**Proposed NCPMC Accreditation Standards**

**March 30, 2016**

**(Based on the NASPAA Accreditation Standards)**

**Standard 1: Mission and Public Service**

1.1 Mission Statement: The program will have a statement of mission that guides performance expectations and their evaluation, including **\*\* A program specific mission is preferred. However, for programs without a program specific mission, the mission of the sponsoring organization will be accepted for 2017 and 2018\*\***

• its purpose and public service values,

• the population of participants, employers, and professionals the program intends to serve, and

• the contributions it intends to produce to advance the knowledge and skills of people in public service and to improve the quality of public leadership and management

1.2 **Performance Expectations:** The program will establish observable program goals, objectives, and outcomes, including learning objectives, consistent with its mission.

1.3 **Program Evaluation:** The program will collect, apply, and report information about its performance and its operations to guide the evolution of the program’s mission and the program’s design and continuous improvement with respect to standards two through five.

**Rationale:** Accreditation standards reflect the commitment of the National Certified Public Manager® Consortium (NCPMC) to support programs for professional education that 1) commit to the values of public service and model them in their operations and 2) continuously improve, which includes responding to and impacting their communities through ongoing program evaluation. Programs are expected to be explicit about the public service values they give priority; to clarify the ways in which it embeds these values in its internal governance; and to demonstrate that its participants learn the tools and competencies to apply and take these values into consideration in their professional activities.

The expectation that the program will 1) define and pursue a mission and 2) continuously improve its performance to benefit its participants in observable ways through education and disseminating knowledge about public service reflects NCPMC’s commitment to public service values. In this way, NCPMC’s accreditation process promotes these values as the heart of service.

These standards verify that the program focuses its resources and efforts toward a defined mission. Its mission statement should assist the program’s decision makers, participants and other constituents in understanding the program and its operations. Decision-makers should be able to demonstrate that they use the mission statement to help them set priorities and align resources with their goals.

So long as their activities are consistent with their mission, programs have latitude to define their performance goals, measures of outcomes, and improvements. Whatever the program’s goals and measures, they must be stated in terms that are sufficiently clear and concrete for the program to use in assessing itself and for outside parties, such as accreditation teams, to use in assuring that the program manages itself strategically. The mission statement brings coherence to the program’s activities.

**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**: The program will establish observable program goals, objectives, and outcomes, including expectations for participant learning, consistent and in alignment with its mission.

**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**: The program will collect, apply, and report information about its performance and its operations to guide the evolution of the program’s mission and the program’s design and continuous improvement with respect to the accreditation standards.

**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.

**Standard 2: Core Competencies**

Programs are encouraged to design their curricula and offerings to best fit their constituencies while ensuring that the National CPM Consortium standards and requirements are met and that the CPM Core Competencies are adequately addressed across the curriculum. Programs are expected to provide participants with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence regardless of instructional modality.

The program consists of a minimum of 300 hours of structured learning activities addressing the CPM core competencies.

--At least 250 hours are instructor- or facilitator- directed.

--The remaining hours consist of learning activities which address specific learning objectives related to the core competencies.

--The environment for teaching-learning fosters achievement of expected participant learning outcomes, which the program is to identify and link to specific core competencies.

The National CPM Consortium also requires that each participant in an accredited CPM program complete a public management project (sometimes termed a capstone project), which shall include a written demonstration of participants' effectiveness in applying the core competencies to their job environment. Participants are to choose a project that allows them to use what theylearn in the CPM program and apply that learning to benefit their organization.

**Rationale:** The CPM Program Director and the Faculty/Instructors ensure the core curriculum addresses all of the seven (7) competencies listed on the CPM Competency Model specified in the Bylaws. In addition, the entire program is documented with learning outcomes related to the program’s mission and to the core competencies. In addition, core competencies are identified in each course and learning activity. The curriculum allows for a variety of perspectives and experiences to invigorate discourse among participants and with the Faculty/Instructors.

**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:** The program uses the CPM competencies as a basis for the curriculum. The required competencies include the following seven (7) domains: Personal and Organizational Integrity; Managing Work; Leading People; Developing Self; Systematic Integration; Public Service Focus and Change Leadership. The program is clearly and accurately described in official publications and participants are able to understand and follow program requirements to completion. The program is able to demonstrate how they address the competencies, how they know whether the participants have mastered the competencies, and how the participants apply their knowledge of the competencies through exercises, interaction, discussion and the capstone project.

**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:** The program is able to illustrate that a clear relationship exists between the capstone projects, the curriculum, and the competencies. Requirements for the projects are clearly specified and feedback is provided as necessary to the participants. Any group projects have clearly defined individual responsibilities. Assessments (e.g., examinations, projects) include tests of knowledge and practical applications which clearly relate to learning outcomes and core competencies.

**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).

**Standard 3: Resources and Capacity**

By documenting the adequacy of its resources and capacity, the program demonstrates the potential to fulfill its mission, accomplish its goals, and achieve the intended outcomes of its programs and services wherever offered and however delivered. The planning processes, structures, and resources are aligned with each other and are linked to the mission. Through its governance and decision-making structures, the program establishes, reviews regularly, and revises, as necessary, policies and procedures that promote effective management and operation of the program, sustainability of the program, and personnel management.

**Rationale.** The program should have the resources required to pursue its mission and to continue to improve. This includes an administrative infrastructure appropriate for its mission, goals, and objectives in all delivery modalities employed. It also includes adequate Faculty/Instructors, both in terms of numbers and qualifications. Other resources include, but are not limited to: sufficient funds, physical facilities, and resources in addition to its Faculty/Instructors to pursue its mission, objectives, and continuous improvement.

**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:** The existing administrative infrastructure (e.g., director and staff) is adequate to serve the number of participants in the program, the number of sites for delivering the program and the number of modalities used in the program. The physical and technical infrastructure together with well-defined decision making processes are adequate to support the program’s operations and fulfill its mission.

**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:** The program's Faculty/Instructors will be academically and/or professionally qualified to serve the program’s mission. There is a climate of diversity and inclusiveness through its recruitment and retention of 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:** Written Policies and Procedures exist addressing issues of admission to the program, evaluation, projects, elective credit, substitutions of prior training privacy, and confidentiality rights of participants.

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

**3.4 Funding:** Funding is sufficientto sustain the program both currently and in the future.

**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 Board/Group:** A governing or advisory board or group is in place with a clearly described function. An advisory board/group will assist the program with, but is not limited to, the following: program policy, recommendations for admission to the program, curriculum, and learning outcomes. There is a climate of diversity and inclusiveness through its recruitment and retention of advisory board/group members.

**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.

**Standard 4: Planning and Implementation**

The program engages in ongoing, participatory planning that provides direction for the institution and leads to the achievement of the intended outcomes of its programs and services, accomplishment and fulfillment of its mission. The resulting plans reflect the interdependent nature of the program’s operations, functions, and resources. The program demonstrates that the plans are implemented and are evident in the relevant activities of its curriculum and services, the adequacy of its resource allocation, and the effective application of institutional capacity. In addition, the program demonstrates that its planning and implementation processes are sufficiently flexible. This allows the institution to be able to address unexpected circumstances that have the potential to impact the program’s ability to accomplish its goals and to fulfill its mission.

**Rationale**: The program’s planning process, includes, but is not limited to: make- up of participants, e.g., diversity in terms of race/ethnicity, levels of government, etc.; frequency or cycle of planning; use of the mission in planning and implementation; flexibility of 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** **Program Requirements:** The program requirements are adequately described, identified, and are made available to the participants at the time of acceptance to the program and upon request.

**Evidence could include but is not limited to:** brochures, handbooks, flyers, website information, samples of correspondence between program and applicants

**4.2** **Tracking System:** A confidential candidate tracking system is incorporated in program operations including contact information. Participants are informed of their progress on a regular basis.

**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:** All participant files and evaluations are kept in a secure location, and confidentiality is maintained at all times.

**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**: Assessment review standards are clearly specified, with provisions to incorporate evaluation results into program development.

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

**Standard 5: Effectiveness and Improvement**

The program uses a systematic process to obtain relevant information to determine program effectiveness. It clearly states how participants are prepared for meaningful lives and successful careers within the context of the mission. Information collected is used to foster on-going improvement of the program.

**Rationale:** The program assesses how well the participants are meeting the expectations of the Faculty/Instructors and evaluates outcomes to improve the program.

**5.1. Participants’ Reactions:** Data are collected on the following: Level of improvement gained through knowledge and skills; knowledge and skills applied in the work setting, and impact on the organization; participant evaluations of courses.

**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:** Provision is made for incorporation of evaluation results into development and improvements of the program.

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

**5.3. Areas of Growth:** When areas of growth are identified or arise they are discussed within the continuous improvement process. Additionally, ways to strengthen or change are developed.

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