

## Continuing Education Unit(s) Guidelines

The Center for Lifelong Learning at Great Falls College MSU is eligible to grant Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for the successful completion of non-credit continuing education programs intended to improve knowledge and skills of professionals in various fields. All non-credit Lifelong Learning activities at Great Falls College MSU are eligible for CEUs and for OPI Renewal Units as requested by the student and approved by the proper agencies. Students successfully completing non-credit courses or activities will receive CEUs and those requesting OPI Renewal Units will receive the appropriate form completed and signed by the Center for Lifelong Learning for them to submit to OPI for their Renewal Units. To signify completion, Lifelong Learning can issue a Certificate of Completion, which is valid for any organization that recognizes Great Falls College MSU CEUs. The Center for Lifelong Learning maintains a record of all CEUs awarded for five (5) years.

### Criteria

Non-credit continuing education programs must satisfy the following criteria:

- A. The activity must be planned in response to clearly identified needs of a specific group or target population.
- B. Learning purpose, objectives and outcomes must be specified for each activity prior to its initiation.
- C. Qualified instructional personnel must be directly involved in conducting and planning of the activity.
- D. Specific performance requirements for the award of CEU must be established prior to offering the activity. These should be a result of the activity's purpose, objectives and outcomes.
- E. Student registration procedures must provide sufficient detail to provide necessary information for a permanent record of individual participation.
- F. Evaluation procedures identified during the planning process are to be used to determine the effectiveness of the program.
- G. A permanent CEU recording system will be maintained Lifelong Learning.

### Procedure

Requests for CEUs for non-credit professional development programs such as workshops, short courses, and seminars, must be submitted at least twenty-five (25) days before the program start date. Incomplete forms will not be considered and will be returned. If you are submitting as an individual, you are expected to check with your professional association or employer to determine the acceptability of the activity for CEUs prior to receiving them.

Upon receipt, Lifelong Learning reviews the completed request form and contacts the requesting organization/student of its decision via e-mail. If a request is not approved, a written notice will be e-mailed, indicating the reason(s) for denial.

### Calculating CEUs

The Center for Lifelong Learning's CEU calculation is based on a nationally recognized measure.

1. One CEU is defined as 10 contact hours of participation in an organized education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction, and qualified instruction (includes classroom, self-paced instruction, pre/post assignments, and/or homework) in support of a learning outcome.
2. In computing the number of continuing education units to be awarded, only the number of instructional hours or the equivalent shall be considered. Breaks and lunch are not to be included. Approval procedures for "equivalent" activities shall be the same as procedures for program approval.
3. Determine the number of contact hours by adding all countable portions of the learning event.

Example: A learning event has six 50-minute sessions with 10 minutes between for set-up. The number of contact hours would be computed as:  $6 \times 50 = 300$  total minutes in organized, interactive learning.  $300 \text{ minutes} / 60 \text{ minutes in an hour} = 5$  contact hours.

4. Divide the number of contact hours by 10 to get the number of CEU(s). Following the above example:  $5 \text{ contact hours} / 10 = .5 \text{ CEU}$ .
5. CEU may be expressed in tenths of a CEU (i.e., 17 contact hours equate to 1.7 CEUs; 3 contact hours equate to .3 CEU). Do not express the CEU past the tenths place (i.e., if your calculation should be 1.78, express this as 1.8 CEU).
6. When the fractional part of an hour is at least  $5/6$  (50 minutes or more), the fractional portion should be counted as a whole hour. Any portion of an hour between 30 and 49 minutes should be counted as 30 minutes. Any part of an hour less than 30 minutes should be discarded.

### **Limitations**

While Lifelong Learning can offer a wide range of CEUs, there are some limitations. The following types of learning activities ordinarily will not be awarded the continuing education unit:

1. Activities that would result in less than 0.5 CEU.
2. Activities leading to high-school equivalency certificates or diplomas.
3. Organizational orientation training programs.
4. Short-duration programs only casually related to any specific upgrading purpose or goal.
5. Recreational activities without a structured, educational environment.

**NOTE:** *Students may not earn both academic credit and CEUs for the same activity.*

### **Awarding of CEUs—Completion**

Within 30 days of program completion:

1. Certificates of Completion will be completed and mailed to the participant at the mailing address given.
  - a. If participants would like their certificate emailed to them, please indicate that on the form and clearly list your email address. It is the participant's responsibility to give a correct and legible email.
  - b. Participants must check with their professional organization or employer to determine if emailed certificates are accepted for CEUs.
2. Certificates of Completion can be mailed to the organization or instructor to be distributed to the attendees, if arrangements are made prior to the activity.
3. To receive a Certificate of Completion, the instructor must verify that each participant who attended the learning event(s) satisfactorily met the requirements for the CEUs. The instructor will be asked to sign off on the form and return it to the Lifelong Learning office to be processed.

### **Fees**

1. All CEUs requests are \$25.
2. For reprints/resending of Certificate of Completion, there is a \$5 administrative fee.

### **Payment**

The requesting organization or participant submits payment with a completed application form. The following payment methods are accepted.

1. Cash
2. Check made out to GFC MSU
3. Credit Card