

AFCPE® Approved Education Program

Guide to Experience Hours

Requirement to Obtain Experience Hours

The Accredited Financial Counselor (AFC®) Program is a rigorous program that requires successful completion of education, exam and experience. The program requires 1,000 hours of admissible financial counseling experience before a candidate can become certified. To ensure the same standards across all educational pathways, improve the capabilities of candidates, meet the expectations of the public and provide a service back to the community, students registered in the AFCPE® Approved Education Program are required to complete the same experiential component in the field prior to receiving certification.

Guidelines and Suggestions for Experience Hours

Experience hours are obtained by completing work in the *financial counseling* or *financial education* field. Your 1,000 hours of relevant experience may include:

- ✦ Developing financial education programming
- ✦ Teaching financial education programs
- ✦ Providing one-on-one financial counseling assistance

Candidates should contact local non-profits, banks and credit unions, or student-run financial counseling offices to inquire about volunteer and/or paid opportunities. Professors can also be a great resource in helping to identify opportunities.

Experience Supervised by an AFC® Certified Professional

Experience obtained under the supervision of an AFC® certified professional is weighted, allowing for an accelerated path to reaching the experience requirement. Every hour worked in one-on-one or group counseling activities under the supervision of an AFC® certified professional in good standing will be valued at 1.5 experience hours (100 hours worked = 150 experience hours). **Please note: experience hours are not final until confirmed and verified by AFCPE through the final certification process.**

Experience Timeline

Candidates have 3 years from the date they register for AFC certification to obtain and report the 1,000 required experience hours. Additionally, candidates may include relevant hours obtained up to 2 years prior to registering for AFC certification. We recommend that students begin as early as possible tracking time spent in activities that qualify for experience hours by keeping a journal or log of experience hours. Several examples of logs have been provided to the University Supervising Professor

at each AFCPE Approved Education Program. Please contact your University Supervising Professor to utilize one of these, or you may use one of your own design to track your hours carefully.

Once a student has successfully passed the AFC certification exam and obtained the required 1,000 hours of experience, the total number of hours accrued in each position must be reported through their myAFCPE account. The supervisor may be asked to confirm to AFCPE that the claims are accurate and complete.

The table below provides you with a more detailed explanation of activities that qualify for experience hours.

Guidelines and Suggestions for Experience Hours

Suggested Activity	Hours Allowed
One on one financial counseling or group financial counseling	Can be 100% of total hours required
Develop and/or teach financial education course(s) or webinars	Limited to 70% of total hours required.
Financial Counseling / Personal Finance related course work. Only client centric or experience-based projects qualify.	Limited to 10% of total hours required.
Attend local professional financial training opportunities (conferences, meetings, seminars)	Limited to 10% of total hours required.
Write for the AFCPE® newsletter and/or blog	Limited to 5% of total hours required.
Participate in web-based trainings such as webinars. <i>(The AFC® online webinar review course, an optional study resource provided by AFCPE does not count toward experience hours).</i>	Limited to 5% of total hours required.