



Outcomes – Getting to the Core of Programmatic Education and Accreditation

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CHEA Conference, January 2016, Washington, DC

Who is ASPA?

- Collaborative forum and collective voice for accreditors of specialized and professional higher education programs/schools in USA
- 60 members
 - Nursing, architecture, dance, religious study
 - >12,000 programs accredited
- 57% CHEA recognized; 50% USDE recognized
- ~75% in fields with some form of licensure or certification

What do specialized and professional accreditors do?

They:

- Conduct an in-depth assessment of specialized or professional programs at a college, university or independent institution.
- Connect the professions to the academic programs by ensuring competency of graduates.
- Have missions that allow for targeted evaluations of quality.

Why survey outcomes requirements?

- Member Services
 - Information on current practices
 - What are accreditors doing?
- Accountability
 - External concerns about accreditation performance
 - Outcomes as an accepted indicator of quality
 - How are accreditors doing?
- Advocacy
 - Communicating actual practices

Methodology

- Excerpts from standards/policies that describe
 - requirements for student learning assessment, and
 - program outcome assessment
- Examples of indicators used to assess compliance with standards/policies
- Use of benchmarks
- Response: 45 agencies

The findings/results

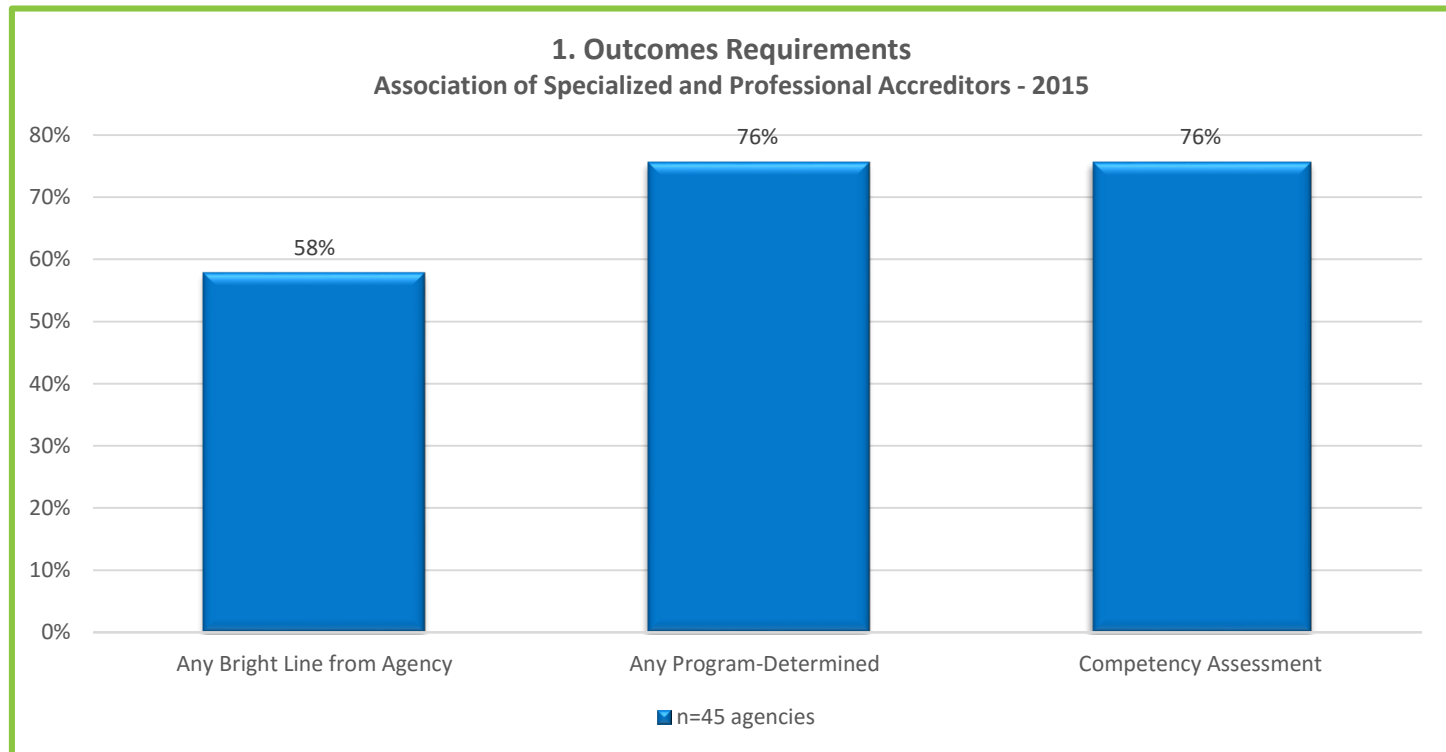
- All respondents look at outcomes
- Outcomes requirements meet the needs of the profession
 - Nature of the field
 - Labor market
 - Licensure/certification

Outcomes categories

- Competency assessment
- Bright line indicators
- Program-determined indicators

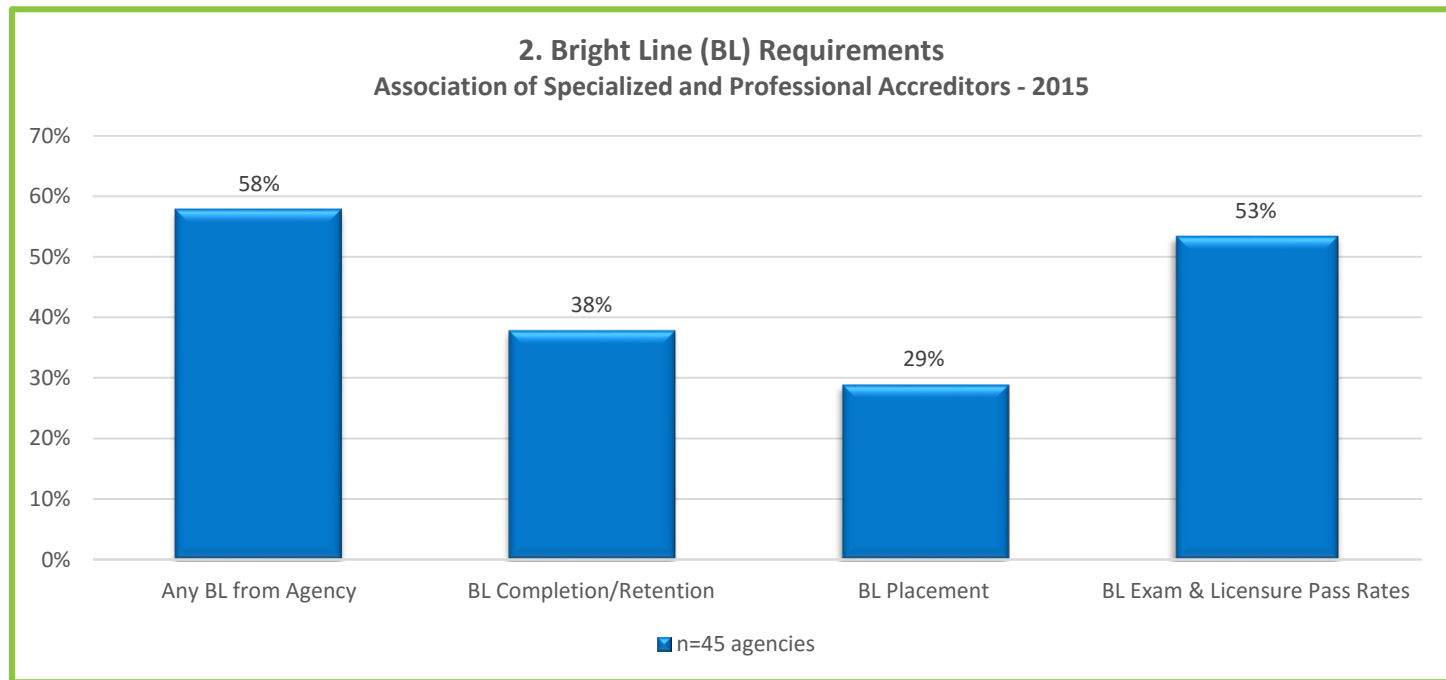
Outcomes requirements

Overall findings



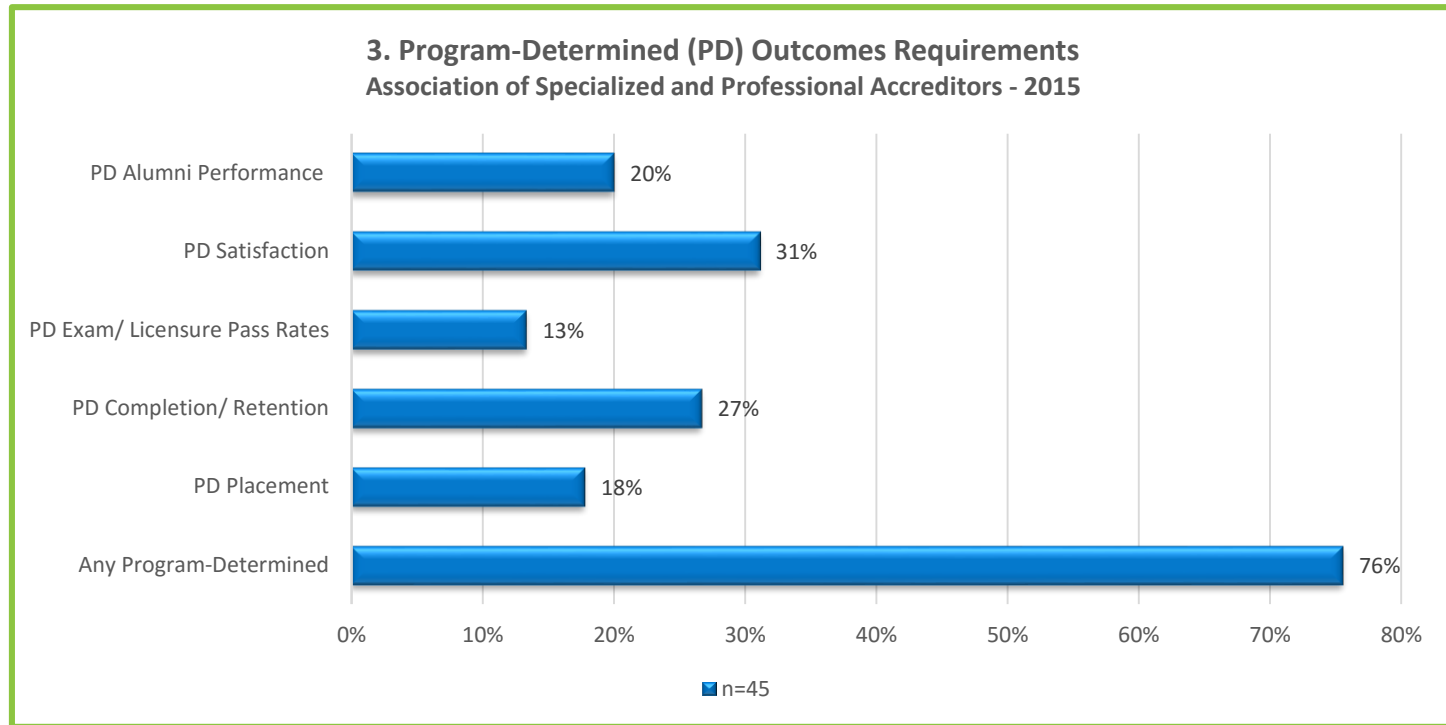
Outcomes requirements

Bright Line Requirements:



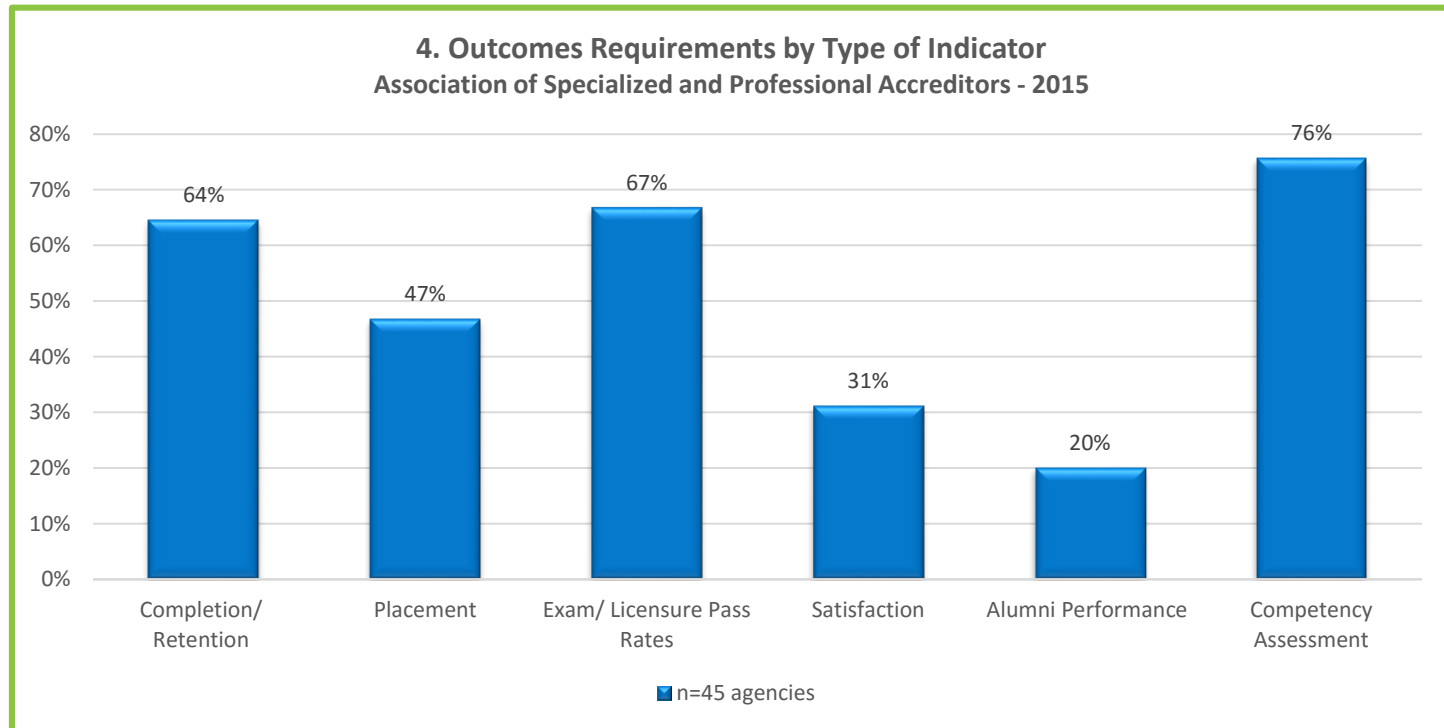
Outcomes requirements

Program-determined requirements:



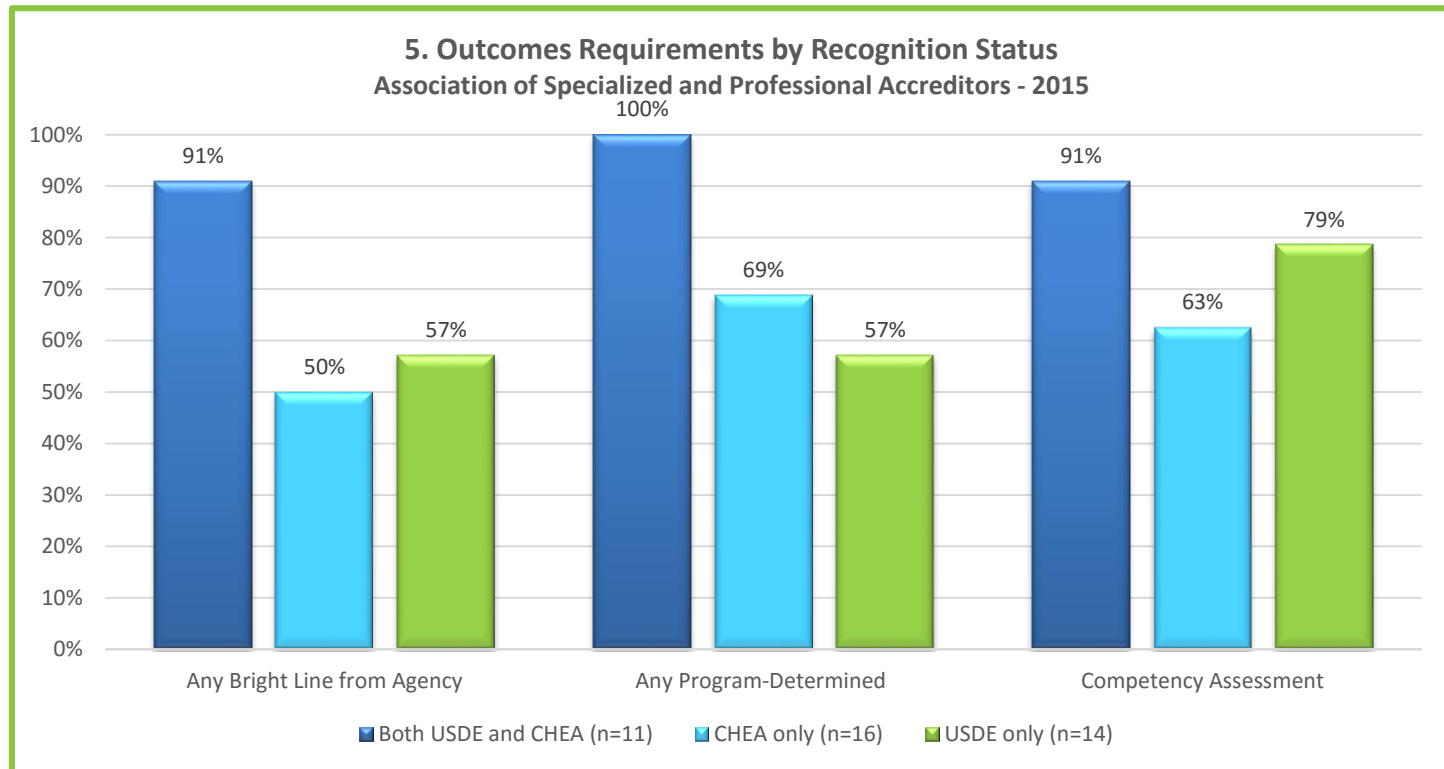
Outcomes requirements

Requirements by type of indicator:



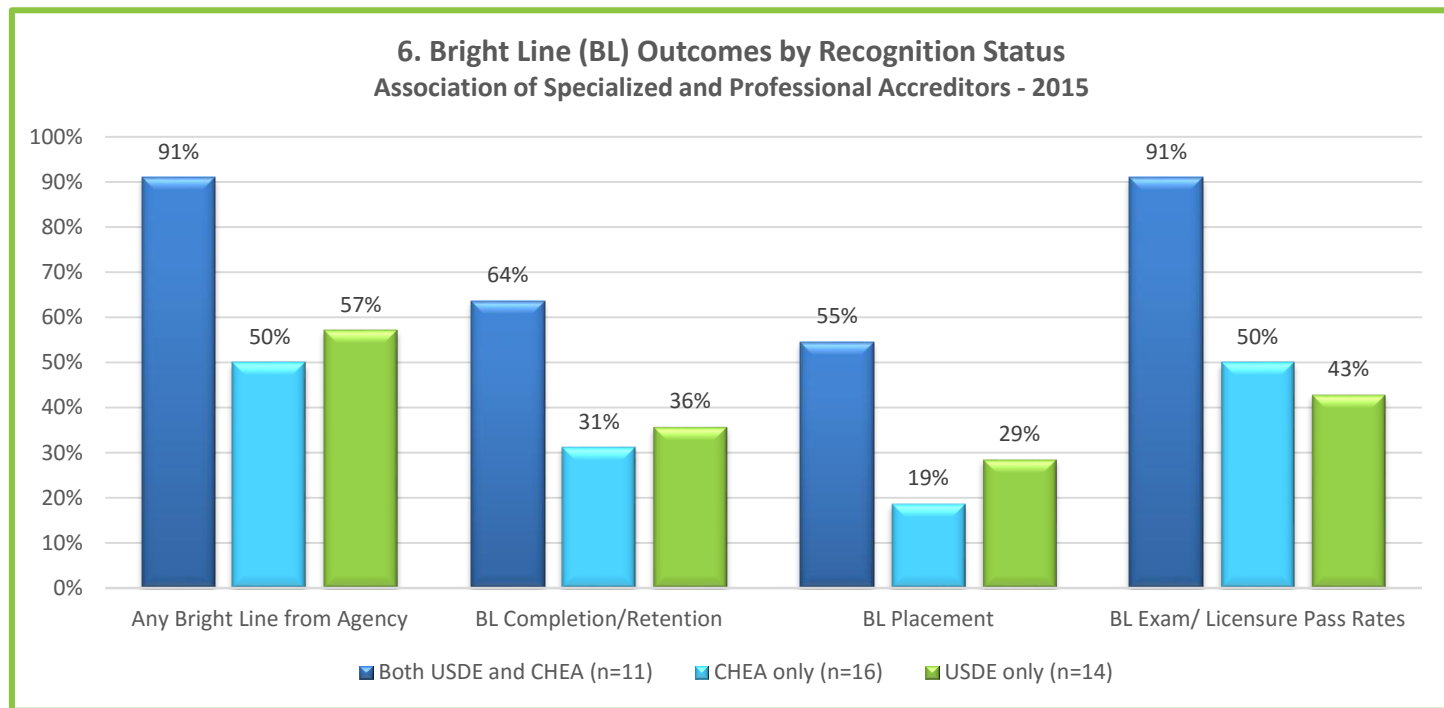
Outcomes requirements

Requirements by recognition status:



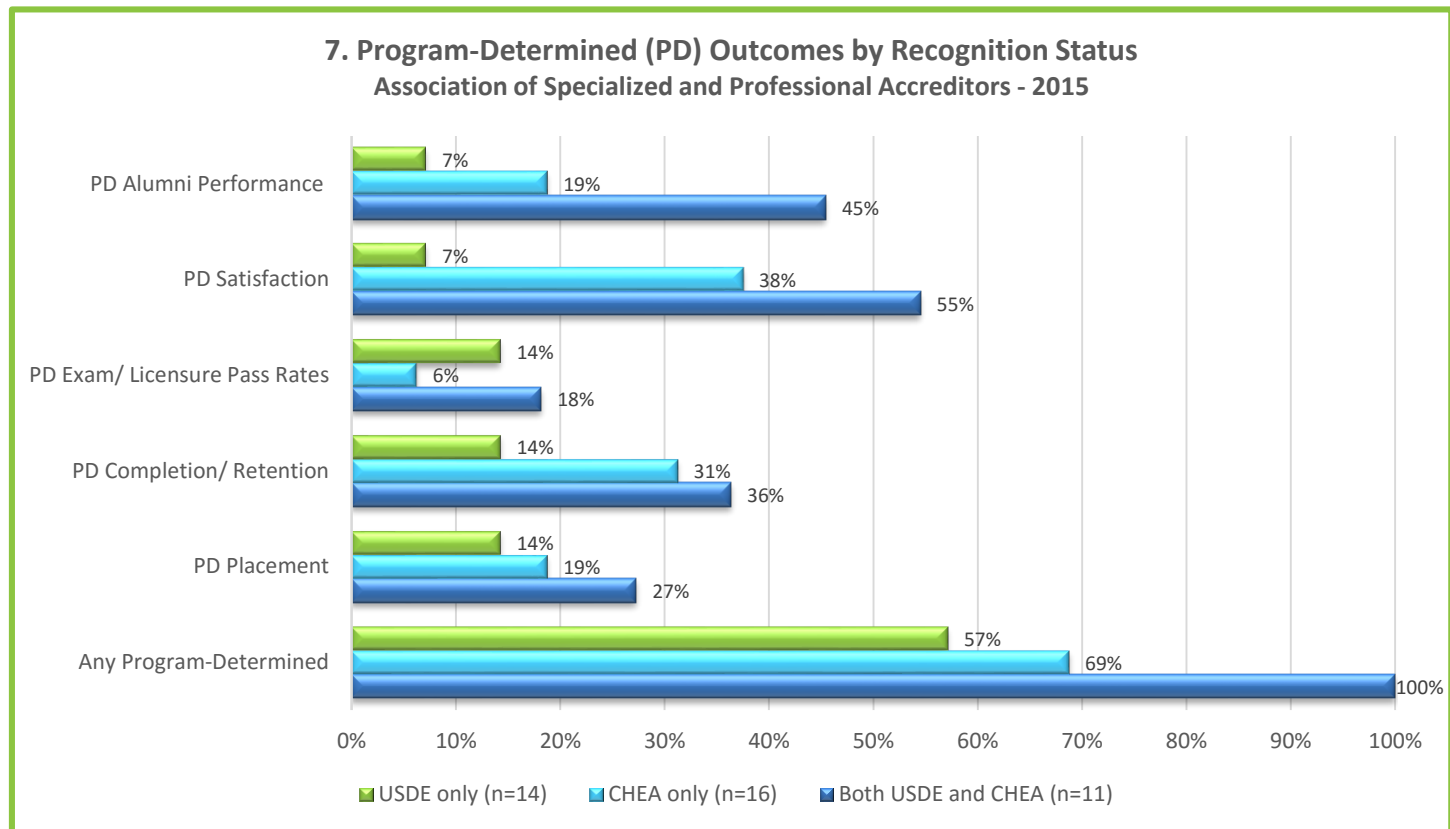
Outcomes requirements

Bright line outcomes by recognition status:



Outcomes requirements

Program-determined outcomes by recognition status:



Competency assessment

- nearly all respondents require their programs to have some form of assessment for the attainment of competencies:
 - based on the mission of the program and/or defined by the accreditor/profession
 - detailed plan for the assessment of competencies
 - assessment results used for program improvement
- Bottom line – competencies for the profession protect the public interest

Limitations of the study

- What do these “counts” really tell us about quality?
- Undercounting
- Need more information
 - What do the competency requirements look like?
 - What kind of thresholds are used and how are they determined?
 - Do programs actually improve over time?

Case Study #1

- CEPH (Public Health)
- The program shall have an explicit process for monitoring and evaluating its overall efforts against its mission, goals and objectives; for assessing the program's effectiveness in serving its various constituencies...
- There shall be procedures for assessing and documenting the extent to which each student has demonstrated achievement of the competencies ...
- Programs should be taking steps to ensure graduation rates as high as the program can reasonably attain, but no lower than 70% for baccalaureate and master's degrees and 60% for doctoral degrees...
- Job placement rates must also be monitored and should also be as high as the program can reasonably attain, but no lower than 80% by degree...

Case Studies #2

- CAATE (Athletic Training)
- There must be a comprehensive assessment plan to evaluate all aspects of the educational program.
- The assessment tools must relate the program's stated educational mission, goals and objectives to the quality of instruction, student learning, and overall program effectiveness.
- Programs must meet or exceed a three year aggregate of 70 percent first-time pass rate on the BOC examination.

Case Studies #3

- ABET (Engineering)
- Student performance must be evaluated. Student progress must be monitored to foster success in attaining student outcomes, thereby enabling graduates to attain program educational objectives.
- The program must regularly use appropriate, documented processes for assessing and evaluating the extent to which the student outcomes are being attained. The results of these evaluations must be systematically utilized as input for the continuous improvement of the program.
- The program must have documented student outcomes that prepare graduates to attain the program educational objectives. Student outcomes are outcomes (a) through (k) plus any additional outcomes that may be articulated by the program. (a) an ability to apply knowledge of mathematics, science, and engineering...

Questions

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