

BULLET BACKGROUND PAPER

ON

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS AND THEIR INTEGRATION INTO CCAF DEGREE PROGRAMS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to identify the current state of the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) certificate programs on how CCAF awards academic credit for professional certifications and licenses.

BACKGROUND

- The Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) has been awarding academic credentials for over 50 years.
 - o 3 Certificate programs
 - CCAF Qualified Faculty
 - CCAF Instructor Certification (CIC)
 - o Three-level program
 - Based on time, experience, and education
 - o Can be used as an entry point to K-12 educator opportunities
 - Instructional Systems Development (ISD)
 - o Awarded to experienced CCAF affiliated school curriculum writers
 - o Recognizes time, experience, and education
 - o Used as an entry to civil service (GS-1750), Fortune 500 companies (training development), colleges/university/K-12 curriculum writers.
 - Joint Service Aviation Maintenance Technician Certification Council (JSAMTCC) Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Airframe and Powerplant (A&P) Certificate of Eligibility
 - o Bridge program for aircraft maintainers traditionally not qualified for both mechanic certificate ratings
 - o Allows the technician to bypass FAA interview process
 - o Award academic credit for professional licenses and certifications
 - CCAF can evaluate all certifications for academic credit
 - 25 certifications have been evaluated by CCAF staff for academic credit
- AFCOOL
 - o Offers professional license and certification opportunities for all enlisted AFSCs
 - o More than 1,500 certifications
 - From Aircraft Maintenance to Project Management
 - o All certifications linked to training received by member up to the journeyman level
 - Training-to-certification gap analysis of several hundred credentials
 - Identifies possible training/knowledge gaps required for certification
 - o Members can utilize provided information to create training/study plans for specific certifications
 - o No or limited out-of-pocket cost to the member

- Member has a \$4.5K lifetime cap for certification expenses

DISCUSSION

- Like many community colleges throughout the U.S., professional certifications and licenses can be integrated into the student's academic degree plan.
- Each AFSC has a menu of certification options that can be integrated into the CCAF degree plan
 - Workforce Development can evaluate and award credit for professional certifications and licenses if the degree needs the additional credit
 - Credit would be non-institutional credit
 - CCAF has already integrated certifications into several degree programs as elective credit on a voluntary basis
 - Examples include:
 - Aircraft maintenance degree programs
 - FAA A&P certification – 30 semester hours
 - Federal Communication Commission (FCC) General Radio Operator License – 9 semester hours
 - Medical degree programs
 - Emergency Medical Technician – 4 semester hours
 - Certified Pharmacy Technician – 17 semester hours
 - Communication and Cyber Technology programs
 - Mandatory for Communication and Cyber AFSCs
 - CompTIA certifications – 3 to 4 semester hours
 - A+, Security+, Network+

SUMMARY

CCAF has the ability to integrate professional certifications into academic degree pathways and award academic credit for the attainment of these credentials. CCAF already awards academic credit for more than 20 professional certifications. It should be understood, some professional certifications and licenses cannot be awarded without a degree or specialized accreditation. However, these certifications and licenses are generally seen in fields that require state-approval for licensure as seen in the medical career fields.