**NCPMC Accreditation Standards**

**Program Accreditation Review Checklist**

**Program under evaluation: New Mexico Date: September 15, 2023**

**Evaluator’s Name: Liz Lundeen, Arkansas CPM Program Director**

**Evaluator’s Role:** [x]  **Review Committee Chair** [ ]  **CPM Graduate** [ ]  **CPM Instructor**

**Standard 1: Mission and Public Service**

The program has a program specific mission statement? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Does it guide public service performance expectations? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Is there a method of program operations and performance evaluation? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Evaluator’s Comments:

The New Mexico CPM Program is administered by New Mexico EDGE, an umbrella organization operated by New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension. The mission of New Mexico EDGE is “Better Government through Education,” and its purpose is “to provide a comprehensive course of study to administrators, managers, elected officials, and staff in local, state, tribal and national government.” The mission appears to guide the New Mexico CPM Program’s priorities, recruitment efforts, curricula, and evaluation methods. The committee’s review of materials and interviews with current participants and graduates demonstrated that the mission guides the public service performance expectations of those in the program. Numerous channels exist for program evaluation, including meetings of the program’s advisory board, instructor “huddles,” recently improved after-class participant surveys, and surveys administered during participant assessments. In addition, the program staff has taken steps to evaluate the program more systematically, starting with certification-specific questionnaires for program stakeholders and graduates. Continuous and ongoing program evaluation appears to be a priority for the NM EDGE program team.

Items of Note:

NM EDGE’s mission is well integrated into program materials for participants and marketing efforts. NM EDGE’s mission also aligns with that of New Mexico State University’s College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences: “to serve as an engine for economic and community development in New Mexico while improving the lives of New Mexicans through research, teaching, and extension.”

Suggestions for Improvement (if any):

NM EDGE should consider developing a separate mission statement for the New Mexico CPM Program, which may help establish an identity for the program apart from other certificates offered by NM EDGE. The review team applauds NM EDGE’s efforts to evaluate the program as a whole and recommends developing a program orientation for participants pursuing the three certificates offered by the CPM program (CPO, CPS, and CPM). An orientation could help participants to better recognize the public service performance expectations expected of them as CPM program participants. Moreover, the orientation could facilitate the administration of a pre-program assessment, the results of which could be compared with post-program assessments administered during the assessment periods for each level.

**1.1 Mission Statement. Evidence could include but is not limited to:** mission statement, interviews with stakeholders about development and implementation of the mission statement and about use of the mission statement to set priorities, develop programs and curricula, establish learning outcomes, and allocate resources.

**1.2 Performance Expectations. Evidence could include but is not limited to:** Review of brochures, handbooks, flyers, website information; planning documents; logic models and environmental scans; and interviews with stakeholders to discuss expectations for alignment of the mission and goals with the program.

**1.3 Program Evaluation. Evidence could include but is not limited to:** The most recent Annual Report; evaluations of the program; survey results from alumni, employers, and focus groups; and Interviews with stakeholders about program improvement processes and about improvements to the program.

**The program adequately meets Standard 1: Mission and Public Service** [x]  **Yes** [ ]  **No**

If no, then please explain your concern here:

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Standard 2: Core Competencies**

Are the CPM Core Competencies adequately addressed across the curriculum? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Does the program consist of 300 or more hours of structured learning activities? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Does the program have a public management project (capstone) that
includes a written component? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Does the public management project benefit their organization? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Evaluator’s Comments:

The NM EDGE CPM Curriculum Advisory Committee offers input and periodically reviews the New Mexico CPM program curriculum to ensure alignment with the CPM core competencies. All certification programs offered through NM EDGE follow seven educational tracks (Knowing Your Government, Management and Leadership, Human Resources, Budgeting, Communication, Information Technology, and Conducting Research). NM EDGE requires all classes, not just those designed for the CPM program, to align with the core competencies.

The New Mexico CPM Program is divided into three tiers: Certified Public Official (CPO), Certified Public Supervisor (CPS), and Certified Public Manager (CPM). Participants who complete all three levels and earn the national certification complete more than 300 hours of structured learning activities. The capstone required of all participants in the third level (CPM) includes a written component and directly benefits the participants’ agencies/organizations.

Items of Note:

Program materials provided to the review team demonstrated alignment between each course offered by NM EDGE and the CPM core competencies. The review team met with members of the CPM Curriculum Advisory Committee, one of whom demonstrated in-depth knowledge of the core compentencies and the capstone project. Participants working on their capstone are required to document 100 hours and work closely with advisors appointed by the CPM program.

Suggestions for Improvement (if any):

While some program stakeholders understood the CPM core competencies and the significance of the nationally recognized CPM credential, others did not. Additionally, the New Mexico CPM Program does not appear to be recognized as a standalone program by participants, graduates, or instructors. The number of participants earning the CPO certificates is high, but there is a significant dropoff in the number of participants continuing on to earn their CPS and CPM certificates. The review team recommends that program staff focus on increasing the number of graduates who complete all three levels of the program and earn the CPM certification. An increase in CPM graduates should, in turn, help to encourage CPO and CPS certificate earners to continue on. A strengthened CPM alumni base should also help to elevate the CPM program’s identity within NM EDGE and beyond.

To elevate the CPM program’s identity and increase the number of CPM graduates, we recommend program staff consider expanding the pilot of a cohort model; offering an orientation for new program participants; revisiting the 100-hour capstone requirement, which may deter participants from pursuing CPM; and reviewing course requirements for the three levels of the program to overlap and increase clarity among program participants.

Program staff should also consider whether offering a myriad of certificates is an asset or liability to NM EDGE. Reducing the number of certificates offered may help to elevate the CPM program and address the issue of program staff feeling overstretched. It may also be possible to fold other certificates into the CPM program and offer them as “tracks” or “concentrations.”

**2.0 Core Competencies. Evidence could include but is not limited to:** Documentation of core curriculum and learning outcomes and of core curriculum and competencies; sample capstone projects; policies and procedures; brochures; handbooks; flyers, website information; interviews with stakeholders—participants, Faculty/Instructors, employers about the curriculum.

**2.1 Competencies Addressed in Curriculum. Evidence could include but is not limited to:** brochures, handbooks, flyers, website information; policies and procedures; sample capstone projects; sample assessments, evaluations and, tests; interviews with stakeholders.

**2.2 Examinations and Projects. Evidence could include but is not limited to:**  Sample capstone projects, assessments and tests; policies and procedures manual; interviews with alumni who submitted exceptional projects (possibly Askew Award winners).

**The program adequately meets Standard 2: Core Competencies** [x]  **Yes** [ ]  **No**

If no, then please explain your concern here:

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Standard 3: Resources and Capacity**

Does the program adequately document the adequacy of its resources and
capacity to fulfill its mission? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Does the program have policies and procedures that promote effective
management and operation of the program in a sustainable manner? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Do the policies provide guidance linking administrative
procedures to the mission? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Does the program utilize instructors who can demonstrate academic or
professional experience to be qualified for the content they teach? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Does the program have a governing or advisory group guiding policy,
recommendations, and potential clientele? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Evaluator’s Comments:

NM EDGE has documented adequate capacity and program resources. The program staff has continued to offer excellent programming despite undergoing multiple staff transitions since its last review. The program director, who is new to the position, has demonstrated thorough knowledge of the program’s capacity and resources as well as a vision for how the program can grow and improve in the years ahead. The review team finds no issues with NM EDGE’s resources and capacity to fulfill its mission. Administrative procedures are also sound. NM EDGE has an impressive pool of instructors from various backgrounds. The advisory board is invested in NM EDGE’s success and includes representatives from a variety of agencies and organizations that are served by NM EDGE programming.

Items of Note:

NM EDGE’s advisory board includes several prominent officials in New Mexico government, including a state cabinet secretary. The board is dedicated to and knowledgeable about NM EDGE’s strategic goals. For example, advisory board members explained to the review team that NM EDGE intends to move from a majority of county government participants to a variety of government officials, representing state, local, and county offices. Advisory board members were also knowledgeable about NM EDGE’s curricula; several members had participated in certificate programs themselves or taught classes.

Suggestions for Improvement (if any):

A number of instructors were only somewhat familiar with the CPM program. They were aware that some participants in their classes were working towards the CPO, CPS, and/or CPM certifications among many others. NM EDGE could consider offering an orientation for instructors to ensure they are familiar with how their courses connect to the CPM core competencies and program as a whole.

NM EDGE’s advisory board members are excellent ambassadors and hold significant positions of influence in the state of New Mexico. The review team recommends using the board more effectively and asking them to meet more than once per year. With more frequent meetings of the board, NM EDGE staff could receive additional feedback on strategic decisions.

**3.0 Program Resources. Evidence could include but is not limited to** Documentation of resources showing alignment with the mission, goals, objectives and outcomes, for example, a Logic Model. Tour of the physical facility, budget documentation, brochures, website etc., interviews with participants and Faculty/Instructors about the adequacy of resources and capacity.

**3.1 Administrative Infrastructure. Evidence could include but is not limited to:** Policies and procedures; interviews with institutional and program leadership; observation of modalities used in the program (for example, access to on-line platform and/or observation of a classroom)

**3.2 Faculty/Instructors. Evidence could include but is not limited to** Documentation of Faculty/Instructors, including name, address and area of expertise (A list of the Faculty/Instructors and their bios is available); brochures, handbooks, flyers, website information.

**3.3 Administrative Policies and Procedures. Evidence could include but is not limited to** flyers, brochures, website and policies and procedures manual; confidentiality statement.

**3.4 Funding. Evidence could include but is not limited to:** documented budget**;** interviews with both institutional and program leadership. A copy of the budget will be available for review.

**3.5 Advisory Group. Evidence could include but is not limited to:** Documentation of advisory board members/group and their meetings, including name, address and area of expertise; brochures, handbooks, flyers, website information, interviews with advisory board/group members.

**The program adequately meets Standard 3: Resources and Capacity** [x]  **Yes** [ ]  **No**

If no, then please explain your concern here:

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Standard 4: Planning and Implementation**

Does the program engage in ongoing, participatory planning that provides direction for the institution and leads to the achievement of intended outcomes for programs and services? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Are the program’s planning and implementation processes sufficiently flexible to address
unexpected circumstances while maintaining the program’s rigor and viability? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Are participant records held securely and confidentially? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Are assessment review standards clearly specified? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Are evaluation results taken into consideration for program improvements? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Evaluator’s Comments:

NM EDGE engages in ongoing, participatory planning to deliver its mission of Better Government through Education. Program staff offer classes according to a schedule that meets participant needs. Disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic prompted NM EDGE to transition all classes online. They have recently resumed offering in-person classes during their “honing events,” but a number of classes continue to be offered online. NM EDGE staff are keenly aware of the needs of their participants. The unanticipated changes in delivery as a resut of COVID-19 revealed to NM EDGE that participants in more rural parts of the state preferred taking classes online and were in some cases unable to participate in in-person programming due to prohibitive travel time and costs. Accordingly, program staff have landed on a hybrid approach that works for the majority of participants across the state. Interviews with instructors, participants, graduates, and advisory board members indicate that NM EDGE takes evaluation results into account when improving programming.

Items of Note:

NM EDGE staff recently participated in a strategic doing workshop and SWOT analysis in order to identify priority areas for change and growth. The review team notes that program staff seem eager to start working on some longer-term strategic goals.

Suggestions for Improvement (if any):

One area identified for improvement both in the written materials and site visit interviews is the program’s registration and tracking system.

**4.0 Planning and Implementation. Evidence could include but is not limited to:** Strategic plan; frequency or cycle of planning; flexibility of planning and implementation; documentation of curriculum; survey results; interviews with stakeholders

**4.1 (3.5) Program Requirements. Evidence could include but is not limited to:** brochures, handbooks, flyers, website information, samples of correspondence between program and applicants

**4.2 Tracking System. Evidence could include but is not limited to:** Observations of tracking/filing system/s; samples of correspondence with participants about their progress; interviews with current participants of the program.

**4.3 Security Measures. Evidence could include but is not limited to:**  Observation and review of how participant files and evaluations are secured; policies and procedures

**4.4 Assessment. Evidence could include but is not limited to:** sample assessment reviews and evaluations; policies and procedures; interviews with stakeholders.

**The program adequately meets Standard 4: Planning and Implementation** [x]  **Yes** [ ]  **No**

If no, then please explain your concern here:

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Standard 5: Effectiveness and Improvement**

Does the program assess how well the participants are meeting the expectations
of the Faculty/Instructors? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Does the program invite participant evaluation of classes? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Does the program evaluate assessment outcomes to improve the program? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Does the program demonstrate and implement a plan of appropriate
strategic growth? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Does the program promote a culture of continuous improvement processes? [x]  Yes [ ]  No

Evaluator’s Comments:

NM EDGE engages in regular participant evalution. A pre- and post-test is used to measure knowledge gained across each class. Class participants fill out an evaluation at the end of each class, and program staff use participant feedback to determine whether changes need to be made. A reflection assignment is completed by participants finishing their CPO, and these short essays include information about how participants are applying what they have learned in the program. Participants finishing CPS and CPM undergo an assessment in which they must apply what they have learned to a series of scenarios that align with the CPM core competencies. Additionally, participants seeking CPS and CPM are asked to fill out a questionnaire about their experience with the assessments.

Items of Note:

While NM EDGE has a solid assessment plan in place to solicit participant feedback, program staff are planning to implement a more robust system of program evaluation in 2024.

Suggestions for Improvement (if any):

Click or tap here to enter text.

**5.1 Participants’ Reactions. Evidence could include but is not limited to:** Sample assessments; evaluations and interviews with stakeholders including participants, Faculty/Instructors, and employers

**5.2 Program Development. Evidence could include but is not limited to:** Interviews with stakeholders; documented changes in curriculum and strategic plan

**5.3 Areas of Growth. Evidence could include but is not limited to:** Strategic plan; documented changes resulting from a continuous improvement process; interviews with program stakeholders

**The program adequately meets Standard 5: Effectiveness and Improvement** [x]  **Yes** [ ]  **No**

If no, then please explain your concern here:

Click or tap here to enter text.

**In Conclusion**

After careful review, I find the program adequately meets the NCPMC Standards for accreditation and would recommend accreditation of this program to the NCPMC Executive Council.

[x]  **Yes** [ ]  **Conditionally Yes** [ ]  **No**

If “Conditionally Yes”, what conditions would you propose for consideration by the NCPMC Executive Council?

Click or tap here to enter text.

What did you find particularly effective or remarkable about this program that other programs might wish to emulate?

NM EDGE has a rich history and supportive relationship with New Mexico State University. It is clear that program stakeholders, including university leadership, government agencies, graduates, participants, and advisory board members think very highly of NM EDGE and are committed to their programs. The advisory board, in particular, is diverse in terms of the agencies and organizations represented. The number of program graduates and certificate holders holding significant positions in New Mexico state, county, and local government is noteable.

Any other comments or concerns?

As representatives of the National CPM Consortium, the review team would have liked to see CPM feature more prominently as a national credential in discussions with instructors, participants, and program graduates. The CPM certification represents a very small percentage of certifications granted by NM EDGE, yet the CPO and CPS certifications represent a much larger percentage. The review team considers this an opportunity for growth for NM EDGE. If program staff can address the dropoff that occurs after CPO and CPS and encourage more CPO and CPS graduates to pursue the CPM certification, the review team is confident that knowledge of and demand for national credential will grow in the state of New Mexico.