Overview

> The following Ebook is designed to walk you through the steps needed to obtain the CFP® (Certified Financial Planner) certification.

Whether you are already working in the Financial Services industry or you are looking to take your first steps to become a Financial Planner, the CFP® certification is a great place to start.

This CFP Board approved educational program is designed to give you the foundational knowledge you need to pass the CFP Board exam and become a successful financial planner.
Step 1: Complete a CFP Accredited Educational Program

> The CFP Board requires each student who sits for the national CFP Board exam to complete an educational program.

  - The educational program must be a CFP Board registered program

> Each of the University partners involved in this consortium are CFP Board accredited programs giving students the foundational knowledge they need to be successful on the CFP Board exam, regardless of previous experience and education.
Step 2: Pass the CFP Board Exam

> The CFP Board requires all CFP® Professionals to have a bachelor’s degree. You do NOT have to have your degree prior to starting the educational program or taking the CFP Board exam. It is a requirement for certification.
   - The Bachelor’s degree does not have to be related to the field of finance
     *Note: The CFP Board does not allow an Associate’s degree to qualify*

> Professional who hold the following designations may gain “challenge status”, allowing them to complete only the Capstone Course of the educational requirement before sitting for the CFP Board exam.
   - CPA
   - Licensed Attorney
   - PhD in business or economics
   - CLU
   - CFA
   - Doctorate in Business Administration

> After completing an educational program, an applicant may sit for the national CFP Board Exam, which is offered the following months each year:
   - March
   - July
   - November
Step 3: Meet the Experience Requirement

> To become a CFP® Certificant, the CFP Board requires each person to meet an experience requirement.

> What is the work experience requirement?
  - “Because CFP® certification indicates to the public your ability to provide financial planning without supervision, CFP Board requires you to have experience in the financial planning process. Three years of full-time relevant personal financial planning experience is required.”

> The work experience requirement may be gained:
  - 10 years prior to exam date
  - Up to 5 years after exam date
Step 3: Meet the Experience Requirement (cont.)

> How does a person meet the Board’s experience requirement?
  - A person must work for 3 years in “the supervision, direct support, teaching or personal delivery of all or part of the personal financial planning process to a client.”

> The personal financial planning process, for which a certificant must work with at least one of the steps, is listed below:
  1. Establishing and/or Defining the Relationship with the Client
  2. Gathering Client Data
  3. Analyzing and Evaluating the Client’s Financial Status
  4. Developing and Presenting the Financial Plan
  5. Implementing the Financial Plan
  6. Monitoring the Financial Plan

> Note: You may complete an educational program, take the Board exam and pass without the experience requirement being met. The CFP Board requires the work experience requirement prior to issuing a candidate the CFP® Certification marks.
Step 4: Pass the Fitness Standards

> A key component of being a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ certificant is upholding a proper ethical standard. The CFP Board requires individuals to pass certain fitness standards as a “Trusted-Advisor.”

> Requirement of the strict code of ethics includes
  - Background checks, no personal bankruptcy within the past 5 years, etc.

> As one may expect, there are certain unacceptable ethical standards that may limit a person’s ability to use the CFP® marks. Examples are as follows:
  - Past bankruptcies
  - Felony convictions
  - Revocation of financial licenses
Step 5: Pay Certification Fees

> In addition to the fees of an educational program, the CFP Board requires the following fees:
  
  - Test-Taking Fee: $595
  - Application/Background Fee: $100
  - Annual Certification Fee: $325
MORE ABOUT THE PROGRAM
**Program Highlights**

> Accelerated study allowing you to complete in 4-21 months

> Personalized touch through the role of a personal Advisor who is partnered with the student throughout the entire learning process. This personal Advisor assists students by:
> - Being accessible via normal business hours
> - Answering questions
> - Providing further explanation to difficult concepts
> - Helping provide learning accountability
> - Helping provide a learning track for completion by a certain date
> - Networking and relationship-building

> Industry-focused learning providing insights as to how this information is used in the “real world” face-to-face with clients and prospects

> 70% of first-time test takers pass the CFP Board exam on their first attempt

> Flexible study formats away from the computer
The Partnership

> A consortium of universities have partnered with industry wealth management leader, Greene Consulting to offer this program.
  - Consistent pricing at each University
  - Similar student experience

> This educational program is designed to help you pass the CFP Board exam and use this information in your current practice NOW - not after you get your CFP® certification.

> For more information, contact Michael Sorrow at 404.324.4600 or visit a partner website by clicking one of the links below.
Resources

> List of Board Registered Programs
  - CFP Board Registered Programs

> Specifics of Work Experience Requirement
  - CFP Work Experience Requirement

> CFP Fitness Standards Guidelines
  - Fitness Guidelines

> Partner Website Links

[Logos of NC State University, Terry College of Business, UTSA College of Business, and James Madison University]