | |
| Texas A&M University--College Station | West | public | Yes | not named | | | |
| Cornell University | East | private | Yes | not named | | | |

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| University | Region | Type | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| University of Arizona | West | public | Yes | not named | | | |
| University of Illinois--Chicago | East | public | No | not named | | | |
| University of Pittsburgh | East | public | No | not named | | | |
| CUNY--Baruch College | East | public | No | named | | | |
| Georgia Institute of Technology | East | public | No | not named | | | |
| Indiana University-Purdue University--Indianapolis | East | public | No | named | | | |
| Johns Hopkins University | East | private | No | not named | | | |
| University of Delaware | East | public | Yes | named | | | |
| University of Virginia | East | public | No | named | | | |
| Virginia Commonwealth University | East | public | No | named | | | |
| Virginia Tech | East | public | Yes | not named | | | |
| George Mason University | East | public | No | not named | | | |
| North Carolina State University | East | public | Yes | not named | | | |
| Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey--New Brunswick | East | public | Yes | named | | | |
| University of Connecticut | East | public | Yes | not named | | | |
| University of Missouri | West | public | Yes | named | | | |
| University of Central Flordia | East | public | No | not named | | | |
| Portland State University | West | public | No | named | | | |
| Brandeis University (Heller) | East | private | No | named | | | |
| Brigham Young University | West | private | No | named | | | |
| Brown University (Watson) | East | private | No | named | | | |
| Cleveland State University | East | public | No | named | | | |
| CUNY--John Jay College | East | public | No | not named | | | |
| Northern Illinois University | East | public | No | not named | | | |
| Ohio University (Voinovich) | East | public | No | named | | | |
| University of North Carolina--Charlotte | East | public | No | not named | | | |
| University of Pennsylvania (Fels) | East | private | No | named | | | |
| University of Texas--Dallas | West | public | No | not named | | | |
| Auburn University | East | public | Yes | not named | | | |
| Florida International University | East | public | No | not named | | | |
| Pepperdine University | West | private | No | not named | | | |
| University of Baltimore | East | public | No | not named | | | |
| University of California--San Diego | West | public | No | not named | | | |
| University of Massachusetts--Amherst | East | public | Yes | not named | | | |
| University of Oregon | West | public | No | not named | | | |
| Binghamton University--SUNY | East | public | No | not named | | | |
| Pennsylvania State University--Harrisburg | East | public | No | not named | | | |
| San Diego State University | West | public | No | not named | | | |
| University of Alabama--Birmingham | East | public | No | not named | | | |
| University of Massachusetts--Boston (McCormack) | East | public | No | named | | | |
| University of North Texas | West | public | No | not named | | | |
| University of Oklahoma | West | public | No | not named | | | |

# 2. Operations and Impact (schools are anonymized)

| Randomized University Number | School type | % Women on tenured/tenure-track faculty (%) | Core course type | Number of core courses | % economics Ph.D. among tenured/tenure-track faculty | % "faculty of diversity" on tenured/tenure-track | % diversity among graduates | Website usability Sscore | Sig. social innovation activity | Social justice website content April-July 2020 | % nonprofit destination for first job | Median first-year earnings (MPA graduates) | Median first-year earnings (MPP graduates) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Blended | 26% | flex-core | more than 5 | 9% | 29% | 28% | 1 to 2 | Yes | higher | 16% | Privacy Suppressed | $50,001-$60,000 |
| 2 | Blended | 41% | flex-core | more than 5 | 6% | 20% | 57% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | 35% | $65,001-$10,000 | $50,001-$60,000 |
| 3 | Blended | 32% | fixed-core | less than 5 | 0% | 12% | 24% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | 14% | Privacy Suppressed* | Privacy Suppressed |
| 4 | Public Administration | 43% | fixed-core | less than 5 | 0% | 19% | 21% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | 36% | $39,000-$50,000 | Not Applicable |
| 5 | Blended | 43% | flex-core | more than 5 | 65% | 22% | 24% | Greater than 2 | No | Lower | 22% | Privacy Suppressed | $50,001-$60,000 |
| 6 | Blended | 28% | flex-core | more than 5 | 19% | 28% | 38% | 1 to 2 | Yes | higher | 25% | $65,001-$10,000 | $70,001-$76,000 |
| 7 | Blended | 48% | flex-core | more than 5 | 39% | 26% | 20% | Greater than 2 | No | Lower | 46% | Privacy Suppressed | $70,001-$76,000 |
| 8 | Public Administration | 42% | fixed-core | less than 5 | 37% | 16% | 32% | 1 to 2 | Yes | Lower | Not Available | $39,000-$50,000 | Not Applicable |
| 9 | Public Administration | 50% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 0% | 25% | 34% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | Not Available | $39,000-$50,000 | Not Applicable |
| 10 | Public Policy | 39% | flex-core | more than 5 | 37% | 39% | 29% | 1 to 2 | Yes | Lower | 11% | Not Applicable | Privacy Suppressed |
| 11 | Public Administration | 44% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 17% | 33% | 31% | lower than 1 | Yes | Lower | 0% | Privacy Suppressed | Not Applicable |
| 12 | Public Policy | 40% | flex-core | more than 5 | 16% | 24% | 37% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | Not Available | Not Applicable | $60,001-$70,000 |
| 13 | Public Administration | 48% | flex-core | more than 5 | 0% | 30% | 75% | 1 to 2 | Yes | Lower | 17% | $50,000-$55,000 | Not Applicable |
| 14 | Blended | 0% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 0% | 0% | 29% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | 32% | $65,001-$10,000 | Privacy Suppressed |
| 15 | Public Administration | 60% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 0% | 60% | 37% | lower than 1 | No | Lower | Not Available | $39,000-$50,000 | Not Applicable |
| 16 | Blended | 43% | flex-core | more than 5 | 14% | 14% | 48% | lower than 1 | No | Lower | 7% | $39,000-$50,000 | Not Applicable |
| 17 | Public Administration | 67% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 0% | 33% | 13% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | 6% | $39,000-$50,000 | Not Applicable |
| 18 | Public Administration | 50% | fixed-core | less than 5 | 10% | 10% | 27% | 1 to 2 | Yes | Lower | Not Available | $39,000-$50,000 | Not Applicable |
| 19 | Public Administration | 39% | fixed-core | less than 5 | 30% | 23% | 23% | 1 to 2 | Yes | Lower | 6% | $50,000-$55,000 | Not Applicable |
| 20 | Blended | 31% | flex-core | more than 5 | 31% | 25% | 56% | Greater than 2 | Yes | Lower | 21% | $65,001-$10,000 | $50,001-$60,000 |
| 21 | Public Administration | 39% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 0% | 33% | 63% | 1 to 2 | Yes | Lower | 13% | Not Applicable | Not Applicable |
| 22 | Blended | 48% | flex-core | more than 5 | 33% | 30% | 40% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | Not Available | Privacy Suppressed | $60,001-$70,000 |
| 23 | Public Administration | 48% | fixed-core | less than 5 | 32% | 29% | 55% | Greater than 2 | Yes | Lower | 53% | $65,001-$10,000 | Not Applicable |
| 24 | Blended | 28% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 16% | 23% | 49% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | 6% | $55,001-$65,000 | $60,001-$70,000 |
| 25 | Public Administration | 40% | flex-core | more than 5 | 4% | 27% | 29% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | 48% | Privacy Suppressed | Not Applicable |
| 26 | Public Policy | 32% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 11% | 18% | 14% | Greater than 2 | No | Lower | Not Available | Not Applicable | Privacy Suppressed |
| 27 | Public Policy | 33% | flex-core | more than 5 | 28% | 18% | 40% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | 13% | Not Applicable | $60,001-$70,000 |
| 28 | Blended | 20% | flex-core | more than 5 | 28% | 30% | 24% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | 51% | $55,001-$65,000 | $60,001-$70,000 |
| 29 | Public Administration | 44% | flex-core | more than 5 | 0% | 25% | 16% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | Not Available | $50,000-$55,000 | Not Applicable |
| 30 | Public Policy | 29% | flex-core | more than 5 | 31% | 18% | 27% | 1 to 2 | Yes | higher | 7% | Not Applicable | $60,001-$70,000 |
| 31 | Blended | 48% | flex-core | more than 5 | 23% | 29% | 32% | 1 to 2 | Yes | Lower | 25% | $50,000-$55,000 | $40,001-$50,000 |
| 32 | Blended | 31% | flex-core | more than 5 | 10% | 14% | 23% | lower than 1 | No | Lower | 16% | $50,000-$55,000 | Privacy Suppressed |
| 33 | Public Administration | 20% | flex-core | more than 5 | 0% | 32% | 90% | lower than 1 | No | Lower | 7% | $50,000-$55,000 | Not Applicable |
| 34 | Blended | 45% | flex-core | more than 5 | 24% | 24% | 27% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | Not Available | $65,001-$10,000 | $60,001-$70,000 |
| 35 | Public Administration | 50% | flex-core | more than 5 | 0% | 10% | 13% | 1 to 2 | Yes | Lower | 29% | Privacy Suppressed | Not Applicable |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---------------------|-----|------------|-------------|-----|-----|-----|----------------|-----|--------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 36 | Public Administration | 23% | fixed-core | less than 5 | 0% | 31% | 46% | lower than 1 | No | Lower | 24% | $39,000-$50,000 | Not Applicable |
| 37 | Public Policy | 45% | flex-core | more than 5 | 18% | 44% | 74% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | 33% | Not Applicable | $50,001-$60,000 |
| 38 | Public Administration | 18% | flex-core | more than 5 | 55% | 24% | 57% | Greater than 2 | Yes | higher | 16% | $65,001-$10,000 | Not Applicable |
| 39 | Blended | 25% | flex-core | more than 5 | 4% | 32% | 45% | 1 to 2 | Yes | Lower | 7% | $39,000-$50,000 | Privacy Suppressed |
| 40 | Public Administration | 67% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 0% | 11% | 31% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | Not Available | $39,000-$50,000 | Not Applicable |
| 41 | Public Administration | 39% | flex-core | more than 5 | 19% | 16% | 36% | lower than 1 | No | Lower | 28% | $55,001-$65,000 | Not Applicable |
| 42 | Blended | 32% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 16% | 34% | 56% | 1 to 2 | Yes | Lower | 29% | $55,001-$65,000 | Privacy Suppressed |
| 43 | Public Administration | 50% | flex-core | more than 5 | 0% | 23% | 17% | lower than 1 | No | Lower | 19% | Privacy Suppressed | Not Applicable |
| 44 | Public Administration | 33% | flex-core | more than 5 | 14% | 14% | 24% | Greater than 2 | No | Lower | 29% | $39,000-$50,000 | Not Applicable |
| 45 | Blended | 42% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 12% | 27% | 33% | Greater than 2 | No | Lower | Not Available | $50,000-$55,000 | Privacy Suppressed |
| 46 | Public Administration | 36% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 0% | 27% | 33% | lower than 1 | No | Lower | 10% | $55,001-$65,000 | Not Applicable |
| 47 | Public Policy | 9% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 36% | 9% | 38% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | Not Available | Not Applicable | $40,001-$50,000 |
| 48 | Blended | 48% | flex-core | more than 5 | 23% | 39% | 24% | Greater than 2 | No | Lower | 23% | Privacy Suppressed | Privacy Suppressed |
| 49 | Public Policy | 48% | flex-core | more than 5 | 20% | 25% | 38% | 1 to 2 | Yes | Lower | 21% | Not Applicable | $50,001-$60,000 |
| 50 | Public Administration | 41% | flex-core | more than 5 | 0% | 47% | 74% | Greater than 2 | No | Lower | Not Available | $50,000-$55,000 | Not Applicable |
| 51 | Public Administration | 43% | flex-core | more than 5 | 0% | 43% | 67% | 1 to 2 | Yes | Lower | 14% | $39,000-$50,000 | Not Applicable |
| 52 | Public Administration | 43% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 0% | 14% | 8% | lower than 1 | No | Lower | Not Available | Privacy Suppressed | Not Applicable |
| 53 | Blended | 23% | fixed-core | less than 5 | 18% | 14% | 33% | lower than 1 | No | Lower | 0% | Privacy Suppressed | Privacy Suppressed |
| 54 | Blended | 48% | flex-core | more than 5 | 0% | 10% | 35% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | Not Available | $50,000-$55,000 | Privacy Suppressed |
| 55 | Blended | 46% | flex-core | more than 5 | 8% | 23% | 23% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | 45% | $50,000-$55,000 | Privacy Suppressed |
| 56 | Public Administration | 30% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 0% | 24% | 24% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | 9% | $65,001-$10,000 | Not Applicable |
| 57 | Public Administration | 52% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 0% | 19% | 24% | lower than 1 | No | Lower | Not Available | $50,000-$55,000 | Not Applicable |
| 58 | Blended | 32% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 10% | 23% | 56% | 1 to 2 | Yes | Lower | 18% | Privacy Suppressed | Privacy Suppressed |
| 59 | Public Administration | 60% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 0% | 40% | 64% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | 26% | $50,000-$55,000 | Not Applicable |
| 60 | Blended | 41% | flex-core | more than 5 | 56% | 15% | 46% | lower than 1 | No | Lower | Not Available | $39,000-$50,000 | Not Applicable |
| 61 | Public Administration | 42% | flex-core | more than 5 | 8% | 17% | 17% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | 14% | $50,000-$55,000 | Not Applicable |
| 62 | Public Administration | 50% | flex-core | more than 5 | 0% | 21% | 77% | 1 to 2 | Yes | Lower | Not Available | $55,001-$65,000 | Not Applicable |
| 63 | Blended | 25% | flex-core | more than 5 | 17% | 0% | 21% | lower than 1 | No | Lower | 16% | $55,001-$65,000 | Privacy Suppressed |
| 64 | Blended | 36% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 9% | 36% | 34% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | Not Available | $50,000-$55,000 | Privacy Suppressed |
| 65 | Public Administration | 33% | flex-core | more than 5 | 34% | 26% | 50% | lower than 1 | Yes | Lower | 30% | $39,000-$50,000 | Not Applicable |
| 66 | Public Administration | 28% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 0% | 21% | 48% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | 21% | Privacy Suppressed | Not Applicable |
| 67 | Public Policy | 20% | flex-core | more than 5 | 69% | 19% | 43% | 1 to 2 | Yes | Lower | 32% | Not Applicable | $60,001-$70,000 |
| 68 | Blended | 24% | flex-core | more than 5 | 9% | 12% | 43% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | Not Available | $50,000-$55,000 | Privacy Suppressed |
| 69 | Public Administration | 43% | flex-core | more than 5 | 14% | 21% | 19% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | Not Available | $39,000-$50,000 | Not Applicable |
| 70 | Public Policy | 38% | flex-core | more than 5 | 27% | 27% | 50% | lower than 1 | No | Lower | Not Available | Not Applicable | $70,001-$76,000 |
| 71 | Public Administration | 52% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 3% | 33% | 58% | Greater than 2 | No | Lower | 12% | $39,000-$50,000 | Not Applicable |
| 72 | Public Administration | 49% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 0% | 34% | 47% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | 28% | $39,000-$50,000 | Not Applicable |
| 73 | Public Administration | 38% | flex-core | more than 5 | 31% | 31% | 35% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | 31% | $39,000-$50,000 | Not Applicable |
| 74 | Public Policy | 30% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 33% | 10% | 43% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | Not Available | Not Applicable | Privacy Suppressed |
| 75 | Public Policy | 48% | fixed-core | more than 5 | 24% | 28% | 39% | 1 to 2 | No | higher | Not Available | Not Applicable | $50,001-$60,000 |
| 76 | Blended | 54% | flex-core | more than 5 | 0% | 31% | 20% | 1 to 2 | No | Lower | Not Available | $50,000-$55,000 | Privacy Suppressed |
| 77 | Public Policy | 60% | flex-core | more than 5 | 20% | 13% | 21% | lower than 1 | No | Lower | 42% | Not Applicable | Privacy Suppressed |

* The Department of Education College Scorecard Data refers to unavailable data as "Privacy Surppressed"

# I.     WHERE IS THE EDUCATION OCCURRING?

1) Named School or not (e.g., Kennedy School of Government, Robert F. Wagner School)

| Named School | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| No Namesake | 52% | 59% | 32% | 65% | 46% | 37% | 56% | 40% | 31% | 67% | 34% | 59% | 86% |
| With Namesake | 48% | 41% | 68% | 35% | 54% | 63% | 44% | 60% | 69% | 33% | 66% | 41% | 14% |
| Totals (N=77) | 100% | 75% | 25% | 48% | 17% | 35% | 74% | 26% | 42% | 58% | 38% | 53% | 9% |

*Hand-coding of school websites
**The term "Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average)" is built off the U.S. News "2021 Most Debt National Universities" report
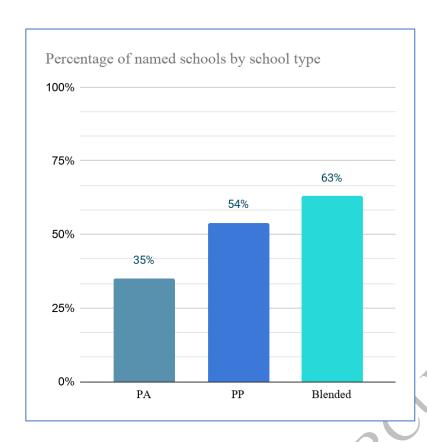
*One-third of schools that only offer an MPA had a namesake on their masthead, compared to much higher percentages of schools that offered an MPP only or both MPA and MPP degrees (Blended).*

*Two-thirds of schools with mean federal student debt loads above average have namesakes, compared with 41 percent of schools with mean federal student debt loads below average.*

Percentage of named schools by school type

2) Morrill Land-grant University or not (e.g., University of Minnesota, Cornell University)

| Named School | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Land-grant | 23% | 29% | 5% | 24% | 23% | 22% | 25% | 20% | 22% | 24% | 10% | 32% | 29% |
| Non-land-grant | 77% | 71% | 95% | 76% | 77% | 78% | 75% | 80% | 78% | 76% | 90% | 68% | 71% |
| Totals (N=77) | 100% | 75% | 25% | 48% | 17% | 35% | 74% | 26% | 42% | 58% | 38% | 53% | 9% |

*Data from National Center for Education Statistics and hand-coding for confirmation
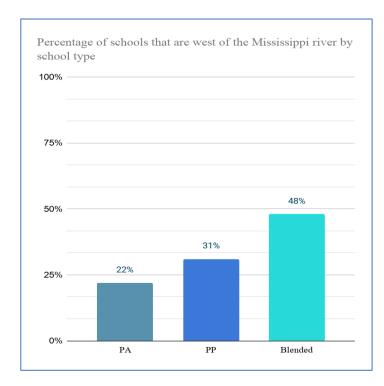
*One-tenth of schools with the mean student debt load above average was founded as land-grant institutions, while one-third with mean federal student loan debt load below average are land-grant institutions.*

3) East or West of the Mississippi River

| Named School | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| East | 68% | 67% | 68% | 78% | 69% | 52% | 67% | 70% | 59% | 73% | 66% | 68% | 71% |
| West | 32% | 33% | 32% | 22% | 31% | 48% | 33% | 30% | 41% | 27% | 34% | 32% | 29% |
| Totals (N=77) | 100% | 75% | 25% | 48% | 17% | 35% | 74% | 26% | 42% | 58% | 38% | 53% | 9% |

*Data from National Center for Education Statistics and hand-coding for confirmation; main campus only

*About half of the schools that offered both the MPA and MPP were located west of the Mississippi, compared to one-fifth that offered the MPA only.*

Percentage of schools that are west of the Mississippi river by school type
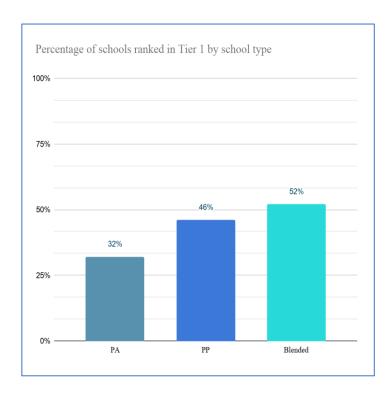
## II.  WHERE DO THE SCHOOLS RANK?

### 1) *U.S. News & World Report* ranking, 2019

| Ranking | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Tier 1 | 42% | 34% | 63% | 32% | 46% | 52% | 42% | 40% | 100% | 0% | 66% | 27% | 29% |
| Tier 2 | 31% | 33% | 26% | 30% | 31% | 33% | 32% | 30% | 0% | 53% | 10% | 44% | 43% |
| Tier 3 | 27% | 33% | 11% | 38% | 23% | 15% | 26% | 30% | 0% | 47% | 24% | 29% | 29% |
| Totals (N=77) | 100% | 75% | 25% | 48% | 17% | 35% | 74% | 26% | 42% | 58% | 38% | 53% | 9% |

*Tier 1= programs rated at levels 1-25 (N=32); Tier 2= programs rated at 33- 49 (N=25); Tier 3= programs rated at 58-72 (N=20)

*Half of the schools that offered both MPA and MPP degrees (Blended) were ranked in tier 1 by U.S. News, compared with one-third of the schools offering only MPA degrees.*

**Percentage of schools ranked in Tier 1 by school type**

| School type | Percentage |
|-------------|-----------|
| PA | 32% |
| PP | 46% |
| Blended | 52% |
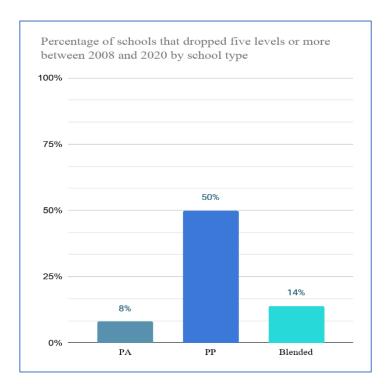
2) Change in the *U.S. News & World Report* ranking levels, 2008 v. 2019

| Ranking Trend | Totals (N=32) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Increase | 22% | 35% | 0% | 33% | 0% | 21% | 29% | 0% | 22% | 0% | 21% | 27% | 0% |
| Steady | 59% | 50% | 75% | 58% | 50% | 64% | 63% | 50% | 59% | N/A | 68% | 45% | 50% |
| Decrease | 19% | 15% | 25% | 8% | 50% | 14% | 8% | 50% | 19% | 0% | 11% | 27% | 50% |
| Totals (N=32) | 100% | 63% | 38% | 38% | 19% | 44% | 75% | 25% | 100% | 0% | 59% | 34% | 6% |

*The rise and fall in ranking levels are calculated by comparing the 2008 *U.S. News* and 2020 results; an increase or decrease is defined as up or down five levels/spots or more

*Half of the schools that only offer the MPP fell more than five spots in the U.S. News rankings between 2008 and 2019, while the MPA and blended schools generally held steady.*

Percentage of schools that dropped five levels or more between 2008 and 2020 by school type
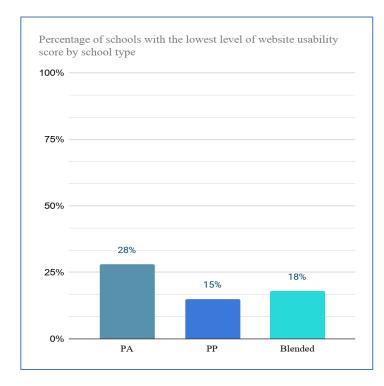
3) Website usability heuristics score (3-way)

| Website Usability | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Greater than 2 | 14% | 14% | 17% | 11% | 8% | 21% | 14% | 15% | 24% | 7% | 14% | 16% | 0% |
| 1 to 2 | 64% | 64% | 61% | 61% | 77% | 61% | 63% | 65% | 55% | 70% | 69% | 56% | 100% |
| Lower than 1 | 22% | 22% | 22% | 28% | 15% | 18% | 23% | 20% | 21% | 23% | 17% | 28% | 0% |
| Totals (N=77) | 100% | 77% | 23% | 47% | 17% | 36% | 74% | 26% | 43% | 57% | 38% | 56% | 6% |

*Score runs from low to high based on an analysis of user-centered heuristics

*There was relatively little variation in website usability scores across all 77 schools, but schools that offered the MPA only had the lowest website scores, while schools that offered both the MPA and MPP (blended) had modestly higher scores.*

*Schools with the mean federal student loan debt above average and that offer only MPA degrees had somewhat lower website usability scores.*

Percentage of schools with the lowest level of website usability score by school type
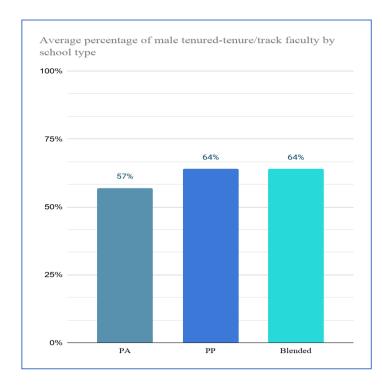
# III. WHO IS DOING THE TEACHING?

1) Average percentage of female and male faculty

| Faculty Gender | Average among all schools (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 (32 schools) | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Women | 39% | 42% | 31% | 43% | 36% | 36% | 41% | 35% | 37% | 40% | 36% | 43% | 34% |
| Men | 61% | 58% | 69% | 57% | 64% | 64% | 59% | 65% | 63% | 60% | 64% | 57% | 66% |

\*Data from hand-coding of faculty profiles on school websites (faculty n=2,500 across the 77 schools)

*Private schools and schools that offer the MPP only and the MPP and MPA (blended) had more male tenured and tenure-track faculty members than their peers.*

Average percentage of male tenured-tenure/track faculty by school type

2) Average percentage of white faculty and faculty of diversity
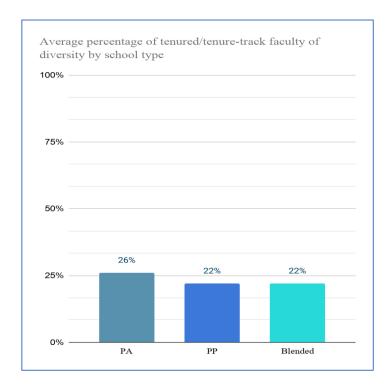
| Faculty Diversity | Average among all schools (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 (32 schools) | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Faculty of Diversity | 24% | 26% | 19% | 26% | 22% | 22% | 26% | 20% | 24% | 24% | 24% | 25% | 21% |
| White Faculty | 76% | 74% | 81% | 74% | 78% | 78% | 74% | 80% | 76% | 76% | 76% | 75% | 79% |

*Data from hand-coding of faculty profiles on school websites

**Data on faculty diversity come from faculty directories, LinkedIn, ResearchGate, Google Scholar profiles, and personal websites that do not disclose nationalities.

***The term "faculty of diversity" extends the NASPAA Data Center's use of the term "persons of diversity" to describe all non-white students.

*About one out of five tenured/tenure-track faculty in private schools are faculty of diversity.*

Average percentage of tenured/tenure-track faculty of diversity by school type

3) Field of doctoral study among tenured/tenure-track faculty

| Faculty Educational Background* | Average among all schools (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 (32 schools) | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Political Science | 21% | 21% | 23% | 19% | 22% | 25% | 19% | 27% | 19% | 23% | 22% | 18% | 41% |
| Public Administration | 22% | 27% | 6% | 32% | 5% | 16% | 28% | 3% | 15% | 26% | 12% | 30% | 8% |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Economics | 16% | 11% | 31% | 9% | 28% | 19% | 11% | 29% | 24% | 10% | 22% | 11% | 15% |
| Public Policy | 10% | 12% | 6% | 11% | 8% | 11% | 11% | 7% | 12% | 9% | 11% | 10% | 7% |

*Hand-coding of tenure/tenure track faculty profiles on school websites, LinkedIn profiles, and faculty websites

*Additional fields of study across the 77 schools

| Other (Biology, Computer Science, etc.) | Sociology | Urban Planning | Law | Psychology | History | International Relations/Affairs | Education | Civil Engineering | Geography | Environment | Public Health | Business |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7% | 6% | 5% | 3% | 3% | 2% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 1% |

The ratio of tenured/tenure-track professors with a Ph.D. degree in economics versus a public administration is 6 to 1 in schools offering only MPP degree, but drops to 1 to 4 in schools offering only MPA degrees.

The ratio of tenured/tenure-track professors with a Ph.D. in economics versus public administration is 10 to 1 in non-NASPAA accredited schools, but 1 to 6 in NASPAA accredited schools.

The percentage of political scientists among tenured/tenure-track professors is similar across all types of schools.

The percentage of tenured/tenure-track professors with a Ph.D. degree in Public Administration is higher in schools with mean student debt loads below average.
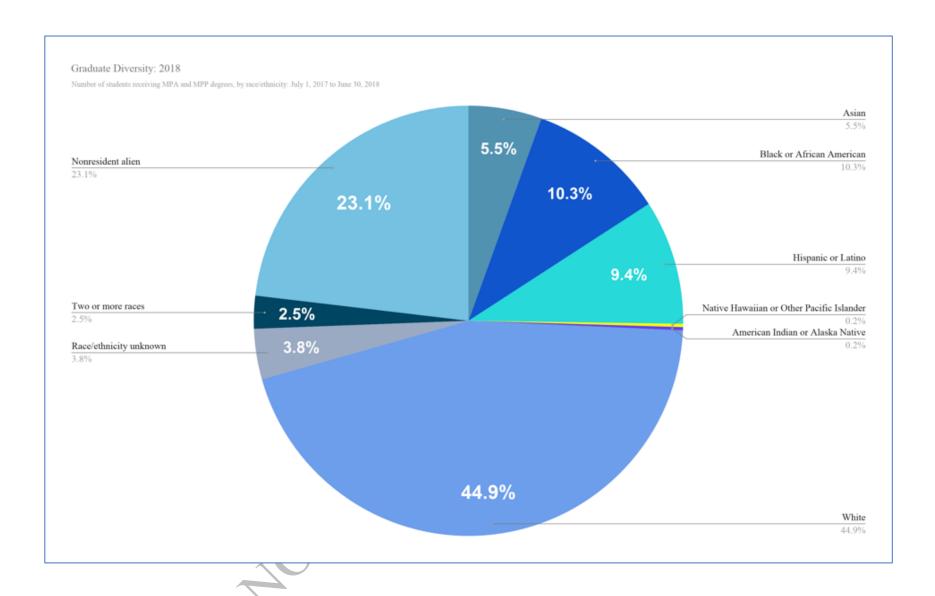
## IV.  WHO IS DOING THE LEARNING?
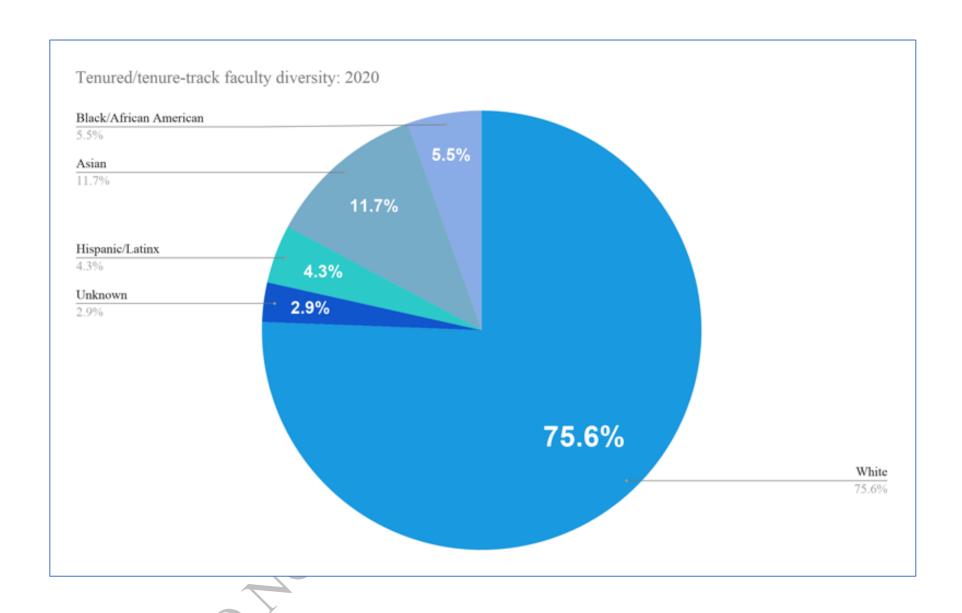
1)  Average percentage of women and men graduates
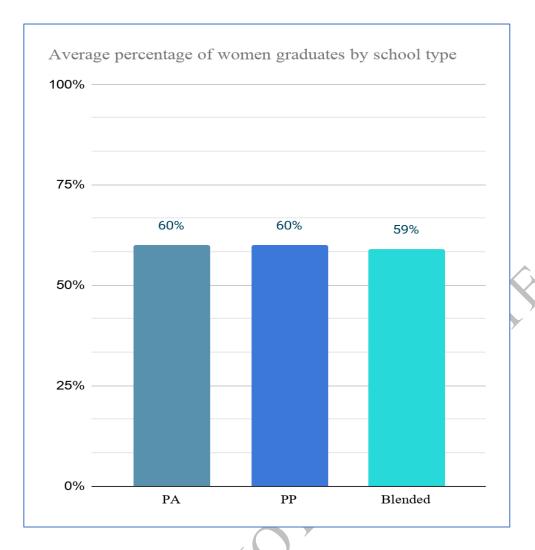
| Gender | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 (32 schools) | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Women | 59% | 60% | 57% | 60% | 60% | 59% | 59% | 59% | 57% | 61% | 58% | 60% | 63% |
| Men | 41% | 40% | 43% | 40% | 40% | 41% | 41% | 41% | 43% | 39% | 42% | 40% | 37% |

*Data from the National Center for Education Statistics

*The percentage of women graduates is consistent at about 60 percent among all types of public and private schools.*

Graduate Diversity: 2018

Number of students receiving MPA and MPP degrees, by race/ethnicity: July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018

Asian
5.5%

Black or African American
10.3%

Hispanic or Latino
9.4%

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
0.2%

American Indian or Alaska Native
0.2%

White
44.9%

Nonresident alien
23.1%

Two or more races
2.5%

Race/ethnicity unknown
3.8%

5.5%

10.3%

9.4%

23.1%

2.5%

3.8%

44.9%

DO NO

Tenured/tenure-track faculty diversity: 2020

- Black/African American 5.5%
- Asian 11.7%
- Hispanic/Latinx 4.3%
- Unknown 2.9%
- White 75.6%

Average percentage of women graduates by school type

2) Average percentage of white graduates and graduates of diversity

| Race | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 (32 schools) | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Graduates of Diversity | 38% | 37% | 39% | 40% | 38% | 35% | 38% | 39% | 35% | 38% | 42% | 35% | 31% |
| White graduates | 62% | 63% | 61% | 60% | 62% | 65% | 62% | 61% | 65% | 62% | 58% | 65% | 69% |

*Data from the National Center for Education Statistics, N=7,100 students across the 77 schools
**Number of graduates excludes international students

*Student diversity is at its highest in schools with mean federal student loan debt above average and schools that offer the PA degree, and lower among schools that offer the MPA and MPP (blended), and among schools that have the lowest mean student loan debt.*

Average percentage of graduates of diversity by school type
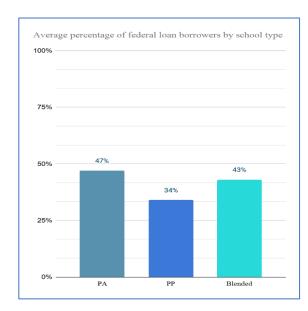
3) Average percentage of federal loan borrowers and non-borrowers

| Federal Loan Borrowers | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 (32 schools) | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Non-Borrower | 57% | 56% | 60% | 53% | 66% | 57% | 53% | 68% | 59% | 55% | 49% | 56% | 95% |
| Borrower | 43% | 44% | 40% | 47% | 34% | 43% | 47% | 32% | 41% | 45% | 51% | 44% | 5% |

*Data from the Department of Education *College Scorecard*

*The percentage of federal loan borrowers is 47 percent in both NASPAA-accredited schools and schools that offer MPA degrees only, which is higher than schools that offer MPP degrees only.*

Average percentage of federal loan borrowers by school type
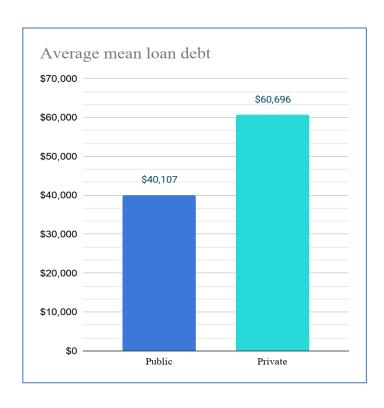
4)  Average mean loan debt in dollars

| Mean Federal Loan Debt | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Average | $45,327 | $40,107 | $60,696 | $42,120 | $56,400 | $45,516 | $42,977 | $52,792 | $52,179 | $35,437 | $59,651 | $35,366 | N/A |

*Data from NCES and the Department of Education *College Scorecard*

*The average mean federal student loan debt for private schools is 1.5 times higher than public schools. The average is also 1.2 times higher in schools that offer the MPP only compared with schools that offer the MPA only and MPA/MPP (blended).*

Average mean loan debt

| | |
|---|---|
| Public | $40,107 |
| Private | $60,696 |

5) Average percentage of schools with at least one-fourth of enrollment from international students

| International Students | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| 25% and above | 25% | 16% | 53% | 19% | 38% | 26% | 19% | 40% | 31% | 20% | 41% | 10% | 43% |
| Below 25% | 75% | 84% | 47% | 81% | 62% | 74% | 81% | 60% | 69% | 80% | 59% | 90% | 57% |
| Totals (N=77) | 100% | 75% | 25% | 48% | 17% | 35% | 74% | 26% | 42% | 58% | 38% | 53% | 9% |

*Data from NASPAA website reporting

*The percentage of schools with over one-fourth of international students is 53 percent in private schools, 3.3 times that of public schools.*
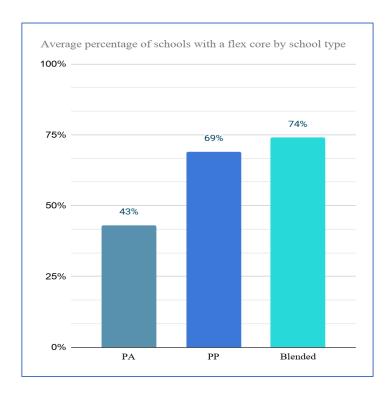
# V. HOW ARE STUDENTS LEARNING?

1) Average percentage of schools with fixed core courses v. flex core courses

| Type of Core Curriculum | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Fixed | 42% | 45% | 32% | 57% | 31% | 26% | 46% | 30% | 16% | 60% | 28% | 49% | 57% |
| Flex | 58% | 55% | 68% | 43% | 69% | 74% | 54% | 70% | 84% | 40% | 72% | 51% | 43% |
| Totals (N=77) | 100% | 75% | 25% | 48% | 17% | 35% | 74% | 26% | 42% | 58% | 38% | 53% | 9% |

*Data from hand-coding of school websites

*Schools with student debt loads above average have a higher percentage of flex cores, while schools that offer the MPA have a lower percentage.*

Average percentage of schools with a flex core by school type

2) Average number of required courses

| Core Courses | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 (32 schools) | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Average Number | 10 | 9 | 13 | 9 | 10 | 12 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 8 | 12 | 9 | 7 |

*Data from hand-coding of school websites

*Private schools, programs that offer MPP and MPA degrees, top-25 ranked schools, and schools with mean student debt loads above average have a higher number of required courses.*

## 3) Average number of specializations in MPA and MPP programs

| Specialization | Totals (N=32) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 (32 schools) | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| MPA | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | N/A | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| MPP | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | N/A | 2 | 1 | 0 |

*Data from hand-coding of school websites. Specializations embrace sub-program topics within the MPA or MPP such as advocacy, international, public finance, policy, management, social innovation, etc.

*The average number of specializations is higher at private schools and schools that offer the MPP or MPA degrees.*

*Word clouds from 436 core course descriptions from the 33-77 ranked schools. These schools were not asked for their core curricula syllabi, but provided course descriptions on their websites.

4) Average percentage of schools with five core courses or more

| Number of Core Courses | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| 5 or less | 10% | 10% | 11% | 16% | 0% | 7% | 12% | 5% | 9% | 11% | 7% | 12% | 14% |
| Above 5 | 90% | 90% | 89% | 84% | 100% | 93% | 88% | 95% | 91% | 89% | 93% | 88% | 86% |
| Totals (N=77) | 100% | 75% | 25% | 48% | 17% | 35% | 74% | 26% | 42% | 58% | 38% | 53% | 9% |

*Data from hand-coding of school websites

*There is little variation in the number of required courses across the schools.*
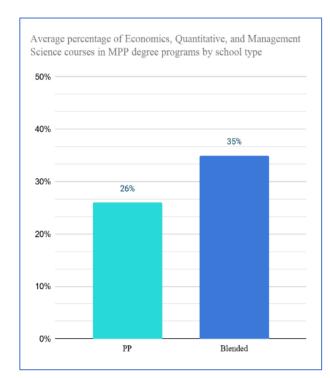
5) Average percentage of Economics, Quantitative, and Management Science courses in MPA and MPP programs
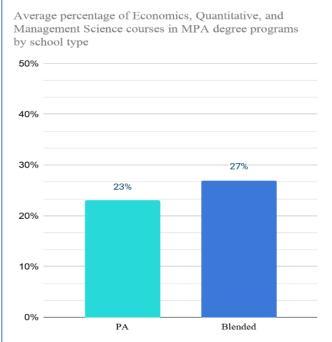
| % Economics, Quantitative & Mgmt Science Courses in program | | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 (32 schools) | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| MPA | 25% | 25% | 26% | 23% | N/A | 27% | 25% | 24% | 25% | N/A | 27% | 21% | 26% |
| MPP | 30% | 27% | 33% | N/A | 26% | 35% | 31% | 29% | 30% | N/A | 35% | 18% | 14% |

\*Data from the Atlas of Public Management coding of core curricula (N=23 for MPA degree programs and 18 for MPP degree programs)

*The percentage of economics, quantitative, and management science courses in a school's curriculum is higher in an MPP degree program offered by a private school and in schools that offer both MPA and MPP degrees (blended). The percentage of economics, etc., courses is lower in public schools that offer the MPP.*

Average percentage of Economics, Quantitative, and Management Science courses in MPP degree programs by school type



Average percentage of Economics, Quantitative, and Management Science courses in MPA degree programs by school type

6) Average percentage of strategy + structure courses in MPA and MPP programs

| % Strategy & Structure Courses | | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 (32 schools) | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| MPA | 12% | 13% | 10% | 12% | N/A | 13% | 11% | 14% | 12% | N/A | 11% | 13% | 14% |
| MPP | 11% | 13% | 9% | N/A | 12% | 11% | 9% | 13% | 11% | N/A | 12% | 8% | 3% |

*Data from the Atlas of Public Management coding of core curricula (N=23 for MPA degree programs and 18 for MPP degree programs)

*MPP degree programs in private schools and NASPAA-accredited schools offer much fewer Strategy & Structure courses.*

7) Average percentage of schools that require internships as a prerequisite for graduation

| Internship Required | Totals (N=32) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Yes | 69% | 75% | 58% | 67% | 67% | 71% | 71% | 63% | 69% | N/A | 63% | 73% | 100% |
| No | 31% | 25% | 42% | 33% | 33% | 29% | 29% | 38% | 31% | N/A | 37% | 27% | 0% |
| Totals (N=32) | 100% | 63% | 38% | 38% | 19% | 44% | 75% | 25% | 100% | N/A | 59% | 34% | 6% |

*Data from hand-coding of school websites and the Atlas of Public Management

*The percentage of private schools that do not require an internship is nearly twice that of public schools.*

8) Average percentage of schools that require a thesis as a prerequisite for graduation

| Thesis Required | Totals (N=32) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Yes | 12% | 29% | 0% | 0% | 17% | 10% | 10% | 14% | 12% | N/A | 8% | 33% | 0% |
| No | 88% | 71% | 100% | 100% | 83% | 90% | 90% | 86% | 88% | N/A | 92% | 67% | 100% |
| Totals (N=32) | 100% | 41% | 59% | 6% | 35% | 59% | 59% | 41% | 100% | N/A | 76% | 18% | 6% |

*Data from hand-coding of school websites and the Atlas of Public Management

*Less than one-third of public schools require a thesis, compared to none of the private schools as well as schools offering only an MPA degree.*

9) Average percentage of schools that offer a joint degree(s)

| Joint Degree | Totals (N=32) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Yes | 72% | 70% | 75% | 75% | 67% | 71% | 71% | 75% | 72% | N/A | 58% | 91% | 100% |
| No | 28% | 30% | 25% | 25% | 33% | 29% | 29% | 25% | 28% | N/A | 42% | 9% | 0% |
| Totals (N=32) | 100% | 63% | 38% | 38% | 19% | 44% | 75% | 25% | 100% | N/A | 59% | 34% | 6% |

*Data from hand-coding of school websites

About 70 percent of all types of schools offer joint degree programs.

Over 90 percent of schools with mean student debt load below average offer joint degrees, compared to 58 percent of schools with mean student debt load above average.

10)    Average percentage of schools with a significant social innovation curriculum/activity score

| Social Innovation Activity | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Yes | 30% | 29% | 32% | 32% | 31% | 26% | 30% | 30% | 31% | 29% | 34% | 27% | 29% |
| No | 70% | 71% | 68% | 68% | 69% | 74% | 70% | 70% | 69% | 71% | 66% | 73% | 71% |
| Totals (N=77) | 100% | 75% | 25% | 48% | 17% | 35% | 74% | 26% | 42% | 58% | 38% | 53% | 9% |

*Data from hand-coding of school websites

*Less than a third of public and private schools offer courses and activities related to social innovation, with an even lower percentage among blended schools.*

(a) Social Innovation website activity

| Social Innovation featured on websites | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Debt Load above Mean | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Yes | 14% | 10% | 26% | 16% | 15% | 11% | 12% | 20% | 16% | 13% | 28% | 7% | 0% |
| No | 86% | 90% | 74% | 84% | 85% | 89% | 88% | 80% | 84% | 87% | 72% | 93% | 100% |
| Totals (N=77) | 100% | 75% | 25% | 48% | 17% | 35% | 74% | 26% | 42% | 58% | 38% | 53% | 9% |

(b) Social Innovation courses offered

| Social Innovation courses offered | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Debt Load above Mean | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Yes | 21% | 19% | 26% | 24% | 15% | 19% | 21% | 20% | 28% | 16% | 31% | 17% | 0% |
| No | 79% | 81% | 74% | 76% | 85% | 81% | 79% | 80% | 72% | 84% | 69% | 83% | 100% |
| Totals (N=77) | 100% | 75% | 25% | 48% | 17% | 35% | 74% | 26% | 42% | 58% | 38% | 53% | 9% |

(c) Social Innovation specialization offered

| Social Innovation Specialization Offered | Totals (N=77) | Status | School Type | NASPAA Accredited | Top 25 | Debt Load above Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| | Totals | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 6% | 5% | 11% | 11% | 8% | 0% | 5% | 10% | 3% | 9% | 14% | 2% | 0% |
| No | 94% | 95% | 89% | 89% | 92% | 100% | 95% | 90% | 97% | 91% | 86% | 98% | 100% |
| Totals (N=77) | 100% | 75% | 25% | 48% | 17% | 35% | 74% | 26% | 42% | 58% | 38% | 53% | 9% |

(d) Social Innovation special programs offered (i.e., seminars, short-term programs, etc.)

| Social Innovation special programs offered | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Debt Load above Mean | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Yes | 17% | 14% | 26% | 16% | 23% | 15% | 16% | 20% | 16% | 18% | 24% | 10% | 29% |
| No | 83% | 86% | 74% | 84% | 77% | 85% | 84% | 80% | 84% | 82% | 76% | 90% | 71% |
| Totals (N=77) | 100% | 75% | 25% | 48% | 17% | 35% | 74% | 26% | 42% | 58% | 38% | 53% | 9% |

(e) Social Innovation Certificate Offered

| Social Innovation Certificate Offered | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Debt Load above Mean | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 8% | 5% | 16% | 11% | 0% | 7% | 9% | 5% | 16% | 2% | 10% | 7% | 0% |
| No | 92% | 95% | 84% | 89% | 100% | 93% | 91% | 95% | 84% | 98% | 90% | 93% | 100% |
| Totals (N=77) | 100% | 75% | 25% | 48% | 17% | 35% | 74% | 26% | 42% | 58% | 38% | 53% | 9% |

# VI.   HOW IS LEARNING ORGANIZED?

REPORT ILLUSTRATION
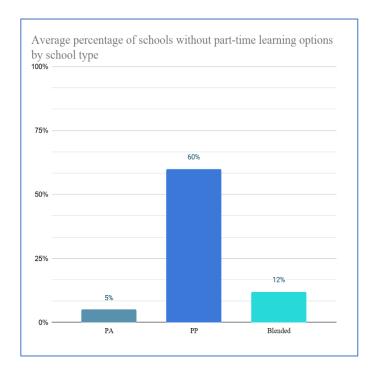


*Word cloud of dean's website messages to potential students

1) Average percentage of schools with flexible (part-time) learning options

| Flexible Study Options | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Part-time | 85% | 91% | 65% | 95% | 40% | 88% | 93% | 56% | 83% | 86% | 74% | 93% | 80% |
| Full-time only | 15% | 9% | 35% | 5% | 60% | 12% | 7% | 44% | 17% | 14% | 26% | 7% | 20% |
| Totals (N=77) | 100% | 77% | 23% | 51% | 14% | 36% | 78% | 22% | 40% | 60% | 37% | 56% | 7% |

*Data from the NASPAA data inventories and further hand-coding of school websites

*The percentage of schools that offer part-time study varies significantly between public and private schools. It also varies between schools that offer only MPA and MPP degrees.*

Average percentage of schools without part-time learning options by school type

2) Average number of master's degree programs

| Master's degree | Totals (N=32) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 (32 schools) | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Average Number | 4 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | N/A | 4 | 3 | 3 |

*Data from hand-coding of school websites

*On average, private schools offer five master's degree programs, which are 60 percent more programs than public schools.*

3) Average percentage of schools with advanced certificate programs

| Advanced Certificate | Totals (N=32) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Yes | 72% | 70% | 75% | 75% | 67% | 71% | 79% | 50% | 72% | N/A | 68% | 82% | 50% |
| No | 28% | 30% | 25% | 25% | 33% | 29% | 21% | 50% | 28% | N/A | 32% | 18% | 50% |
| Totals (N=32) | 100% | 63% | 38% | 38% | 19% | 44% | 75% | 25% | 100% | N/A | 59% | 34% | 6% |

*Data from hand-coding of school websites
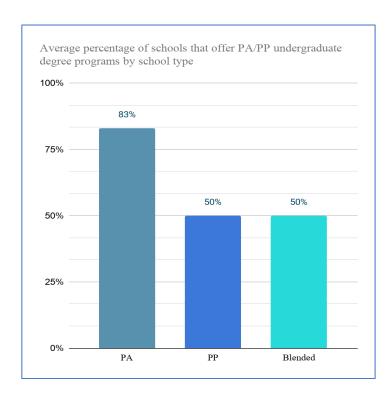
*NASPAA-accredited schools are more likely to offer an advanced certificate than non-accreddited schools.*

4) Average percentage of schools that offer PA/PP undergraduate degree programs

| Undergraduate Degree | Totals (N=32) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Yes | 63% | 70% | 50% | 83% | 50% | 50% | 75% | 25% | 63% | N/A | 63% | 64% | 50% |
| No | 38% | 30% | 50% | 17% | 50% | 50% | 25% | 75% | 38% | N/A | 37% | 36% | 50% |
| Totals (N=32) | 100% | 63% | 38% | 38% | 19% | 44% | 75% | 25% | 100% | N/A | 59% | 34% | 6% |

*Data from hand-coding of school websites

*The percentage of public schools offering undergraduate degrees is higher than private schools, and a much higher percentage of schools awarding MPA only as a master's degree offers an undergraduate degree either as a stand-alone or as part of a blended approach.*

Average percentage of schools that offer PA/PP undergraduate
degree programs by school type
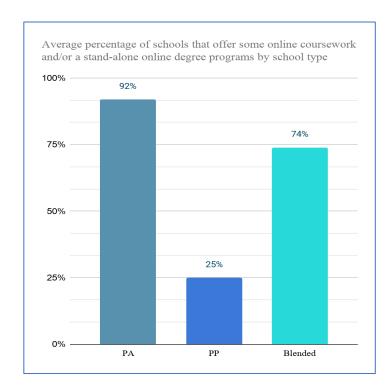
5) Average percentage of schools that offer at least some online coursework and/or stand-alone online degree programs

| Online courses or degrees | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Yes | 75% | 81% | 58% | 92% | 25% | 74% | 84% | 47% | 66% | 82% | 66% | 83% | 67% |
| No | 25% | 19% | 42% | 8% | 75% | 26% | 16% | 53% | 34% | 18% | 34% | 17% | 33% |
| Totals (N=77) | 100% | 75% | 25% | 49% | 16% | 36% | 75% | 25% | 42% | 58% | 38% | 54% | 8% |

*Data from hand-coding of school websites, completed before COVID-19.

*Eighty-one percent of public schools offer online courses and degrees, as do 92 percent of schools that only award MPA degrees. In contrast, only a quarter of schools that only award MPP degrees offer these online learning options.*

Average percentage of schools that offer some online coursework and/or a stand-alone online degree programs by school type

| School Type | Percentage |
|---|---|
| PA | 92% |
| PP | 25% |
| Blended | 74% |

# VII.  WHAT IS THE IMPACT?

1) Website coverage of COVID-19, April-June 2020

| COVID-19 Content | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Higher | 60% | 53% | 79% | 49% | 92% | 59% | 49% | 90% | 72% | 51% | 76% | 44% | 86% |
| Lower | 40% | 47% | 21% | 51% | 8% | 41% | 51% | 10% | 28% | 49% | 24% | 56% | 14% |
| Totals (N=77) | 100% | 75% | 25% | 48% | 17% | 35% | 74% | 26% | 42% | 58% | 38% | 53% | 9% |

*Hand-coding of COVID-19 website coverage, April 13-June 20, 2020

*Website coverage of COVID-19 was most highest among (1) private schools, (2) schools that award the MPP degree, (3) schools that were not accredited by NASPAA, and (4) schools with mean student loan debt about average.*

2) Website coverage of social justice issues, June 2020

| Social Justice Content | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Higher | 49% | 48% | 53% | 41% | 62% | 56% | 51% | 45% | 63% | 40% | 59% | 51% | 0% |
| Lower | 51% | 52% | 47% | 59% | 38% | 44% | 49% | 55% | 38% | 60% | 41% | 49% | 100% |
| Totals (N=77) | 100% | 75% | 25% | 48% | 17% | 35% | 74% | 26% | 42% | 58% | 38% | 53% | 9% |

*Hand-coding of social justice website coverage, April 13-June 20, 2020

*Website coverage of social justice issues was highest among schools offering only the MPP degrees, in top-25 schools, and in schools with mean student loan debt above average, but just 41 percent in schools offering only the MPA degree.*

3)  Overall current events website coverage

| Social Issue Coverage | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Major | 29% | 24% | 42% | 19% | 54% | 30% | 25% | 40% | 47% | 16% | 48% | 20% | 0% |
| Minimal | 52% | 53% | 47% | 51% | 46% | 56% | 51% | 55% | 41% | 60% | 38% | 56% | 86% |
| None | 19% | 22% | 11% | 30% | 0% | 15% | 25% | 5% | 13% | 24% | 14% | 24% | 14% |
| Totals (N=77) | 100% | 75% | 25% | 48% | 17% | 35% | 74% | 26% | 42% | 58% | 38% | 53% | 9% |

*Hand-coding of combined COVID-19 and social justice website coverage, April 13-June 20, 2020

*Website coverage of COVID-19 and social justice issues combined was higher at schools that offered the MPP degree than at schools that offered the MPA.*

4) Average number and percentages of graduate degrees conferred

| Graduates | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 (32 schools) | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Average | 92 | 68 | 163 | 82 | 66 | 118 | 92 | 92 | 137 | 59 | 136 | 67 | 51 |
| Total | 100% | 56% | 44% | 43% | 12% | 45% | 74% | 26% | 62% | 38% | 56% | 39% | 5% |

*Data from the National Center for Education Statistics; numbers apply only to MPA and MPP degrees

*On average, private schools graduated more than twice as many students as public schools. Schools with mean student loan debt above average also graduated twice as many students as those with lower debt.*
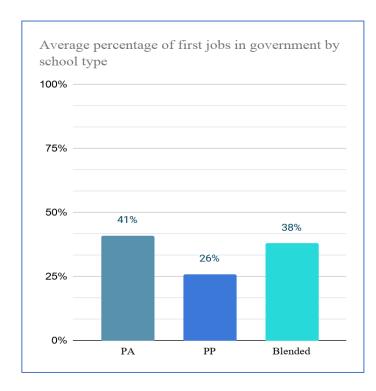
5) Average percentage of first jobs in government, non-profit, or private sector

| First-Destination | Totals (N=52) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 (32 schools) | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| Government | 38% | 42% | 28% | 41% | 26% | 38% | 40% | 33% | 32% | 43% | 31% | 46% | 32% |
| Non-profit | 22% | 20% | 28% | 20% | 23% | 24% | 21% | 24% | 26% | 19% | 25% | 19% | 24% |
| Private | 19% | 16% | 28% | 14% | 37% | 20% | 15% | 32% | 22% | 17% | 23% | 16% | 19% |

*Data collected from NASPAA website and personal email requests to deans

*On average, 37 percent of graduates from schools that only awarded an MPP went to the private sector for their first job, compared with just 14 percent who graduated from schools that only awarded an MPA degree.*

*On average, 46 percent who graduated from schools with mean federal student loan debt below average went to the government, while students who graduate from high debt load schools had a higher interest in non-profit and private sector first jobs.*

Average percentage of first jobs in government by school type
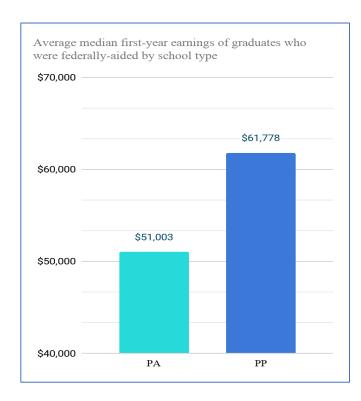
5) Average median first-year earnings of MPA and MPP graduates who were federally-aided students who completed college

| Median first-year Earnings | Totals (N=77) | Status | | School Type | | | NASPAA Accredited | | Top 25 (32 schools) | | Schools whose graduates have the heaviest debt loads (above average) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Public | Private | PA | PP | Blended | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | N/A |
| MPP | $60,768 | $58,825 | $62,182 | N/A | $61,778 | $59,860 | $57,363 | $63,245 | $61,893 | $56,550 | $61,420 | $58,325 | N/A |
| MPA | $54,220 | $50,503 | $67,064 | $51,003 | N/A | $59,300 | $53,133 | $66,450 | $57,675 | $51,838 | $60,279 | $50,562 | $45,200 |

*Data from the National Center for Education Statistics

*The median first-year earnings of graduates from schools that only awarded MPP degrees was $10,775 higher than that of graduates from schools offering only MPA degrees.*

Average median first-year earnings of graduates who were federally-aided by school type

$61,778

$51,003

$70,000

$60,000

$50,000

$40,000

PA

PP

# CONCLUSION

This report provides a short list of benchmarking measures that public affairs educators can explore for insights on future directions, but lacks a deep inventory of insights on how their schools are doing in preparing their students for contemporary careers. Acknowledging that many schools survey their students on course delivery and overall satisfaction with what they learned and how they were taught, graduates are hard to track over time, response rates to further surveys appear to be low, and ongoing assessments are expensive. The result is a general dearth of information on where graduates went, how they advanced, how they are changing the world, and how our teaching and research is helping them make a difference.

The limited available evidence on our alums strongly suggests that public service is becoming more stressful as political polarization, budget crises, and government breakdowns have increased. The nation and world have never needed our best and brightest more. Yet, it also seems reasonable to argue that the "quiet crisis" that framed Paul A. Volcker's 1988 National Commission on the Public Service is growing louder as baby boomers approach their final confrontations with careers and retirements. Volcker's preface to the report is just as relevant today as it was back then: "Simply put, too many of the best of the nation's senior executives are ready to leave government, and not enough of its most talented young people are willing to join. This erosion in the attractiveness of public service at all levels—most specifically in the federal civil service—undermines the ability of government to respond effectively to the needs and aspirations of the American, and ultimately damages the democratic process itself."

Sadly, for our profession, Volcker's words still ring true as time works its will on our curricula, faculties, and student debt. Yet, we know little about how our students are doing, where we did well, what we missed, and how we might redesign our curricula and advocacy agendas to meet the current pressures. At the very least, it seems reasonable to suggest a collective effort to survey several cohorts of students to see what has changed over time and where they might recommend improvements and deepening. Some schools are no doubt already engaged in regular alumni surveys, but perhaps it is time for the community to pool resources and graduate contact information to create a regular assessment that can guide the community.

It has been twenty-six years since I last fielded an alumni random-sample survey of graduates of the top 20 schools. Perhaps it is time to try again.  Surely our graduates have insights that might help us refine our curricula and focus our advocacy as polarization persists.