

LEARNER HANDBOOK

August 2015



CAPELLA UNIVERSITY

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ABOUT CAPELLA UNIVERSITY

RIGHT TO CHANGE INFORMATION

Neither the Learner Handbook, nor any of the information contained herein, constitute a contract or create any contractual commitments between Capella University and any student, any prospective student, or any third party. The information contained in the Learner Handbook is regularly updated and is subject to change without notice. All updates to the handbook will be posted on Capella's website.

MISSION MORE

The mission of Capella University is to extend access to high quality bachelor's, master's, specialist, doctoral, and certificate programs for adults who seek to maximize their personal and professional potential. This mission is fulfilled through innovative programs that are responsive to the needs of adult learners and involve active, engaging, challenging, and relevant learning experiences offered in a variety of delivery modes.

UNIVERSITY VALUES MORE

Capella University is a learning-centered community that values:

- **Our learners**—We foster the success and achievement of our learners by providing an academically rich, outcomes-based education and a value-added customer experience.
- **Human potential**—We honor the potential of each person. We believe in people, challenge them, and help them achieve their goals; we enable transformations.
- **Achievement**—The achievement of Capella learners is our measure of success. We're proud to take accountability for our individual and organizational results.
- **Decisive collaboration**—As a nimble organization, we foster a culture of decisiveness that is informed by practical collaboration. We empower each other to seek input and constructive debate, then make decisions and move forward.
- **Innovation**—We value innovation and entrepreneurial risk-taking. We strive for continuous improvement of both the learning experience and our business performance.
- **Integrity**—We live our values with transparency and high ethical standards. We honor our commitments.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY MORE

Capella University's educational philosophy focuses on developing scholar-practitioners through learning that incorporates both theoretical knowledge and relevant experience. Learners synthesize scholarship with practical application appropriate to their level—as reflective-practitioners at the baccalaureate level, as practitioner-scholars at the master's level, and as scholar-practitioners at the doctoral level. Capella University faculty are themselves scholar-practitioners or as appropriate, practitioner-scholars. They guide and facilitate learner development through dissemination of knowledge and the formation of learning communities. They promote active learning, and they model what it means to be scholar-practitioners and life-long learners. Capella's philosophy also emphasizes collaboration: learners with their peers and learners with faculty. Learners and faculty reflect together on their experiences, build and apply knowledge, participate in communities of learning, and make theoretical and practical contributions in their fields.

INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION MORE

Capella University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission.

PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION MORE

In addition to its institutional accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission, Capella University has received professional accreditations for select programs and specializations.

CAPELLA REFERENCES FOR LEARNERS

Capella University's up-to-date publications and official documents help you plan your course registration, prepare for advising appointments, and learn how Capella's university policies can guide your decisions as you manage your learning progress.

ACADEMIC CALENDARS MORE

The Academic Calendar details important dates related to all phases of your academic career at Capella University.

- Course drop schedules and deadlines
- Course enrollment periods and deadlines
- Grading periods and deadlines
- Quarter start and end dates

UNIVERSITY CATALOG MORE

Capella's *University Catalog* includes requirements for the university's academic offerings, policies related to learner and academic affairs, and information about the university's philosophy and operations. The catalog is effective at the start dates of January and July quarters.

Catalog addenda introduce new academic offerings, requirements, and related regulatory and policy information, and may correct errors previously published in the catalog.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES MORE

Capella's university policies document the written rules, regulations, and courses of action for most academic functions.

CONNECTING AT CAPELLA—KEY RESOURCES

As a Capella learner, you have a wide range of resources that support and enhance your progress. Comprehensive resource information can be found on iGuide, Capella University's personalized web portal. For example, through the My Capella page on iGuide, you can access your Academic Plan, view financial aid resources, and edit your personal information. The [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page provides answers to other questions you may have.

ACADEMIC ADVISING MORE

Academic Coaches and Program Advisors provide support and resources for you throughout your academic career with Capella, including proactive coaching, academic planning and course enrollment support, guidance on issue resolution, and assistance with understanding university policies. If you are in the FlexPath program, you will be supported by a [FlexPath Coach](#), who will provide individualized coaching, academic planning, and guidance throughout your program.

- Degree requirements and your [Academic Plan](#)
- Specialization and course selections and registration
- [Course registration and withdrawals](#)

ACADEMIC SUCCESS RESOURCES MORE

Capella University provides comprehensive multimedia activities, resources, and tutorials to help you develop your academic, professional, and personal skills.

- [Academic integrity and avoiding plagiarism](#)
- [APA style and formatting](#)
- Best practices for [working with a team](#)
- Building [critical thinking](#) skills
- [Community of Excellence](#) workshops
- Evaluate and improve your skills in the [Writing Center](#)
- Information on improving your [reading comprehension and retention](#)
- [Quantitative Skills Center](#) resources, labs, and help desk
- Recommendations for [managing stress](#)
- Strategies for [time management](#), setting goals, and maintaining a schedule
- [Supplemental instruction](#)
- [Tips for becoming a more effective online learner](#)

Connecting at Capella—Key Resources, *continued*

Academic Success Resources, *continued*

Academic Tutoring MORE

Find help accomplishing your academic goals through Smarthinking, a free online tutoring service through which you can submit a paper for customized writing feedback or engage in sessions focused on specific subjects.

ADMISSIONS AND RECORDS

The Admissions and Records team administers admission decisions. It also documents your academic progress, grades, and any official changes you make to your program, preserving the integrity of your academic records.

- Admission application
- Changes of start date, program, specialization, and concentration
- Transfer credit evaluations
- Course registration
- Enrollment status verification and changes
- Grades
- Graduation application and degree audits
- Transcript and diploma requests

For more information on these services, contact the academic advising team.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION MORE

More than 50,000 alumni are members of the Alumni Association, which provides valuable professional networking connections and mentoring opportunities for current learners and alumni.

- [Capella Ambassador Program](#)
- [Capella Peer Mentoring](#)
- [Volunteer Opportunities](#)

BOOKSTORE MORE

Visit the Capella Online Bookstore (powered by ED MAP) to purchase your course materials and to view additional information you may need to complete each course.

- Coursepacks
- Electronic textbooks
- Hardware
- Software*
- Textbooks

*Select Microsoft and Adobe software can be purchased via the [online software store](#).

Email: studentsupport.capella@edmap.com

Phone: 800-274-9104

Hours: M–F 9am EST to 8:30pm EST

CAPELLA STORE MORE

Show your school spirit with Capella gear.

- Men's, women's, and children's apparel
- Novelty items

CAREER CENTER MORE

In the Career Center, you can schedule an appointment with a career counselor, or use a variety of self-service resources, to learn how to use your education to advance your career. Visit the Career Center early in your studies to learn what you can start doing now to position yourself for success.

- [Career Connection](#), Capella's job search and recruiting tool
- [Career Planning Self-Assessment](#)
- Interactive tutorials, including [Making the Most of Career Center Resources](#)
- Job search tools, including tips for [building your resume and a resume-building tool](#)
- [Networking assistance](#)
- [Online career seminars and presentations](#)
- [Career counseling appointments](#) with professionally trained counselors
- Strategies for [managing your career](#)
- Techniques for improving your [interviewing skills](#)
- [What Can I Do With A Degree In...?](#) career guides for university degree programs and specializations

Connecting at Capella—Key Resources, *continued*

COMMUNITY: SOCIAL NETWORKING MORE

Capella University's social networking tools help keep you connected to other learners, alumni, Capella faculty and staff, and others who are interested in online education or programs.

- Capella blogs, including the [Capella University Blog](#), [Education Matters](#), [IAS Community](#), and [Off the Shelf](#)
- Capella's [Facebook](#) page
- Capella's [LinkedIn](#) group
- Capella's private [Campus Community](#) and [Facebook Community](#)
- Capella's [Twitter](#) page
- Capella's [YouTube](#) channel

DISABILITY SERVICES MORE

Capella University's Disability Services department provides an array of resources and a knowledgeable staff to guide you in accessing any services or accommodations you may need while engaging in your academic career.

- Available accommodations and how to request them
- Disability qualifications and definitions
- Rights and responsibilities

Email: DisabilityServices@capella.edu

DISSERTATION SUPPORT CENTER

Capella's Dissertation Support Center promotes success in the comprehensive examination and dissertation phases of your degree program, while ensuring the quality and integrity of dissertation research. Connect with your Dissertation Advisor to discuss strategies for dissertation success and to determine a plan for navigating your dissertation milestones. Explore resources to manage your doctoral journey and to navigate the Institutional Review Board and format editing processes.

- [Dissertation Research at Capella](#)
- [Doctoral Programs](#)
- [Managing Your PhD Journey](#)
- [Research Knowledge Base](#)

Email: Dissertation@capella.edu

FINANCES MORE

Your account information, including tuition and fees and available financial aid resources is offered through Capella University's Finance department.

- Billing inquiries
- Employer reimbursement
- Financial aid application deadlines
- Financial aid award amounts
- Lender directory
- Programs and savings

Tuition and Fees MORE

The Tuition and Fees table includes all charges applied to your program at Capella University; the Tuition and Fees policy provides additional details and procedures.

- Application fees
- Learner/Student ID replacement fees
- Residency and practicum expenses
- [Tuition and Fees](#)
- [Tuition and Fee Refunds](#)

Financial Aid Office: fao@capella.edu

Business Office:

CapellaBusinessOffice@capella.edu

LIBRARY MORE

The Capella University Library provides access to a full range of scholarly articles and ebooks, as well as research support that will help you find the right information for your course assignments 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- Dissertation literature review consultations
- Full-text article and ebook databases
- Interlibrary loan services
- Librarians and professional staff
- Guides and multimedia tutorials

Library Call Hours, Central Time

Mon–Tues: 8:00 am–8:00 pm

Wed–Fri: 8:00 am–5:00 pm

Saturday: Closed

Sunday: 4:00 am–8:00 pm

Email: Librarian@capella.edu

Phone: 1.888.375.8221

Connecting at Capella— Key Resources, *continued*

LICENSURE SUPPORT CENTER MORE

The licensure support team provides information and resources related to professional licensure and certification and assists learners throughout the licensure and certification application process.

- Professional licensure research assistance
- School-specific resources for exploring licensure options, preparing for licensure, and maintaining your license
- Verification of educational requirement completion

MILITARY SUPPORT MORE

If you are a Capella learner serving in the military, a veteran, the spouse of a U.S. service member, or the recipient of VA education benefits, you have the support of a team of experts who can help you manage your progress effectively.

- Course scheduling changes due to military obligations
- Tuition assistance and military scholarships
- Veterans Administration (VA) benefits

TECHNICAL SUPPORT MORE

Technical assistance for all Capella websites, including iGuide and your courseroom, is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- Direct technical support via phone and live chat
- Online tutorials
- Self-help tools and frequently asked questions

Computer Requirements MORE

Computer hardware, software, and an Internet connection are the primary means of participating in courses and are significant contributors to academic success. Capella provides learners with the opportunity to purchase required applications (e.g., Microsoft® Office) at a significant discount through the bookstore.

CAPELLA TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Throughout your academic career at Capella University, you'll likely come across specialized words and phrases that are used to indicate your academic status, distinguish between degree-related requirements, and recognize many of your achievements.

Academic recognition MORE—Capella University acknowledges the academic accomplishments of its learners through recognitions including the Dean's List, the President's List, and Graduation with Honors. Eligibility is based on minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) and other academic requirements in eligible programs.

Academic standing MORE—determined by academic performance and measured by the cumulative grade point average (GPA) or FlexPath evaluations. To maintain good academic standing, learners must meet specific minimum cumulative GPA and program-specific requirements based on undergraduate or graduate course work.

Certification MORE—a professional credential issued by a private organization designating specialized knowledge or skills.

Commencement MORE—an optional ceremony that is a recognition of the conferral of a degree. To participate in a commencement ceremony, learners must have completed all degree program requirements or be successfully progressing toward conferral.

Completion of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS) MORE—the achievement of a specific, significant doctoral milestone: successful completion of doctoral course work and requirements to establish eligibility for the next phase of doctoral studies, the comprehensive examination. This recognition is not an academic degree or credential, but it marks a significant academic achievement.

Conferral MORE—the issue of a degree or certificate by Capella University.

Capella Terms and Definitions, *continued*

Degree- and Certificate-Related Terms

Certificate—a non-degree credential at a specific level awarded upon successful completion of course work and learning experiences in an academic or professional field.

Certificate level—based on the highest completed degree level. Capella offers certificates at the graduate and post-master's levels.

Certificate program—a course of study that leads to the award of a certificate. Examples of Capella's certificate programs include:

- Contemporary Theory in Addictive Behavior
- Post-Master's Certificate in College Teaching
- Specialist Certificate in School Psychology

Combined options—designated bachelor's and master's specializations with a set of master's-level courses that is applied to the requirements for both the bachelor's degree and the master's degree. The bachelor's degree is earned using the designated master's courses; the master's degree is awarded upon completion of the remaining program requirements of the master's specialization. Examples of Capella's combined options include:

- Combined BS/MBA option
- Combined BS/MPH option
- Combined BS/MS in Information Systems and Technology Management option
- Combined BS/MS in Public Safety option

Concentration—a specific set of courses in a narrowly defined field of study that are taken either to fulfill a degree program requirement or to add to degree program requirements. The degree and concentration are awarded simultaneously upon completion of the degree program and concentration requirements.

Degree—the name of a specific academic degree that may include a broad academic subject. Capella's current degrees include:

- Bachelor of Science (BS)
- Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)
- Master of Business Administration (MBA)
- Master of Health Administration (MHA)
- Master of Public Administration (MPA)
- Master of Public Health (MPH)
- Master of Science (MS)
- Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)
- Master of Social Work (MSW)
- Education Specialist (EdS)
- Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)
- Doctor of Education (EdD)
- Doctor of Health Administration (DHA)
- Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
- Doctor of Psychology (PsyD)
- Doctor of Public Administration (DPA)
- Doctor of Public Health (DrPH)
- Doctor of Social Work (DSW)

Degree level—a postsecondary academic achievement classified by a prescribed depth of understanding relative to course work and learning experiences. Capella's academic degree levels are:

- Bachelor's
- Master's
- Specialist
- Doctoral

Degree program—a specific set of course work and learning experiences in a field of study that, upon successful completion, results in the conferral of a degree or credential. Examples of Capella's degree programs include:

- Bachelor of Science in Information Technology
- Master of Business Administration
- Master of Public Administration
- Master of Science in Human Resource Management
- Education Specialist
- Doctor of Education
- Doctor of Philosophy in Human Services
- Doctor of Psychology
- Doctor of Public Administration

Capella Terms and Definitions, *continued*

Degree- and Certificate-Related Terms, continued

FlexPath option MORE—designed to provide learners with the opportunity to earn a Capella degree by allowing them to demonstrate competencies in a direct assessment model of learning. Learners demonstrate mastery of all course competencies by completing assessments at their own pace. The degree and its specialization are awarded upon completion of the FlexPath program requirements.

Multiple specializations—multiple courses of study (specializations) within an eligible degree program that lead to the award of a single degree with two or more specializations. The degree and its specializations are awarded simultaneously upon completion of the program requirements for each specialization.

Specialization—a course of study associated with a specific degree program that leads to the award of a degree. Examples of Capella's specializations include:

- Bachelor of Science in Information Technology with a specialization in Project Management
- Master of Business Administration with a specialization in Finance
- Education Specialist with a specialization in Leadership in Educational Administration

Degree- and Certificate-Related Terms, end

Distance learning—the delivery of educational instruction to remote learners. Not all distance learning is online learning.

Graduation MORE—the successful completion of a degree program with the conferral of a degree from Capella University (degree-seeking learners only).

Honor societies and professional organizations MORE—Capella University-approved and supported chapters of national honor societies and professional organizations that are related to the university's academic offerings.

Licensure MORE—a requirement for learners who want to practice as a professional in an occupation that requires a license, usually from a specific state. It is essential to verify that your program meets your state's educational requirements prior to starting your studies.

Maximum time to degree completion MORE—the time allotted for learners to complete their degree or certificate program. Maximum time to completion begins on the learner's initial program start date and continues regardless of course activity, enrollment status, or change of specialization until a degree is conferred.

Outcomes-based curriculum—curriculum that aligns with Capella's outcomes-based values. To create outcomes-based curriculum, Capella faculty and staff establish learning outcomes; develop or select assessment measures to determine whether the intended learning outcomes have been achieved; create in-course and out-of-course experiences that help learners demonstrate the intended learning outcomes; and discuss and use assessment results to improve learning.

- **Competency**—the knowledge, skills, abilities, and professional attributes required to successfully perform a task in a given context. At Capella University, courses are designed based on the competencies necessary to demonstrate a program's intended learning outcomes.
- **Learning Outcomes**—the knowledge, skills, abilities, and professional attributes a learner demonstrates upon completing an academic offering such as a degree or certificate program or a specialization.

Capella Terms and Definitions, *continued*

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) MORE—an academically approved means of evaluating and measuring (assessing) knowledge that is accomplished outside of a Capella classroom. There is a limited number of degree programs at Capella to which PLA may be applied. Capella uses two different approaches to PLA. A *petition* is a written assessment where learners demonstrate their mastery of course competencies. It recognizes learners who have achieved previous learning. Examples can include learning gained through work experience, certifications, professional development, training, hobbies, and other types of non-academic course work. *Documented credit* allows learners the opportunity to earn credit toward their degree with specific industry-recognized certifications that align with Capella University competencies.

Program start date MORE—reflects the official start date of a learner's academic program and is assigned when a learner first registers for at least one course that is part of a degree or certificate program if he or she remains registered through census date (12th calendar day of a course).

Residencies MORE—face-to-face learning experiences varying in length and number according to program and specialization. They include dissertation research seminars, residencies, and the year-in-residence.

Schools—Capella University has six schools: the School of Undergraduate Studies, the School of Business and Technology, the School of Education, the School of Nursing and Health Sciences, the School of Public Service Leadership, and the Harold Abel School of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Transfer credit evaluation—a review of all non-Capella course work to determine the acceptance of transfer credits. The transfer credit evaluation is based on requirements published in the catalog that is current at the learner's program start date. A transfer credit evaluation may be reissued when an enrolled learner requests a change of catalog, degree program, or specialization.

FREQUENTLY USED ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Capella University faculty and staff consult with numerous governmental and professional organizations and associations to prepare you for the challenges that lie ahead. You'll likely come across a few acronyms and abbreviations that are used by or associated with these organizations and associations as you work toward achieving your educational and professional goals.

ADA MORE—Americans with Disabilities Act

APA MORE—American Psychological Association (Learners follow the current edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association for all scholarly writing.)

CENTSS MORE—Center for Transforming Student Services

CLEP® MORE—College-Level Examination Program

DANTES MORE—Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support

DSST MORE—DANTES Subject Standardized Tests

ETS® MORE—Educational Testing Service

FAFSA® MORE—Free Application for Federal Student Aid

FERPA MORE—Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974

FOIA MORE—Freedom of Information Act

IRB MORE—Institutional Review Board

QM MORE—Quality Matters

SEC MORE—Securities and Exchange Commission

VA MORE—Department of Veterans Affairs

Capella University

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