

Continuing Education
(Community Education credit-free classes)

Operations and overview

Who is a student?

Generally students are required to be 18 years or older based upon the course. We consider a student as anyone who wants to take a class for the love of learning. Our students take courses because they want to combine learning with having fun, doing something new, and because they want to meet people with similar interests. Many of our students love the Western New York and southern Ontario area and are looking to make contacts.

What is Continuing Education?

Continuing Education at Niagara University provides an opportunity for people in the community to learn from others with skills and knowledge to share. Today, we offer a wide variety of credit-free courses, trips, seminars and programs designed to give adults an opportunity to learn new skills.

The department remains committed to the mission of the university and the philosophy that inexpensive, community-based education enriches the life of the community, the university and the people who live here.

I can't make class - Do I get a refund?

Unfortunately no. Please understand that we have to decide if we run a class based upon the enrollments we receive. You will receive a refund if the course cancels. We generally make a decision on holding a class 2 days before the class and you will be notified if it cancels.

What about parking? (It's free!... only if you follow the rules)

Campus Safety requires that all students to get a visitor pass at their office which is located across from the Dwyer Arena. Parking is available in campus lots for free as long as you park in student spots (yellow). Visitors/students should obtain a temporary parking pass at Campus Safety. Campus Safety may also be contacted at (716) 286-8111.

Will classes close for bad weather?

Listen to major news outlets on the radio and TV. Also, one of the reasons we need your email address is to notify you. Closing the university is only made by top level administrators and will be communicated through media outlets. If the Day classes are canceled, then evening classes are canceled. When weather declines during a day when the university is open, a decision on canceling evening classes usually is made by 2 p.m.

Who can teach?

Teaching for our department is a fabulous networking and marketing opportunity. Continuing and Community Education does not require its instructors to have teaching degrees or certification, but must show a thorough knowledge of their subject. Adults who have skills or knowledge that they would like to share are invited to submit a course proposal. All proposals are reviewed and if selected, the instructor is called in for an interview with the director.

Instructors hold temporary status at Niagara University. As such, the office approves and assists instructors with developing their own courses and materials. Our office can arrange for space within the university or community for the instructor to teach his/her class. There are no benefits associated with being a temporary employee through Continuing Education.

If teachers are operating a program involving students under the age of 18 they will undergo a background check and clearinghouse through normal Human resources operations before they are approved to teach.

How do I design a program?

Our office schedules programs year round. Each term typically runs along the academic calendar. You may schedule a class that lasts that entire term or you may design a program that is shorter. Keeping in mind that our population is mostly busy working professionals, we find that the shorter the course can be the better. The exceptions to this rule are language, fine arts, and more intensive courses. Though traditionally longer in length, it is sometimes convenient to schedule these as weekend intensive programs.

The course is for you to design. Feel free to use our expertise in determining how long and when to offer a course. In partnership, we can come up with exciting programs that fill the needs of our students. Most courses are scheduled in the evening from 6 PM and run as late as 9:30 PM. Course are also scheduled on weekends. We are looking to develop more daytime offerings on weekdays. Course and workshop proposals may be submitted at any time but there are pre-determined deadlines for each teaching session.

How do I format my course proposal?

The following guidelines will help you design a winning proposal. The best instructors are those who have a love of their subject, a desire to share it and a basic competence in the subject they will be teaching. If you think that you meet these qualifications, then don't hesitate to try teaching.

The foundation of your proposal should be your course description. If you can make your course sound appealing and communicate clearly and concisely what you will be teaching, chances are you will also be successful as an instructor. Good course descriptions will also interest more people in your course and increase enrollments. The course proposal is comprised of:

- A title; description of what you will be teaching; instructor biography or list of qualifications
- For editing purposes, your entire course proposal cannot exceed 100 words. Please attach your resume, references and include any copies of certifications. The first five words of a course description will often determine if the reader will go on or pass to another course description. Make them count!
- Interviews. The director and staff review all proposals. If your proposal is accepted, an interview will be scheduled.

During the interview, we will discuss:

- Your proposal in greater detail.
- Pay scale and policies. There are no Employee Benefits associated with being an instructor.
- Time of course and starting date.
- Logistics such as specific needs, limits, equipment.

What can Continuing Education offer you as an instructor?

Your experience as an instructor gives you visibility with a diverse audience both through the catalog and in the classroom. We put your name in the hands of people throughout Western New York and Canada. We have established ourselves as a resource guide for those who are looking for training and services as well as classroom instruction. Being an instructor has opened the doors to many professional opportunities for many of our instructors. We are proud of the visibility that we have been able to provide to our team of experts. If you have your own business or are in a private professional service to the public, being an instructor offers you a new clientele resource.

We do not allow “sales pitches” or in-class advertisements of your company or office. We list your biography in each catalog beneath your course. We provide a vehicle for the display of your talent and expertise. There are no Employee Benefits associated with being an instructor.

Values of Niagara University

- Niagara University is a Catholic, Vincentian institution with an obligation to ensure an environment free of discrimination on the basis of religion, national origin, gender, race, sexual orientation, age, disability, veteran status, predisposing genetic characteristic, domestic violence victim status, or any other category protected by law. Similarly, if you feel you have not been treated in a manner that fits these values, please let a staff member know.
- You, and any of your employees, agents, or guests, are expected to abide by the request of campus officials and Campus Safety officers while on the campus of Niagara University.
- You will be expected to abide by the “smoke free” campus policy that applies to all university premises and vehicles.

- d. Please do not to use the Niagara University name or trademarks to publicly promote your event without permission of the Niagara University Department of Public Relations. This includes on any publicity for your event.
- e. Customer (you), its officers, employees, agents, and guests, are expected to abide by all applicable laws and regulations.

Niagara University is committed to having a healthy and beautiful campus. Smoking is not allowed within any building or other enclosed facility and is only allowed in temporary designated areas as indicated by maps and signage.