

Site Visit Report for the Massachusetts

Certified Public Manager Program

Submitted by:

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**Massachusetts Review**

**Introduction**

This visit was conducted as part of a Request for Initial Accreditation. The request was made by Bridgewater State University, (BSU) though the Program Director, Professor Jodie Drapal Koretski (Kluver).

BSU submitted a self-study report and materials in accordance with the CPM Consortium Accreditation Assessment Questionnaire. The committee was charged with reviewing all materials and determining any issues that needed clarification or further review. The chair was charged with seeking clarification at the time of the site visit.

The structural and business components submitted by the Massachusetts Program were all in exemplary order. The program records are well maintained.

Recruitment and enrollment are processed and conducted by BSU. The outreach is well planned and holistic in its approach.

The curriculum materials submitted by the program were of extremely high quality. The accreditation team members were all happy to read and review such an orderly submission. This was very helpful and efficient.

The visit took place on September 14 and 15, 2018. The team chair met with all the requisite groups. Meetings were held with several deans of the University, participants, faculty, administration staff and advisory board members and current students.

The site visitor was able to visit a class in progress. Students were thoroughly engaged and enthusiastic.

**The Mission: Verbatim**

The MA CPM program is centered in its mission:

The Massachusetts Certified Public Manager® Program (MA-CPM) is committed to provide a high quality, research based, and practice oriented statewide leadership certificate program for managers and supervisors who provide public and nonprofit sector administration and to serve as a resource for local communities. The certificate program educates public and nonprofit professionals in core leadership competencies towards improving the quality of public leadership and management within the state.

A screenshot of a cell phone

Description generated with very high confidence

**GENERAL OVERALL QUESTIONS**

**1) Has the program met the minimum requirements for re-accreditation?**

The Massachusetts Program is extremely well conceived and designed. It meets or exceeds the minimum requirements for accreditation. The course expectations are very high yet achievable.

* The level of rigor is substantial, and the faculty members all have experience as academicians as well as practitioners with real life experience. This blend adds real richness to the classes.
* The course selections and materials provide a great platform to meet the Consortium Competency Structure.
* Participants are tested through the use of comprehensive examination and qualitative assessments.
* The program thoroughly meets the criteria for incorporating the CPM competencies into each class.
* There are no deficiencies in any part of the written submission.
* All requirements have been met.

**2) Does the program have a plan for continuing improvement?**

The program is sponsored by Bridgewater State University.

* Heavy emphasis is placed on a mindset of continuous improvement.
* Since the program is new, a keen examination of opportunities to make improvements is evident.
* Students complete evaluations after each session and discuss their experiences in each class.
* University partners with cities and towns to review course syllabi and the curriculum and suggest additions and improvements.
* The faculty is comprised of primarily of doctoral level instructors and MPA Program graduates. There are ongoing discussions about the improvement of curriculum and delivery methods. There are intentional collaborations across the University Graduate programs.

**3) Observations from the report review and site visit**

**POSITIVE ASPECTS AND INNOVATIONS:**

* Current participants have been strong advocates for the program. Word of mouth has helped enormously with recruiting. MPA graduates have recommended staff members to the program.
* The Program has outstanding support from the University and its Department Heads. It starts at the top. President Frederick Clark is an inspirational leader with an entrepreneurial approach to all the University’s programs.
* The Advisory Board meets regularly. Since this is a new program, the Advisory Group currently is made up of a cross section of internal administration and faculty. Outreach has begun to expand the group to include community partners in both municipalities and with State entities. Contacts have already begun with both State and local government officials to serve on the Board. The board will soon expand to have students and CPM graduates as key stakeholders be part of the advisory deliberations.
* The program endeavors to connect all course work with a flow that creates foundational building blocks from one seminar series to the next. Attention is paid to review previous work to help create the thread. There is online work required between sessions.
* Current participants rave about the program and find it to be very challenging yet inspiring. They remarked about how quickly the Program responds to evaluations and believe that the MA CPM Program has demonstrated great flexibility with staffing and logistics.
* Capstone Projects are completed by individual students with sponsorship or strong direction from by their respective agencies. The Capstone “Experience” is extremely valuable and the approach to guiding students through the process is very helpful and extraordinarily innovative. The reviewer will present the Capstone process and template in the live report to the NCPMC.

**INNOVATIVE COMPONENTS:**

* Building the Capstone: The process used to build the Capstone from start to finish is a guided format that leaves no aspect of this type of project murky. The process is a formula for success. It has components to acquire potential funding sources. The site reviewer will expand upon this at the Accreditation Reports segment of the 2018 Annual Meeting

**RESPECTFUL RECOMMENDATIONS:**

* The program has many municipal participants. It is the view of this reviewer that outreach should expand to a State Employees by liaising with the State Human Resources Department. Plans are already in play toward this end.
* As participants graduate, it would be helpful to keep them engaged as some sort of alumni group. Graduates are the individual success stories that build all CPM programs.

**PROGRAM SUMMARY AND FACTS (Verbatim from submission)**

The Massachusetts Certified Public Manager® (MA-CPM) certificate program is a recognized active program by the National Certified Public Manager Consortium and is housed within the Political Science Department at Bridgewater State University, Bridgewater, Massachusetts. The program provides professional development opportunities for public and non-profit sector leaders and serves as a resource for public service training and education in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

To earn the certificate, participants must successfully complete twelve (12) hybrid courses, as well as a Capstone Experience project and Professional Portfolio. The MA-CPM program is offered as either Graduate-Credit or Non-Degree. Students with an undergraduate degree or higher may register for graduate-credits through the College of Graduate

Studies. Up to six graduate-credits earned in the MA-CPM may be transferable to the Master of Public Administration program at Bridgewater State University upon acceptance within the graduate program. Graduate level students at Bridgewater State University may dual register in the MA-CPM program upon acceptance to the MA-CPM program. Students without an undergraduate degree may register for the Non-Degree option through the College of Continuing Studies. All student enrollment options have up to six years to complete the program, however the program can be completed in 24 months.

**Certification Requirements Have All Been Met**

**Program Hours**

The MA-CPM program provides 325 hours of instruction to participants Learning or Job-Related Projects

**Evaluation of Participants**

The program provides substantive evaluation of all major curriculum objectives and all of the competency areas. The MA submission states, “Evaluation may be by oral examinations, written examinations, or assessment evaluations.”

**PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

The administration of the MA CPM Program is provided by the Department of Political Science – Chair of the Department, the Program Director, the Faculty Director, and the administrative staff.

**PARTNERSHIPS**

The MA CPM Program has established linkages with the community groups and municipalities throughout South East Massachusetts with plans for expansion.

**PROGRAM ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT**

### Admissions Policies and Application Procedures

#### Graduate-Credit Option and Non-Degree Option

MA-CPM offers participants the opportunity to apply as either a Graduate-Credit or Non-Degree student. Prospective students with at least a bachelor’s degree are eligible to apply to the MA-CPM program for graduate-credit. Prospective students without a bachelor’s degree are eligible to apply to the MA-CPM program within the Non-Degree option. Prospective students must select their option of choice prior to applying to the program and once selected the option may not be changed. Prospective students are encouraged to speak with the program directors to assist in their option choice decision-making.

#### Graduate-Credit Option

Prospective students who hold an undergraduate degree, a master’s degree, or who are either currently enrolled in a master’s program, in the Master of Public Administration program at BSU, or are an alumnus from the Master of Public Administration program at BSU may apply as a Graduate-Credit option. Prospective MA-CPM applicants who are applying as a current BSU Master of Public Administration student or Alumni of the BSU Master of Public Administration program may transfer up to (6) credits of qualifying (1) credit modules taken while in the BSU Master of Public Administration program. Current BSU Master of Public Administration students and other BSU graduate programs may dual-enroll in the MA-CPM program.

**CANIDATE EVALUATION**

The program is designed for individuals who either have an interest in or are currently working within public and nonprofit sectors. The program offers enrollment options that allow for varying educational levels – Graduate-Credit or Non-Degree. Prospective students with an undergraduate degree or higher may enroll in the Graduate-Credit option through the College of Graduate Studies. Prospective students without an undergraduate degree may enroll in the Non-Degree option through the College of Continuing Education. Current BSU Master of Public Administration (MPA) students and graduate students from other departments may dual enroll in the MA-CPM program. BSU MPA alumni may enroll as a Graduate-Credit student and may transfer up to 6 module credits into the MA-CPM program. No prerequisites are required.

**PROGRAM COMPLETION**

The MA-CPM program provides 325 hours of instruction to participants. Successful completion of twelve modules, a Professional Portfolio, and a Capstone Experience Project is required. MA-CPM module courses are offered during the fall, spring, and summer semesters. The program is designed to be completed in 24 months, but students have up to six years to complete the program.

**PROGRAM FEES AND FINANCING**

The cost for the MA-CPM Program is dependent upon the student’s enrollment choice – Graduate-Credit or Non-Degree options. The Graduate-Credit option is equivalent to 12 credit hours at the current graduate tuition and fees rate plus books and other materials. The Non-Degree option is a fixed rate of $350 per course x 12 credit hours plus books and other materials.

**PROGRAM ATTENDANCE POLICY**

MA-CPM participants are required to successfully complete all courses and assignments before they can be certified. Due to the condensed nature of courses, absences are highly discouraged and may result in failure of the course. Students may refer to individual course syllabi and BSU policies on absences.

**FINAL CPM EXAM**

The culminating assessment of students is made with the following considerations and factors: Each individual module course provides students with opportunities to test their knowledge and apply practical content. Each course is linked to the Exit Requirements: Professional Portfolio and Capstone Experience Project. These requirements include the blending of theory and practice. These requirements are utilized as demonstration projects of both knowledge gained and practical application. Additionally, the learning outcomes have been developed in such a way as to lend themselves to measurement across a wide variety of assignments/types of evidence.

**CPM PROJECT REQUIREMENTS (Verbatim from submission)**

The Capstone Experience Project

A fundamental component of the professional portfolio is a demonstration of the student’s professional development via a capstone project. At the beginning of the program, the student will be asked to consider a project that they would like to develop over the span of their coursework. They will be asked to complete a capstone project proposal seeking permission to work on their desired project – they will want to seek approval early on in their studies to allow you time to develop the project. Their approved proposal completed project paper, and project presentation are all elements to be added to their professional portfolio and will be needing to be completed within the Capstone Experience course.

**The Capstone Experience Paper**

Another important component of the professional portfolio is the professional development paper. This paper should provide an overview of the student’s insights into their professional development and learning related to the competency assessments, course activities, and curriculum. Within this paper they will revisit your mission, goals, objectives and action plan to access how you have grown personally and professionally over the program. A detailed assignment matrix will be provided to the students as part of the Capstone Experience course.

**Presentation of Capstone Experience Project**

Participants will present their Capstone Experience Project in a formal presentation format during the last meeting of the Capstone Experience course. Students will receive feedback from other participants, invited guests, mentors and the instructor regarding their project and presentation. This is an opportunity for students to showcase their work and professional growth.

**CONCLUSION**

The committee recommends accreditation of the Massachusetts Program without equivocation. The program provides a quality experience for the Public Managers of Massachusetts and meets or exceeds all expectations of the National Certified Public Manager Consortium.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:**

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