



Continuing Education Program Rules

Council of the Academy of Professional Reporters
National Court Reporters Association

Abstract: This document defines the rules under which the National Court Reporters Association's (NCRA's) Continuing Education Program operates.

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Article I. Overview of the Continuing Education Program

Section 1.01 Purpose and Scope

This document has been developed, approved, and promulgated by the **Council of the Academy of Professional Reporters (CAPR)** of the **National Court Reporters Association (NCRA)** to define the rules under which the NCRA's Continuing Education Program operates. These rules are intended to apply to both continuing education activity sponsors seeking pre-approval of those activities as well as to individuals seeking to claim CEUs from NCRA for non-pre-approved activities.

At its most basic level, continuing education is defined as the education of an individual beyond the basic preparation for his or her profession. In the NCRA setting, as in many other professions, continuing education plays a crucial role in ensuring that the high levels of knowledge, ability, and professional competence that are needed to become certified are maintained and improved over time.

The goal of continuing education for NCRA is to equip credential holders with the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a world of ever-changing information and technology. A uniformly applied continuing education program ensures that clients will experience a consistently high level of quality, proficiency, and knowledge among NCRA credential holders. The body of knowledge in the world changes approximately every seven years. In this spiraling explosion of information, NCRA credential holders must keep abreast of new developments or face being left behind. The obvious benefits of continuing education are learning new skills, keeping up with technological advances, and developing new areas of expertise. However, the hidden benefits may be even more valuable—keeping the mind

open to new ideas, honing the skills of learning and developing as a well-rounded professional.

Section 1.02

Authority

NCRA's Continuing Education Program is established and administered under the authority of the **Council of the Academy of Professional Reporters (CAPR)**. The operation of this Council is mandated by the Constitution and Bylaws of NCRA and its members are appointed by the NCRA President with approval from the Board of Directors. Any request for exemption from the policies outlined below must be addressed to CAPR.

Section 1.03

CEU Program Accreditation and Standards

NCRA's certifications and other credentials are developed, independently validated, and maintained on an ongoing basis through a nationally-recognized certification entity, **Professional Education Services (PES)**. In addition, NCRA strives to meet the highest credentialing standards, as established by the **National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA)** and the **American National Standards Institute (ANSI)**. NCRA is a proud member of the **Institute of Credentialing Excellence (ICE)**, which advances credentialing through education, standards, research, and advocacy to ensure competence across professions and occupations.

NCRA's Continuing Education Program, via which NCRA credential holders maintain their certification or certificate, is accredited by the **American Council on Continuing Education and Training (ACCET)**. Furthermore, NCRA is listed as an approved organization by the **American Council on Education's Accredited Institutions of Postsecondary Education (AIPE)** and the **Council on Higher Education Accreditation's (CHEA)**.

Section 1.04 Definition of the Continuing Education Unit (CEU)

The Continuing Education Program uses the ACCET-defined Continuing Education Unit (CEU) to measure formal continuing education activities. The ACCET-approved definition of a CEU is as follows:

The Continuing Education Unit (CEU) is in the public domain and is commonly recognized as a standard unit of measure for attributing continuing education and training activities, particularly as it applies to the personal and professional development of adult learners in a formalized, educational setting.

The CEU is defined as ten contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction, and qualified instruction. To compute the number of clock hours that can be awarded, the number of 60-minute clock hours attributed to actual classroom activity is divided by ten. Therefore, if a class is two days at 8 hours per day, the units awarded would equal 1.6 CEUs. Instructional hours do not include breaks, meals, registration time, etc.¹

NCRA and CAPR strongly believe that different individuals learn differently, and therefore continuing education must be flexible. To that end, credential holders may earn CEUs either through activities that have been pre-approved by NCRA, or they may apply for CEUs for non-pre-approved activities, provided that those activities meet the criteria contained in this document. Both pre-approved and non-pre-approved activities are subject to the same criteria for CEU eligibility.

¹ ACCET Document 17, "ACCET Continuing Education Unit (CEU)," Date Revised: April 2005/April 2011 (<http://docs.accet.org/downloads/docs/doc17.pdf>)

Section 1.05 Definition of the Professional Development Credit (PDC)

The Professional Development Credit (PDC) was instituted by CAPR to measure professional development activities which do not conform to the definition of a CEU but are nonetheless viewed by CAPR as holding significant value to NCRA and/or its constituent professions, as well as to the credential holder’s professional development.

Unlike the CEU, the PDC is not based on clock hours, but on the relative value of the activity as determined by CAPR. Also unlike the CEU, PDC’s are available only via specific, pre-approved activities.

Section 1.06 Mandatory Credit Requirements and Cycles

Each NCRA credential requires the holder to earn a certain number of credits (CEUs and/or PDCs) per continuing education cycle. A continuing education cycle consists of a three-year period. An individual’s first cycle shall begin immediately upon being awarded his or her first NCRA credential. The cycle end date for the first cycle will be the first September 30 that occurs at least three years after the cycle start date. The next three-year cycle will begin on the following October 1, and so forth.

The credit requirements for each NCRA credential are below:

NCRA Credential(s)	Credit Requirement per Cycle
RPR, RMR, RDR, CRR, CBC, CCP, CRI, MCRI, CPE, CMRS	3.0 total credits, at least 2.0 of which must be CEUs
CLVS	1.0 CEU
Trial Presentation Professional Certificate,	1.0 CEU within the category of technology CEUs ²

² See Section VI

Realtime Systems Administrator Certificate	
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CEU/PDC requirements are not cumulative, but all requirements must be satisfied. For example, an individual who holds the RPR certification and the Realtime Systems Administrator Certificate would need to earn 3.0 total credits, with at least 2.0 of them being CEUs, and at least 1.0 CEU falling within the technology category. Earning an additional certification will not change an individual's cycle start or end dates.

Section 1.07 Cycle Extensions

In the event that a credential holder fails to earn the required credits by the cycle end date, one four-month extension shall be available. This four-month extension will be subtracted from the beginning of the credential-holder's next cycle. No more than one extension per credential holder per cycle will be allowed. NCRA may charge a reasonable fee for cycle extensions.³

Section 1.08 Carryover Credit

Credential holders who earn more CEUs than are required to fulfill the above-mentioned requirements may carry over up to 0.5 CEU into the next cycle, provided that the credits being carried over were earned in the last six months of the cycle.

Section 1.09 Reinstatements

In the event that any NCRA credentials are allowed to lapse, the credential holder may be eligible for a once-per-lifetime reinstatement provided that the reinstatement is requested within four years of the termination date of the credentials in question, the credential holder has not received such

³ See NCRA Policies and Procedures Manual, Section G, Subsection 1a.

reinstatement in the past, and the credential holder has submitted at least 0.5CEU since the beginning of the lapsed cycle.⁴

Article II. Criteria for CEU Eligibility

In order to be eligible for CEU's an activity must meet ALL of the following criteria:

Section 2.01 Valid Educational Learning Objectives

The activity must include stated learning objectives. Those learning objectives must be designed primarily to provide instruction within an eligible topic area(s).⁵

Section 2.02 Primary Target Audience(s)

The activity must be designed primarily to meet the continuing education needs of a specific NCRA credential holder segment or segments, including court reporters, broadcast captioners, CART providers, scopists, court reporting educational instructors and administrators, legal videographers, and/or trial presentation professionals.

Section 2.03 Relation to Professional Competence

The learning objectives of the activity must be closely related to improving or maintaining the professional competence of one or more of the target audiences mentioned above.

Section 2.04 Capable Instructor(s)

Each activity or session must be led by at least one instructor who is demonstrably and objectively capable to instruct participants on the topic(s) relevant to the stated learning objectives.

⁴ See NCRA Policies and Procedures Manual, Section G, Subsection 1a.

⁵ See Article III for a list of approved topics.

Section 2.05 Qualified Responsible Sponsor(s)

The activity must be sponsored by at least one established education provider in good standing with NCRA. Qualified sponsors include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Independently accredited schools, colleges, and universities
- (b) Local, state, national, and international professional and trade associations
- (c) Entities that employ or contract the services of NCRA certification-holders

Sponsor organizations or entities formed exclusively for the purpose of conducting one educational activity typically are not considered qualified for the purposes of determining CEU credit.

Section 2.06 Minimum Duration

In order to qualify for CEUs, each portion of the activity must be at least 60 minutes in duration, excluding any breaks and non-CEU-eligible content.

Section 2.07 Attendance Verification for In-Person Activities

The sponsor must be willing to certify that the participant was present and participated in the activity. For in-person activities, the exact method of attendance verification may be determined by the sponsor.

If a participant does not fully complete an activity, it is his or her ethical duty to report partial completion to the sponsor. The sponsor must then certify only partial credit for that participant.

Section 2.08 Evaluation Procedures

The sponsor must establish and implement evaluation procedures in order to determine participant satisfaction and the effectiveness of the continuing education offering.

Section 2.09 Attendance Verification for Distance Learning Activities

For distance learning activities (i.e., those that are delivered remotely, with the participant in a different physical location from the instructor), the sponsor must use an approved tracking method to verify completion of at least 80% of the approved activity. Approved verification methods include:

- (a) Key letters or words embedded in the content which are required to certify completion
- (b) Intermittent prompts that require input from the participant before the activity can continue
- (c) Mandatory quizzes or content summaries at the completion of the activity
- (d) Minute-by-minute tracking of how long the attendee participated in the activity

Verification must be established in such a way that at least 80% of the activity is verified. For instance, if a distance learning activity consists of 60 minutes of continuing education, the final verification point cannot occur more than 12 minutes before the end of the activity.

Asynchronous activities must prevent the user from bypassing attendance verification points or skipping ahead to complete the activity in less time.

Section 2.10 General Exclusions

CEU credits may NOT be claimed for the following types of activities:⁶

- (a) Courses primarily intended to teach a non-verbal skill, including but not limited to sports, general fitness and exercise, arts, and music.
- (b) Any activity for which one receives remuneration as part of one's regular employment.
- (c) Attending association business meetings and/or elections.
- (d) Any activity primarily intended for advertising or promotional purposes, including, but not limited to, visiting exhibit and tradeshow booths.
- (e) Any activity primarily intended for recreational purposes, including, but not limited to, beer/wine tastings, receptions, parties, boat cruises, recreational tours, and meals. "Lunch and learn" sessions and educational dinner speakers are acceptable provided that all other requirements in Article II are met. In such cases, CEUs will be determined based on the duration of instruction rather than the duration of the meal.

⁶ For specific topics that have been deemed ineligible for CEUs and PDCs, see Section V.

Article III. Topics Eligible for CEUs

The following topics of instruction are deemed to meet Sections 2.01 and 2.02, and thereby qualify for CEUs, provided that all other criteria in Article II are met. Other topics may be deemed eligible on a case-by-case basis by CAPR.

Section 3.01 Language Skills, Literature, and Linguistics

Activities designed to teach Language

- (a) English Grammar, Punctuation, Usage, and Syntax
- (b) English Spelling and Vocabulary
- (c) Etymology and History of the English Language
- (d) Literature Courses
- (e) Linguistics, Speech Patterns, and Speech Impairments
- (f) Accents, Dialects, Colloquialisms, and Common Slang
- (g) Sign Language
- (h) Foreign Languages

Section 3.02 The Reporting Profession, the Law, and the Courts

- (a) Courtroom and Deposition Procedure
- (b) Transcript Formatting, Preparation, and Chain of Custody
- (c) Legal Terminology
- (d) History of Court Reporting and Legal History
- (e) Legal Research
- (f) Continuing Legal Education (CLE) Courses (approved by a state, local, or national CLE authority)
- (g) Basic Trial Advocacy
- (h) NCRA Certification Training (Realtime Systems Administrator Workshop, CLVS Workshop, Trial Presentation Workshop, etc.)
- (i) Notary Training
- (j) Paralegal Training

- (k) Process Server Training

Section 3.03 Medicine and Medical Terminology⁷

- (a) Medical and Pharmaceutical Terminology
- (b) Medical Jurisprudence
- (c) Forensic Medicine
- (d) Clinical Pharmacology
- (e) Medical Ethics
- (f) Hearing Loss, Hearing Disorders,

Section 3.04 Court Reporting Software and Technology

- (a) CAT Software
- (b) Realtime Connections and Troubleshooting.
- (c) Remote Realtime Technology
- (d) Electronic Transcripts
- (e) CART Technology
- (f) Captioning Technology and Broadcast Engineering
- (g) Technology “Tips” Sessions

Section 3.05 Legal and Business Technology

- (a) Operating Systems and General Office Software
- (b) Basic Computer Repair, Maintenance and Troubleshooting
- (c) Basic Website Design
- (d) Cloud Storage and Delivery
- (e) Data Backup Solutions and Practices
- (f) Data Privacy and Protection

⁷ See Section 5.04 for specific exclusions related to health and medicine.

Section 3.06

Legal Videography

- (a) Equipment Procurement, Setup, Operation, Maintenance, and Troubleshooting
- (b) Video Deposition Procedure
- (c) The Video Signal and Video Formats
- (d) The CLVS Standards and Code of Ethics
- (e) Legal Video Camera Technique
- (f) Video Editing Software
- (g) Video Certification, Duplication, and Chain of Custody
- (h) Video Synchronization to Transcript
- (i) Tapeless Video Acquisition and Workflow
- (j) Legal Video Camera Technique

Section 3.07

Trial Presentation

- (a) Trial Presentation Hardware and Software
- (b) Visual Advocacy and Demonstrative Graphics
- (c) Data Management

Section 3.08

Business Administration

- (a) Marketing, Public Relations, and Social Media for Business
- (b) Accounting Practices and Software
- (c) Strategic Planning, Finance, and Administration
- (d) Management and Human Resources
- (e) Succession and Exit Planning
- (f) Legal Issues and Risk Management

Section 3.09

Ethics and Professionalism

- (a) NCRA's Code of Professional Ethics and Advisory Opinions
- (b) Professionalism and Business Etiquette

Section 3.10 Professional Development and Welfare⁸

- (a) Test Preparation and Test-Taking Skills
- (b) Networking, Public Speaking, and Business Communication
- (c) Work/Life Balance
- (d) Workplace Gender Issues
- (e) Repetitive Stress Injuries, Carpal Tunnel, and Other Physical and Psychological Health Issues Directly Related to Court Reporting
- (f) Professional Mental Health and Stress Management
- (g) Violence and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace
- (h) Substance Abuse and Depression in the Workplace

Section 3.11 Safety and Emergency Preparedness

- (a) CPR/AED, First Aid, and Emergency Preparedness (Up to 1.2 CEUs per cycle)
- (b) Workplace Safety and Security

Section 3.12 Educational Tours⁹

- (a) Tours of Courts, Law Firms, or Law Schools
- (b) Tours of Police Stations and Correctional Facilities
- (c) Historical Tours closely related to the Law, Literature, the English Language, Hearing Loss, or the Court Reporting Profession

⁸ See Section 6.04 for specific exclusions related to personal development as opposed to professional development.

⁹ See Section 6.04 for specific exclusions related to

Article IV. Activities Eligible for PDCs

The following activities are deemed eligible for PDCs. Unlike CEUs, PDCs may only be earned through these pre-defined activities, and no other activities may be submitted for PDC consideration.

Section 4.01 Promoting the Profession to External Audiences

- (a) Eligible credential holders may earn 0.25 PDC by promoting the stenographic court reporting profession in presentations to court reporting schools (as a guest speaker or career day participant), law schools, and judges' associations.
- (b) To claim PDCs under this section, the credential holder will be required to submit an outline or agenda of the presentation, accompanied by either a signed NCRA submission form or a letter signed by a representative of the host event.
- (c) If a question arises as to whether an event qualifies for credit under this section, CAPR will review the request for approval.

Section 4.02 Providing *pro bono* Reporting, CART or Captioning Services

- (a) Eligible credential holders may earn 0.25 PDC for a minimum of 2.5 hours of pro bono service, of which 30 minutes can be the preparation involved. Services for two one-hour events plus 30 minutes of preparation, for example, can be combined for one submission.
- (b) Pro bono services are defined by the Council of the Academy of Professional Reporters (CAPR) as "providing court reporting, realtime, CART, or captioning services for which compensation in any form was not rendered."
- (c) The individual requesting PDCs will be required to present a signature from the deaf consumer or the primary agent of the event or entity for which the pro bono services were performed.

Section 4.03

Involvement in a Formal Mentoring Program

- (a) Eligible credential-holders may earn 0.25 PDC for qualifying involvement in a formal mentoring program. To qualify for PDCs, mentoring must take place with students enrolled in a court reporting program. A minimum of five (5) hours will be required for earning the 0.25 credits, and those hours can either be divided up among multiple students or can all be spent with the same student. A mentor may submit the same student up to two times per cycle (for a total of 10 hours and 0.5 credits).
- (b) Eligible credential-holders may also earn 0.25 PDC under this section by hosting students completing their internships. To qualify for PDCs, interns must be involved in a formal internship via an independently accredited educational institution.
- (c) To claim PDCs under this section, the credential-holder will be required to maintain a log of the mentoring or internship, and to provide that log to NCRA when applying for PDCs. In order to qualify for PDCs, the mentoring relationship or internship must be completed during the three-year cycle in which the certificate-holder is claiming credit.

Section 4.04

Service on an NCRA, NCRF, or Affiliate Board or Committee

- (a) Eligible credential holders may earn 0.25 PDC per year of service on an NCRA, NCRF, or NCRA-affiliated state court reporting association board or committee. Service on a board or committee of the United States Court Reporting Association (USCRA) also qualifies for this category, as does service on any board or body at the state level or higher which is authorized by the government to regulate court reporters, captioners, or CART providers.
- (b) The year of service must be completed prior to submission (with the exception of this first year, in which the service must be completed after October 1, 2011).
- (c) A cross-check with NCRA or NCRF board and committee rosters will provide sufficient documentation for the national service. For state association service and USCRA service, the individual requesting PDCs will be required to present a signed letter from the state or USCRA board president.

Section 4.05 Associations 101 Manual and Exam

- (a) Eligible credential holders may earn 0.25 PDC for passing the Associations 101 exam following a year of state or national board service.
- (b) A passing score is defined as answering at least 80% of the questions. A member may only earn credits for the Association 101 exam once in his or her lifetime, but those who fail to receive a passing score may re-attempt the exam once per year.

Section 4.06 NCRA Lead Chief Examiner Service

- (a) Eligible credential holders may earn 0.25 PDC for one year of continuous service as an NCRA Lead Chief Examiner in compliance with all NCRA policies and procedures.
- (b) Requests for credit will be verified with a cross-check of NCRA's master roster of chief examiners' names.

Section 4.07 NCRA Certification Tests

- (a) Credential holders who pass an NCRA Skills Test or the Written Knowledge Test (WKT) portion of the RMR, RDR, CRR, CLVS (if already an RPR), CCP (if an RPR), or CBC (if an RPR) will earn 0.25 PDCs per exam.

Section 4.08 Speed and Realtime Contests

- (a) Credential holders who successfully complete a speed contest at or above the level of the RMR speeds may earn 0.25 PDC per leg. Credits for any speed contest leg will be awarded only once per three-year continuing education cycle.
- (b) Credential holders who successfully complete a realtime contest at or above 180 wpm straight matter at 96% accuracy may earn 0.25 PDC. Credit for any realtime contest will be awarded only once per three-year continuing education cycle.

Section 4.09 NCRF Oral Histories Projects

- (a) Credential holders who complete and submit a transcription as part of any oral histories program sponsored by the National Court Reporters Foundation, such as the [Veterans History Project](#), may earn 0.25 PDC for each transcription completed.

Section 4.10

NCRA-Sponsored Book and Article Tests

- (a) Eligible credential holders may earn 0.25 PDC for passing one NCRA book or article test.
- (b) A passing score is defined as correctly answering at least 75% of the quiz questions for article tests and at least 85% of the quiz questions for book tests.

Article V. Ineligible Activities

The following topics are deemed not to meet Sections 2.01, 2.02, and/or 2.03 and are therefore ineligible for CEUs or PDCs, even if the other requirements in Article II are met. Other topics may be deemed ineligible on a case-by-case basis by CAPR.

Section 5.01 Sports, Fitness and Exercise

- (a) Yoga, Pilates, etc
- (b) Zumba and Similar Workout Programs
- (c) Weightlifting, Calisthenics, and Aerobics
- (d) Exercise Science
- (e) Organized Sports (participation or study)

Section 5.02 Arts and Music

- (a) Musical Instruments
- (b) Music Appreciation, Theory, and History
- (c) Arts and Crafts
- (d) Art Appreciation and Art History

Section 5.03 Recreation and Hobbies

- (a) Cooking and Food
- (b) Recreational Tours and Events
- (c) Relaxation and Meditation

Section 5.04 Personal Development, Health and Welfare

- (a) Community service unrelated to the professions of court reporting, CART, captioning, legal videography, or trial presentation (e.g.; volunteer social work)
- (b) Holistic and/or Alternative Medicine
- (c) Diet Classes, Meetings, and Programs
- (d) Childbirth, Parenting, Caregiver, and Family Classes

- (e) Self-Help and Rehabilitation
- (f) Massage, Acupuncture, and Hypnosis
- (g) Psuedoscience and Protoscience

Section 5.05

Religion and Spirituality

- (a) Theology and Belief Systems
- (b) Religious Languages, Literature, Art, and Music
- (c) Religious History and Philosophy
- (d) Worship, Prayer, and Faith Healing

Article VI. Technology CEUs

Holders of NCRA's technology-focused credentials are required to earn CEUs exclusively within the area of technology.

Section 6.01 Criteria for Technology CEUs

In order to be considered eligible for Technology CEUs, an activity must meet both the criteria for CEU eligibility and these additional criteria:

- (a) The learning objectives must be designed to provide instruction primarily related to technology.
- (b) The technology in question must be closely related to the professional competence of the target audience(s).

Section 6.02 Topics Eligible for Technology CEUs

Any topic contained within Sections 3.04, 3.05, 3.06, or 3.07 of this document will be deemed eligible for Technology CEUs. Other topics may be deemed eligible on a case-by-case basis by CAPR.