

LEARNER HANDBOOK

July 2016



CAPELLA UNIVERSITY

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ABOUT CAPELLA UNIVERSITY

MISSION

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

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

At Capella University, we believe education transforms people's lives and society—immediately and permanently. The innovative, intentionally designed competency-based education we offer enables adult learners to meet challenges in their careers, lead and make new contributions in their disciplines, and reach their professional and personal goals. Our educational pathways respect existing expertise and allow learners to focus on what is essential, as they gain new competencies and expand on those they already have. The credentials they earn are signs of the professional relevancy, quality, and immediate applicability of their educational experience at Capella University and help to create new opportunities in the future. As partners in their education, we proudly serve the lifelong learning ambitions that allow our learners, alumni, their many communities, and our broader society to thrive.

INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

Capella University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission.

PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION

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

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.

CAPELLA REFERENCES FOR LEARNERS

ACADEMIC CALENDARS

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

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

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 Campus, Capella University's personalized web portal. For example, through the My Capella page on Campus, 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

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 a 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

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

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 academic advising.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

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

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.

Bookstore Hours, Central Time

Mon–Fri: 8:00 am–7:30 pm

Email: studentsupport.capella@edmap.com

Phone: 1.800.274.9104

CAPELLA STORE

Show your school spirit with Capella gear.

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

CAREER CENTER

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

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

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

DOCTORAL SUCCESS CENTER

Capella's Doctoral Success Center promotes achievement in the advanced phases of your doctoral degree program, while ensuring the quality and integrity of doctoral research. Connect with your Doctoral Advisor to discuss strategies for success as you determine a plan for preparing for your dissertation or doctoral capstone and navigate each milestone along the way.

Email: Doctoral@capella.edu

FINANCES

Capella University's Finance department maintains your account information, including tuition.

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

Tuition and Fees

The Tuition and Fees table in the *University Catalog* 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 Email: fao@capella.edu

Business Office Email:

CapellaBusinessOffice@capella.edu

LIBRARY

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–Wed: 8:00 am–8:00 pm

Thurs–Fri: 8:00 am–5:00 pm

Saturday: Closed

Sunday: 4:00 pm–8:00 pm

Email: Librarian@capella.edu

Phone: 1.888.375.8221

Connecting at Capella— Key Resources, *continued*

LICENSURE SUPPORT CENTER

The licensure support team provides information, assistance, and resources related to professional licensure and certification.

- Assistance researching state-specific requirements
- School-specific resources for exploring licensure options, preparing for licensure, and maintaining your license
- Support completing license application forms

MILITARY SUPPORT

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

Technical assistance for all Capella websites, including Campus 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

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—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—determined by academic performance and measured by the cumulative grade point average (GPA) and program-specific requirements.

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

Commencement—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 and submit their RSVP by the deadline required to attend.

Capella Terms and Definitions, *continued*

Competency-based education (CBE)—

Competencies are expressions of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform a given task in a specific context.

In **competency-based education**, the curriculum is organized around professionally relevant competencies and is built to help learners acquire or master these competencies. Competencies, then, build toward program learning outcomes, which are statements of what students can expect to be able to do with their knowledge upon successful completion of the program. All Capella programs are outcomes and competency based.

Outcomes-based learning involves defining what success looks like in a particular field and then developing the most direct educational path to that success. Capella creates academic programming based on current scholarship and professional standards and guidelines in each field. We also work with employers to find out what they expect from their employees. We use these insights to focus our academic programs on specific, measurable expectations called learning outcomes.

Completion of Advanced Graduate Study (CAGS)—

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. This recognition is not an academic degree or credential, but it marks a significant academic achievement.

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

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 undergraduate, 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 specializations with a set of master's-level courses that are applied to the requirements of the bachelor's degree program and may be applied to the requirements of the corresponding master's degree program. The bachelor's degree is earned using the designated master's courses. Upon completion of the bachelor's degree, learners enroll in the corresponding master's degree program. 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 Psychology 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.

Capella Terms and Definitions, *continued*

Degree- and Certificate-Related Terms, continued

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 Emergency Management (DEM)
- Doctor of Health Administration (DHA)
- Doctor of Information Technology (DIT)
- 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

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

Capella Terms and Definitions, *continued*

Licensure—a state requirement for learners who want to practice as professionals in specific occupations. Each type of license has unique educational requirements, including type of degree, course work, and experience hours. Different states have different requirements for the same type of license. It is essential that learners know these requirements and structure their program accordingly. Learners should also be aware of additional requirements, such as criminal history, personal background, examinations, and post-graduate supervised hours.

Maximum time to degree completion—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.

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)—an academically approved means of evaluating and measuring (assessing) knowledge that is accomplished outside of a Capella courseroom. 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—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.

Residencies—face-to-face learning experiences varying in length and number according to program and specialization. Certain programs and specializations also include an online course component as part of the residency experience.

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—Americans with Disabilities Act

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

CENTSS—Center for Transforming Student Services

CLEP®—College-Level Examination Program

DANTES—Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support

DSST—DANTES Subject Standardized Tests

ETS®—Educational Testing Service

FAFSA®—Free Application for Federal Student Aid

FERPA—Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974

FOIA—Freedom of Information Act

IRB—Institutional Review Board

QM—Quality Matters

SEC—Securities and Exchange Commission

VA—Department of Veterans Affairs

Capella University

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www.capella.edu



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