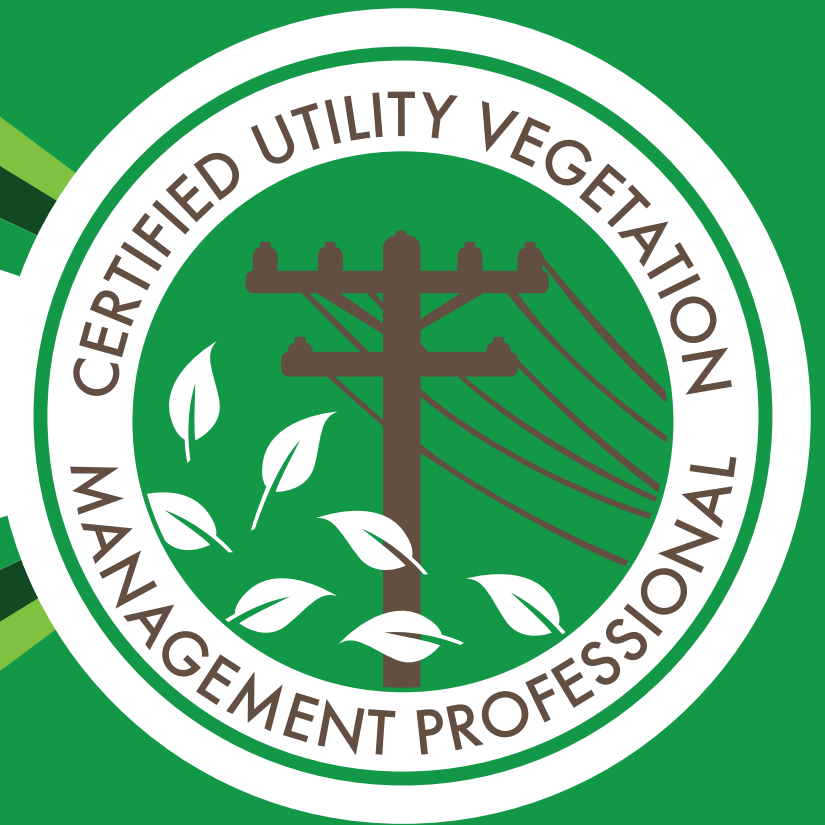


# UAA Professional Certification

Continued  
Competency  
Program  
Handbook



The Continued Competency Program supports the ongoing professional development and training for those that hold the Utility Vegetation Management Professional certification.

The purpose of the UAA Professional Certification program is to:

- Enhance continuous learning and professional development among certification holders.
- Provide direction in the professional developmental areas relevant to certified practitioners.
- Encourage and recognize individualized learning opportunities that assist in the growth and development of practitioners in the UVM industry.
- Offer a mechanism for recording professional development activities.
- Sustain the global recognition and value of UVM Certification credentials.

The Active certification status is maintained through a three (3) year renewal cycle. Every individual who earns a Certification and desires to maintain and renew their credentials must participate in the Continued Competency Program.

Partaking in continuous learning and professional development will allow certification holders to earn Professional Development Units (PDUs) to fulfill the requirements of the Continued Competency Program.

It is recognized that individuals may have different professional needs and desires. The Continued Competency Program is designed to be flexible and can be customized to adapt to those individual needs. The Continued Competency Program provides the general framework and guidance to certification holders in developing an individualized learning plan that will meet professional development desires.

# UAA Professional Certification

## Continued Competency Program Handbook

Last Revision: October 5, 2020

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## OVERVIEW OF THE CONTINUED COMPETENCY PROGRAM

All Certification holders must earn Professional Development Units (PDUs) to actively maintain their professional credentials. These PDUs can be earned through various professional development activities that center on two areas:

- **Education & Training**

- Learning opportunities that allow a certification holder to expand and enhance technical, leadership or strategic business management skills and knowledge.

- **Giving Back to the Profession**

- Activities that enable you to share, network and utilize your knowledge, skills, and experience as a means of contributing to and building the overall industry and utility vegetation management profession.

A total of sixty (60) Professional Development Units (PDUs) are required over the three (3) year Certification renewal cycle to maintain Active Status.

Of the total 60 PDU's, a minimum of 40 or a maximum of 50 PDUs must be earned from the Education & Training area. A minimum of 10 or a maximum of 20 PDUs must be earned from the Giving Back to the Profession area.

PDU REQUIREMENTS FOR RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATION (OVER 3-YEARS)		
	Minimum required	Maximum
<b>Education &amp; Training</b>	40 PDUs	50 PDUs
<b>Giving Back</b>	10 PDUs	20 PDUs
<b>Total</b>	60 PDUs	--

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

- All PDUs must be obtained and completed within the three (3) year cycle.
- Any pre-existing activities will not be considered.
- If activities are part of an overall program with multiple courses, PDUs are earned for the individual components successfully completed within the renewal cycle. (i.e. Certification Holder taking a university degree in business will receive education PDUs for individual courses completed during the 3-year cycle.)
- As PDUs are awarded for successful completion, if a learning activity starts at the end of one cycle and continues into the next cycle, the PDUs cannot be applied until the successful completion; therefore, the PDUs can be applied to the latter cycle when proof of successful completion can be verified.

## **CONTINUED COMPETENCY PROGRAM PROCESS**

### **STEP 1: EARN THE PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION**

The date of the Professional Credential Review Committee Approval is the date of Certification and the start of the 3-Year Certification Cycle.

### **STEP 2: CONTINUED COMPETENCY PROGRAM LEARNING PLAN TOOL**

- Upon certification, individuals will be provided with the Continued Competency Program Handbook to guide their 3-Year Certification Cycle.
- The Learning Plan is provided as a tool to proactively outline potential and record actual PDU activities during the three (3) renewal cycle.
- The Learning Plan does not have to be submitted until the end of the three (3) year renewal cycle; however, it is recommended that planning potential PDUs begin at the onset of Certification to maximize the three (3) year period.

### **Step 3: EARN AND RECORD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UNITS (PDUs)**

Individuals will participate in earning professional development units over the 3-Year Certification Cycle guided by the Continued Competency Program Handbook.

Individuals will record the professional development units within the learning plan, collect and attach any supporting documentation for the activities.

### **STEP 4: COMPLETE & SUBMIT THE CERTIFICATION RENEWAL APPLICATION**

Prior to the expiry of the 3-Year Certification Cycle date, individuals will be required to follow the Certification Renewal Process by submitting the requirements for maintaining and renewing their Certification.

### **STEP 5: UVM PDP PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIAL REVIEW COMMITTEE DECISION**

The Certification Renewal Process will be completed, and a decision rendered and recommended to the UAA.

Individuals approved for renewal will be notified, remain in Active Status, and provided with an updated 3-Year Certification Cycle expiry date.

Individuals not approved for renewal will be notified and placed in Suspended Status with instructions on how to lift the suspension.

### **STEP 6: NEXT 3-YEAR CERTIFICATION CYCLE STARTS**

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UNITS

Professional Development Units (PDUs) are units of measure used to quantify approved learning and professional development activities.

Education and Training PDUs must be related to the technical, leadership or strategic business management activities within the utility vegetation management industry. Topics are substantially consistent with the knowledge and skills related to the UVM Program Management Model: Planning, Implementing, Monitoring & Controlling and Evaluating UVM projects and programs.

Education and Training PDUs are designed to advance and enhance the knowledge and skills demonstrated during the completion of the UVM Certificate Training Program. (link to UVM Program Planning – final course in UVM Certificate program).

Giving Back to the Profession PDUs must be related to the utility vegetation management industry profession.

Giving Back to the Profession PDUs are designed to elevate participation and networking in the overall industry as collective whole. As a respected professional practitioner within the industry, your participation enhances and expands local viewpoints, shares best practices, assists in the development of others, and provides for a well-rounded and informed industry professional.

## EDUCATION & TRAINING PDUS

### Categories of Education & Training

Research has shown that employers require practitioners to have more than just technical knowledge and skills. Leadership and strategic business management intelligence are essential skills to support success.

Education and training professional development units are separated into the three (3) categories and PDUs from each of the categories will be required during the Certification Continued Competency Program.

- **Technical**

- Knowledge, skills, and behaviors related to the discipline of utility vegetation management: forestry, arboriculture, electrical, integrated vegetation management technical. (i.e. courses in arboriculture, safety, electrical systems, pesticides, etc.)

- **Leadership**

- Knowledge, skills, and behaviors related to leadership or LeadershipÆ (i.e. leading teams, leading effective meetings, emotional intelligence, performance reviews, personality assessments, Myers Briggs, True Colors, situational leadership, leadership studies, etc.)

- **Strategic Business Management**

- Knowledge, skills, and behaviors related to industry and organizational strategic business management performance. (i.e. strategic planning, contracts, budgets, time management, performance reporting, project management, etc.)

\*Note: Some courses may overlap areas and you may have to choose which category to enlist the activity or use the additional PDU area.

EDUCATION & TRAINING PDU REQUIREMENTS		
	Minimum Required	Maximum
Technical PDUs	10 PDUs	20 PDUs
Leadership PDUs	10 PDUs	20 PDUs
Strategic Business Management	10 PDUs	20 PDUs
<b>Total</b>	<b>40 PDUs</b>	<b>50 PDUs</b>

A minimum of 10 and a maximum of 20 PDUs will be required over the 3-Year Certification Cycle in each of the categories.

Depending on the interests of the individual, the total number of Education and Training PDUs earned will fall between 40-50 PDUs.

### Types of Education & Training Opportunities

Education and training opportunities are diverse and can vary in the depth of learning and the time required to complete. A variety of the three (3) types is recommended.

Education and training PDUs are separated into three types of learning: **Formal, Non-Formal** and **Informal**

### Formal Education & Training

*Formal Education* indicates that:

- Delivery is through an Accredited Educational Institution (i.e. University, College, Community College)
- Instruction or Guidance is provided by an Instructor or Facilitator
- Courses Contain *Specific Learning Outcomes & Objectives*
- Courses Contain *Structured Learning Activities* related to the Learning Outcomes & Objectives
- Courses Contain an *Evaluation* Component to Measure Learning Outcomes & Objectives
- Successful Completion Provides *Credit* toward Certificate, Diploma, Undergraduate or Graduate Degree Programs

*Example:* Bachelor of Forestry Degree Courses

*Formal Training* indicates that:

- Delivery *May or May Not* be through an Accredited University, College, Community College
- Delivery May be through a *Professional Development, Industry-Specific* or *Private Training Organizations*
- Courses May or May Not be Led by an Instructor or Facilitator
- Courses Contain Specific Learning Outcomes & Objectives
- Courses Contain Structured Learning Activities related to the Learning Outcomes & Objectives
- Courses Contain an Evaluation Component to Measure the Learning Outcomes & Objectives
- Successful Completion Does Not Provide Credit toward Academic Certificates, Diplomas, Undergraduate or Graduate Degree Programs (\*unless approved by an educational institution prior learning recognition)
- Successful Completion may lead to a Non-Credit Certificate of Achievement or Certificate of Completion

*Example:* Utility Vegetation Management Certificate Training Courses

## Rules Guiding Formal Education & Training PDUs

- **One (1) Instructional Hour = 2 PDU**

**Example:**

- Certification holder is enrolled in a diploma, degree or certificate program at a university or college.
- The course provides credit toward the degree program.
- University or college courses usually provide 30-40 instructional hours over the semester and successful completion will provide 60-80 credits toward the program. A maximum of 50 Educational and Training PDUs may be recorded in the 3-year cycle.
- 10 Instructional Hour Course = 20 PDUs
- **Record 20 PDUs**

- **Record PDUs in Increments to the Closest 0.25 PDU**

**Example:**

- Certification holder enrolls in a university/college extension training course that provides non-credit toward a Certificate of Completion program.
- The course is non-credit and does not provide credit toward a diploma, degree or certificate program.
- The course provides 6.5 hours of instruction over 2 days on the weekend.



- 6.25 Instructional Hours = 12.5 PDUs.

- **Record 12.5 PDUs.**

- **Record Only the Hours Relevant to the Certification Knowledge & Skills**

**Example:**

- Certification holder is enrolled in a course that only has a section or module directly relevant to the UVM Certification.

- The course in total is 30 Instructional Hours; however, the relevant section to UVM Certification is only 3 Instructional Hours.

- 3 Instructional Hours = 3 PDUs

- **Record 3 PDUs.**

- **Record Each Course or Section of a Course Separately**

**Example:**

- Certification holder is enrolled in a Bachelor of Forestry diploma program. The overall program is not recognized as PDUs.

- PDUs are recorded for the individual courses within the degree program.

- **Record PDUs for each course or section of a course relevant to UVM Certification.**

- **Provide Supporting Verifiable Documentation for Audit**

**Examples of Supporting Documentation**

- Course transcripts of marks

- Course syllabus, agendas, schedules, or outlines

- Course hourly break down for sections of courses relevant

- Certificate of Completion

- Letter of successful completion.

- Any other verifiable supporting documentation.

## **Non-formal Learning**

**Non-Formal Learning** can be defined as **any organized** learning opportunity that contains **participatory learning activities** designed to reinforce the intended learning.

**Non-Formal Learning:**

- Must have some type of structured participatory learning activity(s).

- May or May Not have Specific Learning Outcomes and Objectives.
- May or May Not have an Evaluation component.
- May or May Not provide a Certificate of Completion, Certificate of Participation or Certificate of Attendance.
- May be delivered through an Employer, Industry Organization or Association, Community College, Extension or Continuing Education, Private Organization, or Any other type of learning organization.

### **Examples of Non-Formal Learning Opportunities**

- Community College Non-Credit Short Course
- Employer Offered Online Training Modules
- Association Field Workshops
- Professional Meetings with a structured Education or Training Workshop Component
- Community College Non-Credit Short Course
- Self-Paced Digital Media Short Courses

### **Rules Guiding Non-Formal Education & Training PDUs**

- **One (1) Interactive Hours = 1.5 PDU**

#### **Example:**

- Certification holder enrolls in a weekend short course at the Community College.
- The course provides a hands-on workshop learning activity.
- The course is 6 interactive hours.
- 6 Interactive Hours = 9 PDUs (6 times 1.5)
- **Record 9 PDUs.**

- **Record PDUs in Increments to the Closest 0.25 PDU**

#### **Example:**

- Certification holder engages in the employers online training modules.
- The modules contain a reading component, interactive questions, and a self-administered exam at the end.
- The module is designed to be completed over a 3.5-hour time-period.
- 3.5 Interactive Hours = 5.25 PDUs (3.5 times 1.5).
- **Record 5.25 PDUs**

- **Record Only the Hours Relevant to the Certification Knowledge & Skills & Each Activity or Portion of an Activity Separately.**

**Example:**

- Certification holder attends a professional association 2-day workshop.
- The 2-day workshop has an afternoon that is relevant to UVM Certification.
- The workshop agenda designates 2 hours on the second afternoon to the relevant topic.
- 2 Interactive Hours = 3 PDUs. (2 times 1.5)
- **Record 3 PDUs.**

- **Provide Supporting Verifiable Documentation for Audit**

**Examples of Supporting Documentation**

- Workshop, Meeting, Class agendas, schedules, or outlines
- Hourly break down of the relevant activities within the overall activity.
- Certificates of Completion, Participation or Attendance
- Letter of successful completion, participation or attendance by organization offering training.
- Any other verifiable supporting documentation.

## **Informal Learning**

**Informal learning** can be defined as **any learning opportunity** encountered that does meet the criteria of formal or non-formal learning.

**Informal Learning:**

- May or May Not be Organized by Others.
- Most times is Self-Directed by the Individual.
- May or May Not have specific learning outcomes or objectives outlined.
- May or May Not have an evaluation component.
- May or May Not have an active participation component.

**Examples of Informal Learning**

- Listening to Online Webinars
- Listening to Conference Speakers
- Reading Books & Articles

- Discussions with Formal Mentors
- Lunch ‘n Learn Activities
- Employer Offered Videos or Reading Modules
- Research
- Listening to Lectures or Attending a Short Class
- Individual Learning Goals & Objectives

## Rules Guiding Informal Education & Training PDUs

- **Informal Learning PDUs are restricted to a maximum of 30 PDUs within a 3-Year Certification Cycle**

- **One (1) Participatory Hour = 1 PDU**

### **Example:**

- Certification holder attends an Industry Conference containing a total of 10 sessions.
- Certification holder attends 5 hours of sessions to listen to industry speakers and records in learning journal the learning activity and impacts.
- 5 Hours of Session Speaker = 5 PDUs. (5 times 1).
- **Record 5 PDUs.**

- **Record PDUs in Increments to the Closest 0.25 PDU**

### **Example:**

- Certification holder sits in on an industry webinar delivered online.
- The webinar is 30 minutes in length.
- 30 Minutes of Session Speaker = 0.5 PDUs. (.5 Hr times 1)
- **Record 0.5 PDUs.**

- **Record Only the Hours Relevant to the Certification Knowledge & Skills & Each Activity or Portion of an Activity Separately.**

### **Example:**

- Certification holder has a formal mentorship relationship.
- As a result of the mentorship, the certification holder has been asked to read several articles, research, and determine recommendations for their next meeting and discussion.
- The certification holder spends 2 hours reading and researching entering the findings and recommendations in their learning journal.

- The certification holder meets for 2 hours with mentor and discusses the activity.
- 2 Hours of Reading & Researching = 2 PDUs.
- 2 Hours of Mentor Discussion = 2 PDUs.
- **Record Reading & Researching 2 PDUs, and**
- **Record Mentorship Discussion 2 PDUs.**

• **Provide Supporting Verifiable Documentation for Audit**

**Examples of Supporting Documentation**

- Learning Journal Entries outlining readings, research, and findings.
- Learning Journal Entries outlining discussions with mentor.
- Letter from Mentor verifying activities over the 3-Year Certification Cycle.
- Lists of Articles, Research, Video Web Links
- Conference Agendas, Schedules, Activities
- Individual Learning Goals & Objectives with Activities to Accomplish
- Any other Verifiable Supporting Documentation.

TYPE OF EDUCATION & TRAINING	PDU VALUATION	EXAMPLE
<b>Formal</b>	1 Hour = 2 PDU	University or College Course (3 Credit/40 Hr) = 10 PDUs <b>Record 10 PDUs</b>
<b>Non-Formal</b>	1 Hour = 1.5 PDU	Evening Community College Class (3 Hrs) = 4.5 PDUs <b>Record 4.5 PDUs</b>
<b>Informal</b>	1 Hour = 1 PDU	Formal Mentorship (60 hours of Meetings & Discussion with Mentor & Logged in Learning Journal over the 3-year cycle)  60 Hours = 60 PDUs.  <b>Record 20 PDUs*</b> (*Maximum of 20 PDUs per Cycle)

## **GIVING BACK TO THE PROFESSION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UNITS**

Certification professionals recognize that sharing, networking and actively applying knowledge and skills related to Utility Vegetation Management are a valuable way to contribute to the profession and give back to the industry. Many find that giving back and assisting with developing others is an enriching learning experience that enhances professional development.

Although, giving back to the profession is a viable means of earning PDUs, there is a maximum limit on the number of PDUs that can be obtained in this manner. A minimum of 10 Giving Back PDUs are required within the three (3) year renewal cycle; however, a total of 20 PDUs will be the highest number recognized within each cycle toward Certification maintenance.

**Giving Back to the Industry PDU Requirements: Minimum required = 10 hours; Maximum = 20 hours.**

### **Earning "Giving Back to the Industry" PDUs**

Participating in collective industry initiatives and contributing to the development of others is a key component of being a professional and earning PDUs.

Giving Back to the Profession may include, but not limited to:

- **Participation on Professional Association or Society Boards or Committees**
  - Participate as a board member or committee member with an industry-related association, society, or group (i.e., UAA or UVMA Board)
- **Create New Content – Publish Articles, Books, Technical Material, Software**
  - Create new knowledge or resources for use by industry-related practitioners. (i.e., Write articles for UAA Newslines, T & D World, etc.)
- **Participate in Structured Subject Matter Expert Activities, Focus Groups, Specific Industry Task Forces, Working Groups, or Research**
  - Participate in special Ad Hoc committees or groups formed for specific tasks  
(i.e., Workforce Retention Task Force, UVM Training Course Content Review)
- **Make Presentations Relevant to the Profession**
  - Make formal or structured presentations to your peers or the industry sharing knowledge and skills related to the Certification.  
(i.e., Conference speaker, General Public Speaking)
- **Instructor or Facilitator for Formal or Non-Formal Education & Training Courses**
  - Lead and manage educational or training opportunities  
(i.e., Facilitator for UVM Certificate Training Course, Instructor for Industry Training Courses or Workshops)

- **Participate as a Formal Mentor or Coach**

- Lead and manage a formal mentorship or coaching opportunity with others within the industry.

(i.e., Mentor for the UVM Certificate Training Program, Mentorship at the Workplace Assisting Others)

- **Other Pre-Approved Leadership and Industry-Related Activities**

- Other relevant activities that have been identified by the Certification holder and receive prior approval from the Board of Governors Review Committee to earn Giving Back to the Profession PDUs.

(i.e., Certification holder has an opportunity to provide value to the industry that does not fit under any of the traditional categories)

## Rules Guiding Giving Back to the Profession PDUs

- **Giving Back to the Profession PDUs are restricted to a maximum of 20 PDUs within a 3-Year Certification Cycle**

- **Participation in activities must be volunteer in nature. Activities may be conducted during paid work hours; however, an individual may not be directly compensated for the activity.**

(Exception: An exception to this guideline is instructing/facilitating for the UVM Certificate Training Courses at the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. Compensation may be accepted for this activity.)

- **Instructor/Facilitator for University or College Credit Courses and UVM Certificate Training Course at UWSP = 20 PDUs**

- **One (1) Participatory Hour = 1 PDU**

**Example:**

- Certification holder provides a 1-Hour presentation at an industry conference
- Certification holder prepared for 4-Hours (i.e., Creating PPT, speaker notes, etc.)
- 1-Hour Speaking Presentation = 1 PDUs
- 4-Hours of Creating Content = 4 PDU
- Record 1-Hour Speaking Presentation = 1 PDUs, and
- Record 4-Hours Creating New Content = 4 PDU