

CONTINUING ACCREDITATION REPORT
ON
THE NEBRASKA CERTIFIED PUBLIC MANAGER® PROGRAM

Presented to:

The National Certified Public Manager Consortium

By the Review committee:

Hector Zelaya, Chair
Tammy Brisco West, CPM Instructor
Trisha James, CPM Graduate

August 2018

We, the members of the committee appointed to review the Nebraska Certified Public Manager® program for continuing accreditation are pleased to report we have completed our review and recommend that the Nebraska CPM program be accredited for the maximum period authorized by the bylaws. Our recommendation is based on the following findings:

Findings

1. Nebraska program administrators submitted all required program documentation to each of the review committee membership;
2. After review by committee members all supplemental documentation was provided on a timely basis;
3. In the matter of general program requirements the committee determined that:
 - A. Adequate linkages exist with institutions of higher education;
 - B. An advisory board is actively involved in dealing with appropriate program issues;
 - C. The program, while emphasizing service to state government, is actively and successfully marketing to local and federal customers;
 - D. Program requirements are clear and accessible to all applicants and candidates.
4. In the matter of program organization, we find:
 - A. Adequate financial support exists from a combination of *University support and enrollment* fees;
 - B. Program instruction is provided by a combination of well qualified state employees and contract instructors.
5. We find thorough documentation of administrative policies and procedures in a combination of administrative policy and formal regulations.

We further find:

- A. A formal manual tracking system is in place. *We're not aware of any steps being taken to replace it with an automated system;*

- B. Project requirements are clear and the use of projects in the curriculum is one of the strengths of the program;
 - C. Adequate security exists for student records;
 - D. Student evaluations are based on a series of formal assessments.
6. In the matter of course materials we find:
- A. Courses provided are balanced to adequately cover the required competencies;
 - B. Course syllabi that include learning objectives exist for each course;
 - C. The program, while responsive to the competencies, is well integrated;
 - D. Clear policies regarding substitutions are in place;
 - E. All requirements regarding hours of instruction are met.
7. We find *assessments* and projects to be one of the strong points of the Nebraska program. The project is divided into milestones/deliverables throughout the program and requires signed buy-in from each participant's organization.
8. In regard to program evaluation we find:
- A. Each course is adequately evaluated by students;
 - B. Each instructor is adequately evaluated by students;
 - C. There is strong feedback from agency managers, of high satisfaction based upon their continued use of the program and, most importantly, the utilization of CPM graduates for special assignments.
9. We examined a detailed list of candidates in the program.
10. We discussed the program's perceived strengths and weaknesses. We are impressed by the efforts to address areas needing improvement, especially:
- A. Recruitment – Although the program caps enrollment at 15 participants per year, only 73 participants have completed the program over a span of 10 years/cohorts. The current cohort has 9 students. The program lists the lack of support from state agencies and the lack of resources as contributing factors. Another contributing factor is the small number of program alumni, which limits the amount of word-of-mouth marketing.

- B. We discussed utilizing the website to highlight the program strengths: such as the return on investment demonstrated by the projects and the level of engagement from program faculty. Another suggestion is listing the alumni by organization on the website so that program prospects can see who may be available in their organizations as a possible program reference.
11. The committee recommends the program review and consider examining course content in three specific areas:
- A. The current cohort identified a need to improve the orientation to the Canvas learning platform.
 - B. Other content areas have been improved in response to continuous participant feedback and a 2016 curriculum review by a public administration Ph.D.

The program has many strong points. We were especially impressed by:

- A. The level of support from the University of Nebraska at Omaha, in the form of both financial and non-financial resources, is impressive. Participants benefit from much of the same resources as degree-seeking students; they have access to the UNO Library, technology staff, the Writing Center, the Speech Center, the Registrar, etc.
- B. The Nebraska City/County Management Association also is a strong supporter of the CPM Program, having established scholarships that pay for 75% of cost or participation by a city administrator or manager.
- C. It is evident the program faculty cares about the program. A significant number of faculty members were part of the working group that helped develop the program and have been teaching ever since. Faculty also serve on the advisory board.
- D. The advisory board demonstrates a significant level of commitment, meeting at least twice per year.
- E. The alumni demonstrate a high level of engagement. They help provide expectations and advice on the applied project at orientation and attend the CPM graduations of subsequent cohorts.
- F. The CPM Program Director and Director Emeritus are valuable assets. Despite limited staff resources, they have developed and implement an academically rigorous program that is blended with practical application.

The findings and recommendations are based on a review of all documentation by the committee and confirmed by a site visit by the chair on August 23-24, 2018.

Committee Recommendation:

Accredit Accredited Provisionally Not Accredited


If either accredit provisionally or not accredit, please specify reasons or reference the relevant paragraph in the report.

Recommendation endorsed by consensus of the committee and respectfully submitted by:

[Name]: Tammy Brisco West

[Name]: Trisha James

And



[Name], Chair, for the Committee

9/7/18

Date