



Professional Education Manual



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History

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS AND VOTER REGISTRATION WAS A STRAIGHT FORWARD, 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 that 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 profession certification program for election and voter registration professionals. The program began with four courses being offered at the Election Center's 1992 Annual National Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. Since 1994, the Election Center has offered professional certification as Certified Elections/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 could 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.

In 1992, 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 and the faculty of Auburn's Master of Public Administration (MPA)



Program. The election community's gratitude to the founders of this program and to the faculty of the MPA Program at Auburn University is overwhelming. Ernie Hawkins, Carol Garner, and Tom Wilkey accepted the challenge of

developing courses specific to the voter registration and election administration profession.

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.

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 of credibility 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 that makes the program the most significant of its kind. Auburn University is the only university in the country that offers a Graduate Certificate in Election Administration as a concentration in the Masters of Public Administration Program.

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 as that for the CERA program with the intent being to prepare elections and registration vendors with the kinds of issues, decisions, and processes that are faced by today's elections professionals. The CERV program is also aimed at developing better-prepared suppliers who subscribe to the same principles and standards shared with elections professionals. CERA status is reserved for those who are government employees serving in the profession, the CERV program is for employees of election and registration suppliers.

Beginning in 2007, the Election Center included a training and certification program for individuals that observe elections internationally. The new certification designation was

named Certified Elections Monitor (CEM). Our first international student, from India, graduated as the first CEM in 2008.

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: 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 members 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/CEM 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/CEM 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.

The Election Center's Professional Certification Board was created by Doug Lewis, the newly appointed Executive Director, in 1995. It, 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. In 1995, the program received the Outstanding Noncredit Certificate Award from the National University Continuing Education Association.

The course curriculum has been carefully designed to emphasize the skills and abilities, which are necessary to function effectively as a professional, certified elections/registration administrator.

Presentation of the core curriculum occurs in different venues. Each year the Election Center conducts workshops 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 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. Periodically in March and/or June, special regional core courses may be offered in venues at different locations around the country for those jurisdictions that have restrictions on travel out of state. During a three-year period, all twelve core courses are offered (four courses per year) so at the end of the three-year period core course requirements towards CERA/CERV graduation can be accomplished. These regional offerings are only available to the host and contiguous states.

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

Already, several states are participating in the Election Center's State Registered Election Official (REO) certification programs. The REO Program provides a complimentary approach to certification including state specific programs for knowledge of state laws, procedures, and court decisions. Successful completion of the State REO program can be used as credit towards one of the National CERA certification course offerings. 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 (CERA), you will be committing yourself to a career long process of professional education. You will work hard to earn and maintain your CERA/CERV/CEM status. You will be recognized for your dedication and commitment to excellence in your profession.

Moreover, you will have the pride that comes with accomplishment beyond what others are able to achieve. Welcome, then, to what is sure to be an incredible journey in the pursuit of professional excellence.

Introduction

To understand the scope of our Professional Education Program (PEP), we encourage you to read the **HISTORY OF THE PROGRAM** as it will give you the basis for many of our decisions and an indication of the collective and individual efforts that brought about this outstanding program. Additionally, the Certified Elections/Registration Vendor (CERV) and Certified Elections Monitor (CEM) designations meet the identical course content in the Core Courses.

Defining our use of the terms **Professional Education Program** and the **Certified Elections/Registration Administrator (CERA)**:

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. It is envisioned that there may be more levels of the Professional Education Program than exist currently. Some of those levels will advance beyond the current program, and some may be developed for employees who are not able to pursue the full CERA program. One example 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) **Registration Election Official (REO)**.

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

ABOUT THE PROGRAM gives general information.

REQUIREMENTS We call particular attention to the section, which spells out the specifics for obtaining CERA, CERV, or CEM status and how to maintain your status after achieving it. If there is anything that is unclear about the program after reading this, please contact us and we will answer your questions.

CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS is self-explanatory.

CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS and **EXPERIENCE** subsections specify additional requirements for certification.

GRADUATION gives all details concerning the graduation procedure.

RENEWING AND MAINTAINING CERTIFICATION discusses additional requirements each successive year to keep your certification up to date.

CORE COURSES section covers the academic part of our certification program and gives a synopsis of each of the topics to be covered.

If you started in this 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.

About The Program



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 committed to 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), a Certified Elections/Registration Vendor (CERV), or a Certified Elections Monitor (CEM). To maintain this status, you must comply with additional requirements found in the subsection on RENEWING AND MAINTAINING CERTIFICATION.

The CERA, CERV, or CEM designation is to be honored. To obtain the designation and/or to maintain CERA, CERV, or CEM status will require a commitment and dedication to the highest professional standards and a commitment to continuing education. You will be challenged, and you will gain from the experience.

Once you have completed one course, the requirements for certification are set until you either obtain CERA, CERV, or CEM status or the twelve0year limitation 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/CEM Program differs substantially from other certification efforts that you may have encountered through other programs. Those

certified through the CERA/CERV/CEM 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 education experience available.

The cost factors of the CERA/CERV/CEM 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, phone calls, and staff time to coordinate all of the above is significant.

The fact remains that professional certification, done correctly, is not inexpensive. Thus, we sponsor the Auburn sessions, summer sessions, and any regional sessions at a significant discount with economy accommodations in mind.

Take pride in your enrollment in the CERA/CERV/CEM 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, Certified Elections/Registration Vendor, or Certified Elections Monitor.

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.

REQUIREMENTS

CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

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

1. To register for a CERA/CERV/CEM core course or renewal course in the Election Center Professional Education Program, you must be an active member of the Election Center with the exception of the Bronze Level of membership which stipulates that this membership excludes participation in the CERA or CERV Professional Education Program. (Bronze Individual Members who are already CERA/CERV graduates or have taken at least one CERA/ CERV class are “grandfathered” and may continue to take CERA/CERV classes at the discounted membership rate.)
2. Each student has up to a maximum of twelve years to complete the program from the date of your first class (most individuals complete the program in 2-3 years). The Election Center’s records will be the sole determinant of the date you began the program.
3. **Students in the courses must attend the full class and its total time;** 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/CEM 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.

NOTE: Attendance at the required events in the preceding paragraph must occur during the period between the calendar year of your first class and July 31 in the year of your graduation. Conference credit, for any single Election Center conference, may be used to complete graduation requirements.

4. CERA/CERV/CEM applicants must attend professional conferences and workshops that are elections/registration oriented. Although the majority of study for the CERA/CERV/CEM 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 conference for CERA/CERV/CEM 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 PEP Manual.

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. The annual deadline to submit an Application for Graduation is June 1. CERA/CERV/CEM applicants must complete and return their Application for Graduation along with a credit card payment, check, or non-cancelable purchase order for \$175.00 to cover the certification fee. (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).
 - i. If a graduate is unable to attend the conference and graduation ceremony, the fee is \$275.00. (The additional amount is to defray costs of the graduation ceremony plus staff time and expense to ship graduation awards). The credit card payment link is provided on the Application for Graduation. Checks or non-cancelable purchase orders are made payable to Election Center – Graduation Fee.
 - ii. No billings and/or vouchers accepted for the same reasons as before. **You must meet the June 1 deadline or graduation will be delayed for another year. Final CERA/CERV/CEM certification will be issued only upon completion of all course, conference, and financial requirements.**
 - iii. 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 University for a nominal fee at this web address: <http://www.auburn.edu/ceutranscript>.
7. CERA/CERV/CEM graduates must agree to adopt and adhere to the Principles and Standards of Conduct of Elections/Registration Officials. (See end of 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.
8. **State Certification Credit:** A graduate of the Registered Election Official (REO) Program for state certification conducted by the Election Center is entitled to choose credit for one of the Core Courses in the Professional Election Program. The student may choose any one of the 12 courses (but only one) and must complete a form (found on the Election Center website) which tells the Election Center which course you are claiming as credit. The form must be completed and submitted with your Graduation Application. Substitution of a core course by virtue of your **REO Certification must occur within 5 years after obtaining your REO Certification.**

CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance at state and national election conferences/workshops is a requirement for the CERA/CERV/CEM designation. A minimum of two must be attended: two from Section One or one from Section one plus one from Section Two (see below). Verifiable attendance records must be submitted with your CERA/CERV/CEM Graduation Application, showing date of conference/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. The following are acceptable:

1. A receipt for payment of registration fee and a copy of the program
2. Any other evidence of attendance

NOTE: Except in case of dispute, it is not necessary to provide documentation for Election Center events. If you can verify the date and location, the Election Center will verify the attendance. Receipts from all other non-Election Center conferences will be required.

SECTION ONE:

Election Center

- JEOLC held every January
- National Conference (**You cannot use the conference when you graduate as one of the required conferences**)
- Special Workshops held every February and April
- National Conference (**You cannot use the conference when you graduate as one of the required conferences**)

SECTION TWO (all must have a minimum of five hours actual instruction time):

U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC)

- Advisory Board meetings OR
- Standards Board meetings OR
- Informational conferences and workshops

International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC)

- Annual meetings

International Association of Government Officials (IGO) formally (IACEROT)

- Annual meetings OR
- Regional meetings
(if five hours instruction and specific to elections and voter registration)

National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS)

- Semi-annual conference

National Association of State Election Directors (NASED)

- Semi-annual meetings OR
- Regional meetings
(if five hours of instruction and specific to elections and voter registration)

State workshops/conferences for elections/registration officials held in your state
(official state election conferences of either the Chief Election Official or the state election association)

State Certification Programs

(Content must be reviewed and approved by the Election Center)

NOTE: Conference attendance limited to these organizations ONLY. 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, or training, etc., which are not specifically oriented to elections/registration issues, will not be allowed by the Certification Board.

EXPERIENCE

Prospective CERA/CERV/CEM Graduates need to meet the following conditions:

CONDITION 1:

- Must be a full-time election or registration official OR
- Must have a full-time job where election administration or registration of voters is a portion of their full-time job

CONDITION 2:

- Must have administered (or assisted in the conduct of) one jurisdiction wide election or voter registration program in preparation for such an election AND
- Must have two years elections or voter registration experience by the time of CERA/CERV/CEM graduation

There will be atypical applicants for graduation, however, such as part-time commissioners, applicants from states, which employ elections/registration officials only part-time, international election monitors, and others. Since it is impossible to anticipate all atypical categories, the Certification Board requires applicants for graduation 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. In this case, the applicant should file a written experience exception document, giving 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). This document should be submitted to the Election Center National Office in care of:

Karla Hooter

Election Center

21946 Royal Montreal Drive, Suite 100

Katy, Texas 77450

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

1. CERA/CERV/CEM students must keep their own records of courses and conference/workshop attendance. You can also access your course attendance records by visiting the MY CERA portion of the Election Center website. The Election Center will also keep records and any conflicts between the two sets of records will be handled by the Election Center National Office. 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/CEM status will be added to the program from time to time. However, it will only effect new applicants. All students will graduate by the program requirements in effect at the time of their first class, unless they choose to accept the conditions of a subsequent program.

GRADUATION

Upon successful completion of all requirements and approval of the Election Center National Office, you will receive the following:

- Recognition at the Election Center's National Conference graduation ceremony in August
- Printed CERA/CERV/CEM Certificate, suitable for framing

- Engraved glass award with your name and graduation year
- Distinctive pin that can be worn only by those achieving CERA/CERV/CEM status
- A mounted certificate plaque
- Congratulatory letter from the Election Center Executive Director with an official media announcement for distribution to your news media announcing your status as a CERA/CERV/CEM graduate along with informational materials describing the depth and level of preparation required to obtain the CERA/CERV/CEM status
- Special recognition at conferences and workshops sponsored by the Election Center. We will especially honor CERA/CERV/CEM members at the Election Center's National Conferences.

The Election Center also maintains a list of active CERA/CERV/CEM status available on its website at www.electioncenter.org.

GRADUATION CONDITIONS:

1. Graduation must occur:
 - Within twelve years allotted from your completion date OR
 - Within two years from the completion of all requirements, 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 in August.
3. Graduates who do not attend the National Conference scheduled for their graduation will be assessed a special handling fee of \$100.00 (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 \$175.00 PLUS the additional \$100.00 handling fee for a total of \$275.00 Because of potential liability, only the graduate will be authorized to pick-up graduation materials.



4. Graduates who choose to attend graduation ceremonies only (and not attend the Election Center's National Conference) will be assessed an additional \$100.00 (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 \$175.00 PLUS the additional \$100.00 fee for a total of \$275.00.

Your achievement of CERA/CERV/CEM 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/CEM status, so take great pride in your accomplishment.

RENEWING AND MAINTAINING CERTIFICATION

NOTE: Graduate (renewal) courses taken prior to graduation ceremony may be audited but cannot be taken for credit. You must pay the course registration fee in order to audit a graduate, or renewal course.

Once you have obtained CERA/CERV/CEM 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/CEM expiration date to complete your application for renewal. Your application must be accompanied by a payment of \$150.00 each renewal period to cover the costs of maintaining accurate records on each CERA/CERV/CEM participant and to partially cover the cost of Election Center communication with CERA/CERV/CEM members each year. It is your responsibility to keep track of your expiration date. Notices sent by the Election Center are a courtesy to you and lack of notification will not be allowed as a basis of appeal.

ELECTIVES

You must complete at least one renewal course AND attend at least two Election Center conference or special workshops within the renewal period, or one Election Center conference and one additional conference as indicated in Section Two beginning on page 15 of this manual (minimum of five hours actual instruction). Renewal courses may be taken more than once for credit.

Conference credit, for any single Election Center conference, may be used to complete graduation requirements OR renewal requirements, but not both. NOTE: though your graduation conference can't be used towards your graduation conference requirements, it can be used towards your CERA/CERV/CEM renewal conference requirements.

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. NOTE: you can't take a course to complete your CERA/CERV/CEM at the graduation conference, however, you can take a renewal class at your graduation conference.

Documents verifying non-Election Center conference/workshop attendance must be submitted just as for graduation. CERA/CERV/CEM graduates should keep records of courses for renewal including the dates and locations of the renewal class. As in original certification, the Election Center's National Office will be the final determinant of whether requirements have been met.

LAPSES IN CERTIFICATION STATUS

If you lapse in maintaining your CERA/CERV/CEM status, you will have to make up renewal courses missed AND attendance at conference/workshop missed in order to be re-certified. Attendance at events may be accomplished by doubling up on Election Center conferences and workshops. No substitution can be made for required courses. It is of no advantage for you to let your certification lapse. Don't get behind – keep your certification current.

Frequently Asked Questions

GRADUATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: The Application for Graduation is due June 1, but I will not meet all requirements until I complete courses taken in July. Can I still graduate in August?

A: Yes – Submit your completed application, with payment, by June 1 noting which courses are required in June or July. Approval for graduation is granted provisionally.

Q: I meet all requirements for graduation except one Election Center conference/workshop. I plan to attend the National Conference at which graduation will take place. Can I use this on my Application for Graduation and still graduate?

A: No – All conference and workshop credit must be anticipated to be completed by July 1 the year you are graduating.

Q: Can I graduate if I am unable to attend the National Conference?

A: Yes – Graduates who attend the graduation ceremony only and not the conference will be assessed an additional \$100.00 to cover pro rata share of the ceremony. Graduates who do not attend the conference or the ceremony will be assessed a shipping & handling fee of \$100.00 to cover shipping costs and pro rata share of the ceremony.

Q: How do I apply for graduation?

A: The graduation application can be found on the Election Center website (www.electioncenter.org) under the TRAINING tab and then INFORMATION & FORMS. The form on the website is FILLABLE so you can complete it and then print it out to mail it, or submit it via email. It must be received by the Election Center by June 1.

Q: Do I need to include a list of the courses I have taken?

A: No – The Election Center has records of all courses that you have completed. Keep copies of your Certificates of Completion for all course work in case any courses come into question.

Q: If I am an elected official, who do I have sign off on my Application for Experience credit? Can I sign it myself?

A: No – You need to obtain a signature from someone within your organization that oversees your position. i.e. County Administrative Officer, State Director of Elections, Secretary of State, etc.

Q: I attended an Election Center conference before taking my first PEP course. Can I use this for credit towards graduation?

A: No – Attending a conference within the calendar year of beginning your courses will be accepted.

Q: I have just returned to the elections profession, can I use my prior election experience on the Application for Graduation under the ‘Experience Credit’ portion of the application?

A: No – You can use your experience beginning immediately prior to beginning courses and must meet the requirement for two years and administered a jurisdiction-wide election.

Q: How do I know when my Application for Graduation has been approved?

A: You will receive written notification from the Election Center National Office in mid to late July in the year you are graduating.

Q: What can I do if my Application for Graduation is not approved and I want to dispute that finding?

A: Contact the Election Center National Office

RENEWAL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How do I renew my CERA/CERV/CEM status?

A: The CERA/CERV/CEM Application for Renewal can be found on the Election Center website (www.electioncenter.org) under the TRAINING tab and then INFORMATION & FORMS. The form on the website is FILLABLE so you can complete it and then print it out to mail or submit it via email. All renewals are due no later than December 31 of the third year following your graduation date or the last renewal date. This date is indicated on your graduation certificate or on your last renewal certificate.

Q: How do I know when my CERA/CERV/CEM will expire?

A: The date is on your CERA/CERV/CEM certificate or is 3 years from your last renewal. You can also find your current expiration date by going to the Election Center website (www.electioncenter.org) under the TRAINING tab, INFORMATION & FORMS, then Our Certified Graduates.

Q: How often do I need to renew my CERA/CERV/CEM and what is the deadline?

A: You must renew every three years. The deadline is December 31 as indicated on your most recent CERA/CERV/CEM certificate.

Q: What happens if I miss the deadline for renewal?

A: You can take a renewal class and meet the conference requirements at your earliest convenience.

Q: What if I am unable to attend a required course during the renewal period?

A: You must complete at least one renewal course every three years. If you fall behind, graduates are encouraged to complete a renewal course as soon as possible in order to keep their CERA/CERV/CEM status in good standing.

Q: What happens when my Application for Renewal is approved?

A: You will receive a letter confirming your renewal status from the Election Center National Office. The annual renewal recognition luncheon occurs every April, at the Election Center's Special Workshop. Renewal certificates and lapel pins are awarded at that time. If you are not able to attend the recognition luncheon, your certificate and lapel pin will be mailed to you immediately after the April workshop.

Core Courses

COURSE I

Introduction to Analysis of Election Systems to Improve Performance

COURSE II

Management & Leadership Concepts in Election & Voter Registration Administration

COURSE III

Planning & Budgeting for Elections & Voter Registration

COURSE IV

Election Information Access & Security

COURSE V

Ethics in Election & Voter Registration Administration

COURSE VI

Communications in Election & Voter Registration Administration

COURSE VII

Facilitating Voter Participation

COURSE VIII

Implementation of New Programs in Voter Registration & Elections Administration

COURSE IX

Enfranchisement, Enhancement, & Enforcement

Modern Federal Election Law & Regulations: 1965 to Present

COURSE X

Constitutions, Courts, and Cases to 1965

(Early America to 1965 with Focus on State and US Constitutions)

COURSE XI

History I – Ancients to 1781

COURSE XII

History II – 1781 to Modern Era

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

COURSE I: INTRODUCTION TO ANALYSIS OF ELECTION SYSTEMS TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

Although United States election and registration laws vary from state to state, all elections in this country require certain basic functions, often involving multiple procedures performed by different agents, such as private vendors or departments of motor vehicles. This course takes a systems approach, breaking the electoral process down into sub-systems and showing how to diagram, analyze, and benchmark them. Studying these functions allows us to improve administrative systems within jurisdictions and to compare procedures across jurisdictions.

COURSE II: MANAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP CONCEPTS IN ELECTION & VOTER REGISTRATION

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

While the United States is becoming increasingly aware of the role that election and voter registration administration plays in a democratic society, there is still a lack of discussion about management and leadership concepts that are specific to the profession. Working to understand and develop these concepts will enable election and voter registration administrators to become more specialized in their field. This course examines the core role and functions of election administration with a focus on how to enhance citizen services, recruit, motivate, and assess office staff and manage office time and resources effectively and efficiently.

COURSE III: PLANNING & BUDGETING FOR ELECTIONS & VOTER REGISTRATION

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

This course covers strategic management and budgeting. The learning objective is to provide participants with the knowledge and skills required for effective strategic planning and the various budgeting techniques seen in practice. This course links the skills and knowledge of effective planning and budgeting techniques to total quality improvement for elections and voter registration.

COURSE IV: Election Information Access & Security

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

Effective use of modern technology has become a vital part of election and voter registration administration. 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. This 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 as well as the internal needs of our employees and other governmental offices. One principle 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.

COURSE V: ETHICS IN ELECTION & VOTER REGISTRATION ADMINISTRATION

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

As with all professionals, election administrators and election officials may not fully understand or appreciate their duties and obligations without also understanding the disciplinary rules and ethical mandates governing their professional activities. Yet professional codes of ethics may have the complexion of arbitrary prescriptions and proscriptions unless those parameters are founded upon well-reasoned and generally accepted ethical precepts. This course will be concerned with identifying and explaining those precepts and with connecting those precepts to the Principles and Standards of Conduct for Elections and Registration Officials.

COURSE VI: COMMUNICATIONS IN ELECTION & VOTER REGISTRATION ADMINISTRATION

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

Effective communication with the media, state legislatures, and local boards and other entities involved with elections and 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 discusses effective communication with the media, state legislatures, local boards, and other entities involved with elections or voter registration which 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.

COURSE VII: FACILITATING VOTER PARTICIPATION

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

In the United States, participation in elections is essential to the proper functioning of the democratic process. This course discusses who votes, who doesn't, and why. It enables officials to measure participation and why it is important to the democratic process. It also gives suggestions on how administrators might motivate citizens in their area to register and vote.

COURSE VIII: IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW PROGRAMS IN VOTER REGISTRATION & ELECTIONS ADMINISTRATION

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

Knowing what needs to be done is only the beginning. Implementation is a system of organizational structures, processes, and routines that put an idea into action. Without implementation, no real change occurs. Unless implementation is successful, the good idea quickly takes a turn for the worse. This course works with actions taken to carry out policies related to election administration and voter registration such as a new one-time project, a new continuous program, or a change to an existing program.

COURSE IX: ENFRANCHISEMENT, ENHANCEMENT, & ENFORCEMENT – MODERN FEDERAL ELECTION LAW & REGULATION: 1965 TO PRESENT

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

Beginning with the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 we will explore modern federal election law including the Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act of 1984 (VAEHA), National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA), Help America Vote Act (HAVA), and the Military and Overseas Voting Empowerment Act (MOVE). This course will focus on how these federal laws impact your election processes and how they affect the voters and their ability to access and participate in the voting process.

COURSE X: CONSTITUTIONS, COURTS, AND CASES TO 1965 – EARLY AMERICA TO 1965 WITH FOCUS ON STATE AND US CONSTITUTIONS

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

Although there are a number of different ways to politically participate, most Americans do so by voting. Questions of voter eligibility and ballot access have thus stirred controversy almost from the earliest days of our republic. Where states endeavored to restrict voting rights, Congress and the Supreme Court have generally attempted to expand the voting privileges. This course focuses on the law that has emerged from both judicial and legislative efforts to expand the voting privilege. It provides the larger legal framework within which election administrators carry out their responsibilities.

COURSE XI: HISTORY I – ANCIENTS TO 1781

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

The best way to understand American democracy is to understand the events that led to its creation. That process begins, in this course, with a survey of the original Greek democracy of 27 centuries ago. Historical evidence from that era and the Roman republic that followed suggests that our democratic ancestors had similar concerns as present-day election administrators about election procedure, voter eligibility, potential fraud, and promulgation of election results. The desire of citizens to participate in the governing processes of their day can be seen in the Scandinavian “ting” before the end of the first millennium, the Italian city-states of the Middle Ages, and the emergence of Parliament in Great Britain and leading up to the ratification of the Articles of Confederation.

COURSE XII: HISTORY II – 1781 TO MODERN ERA

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

This course covers the history of elections and voter registration from the constitution until the Civil Rights era. Understanding 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. 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.

Renewal Courses

COURSE XIII

The Policy Process

COURSE XIV

Crisis Management

COURSE XV

Training in Elections

COURSE XVI

Contracting

COURSE XVII

Comparative Democracy

COURSE XVIII

Conflict Management

COURSE XIX

Developments in State and National Election Law

COURSE XX

Federal Impact on Elections & Voter Registration – 1960's to Present

COURSE XXI

The Integrity of Elections

COURSE XXII

Benchmarking

COURSE XXIII

Researching Election Administration

COURSE XXIV

Expanding the Franchise: Pathways to Participation & Professionalism

COURSE XXV

Defining Democracy: Women's SUFFRAGE

COURSE XXVI

Election Administration Resources Management
Increasing Revenue & Understanding True Costs

COURSE XXVII

Measuring Performance to Tell Your Story
Because If You Don't, Someone Will Tell It for You

COURSE XXVIII

Navigating Successful Change Management in Election Administration

COURSE XXIX

Using Surveys, Focus Groups, & Polling to Collect Information to Help Election Professionals

COURSE XXX

Election Assessment: Tracking Performance across the Election Administration System

COURSE XXXI

Election Storytelling: Effective Use of Information about Operations & Finances

COURSE XXXII

Redistricting/Gerrymandering

COURSE XXXIII

Alternative Election Systems in the U.S.

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

COURSE XIII: THE POLICY PROCESS

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

Today more than ever, election officials at all levels of government are becoming involved in the public policy process as new laws and regulations are proposed across the states and in Washington,

DC. As election and registration officials, public policy affects what you do and how you do it. This course examines the policy process as a system of change within the American political environment that applies to all public policy decisions. The course looks at how you are affected and can affect various stages in the policy process – getting problems on the agenda, helping lay out rational alternatives to problems, impacting policy decisions and influencing policy adoption.

COURSE XIV: CRISIS MANAGEMENT

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

Crises come in many forms: natural disasters, last-minute changes in election law, failure of a key supplier, allegations of error or misconduct accompanied by media attention and political pressure, etc. This course draws upon the broader literature on risk management, disaster management, and crisis management to set up discussions of mitigation strategies for election administration. It examines the elements contributing to a crisis and effective decision-making processes to emerge out of a crisis situation relatively successfully.

COURSE XV: TRAINING IN ELECTIONS

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

Training is critical, not just for poll workers but for everyone in the elections process. This course draws upon recently published material on elections training, best practices, and existing knowledge of adult education to offer principles and examples applicable to election administration. This is a graduate class for the PEP program and participants will be expected to share their own experiences and actively participate in discussions and projects to employ training techniques appropriate for the various training situations in the administration of elections and voter registration.

COURSE XVI: CONTRACTING

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

Election officials acquire many goods and services from private vendors. The largest and most complicated contracts are usually for voting systems equipment and support. Successful procurement is affected by a variety of factors, such as governmental rules, funding decisions, and market conditions. The emphasis in this course is on the role of election officials and the factors that they can control or influence within the overall process.

COURSE XVII: COMPARATIVE DEMOCRACY

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

There are many democracies in the world. Most of them do not hold elections in the same manner as the U.S. While people vote in all of them, the authorities that administer elections and the rules and procedures for calling elections, registering voters, voting, counting, and determining winners vary across nations. Alternatives include national election commissions, state-initiated registration, proportional representation, and the single transferable vote. This course will provide an overview of electoral systems around the world and discuss the implications of different systems for politics and administration where they are used.

COURSE XVIII: CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

The responsibilities of elections and voter registration officials take place in a high stress environment with demands and pressures from voters, candidates, 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 and the staffing problems. Nevertheless, election officials are expected to be efficient, thorough, fair, open, understanding. In a given election cycle, candidates can err, voters can ignore instructions, the media can present inaccurate information, yet all parties expect election and voter registration administrators to perform flawlessly. This course discusses how to operate in such an environment where expectations are so high, buck-passing is rampant, and stress is maximized. It will focus on conflict management and how to take the regular crisis (and the really big one) of work in elections and handle them with professionalism, tact, and wisdom. The course will include a number of exercises to develop skills in active listening, communication, and conflict resolution.

COURSE XIX: Developments in State and National Election Law

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

The right to vote is a fundamental, constitutional guarantee evidencing an inchoate principle of democracy, to wit, an equal opportunity to participate in the making of public law. This course will be concerned with how the laws governing elections further or hinder the attainment of the democratic goal. Special attention will be devoted to the analysis of constitutional requirements and prohibitions applied to federal and state statutes.

COURSE XX: FEDERAL IMPACT ON ELECTIONS & VOTER REGISTRATION – 1960'S TO PRESENT

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

A new wave of federal involvement in elections and voter registration is underway even though elections have historically been administered through local election officials. Behind the scenes, the role of the federal government is shaped by the American system of federalism and particular relationships between the federal government and the states. These relationships organize government in all areas of public policy and will shape the federal role in elections in the future. This course examines the forces that shape federal involvement in election administration and voter registration with a focus on the federal role from the 1960s to the present. Large scale trends suggest new roles and relationships for elections officials.

COURSE XXI: THE INTEGRITY OF ELECTIONS

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

The 2000 presidential elections brought unprecedented public scrutiny to the elections process. Close elections had been contested and recounted before, but none were analyzed by more Americans using more sources for their information. In the aftermath of that election, newspapers, television news programs, and Internet bloggers raised questions about, not only the elections process itself, but also the integrity of those administering the elections. A veritable cottage industry has since emerged which seeks to use film to mold public opinion regarding the fairness of elections and election administrators. Relying upon documentaries, television clips, K-12 educational films, and other sources, participants in the course examine, critique, and learn from the way elections in America are portrayed in film.

COURSE XXII: BENCHMARKING

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

Elections and the administration of elections have garnered increasing attention since 2000. Of particular importance to legislators and the citizenry they represent is administrative accountability. One way to ensure this public accountability, while concomitantly improving organizational efficiency and effectiveness is a process known as “benchmarking.” Hence, this course covers the basics of benchmarking as it relates to elections administration. The course begins with a general overview of the benchmarking process focusing on its general use in the field of public administration. Next, the course covers several appropriate, common benchmarking strategies and methodologies available to election administrators. Finally, the course explores how election administrators can apply the aforementioned types of benchmarking to various election administration issues.

COURSE XXIII: RESEARCHING ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

The election system is receiving greater scrutiny today than ever before. Researchers from a variety of organizations are studying many aspects of election administration, sometimes in isolation from other parts of the system. Their findings, which show up in academic journals, government reports, and popular press, can influence policy makers and public opinion. This course is a summary of methods and findings for election administrators. The goal is to help practitioners discern what is useful critique, what is not, and identify gaps that need to be filled.

COURSE XXIV: EXPANDING THE FRANCHISE – PATHWAYS TO PARTICIPATION & PROFESSIONALISM

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

This course covers the development of contemporary American election administration from the historic moments of the 1960s to the present day. The course begins with the passage of the Civil Rights Act (1964) and Voting Rights Act (1965) and traces key legislation, court decisions, regulatory developments, and political events alongside the launching of new organizations and activities that have shaped the growing professionalism of election administration during this time. This course concludes with a discussion of current key developments in the states that present professional challenges. Professionalism of the field includes the launching of new organizations and activities, such as the Election Administration Reports, the Election Assistance Commission, the Election Center, and others.

COURSE XXV: DEFINING DEMOCRACY – WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

In this course, students will examine women's suffrage in the U. S. and in a comparative perspective. Issues considered will be the place of women's suffrage with respect to other suffrage efforts in the U. S.; the women's suffrage movement and the factors that led to its success; the development of women's suffrage in other countries; and the effects of women's suffrage in the U. S.

COURSE XXVI: ELECTION ADMINISTRATION RESOURCE MANAGEMENT – INCREASING REVENUE & UNDERSTANDING TRUE COSTS

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

This course will explore election administration and voter registration resources for establishing the cost of elections and registration. It will explore tools for budget requests including office operation, capital, and equipment budgets. Is it better to purchase or lease: This course will also cover resources requests from the budget official's perspective: What does it take to make the best case for more funding: What is the appropriate way to charge for elections and election services? Specific topics also include adding contractors vs. more staff and the addition of new technology. Participants are encouraged to bring a copy of their office/election budget for use in discussion and exercises.

COURSE XXVII: MEASURING PERFORMANCE TO TELL YOUR STORY – BECAUSE IF YOU DON'T SOMEONE WILL TELL IT FOR YOU

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

Measuring election performance is quickly becoming an important issue at the top of the national agenda. Policymakers and voters expect a voting experience that is efficient and accurate and yet "one size" voting procedures cannot fit all circumstances given the side variations in systems, laws and practices across states, and local election jurisdictions. At the same time, it is critical that the election administrations be able to measure and analyze their performance and use their findings to demonstrate that elections are working well, to make changes then warranted, and to communicate information about elections to the election community, policy makers, voters, and others. Participants will practice using different performance measurement tools to measure and analyze election office data. Participants will also explore different avenues for communicating results to a variety of stakeholders, including within their offices, to funding authorities, and to external stakeholders including policy makers and the media. Participants are encouraged to bring examples from their own jurisdictions for discussion and analysis.

COURSE XXVIII: NAVIGATING SUCCESSFUL CHANGE MANAGEMENT IN ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

This course presents a structured process for managing successful organizational change in election administration and voter registration offices. As the public sector environment around elections continues to change rapidly, election administrators are faced with increasing demands for accountability and performance. Significant organizational change is both essential and inevitable in all public organizations, yet this sort of change is difficult in election offices because of a complex set of traditional structures, cultures, and routines that can inhibit organizational transformations. Participants will work with actual election administration management changes and design and evaluate change management plans. This approach builds capacity for smooth organizational change and successful implementation to maximize lasting benefits.

COURSE XXIX: USING SURVEYS, FOCUS GROUPS, & POLLING TO COLLECT INFORMATION TO HELP ELECTION PROFESSIONALS

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

How does the public view your office? How do you know? This course teaches participants how to understand several common methods of interpreting election activity. As we would expect, reports for Election 2016 are full of polling data and the opinions of voters and candidates. These reports influence public opinion about election results and about election operations. Election professionals everywhere need to understand the strengths and weaknesses of these methods, especially when they may be asked by the press or county commissioners, for example, to comment on results. This course examines how surveys, focus groups, and polling are conducted. Participants will gain experience in reading questions and interpreting the results and in understanding the benefits and weaknesses of various types of approaches. Participants are encouraged to bring examples from their own jurisdictions for discussion and analysis.

COURSE XXX: ELECTION ASSESSMENT – TRACKING PERFORMANCE ACROSS THE ELECTION ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

All the votes are in and accounted for, and official election results have been released. Even though the election may be “over”, the work of election officials and voter registrars is not! It is essential to conduct analysis of activities across the election system and to establish systematic feedback about successes, challenges, and solutions. In this course, election administrators and voter registrations will practice system wide assessment approach, which includes identifying weaknesses in administrative processes and procedures, evaluating instructions and assessing voter success in casting ballots to reduce voter error, place-based and mail operations, and assessing election day and early voting. Results can be used for continuous performance improvement and to educate different audiences and stakeholders including the general public, funding authorities, policy makers, advocacy groups, and the media.

COURSE XXXI: ELECTION STORYTELLING – EFFECTIVE USE OF INFORMATION ABOUT OPERATIONS AND FINANCES

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

Storytelling is a powerful communication tool, and particularly effective when working to align people or organizations around common goals and missions. Aligning goals and missions is important in the election environment, especially when seeking public funding, writing grants, and working with policy makers. This course uses the storytelling method to develop narratives to influence public funder and grant makers as well as those involved in public policy. Participants will create information displays and presentation outlines using election operations data and financial information to make the cases for funding, purchases, and policy change. All data and materials will be provided in this class.

RENEWAL COURSE XXXII: REDISTRICTING/GERRYMANDERING

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

With the release of the 2020 Census, election jurisdictions all across the country will be affected by changing boundaries as the redistricting process begins again. This course traces the concepts and principles used in redistricting in-general and analyzes how the current gerrymandering landscape has developed. Election officials will learn how these principles affect their work, and ways in which they can contribute to the redistricting process to the benefit of voters and their operations.

COURSE XXXIII: ALTERNATIVE ELECTION SYSTEMS IN THE U.S

1-1/2 days, 10 hours of instruction

Jurisdictions around the United States have adopted alternatives to traditional electoral systems in order to address such issues as racial diversity, partisan gerrymandering, plurality winners, and negative campaigning. Course 33 will describe several systems including cumulative voting, limited voting, top two primaries, and ranked choice voting (RCV). Focusing on RCV, the most widely used of the alternatives, we will examine rationales for adoption, steps for implementation, and experiences of selected cases.

Important Things To Remember

- **The deadline to submit your application to graduate from the CERA/CERV/CEM Program is June 1 every year (must be received by Election Center no later than June 1).** The registration fee to attend the graduation conference in August is separate from the graduation application fee.
- **All conference/workshop event requirements for graduation must be completed within the same calendar year that you complete your first course and prior to July 31 of the year you expect to graduate.** Be sure to keep copies of all receipts for payment and a copy of the conference/workshop program as proof of attendance for non-Election Center conferences. This documentation must be submitted with your Application for Graduation.
- The courses taught at Election Center conferences and workshops run concurrently. Courses taught at Auburn in May, at the summer session, and at any regional offerings run consecutively. Any courses completed during the June/July sessions can be used to qualify for graduation at the August conference. These courses must be noted on the Application for Graduation, which is due by the June 1 deadline.
- **IMPORTANT:** For each class that you complete you will receive a **CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION** approximately 4-6 weeks after the classes end. Please keep these certificates as additional proof of attendance.
- Certification in the Election Center sponsored State Registered Election Official (REO) program can be used to exempt any one of the twelve courses.
- After you have completed all twelve courses, you have up to two years to meet all requirements and submit your Application for Graduation.
- The official CERA/CERV/CEM graduation date is the date of the graduation ceremony held in conjunction with the Election Center's Annual National Conference in August.
- The CERA/CERV/CEM Program requires renewal every three years. Within this three-year period, you must complete one renewal course and attend two Election Center workshop/conference events or one Election Center workshop/conference event plus one from another acceptable sources as defined in this manual under **CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS**.

- CERA/CERV/CEM renewal courses may be taken at your graduation conference prior to official graduation ceremony.

If you have questions about CERA/CERV/CEM graduation and/or renewal, contact Karla Hooter at 281.396.4309 or email at services@electioncenter.org.

Standards of Conduct for Election/Registration Officials

MY PERSONAL PLEDGE TO FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY AND MY PROFESSION:

- I** uphold the Constitution of the United States and the laws, policies, and court decisions of federal, state and local jurisdictions;
- I** commit to excellence and competence by maintaining the highest level of knowledge of expertise in the elections process through continuing education and self-evaluation;
- I** am accountable for maintaining public confidence in honest and impartial elections which I conduct in a fair, efficient and accurate manner;
- I** dignify voters by providing equal opportunity to participate in the democratic process;
- I** am responsible for just and equitable treatment of the general public, elected officials and members of my profession;
- I** manifest a positive role in community relations by being accessible and receptive to both individuals and groups;
- I** have the courage and stamina to protect the public's interest from manipulation for personal or partisan gain while respecting the rights of all;
- I** am flexible and innovative within the framework of the law in carrying out my duties on behalf of the public's interest;
- I** conduct all fiscal responsibilities with wisdom and integrity, and am accountable for all funds and resources committed to my charge;
- I** maintain a productive and efficient operation through a well-managed elections environment;
- I** maintain the highest level of integrity in performing all duties of my profession.

Principles of Election/Registration Officials

WE SUBSCRIBE TO THESE PRINCIPLES:

- Freedom is an inherent human right, but it is also fragile and can be lost through neglect or misuse.
- Freedom requires responsibility.
- Freedom can best be maintained and nurtured through the democratic process. The success of the democratic process requires fair and open elections which accurately reflect the intent of the electorate.
- Therefore, it is our unique role as election officials to serve as gatekeepers of Democracy.

It is our sacred honor to protect and promote public trust and confidence by our conduct of accurate and fair elections.

As the public's guardians of freedom within a democratic society, we are responsible for the integrity of the process. Our role demands that these principles must be placed above personal or partisan gain.

Nurturing and protecting democracy is a team effort in the profession of elections administration. Our task requires wisdom, courage and the desire to remain focused on our vision of free and impartial elections despite changes in our society and its laws.

By dedicated adherence to these principles and standards of conduct, we demonstrate our loyalty to freedom, pride in our profession and a commitment to the excellence of the democratic process.



National Office
21946 Royal Montreal Dr. Suite 100
Katy, TX 77450

Phone: (281) 396-4309
Fax: (281) 396-4315
services@electioncenter.org