

# **Integrating Emergency Management Studies into Higher Education: Ideas, Programs, and Strategies**

Jessica A. Hubbard, Editor

Papers From the 2009 FEMA Emergency Management Higher Education Conference



**Public Entity Risk Institute**

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## Emergency Management Higher Education: A Snapshot of the Community

Carol L. Cwiak, JD, PhD

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**F**OR THE PAST FEW YEARS, higher education institutions in the United States that offer emergency management programs have been surveyed annually to capture data on program growth, development, needs, concerns, challenges, and trends. The goal of each year's "FEMA Emergency Management Higher Education Report" is to provide a current snapshot of the emergency management higher education (EM Hi Ed) community in order to assist the FEMA EM Hi Ed Program, policy makers, educators, students, practitioners, and other interested parties and organizations in understanding where EM Hi Ed is today and where it is headed.

This is the third consecutive year that I have conducted this survey; Dr. Henry Fischer conducted a similar survey in 2005. Each year the survey instrument is fine-tuned to better collect the relevant data: some questions are either modified or dropped from one year to the next, and new questions are added as they become salient issues in the community. The challenge here, as in any survey effort that is trying to provide a complete picture of a growing and diverse community, is to collect the needed data

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This chapter is a reprint of a report produced for the FEMA Emergency Management Higher Education Program. The data in this report were presented at the FEMA Emergency Management Higher Education Conference in June 2009. The author would like to thank all the institution representatives who took the time to fill out the survey: this report is possible because of your participation. Also, enduring thanks go to Dr. B. Wayne Blanchard for his extraordinary commitment to the emergency management higher education community and to the ever-lovely Barbara Johnson for her patience and good cheer: your hard work and dedication are the bedrock upon which our community has been built.

without overwhelming the respondents. Of note, the EM Hi Ed community has been exceedingly gracious in its cooperation over the years with this survey effort.

This year's report, as in past years, shows continuing growth in EM Hi Ed as well as some enduring challenges. It also reports on some promising trends—notably, (1) greater consensus in what competencies and resources matter within the emergency management community, and (2) greater recognition of the connectivity between the emergency management practitioner and higher education communities, and the impact that one has on the other. These trends support the premise that the larger emergency management community is coalescing. Coupled with the ongoing growth in EM Hi Ed, this coalescence reasserts the importance of focusing on continued improvement in the product provided to students and the practitioner community.

## METHODOLOGY

On March 29, 2009, a nine-page survey instrument was e-mailed to the point-of-contact (POC) for each of the 129 institutions listed on FEMA's EM Hi Ed Program Web page as offering a degree—associate, bachelor-level concentration and minor, bachelor's, master's, or doctoral—and/or stand-alone certificate program. Many of these institutions were on more than one list of degrees offered, but each was surveyed only once.

The initial solicitation was followed by three reminder e-mails to the POCs of the nonresponding institutions. To accommodate institutional requests, responses were accepted through May 19, 2009. Sixty-seven institutions responded (see appendix) for an overall institutional response rate of 52 percent—an increase over last year's response rate of 44 percent (53 responses out of 120 solicitations). Unless otherwise noted, these sixty-seven respondents provide the base for all percentages shown in this report. Some institutions did not respond to all the survey questions because they either did not collect the type of data requested or felt that the questions were not applicable to them; in such cases, a different *n* is indicated for the item.

Nonresponding institutions were primarily either those that had a valid POC and a valid e-mail address but did not respond, or those that had an incorrect POC or e-mail address and thus were not reached. A startling twenty-four institutions fell into the second category. To the extent that updated POCs or e-mail addresses could be found on institutional pages, they were; however, often these pages had either the same incorrect information or no direct POC listed (this was particularly true for a number of distance education programs). Outdated POCs and e-mail addresses were usually a result of old information that institutions had simply not updated with the EM Hi Ed Program. This oversight is noteworthy because a more complete survey

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effort in the future depends on its being corrected. It is recommended that institutions take the time at least once a year to check the information pages on each college list on which they appear to ensure that their programs and contact information are still accurate. Incorrect information not only hampers annual survey efforts but also creates difficulty for students who use the lists to contact institutions that they might be interested in attending.

A few limitations within the survey instrument itself were noted; these are addressed as they arise in the discussion below, and recommendations for dealing with them in future surveys are provided as applicable. This year's survey eliminated a few questions that were identified last year as problematic or lacking in value. Insofar as data from past years reflect trends or dramatic changes taking place in the higher education community, they are included. Responses to the open-ended survey questions have been summarized and consolidated for inclusion in this report.

## FINDINGS

The survey instrument sought data on general program information; program faculty and new hires; student and graduate numbers, including enrollment and graduation trends; program access and support indicators; use of emergency management technology and course materials; additional products, activities, and services that respondent institutions would like the FEMA EM Hi Ed Program to provide; competencies; challenges facing emergency management programs; and anticipated changes in programs. Findings are reported in the sections that follow.

### General Program Information

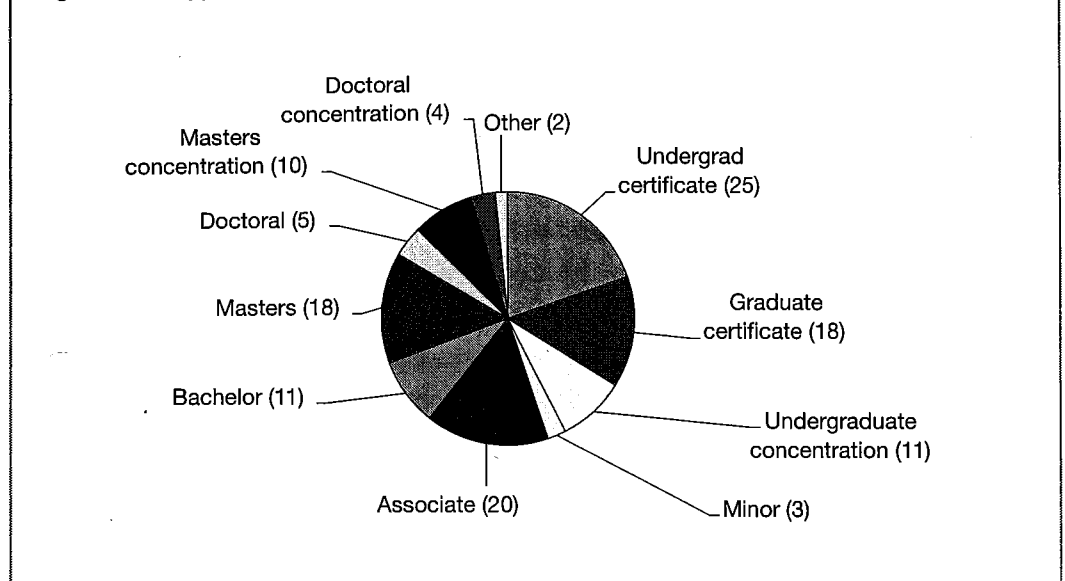
As part of the general information being sought, the survey asked about types of programs being offered, the length of time in which the programs have been in existence, and the programs' primary focus and purpose.

#### *Types of Programs Offered*

The sixty-seven respondent institutions reported 127 programs, which break down as shown in Figure 5-1. The majority of institutions (57 percent) reported two or more programs; the maximum number of programs reported was six.

Respondents were also asked if they were planning on developing any new programs over the upcoming year. Twenty-eight percent indicated that they plan on developing one or more new programs, would be starting a new program, or would be adding additional areas of emphasis. Among new programs under development or beginning in the upcoming year, respondents listed doctorate, master of science,

Figure 5-1. Types of Programs Reported



bachelor of science, associate of science, and certificate programs; among additional courses and tracks in focus areas, they listed security policy and leadership, continuity of operations, military, crime scene technician, emergency management, security management, homeland security, biosecurity and disaster preparedness, disaster management and humanitarian relief, student watch officer and intelligence analyst, fire/medic, and Transportation Security Administration. Also mentioned were the adoption of a statewide emergency management curriculum and the movement of curriculum to an online format.

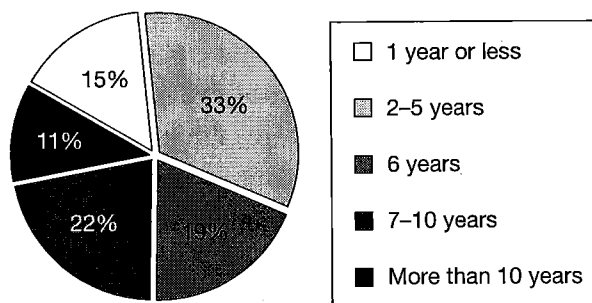
#### *Years in Existence*

When asked the number of years that their programs have been in existence, respondents ( $n = 59$ ) reported anywhere from zero to twenty-five. Nearly half (48 percent) reported their programs as having been in existence for five years or less (Figure 5-2); this segment includes 15 percent that have been in existence for one year or less. With a cluster of programs (19 percent) that are now six years old, it is now the case that more than half of the programs (52 percent) are at least six years old.

#### *Primary Program Focus and Purpose*

Sixty-one percent of all respondents reported that they consider their primary program focus to be both private *and* public sector. Of the rest, 30 percent reported a public

Figure 5-2. Program Years in Existence



sector focus; 6 percent reported a private sector focus; and 3 percent reported "other" and cited nonprofit, health, military, government, and training faculty to do research.

In identifying the primary purpose of their program, 62 percent of all respondents reported a dual purpose: both preemployment (i.e., preparation for entry in the field) and advancement (i.e., preparation of practitioners for advancement). This reflects a slight increase over the 58 percent of programs reporting a dual purpose in both 2008 and 2007. It is also the third year in a row in which in the proportion of institutions reporting *solely* an advancement purpose has decreased (16 percent in 2009, down from 19 percent in 2008 and 25 percent in 2007), which perhaps reflects a greater appreciation among them for emergency management becoming a career of first choice. The percentages of respondents reporting solely preemployment or other purposes have remained relatively static at 19 percent and 3 percent, respectively.

Respondents that indicated their primary purpose to be a dual one—both preemployment and advancement—were asked to indicate the relative percentage of each. The breakdown average across programs was 48 percent preemployment and 52 percent advancement, figures that are not dramatically different from those in years past. However, while most of the programs reported a fairly even split (with a mode in both categories of 50 percent), the range for these categories was an expansive 5–90 percent for preemployment and 10–95 percent for advancement.

### Program Faculty

Institutions were asked about four faculty measurements (full time, adjunct, associated, and devoted) and about new hires. Barring slight fluctuations, not much has changed in the faculty measurements over the past few years.

### *Current Staff*

Among institutions reporting on full-time faculty members ( $n = 65$ ), 31 percent reported none, 31 percent reported one, 17 percent reported two, and the remaining 21 percent reported three to seven full-time faculty members on staff.

Among institutions reporting on part-time faculty members ( $n = 66$ ), 21 percent reported none, 18 percent reported one, 9 percent reported two, 24 percent reported three to five, 16 percent reported six to ten, and 11 percent reported more than ten (between eleven to ninety) part-time faculty members on staff. The institutions noting the highest concentration of part-time faculty members offer distance education programs that boast high student enrollments. Of note, those programs also carry fewer full-time, associated, and devoted faculty members than do those offering traditional brick-and-mortar course delivery. The dichotomy between faculty needs for brick-and-mortar education and faculty needs for distance education deserves more attention from the EM Hi Ed community, specifically with regard to the potential impact it may have on the discipline and profession. It will be interesting to see what changes emerge as more specifically trained emergency management scholars are integrated into the community. It is speculated that as more programs move toward distance education, the number of part-time faculty members will continue to increase.

Among institutions reporting on associated faculty members (i.e., faculty housed in another department who teach a course within the program) ( $n = 66$ ), the majority of respondents (67 percent) reported no associated faculty, a percentage that has risen steadily over the past three years (63 percent in 2008, 53 percent in 2007). As was noted in the 2008 report, it is unclear whether this lack is a function of strengthened program identity and resource allotment or of the institutional structure within academia that acts as a disincentive to the cross-use of faculty. As for the rest who responded to this question, 15 percent reported one, 14 percent reported two to four, and 4 percent reported five to eight associated faculty members.

The most important faculty measurement collected is that of full-time faculty members who are principally devoted to the institutions' emergency management programs. This measurement arguably serves as a yardstick of program strength. Theoretically, there should be a steady increase in this number over time. To date, however, no such increase has been seen. This year, among institutions reporting on associated faculty members ( $n = 66$ ), about a third of respondents (35 percent) reported no full-time faculty members principally devoted to their programs, a measurement that has remained relatively static over the past few years (35 percent in 2008, 33 percent in 2007). A number of factors may be contributing to this stasis: (1) a lack of qualified faculty members available to lead programs (see "Challenges Facing Emergency



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Management Programs" in this and previous FEMA EM Hi Ed reports); (2) the diversity of program offerings (many are delivering minors, concentrations, or certificates, which may not require full-time devoted faculty members); (3) a growing number of programs offered primarily via distance education, which may change the traditional brick-and-mortar faculty model; (4) the relative youth of many programs; and (5) the fact that the internal structure of program offerings may be interdisciplinary in nature, leaving faculty with dual assignments. No dramatic changes from past years are evident across the remainder of the responses, either: 39 percent of respondents reported one devoted faculty member, 11 percent reported two, 8 percent reported three, and 7 percent reported four to seven devoted faculty members.

### *New Hires*

Among respondents who replied to a question about new hires ( $n = 66$ ), 62 percent reported that they did not attempt to hire new faculty over the past year; 6 percent reported that they attempted to hire faculty but ultimately hired no one; and 32 percent reported that they did in fact hire new faculty. In total, 89 new hires were reported: 16 for full-time positions and 73 for part-time positions. To better gauge the impact that distance education offerings are having on part-time faculty hiring, respondents were asked how many of their new part-time hires would be dedicated solely to distance education delivery. Of the 73 part-time faculty members hired, 66 were designated solely for this purpose. Two points are worth noting here: (1) this year's 16 full-time faculty hires reflect a dramatic increase over that of past years and may have a positive impact on the devoted faculty member measurement next year; and (2) the continued growth of part-time faculty members offering emergency management distance education courses deserves a closer look by the higher education community and a more engaged discussion of what this means to the discipline and the profession.

### **Students and Graduates**

Past survey instruments queried respondents on student demographics, such as age, status (traditional student versus practitioner returning for advancement), and enrollment hours (part time versus full time). Because of the challenges inherent in collecting this information\* and the data's minimal value, these questions were eliminated from the 2009 survey. This made sense given that International Association of Emergency Managers students conduct an annual survey of emergency management students that collects demographic information in a self-report format.

\* Many programs struggled with responding to these questions, and even when the answers were clear-cut within their institution (e.g., part time versus full time), the categorical definitions were not uniform across the higher education community.

The only remaining item regarding individual student demographics is sex. Reported representation by sex—62 percent men and 38 percent women ( $n = 64$ )—has not changed significantly over the past few years: the same proportions were reported in 2007. In 2008, when the proportion of women increased slightly to 41 percent, some thought it might indicate a potential trend, but the current year's data have dispelled that notion. The breakdown by sex in 2009 varies widely from program to program (the ranges were expansive: men, 15–95 percent, women, 5–85 percent), but there appears to be greater equality in graduate-level and nonmilitary programs.

### *Course Participation*

To capture the impact that the EM Hi Ed community has not only on the emergency management community as a whole but also on college and university campuses in general, graduation figures, student enrollment, and course participation figures have been extrapolated from the responses received and extended to represent the EM Hi Ed in full. Although such extrapolations are not the ideal (100 percent participation by all institutions would be the ideal), they are more easily supported when the reported responses across program type, size, and years in existence are representative of that larger community. Such is the case herein, so the extrapolations based on current data collection from all 67 responding institutions are believed to be representative of the entire survey audience of 129 institutions.

Respondents were asked to report the number of students who took one or more of their emergency management courses over the past year, and to include students from within their programs as well as those from outside (e.g., those in another major who took one or two courses). The goal was to determine the reach that emergency management programs have beyond the students who are actually enrolled in them.

This year there were some problems with this query. First, respondents appeared to be confused as to whether students who were enrolled in their programs should also be reported. Second, it became evident that new programs had “enrolled” students who had yet to attend courses (thereby creating a discrepancy between “enrolled” numbers and “took courses” numbers). Third, one program reported offering coursework to 44,000 students as part of a partnership with the Emergency Management Institute (EMI). To avoid a distortion in the extrapolation, these 44,000 students were deducted from the total before a figure was extrapolated to the EM Hi Ed community as a whole; they were then added back in.

Fifty-two percent of all respondents reported a total of 8,223 students who took one or more emergency management programs in 2008–2009. This number, extrapolated to the full EM Hi Ed community and with the 44,000 EMI students added back

in, came to 59,832 students (see Table 5-1). As noted above, however, this figure is problematic, and the question needs to be fine-tuned next year to ensure that there can be greater confidence in the data collected.

### Current Enrollment

Fifty-two percent of all respondents reported that 8,657 students were enrolled in their emergency management programs in 2008-2009. Extrapolated to the total EM Hi Ed community, this amounts to 16,668 students currently enrolled (see Table 5-1)—almost 80 percent more than the 9,360 extrapolated from the 4,134 students reported by 44 percent of respondents in 2008.

Table 5-1. Extrapolated Student Data

Course Participation, Enrollment, and Graduation Figures	Total
Number of students who <i>took an emergency management course</i> in 2008-2009 (extrapolated from response of 8,223 [52 percent] + 44,000*)	59,832
* One program offered courses to 44,000 students as part of a partnership with EMI.	
Number of students <i>enrolled in programs</i> in 2008-2009 (extrapolated from response of 8,657 [52 percent])	16,668
Number of students that <i>graduated this past year</i> from emergency management higher education programs (extrapolated from response of 810 [52 percent])	1,560
Number of students that <i>graduated since the inception</i> of emergency management higher education programs (current year extrapolation plus baseline extrapolation from 2008 of 7,730)	9,290

### Graduation Figures

Data regarding graduate numbers were first collected in 2008, when respondents were asked to provide the numbers of students who had graduated since their institutions' programs began. Based on their combined total of 3,414 students from a 44 percent response rate, extrapolation to the entire EM Hi Ed community produced a total of 7,730 students (see Table 5-1). In this year's data collection, the number of graduates reported for the past year, based on 810 students from a 52 percent response rate, was extrapolated to be 1,560. This brings the total number of students who have graduated to date from emergency management programs (current year extrapolation plus baseline extrapolation from 2008) to 9,290.

### Enrollment and Graduation Trends

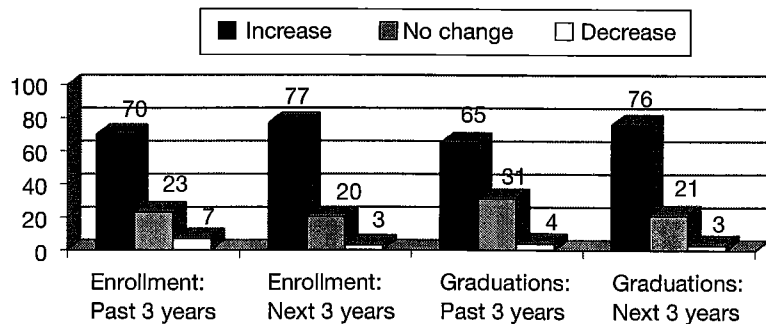
As has been the case in past years, some respondents were either unable to respond or not comfortable with responding to some of the enrollment and graduation trend questions because of the relative newness of their programs. Nevertheless, the trends in enrollment and graduation have maintained a steady upward curve. While this year's data show the same upward curve, there is evidence that the exponential growth expectations in enrollment trends are slowing down. Given respondents' comments within other areas of the survey instrument, it is surmised that a primary factor behind these dampened expectations is the current economic situation.

Among the respondents who replied to questions about enrollment over the past three years as well as projected into the next three years ( $n = 60$ ), the overwhelming majority, 70 percent, reported an increase in enrollment over the past three years, while 23 percent reported no change and 7 percent reported a decrease (Figure 5-3). Looking ahead three years, 77 percent predicted an increase in enrollment, 20 percent predicted no change, and 3 percent predicted a decrease. Among respondents reporting on graduations over the past three years ( $n = 55$ ), 65 percent noted an increase, 31 percent noted no change, and 4 percent noted a decrease (Figure 5-3); among those speculating about graduation figures over the next three years ( $n = 58$ ), 76 percent predicted an increase, 21 percent predicted no change, and 3 percent predicted a decrease.

### Postgraduate Employment

With regard to student employment after graduation, respondents were asked if they track their graduates' employment and, if so, what percentage of their graduates had moved into emergency management-oriented positions in the workplace (public and private sector); those respondents who indicated that they do not track employment were asked to estimate this percentage. This is the first year that the survey has

Figure 5-3. Enrollment and Graduation Trends, 2009



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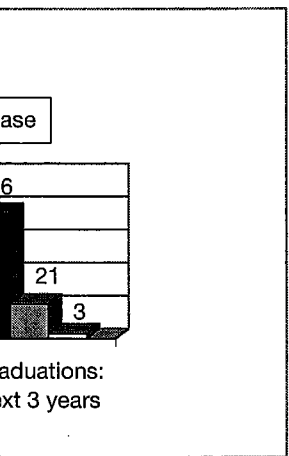
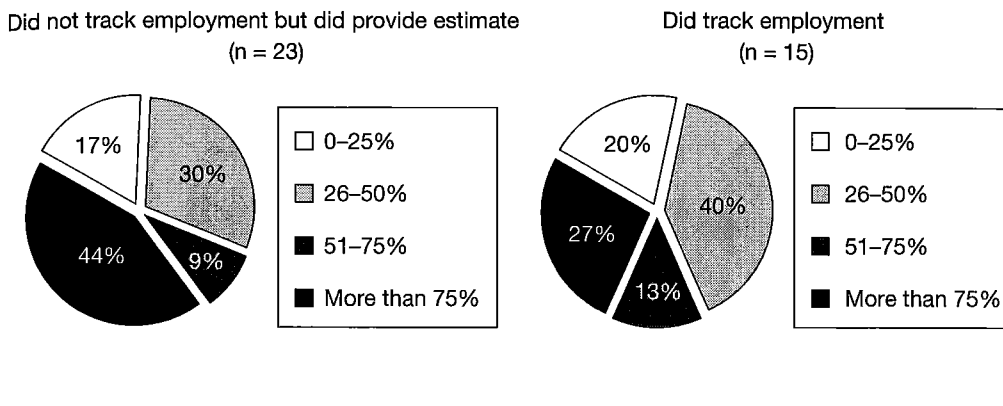


Figure 5-4. Number of Graduates Who Move into Emergency Management-Oriented Positions



collected such data. Of the sixty-five respondents who answered the question, 69 percent reported that they do not track employment.

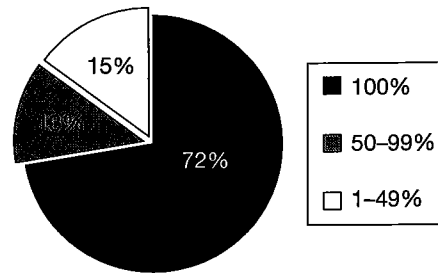
A couple of provisos are necessary here. First, those respondents who do not track employment were given the option of not providing an estimated percentage if they felt uncomfortable doing so—an option selected by about half of those in this category. Second, there was no place in the query to accommodate responses about students who are already in emergency management-oriented positions prior to graduation. With so many programs offering advancement degrees, this issue complicated the response to the employment query. Five respondents noted this failing in the survey (and many thanks to them!). These two provisos are important to keep in mind while evaluating this data.

Interestingly, the twenty-three respondents who reportedly do not track employment but who did provide estimated percentages of graduates moving into emergency management-oriented positions responded with higher percentages than those who do track employment. Of those who estimated, 44 percent reported that more than three-quarters of their graduates moved into emergency management-oriented positions, compared with just 27 percent reported by those who did track employment.

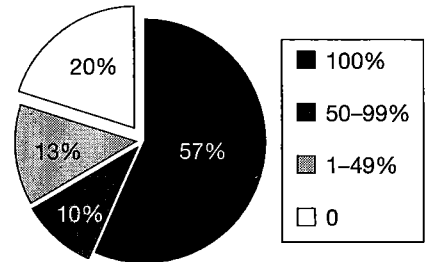
**Distance Education**

The bulk of all respondents, 70 percent, reported offering distance education opportunities. The extent to which their programs' coursework is available online is shown in Figure 5-5. These forty-seven respondents were then queried further as to the percentage of their course offerings that are offered *exclusively* online; the responses from the thirty respondents who provided an answer to this query are shown in Figure 5-6. Of note, the seventeen respondents who reported offering all of their coursework

**Figure 5-5. Percentage of Distance Education Offerings Available ( $n = 47$ )**



**Figure 5-6. Percentage of Offerings Available Exclusively via Distance Education ( $n = 30$ )**



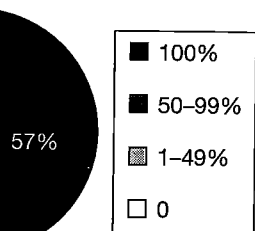
exclusively online amounted to 25 percent of overall survey respondents. As more and more programs move toward blended delivery or online models, it will be interesting to see how these figures change in future years.

### Access to Funding and Resources, and Perceived Level of Support

Nine questions were added this year to better understand institutions' access to funding and resources (three questions) and perceived level of support (six questions). These questions used a ten-point Likert scale (with 1 representing "not at all" and 10 representing "very much so") to gauge the level of access or support respondents felt that their institutions enjoyed. A number of respondents indicated that certain access or support items are not applicable to their programs, so note should be taken of the number of respondents for each item. Additionally, respondents' selections tended toward the middle of the scale (4-7) for most items. Note should also be taken of the standard deviation for each item since, when coupled with the mean, it provides greater insight into the data.

A number of statements can be made about the findings from this section. With regard to the access items, access to library resources had a dramatically higher mean (7.43) than access to external funding sources (4.62) and access to institutional funds (4.31) (Table 5-2). With regard to the support items, (1) both local emergency management community support (6.95) and FEMA-specific support (6.94) rated higher than institutional administrative support (6.66); (2) notably, the lowest mean was seen with Department of Homeland Security (DHS)-specific support (3.86)—lower even than the two lowest access indicators; and (3) state-level support (6.00), while lower than the other support indicators, ranked higher than support from the national emergency management professional community (5.15).

Percentage of Offerings  
Delivered via Distance  
(30)



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Level of Support

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Table 5-2. Rankings for Access and Support

Access to Resources/Sources of Support	No. Responding	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>Access</b>			
To library resources (e.g., ability to obtain new holdings)	67	<b>7.43</b>	2.457
To external funding opportunities (e.g., grants, contracts, etc.)	66	<b>4.62</b>	2.944
To institutional funding (e.g., stipends to develop courses/materials)	67	<b>4.31</b>	2.960
<b>Support</b>			
Local emergency management community (e.g., county and regional)	66	<b>6.95</b>	2.691
FEMA-specific (e.g., Higher Education Program, EMI, etc.)	66	<b>6.94</b>	2.806
Institutional administrative (e.g., for attempts to develop and implement new program ideas)	67	<b>6.66</b>	2.831
State emergency management community (e.g., state-level agency and state professional organization)	65	<b>6.00</b>	3.005
National emergency management professional community (e.g., International Association of Emergency Managers, National Emergency Management Association, Emergency Management Professional Organization for Women's Enrichment™ [EMPOWER], etc.)	65	<b>5.15</b>	2.949
Department of Homeland Security (DHS)-specific (e.g., overarching DHS programs and agencies within DHS other than FEMA-specific support)	59	<b>3.86</b>	2.488

Technology Coursework

Respondents were asked which types of technology-based instruction their programs offer. The survey presented a series of selections as well as an option to list additional technology-based instruction. This question proved to be problematic in that a handful of respondents answered by citing technology tools that are used to support teaching (such as Blackboard and Wimba) rather than to enhance emergency management capabilities. Their responses were not included in the culled data, and future surveys will need to be more specific to avoid similar misunderstandings.

The most common technology-based instruction that respondents reported offering in their programs was WebEOC or another Web-based emergency operations center (EOC) system (28 institutions), followed by geographic information systems (GIS) (26 institutions). Other reported technology-based instruction include social networking (18 institutions), media software (14 institutions), and the GIS-based HAZUS (13 institutions). The 14 institutions noting technology that was not listed on the survey

instrument cited such programs as CAMEO, SLOSH, SPSS, Second Life, RASOR-EN, GR2Analyst, Hurrevac, Aloha, and Laulima. Finally, 16 institutions reported using no technology-based instruction in their programs.

### **Use of Course Materials and Resources**

Respondents were asked about the use of specific resources and teaching materials that are considered to be fundamental by those in the emergency management community.

#### *“Principles of Emergency Management”*

Asked if they were aware of the “Principles of Emergency Management” document that presents the definition, vision, mission, and eight principles of emergency management (<http://www.training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/edu/emprinciples.asp>), the vast majority of respondents, 96 percent, replied in the affirmative, compared with 87 percent in 2008.

As a follow-up, respondents were then asked whether the “Principles of Emergency Management” document is used in classes and, if so, in which classes and to what extent? This time 83 percent of respondents replied in the affirmative (compared with 66 percent in 2008), noting that the principles are used across a variety of courses, most often as foundational material. As one respondent stated, “They are the core of what we teach.” This wholesale awareness and high-level use of the emergency management principles across the EM Hi Ed community is in line with their adoption by key emergency management stakeholder groups in the practitioner community. It is but another indication of the coalescence that is occurring throughout the emergency management community on key identity and resource items that are relevant to the field.

#### *Emergency Management Institute’s Independent Study Coursework*

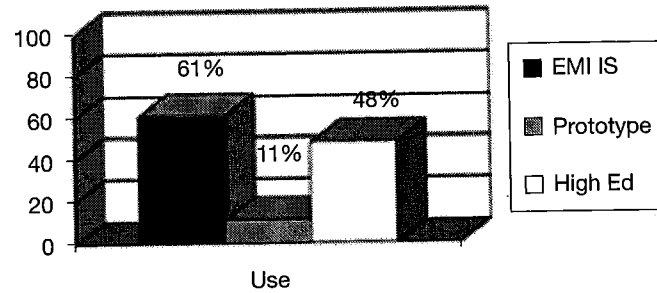
From among sixty-six respondents, forty (61 percent) reported that their programs use the EMI’s Independent Study (IS) coursework (Figure 5-7). To gauge the capacity in which this coursework is used, the survey then asked those respondents if the material is used to supplement other course material or alone as a primary source of information. The vast majority of them, 90 percent, responded that it is used to supplement other course material.

#### *Prototype Curriculum for Associate Degrees in Emergency Management*

While only 11 percent of sixty-six respondents reported using the Prototype Curriculum for Associate Degrees in Emergency Management as part of their programs (Figure 5-7),



Figure 5-7. Emergency Management Course Use



two provisos must be noted: (1) the usage reported by associate-level programs was 35 percent and (2) the majority of those who reported that they do not use the curriculum in its entirety noted that they do use it to help develop coursework and programs.

#### *FEMA Emergency Management Higher Education Courses*

Forty-eight percent of all sixty-seven respondents reported that they use FEMA EM Hi Ed courses as a part of their programs (Figure 5-7). As was the case with the Prototype Curriculum for Associate Degrees, those who reported that they do not use these courses in their entirety overwhelming reported that they do use them to enhance their own understanding of the material, identify key literature, inform class assignments and activities, and help develop coursework and programs.

Respondents who use the FEMA courses reported using between one and twelve of the twenty-three courses available (see Table 5-3), with the average being five courses. Given the average course use reported over the past two years (eight in 2008 and six in 2007), it appears that programs are moving toward using the courses less in their entirety and more for the value in informing individual course design. This conclusion is supported by respondents' comments (see respondents' course comments later in this section).

This raises the question, are emergency management programs becomingly increasingly more comfortable with the available material and their ability to fashion their own delivery of it? If the response to this query is yes, it is an indication of EM Hi Ed's maturation, and future surveys should try to capture data to corroborate a possible trend. In musing over what the course use numbers may indicate, last year's report noted, "It will be interesting to follow course use over the years and to theorize whether factors such as new textbooks, status of the course creators, or recent events enhance or detract from the use of FEMA Emergency Management Higher Education Courses." Also, the relationship between course revision and the regular updates

**Table 5-3. Higher Education Course Use**

<b>Programs Using (n = 32)</b>	<b>FEMA Emergency Management Higher Education Course Title</b>
16	Disaster Response Operations and Management (2008:16; 2007:18)
14	Social Dimensions of Disaster (2008:13; 2007:10)
14	Terrorism and Emergency Management (2008:16; 2007:16)
13	Homeland Security and Emergency Management (2008:17; 2007:11)
12	Building Disaster Resilient Communities (2008:19; 2007:10)
12	Public Administration and Emergency Management (2008:11; 2007:7)
11	Sociology of Disaster (2008:8; 2007:8)
11	Technology and Emergency Management (2008:10; 2007:13)
10	Business and Industry Crisis Management (2008: 8; 2007:14)
10	Political and Policy Basis of Emergency Management (2008:15; 2007:9)
10	Principles and Practice of Hazard Mitigation (2008:11; 2007:11)
9	Breaking the Disaster Cycle: Future Directions in Natural Hazard Mitigation (2008:5; 2007:8)
9	Hazards Risk Management Course (2008:9; 2007:7)
9	Holistic Disaster Recovery: Creating a More Sustainable Future (2008:6; 2007:6)
8	Hazard Mapping and Modeling (2008:5; 2007:8)
7	Individual and Community Disaster Education (2008:6; 2007:6)
7	Research and Analysis Methods in Emergency Management (2008:6; 2007:4)
7	Social Vulnerability Approach to Disasters (2008:6; 2007:7)
6	EM Principles & App. for Tourism, Hospitality and Travel Management (2008:3; 2007:4)
6	Hazards, Disasters and U.S. Emergency Management—An Introduction (2008:8; 2007:6)
4	Coastal Hazards Management (2008:4; 2007:6)
4	Earthquake Hazard and Emergency Management (2008:7; 2007:3)
4	Disaster Response Operations and Management (2008:16; 2007:18)

regarding said course provided in the FEMA Higher Education Program Notes of the Day may have an impact on course use. These are all other issues for consideration that have perhaps been too difficult to isolate in this survey effort but will continue to be watched as course use is analyzed in future data collections.

## Course Title

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Interestingly, FEMA course-use patterns do not vary all that much from year to year. Those courses in the top dozen tend to remain there, although they may go up or down a spot or two year by year (figures for the past three years are provided parenthetically in Table 5-3 to illustrate this point).

As is true every year, there is always much praise for resources produced by FEMA (both the EMI IS and Higher Education courses) and the FEMA Higher Education Program team (namely, the program director, Dr. B. Wayne Blanchard, and the program assistant, Barbara Johnson) and its resources. Comments, which notably support the survey findings regarding portions of courses used as needed rather than courses used in their entirety, are consolidated and summarized below:

- Well-constructed, well-organized, and excellent content
- Free of charge
- Excellent source of reference
- Good foundation in basic subject matter areas
- Syllabi are easy to read and follow and include exams
- Contain relevant research and provide class activities
- Present standardized knowledge base
- Help create a consistent body of knowledge
- No copyright issues
- Online flexibility-readily available
- Easy to incorporate into class material
- Provides additional material for student access
- Can use pieces of Hi Ed courses as needed
- User-friendly
- Current information
- Clear and concise
- Availability of certificate from EMI.

Some examples of the praise for the FEMA Higher Education Program are excerpted below (with the last comment noting a lament that has long been echoed in the emergency management community):

- *"We have been exceptionally pleased with the support and networking offered by the Higher Education Program."*
- *"The Hi Ed website contains a plethora of valuable information for new programs — thank you!"*

- *"Thanks to Wayne for always being a resource...we couldn't have gotten our program off the ground without his and Barbara's help."*
- *"Doing a great job!"*
- *"We appreciate Wayne's hi ed email report as a constant source of information – he has everything in there from A-Z and we are continuously finding pertinent information in it that can be of use to our program."*
- *"Thank you for all you do for the higher education community!"*
- *"Running the Higher Education Program is a Herculean task...when is someone from FEMA going to snap out of it and get Wayne and Barbara some help?!"*

### **Additional Products, Activities, and Services**

Every year respondents are asked what other products, activities, and services they would like to see the FEMA EM Hi Ed Program provide. While there is always a wish list that emerges, this year's list is arguably the longest to date. Note that in the list below, requests have been consolidated and/or summarized where appropriate. Also, some requests (as noted in parentheses) are clearly directed at EMI coursework, albeit not explicitly stated as such. EMI coursework is not part of the FEMA's Higher Education Program's purview, but the requests are included herein based on the usage of EMI coursework by programs.

- More advertising and awareness for programs/honor society, Epsilon Pi Phi
- Online forums/discussion boards
- Crossover between EMI courses and Hi Ed courses
- Structured curriculum recommendations
- Open courses for additional input
- Short books on EM topics
- More collaborative opportunities for the Hi Ed community
- Regional Hi Ed meetings
- Textbook reviews
- Downloadable instructional modules and multimedia files for Blackboard/LMS
- More courses/more courses at entry level
- Continued course updates
- Recommended readings by topic area
- More interactive cases and simulations online/live exercises for students
- Actual photos that relate to the material being discussed (EMI courses)
- Instructor PowerPoint presentations for EMI courses
- Improve timing in testing/grading area (EMI courses)

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- Public-private partnering course
- Increased depth of materials
- Course development by faculty with real-world experience
- More research-focused courses
- Posters, fact sheets, visual aids
- Database of syllabi
- Activities and classroom exercises that emphasize material/theory
- More videos, DVDs, and online clips
- Webinars and videoconferences
- International Disasters course
- Incorporation of content/media options to support distance education
- Update videos and training materials
- E-books
- More challenging associate degree-level courses
- More sophisticated technology to keep younger students' attention.

### Competencies

In 2008, institutions had been asked to provide the top five knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) that EM Hi Ed programs should focus on. This year, they were asked to list what they felt were the top ten competencies in emergency management. One respondent astutely noted that the same question had been asked the previous year. While there may be some room for debate about the similarities and differences between competencies and KSAs, in this instance the proof of the perceived similarity in meaning is evidenced in the data. In Table 5-4 below, the competencies are shaded to illustrate corresponding items in the KSA column. Items that remain white have no correlation in the top fifteen items cited on the 2009 and 2008 lists.

A couple of things are evident from a review of the competencies listed in 2009 and the KSAs listed in 2008. First, whether they are called competencies or KSAs, the higher education community is fairly consistent in its consensus on what is important. Second, the amount of consensus in evidence across the list seems to be growing (e.g., communication was listed by 43 percent of responding institutions this year as opposed to 30 percent last year, and the total number of competency listed were 75 compared to over 200 KSAs listed last year). This growing consensus appears to support a promising trend that has been evidenced in the FEMA "Body of Knowledge" reports and the widespread adoption of the "Principles of Emergency Management." If it continues, that would support the hypothesis that the emergency management community is indeed coalescing around key competencies, resource materials, and ideology.

Table 5-4. Competencies

	Competencies (2009)	Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (2008)
1	Communication: Verbal and written (43%)	Communication: Verbal and written (30%) [2]
2	Comprehensive EM: knowledge of best practices in the field (40%)	Comprehensive EM, overall knowledge of field: four phases, all hazards (36%) [1]
3	Government role, interaction, political and bureaucratic context (33%)	Relationships, partnering, team building (28%) [3]
4	Critical thinking and problem solving (31%)	Critical thinking, analytical skills, problem solving (26%) [4]
5	Leadership (28%)	Leadership (15%) [6]
6	Management (24%)	Management skills (19%) [5]
7	Risk assessment, analysis, and management (23%)	Risk assessment, analysis, and management (15%) [7]
8	Collaboration, teambuilding, teamwork (21%)	Knowledge of the social science research and ability to apply it in practice (13%) [10]
9	Planning (19%)	Planning Skills (13%) [9]
10	Operational frameworks – NIMS/ICS/EOC operations (19%)	Mitigation (11%) [11]
11	Technology (18%)	Technology Skills (13%) [8]
12	Financial operations, contract administration, grant writing (13%)	Coordination (9%) [12]
13	Ethics, professionalism (12%)	Professionalism, ethics, evolution as discipline and career (9%) [13]
14	Vulnerability approach (10%)	Public policy (9%) [14]
15	Legal matters (9%)	Political context (9%) [15]

### Challenges Facing Emergency Management Programs

Each year this survey asks respondents to identify the top five challenges facing emergency management programs. In the past, similar themes have emerged (e.g., faculty, funding, student recruitment). Last year's challenges, while in line with past years' themes, seemed to be more specific (e.g., hiring not just more faculty but more *quality* faculty with research skills, experience, etc.). And while some recurring themes have again surfaced, some new concerns have also made the list. This year's list (Table 5-5) has been expanded to nine items—those that received focused attention. Last year's list is provided alongside to allow for comparisons with recurring themes color-coded.

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Table 5-5. Challenges Facing Programs

	2009	2008
1	<b>Funding (31%)</b> Programs, faculty, research and students	<b>Faculty (44%)</b> Qualified faculty: PhD, experience, research skills and teaching ability
2	<b>Faculty (20%)</b> Quality candidates: PhD, experience and research ability	<b>Funding (28%)</b> Programs, faculty, research, students, and resources
3	<b>Student recruitment (16%)</b> Higher-quality students, better marketing, increased competition	<b>Student recruitment (26%)</b> Increased competition, higher-quality students
4	<b>Lack of political understanding/support (15%)</b> Political appointees who do not understand the importance of EM or EM Higher Education	<b>Constantly changing material (19%)</b> Constant policy changes, lack of agreement on topical coverage, and the barrage of reports from government offices
5	<b>DHS/FEMA (15%)</b> DHS influence disruptive, oversight over FEMA causes problems, no balance	<b>Institutional support (19%)</b> Acceptance, credibility, and respect within the institution
6	<b>Academic legitimacy (15%)</b> Fighting for recognition within the larger academic community	<b>Internships (11%)</b> Building relationships and seeking out opportunities
7	<b>Jobs/careers (12%)</b> Lack of jobs and career path options not apparent	
8	<b>Books/journal articles (10%)</b> Quality material needed, written by qualified folks	
9	<b>Connection between the field and academia (9%)</b> Greater collaboration needed	

The top concern that emerged this year was funding, cited by 31 percent of respondents. Given the current economic situation and the fact that this is an enduring challenge for academia en masse, this is not too surprising. This challenge is in line with the lower means that emerged for funding access indicators (see Table 5-2).

The enduring challenge of acquiring quality faculty candidates was cited by 20 percent of respondents, a dramatic reduction from 44 percent in 2008. It will be interesting to see whether this continues to be a challenge in the future. As stated previously, the movement toward distance education has an impact on faculty hires as it allows

for faculty members without PhDs (e.g., adjuncts with a master's degree) to teach, as well as for those with PhDs who are teaching at institutions with brick-and-mortar EM Hi Ed programs to teach a distance education course or two at other institutions.

The third challenge in 2009, student recruitment issues (16 percent), came in third in 2008 as well. While student recruitment is a general concern across all areas of academia, respondents' comments focused on the challenge of recruiting higher-quality students who are able to acquire the necessary skill sets—for example, communication skills, leadership qualities, critical thinking, and the ability to be innovative, to conduct research, and to think like a scholar—within the discipline and field.

A new entry on the challenge list this year, cited by 15 percent of respondents, is the lack of understanding and support from political appointees regarding the importance of emergency management and emergency management higher education. This lack has long been a concern within the practitioner community, and its appearance on the EM Hi Ed challenge list seems to confirm that there is greater cohesion between the practitioner and higher education communities, and to indicate forward movement on the professionalization front. Coalescence around shared issues will produce a more powerful lobby for ownership of the solutions, which will ultimately lead to greater control of emergency management's future.

Another challenge cited by 15 percent of respondents hit on one more area that has been long lamented in the emergency management practitioner community: the disruptive quality of DHS's oversight and influence on the emergency management community as a whole. Respondents focused on a "lack of balance" between DHS's focus on terrorism and an all-hazards approach, its ongoing efforts to subsume emergency management as a "sub-component of homeland security," and its "uninformed, incessant meddling where it has no place being." Comments in this area were quite pointed and no doubt explain, in part, the very low mean earned by DHS on the support indicator. They also reflect yet another issue that appears to be creating coalescence in the larger community.

Also tied for third place with 15 percent is the challenge of academic legitimacy. This is no stranger to the challenge list, although it has appeared under different headings in the past. In academia, there is great competition for scarce resources, so academic posturing is a fact of life. Emergency management programs, the vast majority of which are less than ten years old and can only now begin to refer to the discipline of emergency management with some validity, have faced this challenge repeatedly. But it should become increasingly less of a challenge as programs and the discipline mature.

In seventh place, jobs and career path options were identified as a challenge by 12 percent of respondents, who were concerned about the types of jobs that graduates



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will be moving into and whether programs were providing curriculum that adequately equipped students to meet the diverse needs in the job market. One respondent mentioned that this relates back to the lack of balance created by DHS oversight: "Do we need to teach our students to pander to the 90 percent terrorism and 10 percent all-hazards approach so that they can get jobs in this DHS-centric model or should we teach them what we know from research is the correct approach and risk that they won't be hired?"

Ten percent of respondents cited the need for quality books and journals written by qualified individuals. This challenge has come up in past years (although it did not make last year's list). Publishers have made quite a significant push over the last few years to get more textbooks out to the higher education community. Unfortunately, rapid changes in structures and laws in emergency management have quickly made textbooks outdated. There are a number of quality journals, some of which are directly focused on emergency management and others that belong to other disciplines but that publish emergency management-related material. Comments in relation to this challenge focused on books that are written by academics but that should be written by practitioners (or vice versa), and journal articles that are little more than "op-ed pieces" and too often "not in accordance with any accepted research standard." As one respondent asked, "Where are the scholars in emergency management?"

The final challenge, cited by 9 percent of respondents, focused on the connection between the field and academia. Respondents noted a greater need for collaboration to strengthen both EM Hi Ed programs and the field itself. Specifically, they mentioned the need for more feedback from the practitioner community about what can be done to make graduates more valuable, to strengthen programs, and to strengthen the field.

While some challenges, such as funding and student recruitment, will likely remain on the list indefinitely given that they are endemic to higher education, others, such as faculty and academic credibility, should theoretically become lesser challenges over time. This year's list reflects some promising developments in the EM Hi Ed community—most notably, recognition of the importance of connectivity with the practitioner community, whether as a matter of simpatico (e.g., over the lack of political understanding and support) or of need (e.g., for more feedback to create stronger graduates, programs, and contributions to the field). While the connectivity is seen in the framework of challenges facing programs, it indicates the larger emergency management community's increasing coalescence around key issues.

### Anticipated Changes in Programs

Respondents are asked each year to identify the changes that they anticipate in the next three years in their programs. This list is typically quite telling with regard to not only the direction that programs are taking to remain current with technology and trends, but also the challenges they are facing within their programs (e.g., faculty, student numbers, and economic woes). In reviewing the anticipated changes, it is possible to discern the proposed solutions to some of the challenges mentioned above. All in all, the following list of anticipated changes (several of which were mentioned by more than one respondent) is an indicator of the continual process of fine-tuning and growth that programs go through:

- New programs
- Increased enrollment
- Hiring of additional faculty
- Hiring of full-time program representative
- Move to distance education
- Move to different department
- Greater course flexibility within program
- More course offerings
- Increased program growth
- Increased topical offerings with in-house IS courses
- Greater competition for students
- Decreases related to economic downturn
- Greater involvement in the local emergency planning committee
- Refined/fine-tuned course offerings/programs
- More digital video streaming
- Programs offered internationally via partnerships
- More technical courses
- Greater focus on grants and research with students
- More support resources (e.g., financial and course material)
- Demographic changes at two-year technical colleges
- Integration of both homeland security and emergency management student markets
- Restructuring to include FEMA Hi Ed courses
- Approaches to deal with employment perceptions in the field
- More practical exercises and hands-on experiences.

## CONCLUSION

With each year, it becomes more and more apparent that the EM Hi Ed community is coming into its own. As programs mature and faculty members become more immersed in the field, the community's collective strength has grown. Over time the questions have changed from "What should we be teaching?" to "How can we teach it better?" and "What more should we be doing to contribute to the discipline?"

This shift from searching for identity clarification to raising the bar for quality and expectations is an important one. It signals a demarcation point for emergency management, both in its emergence as a discipline and in its movement toward becoming a profession. The community has come to understand the potency of its efforts on society and the importance of producing graduates who are equipped to handle the complexities of problem solving in a global economy, where disasters remain local and government priorities are conflicted.

The task has, on occasion, seemed daunting, but more and more there are indicators that the community's perseverance has paid off. With strength gained from its collectivity, commitment, and continued push for improvement, the community has achieved the power to create change, and that power has not gone unnoticed. Legislators, policy makers, and government officials are increasingly coming directly to the EM Hi Ed community for assistance in addressing some of society's enduring challenges related to risk management and hazards.

Additionally, the connectivity and shared vision between the practitioner and higher education communities have fortified the voice of the larger emergency management community. One is reminded of the line from *Dirty Dancing*, "Nobody puts Baby in the corner." Such is the case with the emergency management community: no longer is the community willing to tolerate being put in the corner as if it is an afterthought or an aside. Its growing strength, identity, and momentum are both undeniable and seemingly unstoppable.

Much hard work and dedication has been put forth over the past year by the EM Hi Ed community, and despite the challenges, movement continues onward and upward. As is clear from this year's report (and prior ones), introspection and an enduring commitment to continuous improvement has served the community well. The community is indeed coming into its own, thanks to those who have committed so much of themselves to the evolutionary, and sometimes revolutionary, effort.

### APPENDIX. Participating Colleges and Universities: Emergency Management Programs Offered

*As reported by respondents*

- Adelphi University (CG)
- Andrews University (BC, MC)
- American Military University (CU, CG, BC, A, B, M)
- Arkansas Tech University (B, M)
- Auburn University (CU, MC)
- Barton Community College (C, A)
- Baton Rouge Community College (CU)
- Broward Community College (CU, A)
- Caldwell Community College (A)
- California State University (M)
- California University of Pennsylvania (BC)
- Capella University (MC, DC, O)
- Central Georgia Technical College (CU, A, O)
- College of Southern Nevada (A)
- Community College of Rhode Island (CU)
- Delaware Community College (A)
- Durham Technical College (CU, A)
- Eastern Michigan University (BC, MC)
- Empire State College (BC, MC)
- Farleigh Dickinson University (CU, CG)
- Frederick Community College (CU, A)
- Florida State University (CU, CG, MC)
- George Washington University (CG, M, D)
- Georgia State University (CG, MC, DC)
- Hesston College (CU)
- Indiana University, Kokomo (CU)
- Lakeland Community College (CU, A)
- Lakeshore Technical College (A)
- Lamar Institute of Technology (A)
- Loma Linda University (CG)
- Louisiana State University (BC, MI, MC, DC)
- Lynn University (CU, CG, BC, MI, M)
- Massachusetts Maritime Academy (M)
- Metropolitan College of New York (M)
- Millersville University (MI, M)
- Minnesota State Colleges & Universities (CU, A)
- Montgomery County Community College (CU, A)
- Nash Community College (A)
- New Jersey Institute of Technology (CG, M, D)
- North Dakota State University (MI, B, M, D)
- Northwest Florida State College (CU, A)
- Norwich University (M)
- Philadelphia University (CG, M)
- Purdue University, Calumet (CU, M)
- Red Rocks Community College (CU, A)
- Saint Louis University (CG, M, MC)
- San Antonio College (CU, A)
- Shaw University (B)
- State University of New York, Canton (B)
- Temple University (CU)
- Texas A & M University (CG)
- Thomas Edison State College (CG, B)
- University of Akron (CU, MI, B)
- University of Central Missouri (B)
- University of Delaware (BC, M, D, DC)
- University of Hawaii—West Oahu (CU, BC)
- University of Idaho (CG)
- University of Maryland, Baltimore County (CG, M)
- University of Maryland University College (B, M)
- University of Nevada Las Vegas (M)
- University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (CG)
- University of North Texas (B, M, D)
- University of South Florida (CG)
- University of Wisconsin, Green Bay (CU, CG, BC)
- Western Iowa Tech Community College (CU, A)
- West Texas A & M University (B)
- Western Washington University (BC)