

Continuing Education Unit (CEU) Requirements, Opportunities, and Reporting



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Continuing Education Requirement

CCAs must participate in continuing education to maintain their certification. Continuing education activities are measured in CEUs, which are defined as the equivalent of one hour of quality contact time in training or other qualifying activity on such topics as contained in or related to the CCA Educational Areas Document.

Continuing Education Renewal Cycle

A CCA must devote the equivalent of an entire work week (40 hours) to obtain 40 CEUs in every two-year cycle.

Two-year CEU cycles begin on January 1 of the first year and end on December 31 of the second year. The continuing education requirements for maintaining certification are:

1. A minimum of 40 CEUs every two years with a minimum of 5 CEUs in each of the four competency areas. Please note: The category—Professional Development—is not a required category for CCA.
2. A minimum of 20 CEUs must be pre-or post-Board approved in each two-year cycle.
3. Applicants may begin accumulating CEUs on the day their CCA certificate is dated. CEUs obtained on or after the date on the certificate, but prior to 1 January, will count towards the first year.

These continuing education requirements are minimums. The CCA is encouraged to exceed them whenever possible.

Competency Area Requirements

A minimum of 5.0 CEUs must be earned for each of the following categories in the two-year continuing education cycle.

1. Nutrient Management
2. Soil & Water Management
3. Integrated Pest Management
4. Crop Management

Professional Development CEUs

CEUs can be earned for CEUs categorized as Professional Development. There is no minimum number of CEUs required for the Professional Development category. Professional Development continuing education should provide the CCA with opportunities to expand their knowledge and expertise in the following areas:

- Ethics training - ethical and professional conduct, liability and employment law

- Computer courses - computerized accounting packages, specialized agronomic applications (nutrient management assessment tools, soil analysis, etc.), GIS/GPS mapping or interpretative software training, multi-media presentation training, Graphics or desk top publishing programs, word processing applications
- Business courses - financial analysis, business planning and budgeting, resource management, financial and credit management, marketing and production decision-making, time management, leadership skills
- Economics seminars - micro and macro-economic topics, global supply and demand forecasts, international trade policies, commodity marketing and trade
- Legislative and policy related training or information sessions - discussion of proposed or pending legislative and or policy changes affecting the business environment in which CCAs operate
- Communications - communications in the work place, business writing, interpersonal communications, dealing with difficult people, presentation skills

CCA Candidate

A CCA Candidate does not have CEU requirements. CEU requirements begin once a CCA Candidate becomes fully certified.

CCA and CPAg Retired

A “CCA Retired” is exempt from CEU requirements.

Ways to Earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs)

CEUs are characterized as Board-Approved Meetings, Board-Approved Self-Study, or Self-Reported. A minimum of 20 Board-Approved CEUs are required in the two-year continuing education cycle.

Board-Approved Meetings

CCAs receive CEUs for attending Board-Approved meetings by signing in using the pre-assigned QR code and CCA app or signing a sign-in sheet provided by the meeting host. Each meeting or meeting session has an approved, unique tracking number automatically assigned to and associated to the QR Code in the app and/or the sign-in sheet.

CCAs and meeting hosts are encouraged to use the CCA app to scan the QR Code. This results in more rapid as well as accurate reporting for the CCA and reduces program costs. The credits will be posted to individual CCA accounts from the sign-in sheet. It is very important that each participant record the required information on the sign-in sheet before they leave the meeting if they do not use the QR Code.

The CCA should record the course number and keep any course materials for his or her records. A CCA must provide their CCA number when signing the sign-in sheet (not required when using the app). If no CCA number is provided, no CEUs will be issued.

CCAs may report CEUs using the online form as long as the required minimum of 20 CEUs are board approved. CEUs are subject to random audit and will be reviewed in conjunction with any complaints.

Board-Approved Self-Study

CEUs granted for self-study (written) and self-paced (videos and webinars) educational materials pre-approved by the appropriate local CCA board.

For self-study CEUs, the CCA must complete a quiz on the material and achieve a passing score of 70% or provide proof of successful completion of a correspondence course. For self-paced CEUs, the system used to deliver the content must have a tracking system to verify attendance and attentiveness if it does not, then a quiz is also required.

Product specific materials will be granted CEUs when fair and credible performance comparisons are presented. No credit shall be allowed when emphasis is on product sales. No advertising shall be allowed in self-study or self-paced materials, but sponsor recognition and acknowledgment is permitted. Self-study and self-paced materials should include field application information (i.e. how does a CCA use this information with farmers?).

Self-Reported CEUs

A CCA can self-report the following activities:

1. Continuing education events that meet one or more of the educational areas, but are not pre-or post-approved by a local CCA board – There is a limit of 20 CEUs for this type of self-reported continuing education in a two-year reporting cycle. A CCA must use the online form for self-reporting these CEUs. Mailed or faxed forms will be returned.
2. Post-secondary education coursework - Post-secondary education coursework can be self-reported by the CCA and will be considered “board approved”. Requirements include:
 - a. Course grade slip indicating a passing grade of “C” or higher.
 - b. Course outline or syllabus if course title is not self-explanatory.
 - c. CCA CEUs = {15 x semester credits} or {9 x quarter credits}.

This applies to all forms of post-secondary education coursework, on-campus and electronic or distance learning.

3. Volunteer work on agriculture boards and committees – A CCA can earn CEUs up to 5 hours in the Professional Development category in a two-year continuing education cycle by leveraging their expertise as a CCA by serving on a board or committee. Examples would include being on boards or committees for CCA, soil and water conservation districts, national agriculture organizations, etc. One hour of service is equal to 1 CEU. A CCA requesting CEUs for volunteer work on agriculture boards and committees must document their contributions and describe how being a CCA has contributed to their effectiveness as board or committee member. A CCA should contact their local board representative to report CEUs for volunteer work on agriculture boards and committees.

4. Mentoring of early-career crop advisers and agronomic professionals – A CCA can earn up to 5 hours in the Professional Development category in a two-year continuing education cycle for mentoring and developing the agronomic skills of people entering the profession. One hour of mentoring is equal to 1 CEU. A CCA requesting CEUs for mentoring must document the mentoring activities and the efforts made to promote the CCA certification to the mentee. A CCA should contact their local board representative to report CEUs for mentoring.

Specialty Certifications

The ICCA Program provides Specialty Certifications for specific niche needs that build upon the core ICCA program. Each of these Specialty Certifications has a CEU requirement that must be met during the two-year continuing education cycle.

4R Nutrient Management (4R NMS) Certification - The CCA must earn 7.5 CEUs every two years in each of the Nutrient Management and Soil and Water Management categories. The requirement of 40 total CEUs every two years and the minimum of 5 CEUs in each of the Integrated Pest Management and Crop Management categories is unchanged.

Precision Agriculture Specialty (PASp) Certification - The CCA must earn 5 CEUs every two years in Precision Agriculture. The requirement of 40 CEUs every two years, which must include 5 CEUs in each of Nutrient Management, Soil and Water Management, Integrated Pest Management and Crop Management remain unchanged. Contact your CCA support representative to assist with recording of PASp credits already reported in other CCA content categories.

Resistance Management Specialty (RMS) Certification - The CCA must earn 10 CEUs every two years in Integrated Pest Management. The requirement of 40 total CEUs every two years that must include 5 CEUs in each of the Nutrient Management, Soil and Water Management and Crop Management categories is unchanged.

Sustainability Specialty (SSp) Certification - The CCA must earn 5 CEUs every two years in Sustainability. The requirement of 40 CEUs every two years, which must include 5 CEUs in each of Nutrient Management, Soil and Water Management, Integrated Pest Management and Crop Management remain unchanged. Contact your CCA support representative to assist with recording of SSp credits already reported in other CCA content categories.

CEU Calendar

The International CCA program maintains a calendar of CEU opportunities on their website. It can be accessed through this web address - <https://www.certifiedcropadviser.org/meetings/calendar>.

Check CEUs

A CCA can check on the CEUs they have earned and their progress toward meeting the continuing education requirements on the International CCA website. This information can be accessed through this web address - <https://www.certifiedcropadviser.org/education-ceus/ceus>. The CCA must login with a username and password to access their CEU report.

Board Appeal of CEU Requirement for Extenuating Circumstances

A CCA who does not earn the required amount of CEUs by the stated deadline may write a letter of appeal to their local CCA board explaining any extenuating circumstances that prevented them from earning the CEUs.

Extenuating circumstances include: loss of job, health condition, active military service, changes of locale and position. The CCA needs to file the appeal (within the appropriate timeframe) in writing to the ICCA office, which will forward the written appeal to the local board.

The local CCA board can do one of the following upon review of the appeal letter:

1. Waive the deficient CEUs and allow the CCA to continue to their next CEU cycle;
2. Add the deficient CEUs to the CCA's next CEU cycle; or
3. Deny the appeal and uphold the termination of the CCA's certification

Addendum

Appeal Form