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**Frequently Asked Questions about the**

**Nebraska Certified Public Manager® Program**

**What is the Certified Public Manager® (CPM) Program?**

The Certified Public Manager® (CPM) Program is a nationally-accredited comprehensive management development program specifically for managers in federal, state, and local government and in nonprofit organizations.

The CPM Program is based on the assumption that well-trained public managers provide better service to the public.

The program’s primary goal is to foster and encourage the highest possible levels of performance and ethical practice of public and nonprofit sector managers to continuously improve the performance of local, state, and federal government, and of the nonprofit sector.

The CPM Program offers a comprehensive course of study where public and nonprofit managers can acquire and apply best practices and theory to their leadership and management of people, processes, and organizations. The course of study is designed to address competencies that facilitate exceptional job performance and organizational success. The curriculum applies theory to practical problems facing the participant, their agency/department/organization, and citizens.

Those who complete the program earn a national trademark designation of CPM (Certified Public Manager®).

**2. What is the history of the CPM Program?**

The program was developed in the mid-1970s by several Georgia educators and state officials to train public managers. The National Certified Public Managers’ Consortium was formed shortly thereafter. The Consortium is an independent, tax exempt 501(c)(6) nonprofit organization incorporated in North Carolina. The purpose of the Consortium is to establish accreditation standards and, upon request from members, review the member’s program for either initial or continuing accreditation. The accreditation review process assures that Consortium standards are maintained by member programs. The term “Certified Public Manager®” is a registered service mark of the National Certified Public Manager® Consortium.

As of April 2012, the Consortium includes 32 accredited members (29 states, the federal government, the District of Columbia, and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments), four active members (working toward accreditation) and five associate members (developing programs**.**

The University of Nebraska at Omaha became an Associate Member for Nebraska in February 2007 and received its accreditation in 2008.

**3. Is the program nationally accredited?**

The Certified Public Manager® (CPM) Program is a nationally-recognized professional development program for supervisors and managers in government and the nonprofit sector. It is a training system that develops and measures competencies in the field of public management.

The National Certified Public Manager® Consortium monitors and accredits the member programs. Only accredited programs are authorized to award the CPM designation. Additional information about the National CPM Consortium can be found at the following web site: [www.cpmconsortium.org](http://www.cpmconsortium.org).

**4. What are the national requirements for certification?**

The program requires at least 300 hours of structured learning activities for each participant. Such learning activities may include, but are not limited to: workshops/courses, application projects, structured readings, comprehensive examinations, and other approved activities. In addition, there must be a written demonstration of participants' effectiveness in applying core materials to their job environment. Finally, the program must provide substantive evaluation of all major curriculum objectives.

**5. What is included in the curriculum?**

The curriculum is driven by the seven competency clusters required by the National Certified Public Manager Consortium. These clusters include:

* Personal and Organizational Integrity
* Managing Work
* Leading People
* Developing Self
* Systemic Integration
* Public Service Focus
* Change Leadership

Each course offered through the CPM Program falls into one of these categories. The entire course of study will provide participants with general administration skills; technical, qualitative, and quantitative skills; human relation skills; and analytical and conceptual skills.

The Nebraska CPM Program is designed to address these competencies and those of the International City/County Managers Association (ICMA). The program also aims to meet specific learning outcomes.

**A sampling of CPM Courses include:**

* Knowing and Managing Yourself
* Managing in the Public and Nonprofit Sectors
* Understanding and Using Public Policy
* Managing for Results
* Strategic Planning and Continuous Improvement
* Project Management
* Leadership
* Leading Teams
* Managing Public and Nonprofit Finance
* Law for Public and Nonprofit Managers
* Communicating Effectively: Professional Communication and Getting the Most from Media Relations
* Understanding Organizational Culture, Cultural Competence, and Managing Diversity
* Understanding and Promoting Ethical Behavior
* Managing Information and Information Technology
* Negotiation Skills

**6. Who can apply and are there prerequisites?**

The program is designed to benefit current government or nonprofit supervisors, managers, and persons with significant responsibilities (e.g., municipal or county clerks), and also persons who are interested in supervisory or management positions in a government or nonprofit organization. The Nebraska CPM Program has no prerequisites. Applicants with all educational backgrounds and levels of experience are welcome to apply.

**7. What are the benefits of the program to participants?**

Benefits of the Nebraska CPM Program are impressive. Participants have the opportunity to strengthen leadership abilities, management and supervisory skills, skills in managing and improving work processes, budget development and execution, and personnel management. Networking opportunities abound. Participants develop interagency and cross-sector contacts and communication. In addition, participants learn to encourage innovation, creativity, and new approaches to problem solving in their organizations.

Another incentive to participate in the program is the undergraduate and/or graduate credits that can be earned. Graduates of the Nebraska CPM Program can receive 15 upper level college credits, which can be used to complete a Bachelor’s in General Studies (BGS) through UNO’s Division Continuing Studies Program. There is no charge for these credits beyond the $2,500 tuition for the CPM Program. If they have an undergraduate degree, graduates can receive up to six graduate credits toward a UNO Master’s in Public Administration (MPA). To receive the MPA credits, participants must enroll in the UNO graduate school and pay tuition and fees for the six credit hours. Nebraska CPM participants who do not live in Nebraska must pay non-resident tuition. No work beyond the CPM program requirements is necessary to receive the undergraduate and graduate credits.

Participants who complete the program will have a life-long certification, but will also have the opportunity for further growth and development through continuing education opportunities. Clearly, benefits of the Nebraska CPM Program include participant potential for both short-term growth and long-term continuous improvement.

**8. What are the benefits to participants’ agencies/organizations?**

* CPM projects approved by participants’ supervisors that focus on agency/organization issues
* More highly skilled and effective leaders and managers
* Leaders and managers who are more committed to service in the public and nonprofit sector
* Leaders and managers who are part of a broader network of public and nonprofit managers, and who can use their network to further the goals of their agencies/organizations

**9. How long is the CPM Program?**

The Nebraska CPM Program is a 12-month certification. Participants have the option of extending the time to completion as long as they meet all requirements within three years.

**10. Where and how often are classes held?**

Classes are offered in Omaha at the University of Nebraska at Omaha campus. Cohorts begin in January of each year and meet on campus for two-to-three days, six times during the year. The rest of the program is offered online, with at least one course each month.

**11. Is there a CPM alumni society?**

Certified Public Manager® graduates are eligible for membership in the American Academy for Certified Public Managers® (AACPM). The AACPM holds an annual conference that provides continuing education for CPMs, as well as networking opportunities.

Alumni of the Nebraska CPM Program are encouraged to establish a Nebraska Society for Certified Public Managers® under the auspices of the national AACPM. Please visit http://www.cpmacademy.org/ for more information on the professional association.

**12. How much will the program cost?**

The cost of the program is $2500, plus books and travel, if participants need to commute to Omaha for the on-site courses. The cost of books and other course materials is not expected to exceed $200. Payment plans are available.

Payment is due at the beginning of the program. At minimum, a deposit of $250 is due upon admission to the program (a $500 deposit is required, electing to use a payment plan). If necessary, customized payment plans can be worked out for participants and for the organizations that sponsor a participant. The program must be paid in full before the participant's graduation in December.

**13. How much time should I expect to spend on the program?**

The National CPM Consortium requires 300 hours of structured learning activities for the complete program, which includes courses, assignments, and the major project. Based on this requirement, you should expect to spend, on average, five-to-six hours a week on the program.

**14. What is the difference between the Certified Public Manager® (CPM) Program and the Graduate Certificate in Public Management?**

The Graduate Certificate requires an undergraduate degree for application. The CPM program is open to all educational backgrounds and levels of experience.

The Graduate Certificate provides in-depth exposure to theory and practice in five key areas of public management (e.g., public finance, human resource management). The CPM program is a comprehensive management development program that provides practical skills and knowledge across a broad range of responsibilities of public managers.

**15. What if I miss a course or am unable to complete an assignment before the program ends?**

CPM participants are required to successfully complete all courses and assignments before they can be certified. Nebraska CPM participants sign a Letter of Intent and Commitment to the program that includes committing to: (1) Complete all components of the program and (2) Rearrange schedules as necessary to make time for the program.

Given this commitment, we expect participants to make extraordinary efforts to attend on campus classes, submit assignments on time, and meet online requirements. In addition, the courses held on campus are the ones that require significant interaction that is impossible to do online. On campus classes that must be attended in person (preferably in class, but remotely if circumstances prohibit attendance) are:

* Knowing and Managing Yourself (2 days)
* Leadership (2 days)
* Organizational Culture, Inclusive Organizations, and Managing People (1.5 days)
* Communicating Effectively (2 days)

In situations of emergency, where participants absolutely cannot attend on campus classes when they are scheduled, post online by the deadlines, or submit an assignment by the due date, we can offer the following options:

* Make up the course the following year and graduate a year later
* If the course is on campus, and the participant cannot be in the class, they may join the class remotely via Skype, conference call, or Adobe Connect. Program faculty and staff will determine which option will be made available.
* For an assignment, a participant can negotiate a new due date with the Program Director and the relevant faculty, but that due date must be met.
* For any other class that must be missed, whether on campus or online, the participant must propose a way to prove that they have gained the competencies covered in that class and negotiate a due date to provide that proof.

No more than three days of classes can be made up in one year. If a participant has to miss more than three days of class, whether online or on campus, s/he will need to come back the following year to complete the program. Participants must satisfactorily complete all courses within the allotted three years.

**16. Can participants earn college credit hours for completion of the Nebraska CPM Program?**

The Nebraska CPM Program has been approved to provide six graduate credit hours for participants who enroll with the University of Nebraska at Omaha’s Graduate Studies Office, and sign up for the corresponding PA 8896 Special Topics courses. The cost of applying for graduate admission is currently set at $45. The cost of graduate tuition is $235 per credit hour for Nebraska residents and $425 for non-residents. Participants who wish to receive the six graduate credit hours can enroll in these courses while they are in the CPM Program or within three years of graduating. These courses are open to Nebraska CPM participants only.

The Nebraska CPM Program has also been approved to provide CPM graduates with 15 undergraduate credit hours toward the Bachelor’s of General Studies (BGS) Degree through the UNO Division of Continuing Studies. These credits can be used as upper division credit if that benefits the student. CPM graduates interested in using these credits will need to meet with an advisor within the Division of Continuing Studies to determine where the 15 hours would best fit given the student’s transcript and previous college work (i.e., they can be used as electives, an area of emphasis, or a secondary field).