

Department of Homeland Security
Federal Emergency Management Agency
National Training and Education Division/National Training and Education System
Higher Education Program

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HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT FY 2017

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Program Overview

PROGRAM MISSION

The Higher Education Program's mission is to serve the Emergency Management profession through education. This is accomplished through the promotion of personal mastery, the examination of mental models and cultivation of shared visions, team learning and systems thinking to produce innovation, opportunity and connection. In focusing on developing a learning community, the Higher Education Program supports a community that, in the words of Peter Senge, "continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole together."¹

The Higher Education Program upholds FEMA's mission and aligns with the priorities to: be survivor centric, be expeditionary, build capability for catastrophic disasters, enable risk reduction and strengthen FEMA's organizational foundation by alignment toward building and sustaining core competencies and capabilities to realize the National Preparedness Goal (NPG). The Higher Education Program is an integrated part of the National Training and Education System (NTES) and closely coordinates with training efforts through the Emergency Management Institute's cornerstone principles: initiative, collaboration, cooperation and innovation. Lastly, the Higher Education program is outcome driven, effective, efficient and dedicated to continuous improvement.

OPERATING HIGHLIGHTS

The Higher Education Program operates within the National Preparedness Directorate (NPD), National Training and Education Division's (NTED) National Training and Education System (NTES) and is run by a program manager who is responsible for the overall program mission achievement, quality and efficiency. This position is the liaison to leadership and external stakeholders. The program manager leads both a program assistant team member and a contract support team member.

The program assistant is responsible for the logistical support of focus groups; managing contracts including statements of work, budgets, vouchers and deliverables; tracking course requests and updates; maintaining and updating the program website; planning and coordinating webinars; mastering and facilitating webinar capabilities; assisting in compilation and editing of weekly newsletters and managing aspects of symposium planning and execution. Data collection is another responsibility of the program assistant.

The contract support is responsible for maintaining and updating the College List database, as well as providing those updates to the program assistant for reconciliation on the program website. Managing many aspects of the annual symposium is another priority of the contract support including: invitations, registrations, agenda, print material and the After Action Report. Additional responsibilities include: notetaking and summarizing for program meetings, community calls and focus groups; developing brochures and other print materials for

¹ Senge, Peter M. *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. New York: Doubleday/Currency, 1990.

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dissemination; collecting and compiling data, as well as drafting the program's annual data report.

Together, the team achieves the Higher Education Program priority of maintaining a learning-centric environment through: the development of research inquiries, course material, programs and publications; the promotion of open dialogue at meetings, during monthly community call, at the annual symposium, and among special interest groups and focus groups; and dissemination of information through the invitation to contribute to our website, webinars, newsletters, community conference calls and regional engagements.

GOING FORWARD

The Higher Education Program is eager to incorporate the FEMA Administrator's Annual Planning Guidance for 2018 into its path forward. To this end we will highlight efforts that contribute toward: 1) building a culture of preparedness, 2) readying the nation for catastrophic disasters and 3) promoting understanding and connection to reduce the complexity of the Agency, as laid out in the plan. The Higher Education Program is committed to these focus areas and will continue to build upon them by supporting the development, dialogue and dissemination of information across the Emergency Management Higher Education landscape of practice.

Additionally, the program is committed to build and sustain itself as a learning organization to ensure that the whole community feels involved, respected and productive. This will continue to be achieved through: *research inquiries* that expand our own personal capacity and support each other to do the same; *webinars* that allow conscious reflection on how we see the world and the impact of our work; *focus groups* that encourage communication to create a collective way forward; *Special Interest Groups* that create a listening and understanding environment for collective intelligence to emerge and a vision that supports team learning; and the hosting of our *College List* and *Annual Symposium* that reveal the vast and interconnected emergency management education system.

Finally, as with all living organizations, some aspects grow and other aspects diminish. This is the life cycle and as a program we work to take an honest look at the work we are doing to ensure we are not putting energy to efforts we have always done that are no longer yielding fruit. Each year the program looks at our activities and the data points we are collecting to ensure they are aligned with agency priorities as well as our overarching mission to serve the emergency management profession through education. This results in the elimination of some data points and the discovery of new data will help to us to accurately track the advancement of our program, as well as to provide us a way to effectively share our story

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Focus Groups

OVERVIEW

The Higher Education Program encourages the community to convene focus groups to share information, knowledge and perspective on topics and challenges relevant to the emergency management academic discipline with the desired outcome to collectively generate possible solutions and/or paths forward that honor diversity and identity. The topics for the focus groups are generated from across the Higher Education community and FEMA family. They are led by external Higher Education community participants with support of the program manager. Focus group deliverables such as reports and publications, all contribute to the body of knowledge disseminated across the community of interest.

MANAGEMENT

The focus groups are managed by the Higher Education program staff and are many times facilitated by higher education community members outside of FEMA. More specifically, the program manager works with the focus group chair to determine an agenda and the invitees, while the program assistant works with each contractor to develop their individual statement of work and manages the voucher process, ensuring that tasks have been delivered on time. The program contract support takes notes during the meeting and provides a summary to the group chair for review and disbursement.

Group activity is reported back to the program manager for dissemination. The data points collected in FY17 were: 1) number of focus groups established, 2) deliverables, 3) action items and 4) completion dates.

CHALLENGES

The program has been fortunate in locating Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to participate in the focus groups planned for FY 2017. The larger challenge still relates to the procurement process. To compensate the SME's time and travel, they are issued micro purchases. To process a micro purchase, each faculty and/or SME must obtain a SAM and DUNS number in order to contract with the government. This process takes time and forward planning. In an effort to mitigate complications with obtaining these numbers, a web page was developed on the Higher Education Program website with clear instructions for completing the process.

Accountability has also been a challenge. The program does not currently have a database that tracks deliverables outlined in statements of work (SOW). The Higher Education Program staff currently track action items in a more ad hoc fashion, as there is no Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) or formalized tracking structure for deliverables.

Although outlined as a step moving forward in last year's data report, an SOP has not yet been developed. Instead, a checklist was drafted to help create a standard timeline for action items as a stop-gap measure.

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GOING FORWARD

A SOP will be developed to clearly define the process for SME selection and procurement. The SOP will outline the required elements of the SOW and expectations of meeting participation, deliverables and any expected follow-on work to ensure the timely completion of deliverables and clear expectation for contracted focus group members.

FOCUS GROUPS FY 2017

NAME	EXPECTED OUTCOME	MEETING	DELIVERABLES	STATUS
Homeland Security Academic Advisory Council - National Table Top Exercise	Exchange information and expertise on campus violence, including active shooter and other threats.	November 2016 Chicago, IL	Report received December 2016	Complete
Unity of Effort & Accreditation	Share situational awareness and understanding of EM & HS academic standards and accreditation that present opportunities for collaboration and unity of effort.	March 22, 2017 Arlington, VA	Contribute to an update of the outcomes and deliver at the 19 th Annual Higher Education Symposium	Complete
Discipline	Articulate findings from AERA and focus group to better understand how the EM academic discipline can benefit from the conference, to articulate the boundaries and relationships with complementary academic disciplines and explore how the EM discipline builds and sustains the needed capabilities and competencies to achieve the National Preparedness Goal.	April 27 – May 1, 2017 San Antonio, TX at the American Education Research Association (AERA) annual meeting	Report to be presented and disseminated at the 19 th Annual Higher Education Symposium	Complete

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NAME	EXPECTED OUTCOME	MEETING	DELIVERABLES	STATUS
Higher Education Emergency Management Research Collective Focus Group	Determine a 3-5 year disaster, natural hazards and related disciplines academic research agenda.	August 8 – August 9, 2017 Emmitsburg, MD (EMI)	Present a webinar and draft a report to disseminate	Active
Emergency Management Scholarship of Teaching and Learning	Locate, create and expand SoTL research specific to the academic discipline of Emergency Management and inclusive of Homeland Security.	September 13 – September 14, 2017 Emmitsburg, MD	Present a webinar and draft a report to disseminate	Complete and has generated add-on work.

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Webinars

OVERVIEW

The Higher Education Program conducts at least quarterly webinars. Webinars help to generate shared vision and community connections that lead to the enhancement of emergency management higher education. During FY 2017 the program delivered eight webinars using the Adobe Connect platform in combination with the Higher Education Program conference line. This year the Higher Education Program was extremely fortunate to have the commitment of two highly qualified faculty to deliver a four-part webinar series on case student development and use. This was a generous offering to the community and testament to the service-oriented nature of emergency management academic faculty. Each of our webinar deliveries is scheduled for one and a half hours. This provides ample time to convey the material as well as time for the community to dialogue regarding the content. Many times there are very rich examples of information exchange and understanding revealed in the dialogue of our webinars.

MANAGEMENT

The program manager works with the higher education community to determine the webinar topic. The program assistant works with the Subject Matter Expert (SME) to create a training bulletin, set up the website and collect the data for webinars. With the exception of some follow-up questions, which are often times directed to the program manager and then reported back to the program assistant, the program assistant manages the webinar session.

The Higher Education Program team has made significant improvements in the quality of the webinar delivery, most notably in the quality of audio presentation, but also with closed captioning and webinar recording. The lack of audio interference and interruption has greatly contributed to the flow of the webinars, and to that end, their success. Additionally, a Standard Operating Procedure checklist for webinars was compiled and put forward by the Higher Education Program staff to ensure the precise preparation and execution of each scheduled webinar.

The data points for webinars are: 1) number of webinars held, 2) number of registrants, 3) number of attendees via Adobe Connect platform and 4) follow-up questions. Additionally, but inconsistently, the number of participants that called into the Higher Education Program conference line was collected.

CHALLENGES

Registration for and actual participation in the webinar had not been predictable during the last fiscal year. However, the team observed that participation was considerably lower when there was not a reminder bulletin sent out the week of the scheduled webinar. Although a reminder bulletin was not sent for every webinar in FY 2017, this step significantly impacts participation and will be incorporated into the Standard Operating Procedure for webinars.

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GOING FORWARD

The team will need to consistently send a bulletin reminder a day or two before each scheduled webinar to remind the community to participate. Webinars that were preceded by a reminder bulletin captured a larger audience.

Registration numbers are regularly higher than the actual participation. This phenomenon is unclear. For insight, the team would like to employ a brief query to registrants that will hopefully provide information to assist in raising the participation number.

Remembering to call into the FEMA conference line operator after each webinar will be important for the program staff moving forward. By calling into the operator after the webinar, the program is able to find out the number of people that called into the conference line during the webinar presentation. This number is important because it reflects, more accurately, the number of participants, as not all participants log onto the Adobe Connect platform.

In the coming year, we will also capture the number of topics and questions surfaced in the dialogue period of each webinar to better understand knowledge transfer and if there we can discern any link between the dialogue and value of the webinar topic.

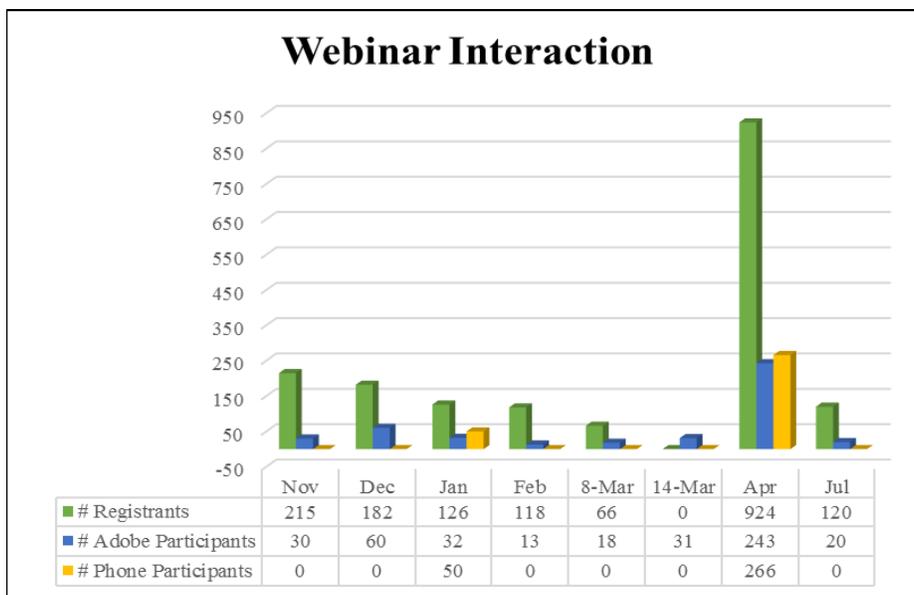


Chart description. Nov-Registrants 215, Adobe Participants 30, Dec- Registrants 182, Adobe Participants 60, Jan- Registrants 126, Adobe Participants 32, Phone Participants 50, Feb-Registrants 118, Adobe Participants 13, 8-Mar- Registrants 66, Adobe Participants 18, 14-Mar-Adobe Participants 31, Apr- Registrants 924, Adobe Participants 243, Phone Participants 266, Jul-Registrants 120, Adobe Participants 20

Note: The number of phone participants was not collected for the November, December, February, both March, April and July webinars. Additionally, participants did not have to register for the March 14th webinar.

* The March webinar did not require registration to participate.

* The April webinar depicts a spike in registrants and participants because the solicitation was distributed to the faith-based listserv.

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WEBINARS FY 2017

WEBINAR TITLE	PRESENTER	DATE
Jobs and Internships for Emergency Management Students	Brent Cox Timothy De Palma E. Tal Ehlers Wendy Walsh	11/30/2016
Webinar #1: Overview and “The Case for the Case”	Jane Kushma Jean Slick Wendy Walsh	12/6/2016
Webinar #2: Invitation to EM Case Teaching: Session II	Jane Kushma Jean Slick Wendy Walsh	1/11/2017
Webinar #3: EM Teaching with Cases Series	Jane Kushma Jean Slick Wendy Walsh	2/8/2017
Webinar #4: EM Teaching with Cases	Jane Kushma Jean Slick Wendy Walsh	3/8/2017
FEMA Corps: A Pathway to an Emergency Management Career	Meghan Curley Katrina Mathis Benjamin McNeil Wendy Walsh Paul Whitman	3/14/2017
Academic Perspective On Increasing Engagement With Faith-based Organizations in Disaster Preparedness	Jamie Aten Marcus Coleman Brie Loskota Wendy Walsh EMI Leadership	4/12/2017
Highlights from the 19 th Annual Emergency Management Higher Education Symposium	DeeDee Bennett Carol Cwiak Wendy Walsh	7/19/2017
An Academic Collaboration to Discern a 3-5 Year Research Agenda for FEMA	DeeDee Bennett Kevin Kloesel Steven Patterson Lori Peek Brenda Phillips Jennifer Tobin Wendy Walsh Gary Webb	10/19/2017

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Higher Ed Courses

OVERVIEW

The Higher Education Program historically developed and disseminated courses to support its mission. However, based on the findings of the Resource Needs Focus Group convened in FY 2016, the community recommended minimal value in new courses being developed. This decision was based, in-part, to having dated material on the Higher Education Program website that was not being utilized, as well as having material that was not 508 compliant, as required by law.

Instead, it was recommended that the program build course “treatments” – which are defined by the community as a sort of jump-start to a course that may include a syllabi, recommended texts and two to three-modules of a course. There were no specific requests or proposals for course treatments in FY2017, but there was interests conveyed in developing a module or short course to introduce the concept of Systems Thinking to emergency management. In collaboration with the Naval Postgraduate School Center for Homeland Defense and Security, we have begun to support the development of a self-study course to be hosted on the CHDS.us website. Stride in content have been made, but due to the severe hurricane and wildfire seasons, progress has been delayed. It is hoped that this course will be completed in June of 2018.

The program has funded two courses to be built in EMI’s learning content management system (LCMS). One course was a new, single-credit independent study course completed in FY2017. This course entitled, “So You want to be an Emergency Management Professional,” was initiated in 2016 upon the recommendation of the 2016 Synergy Focus Group to help improve entry into and career advancement within the profession of emergency management. It is currently being formatted for upload to FEMA’s Independent Study (IS) database. This is the very first FEMA Independent Study Course designed and developed by the emergency management higher education academic community.

The second course to be uploaded into the LCMS was a previously developed course on the topic of recovery. This effort was a pilot to discern if uploading higher education courses into the LCMS format would result in a more desired format to share with other learning management systems. The outcome of this pilot revealed that the time and complexity to upload content to LCMS does not result in any improved formatting or accessibility for institutions of higher education, as the systems is customized to meet the training communities’ needs to repurpose learning content.

MANAGEMENT

The program manager and program assistant collect data for the Course Development category. The data points are: 1) number of course requests, 2) number of feedback forms sent, 3) number of feedback forms returned, 4) number of courses developed, 5) number of courses updated, 6) number of courses archived.

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CHALLENGES

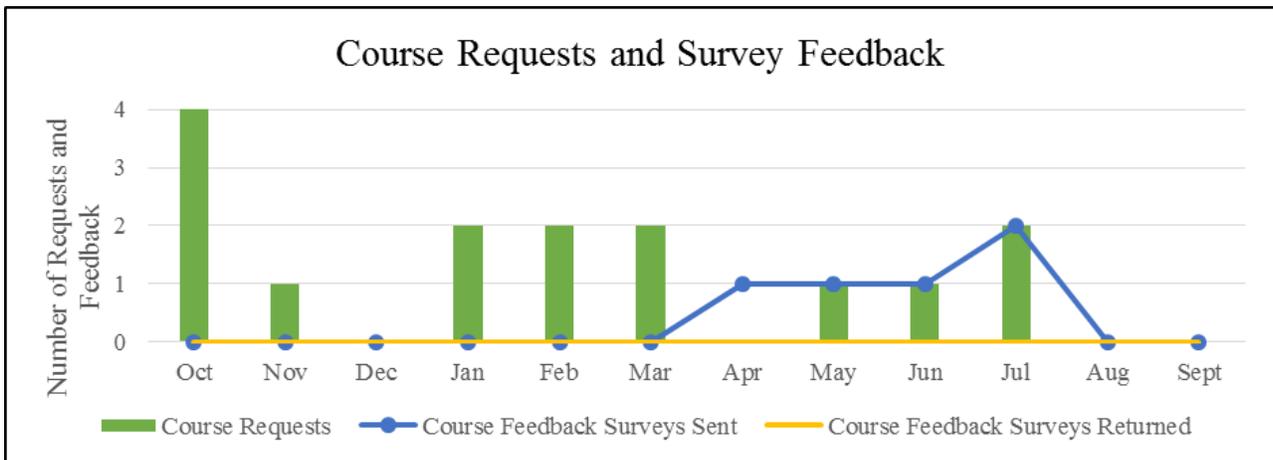
As noted, it was decided to pull many of the Higher Education courses available for download offline due to dated material and lack of 508 compliancy. This changed the accessibility for course downloads and the corresponding data measures for number of course downloads and feedback. Courses are now available by request only.

GOING FORWARD

There will be no new course development at this time, in response to community demand and while we may explore the utility of the LCMS for other Independent Study courses, we will not pursue the system to format or host higher education courses. The program will continue to track requests for archived courses. A feedback form has also been created for anyone who requests archived courses to voluntarily fill out to better understand the use of this material and we will track request for the development of new course material.

UPDATED COURSES FY 2017

COURSE TITLE
1. Research



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Supported Research Inquiries

OVERVIEW

The Higher Education Program considers community proposals for academic inquiry and research that align with the program mission. The intended outcome of these inquiries is to develop materials applicable for academic use, disseminate critical information to practitioners, provide measurable learning experiences and/or inspire the necessary dialogues to build and sustain capabilities to achieve the National Preparedness Goals. These inquiries are commonly generated by individual academic community members or as a result of activity at the annual symposium, through focus groups, community calls or webinars.

MANAGEMENT

Both the program manager and program assistant play a role in vetting proposal inquiries, as well as collecting data for the research inquiry. The data points for research inquiry are: 1) number of projects supported, 2) number of projects completed in alignment with initial statements of work, 3) number of products and/or resources made available on the higher education website and/or shared at the annual symposium.

CHALLENGES

The research project selections were generated late in the last fiscal year because most were tied to community needs identified at the symposium in June. Although the selections were made in a more ad hoc fashion, the program manager ensured that each selected project could support the building and/or sustaining of capabilities and competencies to realize the National Preparedness Goal.

The quality of one completed project resulted in the realization that proposals must provide a specific description of proposed methodology and approach to ensure that data is collected, analyzed and secured in alignment with commonly held academic research standards.

GOING FORWARD

The program staff will develop a Standard Operating Procedure and template for research effort proposals and accountability. The process will ensure that proposals will also be reviewed by relevant faculty SIG members to ensure clarity and integrity in approach.

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RESEARCH INQUIRIES FY 2017

RESEARCH TITLE	RESEARCHER(S)	EXPECTED DELIVERABLES	STATUS
Jobs & Internship Student Perspectives-affiliated and non-affiliated	Sandy Smith Carol Hackerott	Report of findings and brief of findings at 2017 Symposium	Complete
Core Competency-defining measurable behavioral indicators	Shirley Feldman-Jensen Steve Jensen Sandy Smith	Report of measurable behavioral indicators for core competencies at various levels (Associates, Bachelor, Master, PhD & Executive)	Complete
Higher Education Focus Group Impact	Carol Cwiak	Report of findings by June 2017	Complete
Emergency Management Oral History Project	Robert McCreight	Report of findings, captured oral history narratives and recordings submitted to the Congressional Library Story Corps by June 2017	Complete
Develop a new Synergy Course: "So you want to be an Emergency Manager" in the LCMS	David McEntire	One unit Independent Study course aligned with the Synergy FG vision will be developed and accessible in the LCMS platform by June 2017	Complete
Feasibility and level of effort determination of moving an existing Higher Education Course into the LCMS platform	Damon Coppola	To have a better understanding of the level of effort needed to move Higher Education Courses into the LCMS	Complete

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Symposium

OVERVIEW

The 19th Annual Emergency Management Higher Education Symposium was hosted at the Emergency Management Institute at the National Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg, MD from June 5-8, 2017. This year's theme was "Meeting Community Needs" and was complimented by three keynote speakers: Dr. C.J. Huff, former Superintendent for Joplin Schools; John Hope Bryant, Founder and CEO of Operation HOPE; and Andrea Davis, Director of Global Crisis Management & Business Continuity at The Walt Disney Corporation. The inclusion of the Information Exchange and Planning Special Interest Group (SIG) led to inaugural events at this year's symposium, including the introduction of the World Café mealtime conversations and a movie night spotlighting emergency management documentaries.

The symposium is an opportunity for the community to meet, share information and learn from each other. The symposium serves to promote community dialogue, develop current opportunities to work together and identify future work as well as disseminate information and knowledge through symposium activities and presentations.

MANAGEMENT

The program manager, program assistant and program contract support each play a role in collecting data for the symposium, as each play a vital role in the planning and execution of the event. The Information Exchange and Symposium Planning SIG plays a major role in the planning of the event, as well.

This year, changes in the planning timeline were implemented to allow for international invitations to be sent out even earlier than in years past for the purpose of mitigating time constraints that can often impede the attendance of the international community.

The data points for symposium logistics are: 1) number of national invitations sent, 2) number of international invitations sent, 3) number of registrations received, 4) number of actual attendees, 5) number of rejections and 6) number of student volunteers.

The data points for symposium presentation are: 1) number of abstracts submitted, 2) number of abstracts accepted, 3) number of posters submitted, 4) number of posters accepted, 5) number of review articles submitted post-conference.

Additionally, the data points that were used for attendees to evaluate the symposium are: 1) number of breakout sessions, 2) number of plenary sessions and 3) number of overall conference evaluations.

CHALLENGES

The President's executive order implementing a travel ban from, initially, seven countries, may have contributed to the low number of international participants. Although we have not historically had participants attend from the seven countries listed in the executive order,

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international faculty expressed concerns that additional countries may be added and heightened security could result in travel deterrents or delays. The anticipated hassle resulted in some participants from the international community not attending the symposium.

Over the past two years, the Higher Education Program has worked to include the broader community in the process of reviewing and selecting abstract and poster submissions. In 2016, we leveraged the generous support of a discipline journal editorial board to review abstracts and while successful, the process resulted in a heavy lift from program staff to manually compile the data and there were shortcomings in the submission form. There was also some community criticism that the review board did not fully represent the community. In 2017, a volunteer faculty took the lead on developing a process that would leverage the community more. Unfortunately, there were minimal volunteer reviewers and some of the reviews did not provide constructive criticism for submissions to learn from the process.

Student volunteers are a critical aspect of the symposium. They are a fantastic force multiplier for staffing the Symposium. They perform a variety of roles such as supporting registration, running microphones and collecting evaluations. One of the most important roles they have is capturing session notes. Student volunteers are assigned to each breakout session to capture the highlights of the session, as well as the community questions and dialogue. The program assistant provides a note taking template for consistency and to ensure their products are 508 complaint and can be posted to the Higher Education Program website. Unfortunately, there have been problems with students completing and submitting their notes. In 2016, a faculty agreed to coordinate and manage the students in partnership with the Higher Education program assistant. To mitigate the problem of receiving the finished product, a computer lab was secured and it was clearly conveyed to students that notes must be completed prior to departing. While this resource may have helped some, there was still a significant number of notes that were not completed and/or turned in.

The reoccurring challenge that has yet to be resolved is the low evaluation participation among attendees. As in years past, a paper evaluation packet was included in the event folder and distributed to each attendee. Although repeated reminders were announced, only 52 evaluations were returned. It should be noted that this was an improvement from the prior year, but it still remains that less than a quarter of the participants make the time to convey their feedback of the event.

Additionally, in prior years there has not been an evaluation circulated for pre-conference workshops in the past. As an afterthought, an electronic survey through “Survey Monkey” was sent to workshop attendees. This, too, yielded disappointingly low feedback. While only 15 of the 127 workshop participants completed the survey, they did provide good comments for the presenters. Further, the survey was sent post the workshop and participants were not provided with the information during the workshop that there would be an evaluation, which could have impacted the number of responses.

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GOING FORWARD

A save-the-date for the 2018 Symposium was drafted by the Higher Education Program staff and approved by the Information Exchange and Symposium Planning Special Interest Group. On September 28th, 2017 the invitation was extended via email to international participants. Also, in an effort to be more inclusive to the international community, a member of the Information Exchange and Symposium Planning SIG was designated to specifically work on outreach to this group.

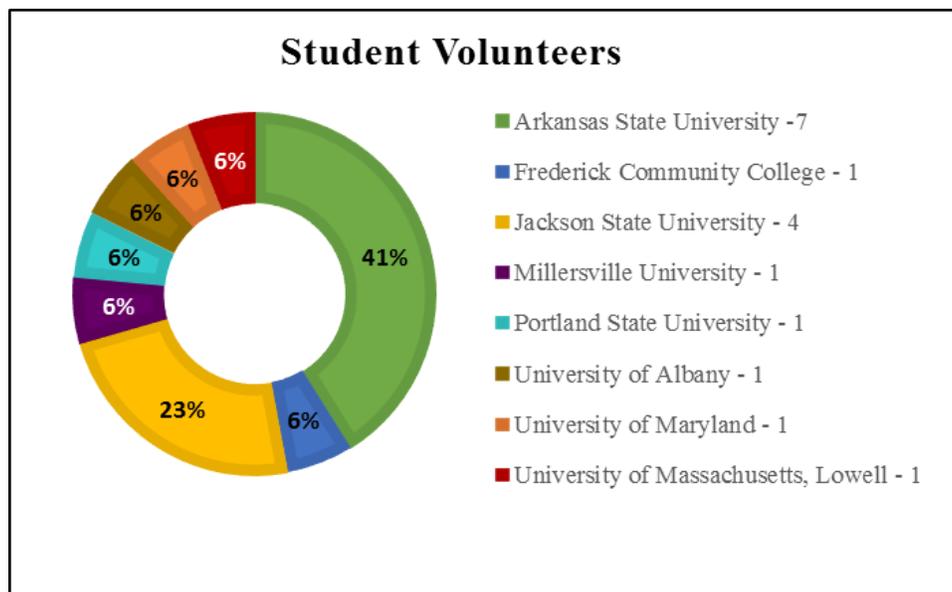
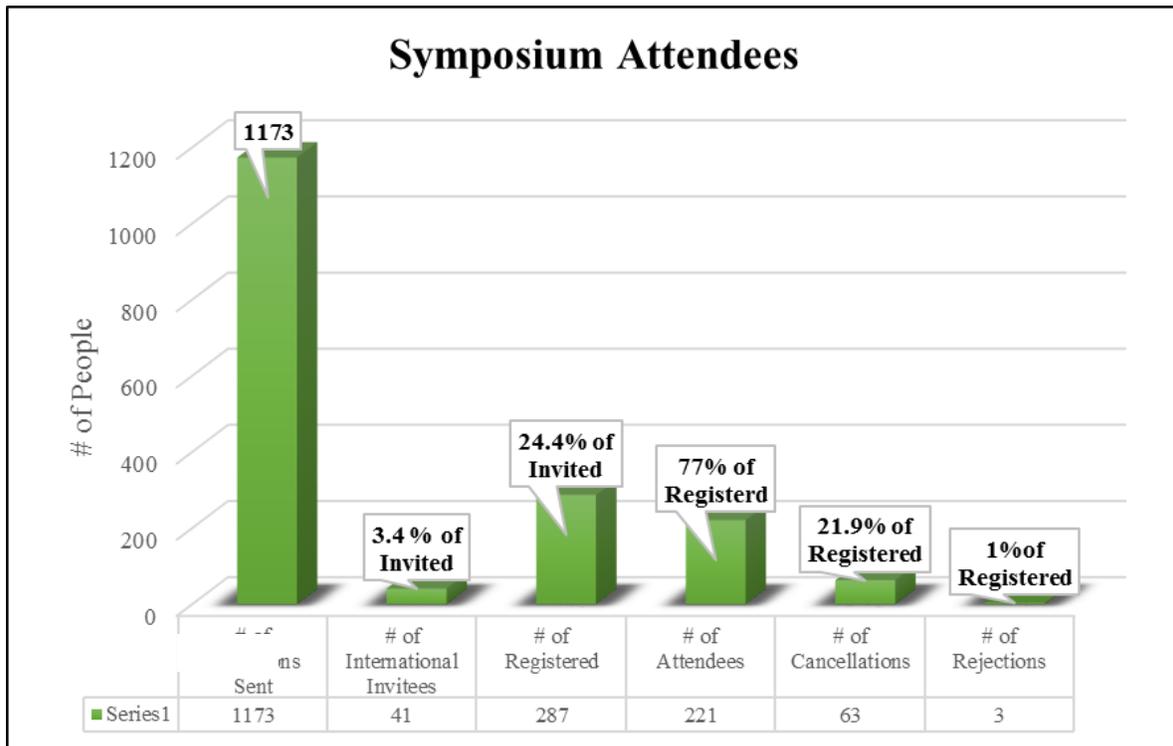
The Information Exchange and Symposium Planning SIG has convened three faculty to create a new submission form for the 2018 Symposium. The review process will be led by designated symposium track leads for the tracks of research, scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) and program administration. Each lead will conduct the same review process, leveraging a common rubric and will be responsible to ensure that each submission will have at least three reviewers. Further, reviewers will be provided with resources and guidance to ensure that their reviews provide valuable comments and constructive criticism.

This SIG has also designated leads to rebuild the evaluation and restructure the evaluation process. This will include developing robust incentives for evaluation participation. We will also provide the electronic evaluation for workshop participants in 2018 and provide participants with the link while during their workshop attendance to encourage them to complete prior to leaving the session.

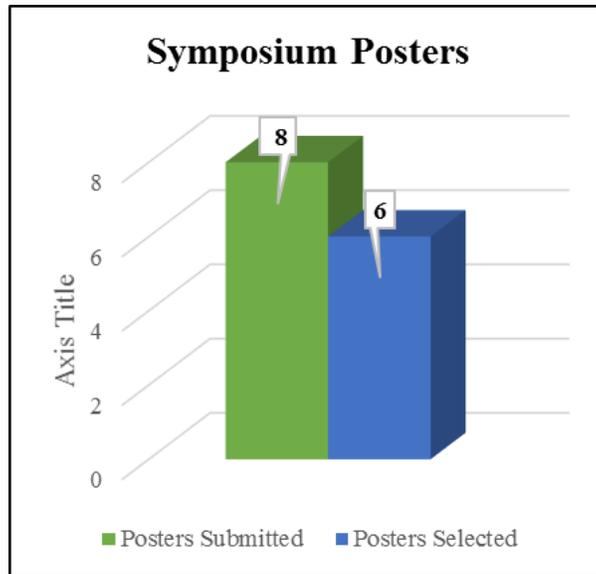
The Higher Education program assistant is working with new faculty on student engagement, accountability and support processes early in symposium planning. We will continue to provide a template and the Higher Education program manager will meet with students to convey the incredible opportunity for students to have their written work posted on the Higher Education Program website as a resume builder, as well as a great opportunity to demonstrate their professionalism to leaders in the emergency management discipline.

Each year the Higher Education Program team meet and discuss the successes and challenges of the Symposium planning and delivery. The program contract support takes the data from this meeting and creates the Symposium After Action Report (AAR). This document is not made publically available, but is shared with The Information Exchange and Symposium Planning SIG to ensure continuous improvement. This AAR is a program valuable practice and will continue.

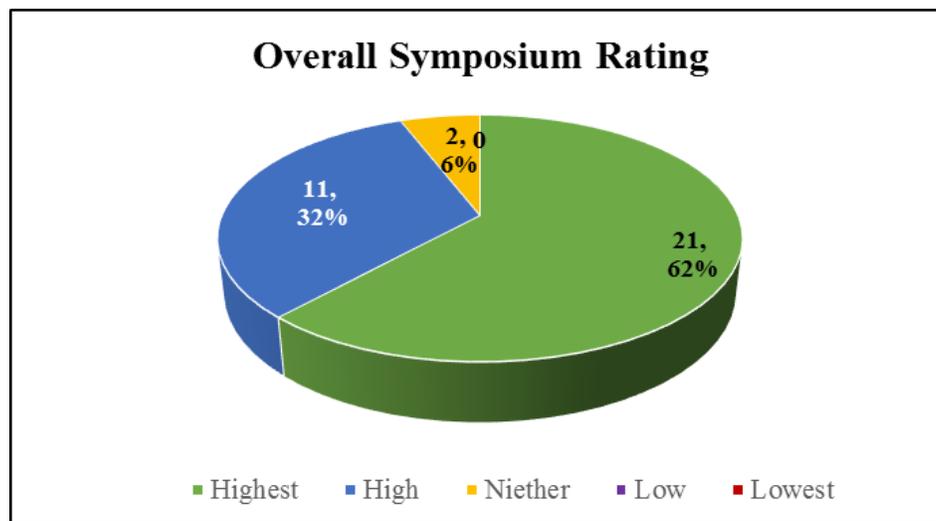
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*The two rejections were based on the disqualification of submissions that endorsed a business or product, which are not permitted appropriate for this venue.



Special Interest Groups

OVERVIEW

The Higher Education Program encourages the formation of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) to develop and disseminate information in their topic of interest. SIGs provide a forum within the Higher Education community of interest to pull people together who have a common curiosity. The SIGs serve as a focal point for community development in their specialty areas, potentially co-authoring papers, conducting research, supporting curriculum development and working as Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). The Hi Ed program currently has fifteen SIGs, after adding two additional SIGs that took shape during the Symposium: Collaboration, Connection, Commitment to Two-year Emergency Management Academic Programs and Ethics in Emergency Management.

MANAGEMENT

SIG groups must be made up of 5 or more members (they have one year upon forming to reach this number), with one member committing to serve as the lead point of contact. Group leaders serve as the main coordination point for scheduling meetings and facilitating collaborative activities. They are encouraged to report their activity to the program manager to convey situational awareness across SIG groups and the full Higher Education community of practice. They are expected to convene a face-to-face SIG meeting at the annual Symposium and provide relevant activity updates during a plenary session. SIGs may also submit proposals to the Higher Education Program to host focus groups, webinars and research to further their interest.

To date, the only measurable data points that have been recorded for SIGs are the total number of groups that have formed, as well as the number of members in each group.

CHALLENGES

The challenge of initiating membership and engaging in consistent communication to keep the SIG significant and relevant still exists for many SIGs. To that end, the socialization of SIGs could improve. The Higher Education Program has set up a webpage for SIGs to state their intended purpose, convey their goals and recruit additional members. Several have not provided the requested information to populate this site after several prompts. The Higher Education Program is still working to discern effective ways to support the development of the SIGs.

GOING FORWARD

Measuring the outcome of each SIG could potentially be added as a data point moving forward.

The Higher Education program SIGs will continue to support and motivate SIG activity such as recruiting membership with diverse perspectives, submitting symposium abstracts and/or posters for their interest area, supporting open discussion, capturing ideas and work of the groups to share and advance knowledge dissemination. Beginning in January, the Higher Education program will begin to host monthly SIG leadership calls to support development. SIGs that have not met the member requirements or that have not met in the past year will be disband.

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SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS FY 2017

GROUP	LEADER	# OF MEMBERS
Accreditation	Daryl Spiewak	23
Case Teaching and Learning	Jane Kushma	6
Collaboration, Connection, Commitment to Two-year Emergency Management Academic Programs	Kathy Francis	15
Emergency Management & Homeland Security Unity of Effort	Jim Ramsay	6
Ethics in Emergency Management	Sandy Smith	1
Information Exchange & Symposium Planning	Wendy Walsh	24
International Emergency Management	Jean Slick	12
Inter-organizational Emergency Management	Tom Poulin	5
Jobs & Internships	Tim DePalma	16
Money Issues of Emergency Management Education	Jim Jaffe	3
Racial, Ethnicity & Economic Impacts in Emergency Management	Meldon Hollis	4
Science Technology Integration in Emergency Management Higher Education	Nancy Suski	8
Service Learning Leadership	Elizabeth Dunn	11
Theory & Research	David Plance	7
Virtual Resources & Simulation Tools for the EM Higher Education Classroom	Mark Landahl	5

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The College List

OVERVIEW

The [College List](https://training.fema.gov/hiedu/collegelist/) (located at the following URL: <https://training.fema.gov/hiedu/collegelist/>) is an invaluable and comprehensive online resource that showcases the development of programs at all levels of study in the Emergency Management Higher Education Community as well as the broader Homeland Security and related fields of study, including public health, international disaster relief and humanitarian assistance.

MANAGEMENT

The College List is managed by the program assistant and maintained by the program contract support. This includes making sure that The College List and the Higher Education Program database are in sync. The program assistant is responsible for handling most of the outreach and initial inquiries for new programs, while the program contract support corresponds with established programs, collects data and maintains The College List database, which is able to sort the data that is input.

The data points for which information is collected in order to analyze The College List are: 1) total number of College List programs, 2) number of new College List programs, 3) number of deleted College List programs and 4) number of proposed programs.

CHALLENGES

This year continued the major effort to automate the college list database with the program contract support requesting individual updates for all programs that were older than 2 years. No automated update requests were sent, as a result, because it was realized that there were so many outdated contacts and programs that direct contact was needed for best remedy. Many hours of researching current contacts were put in by the program contract support. Additionally, all of the write-ups that were posted to The College List were manually reformatted by the program assistant and program contract support in order to have a consistent and uniform appearance on the program website.

The data point of “College List Inquiries” although important in value, was not consistently followed. It is intended to track the number of colleges, universities or institutions that are interested in pursuing the development of Emergency Management or Homeland Security related programs or courses. There are two primary ways in which a program will submit an inquiry: 1) contacting the program manager or program assistant directly or 2) by submitting and email to ‘FEMA-EMI-collegelist,’ which is monitored by the program contract support.

GOING FORWARD

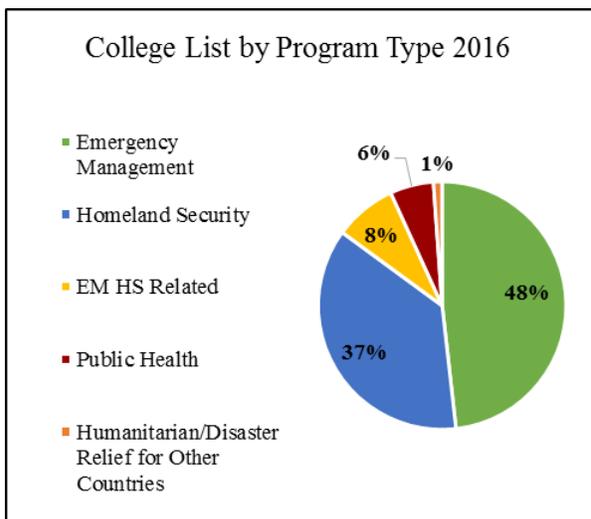
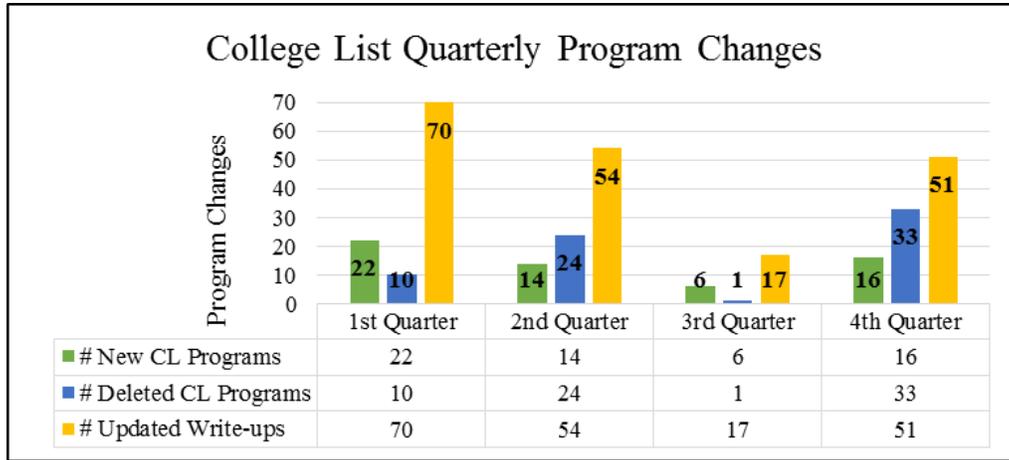
The “College List inquiries” data point should continue to be collected and clear reporting between the program manager, assistant and contract support is critical. The inquiries need to be conveyed program-wide, as each of the three staffers can receive an inquiry.

“College List denials” will remain a data point, and in the future there will be a narrative description of what prompted the denial. There were no denials in this fiscal year.

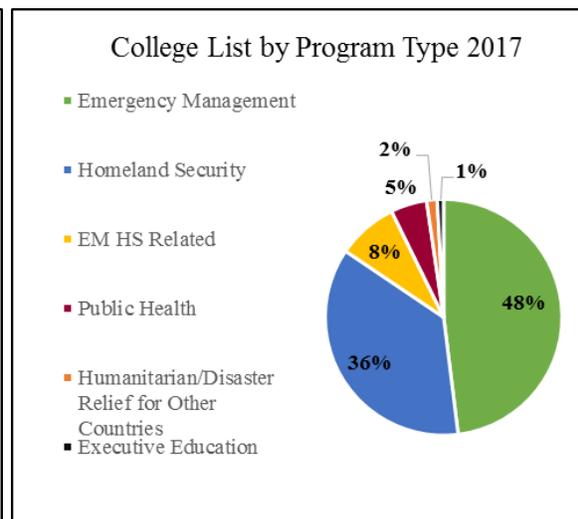
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The data point “College List write-ups older than 2 years” will be added. It was not possible to capture this data during this fiscal year due to The College List requiring so many updates.

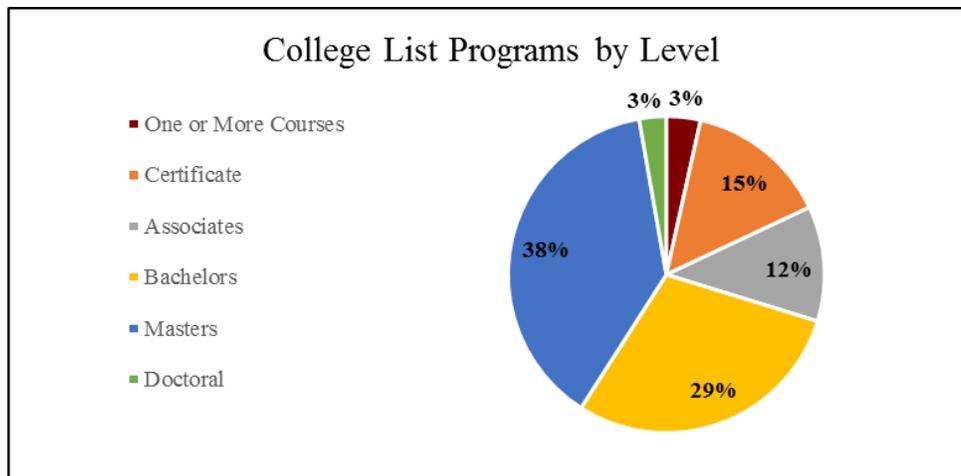
“Phase 2” of the database building will begin in early 2018 so that automation can launch.



N = 689 programs



N = 616 programs



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Communication

OVERVIEW

Communication is the key for all aspects of the Higher Education Program to ensure the overall growth and sustainment of our Nation's Emergency Management Higher Education programs. To achieve good communication, the Higher Education program creates and distributes a weekly newsletter to 57,963 subscribers, facilitates monthly community calls, hosts (at least quarterly) webinars, hosts regional engagements (new this year) and maintains a current program website.

MANAGEMENT

The Higher Education program team members each play a role in the management of these methods of communication, as well as the data collection for each.

For the weekly program newsletter, the program contract support researches higher education faculty vacancies, as well as federal emergency management and homeland security related job vacancies and forwards them to the program assistant who, with her program updates includes them in the weekly newsletter draft and forwards it to the program manager. The contract support also provides a list of new College List programs to the program assistant to highlight in the newsletter. The program manager then adds her message to the community and has the entire document edited and approved by external affairs. This fiscal year, the newsletter was delivered consistently every Friday morning (unless Friday fell on a holiday, in which case it was delivered a day earlier). From October through August, four newsletters were delivered each month, and in September, five were delivered.

The monthly Community Call is hosted via the FEMA Hi Ed conference call line and moderated by the program manager. A roll call is taken by the FEMA region location of the participant to determine the number of participants and followed by the program manager's agenda which always includes: higher education program updates, community updates and lastly, participant updates. The program contract support provides notes to the program manager and completes follow-up tasks. The informal dialogue of the community calls adds value to the program in that it provides a means for us to hear the current interests, activities and challenges of our broader community, creates a venue for us to receive feedback on our activities and facilitates new membership for the Special Interest Groups.

Webinars provide great communication value to learn more about specific topics and always include time for the community to engage in dialogue on the topic. Webinars were discussed in detail earlier in this report.

The program website, although not in a polished state, has undergone a number of improvements in the past year including: the addition of each Special Interest Group page as previously noted with a description and group lead contact; a re-vamped College List with uniform program write-ups; and links to the presentations, breakouts and posters from the 2017 Symposium.

Regional engagements were a new addition to the program's communication output this year. Two engagements, one for Region IX and one for Region I, were successfully held for the purpose of building awareness, capturing successful regional practices of collaboration with

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faculty, students and researchers working with emergency management practitioners as well as identifying untapped opportunities. The engagements are in partnership with the Center for Homeland Defense and Security's University and Agency Partnership Initiative (UAPI) and brings together the local homeland security/emergency management academic and practitioner communities. Because the engagements were new in the latter half of the fiscal year, data points were not established. However, the number of participants were captured for each and an After Action Report (AAR) was developed for each event to establish a baseline for these engagements.

The data points for measuring communication are: 1) total number of community call participants 2) number of newsletters sent per month, 3) number of newsletters delivered, 3) number of newsletter deliveries pending, 4) number of bounced deliveries, 5) number of unsubscribed, 6) number of opens and unique opens and 7) number of clicks and unique clicks.

CHALLENGES

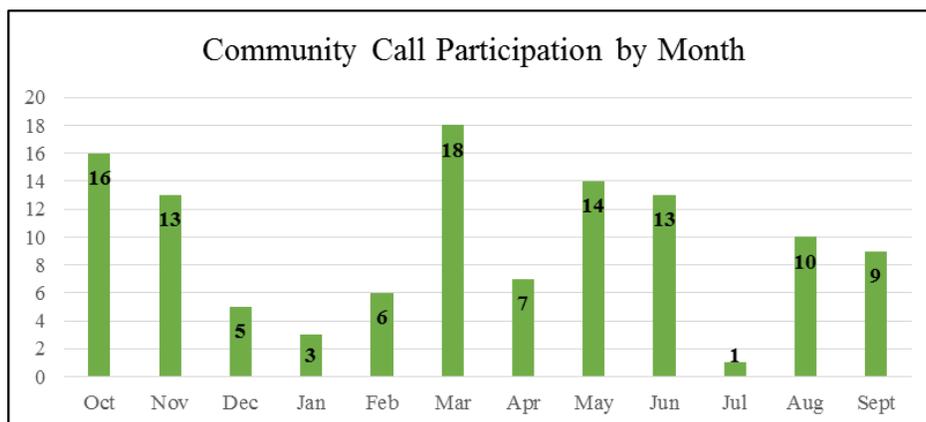
Community calls are intended to be an informal way to dialogue and catch up. Participants do not sign up but rather just call in to an open line at a designated time. This makes counting the number of participants more of a guesstimate, as some participants do not announce when they call in, participate in roll call or note when they sign off. Follow up requests and emails seem to be a better indication of the value of these calls.

Additionally, the participation on these calls is quite unpredictable. Sometimes, a day or two before the scheduled call, a Gov Delivery message is sent to remind the community to call in. This generally raises the number of participants, however, the program has been inconsistent in sending this reminder out.

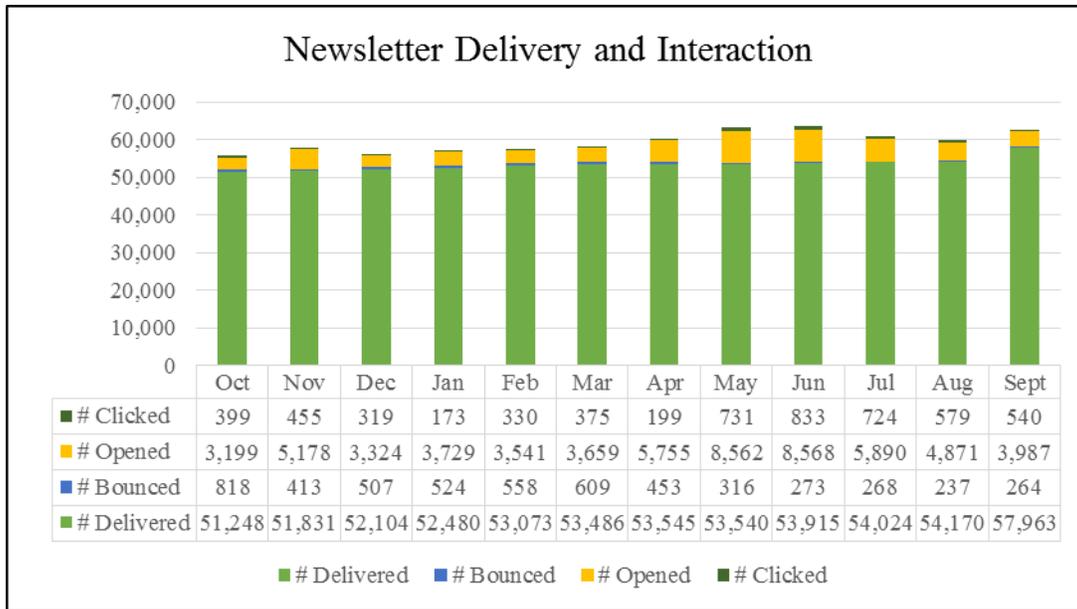
GOING FORWARD

The Program will determine a means to collect and measure data for the website as well continue to work to have a better understanding of the Gov Delivery analytics by working with the FEMA and EMI analytics support to better understand ways to collect, understand and guide decisions with data. The program will continue to expand methods and opportunities to communicate, collect reliable data, and employ useful measures.

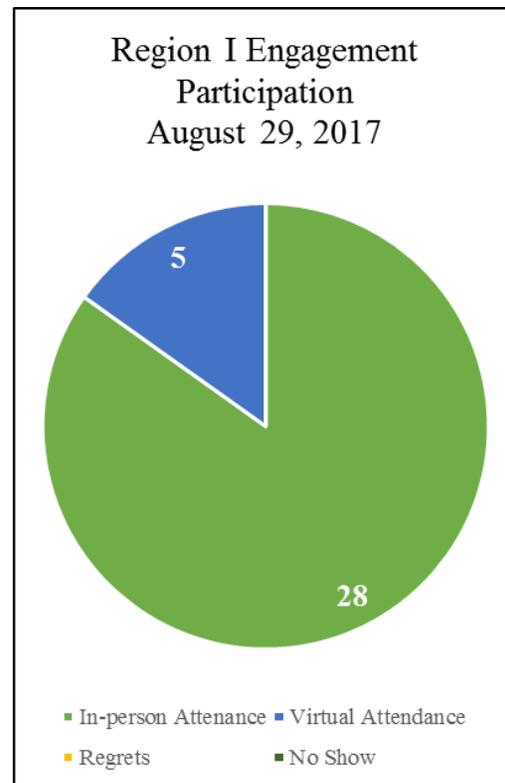
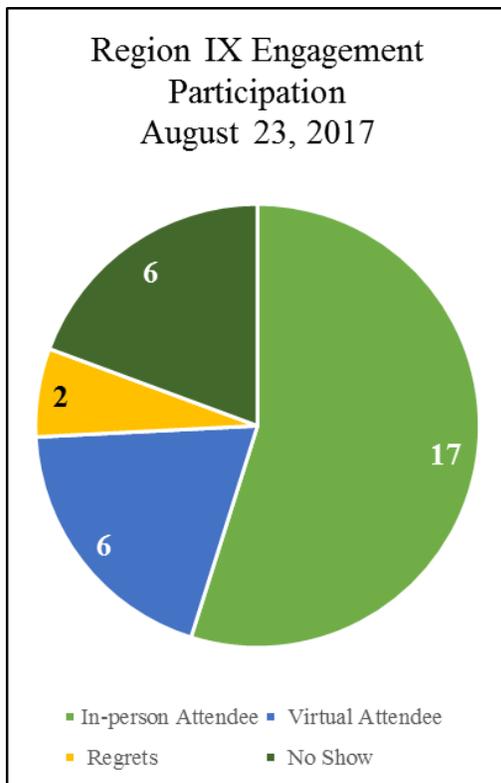
Establishing informative data points for regional engagements will be a priority for the program.



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Graphic description: Oct number of Delivered-51,248, bounced-818, opened-3,199, clicked-399, Nov number of Delivered-51,831, bounced-413, opened-5,178, clicked-455, Dec number of Delivered-51,104, bounced-507, opened-3,324, clicked-319, Jan number of Delivered-5,480, bounced-524, opened-3,279, clicked-173, Feb number of Delivered-53,073, bounced-558, opened-3,541, clicked-330, Mar number of Delivered-53,486, bounced-609, opened-3,659, clicked-375, Apr number of Delivered-53,545, bounced-453, opened-3,755, clicked-199, May number of Delivered-53,540, bounced-316, opened-8,562, clicked-731, Jun number of Delivered-53,915, bounced-273, opened-8,568, clicked-833, Jul number of Delivered-54,024, bounced-268, opened-5,890, clicked-724, Aug number of Delivered-54,170, bounced-237, opened-4,871, clicked-579, Sept number of Delivered-57,963, bounced-264, opened-3,987, clicked-540



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Conclusion

The Higher Education Program has made significant contributions toward achieving the National Preparedness Goal. The emergency management and homeland security Higher Education community of interest and practice is vast and continues to grow connection, develop opportunities for collaboration and knowledge sharing. Supporting the development, dialogue and dissemination of this learning community, its resources and expertise have demonstrated fruitful service to the emergency management profession through education.

As we plan for 2018 and the next Higher Education Symposium, we are looking to continue to deepen our understanding and support the needs of the whole community. Education is the enabler to positively grow and sustain needed competencies and capabilities for the emergency management profession.

Program Contacts

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