

Certified Cooperative Communicator (CCC) Continuing Education Units (CEUs) Guidelines & FAQs



Executive Summary

Qualifying Activities for CEUs

Below are descriptions of qualifying activities or programs and the point allocation for each. No activity can be counted in more than one category. You do not have to have CEUs in each of the three categories; all of your CEUs can be in one category. Additional documentation, detailed on the application, is required for each category.

IMPORTANT: If you have questions about a particular activity, you should contact the CCC Program staff at NRECA. Please remember that work you have done may qualify for CEUs! Just because something is not listed in this document, or is not explained in detail, does not mean you may not be eligible for CEUs. List only the minimum number of activities to meet your 1.0 CEU each year. You will not receive extra points for work beyond the 1.0 CEU, and extra points cannot be carried over to the next year.

The NRECA CCC Program staff determines the number of CEUs for activities. NRECA bases their decisions on the standard format used to calculate CEUs. With CEUs, one hour of contact time equals 0.1 CEU and 10 hours equal 1.0 CEU.

Education

- College Programs
 1. College Degree - Automatic recertification for the year for obtaining a Bachelor's, Master's or Doctorate degree.
 2. Individual courses on a semester basis for credit when the subject matter relates directly to the practice of mass communication and/or marketing communication.
- Seminars and Continuing Education Programs - Participating in communications, marketing, or public relations organizations; other industry or trade associations; and/or formal electric cooperative training courses that applies to cooperative communications practice (e.g., professional development programs, formal on-line study courses, national conferences, regional programs, etc.).
 1. 2-day program – up to 1.0 CEU with approved agenda.
 2. 1-day program – up to .5 CEU with approved agenda

Professional Activities

- Leadership in cooperative communications – Service in communication, marketing or public relations organizations, and/or committees or comparable positions. Such organizations include (but are not limited to) the Certified Cooperative Communicator (CCC) Program, the Council of Rural Electric Communicators (CREC), the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), the Public Relations Society of

America (PRSA), the American Marketing Association (AMA), statewide and G&Ts, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Committee, Touchstone Energy and the Cooperative Communicators Association (CCA).

- National committee chair, officer or board member – 1.0 CEU per year
 - Special participation in activities (will vary by type – inquire with NRECA for approval) – up to 1.0 CEU per year.
 - Committee member – up to 1.0 CEU per year. Appropriate verification may be required.
- Presentations – Presentations or speeches including serving as a panelist on cooperative communications, marketing or public relations – up to 1.0 CEU per presentation. Appropriate verification must be submitted. You may include: speech outline, copy of speech, PowerPoint, or video of presentation.
 - Instruction – Serving as an instructor at a seminar, workshop or program on communications, marketing or public relations requiring preparation of outlines and other course-related material where subject matter relates to cooperative communications; or instruction in credit courses related to communications when sponsored by a fully accredited college or university – 1.0 CEU for each 10 hours of contact (0.1 CEU per hour) based on documentation provided.
 - Published works that contribute to the practice of cooperative communications.
 1. Published book – Automatic recertification.
 2. Each article, opinion piece or editorial, or book review published in a communications, marketing or public relations journal, magazine, newspaper or CCC newsletter – up to 1.0 CEU.
 - Awards for significant contributions in cooperative communications - *In order to receive credit for the award the individual must have played a significant role in the design, implementation and evaluation of the program.* These include awards given by communications, marketing or public relations organizations or other industry awards related to excellence in cooperative communications, research or teaching, such as the Council of Rural Electric Communicators (CREC) Spotlight on Excellence Awards, or an award given by an industry trade association or a professional membership organization – limit of 0.5 CEU per year toward the CEU requirement (including the Spotlight competition, with the exception being the Chesnutt Award, which is automatic recertification).

Service

- The Service category includes cooperative communications service to the local/national community (volunteer or pro-bono work which is outside normal work assignments) – limit 0.5 CEUs per year.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is the purpose of the continuing education requirement for CCCs?

A. Communicators/marketers who earned the CCC designation have proved, through the certification process, the quality of their skills and their knowledge of good practices in their field. However, it is essential for communicators to show that their professional skills and knowledge is current. This continuing education requirement was developed to assist CCCs maintain and improve their levels of professional competence.

Q. Do all CCCs have to earn continuing education units (CEUs) to maintain their status as active CCCs? What about the annual professional fee?

A. No. Only CCCs who earned certification in 2001 and afterward are required to participate in continuing education activities. However, CCCs who earned certification before 2001 may voluntarily participate in CCC continuing education activities. As for the professional fee, all CCCs—regardless of when they earned the certification—must pay the fee, which is currently \$175.

Q. I was notified in November 2025 that I had become a CCC. What is my timeframe for earning CEUs to remain a CCC in good standing?

A. The CEU requirement is on a calendar-year basis, January 1 through December 31. Any CCC who earned the designation in 2025 will have to earn 1.0 CEUs in 2026 to remain in “good standing” or “active.”

Q. How many credits do I need to earn every year to maintain my CCC designation? How can I earn them?

A. You need to earn 1.0 CEUs each year. This is the equivalent of 10 hours. You can earn credits in a variety of ways: education, professional activities, and service. Note that CEUs are not awarded retroactively, and credits must be earned during the calendar year. Extra CEUs cannot be carried over to the next year.

Q. Who determines how many CEUs a CCC continuing education activity is worth?

A. NRECA CCC program staff determines the number of CEUs for activities. NRECA bases their decisions on the standard format used to calculate CEUs (one hour of contact time equals 0.1 CEU, or rather 10 hours equal 1.0 CEU).

Q. What are some specific examples of CEUs that count toward my certification maintenance?

A. If you attend a communication seminar with five hours of educational activities (lectures, activities, etc.), you will earn 0.5 CEU. If you take a university-based course in communications/marketing, you will automatically earn your 1.0 CEUs since there is more than 20 hours of contact time for a two-credit or three-credit course. If you are active in professional communication organizations, you can also earn CEUs. Another way is to perform communication activities for a charity or organization in your community. There are many other ways, a well, to earn CEUs.

Q. Do Spotlight on Excellence Awards count?

A. Yes, Spotlight Awards (and other awards) count. You can earn up to 1.0 CEU per year for awards.

Q. I looked at the CCC continuing education policies and procedures guide. What if I am not sure that a seminar or conference will count toward CEUs? For example, I might not attend a conference unless I could apply attendance toward the requirements.

A. Contact Angie Hylton who will be able to give you guidance and approval beforehand.

Q. What is the process for keeping track of CEUs? Do I file my credits and documentation with NRECA?

A. You are responsible for maintaining and collecting your continuing education documentation. NRECA will randomly select several CCCs to provide proof of continuing education. If you are selected for the annual CCC continuing education audit, you will be required to provide proof of education for the previous year by providing one of the following:

- Copy of the certificate you received for attending.
- Receipt showing registration/attendance confirmation.
- Copy of the sign-in sheet with your name clearly visible.
- A verifying email from the instructor.

Q. What happens if I do not pay the CCC professional fee for one or more years?

A. You must pay the annual professional fee to remain an active CCC. If you do not pay the fee for one or more years, you must pay a reactivation fee plus the current year's fee. In addition, to regain your active CCC status, you must agree to a review of your education and training activities for the previous 12 months. The NRECA CCC Program Manager will consider recertification requirements on an individual basis.

For additional information on the CCC CEUs, please contact:

Angie Hylton – angie.hylton@nreca.coop or (703) 907-5656

For additional information on the CCC program, please contact:

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