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# *1 Background*

There was a time when the administration of elections and voter registration was a straightforward, relatively simple matter of occasionally organizing election workers, maintaining registration lists, and holding periodic elections. That time is no longer. Civil rights concerns (racial, ethnic, disabilities, language minorities) as well as a variety of other considerations ranging from increasing participation to the demands of modern technology, have forever and radically altered the nature of the elections/registration process. As a result, thoughtful election and registration officials have come to believe that this profession is one which requires expert, trained administrators who understand the subtleties of the myriad of factors now making the administration of the elections process a specialty for which specific knowledge and abilities are essential.

The result of those concerns was the development of the nation's first and only professional certification program for election and voter registration professionals. Since 1994, The Election Center has offered professional certification as Certified Election/Registration Administrator (CERA) status. CERA designation is the highest achievement for those in the elections profession. Earning – and more importantly – maintaining CERA status means a commitment to a career-long process of continuing professional education.

Election 2000 established in the public's mind just how complex the elections process can be. Election 2004 demonstrated how important the voter registration process is and its potential to affect participation as well as administration. It is clear that Congressional and state legislative leadership have focused on our profession more than in any other period in American history. Political leadership at all levels is insisting on more training and better administration of the entire process.

The Election Center invited Auburn University in Alabama to forge an alliance to dramatically improve election administration. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to Dr. Robert Montjoy formerly of Auburn University. Thanks to Dr. Montjoy, the faculty of Auburn's Master of Public Administration (MPA) Program accepted the challenge of developing and teaching courses specific to the voter registration and election administration profession. The elections' community's gratitude to Dr. Montjoy and faculty of the MPA program at Auburn is overwhelming. Now that Dr. Montjoy has moved to the University of New Orleans, he continues with the Professional Education Program. We are also deeply grateful to Dr. Christa Slaton of Auburn for taking on the

role of coordination. Thanks to Dr. Slaton, and her work with the Auburn faculty, The Election Center continues to develop new advanced Professional Education Program courses that help election professionals continue to grow and develop in their profession.

Since specific degree programs in elections/registration administration have not been developed, the establishment of a program providing professional education for practitioners in the field has become very important. Several years ago, a working group of Election Center members began examining possibilities and experimenting to determine the best way to respond to the growing need for a professional education program for elections/registration officials and to provide the opportunity for professional certification and continuing education.

During this process, which involved representatives of the academic sector, election and registration officials from the local level, members of The Election Center, and the National Association of State Election Directors (NASED), numerous possibilities were examined. The Election Center's Professional Education Program presents the approach developed through that process. A foundation of high-quality educational courses in the core skills required for modern elections/registration administration was clearly necessary and that dedication to excellence is now the basis of the current program.

The Election Center's Professional Education Program was designed and coordinated with Auburn University. The involvement of an institution of higher education and the application of academic discipline to the planning and implementation gives The Election Center's Certification Program a level unequalled by other certification programs. Because of our relationship with Auburn University, our program participants have the opportunity to gain continuing education units through an academic institution as well as a certification of professional excellence through The Election Center's Certified Elections/Registration Administrator (CERA) Program which makes the program the most significant of its kind. As we continue to develop our programs, we will strive for college credit from one or more universities.

In the aftermath of Election 2000, we also decided that we needed to include training and certification for those manufacturers and suppliers of election administration goods and services. We added a new program beginning in 2001 for Certified Elections/Registration Vendor (CERV). The core course work is the same (currently) as that for the CERA program with the intent being to prepare elections and registration vendors with the kinds of issues and decisions and processes that are faced by today's elections professionals. The CERV program is also aimed to developing better prepared suppliers who subscribe to the same principles and standards shared with elections professionals. Eventually, the CERV program will add courses specific to the improvement of goods and services offered and delivered to the elections community.

CERA status is reserved for those who are government employees serving in the profession but the CERV program is for employees of election and registration suppliers.

The Election Center's Professional Certification Board, in concert with The Center's Board of Directors, serves as the governing body for the Professional Education Program. The Election Center will continue to work with Auburn University and other academic institutions to develop secondary curriculum and additional policy issues connected with the program.

The core curriculum has been carefully designed to emphasize the skills and abilities, which are necessary to function effectively as a professional, certified, elections/registration administrator. At the current time, there is no testing associated with the CERA program, but it is anticipated that testing may be added in the future.

Presentation of the core curriculum occurs in different venues. Each year The Election Center conducts training in February and April. In conjunction with those workshops, Professional Education Program courses are taught. Additionally, courses are offered at the National Conference each August. The courses taught in February, April and August are taught **concurrently** meaning that each student can complete one course at each offering. The reason for offering these concurrently is that Auburn faculty have regular teaching duties at the university during those months. Each May, several courses are offered at Auburn University (usually the courses are those most needed by the greatest number of students for CERA graduation) and each July five courses are offered in a Summer Session. In odd number years, Courses 1-5 are offered in the summer; during even numbered years, Courses 6-10 are offered.

This, then, constitutes our Professional Education Program. This curriculum provides the **only** university-approved intensive instruction for elections and voter registration officials available at the state and local level. The Election Center and the elections/registration community are committed to this project.

Already, several states have now moved to state certification programs (also offered by The Election Center) for their officials based on the leadership initiative of The Election Center in instituting a national program. It should be a complimentary approach to certification that there are state specific programs for knowledge of state laws, procedures and court decisions, and gaining national certification through The Election Center.

Your interest in this program is evidence of its importance to our profession. Should you decide to pursue designation as a Certified Elections/Registration Administrator, you will be committing yourself to a career long process of professional education. You will work hard to earn and maintain your CERA status. You will be

recognized for your dedication and commitment to excellence in your profession. And, you will have the pride that comes with accomplishment above and beyond what others are able to achieve.

Welcome, then, to what is sure to be an incredible journey in the pursuit of professional excellence.

## *2 How to Use This Book*

To understand the scope of our Professional Education Program (PEP), which can result in a Certified Elections/Registration Administrator (**CERA**) designation, we encourage you to read both the *ACKNOWLEDGMENT* and *BACKGROUND* sections of the manual because they give you a sense of the effort it took to get to the present. All too often people ask why we have chosen one thing rather than another and reading these two sections will give you both a basis for many of our decisions and an indication of collective and individual effort that brought you this outstanding and much-copied program. Additionally, the Certified Elections/Registration Vendor (**CERV**) designation meets the identical course content in the Core Courses.

Perhaps we should define our use of the terms **Professional Education Program** and the **Certified Elections/Registration Administrator**. It is important to understand that the **Professional Education Program** is an overall education program designed to assist professionals at all levels within the specific office where they are employed in our profession. It is envisioned that there may be more levels of the Professional Education Program than exist currently. Some of those levels will be more advanced than the current program, and some may be developed for employees who are not able to pursue the full CERA program. One example of this is the Election Center's State Certification program, where election officials are certified to the specific practices and laws of their home state, which results in designation of (State) **Registered Election Official (REO)**.

**CERA** or **CERV** designation results from a career long commitment to continuing education, both academically, and through seminars, conferences, and professional association work. You can be involved with the Professional Education Program without making a total commitment to pursuing the requirements of **CERA** or **CERV** certification. While sometimes the terms get used interchangeably, they really are separate terms. The Professional Education Program is available to all within the profession. CERA is not only the Professional Education Program, but a commitment to continuous improvement of your professional skills.

We call particular attention to the **REQUIREMENTS** section, which spells out the specifics for obtaining CERA or CERV status and how to maintain your status after achieving it. There should be nothing that is unclear about the program after you read this section; if there is, please contact us and we will answer your questions. **OVERVIEW** gives general information; **CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS** is self-explanatory; **CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS** and **EXPERIENCE** subsections specify additional requirements for certification. The **ELECTIVES** section needs special attention. **GRADUATION** gives all details concerning the graduation procedure; and the subsection on **RENEWING AND MAINTAINING CERTIFICATION** discusses additional requirements each successive year to keep your certification up to date. The **CORE COURSES** section covers the academic part of our certification program and gives a synopsis of each of the topics to be covered.

The **CERTIFICATION BOARD** section discusses the Board makeup, powers of the Board, and how members are selected and Standing Committees. The immediately needed forms and applications are in the **RECORDS KEEPING** section. Forms which are needed to verify experience, seminar attendance and graduation forms will be sent to you closer to the end of your program. **MEMBERSHIP** provides information on **LOCAL MEMBERSHIP** and **STATE MEMBERSHIP** along with membership forms. Those are followed by reasons for belonging to The Election Center as provided by some of the members of The Center in **WHY BE AN ELECTION CENTER MEMBER**.

The **Principles of Elections/Registration Officials** and the **Standards of Conduct of Elections/Registration Officials** are displayed prominently on the back cover of this manual. Together they comprise the code of ethics for our profession.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Principally the manual will now be available through the Election Center website.. Rather than printing a new book when the information in a section or on a page changes, as it will from time to time, we will issue revised pages to replace the out of date ones. You will note a date on each page that will let you know the last revision of that page's information. It is possible that several dates will be contained in the book.

If you began your program under the requirements of a previous manual, the program content of your original program will not change from the provisions in the previous manual; however, fees, graduation procedures, and endorsement of our code of ethics are examples of changes in later editions of the manual that affect all participants.

## *3 Requirements*

### ***OVERVIEW***

Congratulations, you are showing interest in The Election Center's Professional Education Program (PEP). This is a course of study and other requirements for those who want to be recognized for their professional knowledge and expert skills and are willing to be involved in continuing education for periodic upgrades of both knowledge and elections/registration management practices. The program consists of two major parts. After completion of certain coursework and additional requirements you can become a Certified Elections/Registration Administrator (CERA). To maintain this status you must comply with additional requirements found in the subsection on ***RENEWING AND MAINTAINING CERTIFICATION***.

The CERA or CERV designation is to be honored. To obtain the designation and/or to maintain CERA or CERV status will require a commitment and dedication to the highest professional standards, a commitment to continuing education, and a willingness to comply with the mandates of the PEP Certification Board. We welcome all who choose to seek certification. You will be challenged and you will gain from the experience.

Once you have applied to the program or completed one course, the requirements for certification are set until you either obtain CERA or CERV status or the twelve-year limitation (for anyone who started on or after January 1, 1997) is completed, whichever comes first. In other words, although the certification requirements may change over the years, applicants will not have their original certification program changed.

The Election Center's CERA/CERV Program differs substantially from other certification efforts that you may have encountered through other programs. Those certified through the CERA/CERV program will have the benefit of having been taught by university professors, professional educators, as well as subject matter specialists, and can obtain CEU (College Education Unit) university credit for their classroom participation. These professional educators and specialists have been paired with skilled, seasoned elections/registration practitioners so that the course work developed is related directly to your professional needs. Additionally, as with the programs of our workshops and conferences, The Election Center gears its continuing education program to have more substance, more information directly related to your profession, than other groups and associations. The hallmark of Election Center programming is to offer participants the best and most substantive educational experience available.

The cost factors of the CERA/CERV program are substantial. We are aware that some will question why the fee structure is the way it is. We want you to be aware that the cost of travel for educational professionals, honorariums for the professional educators, host facilities, meals, educational and course materials, promotional materials, mailings, faxes, phone calls and staff time to coordinate all of the above, runs into significant sums. We are doing everything to keep the costs as low as possible, but even that sometimes is not enough.

The fact remains that professional certification, done correctly, is not inexpensive. We won't always be able to find inexpensive solutions and maintain a quality program consistent with the educational requirements. However, we will continually attempt to refine the cost process, so that we keep your budgets in mind. Bear with us when there are those times when savings are just not possible. Remember that you are after a specific objective and if the goal is to achieve CERA status, some obstacles are worth overcoming. Additionally, we sponsor the Auburn Sessions and the Summer Sessions at a significant discount with economy accommodations in mind.

Take pride in your enrollment in the CERA/CERV program. Upon successful completion of the program, you will have improved your skills and your knowledge of election and/or registration issues. You will have had many opportunities to get better acquainted with your colleagues throughout the nation who are in a professional role similar to yours. You will have accomplished what few in your profession have achieved: the right to be recognized for your expertise. You will have earned the right to be designated as a Certified Elections/Registration Administrator.

**NOTE:** Fees which are listed throughout this manual may be changed without notice and in no instance does a published fee amount constitute a contract amount. Fees may be changed wherever the costs associated with the program warrant new fees as determined by The Election Center's management process.

## ***CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS***

In order to become CERA/CERV certified there are specific requirements regarding the program that must be met:

1) You must fill out an application for admission and submit it to The Election Center. The Application Fee of \$50 by check or noncancellable purchase order (vouchers and/or billings not allowed) made payable to: Election Center- PEP Application Fee. The reason this amount cannot be billed is that it creates administrative costs immediately and it requires too much staff time and follow-up to pursue the application fee through various offices. There is no exception to this policy. If necessary, send your personal check and get reimbursed.

2) (A) Those entering the program after January 1, 1997: You will have twelve years to complete the program from the acceptance date we issue to you or the date of your first class, whichever comes first. Your acceptance date is defined as the date The Election Center gives in your acceptance letter. Those who have already taken one or more courses can have those courses credited toward CERA status. Send in an application immediately (but definitely no later than 30 days after your first course). You will have twelve years from acceptance date to complete your program. The Election Center's records will be the sole determinant of acceptance date.

(B) Those entering the program prior to January 1, 1997: You have two choices: either opt to complete the twelve-year program in paragraph (2) (A) of this section, OR stay on the original program as described in your program manual dated 8/17/94. You must indicate to us which program you are following and cannot take any course higher than Course X until you have notified us of your intent to follow the original program or the current program.

3) After January 1, 1997, applicants for the CERA/CERV must complete all 12 core courses within the specified period (twelve years). ***Students in the courses must attend the full class and its total time period;*** i.e., if the class is for two days instruction, the student must be present for all of the instruction on both days. Credit will not be given for those who enroll, attend a portion of the class, go do business or sightseeing, and return to the class. This requirement is so strict that ***not even verifiable emergencies will qualify as an exception.*** If you miss any portion of the course work, you must repeat the course in order to obtain credit. ***Fees will not be returned*** to those who are absent (for any reason) during the class, nor will financial credit be carried forward. Missing part of the class constitutes forfeiture of both financial and CERA/CERV credit for that course. It does not, however, affect any other requirements nor does it constitute prejudice against the applicant for any other courses.

Our associations with universities to offer these classes for college continuing education units mandate that no credit be given unless full contact hours are achieved. By eliminating all opportunities for abuse we satisfy both the institutions of higher learning and eliminate the potential for abuse by a few students.

4) CERA/CERV applicants must attend professional conferences and workshops that are elections/registration oriented. Although the majority of study for the CERA Program is in classroom hours with professional educators, the Certification Board agreed a limited amount of credit should be given for conference and workshop attendance, because learning from peers is important. Credit for attendance at workshops and conferences for CERA/CERV status can be obtained through verifiable attendance at **two** Election Center conferences or workshops (events), or **one** Election Center event **and one** from one of the other associations listed in the Conference Attendance Requirements Section of the CERA/CERV handbook.

**Note: Attendance at the required events in the preceding paragraph must occur during the period between your acceptance date and your graduation date.** *Exception: Credit will be given for attendance at the Election Center National Conference at which applicants for graduation would receive CERA/CERV status.* Conference credit, for any single Election Center conference, may be used to complete graduation requirements OR renewal requirements, but not both.

5) CERA applicants must have completed one of the appropriate experience requirements (for their particular office responsibility):

- a) Registration officials: administration\* of voter registration in one jurisdiction wide election;
- b) election officials: conducted\* one jurisdiction wide election;
- c) officials having dual responsibilities: one jurisdiction wide election.

\* This means for your particular responsibility within your office

6) Approximately three months prior to The Election Center National Conference, The Center will make available an Application for Graduation Package to those who have completed five or more courses. CERA/CERV applicants must complete and return this package along with a check or non-cancellable purchase order for \$175 to cover the certification fee and your first three years renewal. (This amount covers the original fee for certification, for maintaining official records, and to offset partial costs of issuing Election Center transcripts, degrees, and awards.) If a graduate is unable to attend the conference and graduation ceremony, the fee is \$275. (The additional amount is to defray costs of graduation ceremony plus staff time and expense to ship graduation awards.) Checks or noncancellable purchase orders are made payable to: Election Center-Certification Fee. As with the application fee, no billings and/or vouchers accepted for the same reasons as before. If your jurisdiction is to cover the cost of these requirements, pay

by personal check and have your jurisdiction reimburse you. You must meet the deadlines in the graduation package or graduation may be delayed for another year. Final CERA/CERV certification will be issued only upon completion of all course and financial requirements. Auburn University also keeps records and continuing education unit certificates will be given on successful completion of the required course work. Transcripts of your CEU credits can be ordered directly from Auburn for a nominal fee.

7) CERA/CERV graduates must agree to adopt, sign, and adhere to the *Principles and Standards of Conduct of Elections/Registration Officials*. (See back cover of this manual.) These two documents are our common bond in this profession. While the words may change slightly for international professionals, the basic documents will be the same for all. The *Principles and Standards of Conduct of Elections/Registration Officials* were created by Certified Elections and Registration Officials in Kansas City, Missouri, March 15 through 17, 1997. Your CERA/CERV designation may be revoked or suspended for violation of our profession's *Principles and/or Standards of Conduct*. See procedures under Standards and Ethics Committee (page 6.2).

8.) **State Certification Credit:** A graduate of the Registered Election Official program for State Certification conducted by The Election Center, is entitled to choose credit for one of the Core Courses in the Professional Education Program. The student may choose any one of the 12 courses (but only one) and must complete a form (found in this manual) which tells The Election Center which course you are claiming as credit. The form must be completed and turned within the first year of your enrollment in the Professional Education Program or one year from the date you take your first Professional Education Program course, whichever occurs first.

## ***CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS***

Attendance at state and national election conferences and workshops is a requirement for the Certified Elections/Registration Administrator (CERA/CERV) designation. A minimum of two must be attended: two from Section One or one from Section One plus one from Section Two (see next page). Verifiable attendance records must be presented to PEP's Certification Board, or its designated agents, showing date of conference or workshop, specific subject matter covered (conference program or brochure is permissible), and receipts showing paid registration. *Subject matter at such conferences or workshops must be voter registration or election specific* for a minimum of five hours actual instruction time; generic sessions in management skills, personnel issues, records management, etc., do not count.

Proof of conference attendance is required and all materials submitted will be reviewed for compliance by the Certification Board. The following are acceptable:

- 1) a receipt for payment of registration fee and a copy of the program;
- 2) a Certificate of Completion and a copy of the program (or other description of the session and number of hours);
- 3) any other evidence of attendance and a copy of the program.

Note: It is not necessary to provide documentation for Election Center events: if you can verify the date and location The Center will verify the attendance. Receipts from all other organizations will be required.

**Section One:**

**The Election Center**

National Conferences  
 Special Workshops  
 Seminars

**Section Two:** [ALL MUST HAVE A MINIMUM OF FIVE HOURS ACTUAL INSTRUCTION TIME.]

**U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC)**

Advisory Board meetings  
 Standards Board meetings  
 Informational conferences and workshops

**The National Association of County Recorders, Elections Officials and Clerks (NACRC)**

Legislative conferences  
 Regional meetings (if five hours instruction & specific to elections & v.r.)  
 Annual meetings

**International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC)**

Annual meetings

**International Association of Clerks, Recorders, Election Officials and Treasurers (IACREOT)**

Annual meetings  
 Regional meetings (if five hours instruction & specific to elections & v.r.)

## National Association of Secretaries of State

Annual or semi-annual conferences

## National Association of State Election Directors

Annual or semi-annual meetings

Regional meetings (if five hours of instruction & specific to elections & v.r.)

**State workshops/conferences for elections/registration officials held in your state** (whether by the State Elections Office or by State Association)

*NOTE: Regardless of which group in Section Two sponsors meetings, sessions, seminars, workshops or conferences, **the subject matter must be directly related to election or voter registration administration and must have a minimum of 5 hours actual instruction time.** Generic topics on general subjects related to management, wellness issues, employee retention or training, etc., which are not specifically oriented to elections/registration issues, will not be allowed by the Certification Board.*

## ***EXPERIENCE***

It is anticipated that most applicants for admission to the CERA Program will be accepted without question because they will have the appropriate experience level. Applicants need to meet the following conditions:

### Condition 1:

A) Must be a full-time election or registration official

OR

B) Must have a full-time job where election administration or registration of voters is a portion of their full-time job

AND

### Condition 2:

A) Must have administered (or assisted in the conduct of) one jurisdiction wide election or voter registration program in preparation for such an election

AND

B) Must have two years elections or voter registration experience by the time of CERA graduation.

There will be atypical applicants, however, such as part-time commissioners, applicants from states, which employ elections/registration officials only part-time, and others.

The Certification Board wants every applicant seeking certification to be considered for admission. However, since it is impossible to anticipate all atypical categories, the Certification Board requires applicants who do not meet the above criteria to ask the state election director or state voter registrar (whichever is appropriate in your state), to certify the experience and qualifications of the applicant or provide other appropriate verification.

If the applicant feels that an improper review of qualifications by a state official has occurred, the applicant may appeal directly to the Certification Board. The Board will then make a determination of eligibility and notify the applicant.

There will be some state election directors or state voter registrars who do not wish to participate in this process, and in this case, the applicant should file a written experience exception document, giving:

1) detailed information concerning the applicant's experience (including dates, locations, position titles, position duties, along with names, addresses and phone numbers of those who can verify such information)

AND

2) the applicant's reasons for admission to the program.

The document should be submitted to the Certification Board in care of:

**The Election Center  
Professional Education Program  
12543 Westella, Suite 100  
Houston, Texas 77077-3929**

### ***ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS***

1) CERA/CERV applicants should keep their own records of courses and conference/workshop attendance. The Election Center will also keep records and any conflicts between the two sets of records will be handled by the Certification Board. Appeals of any discrepancies must be submitted in writing to The Election Center's Certification Board. Decisions of the Certification Board are final.

2) Additional requirements to obtain CERA/CERV status will be added to the program from time to time. However, it will only affect new applicants. All students will graduate by the program requirements in effect at the time of their applications, unless they choose to accept the conditions of a subsequent program.

## ***GRADUATION***

Upon successful completion of all requirements and approval of the Certification Board, you will receive the following:

- 1) Graduation ceremony at the next national conference;
- 2) Printed CERA/CERV Certificate suitable for framing;
- 3) An official media announcement sent directly from The Election Center for your distribution to your news media announcing your status as a CERA/CERV graduate along with informational material describing the depth and level of preparation required to obtain the CERA/CERV status;
- 4) A distinctive pin that can be worn only by those achieving CERA/CERV status;
- 5) Special recognition at conferences and workshops sponsored by The Election Center; we will especially honor CERA/CERV members at Election Center National Conferences.
- 6) The Election Center also maintains a list of active CERA/CERV status available on its website.

### **Graduation conditions:**

- 1) Graduation must occur:
  - a) within twelve years allotted for your completion date,or
  - b) within one year from the completion of your final required core course, whichever is sooner (this date may be extended within the same calendar year if the date of The Election Center's National Conference is after that date)

2) Graduation ceremonies will only be held in conjunction with The Election Center's National Conference.

3) Graduates who do not attend the national conference scheduled for their graduation will be assessed a special handling fee of \$100 (minimum) to cover increased costs including shipping, staff time, and insurance for delivery of graduation items, plus the pro rata share of graduation ceremonies. The total fee for graduation is then the normal \$175 PLUS the additional \$100 handling fee for a total of \$275. (The Election Center has to make many of the guarantees months in advance of knowing exactly who will attend the ceremony.)

4) Graduates who choose to attend graduation ceremonies only (and not attend The Election Center's National Conference) will be assessed an additional \$100 (minimum) fee to cover hotel space rental for the ceremony, meal and refreshment costs, decorating, pro rata share of travel for staff and speakers, public address equipment, etc. The total fee for graduation is then the normal \$175 PLUS the additional \$100 additional fee for a total of \$275

Your achievement of CERA/CERV status will be one of the most important accomplishments in your professional life. We will do our part to honor the work and commitment it takes to obtain such a high honor. There will be programs and projects directed only to those who have obtained CERA/CERV status, so take great pride in your accomplishment.

## ***RENEWING AND MAINTAINING CERTIFICATION***

Once you have obtained CERA/CERV status, your initial certification is good for a period of three years, as evidenced by an expiration date printed on your certificate. All future renewals will also be for three years.

You have 30 calendar days from your CERA/CERV expiration date to complete your application for renewal (see form on page 7-5). These must be accompanied by a payment of \$100 each renewal period [see Note on page 3-2 about potential changes in fees] to cover the costs of maintaining accurate records on each CERA/CERV participant and to partially cover the costs of communication with CERA/CERV members each year. These must arrive at The Election Center's national

office within the 30-day grace period, not be postmarked by such date. ***It is your responsibility to keep track of your expiration date; notices sent by The Election Center are as a courtesy to you and lack of notification will not be allowed as a basis of appeal.***

## ***ELECTIVES***

Electives will be required for keeping certification current. Other professional courses are being developed. Some courses will build on foundations laid in core courses; others will be advance courses requiring completion of other electives before taking an advanced level course. For applicants who entered the program prior to January 1, 1997, and have elected to stay under the original five-year plan, **Course XI**, *The History of Voter Registration and Elections I – Antiquities to 1600s*, and **Course XII**, *The History of Voter Registration and Elections II- The Modern Era*, will count as electives. If such applicants choose the twelve course option, however, then courses XI and XII must be counted in the core curriculum. For those enrolling after January 1, 1997, courses I through XII are required as core curriculum .

Also offered under electives may be some ***independent study projects***. Such projects are planned for use only in unusual circumstances and create more faculty involvement, more staff time, and add significantly to course costs. There will be tuition for independent study projects and the tuition may exceed the cost of a regularly scheduled course due to the higher overhead costs. Access to independent study projects will be restricted and may be used on a case-by-case basis to satisfy **electives only**. They may not be used as substitutes for core courses. They also may not be used in place of poor planning by those who have avoided taking offered courses when available.

You must complete at least one additional course (or independent study when approved in advance) AND attend at least one Election Center national conference or special workshop within the renewal period. Additionally, you must also attend at least one elections or voter registration specific workshop in your state (minimum of five hours actual instruction), if offered in your state. Attendance at Section 2 events (see page 3-7) can be substituted when no state conference is offered (but cannot be substituted for an Election Center attendance requirement). Independent study or special projects coordinated directly through The Election Center may be arranged in some special circumstances.

Conference credit, for any single Election Center conference, may be used to complete graduation requirements OR renewal requirements, but not both. Election Center courses for renewal may be taken at any time between the date you are certified for graduation and the deadline date for renewal.

Continuing professional education is the backbone of the CERA/CERV program. It assures that those holding the designation of CERA/CERV are current in elections/registration administration and are willing to keep their skills and knowledge current. There will be annual requirements for some form of continuing education through program offerings of The Election Center. The Certification Board will periodically add requirements necessary to maintain CERA/CERV status.

Documents verifying attendance must be submitted just as for graduation. CERA/CERV graduates should keep records of courses for renewal. However, they are not required with renewal applications unless there is a discrepancy with Election Center records. As in original certification, The Election Center's Certification Board will be the final determinant of whether requirements have been met.

### ***LAPSES IN CERTIFICATION STATUS***

Failure to maintain continuing education and other requirements as specified here or by the Certification Board, will be grounds for losing your CERA/CERV status. Once the CERA/CERV status has been lost, you will have **to make up courses missed AND attendance at events missed in order to be re-certified.** Attendance at events may be accomplished by doubling up on Election Center conferences and workshops OR through independent study or special projects as assigned by The Election Center. Each such study or project will carry a financial fee that could be higher than a conference registration fee. **No substitutions can be made for required courses.** It is of no advantage to you to let your certification lapse. During a period when your CERA/CERV status has lapsed, your name will not appear on any list of publication of CERA/CERV graduates. *Don't lose out -- keep your certification.*

# 4 Core Courses

## **COURSE I:**

INTRODUCTION TO ELECTION AND VOTER REGISTRATION SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATION

## **COURSE II:**

MANAGEMENT CONCEPTS IN ELECTION AND VOTER REGISTRATION ADMINISTRATION

## **COURSE III:**

PLANNING AND BUDGETING FOR ELECTIONS AND VOTER REGISTRATION

## **COURSE IV:**

ELECTION AND VOTER REGISTRATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

## **COURSE V:**

ETHICS IN ELECTION AND VOTER REGISTRATION ADMINISTRATION

## **COURSE VI:**

COMMUNICATIONS IN ELECTION AND VOTER REGISTRATION ADMINISTRATION

## **COURSE VII:**

FACILITATING VOTER PARTICIPATION

## **COURSE VIII:**

IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW PROGRAMS IN VOTER  
REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS ADMINISTRATION

## **COURSE IX:**

LEADERSHIP IN ELECTION AND VOTER REGISTRATION ADMINISTRATION

## **COURSE X:**

THE LAW OF ELECTIONS AND VOTER REGISTRATION

## **Course XI:**

THE HISTORY OF VOTER REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS I- ANTIQUITY TO THE 1600S

## **Course XII:**

THE HISTORY OF VOTER REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS II – 1600S TO MODERN ERA

*Note: Courses do not have to be taken in sequence, but to expedite CERA/CERV certification, we encourage enrolling in the courses whenever they are offered.*



**COURSE I.**

**INTRODUCTION TO ELECTION AND VOTER REGISTRATION SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATION**

(1 ½ day, 9 hours of instruction)

U.S. election and registration laws differ from state to state. Yet all elections in this country require certain basic functions, which often involve multiple procedures performed in different offices. Studying these functions enables us to improve administrative systems within jurisdictions and to compare procedures across jurisdictions. This course covers the importance of a systems approach to election/voter registration administration and describes basic systems that are used in the United States.

I. The Importance of Systems

A. What is a system?

B. How do we analyze systems?

C. Administrative systems and elections/registration law, an example

D. Systems and Total Quality Management

II. Systems in Elections/Registration Administration

A. Voters (registration and voter file maintenance)

B. Campaigns

C. Poll worker recruiting and training

D. Districting

E. Equipment and supplies

F. Precinct operations

G. Absentee and early voting

H. Canvassing

I. Recounts and contests



**COURSE II.**

**MANAGEMENT CONCEPTS IN ELECTION AND VOTER REGISTRATION ADMINISTRATION**

(1½ days, 9 hours of instruction)

- I. The Task of Administration
  - A. Understanding the myth of the politics/administration dichotomy
  - B. Internal management dynamics
  - C. External management dynamics
  
- II. What's Different About Public vs. Private Sector Management?
  - A. Legal distinction
  - B. Process distinction
  - C. Environmental differences (the government environment)
  
- III. Managing in An Organized Anarchy
  - A. What is an organized anarchy?
  - B. Working out the many myths of management
  - C. Effective tactics for managing an organized anarchy
  
- IV. The Special Nature of Elections/Registration Administration
  - A. 1990's democratic theory
  - B. Democracy as a dependent child
  - C. Multiple constituents vs. ultimate constituents
  
- V. Professionalism
  - A. Attributes of the profession
  - B. Public service professions
  - C. Steps toward professionalization
  
- VI. Breaking Out of the Box
  - A. No more ostrich leadership
  - B. NIHYYSOAB
  - C. Entrepreneurial management
  
- VII. Upon Return to the Office



### **COURSE III.**

#### **PLANNING AND BUDGETING FOR ELECTIONS & VOTER REGISTRATION**

(1½ days, 9 hours of instruction)

This course links the skills and knowledge of effective planning and budgeting techniques to Total Quality Improvement for Elections and Voter Registration.

- I. Introduction to Total Quality Improvement
  - A. Commitment to customer-driven quality
  - B. Employee participation in quality improvement
  - C. Commitment to continuous improvement - performance measures
  - D. Future orientation: goals - objectives - programs
  
- II. Strategic Planning and Total Quality Improvement
  - A. Environmental scanning - competition/cooperation
  - B. Forecasting
  - C. Scheduling
  - D. Risk analysis
  - E. Goals - objectives - functions - activities

#### **Exercise:**

#### **Integrating Strategic Planning with Total Quality Improvement**

- III. Budgeting for Total Quality Improvement
  - A. Technical aspects
    - 1. The budget cycle
    - 2. The accounting cycle
      - a. Fund accounting
      - b. Control
      - c. Information
    - 3. Purchasing
  - B. Management aspects
    - 1. Budget types and emphasis
    - 2. The budget process - top-down or bottom-up
    - 3. Link the budget to the accounting system
  - C. Benchmarking
    - 1. "Best practices"
    - 2. Performance measures
    - 3. Streamlining

#### **Exercise:**

#### **Integrating Planning and Budgeting with Total Quality Improvement**



**COURSE IV.**

**ELECTION AND VOTER REGISTRATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY**

(1 1/2 days, 9 hours of instruction)

Effective use of modern technology has become a vital part of elections/registration administration even in small jurisdictions which have traditionally utilized little automation. Automation can greatly improve productivity and efficiency, but needs and solutions must be properly evaluated if expensive and potentially catastrophic problems are to be avoided. The course will focus on types of technology available and will expose participants to types of uses for the technologies. Technology will be examined for the ways it can be used to more effectively serve both the external publics (budget authorities, general public, voters, news media, etc.) as well as the internal needs of our employees and the other governmental offices. One principal focus, however, will be to look at how technology changes the nature of the way tasks are accomplished and how to manage those tasks in a changed environment. Areas covered will vary but may include:

- I. Defining Our Tasks
  - A. Types of Information Gathered
  - B. Types of Information Distributed
- II. Using Technology to Enhance Workflow
  - A. Information management
  - B. Planning
  - C. Scheduling
  - D. Implementing & Monitoring
- III. Rethinking Work & Redefining Methods
  - A. Why typical technology projects succeed or fail
  - B. Deciding how work to be done
  - C. Examining all tasks for relevancy
  - D. Allocating resources
- IV. Transforming the Process
  - A. Better information and better management
  - B. Anticipating growth, major changes and problems
- V. Computers and the Office
  - A. Hardware Issues
  - B. Software Issues
  - C. Maintenance Concerns
  - D. The Internet & Your Office
  - E. Building Bridges to other offices
- VI. Buying vs. leasing decisions
- VII. Voting Systems
  - A. DRE (Direct Recording Equipment)
  - B. Optical Scan
  - C. Punch Card



**COURSE V.**

**ETHICS IN ELECTION AND VOTER REGISTRATION ADMINISTRATION**

(1½ day, 9 hours of instruction)

- I. Application of General Concepts & Critical Thinking
  - A. Philosophical Approaches to Ethics
  - B. Theories of Human Nature and the Proper Role of Government
- II. Levels of Ethical Reflection
  - A. Expressive
  - B. Moral Rules
  - C. Ethical Analysis
  - D. Post ethical
- III. Ethical Decision-Making
  - A. Application of Ethical Decision-Making Model
  - B. Analysis of Administrative Responsibility
- IV. **Exercises: Ethical Problems in Elections/Registration Administration**
- V. Review of Codes of Ethics for Public Service
- VI. Review of Principles and Standards of Conduct of Elections/Registration Officials



**COURSE VI.**

**COMMUNICATIONS IN ELECTION AND VOTER REGISTRATION ADMINISTRATION**

(1½ days, 9 hours of instruction)

Effective communication with the media, state legislatures, and local boards and other entities involved with elections or voter registration is critical to maintaining budget and public support for the electoral process, and for effective voter outreach and other public relations purposes. This course will provide the skills and principles important to effective representation of elections/registration departments and offices. Topics may include:

- I. Knowing Ourselves and Others
  - A. Thoroughly understanding ourselves
  - B. Defining the publics involved with our offices
    1. External publics
    2. Internal publics
    3. Administrative and/or budget authorities
- II. Developing a Plan to Effectively Communicate Our Programs
  - A. Methods of reaching
  - B. Defining our objectives
  - C. What course of action
  - D. Four principles of persuasion
- III. Relating to News Media and Public Relations
  - A. Mass media
  - B. Specialized media
  - C. Personal appearances
- IV. Communicating with your Legislature, State Board or Local Government
- V. Internal Communications
  - A. Public relations starts in the office
  - B. The importance of the telephone
- VI. Legal Notifications
- VII. Communications from a Reporter's Viewpoint
- VIII. Developing a News Release and News Conferences (Group Exercise)



**COURSE VII.**  
**FACILITATING VOTER PARTICIPATION**

(1 ½ day, 9 hours of instruction)

- I. The Importance of Voter Participation Rates to Elections/Registration Officials
  - A. Support for Democracy
  - B. Self-Evaluation
  - C. Planning and budgeting
  - D. Enforcement of NVRA
  
- II. Comparisons of registration and voting procedures and voting rates
  - A. Using different measures of participation
  - B. Comparisons through time
  - C. Comparisons with other nations
  - D. Comparisons within the United States
  
- III. Factors correlated with participation
  - A. Demographic factors
  - B. Social, psychological, and political factors
  - C. Legal and administrative factors
  - D. The rational voter argument
  
- IV. Examples of voter outreach programs
  
- V. Measuring the effects of voter registration programs
  - A. Imputing causality: the laboratory model
  - B. Measurement problems in the real world
  - C. The importance of data
  - D. Accounting for change



**COURSE VIII.**

**IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW PROGRAMS IN VOTER REGISTRATION AND  
ELECTIONS ADMINISTRATION**

(1 ½ days, 9 hours of instruction)

- I. Introduction - “An Implementation Parable”
- II. Basic Concepts
  - A. Organizational Structures
  - B. Authority
  - C. System
  - D. Routine (SOP)
  - E. Public administration
- III. Project Design and Management
  - A. Concepts
    - Task Definition
    - Linking
    - Scheduling
    - Assigning Resources
    - Monitoring
  - B. A practical exercise
- IV. Additional Considerations for Implementation of Public Programs
  - A. New Program or mandate
  - B. Changing old routines
  - C. Multiple actors and agendas
  - D. Uncertainty
  - E. Planning and control
  - F. Fixing
  - G. Evaluation - implementation or impact
  - H. Approaches
    - Top-down
    - Bottom-up
    - Interactive
    - “Slice”
- V. Synthesis - “Project Management and Implementation: An Electoral Example”



**COURSE IX.**

**LEADERSHIP IN ELECTION & VOTER REGISTRATION ADMINISTRATION**

(1½ days, 9 hours of instruction)

It has been said that leaders are born and not taught. Even conceding an element of truth to that contention, it is certainly undeniable that effective leaders do exhibit common traits and characteristics which can be learned. It is also true that individual leadership styles can differ widely and yet be effective. This course will focus upon identifying and assessing individual leadership styles, maximizing individual leadership effectiveness, and learning techniques of leadership particularly needed in the public sector. Individual subjects covered may include:

- I. Realities Reshaping America and American Leadership
- II. Maladministration/Sickness from Within
  - A. What is administration?
  - B. Identifying bureau pathologies (**Exercise #1**)
- III. The Human Side of Leadership/Motivation Behavior and Environment
  - A. Maslow's hierarchy of needs
  - B. McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y
  - C. Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory
- IV. Six Key Animating Organizational Transformation
- V. Realities of Leadership and New Word Traits Most Admired in a Leader
- VI. Situational Leadership
  - A. Situational leadership requirements (**Exercise #2**)
  - B. Implementing situational leadership: one minute management
- VII. Characteristics That Make a Good Team Click
- VIII. Leadership Challenge
  - A. Searching for excellent organizations
  - B. Five leadership practices common to successful leaders
  - C. **Exercise #3, #4, & #5**
- IX. Tower building (**Exercise #6**)
- X. Leadership Common Sense
- XI. Upon Return to the Office.....



**COURSE X.**

**THE LAW OF ELECTIONS AND VOTER REGISTRATION**

(1½ days, 9 hours of instruction)

Since voting is a fundamental right of citizenship, knowledge of elections/registration law has always been important for effective elections/registration administrators and their legal representatives. Elections and registration law has changed more since the 1960s than in all previous American history. New laws for the disabled, voting rights, the NVRA, military and overseas voters have made legal knowledge more important than ever at the same time that it has made the law of elections and registration ever more complex. This course will cover the law which election/voter registration administrators and their lawyers need to know, with emphasis upon legal principles which may be frequently used in resolving legal questions on a day-to-day basis. Examples of topics which may be included are:

- I. U. S. and State Constitutional Provisions on Voting and Elections
- II. The Right to Vote
- III. The Right to Be a Candidate
- IV. The Right to Gain Ballot Access
- V. The Right to Fair and Effective Representation
- VI. Rights Under the Federal Voting Rights Act, the National Voter Registration Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act
- VII. Political Rights of Public Officials and Employees



**COURSE XI.**

**THE HISTORY OF VOTER REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS I – ANTIQUITY TO 1600S**

(1 ½ days, 9 hours of instruction)

One of the best ways to understand how we arrived at today's democracy is to understand the events that led up to the creation of democratic governments. Even though the first democracies existed 400 years before the time of Christ, they disappeared after only a short period in history. What steps led to the creation of the American democracy? When were elections first held? How have elections evolved? How have changing election laws and procedures changed democracy? As elections/registration officials, if we understand how and why we arrived at the current form of democracy, then we can better advise the public, the news media and elected officials on proposed changes, or special protections built into current laws or procedures.

This course takes you through the original Greek Democracy and the Roman Republic when democracy disappears altogether. It picks up with the actions of monarchs which lead to incremental steps from their subjects toward establishing a "free people" concept. This course ranges from approximately 600 B.C. to roughly the 1600s A.D. in the American colonies. A pattern emerges that will help voter registrars and elections administrators understand the how and why our democracy evolved the way it did.

Understanding the evolution of the democratic process is an important key in the preservation of our republic and the improvement of democracy for free people everywhere.



**COURSE XII.**

**THE HISTORY OF VOTER REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS II – THE MODERN ERA**

(1 ½ days, 9 hours of instruction)

When did the concept of making lists of potential voters come into existence and why? What laws, rules and court decisions have affected voter registration? Why were they implemented? What has been the impact of each of those on the current form of democracy? How does voter registration in America differ from voter registration in other forms of developed democracies? These and other areas may be covered in a course designed to help us better understand the reasons for what we do currently. Understanding the developments of the past which have led to the present can help elections and registration professionals interpret both the intent and the influence of laws and procedures on voter registration. It may even help us to predict what future changes can do to the course of democracy.

Elections and voter registration from the 1600s to modern day in America and Europe is the subject matter. We cover why voter registration was implemented and the abuses, court cases, and improvements that evolved as the electoral process grew in the United States. This course will cover the early democracy that was limited mostly to wealthy, white, property owner males and its extension of voting rights to ever increasing groups of citizens throughout our history. We review the reasons behind the changes in laws and the Constitution in assuring rights to citizens. We see the impact on voter registration laws and how they were structured to enhance or limit the growth of democracy. We review how the enfranchisement of more levels of the public has affected democracy and its impact on government.

By understanding the reasons for the decisions which impacted both voter registration and elections administration, we can more clearly understand why we administer the process the way we do in the present. It also provides a better basis for anticipating changes for the future and can help to predict the outcome of changes to the system as they are proposed.



## *5 Renewal Courses*

***COURSE XIII:***  
***THE POLICY PROCESS***

***COURSE XIV:***  
***CRISIS MANAGEMENT***

***COURSE XV:***  
***TRAINING IN ELECTIONS:***  
***REACHING ALL LEVELS***

***COURSE XVI:***  
***CONTRACTS FOR ELECTION SYSTEM EQUIPMENT***

***COURSE XVII:***  
***COMPARATIVE DEMOCRACY***

***COURSE XVIII:***  
***CONFLICT MANAGEMENT***

***COURSE XIX:***  
***ELECTION LAW***

*(Note: Course Description not yet available for Election Law)*

*Note: Courses do not have to be taken in sequence, but to expedite CERA/CERV certification, we encourage enrolling in the courses whenever they are offered. Renewal courses are only offered to CERA/CERV graduates.*



**Course XIII.**  
**The Policy Process**

(1 ½ days, 9 hours of instruction)

Dr. Cynthia Bowling

After the elections, before the elections, and in between the elections, is policy-making.

A public policy might be defined what the government chooses to do OR not to do. As election and registration officials, you follow policy, you implement policy, and yes, you make policy. In fact, you are the linchpins that hold our representative democracy together. And because policies affect what you do and how you do it, even who you are, you must understand the policy-making process, the political environment, and the role you can play within our governmental systems.

This course defines public policy, and discusses several policies that affect elections and voter registration officials. It also discusses the environment in which policies are made. It will also discuss the policy process through several different lenses – as a system, as a rational process, as politics. Finally, we look at how you are affected and can effect various stages in the policy process – getting problems on the agenda, helping lay our rational alternatives to problems, impacting the policy decisions and making good decisions in a political environment, and implementation and evaluation. Throughout the class, several break-out sessions underlie important concepts and practices.

Topics:

What is Public Policy?

What are rules, policies, and laws?

The Political Environment of Public Policy

Theories of the policy process.

The Policy Process:

- Agenda Setting
- Alternatives
- Decision-Making
- Implementation
- Evaluation



**Course XIV.**  
**Crisis Management**

(1 ½ days, 9 hours of instruction)

Course Description:

This course examines the elements contributing to a crisis and effective decisionmaking processes to emerge out of a crisis situation relatively successfully. Issues include: effective crisis management, working with the staff and the internal public in effective crisis management, and planning and effective dissemination of information to the media. Skill training will be provided in the areas of effective crisis management, communication of ideas in a crisis situation, writing a press release and organizing a press conference.



**Course XV.**  
**Training in Elections**

(1 ½ days, 9 hours of instruction)

Goal: To employ training techniques appropriate for the various training situations in the administration of elections and voter registration

Outline:

- A. Setting training objectives
- B. Analyzing audiences
  - a. Focus on adult & older adults
- C. Choosing training methods
- D. Presentation tips
- E. Evaluation
- F. New techniques
- G. Application



**Course XVI.**

**Contracts for Election System Equipment**

(1 ½ days, 9 hours of instruction)

Goal: To understand the purposes and techniques of government contracting in the administration of elections and voter registration

Outline:

- A. Contract design goals
- B. Roles in the contracting process
- C. Types of procurement
- D. Key steps in RFP procurement
- E. Do's and don'ts for voter system acquisition and contract administration



**Course XVII.**  
**Comparative Democracy**

(1 ½ days, 9 hours of instruction)

Goal: To better understand the U.S. electoral system by comparing it with those of other nations

Outline

- A. Classification of electoral systems
- B. Survey of laws on registration and voting in 63 nations
- C. Review of different systems for determining election outcomes
- D. Evaluation of electoral systems
- E. Individual country reports



**Course XVIII.**  
**Conflict Management:**

(1 ½ days, 9 hours of instruction)

Dr. Christa Slaton

The responsibilities of elections and voter registration officials take place in a high stress environment with demands and pressures from voters, candidate, legislators, media, and other government agencies. Most of those who interact with elections officials know little about the process of administering elections, the deadline pressures, the budget constraints, the staffing problems. Nevertheless, elections officials are expected to be efficient, thorough, fair, open, understanding, practice--in a word, perfect. In a given election cycle, candidates can err, voters can ignore instructions, the media can present inaccurate information. But the expectation most stakeholders in the election process have is that the elections officials are responsible for all errors and have the duty to correct all wrongs.

How does one operate in such an environment--where expectations are so high, buck passing is rampant, and stress is maximized. This course will focus on conflict management--how to take the regular crises (and the really big one) of work in elections and handle them with professionalism, tact, and wisdom. The workshop will include a number of exercises to develop skills in active listening, communication, and conflict resolution. Based on a training manual developed for mediators, this workshop will cover the following topics:

- I. Types of Conflict and Means of Resolving Conflicts
- II. Trust Building
- III. Listening Skills
- IV. Styles of Communication
- IV. Communication Skills
- V. Practice, Practice, Practice



## *6 Certification Board Members*

Membership of the Certification Board will consist of twelve members, all of whom shall be voting members. Eight members will be selected to serve staggered, two-year terms, so that four of the eight are being appointed each year. The eight members will be comprised from the following groups:

a) Three members from the following responsibility level: secretary of state (when responsible for the election or registration process); State Board of Elections (or similar titles); state election director, and/or state voter registrar (with no elections responsibility) or its similar title/function. The three members so selected will serve staggered terms.

b) Five members from the following level: county clerk (when responsible for elections); county election director (or similar title/function); city/municipal election director; or City Board of Elections, and/or county or city voter registrar (with no elections responsibility). The five members so selected will serve staggered terms.

The eight members above will be appointed by the executive director of The Election Center, with the consent of The Center's Board of Directors. Consideration of future members for the Certification Board's eight rotating slots will come from recommendations by Election Center members and CERA graduates to the Executive Director and as chosen by the Director.

Four permanent members of the Certification Board will be: The Election Center's executive director; the Professional Education Program director for The Election Center; one member as appointed to represent Auburn University and; The Chairman of the Board of The Election Center. The positions are "position dependent" rather than "person dependent"; i.e., whoever holds the title of each position will automatically serve as member of the Certification Board. Additionally, members of The Election Center's Board of Directors may serve as *ex officio* members.

The chairman and vice chairman of the Certification Board will be elected from the membership of the Certification Board and will serve as chair or vice chair for one year; they may be elected to serve no more than two consecutive terms as officers although there is no limit on the number of times they may serve in one of these roles. The chair may appoint, with the consent of The Center's Board of Directors, various advisory committees as are deemed necessary by the Certification Board. Advisory

committees may be chaired by a member of the Certification Board, and actions taken by advisory committees will be as recommendations to the Certification Board.

Membership on Standing Committees shall be appointed by The Election Center's Executive Director (on behalf of the Board of Directors). The Executive Director shall be an *ex officio* and voting member of each Standing Committee. Standing committees, which may be reorganized from time to time by a majority vote of the Certification Board, with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors of The Election Center:

Standards and Ethics --

- for maintaining and potential revision to the ethical conduct code for elections/registration officials, adopted as the Principles of Elections/Registration Officials, and, the Standards of Elections/Registration Officials;
- the maintenance of those Standards by officials designated as Certified Elections/Registration Administrator (CERA);
- Standards and Ethics shall have the authority, for cause, to recommend redress action, censure or expulsion of those holding CERA/CERV status;
- Standards and Ethics will develop procedures for "due process" hearings and actions for each level of severity in maintaining the Standards of Conduct;
- Standards and Ethics will also recommend exemplary CERA/CERV work for recognition.
- Decisions of Standards and Ethics are subject to review by the Certification Board which may confirm, modify or deny actions taken by Standards and Ethics;
- Final appeal may be to The Election Center's Board of Directors, although the Board of Directors may decline to hear appeals. If declined, the actions of the Certification Board will be binding.

Professional and Educational Requirements -- to determine program content for future professional educational programs and to develop criteria for:

- those who desire a professional recognition level (such as Certified Elections/Registration Administrator) but are unable to commit to the CERA requirements and
- a continuing education program that does not culminate in a certified or registered program but does provide extensive hands-on or practice preparation;
- an advanced level of CERA for those who desire to achieve professional excellence at a level clearly beyond the accepted level for certification;
- the development of a testing program for achieving the CERA designation.

Professional Practices -- to promote development of papers which will share the professional practices of one office with members of other jurisdictions and to provide a method for recognition for outstanding practices.

In the future and whenever possible, new board members will be appointed who are CERA program graduates.

# ***7 FORMS***



Application for Admission - CERA/CERV Program

Procedure

1. Complete the application below and sign.
2. Include a check or noncancellable purchase order for \$50 (vouchers and/or billings not allowed), payable to: The Election Center Professional Education Program.
3. Mail Application for Admission and \$50 to: The Election Center, Westella Professional Building, Suite 100, 12543 Westella, Houston, TX 77077-3929.
4. If you have questions, contact Doug Lewis at The Election Center. Phone (281) 293-0101; Fax (281) 293-0453; e-mail: [cera@electioncenter.org](mailto:cera@electioncenter.org)

Application for Admission - CERA/CERV Program

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

BUSINESS ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(City, State, Zip)

BUSINESS PHONE: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(City, State, Zip)

HOME PHONE: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
(In case of emergency)

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
(Required by Auburn University to track courses)

CURRENT POSITION:

\_\_\_\_ ELECTION/REGISTRATION ADMINISTRATOR

\_\_\_\_ ELECTION/REGISTRATION VENDOR

\_\_\_\_ ELECTION BOARD MEMBER

I WILL ACCESS THE PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM MANUAL THROUGH THE WEB.

\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO

*Election Center Use Only*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Application Received*  
\_\_\_\_\_ *Fee Received*  
\_\_\_\_\_ *E-mail or letter sent to applicant*





**RECORD KEEPING**

**CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE**

For your own records, note the dates and locations of conferences, seminars and workshops that you have attended. Remember they must be a minimum of 5 hours instruction/seminar time and must be specific to voter registration or elections administration. They cannot be generic seminars on how to handle personnel problems, wellness issues and other such generic topics. You must have at least one Election Center conference or workshop (see page 3-5), in addition to the courses, and may have one from any of the Section II organizations (listed on page 3-6). ***Save receipts and programs.***

<u>Sponsoring Organization</u>	<u>Subject Matter</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>

## Application for CERA/CERV Renewal

**Procedure**

1. Renewal status is required every three years following your graduation date. Renewal fee is \$100.
2. Course Requirement: Complete 1 PEP renewal course during your 3 year renewal period.
3. Conference/Workshop Requirements (2 events): (1) Attend 2 Election Center conferences/workshops, **OR** (2) Attend 1 Election Center conference/workshop **PLUS** 1 event from another association (minimum of 5 hours of election or voter registration subject matter). This must occur between the graduation date and the 3 year renewal deadline.
4. Deadline for submission is December 31 of your renewal year. Mail to The Election Center, 12543 Westella, Suite 100, Houston, TX 77077-3929.

### Application for CERA/CERV Renewal

<b>NAME:</b> _____ 	<b>DATE:</b> _____ -
<b>TITLE:</b> _____ <b>BUSINESS ADDRESS:</b> _____ _____ _____ (City, State, Zip) <b>PHONE:</b> (____) _____ <b>FAX:</b> (____) _____ <b>E-MAIL:</b> _____	<b>HOME ADDRESS:</b> _____ - _____ - _____ - _____ (City, State, Zip) <b>PHONE:</b> (____) _____
<b>ENCLOSED ARE:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Check for \$100 <input type="checkbox"/> Application for Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> Course Credit information <input type="checkbox"/> Conference/Workshop Credit information <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation <input type="checkbox"/> Miscellaneous: _____
<b>I AM REQUESTING APPROVAL FOR RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATION STATUS AS:</b> _____ CERA (OR) _____ CERV _____ DATE OF CERA/CERV GRADUATION _____ DATE CURRENT CERA/CERV EXPIRED (from Certificate) <b>SIGNATURE:</b> _____ <b>DATE:</b> _____	
<hr/> <hr/>	
<b>Election Center Use Only</b>	
_____ Application Received (Date) _____ Fee Included _____ Renewal Issued (Date) _____ Membership Number (Election Center Member #)	

APPLICANT'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

### Course Credit for Renewal

**Procedure**

- 1. Course Requirement: Complete 1 PEP renewal course during your 3 year renewal period. Documentation not required.
- 2. In highly unusual situations and only when arrangements have been made several months in advance of the renewal deadline, The Election Center may assign an independent study project in lieu of attendance of a PEP course. If this is applicable, please describe the project, include name of individual who made the assignment, assignment date and completion and submission date.

### Course Credit for Renewal

PEP COURSE # (One renewal course required)	TITLE	LOCATION	DATE
---	-------	----------	------

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

(OR)

**IN LIEU OF PEP COURSE(S), I MADE PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE ELECTION CENTER TO COMPLETE AN INDEPENDENT STUDY PROJECT.**  
Description of project:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Project assigned by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date assigned: \_\_\_\_\_  
Completed project submitted to: \_\_\_\_\_ Date submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

*PEP Certification Board use only:*  
*Study project evaluated and \_\_\_\_\_ meets OR \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the criteria for course credit.*  
*Comments:*  
  
*Signature of Board Member:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

APPLICANT'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

### Conference/Workshop Credit for Renewal

**Procedure**

1. Conference/Workshop Requirements (2 events):

(1) Attend 2 Election Center conferences or workshops, **OR**

(2) Attend 1 Election Center conference or workshop **PLUS** attend 1 event from another association (minimum of 5 hours of election or voter registration subject matter). This must occur between the graduation date and the 3 year renewal deadline.

*a. In highly unusual situations and only when arrangements have been made several months in advance of the renewal deadline, The Election Center may assign an independent study project in lieu of conference/workshop attendance. If this is applicable, please describe the project, include name of individual who made the assignment, assignment date, completion and submission date.*

### Conference/Workshop Credit for Renewal

Organization	Title of Event	Location	Date	Documentation
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No documentation required for Election Center events</li><li>• Other events - document required: program or written description <b>PLUS</b> receipt or cancelled check</li></ul>

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**(OR)**

**IN LIEU OF CONFERENCE/WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE, I MADE PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE ELECTION CENTER TO COMPLETE AN INDEPENDENT STUDY PROJECT.**

Description of project:

\_\_\_\_\_

Project assigned by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date assigned: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed project submitted to: \_\_\_\_\_ Date submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PEP Certification Board use only:**

Study project evaluated and \_\_\_\_\_ meets **OR** \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the criteria for course credit.

Comments:

Signature of Board Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



State Certification Class Substitution Form - CERA/CERV Program

Procedure

5. After graduating from a State Certification Program, complete the form below and sign.
6. Mail form to: The Election Center, Westella Professional Building, Suite 100, 12543 Westella, Houston, TX 77077-3929.
7. Additional information of State Certification PEP Course Credit can be found in the PEP manual on page 3-5.
8. If you have questions, contact The Election Center. Phone (281) 293-0101; Fax (281) 293-0453; e-mail: [cera@electioncenter.org](mailto:cera@electioncenter.org)

NAME: _____	DATE: _____
TITLE: _____	
PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT: _____ _____	
BUSINESS ADDRESS: _____ _____ <div style="text-align: center;">(City, State, Zip)</div>	
BUSINESS PHONE: (____) _____	FAX: (____) _____
E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____	
HOME ADDRESS: _____ _____ <div style="text-align: center;">(City, State, Zip)</div>	

**IN LIEU OF A PEP COURSE, I HAVE ATTENDED A STATE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM SPNSORED BY THE ELECTION CENTER AND WOULD LIKE TO SUBSTITUTE THE PEP COURSE SPECIFIED BELOW.**

State Certification Program Information:

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates of Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Substituted PEP Course: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_



## *8 Membership in the Election Center*

The elections and voter registration community has struggled for years in attempting to professionalize the work and tasks of voting administration. While there are groups that include elections and registration administration officials, the only organization offering full-time, year-round professional staff to serve the registration and elections community is The Election Center. Membership in The Election Center not only sustains our staff operation, it also entitles members to certain benefits and services. Those services and each level of membership are described below:

### **ALL MEMBERS**

All members of the **Blue, Silver, State, Corporate, Gold, and Platinum** levels receive discounts on all fees for special workshops and conferences and substantial discounts on tuition for the Professional Education Program classes. The savings of joining as a member will more than pay the cost of membership: the savings of one special workshop, one conference and four Professional Education Program courses per year, will potentially save a member more than \$500 per year and, depending on level of membership, could save \$1,000 or more. Membership is for one year beginning with the date of your first payment; renewals date from your original anniversary date, not from the date of any subsequent payments.

Each level of membership is entitled to name associate members; associates are entitled to member discounts on all Election Center program offerings including the Professional Education Program, special workshop and conferences. See description of individual membership levels to determine number of free associates (if any). Additional associate members can be obtained at \$50 each. Associate Members *must be* tied to a principal member.

**Professional Education Program** The most extensive, comprehensive, and finest continuing education program available for elections and voter registration officials. The program offers continuing education credits from Auburn University. Additionally, the program can lead to certification as a **Certified Elections/Registration Administrator (CERA)** upon the successful completion of the program requirements. Reduced tuition to the Professional Education Program is available to all members.

**FaxCast™** is The Election Center's specialized information service which alerts members to pending legislation in Congress and then tracks the progress of that legislation; proposed regulations from departments or agencies; important news affecting elections and voter registration officials, and Action Items requiring immediate attention, or nationwide surveys of administrative or legal practices on specific issues. This service is automatically part of Silver, Gold and Platinum levels and limited service is provided at the Blue level.

**JobBank™** is a new service offering both individual members and government offices the opportunity to list jobs and file individual resumes with The Election Center. Individuals will be able to have a central location for making their services and skills available to a much larger audience. Government offices will have a resource center available to request copies of resumes of available people to fill their specific voter registration or elections openings. Nonmembers can list their resumes for \$50 and members for free. In the initial phase, member government offices and vendors can list all openings free of charge.

**EC Surveys™** has been expanded to offer additional survey opportunities. Election Center Surveys have long been a great source of information and answers to problems encountered by voter registration and elections officials. The Election Center surveys all states or a selected distribution of other local elections officials to determine what other officials are doing about various issues, laws or regulations related to registration and elections. These surveys are free to State, Silver, Gold and Platinum Members; and available at a flat rate for each survey for Blue members and Corporate members. These services are no longer available to nonmembers. An additional EC Survey™ service now available is a salary survey. Due to the time consuming nature of such surveys and the specialized nature of selection of recipients, these surveys are free only to Gold and Platinum members. Other members may engage The Election Center for salary surveys at a negotiated fee.

**DataSearch™** is The Election Center's research services available only to members. We research specific questions from our members and provide timely answers to your questions. In more than 12 years of service to elections and voter registration officials, this service alone has been worth the price of membership. No other single location in America has the ability to find the answers to your elections related topics than The Election Center. Sometimes we refer you to the particular source, but more often than not, we provide the answer or material you need.

**EC Consultants** is the newest, and potentially one of the most valuable, services ever offered to members. We offer members the opportunity to have an internal review of their operations by a consulting unit from The Election Center. The consultant(s) can be arranged to provide a total review of all office operations; a review of a specific area of operations; a technology team to study ways to update technology usage; or a peer review program to study the personal management style of operations and make recommendations. This service is a fee based service for members only and not available to nonmembers. While it is not free to any level of membership, the costs of such consulting will be from one-half to one-tenth the cost of other outside consultants. A single practitioner from another area of the country, a member of our staff, a mixture of vendors and practitioners, or a team approach can be offered depending on the level of consulting desired. Call The Center for details.

**PLATINUM MEMBER: \$1,200 PER YEAR (THREE YEAR PLAN - \$3,000, SAVE \$600)**

A Platinum Member can attend all Election Center workshops and conferences free of charge. This is restricted to the primary Platinum Member. Additionally, the Platinum Member is eligible for member discounts on tuition in the Professional Education Program. Members at this level can name up to 10 associate members at no additional charge, *with the only stipulation that they work directly for, and are employed by, the principal member.* Other services as described in the ALL MEMBERS section.

**GOLD MEMBER: \$750 PER YEAR (THREE YEAR PLAN - \$2,000, SAVE \$250)**

Members at this level are entitled to two complimentary associate members. The Gold Member can attend one conference or workshop free of charge each year. Full FaxCast™ service is provided. Discounts are offered for the Professional Education Program and all other Election Center services. Other services as described in ALL MEMBERS section.

**CORPORATE MEMBER: (MATERIALS FOR BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP CAN BE FOUND ON THE ELECTION CENTER WEBSITE AT [WWW.ELECTIONCENTER.ORG](http://WWW.ELECTIONCENTER.ORG) OR BY CALLING HOUSTON HEADQUARTERS.)**

**SILVER MEMBER: \$350 PER YEAR (THREE YEAR PLAN - \$950, SAVE \$100)**

One complimentary associate member plus FaxCast™ , EC Surveys™ plus discounts on all conferences, workshops, and tuition for the Professional Education Program. Other services as described in ALL MEMBERS section.

**BLUE MEMBER: \$150 PER YEAR**

This level not available to state governments, state departments or state agencies (See State Members.) Limited FaxCast™, plus availability of EC Surveys™ plus discounts on all conferences, workshops and the tuition for the Professional Education Program. Associate membership available at \$50 each. Availability of other services as described in ALL MEMBERS section.

**ASSOCIATE MEMBER: \$50 PER YEAR**

There is no single \$50 membership level. Associate membership can *only* be obtained by being tied to a principal member. Discounts provided to Associate Members as explained in the ALL MEMBERS section.

**STATE MEMBER:**

State governments receive extensive support from Election Center staff and make extensive use of Election Center Surveys. The cost of providing services to state offices is considerably higher than the introductory level membership available to Local Members. The entry level for any single member from state government is \$350. The Election Center has instances where one or more of the following are members

from a single state: the chief election official of the state; chief counsel for the state elections office; the staff director (or research director) of the state legislative body; the staff director of the state court; the attorney general; the director of campaign finance or state ethics commission, and the state election director. For each person to receive direct services or direct surveys or to receive the faxes, then each separate entity must join separately.

States receive many survey requests from other states through The Election Center. The Center coordinates the responses, assembles the replies and sends them on to the requesting state. Over the years, the states have indicated this is one of the most valuable services they receive from any organization. The Election Center has the ability to give survey results quickly, which has aided many state offices in their ability to revise their own laws or to provide research necessary for responding to a legal challenge. The ability to have each state's method of handling certain issues of interest in elections or voter registration laws, procedures or regulations is invaluable to members.

Surveys are limited to elections and voter registration issues. A state office that is responsible for both elections/registration issues and campaign finance issues would need separate memberships to cover the two different areas. The Election Center is building a separate list of state officials to handle campaign finance related subjects so that elections/registration personnel are not asked to reply for information handled by other personnel. By doing these as separate areas, response is higher for each area of subject matter.

For description of services available to State Members, see Membership in The Election Center (page 8-1) for the All Members section and the sections on Silver, Gold and Platinum. **Blue level membership IS NOT AVAILABLE to states because it costs more to serve states than the Blue level provides.**

State government members also benefit from analysis of current or proposed federal legislation and/or federal regulations. They also are made aware of court decisions, which affect their responsibilities. These services are not generally available to other levels of membership.

See State Membership Enrollment Form (next page) for levels available.

### **Corporate Member: \$800 per year**

Businesses and corporations are offered this level for membership. Corporate members receive all rights and privileges of membership. Corporate members are given one free Associate Member and additional memberships can be provided at \$80 each. Corporate members also receive a \$500 discount when displaying as exhibitors at the National Conference.

# MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT FORM

Please complete a separate form for each member

Membership is person specific, i.e., a specific name must be assigned a membership, not the office. We track services, attendance, tuition payments, certification requirements and deliver faxes to individuals. Each level above Blue membership has one or more associate members as free. Additional associates can be added. Faxes, surveys, and communications are directed only to the primary member. Membership is for one year beginning with the date of receipt of your original check. Renewals will be based on the original anniversary date, not on date of subsequent payment; therefore, you are not penalized for paying early (because you still get a 12 month membership from your anniversary date) nor do you gain an advantage by holding payment to a later date. Associate Membership is available only to those who have a principal member in one of the approved membership categories; it *cannot* be obtained separately.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>PLATINUM MEMBER : \$1200</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>STATE PLATINUM MEMBER: \$1200</u>                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>GOLD MEMBER: \$750</u>       | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>STATE GOLD MEMBER: \$750</u>                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>SILVER MEMBER: \$ 350</u>    | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>STATE SILVER MEMBER-ELECTIONS: \$350</u>         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>BLUE MEMBER: \$150</u>       | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>STATE SILVER MEMBER-CAMPAIGN FINANCE : \$350</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <u>ASSOCIATE MEMBER: \$50</u>   | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>CORPORATE MEMBER: \$800</u>                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CHECK ENCLOSED \$ _____         | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>CORPORATE ASSOCIATE MEMBER: \$80</u>             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SEND INVOICE                    |  |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone:( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: The Election Center 12543 Westella, Suite 100 Houston, TX 77077 Phone: 281-293-0101

Fax: 281-293-0453 E-Mail: [services@electioncenter.org](mailto:services@electioncenter.org) Note to accounting offices: The Election Center Federal Tax ID # is 54-1578880, a nonprofit (exempt) 501 (c) (3) corporation. This form serves in lieu of IRS form W-9 or any form requesting taxpayer id. Please help us to cut down on wasted manpower, time and paper; mark your records that Taxpayer ID has been provided.



## *9 Why be an Election Center Member?*

The Election Center is the voter registration and elections community's only full-time professionally staffed organization in existence. The Center serves members and nonmembers in inquiries about elections and voter registration laws at national and state levels. Additionally, The Election Center tracks Congressional changes and relays that information immediately to those in elections and voter registration administration. It is a nonprofit, IRS 501 (c) (3) organization dedicated to education and service for the elections and voter registration profession.

The Center keeps track of proposed rules and regulations and how they affect our jobs and our profession. In recent years, The Election Center was responsible for:

- getting the Immigration and Naturalization Service to change its regulations affecting the forms required of elections people in poll workers (our jurisdictions are now exempt from the INS forms);
- the U S Postal Service changing its rules and regulations to allow elections officials to be able to mail a voting stylus through the mail with the absentee ballots;
- the U S Postal Service to develop a national elections mailing program designed specifically for voter registrars and elections administrators for lowest cost mailings;
- alerting us when the U S Congress is ready to hold hearings on issues affecting the way we do our jobs, such as Alternative Voting Issues on Mail Balloting, Early Voting, Telephone Voting, Fax Balloting; keeping us informed on Social Security legislation and which eventually resulted in Congress approving a \$1000 exemption from Social Security taxes on our elections/registration workers;
- letting us know through its FAXCAST system of legislation which affects our ability to do our jobs; and to stay on top of the legislation as it proceeds through the system so that we can have our say when it is appropriate;
- of being the catalyst to bring together all elections related organizations in the Election Officials Coordinating Council for consideration of potential legislation, court cases or regulations of interest to all in this profession.

There are many services offered by The Election Center that have served the elections community well over a number of years. Many new services are being implemented by the new staff at The Center, which will be presented later. The real reason that you should join, however, is that, if people like you, who are making their profession in voter registration and elections work, do not support The Election Center, how will it or any organization like it, survive?

Services, while needed and worthwhile, are secondary to the importance of having a dedicated, full-time staff operation that looks out for our best interests. Due to the concentrated effort of The Center, we now have a full-fledged continuing education program for voter registration and elections officials. The Professional Education Program is affiliated with Auburn University, one of the nation's outstanding academic institutions.

Due to staff effort, we know almost immediately whenever there is a bill that will affect our profession or our daily responsibilities. Due to staff effort, attention is called to proposed regulations *before* they become final—giving us the chance to respond, to influence and to modify the process before final regulations.

Thanks to the The Election Center staff, we know the correct people to contact or work with in Congress whenever there is an issue that affects us. Thanks to the staff, we know whom to contact in various departments or agencies and how better to achieve a resolution to our problems. Thanks to the staff, we know whom to talk to across the country facing problems similar to ours.

All of these services are not possible without a full-time staff operation to serve our needs and that's why we need to support The Election Center. It should be automatic that we send \$350 a year....or more....to The Center, just as a sustaining effort. All of us have been through budget crunches, but this is one area where we *cannot* cut; the value to our profession is just too great.

Obviously, we believe that The Center is worthwhile and delivers the most valuable training programs, seminars, workshops and conferences available to our profession. The FaxCasting System that is available to members, who join at \$350 or more, is the single most beneficial resource that we receive from *any* outside source. Through the FAXCAST, we are alerted immediately to action items and needed information.

Even if you decided that none of the services are of any value to you (which would be highly unusual), the natural result of the efforts of The Election Center to gain professionalism for our field, to *certify* us as distinguished, thoroughly prepared, professional practitioners and to have us achieve the status of Certified Elections/Registration Administrator (CERA), means that it will eventually add money to our salaries, decrease the turnover in our positions, and increase the background and qualifications necessary to administer our field. If there were no other reason than economic self-interest, then we should support The Election Center. One of the most valuable rewards of membership is the ability to be part of a network of elections and voter registration officials. Having the ability to call on others in your profession, from all parts of the U.S., to exchange ideas, to find out how they handle the same problems, is of great value to most of us. Add to it the ability to get an almost instantaneous response from Center staff when a particular research item is needed, or the quick answer needed immediately to solve a problem or answer a question, can only come from having an office staffed with professional employees.

Most officials don't realize how good we've had it. Let us share with you: The Election Center has not raised its membership fees in its existence. Yet the cost of everything has gone up in the last 13 years. Your contribution to The Election Center, at whatever level you are sending, *buys less than half* of what it did ten years ago. The Election Center has operated on an annual budget—as a **National nonprofit** organization—of less than the three *smallest* churches in most communities.

During that time, The Center has offered us the most thorough, complete, and detailed conferences and workshops in existence for elections and voter registration officials. They have kept their promise to us of offering the most substantive programs available anywhere for those in our profession.

They have been in the forefront of working on issues that are of interest to us and then bringing in experts and officials to bring us up to date. That's why we owe it to them to be supportive year after year after year. Additionally, we need to tell others about The Center and its value to our profession.

**I**t's also why you ought to join The Election Center this year at whatever level you feel you can. See the enrollment form for the levels of membership and the kinds of services received by each level. Regardless of your choice of membership, you can't go wrong if you support the only nonprofit organization serving our profession. The Center deserves our support and we hope you will take immediate action to send in your membership now. Please review and sign the enrollment form today and send it along with your check. We each need to ask our neighboring officials to join and help support our organization.

Once you have determined the level of support you can offer, make it automatic that ***this one expense stays in your budget no matter what***. You will be glad you did. Our profession will be glad you did. With your support, The Election Center will be around for another 10 years to lead us to the next level of commitment to our communities, to our nation, and to the support of democracy. Can there be any more noble cause?

See the membership brochure about the new programs and continuing programs being currently offered by The Election Center. You will see the nature of service that is being planned for the next few years. Service costs money, and in order to improve the services we ***need*** your membership. Send your check now while your focus is on this matter.

Ernest Hawkins  
Voter Registrar  
Sacramento County, CA  
Emeritus

R. Doug Lewis  
Executive Director  
Election Center  
Houston, TX

Alice Miller  
Executive Director  
State Board of Elections  
Washington, D.C.

Robert Monjoy  
University of New Orleans  
Urban & Public Affairs  
New Orleans, LA

Julie Pearson  
Auditor  
Pennington Co  
Rapid City, SD

Brook Thompson  
Director of Elections  
State of Tennessee  
Nashville, TN



## ***10 To Join The Election Center:***

Complete the enrollment form and return it to:

- The Election Center, 12543 Westella, Suite 100, Houston, TX 77077-3929 or FAX it to 281-293-0453. Should you have questions or need further information, call the National Office at 281-293-0101. E-Mail: [services@electioncenter.org](mailto:services@electioncenter.org)
- If you have questions about scheduled conferences or workshops, please call or write the Conference Office at 916-361-6181, PO Box 278475, Sacramento, CA 95827.



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