

APPROVAL PROCEDURES FOR ADVANCED AND CORE COURSES

Statutory Authority: Pursuant to Section 553.841(6), Florida Statutes, the Florida Building Code Commission (FBC) is entrusted with the development and administration of core curriculum courses. The core course is a prerequisite to the Advanced courses and is a one time requirement for licensees.

Core Courses

The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) is responsible for developing the Core courses. The courses are offered directly by the DCA and/or sold to secondary providers that are approved by the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR). Attendance rosters are directly submitted to the DBPR by the DCA even if the courses are offered by secondary providers. The core course is a requirement for the following professions:

1. Construction Industry Licensing Board
 2. Electrical Contractors Licensing Board
 3. Building Code Administrators and Inspectors Board
 4. Board of Architecture and Interior Design
 5. Board of Landscape Architecture
 6. Board of Professional Engineers (CE Program not handled by the DBPR)
- The DCA must submit core courses for department approval prior to offering them to licensees.
 - The DCA shall administer the course through direct offerings to licensees, or using DBPR board approved course providers. Once approved by the department, core courses are valid for all professions listed above.
 - The DCA shall be solely responsible for filing course attendance rosters of all licensees who have attended the core courses. Core courses cannot be electronically reported by secondary providers since the courses are approved under the DCA's providership.
 - All licensees must complete the core course (for professions listed above) within 2 years from the date of licensure.
 - Completion of the core course will also count towards the continuing education credits for the renewal cycle in which the course was completed.
 - Only courses developed by the DCA qualify for core course credits.
 - DBPR approved course providers who teach core courses must comply with the reporting procedures as established by the DCA.
 - The DCA is responsible for all core course updates and the providers must use the most updated material when administering the courses.

Advanced Module Courses

The Advanced Module courses relating to the Florida Building Code offered to Florida licensees must be approved by the Florida Building Code Commission and the respective licensing boards prior to being offered for continuing education credits.

Providers should develop Advanced courses as they relate to the Florida Building Code and have the courses accredited through the DCA. All Advanced courses must be technical in nature and relate to the applicable codes for the targeted attendees' trade(s).

Advanced courses developed by the DCA and approved by the Florida Building Code Commission must be submitted to the respective DBPR boards for approval.

Course providers who are already approved by the DBPR boards may elect to purchase the FBC pre-approved courses and submit them to the respective DBPR boards for approval. The courses must be approved by the individual boards before the providers can offer the courses to licensees for continuing education credits.

Professions that require Advanced course:

1. Construction Industry Licensing Board
2. Electrical Contractors Licensing Board
3. Board of Architecture and Interior Design
4. Board of Landscape Architecture
5. Board of Professional Engineers (CE Program not handled by the DBPR)

All the professions referenced above have policies and procedures in place that allow the respective boards or the Bureau of Education and Testing (BET) to approve providers and courses. The BET is a core function area within the department that is responsible for processing education courses for 15 different professional boards and commissions in addition to monitoring licensees for continuing education compliance.

1) FBC Developed Courses

- a. The FBC shall, through recommendations made by the Education Outreach Council, identify the training needs and determine the content requirements for the Advanced courses.
- b. The FBC shall develop the Advanced courses for those professions or trades where there is a deficiency or lack of courses in certain areas, or where additional training is necessary.

- c. The FBC shall submit such courses to the BOARDS for review and approval. Approval will be granted by boards referenced in Page 2, and there may be an approval fee as dictated by board rule.
- d. The board shall approve or deny the courses using the established procedures.

2) Providers Using the DCA Developed Courses

- a. The DCA shall, for a fee (as determined by the FBC), sell the FBC approved courses to providers who wish to offer such courses to licensees.
- b. The FBC shall issue a certificate to a course provider purchasing the courses from them. The certificate shall include the name of the course, targeted professions/trades, issue date, method of presentation, and the name and address of the course provider.
- c. The course provider, if already approved by the department, may submit such course for approval along with the certificate of approval to the department. The provider shall use the continuing education course approval form developed by the appropriate boards for course approval.
- d. The board shall charge a course approval fee as dictated by rule which may be equivalent to that of a continuing education course fee charged by the board.
- e. The board, upon receipt of such application and certificate of approval from the DCA shall approve (or deny) the course following established procedures.

The Construction Industry Licensing Board and the Electrical Contractors' Licensing Board have authorized the department to approve Advanced courses from providers that are using the FBC courses once the provider has submitted an application and paid the course fee. The Board of Landscape Architecture also has authorized expedited administrative approval of the pre-approved Advanced courses once the course instructors are approved by the board.

3) Provider Developed Courses and the DCA Accreditation Process

Providers who develop Advanced courses must:

- a. Use the DCA **Accreditation** process to get the course approved by the FBC.
- b. Comply with all content requirements as that of those courses developed by FBC.
- c. Submit the complete course to the DCA using their on-line course approval process along with all applicable course materials (to include supplementary materials such as audio/visual aids, graphs, charts, slides, computer-generated materials like PowerPoint presentation, etc.)
- d. The DCA using the course accreditors shall evaluate and determine the eligibility of the course content and the delivery method.

- e. Once approved by the FBC, the DCA shall issue a Certificate of Approval to the course provider. The certificate shall contain the name of the course, length of the course, date of certification, and targeted profession(s), the course delivery method, and the name of the course provider
- f. The provider shall submit the course to the department seeking course approval under applicable boards.
- g. Advanced courses submitted to individual boards must clearly show that the course has the FBC approval for that particular trade or profession. For example, a course approved by the FBC for Interior Design may not automatically qualify for credits under the construction board.
- h. Providers using the DCA developed courses can only teach the course in the format that it was approved by the FBC. Changing the method of presentation would require the course provider to submit the course to DCA for re-approval through the course accreditation process.
- i. The boards have not granted reciprocity credits for Advanced courses and the course approval under one board would only apply to the licensees who are licensed under that board.

Course Updates for Advanced courses

All course providers must maintain the courses current, including updating the course material in accordance with the changes in the codes, statutes, rules, and procedures. If the initial course was developed by the DCA, each provider should notify the department that they are using the updated material as such updates are made by the DCA. If the initial course was developed by the DCA, but they elect not to update the course material and drop the course from their list of approved courses, any provider who would want to continue teaching the course would be *directly* responsible for updating the course material. Such updates must be approved using the course accreditation method as outlined in Section #3. Once the changes are approved by the FBC, the course updates must be submitted to the department to be included in the course file.

All Advanced courses approved by the boards will receive a course approval letter stating the name of the course, the course approval number, credit hours, and the approval and expiration dates. The course provider is responsible for electronically reporting the course attendance roster directly to the department for monitoring.

January 10, 2006