



Nonprofit Academic Centers Council | Accreditation

Marco Tavanti, Director MNA Program
School of Management
University of San Francisco
101 Howard Street, Suite 500
San Francisco, California 94015

July 1, 2019

Dear Dr. Tavanti,

This letter comprises the successful outcome of the NACC accreditation process performed to review the University of San Francisco School of Management's Master of Nonprofit Administration Program (www.usfca.edu/management/graduate-programs/nonprofit-administration).

The accreditation outcomes for the NACC review of the Master of Nonprofit Administration program have drawn on three levels of data collection, expert review by distinguished and experienced scholars of nonprofit sector management pedagogy aided by qualified practitioner graduates of nonprofit management programs comprising the NACC External Review Board; the Accreditation Advisory Chair; and myself as project director. The NACC accreditation process affirms the University of San Francisco's Master of Nonprofit Administration program as aligning with the three central principles underlying the NACC Curricular Guidelines finalized in July 2015.

At the conclusion of our review and on behalf of our stakeholders engaged in this process we can confirm:

- The Master of Nonprofit Administration affirmatively aligns with 15 of the 16 major subject areas of the NACC Curricular guidelines. Greater detail is provided in the remainder of this correspondence.
- The data gathered for this Accreditation review process involving academic program mission, program description and purposes, course nomenclature, individual syllabi content, required course texts, course assignments, and instructor expertise underpinning the Master of Nonprofit Administration (full time and part time formats) align with the NACC accreditation criteria devised for graduate academic programs housed in traditional institutions of higher education.
- Course titles and subject matter, faculty biography and expertise for the University of San Francisco's Master of Nonprofit Administration degree unambiguously meet 15 of the 16 major content subject areas through core curriculum instruction.



The structure of this document and additional materials reflects our view that an accreditation process for the nonprofit/philanthropy field of knowledge and instruction should be one of affirmation rather than correction. We take this approach as a way to:

- Align the larger scope of interdisciplinary research scholarship of the field of nonprofit sector studies that inform nonprofit management pedagogy and program design;
- Advance the evolving trajectory of subject matter in scholarly research along the themes of the field pioneered in the 1970s and 1980s thru present day;
- Consider the variable institutional fit that nonprofit academic programs have in higher education.

To be clear, our goals for this process are to validate the alignment of your academic program with the 2015 NACC curricular guidelines. The NACC Curricular Guidelines are considered by their designers to be a living document capturing the emerging subject matter specialties drawn from research and practice. The most recent comprehensive update of the Curricular Guidelines was completed and published in mid 2015. Although a new update is scheduled to be released next year or soon after, the 2015 version has served as the guiding document for this accreditation review. Within this context our accreditation approach:

- Takes a reactive review standard rather than proscriptive;
- Endeavors to offer transparency in methods and in reporting outcomes;
- Provides opportunity and weight to participant context and explanation within the limits of brevity and clarity.
- Validates “truth in advertising” by ensuring that academic programs accredited through the NACC process meet the criteria for content and quality.

Our process for review applied three principle guidelines in process of review for the Master of Nonprofit Administration Program:

1. A nonprofit/philanthropy-first research philosophy and perspective. This nonprofit/philanthropy-first approach refers to research centered on the unique role and nature of the nonprofit and philanthropy sector and its institutions in society.
2. A nonprofit-first pedagogical subject matter cast in the 16 major subject headers contained in the NACC curricular guidelines encompassing specific characteristics reflected in nonprofit institutional forms.
3. A nonprofit pedagogy for stand-alone graduate degrees utilizing terminology that synchronizes with the nomenclature and themes found in the NACC Guidelines.



Nonprofit Academic Centers Council | Accreditation

Our process for review included the following components.

Three phases of data collection:

- Phase 1 was comprised of the application, payment of fee and input of program identification data into the web-based application by the academic program director
- Phase 2 included descriptive and detailed data which was input along with supporting documentation organized and submitted by the academic program director. This phase included a follow-up conference call with the academic program director by Accreditation staff.
- Phase 3 engaged the academic program director to map the Master of Nonprofit Administration program curriculum on the NACC curricular guidelines spreadsheets.

Two levels of content assessment

- The materials were then reviewed by separate External Review Board members trained to confirm the data made by the submitting institutions and to map the curriculum using the framework established in the NACC Curricular Guidelines.
- As NACC Accreditation Project Director, I reviewed and compiled the assessment information from all stages of data collection and review; reviewed the general structure of the assessment components with the Accreditation committee members; discussed any nuances or comments I felt required elaboration with the individual External Advisory Board members, and then made final assessment you find as the content of this letter.

Validation

The letter was then presented to the Accreditation Advisory Committee Chair for review and sign-off as the second validating signature on the NACC Accreditation Certificate that accompanies this document.

1. **A nonprofit/philanthropy-first research philosophy and perspective.** This approach refers to research centered on the unique role and nature of the nonprofit and philanthropy sector across and beyond public administration and the private sector. Along with these research perspectives, the nonprofit/social/third sector has also advanced and solidified in the understanding of its institutional representations, functions, and the needs for specialized nonprofit management education (NME) field.
2. **A nonprofit-first pedagogical subject matter** cast in the subject themes comprising the NACC curricular guidelines that are relevant to the teaching emphasis of the graduate



program purposes depicted on its website and in the data collected for the NACC accreditation process.

3. **A nonprofit pedagogy utilizing terminology** that synchronizes with the nomenclature and themes found in the 2015 NACC Guidelines.

Using these criteria and methods, the review of the Master of Nonprofit Administration whose web address is www.usfca.edu/management/graduate-programs/nonprofit-administration has met or aligned with 15 of the 16 major subject areas of the NACC Curricular guidelines noted in TABLE I.

Our review process confirms that the University of San Francisco’s Master of Nonprofit Administration will be listed by the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council as an accredited program fulfilling its stated purposes and promises to its students.

TABLE I Guideline Category	Rev1	Rev 2
1.0 Comparative Global Perspectives on the Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action and Philanthropy	Yes+	Yes+
2.0 Scope and Significance of the Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action and Philanthropy	Yes	Yes+
13.0 History and Theories of the Nonprofit Sector, Voluntary Action and Philanthropy	Yes	Yes+
4.0 Ethics and Values	Yes	Yes+
5.0 Nonprofit Governance and Leadership	Yes	Yes+
6.0 Public Policy, Advocacy and Social Change	Yes+	Yes+
7.0 Nonprofit Law	Yes	Yes
8.0 Nonprofit Economics	No	Yes
9.0 Nonprofit Finance	Yes	Yes
10.0 Fundraising and Resource Development	Yes+	Yes
11.0 Nonprofit Financial Management and Accountability	Yes	Yes
12.0 Leadership, Management, Innovation and Entrepreneurship	Yes	Yes
13.0 Nonprofit Human Resource Management	Yes	Yes
14.0 Nonprofit Marketing and Communications	Yes	Yes
15.0 Information Technology, Social Media and Data Management	Yes	Yes
16.0 Assessment, Evaluation and Decision-Making Methods	Yes	Yes



Nonprofit Academic Centers Council | Accreditation

Accreditation Certification

Our review process confirms that the University of San Francisco’s Master of Nonprofit Administration (MNA) Program will be listed as a NACC accredited program which our review certifies its status as fulfilling its stated purposes and promises to its students. The University and the Program may communicate this accreditation status along using NACC accreditation logo which can be used in the marketing material of the program to recognize the quality of the academic program.

We appreciate the leadership example that the MNA program has provided in the pioneering years of nonprofit management education and we look forward to seeing future innovative developments in accordance with the NACC standards and needs to educate nonprofit leaders and managers.

Signatures

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stuart C. Mendel".

Accreditation Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Hale".

Accreditation Committee Chair



Nonprofit Academic Centers Council | Accreditation

Notes

Use of the accreditation data: Since we are considering this accreditation process as a pathway to learn from one another, we will consider the information we collect and the knowledge we create as the intellectual property of the NACC.

Consequently, we plan to use the data and assessment outcomes we collect for purposes of further research questions and for publication in report formats to our members; to the larger community of academics through the NACC News; at academic conferences affiliated with the field; and potentially in juried scholarly publications of the field.

Appeals Process

We are not encouraging appeals. Our desire is to reach consensus with the participating organizations and have put in place checks and balances we believe establish fairness and impartiality. Nonetheless, we will establish that appeal of the accreditation determination may be necessary and can be made through written articulation of the issue to the project director, and for subsequent review by the Accreditation Advisory Committee Chair.