Educating nonprofit leaders in the 21st Century:
What does 'social entrepreneurship' mean for nonprofit management education?

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Graduate programs offering a concentration in nonprofit management education (NME) are housed in a variety of locations within the university, almost all of them within a professional program or school. Although the curriculum of these programs varies, as DiMaggio and Powell have suggested, once a field is established there seems to be an inevitable push for organizations within that field to become more similar to each other (1983). Research on nonprofit management education programs over the past twenty years has shown this to be the case. For example, as the call came for more of a focus on program evaluation, the number of courses offered in this area increased dramatically. As the impact of globalization on the sector became more apparent, the number of courses with an international focus increased as well. With each new trend or development, comes a modification in curricular design across all program types. Although some changes may materialize in one location earlier than others, programs tend to move in tandem with each other, a phenomenon that DiMaggio and Powell have coined "institutional isomorphism."

The development of courses and programming in social entrepreneurship and social enterprise is the most recent trend we have seen in the field. We have seen an increase in the number of courses and programs developed with a focus on social entrepreneurship. Not surprising as a recent article in *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* proclaimed social entrepreneurs as "the hottest game in town and the b buzzword of the decade" (Bernholz, 2011). While singleton

social entrepreneurship courses are offered in a variety of institutional settings, most of the recently established social entrepreneurship *programs* are located in a business school setting. There are certain advantages of the business school model including main-streaming of nonprofit management as a field, and integrating knowledge of the nonprofit sector, philanthropy, social enterprise and corporate social responsibility into the education of all management school students. This has the potential of improving not only management but also governance of nonprofit organizations because business managers commonly serve on and dominate nonprofit boards and in the past have not always understood the dimensions of board governance particular to the sector.

On the other hand, the business school alternative poses a number of significant challenges. Nonprofit students may be neglected in the business school context if graduates with high earning potential are more highly valued by faculty and administration. Moreover, nonprofit management education itself may be distorted if it is unduly imbued with a commercial perspective or if conventional faculty are merely recycled into nonprofit programs without having the proper background or research interests. This could potentially lead to diminished coverage of nonprofit cases and materials in coursework with graduates ill-prepared to take on the challenges of managing in the nonprofit sector.

This paper will discuss the increased interest in social entrepreneurship curriculum exhibited by business schools, together with a discussion of the various programmatic forms that have been developed in other institutional locations. By linking the social entrepreneurship movement to the historic roots of public management generally, the authors will argue that although social entrepreneurship is the flavor of the month, it does not significantly depart from the traditional values on which the field is based, i.e., market motives, rationality, hierarchy, and

2

science. The authors end with a call for a more expanded definition of the work of the sector that will humanize our bureaucratic processes, link communities with agents of social change, and embrace democratic values through collaboration with citizens.

"Teaching" Social Entrepreneurs

During the past decade there has been a dramatic increase in the number of graduate level social entrepreneurship courses offered in the United States (Figure 1). The historical census of nonprofit management education courses maintained by Seton Hall University included only four courses in 1998, increasing to 21 and 26 in 2002 and 2006 respectively. Today there are almost 100 courses offered. Most of these courses are offered as singleton courses within the nonprofit management master's degree program. However, some are included as part of a concentration in social entrepreneurship or a complete master's degree in social entrepreneurship. In our review of graduate education programs with a social entrepreneurship emphasis, we found 20 such programs in the United States and at least 16 in universities around the world.

Most of the program websites for these 36 programs include a homepage where the major purpose of the program is elucidated, with the goals and objectives of the social entrepreneurship program clearly articulated. A summary of the many goals in the stated purpose of the social entrepreneurship programs in our study is provided in Table 1 for programs located in the United States and Table 2 for international programs. A check mark indicates the inclusion of that purpose in the website description. Programs located within the United States (Table 1) are identified by their institutional location, while those located outside the United States are listed by country.

3

In the United States the most frequently mentioned purpose of the social entrepreneurship program is to create social value, including such purposes as a commitment to working on social issues, improving social and economic conditions, addressing critical issues requiring social transformation. Almost 75% of the social entrepreneurship graduate programs included this value in the description of program purposes. Providing leadership to solve problems and working across sector boundaries were included in more than half of the purpose statements. Although borrowing and adopting the logic of the private sector was stated more often by a business school (63%), it was also mentioned by three programs in other than a business setting. Purposes associated with crafting entrepreneurial solutions such as innovation, identifying opportunities, and organizing resources were mentioned by fewer than half of the programs in their stated purpose. Finally, five of the programs made reference to the importance of developing economically sustainable solutions or working in social ventures, all of which were located in a public affairs and administration or religiously based program.

By contrast with programs in the United States, the most frequently mentioned purpose stated by programs in others parts of the world is crafting entrepreneurial solutions, mentioned by 81% of the programs. On the other hand, creating social value which was most often mentioned in the stated purpose of US programs in social entrepreneurship, was mentioned by fewer than half of the international programs (43%). Preparing graduates for work in social ventures was also frequently mentioned, with 69% stating this as a program purpose.

Regardless of location, very few programs embraced the adoption of creating an ethical, responsible worldview in the website overview or mobilizing people from diverse backgrounds in their stated program purpose. And even fewer declared that an understanding of political, economic and policy forces is an important program emphasis. The focus seems clearly placed

4

on the development and implementation of social ventures, less on the political, policy or ethical dimensions of the social entrepreneurship approach. And we found no mention in engaging the citizenry in the development of policy alternatives.

Curricular Content of Social Entrepreneurship Programs

In this section we focus on the curricular content of social entrepreneurship programs located in the United States where course descriptions and programmatic content are generally more available on the web than in international programs. This is due, in part, to the many and varied curricular models for post-graduate study in other parts of the world.

In their article on social entrepreneurship, Young and Grinsfelder (2010) reviewed the literature regarding skill sets required by entrepreneurs in various sector settings. They identified three skill sets required by entrepreneurs to successfully acquire resources: market skills, political skills and management skills. We have expanded on this typology to more fully recognize the nonprofit management skill set and to hold open the possibility that courses may include components of all three skills sets. The results of the analysis of the curricular content of the social entrepreneurship concentration courses are shown in Table 3. The bar graphs in Figure 2 graphically depict the degree programs, once graph for each institutional location of the degree program .

Not surprisingly, there tends to be more of an emphasis on nonprofit management skills in social entrepreneurship programs located within a public policy, service or administration school than in programs located within a school of business. And, there is more of a balance between the three skill sets necessary for success as a social entrepreneur as well. The New School University is an exemplar in this regard with the social entrepreneurship courses almost evenly split among the four skill sets analyzed. The social entrepreneurship programs located

5

within a business school appear to have much more curricular focus on market skills. The

exceptions among this group of business schools are Brandeis, Duke, Northwestern and Yale

Universities. Brandeis University offers an MBA for those interested in managing an

organization with a social mission and has many courses focused on nonprofit or civil society

organizations. At Duke University, faculty are appointed jointly to the program in social

entrepreneurship and nonprofit management and several courses in nonprofit management are

available as possible electives within the social entrepreneurship curriculum. Similarly, many of

the nonprofit courses within the Executive Education program at Northwestern University's

Kellogg School of Management are available to students within the MBA program. Finally, the

long tradition of offering courses and programming on the third sector at Yale University,

beginning with the establishment of PONPO over 25 years ago, has resulted in an extensive array

of course offerings in nonprofit studies that students can elect to take within the program at this

institution.

Four of the twenty social entrepreneurship programs in our analysis identify themselves

as religious institutions. We capture them separately here to draw attention to their particular

focus on curricular content seeking to establish an "ethical and responsible worldview." As an

example, the program emphasis in social entrepreneurship is one possible concentration of the

Master of Arts in Social Engagement at Trinity International University, a Christian university

located in Illinois. The university's website describes the degree as a program of study that "will

equip you (the student) to trace the contours of contemporary culture, interpret its movements

and messages, and engage its challenges from a Christian worldview"

(http://www.tiu.edu/graduate/academics/ma-culture). Although the curriculum of the

social entrepreneurship programs within these settings focus somewhat on market skills, there appears to be more of a balance in the curriculum among the various skills sets.

The differences in institutional settings that we found in our examination of the social entrepreneurship concentrations of these programs becomes even more pronounced when we use this typology to analyze the entire master's degree program, both core requirements and concentration requirements and electives. Table 4 shows the breakdown of curricular content by institutional location, again using the modified Young/Grinsfelder typology to categorize course offerings and graphically depicted by the bar graphs in figure 3. In schools of public policy, service and administration, the overall curricular content is clearly focused on political skills with some programmatic emphasis on nonprofit management skills. In the business school setting, the preponderance of courses in the core requirements and social entrepreneurship concentration are much more focused on market skills. Finally, the importance of institutional location becomes even clearer when we look at the results for religious programs. Brigham Young University offers its social entrepreneurship program within an MBA program. It is evident from this master's degree program that the importance of market skills seems to "trump" the religious dimension. Eight-seven percent of the courses fall in the market skills category. On the other hand, the degree at Pepperdine University is located within the Graduate School of Education and Psychology and the program at Trinity International University within a Graduate School.   In these two programs, political and nonprofit management skills dominate.

Finally, in figures 4 and 5 we have combined all of the degree programs by institutional location for both the social entrepreneurship concentration and total master's degree curriculum. While the courses are more evenly distributed among the four skills sets in the social entrepreneurship concentration regardless of location (figure 4), the importance of institutional

7

location is made clear when combining the course in the concentration with those required in the general college core. In a business school setting, the preponderance of courses focus on market skills (75%). Schools of public policy, service and administration, are a bit more balanced than business schools, with 44% of all courses focused primarily on political skills. Finally, there is also a more balanced focused on the various skills sets within religious institutions, though market and nonprofit skills are far more likely to be included than are political skills.

Discussion

Our review of graduate programs in social entrepreneurship has drawn our attention to the importance of institutional location to curricular content. Of the 20 programs we examined, 65% are located within a business school setting and as we saw almost 75% of the content in the business school setting is focused on market skills. It is important to note that the growth of these programs, particularly within schools of business, is taking place at the same time that our tolerance of government developed solutions to social issues is waning. In their discussion of the emergence of social entrepreneurship as a new 'institutional logic,' Lounsbury and Strang note that "the declining ambitions of government-directed public policy over the last two decades are paralleled by the growing prestige of "business" and "management" (2009, p. 75). Further, they maintain that the rise of social entrepreneurship "arises at the intersection of these paired shifts in American culture and organizational structure" (p.76), i.e., organizations in the third sector are increasingly encouraged to adopt the skills and techniques of the market both to develop programs for social change as well as to create social enterprises that will be self-sustaining without government or philanthropic support.

What empirical evidence do we have that our embrace of social entrepreneurs and their methods will help ameliorate the problems facing the world? Lounsbury and Strang posit that

"the key empirical cases are the success stories of particular individuals and organizations around the world that are identified as 'social entrepreneurs'" (2009, p. 73). We have embraced the social entrepreneurship solution for wide-spread adoption based on the success of individual entrepreneurs. We do not have any evidence that *collectively* they are making a marked difference, rather, the social entrepreneurship logic is being widely embraced based on individual success stories.

The social entrepreneurship movement is just one of many recent trends in the United States that embrace the private, for-profit model in place of government-directed or philanthropic solutions. In each case, the logic of the private-sector model based is based on individual success stories rather than empirical evidence. For example, there are examples of successful charter schools across the country, the Thomas MacLaren School in Colorado, North Star Academy in New Jersey, and the Princeton House Charter School in Florida. These charter schools are individual success stories. Using these success stories as evidence, public officials across the country increasingly embrace charter schools as the solution to our failing public schools. Yet the empirical evidence regarding their efficacy as a large-scale solution, particularly in low income neighborhoods and among the disabled population, is scant.[1] Government's embrace of performance-based funding is another example of a wide-spread practice based on the business-logic model. Governments have infused performance-based funding into the evaluation process for preschool programs, foster care programs and substance abuse programs, even though we have incomplete empirical evidence supporting a relationship

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[1] Diane Ravitch, an early proponent of charter schools and choice, summarizes these points in her article in the Wall Street Journal, "Why I Changed My Mind About School Reform" (2010).

9

between program outcomes and performance-based funding mechanisms.[2] Ebrahim and

Weisband (2007, p. 3) have labeled this approach to program evaluation the "rationalist

accountability framework." As discussed in their volume on accountability, the rationalist

approach emphasizes a logic model that falls short of meeting its objectives when applied across

diverse cultural, social and political settings. One approach does not fit all programs. However,

few challenge the dominant paradigm or suggest alternative approaches for program evaluation

and accountability.

In the absence of any significant research or results-based analysis of these movements,

each reform - charter schools, performance-based funding and social entrepreneurship - depends

on concrete instances of activities and successes - the success stories - to become the "logic" that

pushes its development forward (Lounsbury and Strang, 2009, p. 73).

Why does the private-sector management logic so often trump public approaches to

public policy and social change, particularly in the absence of empirical evidence? To answer

this question, we must look to the past, to the very beginnings of public administration in the

United States as a professional discipline. In her work on *Bureau Men, Settlement Women*,

Camilla Stivers suggests that pioneers in the field of public administration may have

inadvertently minimized the 'public' and elevated the "private" with their embrace of bureau

men and the scientific management approach.

> Decisions early in the twentieth century about what public administration might
> be and how one should study or practice it put in place conceptual boundaries and
> set in motion intellectual dynamics that persist in the field to this day. They have
> become so taken for granted, however, that they are little noticed by those who
> teach or study administration, let along by those actively engaged in it…The story

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[2] Beryl Radin has suggested that performance "has joined motherhood and apple pie as one of the truisms of the American culture" (2006, p. 4.)

of public administration's development, in other words, has practical
consequences. It contributes to our sense of the place of administration in
American governance and political life, the questions and issues that are the
substance of scholarly dialogue, the conventional wisdom in administrative
agencies, *the substance of the latest cutting-edge reform* (italics added) and our
sense of what it might be possible to think, say, and do about administrative
governance in the future (Stivers, 2000, p. 3).

During this time period, Stivers argues, there were two narratives available for crafting

public policy within an administrative setting. One was based on the ideals and understandings

of the bureau men who understood by utilizing the principles and practices of the scientific

management movement, they could rationalize approaches to public management and find the

"one best way" to implement policy and evaluate results. The other narrative was that of the

settlement women. Their work in the early settlement houses resulted in their adoption of policy

approaches centered on social justice, proposing government programs to improve the lives of

the poor. While the bureau men focused on method, the settlement women set their sights on

improving life within the community. Stivers refers to these narratives as the "two faces of

Progressive reform" and concludes the selection of one over the other (the embrace of

systemization over humanization) "can be seen as the divorce of substantive intent from

instrumental method" (p. 5). She concludes the field of public administration today reflects

intellectual choices made during early in its development.

Although we cannot undo the past nor would can we wave a magic wand and simply

substitute one philosophy for the other, we can seek to infuse the values of the settlement women

into the conversation, values such as caring, community, social justice, and citizenship. As

students of public administration in general and nonprofit management in particular, we can

recognize the important role government workers and nonprofit professionals play in

encouraging this conversation and instill the values of the settlement women – values abandoned over a century ago - into our academic degree programs.

In his recent work on "Driving Social Change," Paul Light provides direction for solving what he calls the 'world's toughest problems' through the inclusion of several drivers, only one of which is social entrepreneurship. He maintains that each of the four drivers are necessary for 'social breakthroughs' in solving the tough issues of the day, recognizing social entrepreneurship as one of only several forces necessary to drive social change. This excerpt from the introduction to his work explains the role of each driver in the process and the importance of defining problems before adopting solutions:

> However, social breakthrough is not a synonym for social entrepreneurship or innovation. Rather, it is the destination of all social action, and involves a cycle of engagement that can act as a map for deploying resources and energy. Although a breakthrough can come from the new combinations of ideas that underpin innovation (social entrepreneurship), is can also come from the aggressive defense, delivery, and expansion of past breakthroughs (social safekeeping), careful research on trends and solutions (social exploring), and the unrelenting demand for change embedded in social networks (social advocacy). *The choice of one driver over another depends entirely on the problem to be solved, not the popularity of a particular approach* (italics added). The urgent threat comes first, while the choice of a particular driver for achieving impact comes second. Form follows function, path follows purpose, and driver follows destination, not vice versa. (Light, 2011, pp. 3 – 4)

Light's drivers provide an opportunity to incorporate the values of the bureau men (social entrepreneurship) with those of the settlement women (social advocacy). Further, it requires us to fully understand the problem to be addressed and develop solutions based on careful research and empirical evidence (social exploring), rather than developing policy logics based on anecdotal success stories. Finally, Light recognizes the importance of protecting already established breakthroughs from aggressive attacks as these are vital sources and creators of

12

social capital (p. 71). Solving the urgent threats ahead, "lies in both creating and protecting the world's great breakthroughs" (p. 149).

Conclusion

As we have argued, the development of the modern administrative state is rooted in the Progressive Era's belief in the principles of scientific management to solve social problems. Bureau men with their rational approaches could be a substitute for community discourse, citizen involvement and public debate over problem identification and crafting alternate solutions. This approach led to the modern day preference for private solutions to public problems, the divorce of private method from public sentiment. The recent trend to develop management education programs in social entrepreneurship is just the latest example of this historical tendency. Our curricular review of management education programs with a concentration in social entrepreneurship shows how academic programs continue to adopt the logic and tools of the private sector to solve the 'world's toughest problems,' particularly in a business school setting.

Our purpose here is not to diminish the role of social entrepreneurs in our battle to solve the world's deepest needs, but rather to elevate the roles of other players that have been minimized historically. Addressing the world's deepest needs will require the collective efforts of all of us and must begin with a public conversation. Educating leaders who can facilitate these conversations must become a goal of our nonprofit education programs. Public discourse is first, crafting solutions is second. Towards this end, we must strike a better balance in our curriculum between courses designed to craft solutions (program evaluation, financial management, fundraising, etc.) and those designed to strengthen community participation (collaborations, partnerships, community leadership, etc.). We must make room at the table for values and ideas of the settlement women that were abandoned so many years ago.

13

Figure 1 Growth in Social Enterprise and Social Entrepreneurship Courses: 1998 – Present
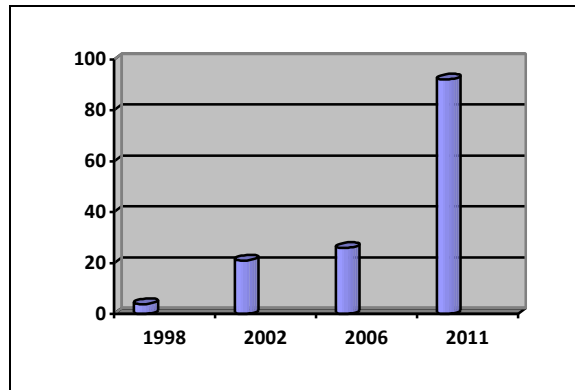
Table 1 Social Entrepreneurship Program Purposes (US)

	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	BN	BN	P	P	P	P	P	R	R	R	
Creating social value	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔			✔			✔		✔	✔	✔	✔	*14*
Providing leadership to solve problems	✔	✔	✔	✔			✔		✔		✔		✔				✔	✔		*10*
Work across sector boundaries		✔	✔		✔		✔		✔		✔	✔					✔	✔		*9*
Borrow & adopt logic of private sector					✔	✔	✔		✔		✔	✔					✔	✔		*8*
Crafting entrepreneurial solutions	✔		✔					✔	✔	✔		✔		✔					✔	*8*
Economically sustainable solutions												✔		✔			✔	✔	✔	*5*
Work in social ventures												✔				✔	✔		✔	*4*
Delivering quality services & efficient use of resources								✔		✔							✔			*3*
Understanding political, economic and policy forces			✔							✔								✔		*3*
Adoption of an ethical, responsible worldview																	✔		✔	*2*
Mobilizing people from diverse backgrounds										✔	✔									*2*
Creating economic value	✔																			*1*

Key: B=Business School; BN=Business School with Nonprofit Management Degree; P=School of Public Policy, Service or Administration; R=Religiously Affiliated Institutions

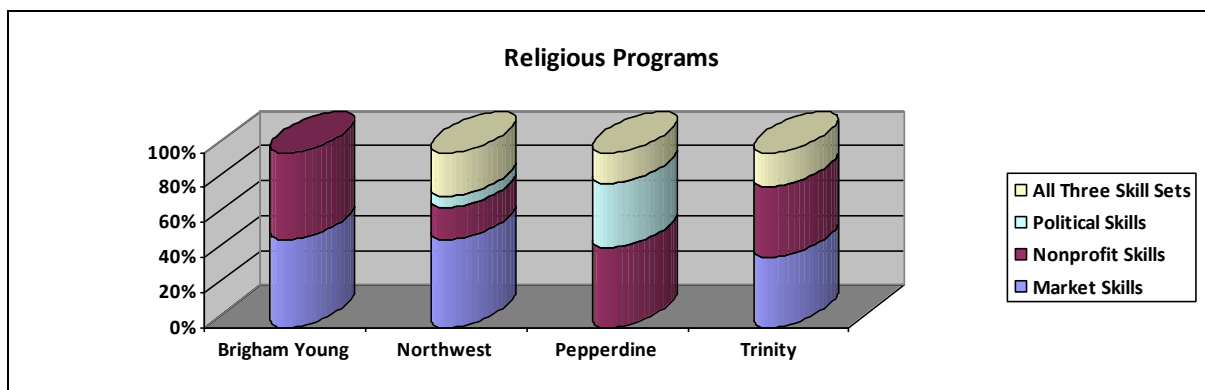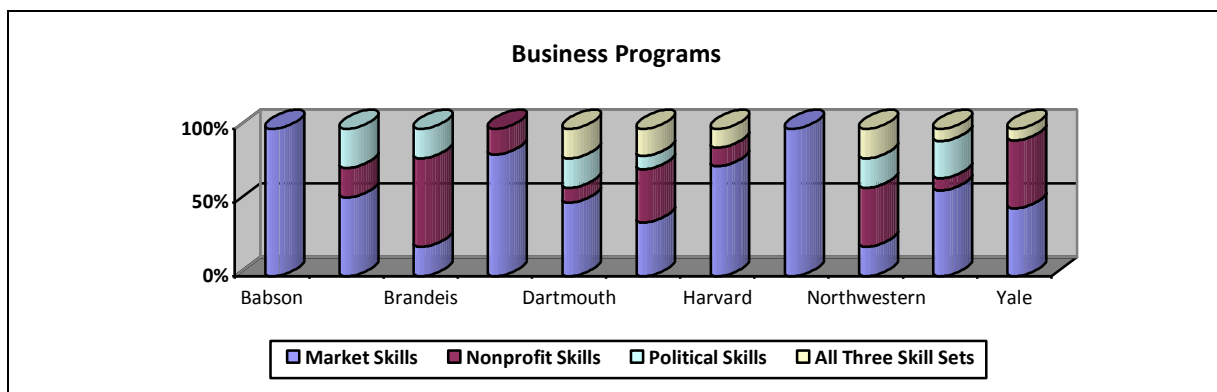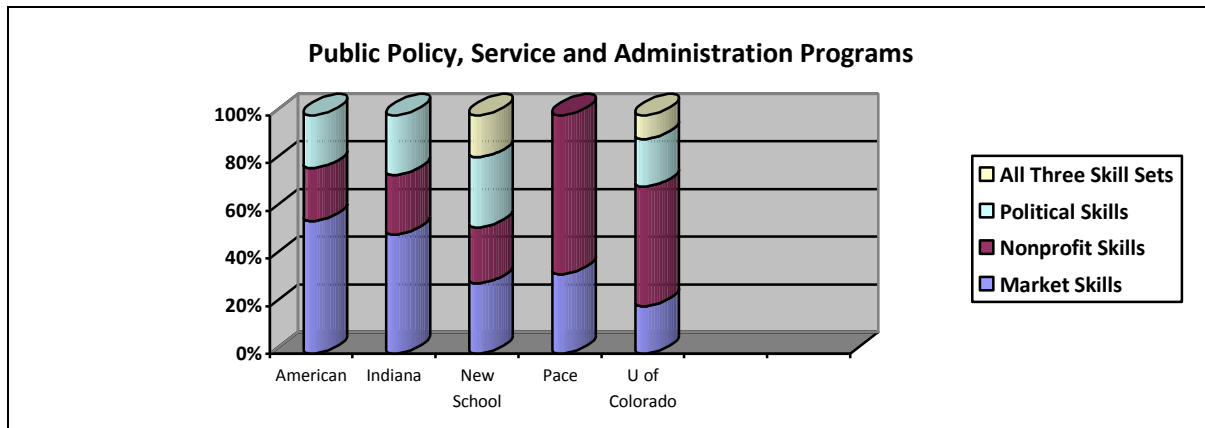## Table 2 Social Entrepreneurship Program Purposes (International)

	A	A	A	A	A	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	NA	AU	NZ	
Crafting entrepreneurial solutions	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔		✔	✔		✔	✔	✔	13
Work in social ventures		✔			✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔		✔		✔	✔	11
Borrow & adopt logic of private sector		✔			✔		✔	✔		✔	✔		✔				7
Creating social value	✔		✔	✔	✔							✔			✔	✔	7
Economically sustainable solutions		✔										✔	✔		✔	✔	5
Creating economic value	✔	✔		✔								✔					4
Work across sector boundaries		✔	✔											✔		✔	4
Adoption of an ethical, responsible worldview		✔	✔	✔													3
Delivering quality services & efficient use of resources				✔												✔	2
Providing leadership to solve problems													✔			✔	2
Understanding political, economic and policy forces		✔															1
Mobilizing people from diverse backgrounds																	0

Key: A=Asia; E=Europe; NA=North America; AU=Australia; NZ=New Zeland

Table 3 US Social Entrepreneurship Programs:
Concentration Course Descriptions by Institutional Location and Modified Young/Grinsfelder Typology

		# of Programs	Market Skills	Political Skills	Nonprofit Management Skills	All three skill sets
Public Policy, Service and Administration	American	5	2	2		
	Indiana U	2	1	1		
	New School	5	5	4	3	
	Pace	2		4		
	U of Colorado	2	2	5	1	
Business	Babson	2				
	Boston	8	4	3		
	Brandeis	3	3	9		
	Columbia	19		4		
	Dartmouth	5	2	1	2	
	Duke	4	1	4	3	
	Harvard	6		1	1	
	NYU	6				
	Northwestern	2	2	4	2	
	Stanford	7	3	1	1	
	Yale	6		6	1	
Religious	Brigham Young	2		2		
	Northwest	8	1	3	4	
	Pepperdine		4	5	2	
	Trinity	2		2	1	

Figure 2 US Social Entrepreneurship Programs:
Concentration Course Descriptions by Institutional Location and Young/Grinsfelder Typology

Public Policy, Service and Administration Programs

Business Programs

Religious Programs

18

Table 4 US Social Entrepreneurship Programs:
Masters Curriculum by Institutional Location and Young/Grinsfelder Typology

		# of Programs	Market Skills	Political Skills	Nonprofit Management Skills	All three skill sets
Public Policy, Service and Administration	American	8	6	2	1
	Indiana U	2	7	1	
	New School	5	8	8	4
	Pace	2	6	4	
	U of Colorado	2	8	5	1
Business	Babson	12			
	Boston	21	4	3	
	Brandeis	14	3	10	2
	Columbia	22		4	
	Dartmouth	20	2	1	3
	Duke	13	1	4	3
	Harvard	16		1	1
	NYU	13			
	Northwestern	13	2	4	2
	Stanford	26	3	1	1
	Yale	17		6	1
Religious	Brigham Young	14		2	
	Northwest	8	1	3	4
	Pepperdine		4	5	2
	Trinity	2		8	1

Figure 3 US Social Entrepreneurship Programs:
Masters Curriculum by Institutional Location and Young/Grinsfelder Typology

Public Policy, Service and Administration Programs

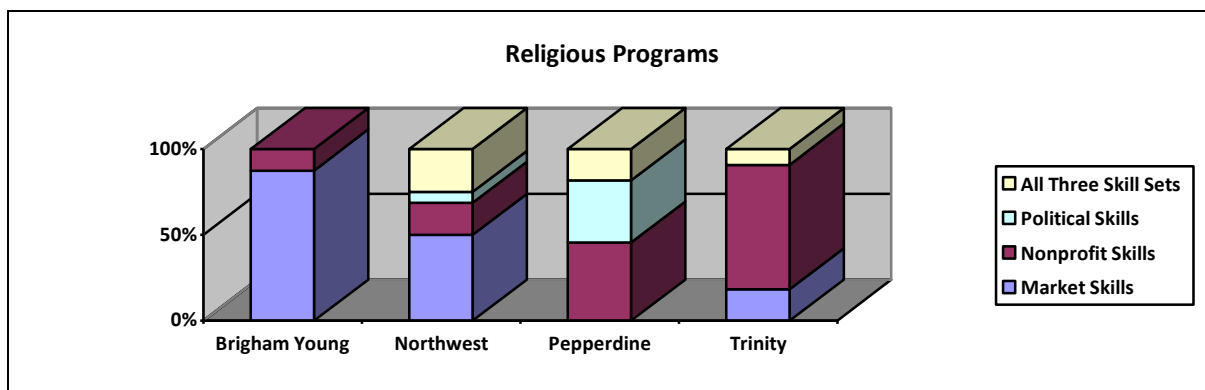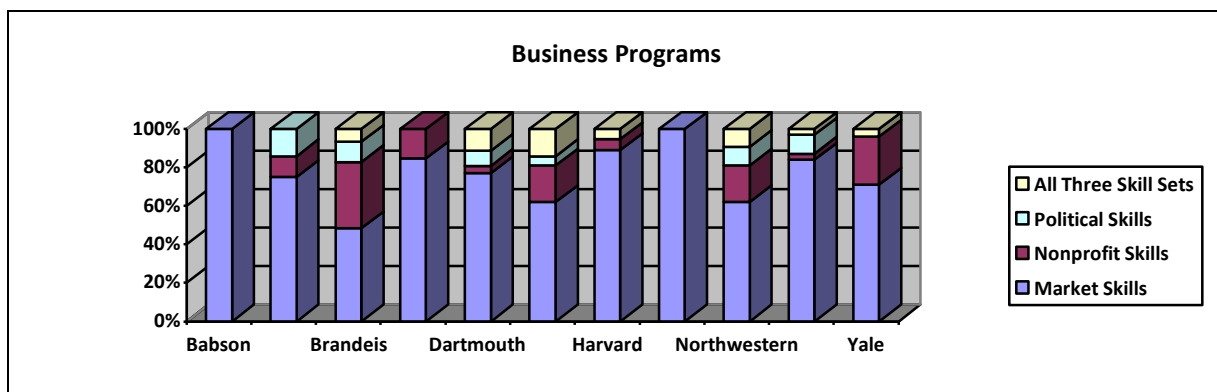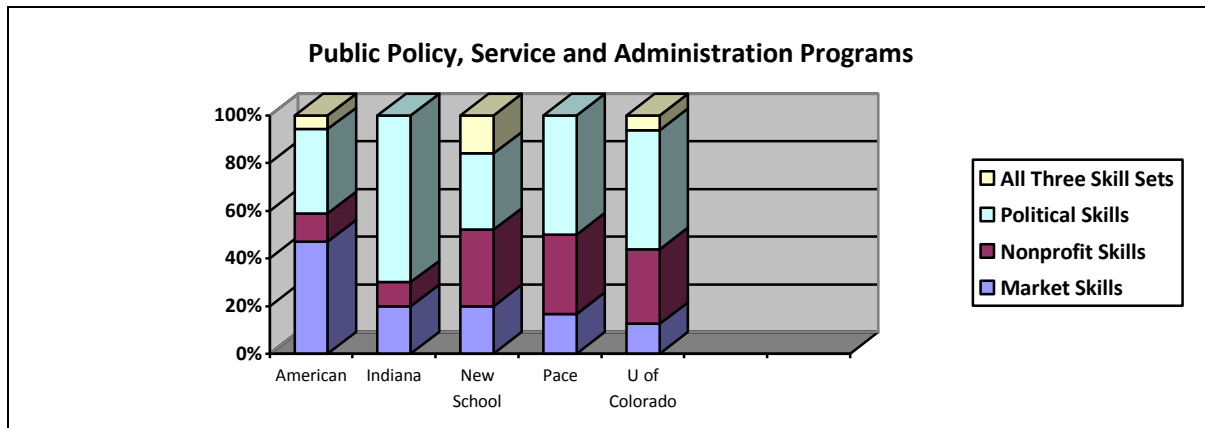**Business Programs**

Religious Programs

20

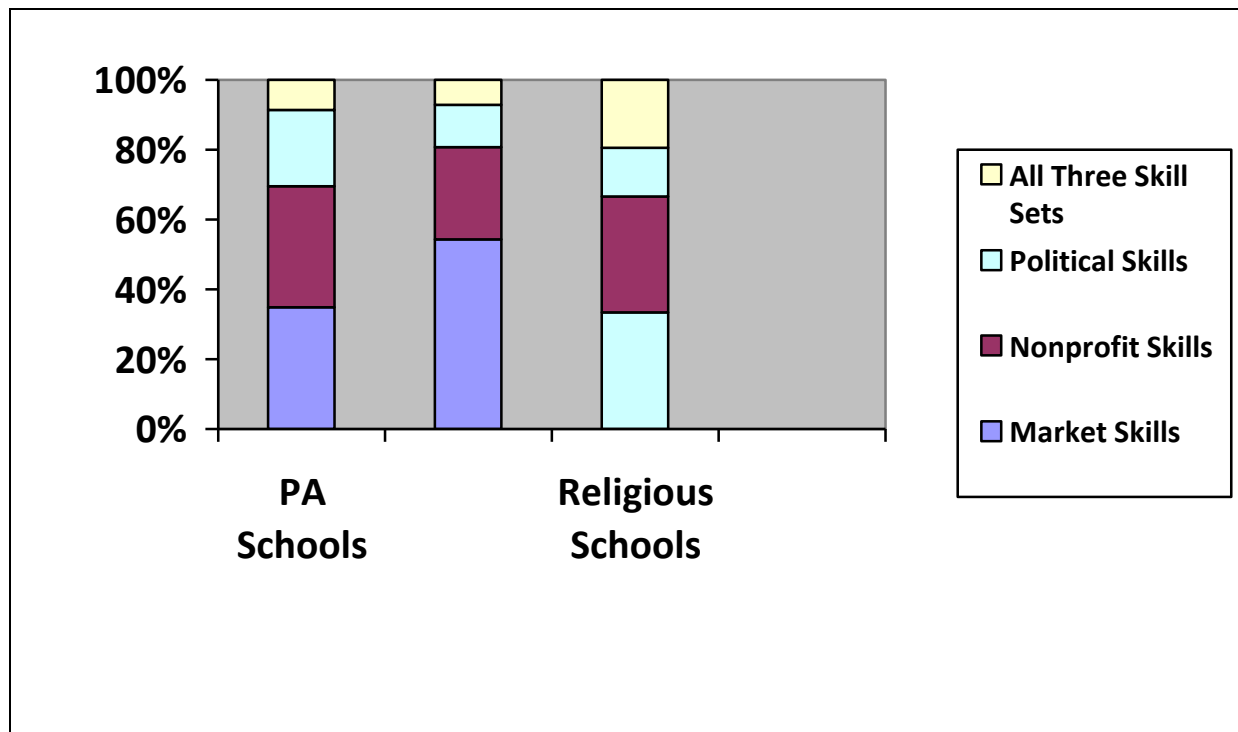**Figure 4 Combined Concentration course offerings by Institutional Type**
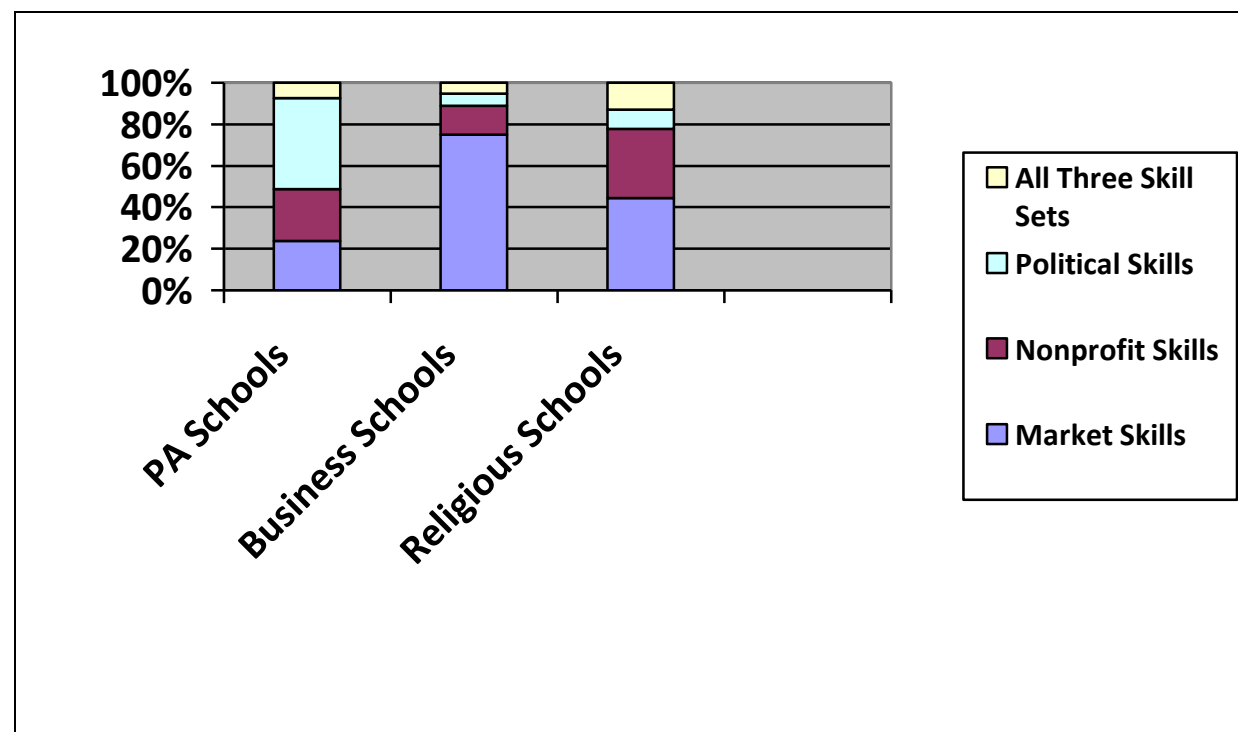

Figure 5 Combined Masters Curriculum by Institutional Location

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