

National Council on Family Relations Academic Program Review (APR) Application Process Directions and Guidelines

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Introduction

National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) Academic Program Review (APR) recognizes accredited* institutions offering undergraduate and graduate degrees that include coursework following the Standards and Criteria for the provisional Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE) credential. Complete information on the CFLE credential can be found on the NCFR website at <https://www.ncfr.org/cfle-certification>. Programs that meet the CFLE Standards and Criteria are identified as [NCFR CFLE-Approved Programs](#).

The provisional level of certification is available to applicants who have at least a bachelor degree but who have not yet earned sufficient work experience hours in Family Life Education to qualify for full certification (see <https://www.ncfr.org/cfle-certification/become-certified/work-experience-full-certification> for information on full Certification). Students who graduate from NCFR CFLE-approved programs may apply for provisional CFLE status via the [CFLE-approved program application process](#) and do not have to take the CFLE exam. Upon approval, programs are sent information regarding the CFLE-approved program application process. See *Appendix E* for a review of the CFLE-approved program application process and the CFLE-approved program checklist template.

NCFR CFLE Program Approval

NCFR CFLE-approval may be granted for a specified degree program or for an identified CFLE track of courses offered through several departments. In its application, the institution identifies the set of courses that best address the 10 Family Life Education (FLE) content areas; the set is typically 10 to 15 three-credit courses plus a supervised practicum or internship that includes a focus on FLE (a two or three-credit course that involves at least 120 hours in the field). The application submission consists primarily of the syllabi of the courses. Syllabi are peer-reviewed by the Academic Program Review Committee.

NCFR approval is not an accreditation. Approval is based on the “fit” between the identified course work and the 10 FLE content areas, plus an internship/practicum experience that follows the CFLE Standards and Criteria. *Appendix A* details the Family Life Education Content and Practice Guidelines. Briefly, the 10 FLE content areas address:

1. Families & Individuals in Societal Contexts
2. Internal Dynamics of Families
3. Human Growth and Developmental across the Lifespan
4. Human Sexuality
5. Interpersonal Relationships
6. Family Resource Management
7. Parent Education and Guidance
8. Family Law and Public Policy
9. Professional Ethics & Practice
10. Family Life Education Methodology

* Accredited means a recognized regional agency for the accreditation of a Baccalaureate Institutions, Acceptable agencies include: *Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)*, *Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)*, *North Central Association of Colleges and Schools*, *Higher Learning Commission (NCA HLC)*, *New England Association of Schools and Colleges Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (NEASC CIHE)*, *Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS COC)*, and *Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Senior College and University Commission (WASC WSCUC)*.

Academic Program Review Committee

CFLE professionals serving on the Academic Program Review Committee approve programs that are deemed to meet the CFLE Standards and Criteria. The Committee makes a review of the application and, working with the NCFR Academic Program Liaison, reaches a conclusion about the course work reflected in the application.

Committee members typically serve a three-year, voluntary term. Throughout the year, the Committee members work largely independently; their curriculum reviews are coordinated by the Academic Program Liaison. Once per year, at the NCFR Annual Conference, the Committee gathers to review the application review process and consider potential policy amendments regarding NCFR CFLE-approved programs.

Committee members are family science professionals who have received a doctoral degree, are qualified to review college level curricula, and bring both an academic and practitioner perspective to the review process. They are also active members of NCFR and hold the CFLE credential.

Academic Program Liaison

The Academic Program Liaison position is a professional appointment by NCFR. Their primary responsibility is the management of the Academic Program Review process. The Liaison's responsibilities include coordination of work by the APR Committee and projects that support the NCFR Family Life Education Director's initiatives.

Currently, the Academic Liaison position is held by Claire Kimberly, Ph.D., CFLE. Her email address is APRLiaison@ncfr.org. Dr. Kimberly may also be contacted by phone at 256-412-7614.

APR Application Process

An administrator or faculty member at the institution can contact the Academic Program Liaison at any time to discuss the application process. Once the application form and payment have been submitted the APR Liaison will send directions and a link to be used to submit the materials electronically. See *Appendix B* for a detail description of information needed in the application.

Steps to initiate the process include:

1. Determine the degree program(s) or course(s) of study that will be submitted for approval. If you are seeking approval for more than one degree program (e.g., an undergraduate and a graduate level program), you must submit a separate and complete application for each, including an application fee for each. You may submit the applications at the same time, or separately.
2. Identify the full-time, tenure-track faculty who will be listed on the application as NCFR member(s) and CFLE(s). CFLE-approved programs must have at least one NCFR member and one CFLE; one person may serve in both capacities. An NCFR membership application can be submitted at the same time as the Academic Program Review application. If the institution needs to sponsor a faculty member's CFLE credential (via the CFLE exam), that can be accomplished parallel to the APR approval; program approval would be contingent upon the successful earning of the CFLE credential by the faculty member.

- Submit **CFLE Academic Program Approval** form (found under [Information for CFLE Academic Program Approval](#) on the NCFR website) and the application fee to Susan Baker at NCFR headquarters. Susan can be reached at Susanbaker@ncfr.org or 763-231-2884. **Do not send the application with payment information to the Liaison.** NCFR will notify the Liaison when the application had been received and payment has been processed at NCFR headquarters. Contact Susan if you need NCFR to create an invoice. An institution may submit the application at any time; there is no specific submission deadline.

Please note that there are late fees attributable to delays in submitting application materials:

For first time applications, programs will be charged a \$50 late fee if application materials are not received within 3 months of payment of the application fee. NCFR will have the right to charge an *additional* \$50 late fee for programs that have not submitted application materials or provided a response to the APR Liaison’s request for information after 6 months. After 9 months, the application will be voided. The original application fee and any paid late fees are non-refundable.

First-time Applications	
Deadline/Timeframe	Fee
At 3 months	\$50
At 6 months	\$100
At 9 months	Application voided. Payment not refunded

- Contact the Academic Program Liaison (APRLiaison@ncfr.org) to plan the best time for submitting materials. Most reviews can be accomplished in a 3 to 4-month period.
- Prepare a program narrative for electronic submission. Briefly, the narrative should address:
 - Program mission statement
 - Program description including the number of students currently enrolled in the program as well the number of students graduating from the program in each of the last two years
 - Program-level objectives or student learning outcomes
 - Requirements for completion of the degree including the number of credits required, degree plan or list of required courses, and how courses are offered (semester or quarter basis, online).
 - Information on transfer credits eligible for pre-approval as a course substitution. There are many circumstances where CFLE requirements are not the same as degree requirements. NCFR will *not* automatically accept transfer credits in place of NCFR CFLE-approved courses because the criteria used by a school in accepting transfer credits may be different than the criteria used by NCFR in evaluating coverage of the CFLE content areas. Transfer courses are still considered substitutes to the approved course on a CFLE checklist and must be approved by NCFR by following the substitution process.

In situations where numerous students will be using the same transfer course as part of their CFLE application, the institution can submit information to NCFR for

- review as a pre-approved substitution. This will eliminate the need for each applicant to have to submit the transfer course syllabus to NCFR.
- A list of the most frequently used sites for the FLE-oriented internship (up to 10).
 - The narrative should also include information on how the program, once approved, intends to promote the availability of the CFLE-approved program application process to students, as well as how students who wish to pursue the CFLE designation will be advised and mentored.
6. Prepare syllabi for electronic submission. Each syllabus should include instructor contact information, term*, course objectives (and unit objectives if available), course description (may be from catalog), textbook(s) and/or required readings including research-based and peer-reviewed scholarly literature, course requirements/assignments, and a detailed course schedule or content outline reflecting topics (may be labeled tentative).
 7. Draft the CFLE checklist, reflecting the courses you propose for the 10 FLE content areas plus the Internship/Practicum, sometimes called Area #11. A template for the checklist is available from Claire Kimberly, APRLiaison@ncfr.org.

Academic Program Review Process

The APR Committee strives to complete application reviews within 3-4 months. Questions about the process can be directed to the Academic Program Liaison.

The Academic Program Liaison begins the review process with a preliminary assessment of the materials submitted. The Liaison may advise the institution of additions or changes that can be made immediately before the application advances to the APR Committee.

APR Committee members utilize scoring guidelines in their evaluation of submitted materials. Scores are not reported to the institution; scoring serves only as a guide for the Committee and the Academic Program Liaison. Guides do not include cut scores or minimum points for approval; they assist in identifying areas needing clarification and/or enhancement.

During the approval process, the Academic Program Liaison alerts the institution to any concerns identified by the APR Committee. Frequently, concerns are quickly answered with clarifications or application amendments provided by the institution.

The review process identifies areas for correction and/or enhancement. Sometimes, the adjustment must be made immediately for the program to receive approval but—in many instances—the APR Committee makes an advisory statement for a modification to be made at the next renewal in five years' time. Thus, approval can proceed, and graduating students can benefit from the institution's status as an NCFR CFLE-approved program.

A webcast featuring former Academic Program Liaison Deborah Gentry is very helpful in explaining the Academic Program Review application process <https://www.ncfr.org/events/tips-applying-cfle-program-approval>. Specific APR resources are included near the end of this document.

**Students completing the CFLE-approved program application process must have completed the courses on the school's checklist during or after the date the program was first approved by NCFR. For example, if NCFR approved a program in October of 2018, applicants must have completed the approved courses at or after that date unless an earlier date is noted on the syllabus submitted. Therefore, submitted syllabi should include information on all terms in which the course, as submitted to NCFR, has been taught. The syllabi across all terms noted must be nearly identical with regard to course content, course objectives/learning outcomes, kinds of readings and learning activities and assignments; there should not be substantive differences in the syllabus of one term to another.*

There are occasions when APR reviewers provide suggestions or ask academic program faculty and administrators to contemplate various options and alternatives. Such feedback is not considered to be a mandate. For example, program faculty may be alerted to newer editions of textbooks they are currently using or informed of multiple alternatives that could possibly meet the course learning outcomes in new and different ways. Sometimes, academic program faculty seek APR input about textbooks and other resources. When providing suggestions, reviewers take care to provide multiple alternatives. Program approval is not contingent upon the use of a specific textbook or resource. An approved degree or program receives a CFLE checklist from NCFR, listing the course requirements at that institution. The CFLE checklist is also posted on the NCFR web site for access by students:

<https://www.ncfr.org/cfle-certification/become-certified/cfle-course-checklists-school>

Communication of APR Approval

NCFR sends the institution a notification letter and an official certificate of approval. The institution is then included on the NCFR website and listed on the official roster of NCFR CFLE-approved programs. CFLE-approved programs are indicated within the NCFR [Degree Programs in Family Science](http://www.ncfr.org/degree-programs) section of the website (<http://www.ncfr.org/degree-programs>).

NCFR will provide the institution with a press release template for use by the academic department or the institution's marketing office. In addition, NCFR recognizes all newly CFLE-approved programs in the weekly *Zippy News*, in the quarterly newsletter, *CFLE Network*, and at the Certified Family Life Educator Reception at the NCFR Annual Conference.

Institutions are encouraged to notify their students of the approved status of their degree program. Such notice may appear on degree plan documents and in course syllabi. Students can be referred to the NCFR web site (<https://www.ncfr.org/cfle-certification/become-certified/cfle-approved-application>) for information about how they will apply for the Provisional CFLE.

Each NCFR CFLE-approved program must have a named CFLE contact. This person is responsible for promoting the availability of the CFLE-approved program application process and assisting with the application process.

NCFR documentation about the 10 FLE content areas can also be put to good use in course syllabi. Some academic programs refer to the 10 FLE content areas in assignments and readings, especially in capstone courses and in internships (e.g., *"This course meets the requirements for the Internal Dynamics of Families content area of the NCFR Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE) credential"*). Similarly, the content areas can be translated to objectives or student learning outcomes, aligning APR with curriculum assessment at the institution.

Brochures, posters, and PowerPoint slideshows about APR and CFLE may also assist in communicating the value of the provisional CFLE to students. Several are available free on the NCFR web site and others can be ordered online.

Renewal of Academic Program Approval

CFLE-approved programs are re-evaluated every five years through the submission of an APR Renewal application. A renewal fee is due upon submission of the APR Renewal application. NCFR will send several reminders of the renewal due date.

Once the form has been received, updated syllabi for approved courses and an updated checklist must be submitted. The Academic Program Liaison will email the CFLE contact with specific directions, but further details can be found on NCFR’s website under [Renew Your Programs’ CFLE Approval](#).

Please note that there are late fees attributable to delays in submitting application fees, materials, or in providing response to the APR Liaison’s requests:

Programs renewing their CFLE APR approval will be charged a \$50 late fee if a renewal fee, and/or submission of renewal application materials are not received within *3 months* of the renewal due date. A \$50 late fee can also be charged for a delay in providing a response to the APR Liaison’s requests for information. NCFR will have the right to charge an *additional* \$50 late fee for delays that extend to 6 months.

If materials or requested information has not been received 12 months from the renewal deadline the program will be placed on probation. After 18 months, the program’s CFLE status will be terminated. Additional information about this process include:

- **Probationary** status - In circumstances where application materials or response to the APR Liaison’s request for information is not received within **1 year** of the due date the program will be placed on probationary status. Notation regarding probationary status will be added to the CFLE checklist found on NCFR’s website. The application fee and any late fees already paid will not be refunded.
- **Termination of application** - In circumstances where application materials or response to the APR Liaison’s request for more information are not received within *18 months* of the due date, the program’s CFLE status will be terminated. The application fee and any late fees already paid will not be refunded.
 - Notation of *CFLE-approved status*  will be removed from the program’s record in the NCFR Degree Program’s Guide. Terminated status will be noted on the CFLE checklist.

Renewal Applications	
Deadline/Timeframe	Fee
At 3 months	\$50
At 6 months	\$100
At 12 months	Placed on probationary status. Application fee not refunded
At 18 months	Approval terminated. Application fee not refunded

Updates Prior To The Renewal Application

Changes in any of the following areas should be reported and explained immediately to the Academic Program Liaison, *without waiting for the regular renewal time*:

1. Change in the named faculty members for the NCFR member and CFLE Contact.
2. Changes in course titles, acronyms, or numbers that appear on the CFLE checklist.
3. Added or dropped courses; new courses require submission of syllabi for approval.
4. Substantive changes in courses (e.g., course description, content, objectives, and learning outcomes). Usual updates such as new textbooks do not need to be reported during the five-year period of approval.

Summary

We hope that you have found this manual to clarify the application process for NCFR CFLE-approval of your academic program helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact the APR Liaison, Claire Kimberly with any questions about applying for program approval, program updates, or program renewal. She can be reached at APRLiaison@ncfr.org.

Contact the CFLE program at CFLE@NCFR.org to learn more about the CFLE-approved program application process.

FAQs Regarding Content Areas and Syllabi

1. What is the ideal number of courses needed to cover a content area?

In most cases, NCFR recommends a single course per content area. You might have more than one course that meets the criteria of a content area. In that case, list the courses as an either/or option.

The scope of a single course, or even a combination of courses, may not encompass all the sub-topics of a content area (see detail of sub-topics in *Appendices A and B*). NCFR does not expect full treatment of all sub-topics; it is for this reason that a team of peer reviewers evaluates the appropriateness of a submitted curriculum. Through multiple views of the submission, an evaluation of the “fit” between curriculum and content area is more likely to be fairly made. (In the same manner of multiple views, NCFR intends that the overall scope of a program will emerge, understanding that emphases of degree programs vary across institutions.)

Some content areas are especially sensitive to the scope of courses. For example, Content Area #3, **Human Growth and Development across the Lifespan** requires curriculum about human development across the entire lifespan. "Lifespan Human Development" is a typical course for this content area. If your program does not offer a lifespan course, you will need to combine two or even three life stage courses such as "Child Development," "Adolescent Development," and "Adult Development" to include coursework covering the lifespan.

While determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis, it is preferred that no more than three courses be required to meet the criteria for a Content Area.

2. Can a course be used in multiple content areas?

Yes, with this limit: a course should not be used as the primary course for more than two content areas.

3. Does NCFR require certain course readings?

Readings are not specified but the review does consider both how current the literature is and if it is research-based.

“Current” is generally defined as being published in the past five to seven years. Certainly, classic literature is a welcome feature in a course and reviewers do not consider the year of publication of seminal works and foundational texts. Scholarly literature is expected across the curriculum; however, this does not mean that lay books and popular literature cannot be used, also. Reviewers look for research-based texts, refereed or peer-reviewed literature (especially from scholarly journals), and a variety of perspectives.

4. Should course objectives match the 10 FLE content areas?

There is no expectation that an approved course’s objectives must exactly match the criteria of a content area (although there is likely to be considerable overlap). Course objectives are often created or approved in original course design; at some institutions, objectives are stable over many years. Most are sufficiently broad that they encompass the concepts of the CFLE Standards and Criteria.

Objectives (which may be written as student learning outcomes) are expected at least at the course level. If a proposed course does not have a set of objectives, the faculty should create objectives or outcomes for submission with the course syllabus.

Typically, the rigor of objectives and/or learning outcomes should correspond to the level of course being taught (e.g., 100, 200, 300, 400, 500 and so on). Introductory level courses often expect lower-level critical thinking skills as compared to upper-level courses.

Outcomes assessment is recognized as a best practice, but it is not a requirement. One indicator of an outcomes approach is the articulation of student learning outcomes; these are often “translated” from the course objectives. For example, a course objective of “study multiple theories” might be presented as a student learning outcome of “the student will be able to identify and explain at least four theories of the family.”

Increasingly, higher education assessment standards include articulation of outcomes at the unit or module level within courses. While this is not a requirement for NCFR CFLE approval, presence of unit-level outcomes is noted as a best practice.

Appendix A: Family Life Education Content and Practice Guidelines

I. FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS IN SOCIETAL CONTEXTS

Content: An understanding of families and their relationships to other institutions, such as the educational, governmental, religious, health care, and occupational institutions in society.

e.g., Research and theories related to: Structures and Functions; Cultural Variations (family heritage, social class, geography, ethnicity, race & religion); Dating, Courtship, Marital Choice; Kinship; Cross-Cultural & Minority (understanding of lifestyles of minority families & the lifestyles of families in various societies around the world); Changing Gender Roles (role expectations & behaviors of courtship partners, marital partners, parents & children, siblings, & extended kin); Demographic Trends; Historical Issues; Work/leisure & Family Relationships; Societal Relations (reciprocal influence of the major social institutions & families, i.e., governmental, religious, educational, health care, & economic).

Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

- a. Identify the characteristics, diversity, and impact of local, national, and global social systems on individuals and families
- b. Identify factors (e.g., media, marketing, technology, economics, social movements, war, natural disasters, environment, sustainability) influencing individuals and families from both contemporary and historical perspectives
- c. Identify factors that influence the relationship between work, personal, and family life
- d. Identify social and cultural influences affecting dating, courtship, partner/marital choice and relationships, family composition, and family life
- e. Recognize the reciprocal interaction between individuals, families, and various social systems (e.g., workplace, health, legal, educational, religious/spiritual)
- f. Assess the impact of demographics (e.g., class, race, ethnicity, religion, generation, gender, sexual orientation) on contemporary families

II. INTERNAL DYNAMICS OF FAMILIES (12% of exam)

Content: An understanding of family strengths and weaknesses and how family members relate to each other.

e.g., Research & theories related to: Internal Social Processes (including cooperation & conflict); Communication (patterns & problems in husband-wife relationships & in parent-child relationships, including stress & conflict management); Conflict Management; Decision-making and Goal-setting; Normal Family Stresses (transition periods in the family life cycle, three-generation households, caring for the elderly, & dual careers); Family Stress & Crises (divorce, remarriage, death, economic uncertainty & hardship, violence, substance abuse); Special Needs in Families (including adoptive, foster, migrant, low income, military, & blended families as well as those members with chronic illness and/or disabilities).

Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

- a. Recognize and define healthy and unhealthy characteristics pertaining to:
 1. Family relationships
 2. Family development
- b. Analyze family functioning using various theoretical perspectives
- c. Assess family dynamics from a systems perspective
- d. Analyze family dynamics in response to normative and non-normative stressors
- e. Analyze family dynamics in response to stress, crises, and trauma

- f. Facilitate and strengthen communication processes, conflict-management, and problem-solving skills
- g. Develop, recognize, and reinforce strategies that help families function effectively

III. HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT ACROSS THE LIFESPAN (12% of exam)

Content: An understanding of the developmental changes (both typical and atypical) of individuals in families across the lifespan. Based on knowledge of physical, emotional, cognitive, social, moral, and personality aspects.

e.g., Research and theories related to: Prenatal; Infancy; Early and Middle Childhood; Adolescence; Adulthood; Aging.

Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

- a. Identify developmental stages, transitions, elements, and challenges throughout the lifespan
- b. Recognize reciprocal influences:
 - 1. Individual development on families
 - 2. Family development on individuals
- c. Recognize the impact of individual health and wellness on families
- d. Assist individuals and families in effective developmental transitions
- e. Apply appropriate practices based on theories of human growth and development to individuals and families
- f. Recognize socio-ecological influences on human development across the lifespan (e.g. sexual/gender identity, trauma, etc.)

IV. HUMAN SEXUALITY ACROSS THE LIFESPAN (8% of exam)

Content: An understanding of the physiological, psychological, and social aspects of sexual development across the lifespan, so as to achieve healthy sexual adjustment.

e.g., Research and theories related to: Reproductive Physiology; Biological Determinants; Emotional and Psychological Aspects of Sexual Involvement; Sexual Behaviors; Sexual Values & Decision-Making; Family Planning; Physiological & Psychological Aspects of Sexual Response; Influence of Sexual Involvement on Interpersonal Relationships.

Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

- a. Recognize the biological aspects of human sexuality (e.g., sexual functioning, reproductive health, family planning, sexually transmitted infections)
- b. Recognize the psycho-social aspects of human sexuality:
 - 1. Characteristics of healthy and unhealthy sexual relationships
 - 2. Interpersonal dynamics of sexual intimacy
 - 3. Risk factors (e.g., substance abuse, social pressures, media)
- c. Address human sexuality from value-respectful positions

V. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS (9% of exam)

Content: An understanding of the development and maintenance of interpersonal relationships. e.g., Research and theories related to: Self and Others; Communication Skills (listening, empathy, self-disclosure, decision making, problem-solving, and conflict resolution); Intimacy, Love, Romance; Relating to Others with Respect, Sincerity, & Responsibility.

Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

- a. Recognize the impact of personality and communication styles
- b. Recognize the developmental stages of relationships
- c. Analyze interpersonal relationships using various theoretical perspectives
- d. Develop and implement relationship enhancement and enrichment strategies
- e. Develop and implement effective communication, problem solving, and anger and conflict management strategies
- f. Recognize the impact of violence and coercion in interpersonal relationships
- g. Recognize the influence of unhealthy coping strategies (e.g., substance use, disordered eating, avoidance) on interpersonal relationships

VI. FAMILY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (10% of exam)

Content: An understanding of the decisions individuals and families make about developing and allocating resources including time, money, material assets, energy, friends, neighbors, and space, to meet their goals. e.g., Research and theories related to: Goal Setting and Decision-Making; Development and Allocation of Resources; Social Environment Influences; Life Cycle and Family Structure Influences; Consumer Issues and Decisions.

Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

- a. Recognize the multiplicity of resources families need, acquire, and manage (e.g., personal, familial, professional, community, environmental)
- b. Recognize and facilitate the reciprocal relationship between individual/family/community choices and resources
- c. Apply and facilitate effective decision-making processes (e.g., assessment of individual and family needs, identification and evaluation of options and resources, implementation of decision, evaluation of outcomes)
- d. Understand the impact of values and goals in the decision-making process
- e. Apply organizational and time management strategies
- f. Apply basic financial management tools and principles
- g. Inform individuals and families of consumer rights, responsibilities, and choices of action/advocacy

VII. PARENTING EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE (10% of exam)

Content: An understanding of how parents teach, guide and influence children and adolescents as well as the changing nature, dynamics and needs of the parent child relationship across the lifespan. e.g., Research and theories related to: Parenting Rights and Responsibilities; Parenting Practices/Processes; Parent/Child Relationships; Variation in Parenting Solutions; Changing Parenting Roles Across the Lifespan.

Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

- a. Promote healthy parenting from systems and lifespan perspectives
- b. Promote healthy parenting from a child's and parent's developmental perspective
- c. Apply strategies based on the child's age/stage of development to promote effective developmental outcomes
- d. Identify different parenting styles and their associated psychological, social, and behavioral outcomes
- e. Analyze various parenting programs, models, and principles

- f. Evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of various parenting strategies
- g. Recognize various parenting roles (e.g., father/mother, grandparents and other caregivers) and their impact on and contribution to individuals and families
- h. Recognize parenting issues within various family structures (e.g., single, blended, same sex)
- i. Recognize the impact of societal trends on parenting (e.g., technology, substance abuse, media)
- j. Recognize the influence of cultural differences and diversity
- k. Identify strategies to support children in various settings (e.g., schools, legal system, healthcare)
- l. Recognize the various pathways to parenting and their associated issues and challenges, (e.g., assisted reproduction, adoption, childbirth, blending)

VIII. FAMILY LAW AND PUBLIC POLICY (8% of exam)

Content: An understanding of legal issues, policies, and laws influencing the well-being of families.

e.g., Family and the Law (relating to marriage, divorce, family support, child custody, child protection and rights, and family planning); Family and Social Services; Family and Education; Family and the Economy; Family and Religion; Policy and the Family (public policy as it affects the family, including tax, civil rights, social security, economic support laws, and regulations.)

Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

- a. Understand the following policy processes (e.g., policy formation, policy implementation, policy evaluation)
- b. Identify current laws, public policies, and initiatives that regulate and influence professional conduct and services
- c. Identify current laws, public policies, and initiatives that affect families
- d. Distinguish between lobbying, policy evaluation, analysis, education, and advocacy
- e. Analyze policy resources for evidence of bias (e.g., unintended, inherent, political, self-interest)
- f. Inform families, communities, and policy makers about public policies, initiatives, and legislation that affect families at local, state, and national levels

IX. PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND PRACTICE (7% of exam)

Content: An understanding of the character and quality of human social conduct, and the ability to critically examine ethical questions and issues as they relate to professional practice.

e.g., Research and theories related to: Formation of Social Attitudes and Values; Recognizing and Respecting the Diversity of Values and the Complexity of Value Choice in a Pluralistic Society; Examining Value Systems and Ideologies systematically and objectively; Social Consequences of Value Choices; Recognizing the Ethical Implications of Social and Technological Changes, Ethics of Professional Practice

Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

- a. Demonstrate professional attitudes, values, behaviors, and responsibilities to clients, colleagues, and the broader community, that are reflective of ethical standards and practice
 - 1. Understand the domains and scope of practice for Family Life Educators and the role of collaboration
 - 2. Establish and maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries
 - 3. Create a personal ethics plan to support/reflect the standards of the profession
 - 4. Maintain current knowledge and skills in the field
- b. Evaluate, differentiate, and apply diverse approaches to ethical issues and dilemmas

- c. Identify and apply appropriate strategies to deal with conflicting values
- d. Demonstrate respect for diverse cultural values

X. FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION METHODOLOGY (12% of exam)

Content: An understanding of the general philosophy and broad principles of Family Life Education in conjunction with the ability to plan, implement, and evaluate such educational programs. e.g., Research and theories related to: Planning and Implementing; Evaluation (materials, student progress, & program effectiveness); Education Techniques; Sensitivity to Others (to enhance educational effectiveness); Sensitivity to Community Concerns and Values (understanding of the public relations process).

Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

- a. Employ a variety of strategies to identify and meet the needs of different audiences
- b. Employ techniques and technologies to promote application of information in the learner's environment
- c. Create learning environments that are respectful of individual vulnerabilities, needs, and learning styles
- d. Demonstrate group process and facilitation skills
- e. Demonstrate sensitivity to diversity and community needs, concerns, and interests
- f. Develop culturally competent educational materials and learning experiences
- g. Identify appropriate sources for evidence-based information
- h. Implement evidence-based programs
- i. Design educational experiences:
 - 1. Needs assessment
 - 2. Goals and objectives
 - 3. Content development
 - 4. Implementation
 - 5. Evaluation/outcome measures
- j. Promote and market educational programs
- k. Implement adult education principles into work with individuals, parents, and families

References

Bredehoft, D.J. & Cassidy, D. (Eds.) (1995). Family Life Education curriculum guidelines. Minneapolis: National Council on Family Relations.

Bredehoft, D.J. & Walcheski, M.J. (Eds.). (2011). The Family Life Education framework poster and PowerPoint. Minneapolis, MN: National Council on Family Relations.

National Council on Family Relations. (2018). Family Life Education Content Areas: Content and Practice Guidelines. In *Tools for ethical thinking and practice in Family Life Education* (pp.35-41). Minneapolis, MN: National Council on Family Relations.

National Council on Family Relations. (2018). The 10 Family Life Education Content Areas. Minneapolis, MN: Author. Retrieved from <https://www.ncfr.org/cfle-certification/what-family-life-education>

Appendix B: Guide to Submission Materials

All materials will be submitted through an online portal. The APR Liaison will send you the link once the Academic Program Approval form has been submitted and the first-time application fee has been paid. Please use descriptive filenames that include the title of the courses.

Program Narrative:

Your program narrative should communicate the purpose and scope of the program being submitted for approval. The APR Committee relies on this narrative to learn how your academic curriculum aligns with CFLE Standards and Criteria.

There is no minimum or maximum length for the narrative. It is not necessary for the information be contained in one document. Many applicants submit several files, efficiently utilizing documents they already publish for current and prospective students. For example, excerpts from university, college or department publications are accepted. Student forms for advising or degree planning may be an efficient means to display program requirements.

Linking to websites is not a requirement although some institutions find that efficient for displaying additional information about their programs.

Recommended items in the narrative (may include file attachments):

1. Program description (may be a copy from the catalog)
2. Program mission statement (may be department or institution)
3. Program objectives / student learning outcomes
4. List of current CFLE/NCFR faculty members
5. Requirements for completion of the degree
6. Number of credits required for completion of the degree
7. Degree plan or list of required courses (including information on any transfer courses for which substitution pre-approval is requested)
8. Delivery methods (online, on-ground, blended)
9. A list of the ten most frequent sites for FLE-oriented internship experiences
10. Other contextual circumstances, features, and characteristics of the program
11. URLs or hyperlinks to program / department web sites
12. Narrative describing how the institution will promote availability of CFLE credential through CFLE-approved program application process, as well as how students who decide to pursue the CFLE designation will be advised and mentored

List of Courses:

Either in paragraph format or using a chart like the one suggested on page 19 of this document, list the courses that you propose for each content area. There are 10 content areas plus an Internship/Practicum (called Area #11).

For each area, you can add a comment if the matching syllabus does not reflect credit hours, course objectives or student learning outcomes, and the department through which the course is offered. (Courses can reside in different departments or colleges within the same institution.)

Clarify what combination of courses is planned. These examples can guide your entry:

Example #1 requiring one course:

FAM 305

Example #2 requiring an option of one or two courses:

FAM 305 OR

FAM 205 and FAM 301

Example #3 requiring two courses:

FAM 201

AND

FAM 205

Syllabi:

Submit a recent syllabus for every course being proposed, including courses offered through other departments at your institution. Filenames should reflect course number, title, and institution.

Syllabi are varied across institutions and even within an institution; no standard form is specified. The list of syllabus elements (below) is used by the APR Committee but there are exceptions in some courses. (For example, an internship or practicum class may have a vastly different calendar and / or readings from a parenting education class.)

Expected Elements of a Syllabus:

REQUIRED: Date or semester of syllabus

REQUIRED: Instructor contact information

REQUIRED: Course description, as typically shown in catalog

REQUIRED: Course objectives / student learning outcomes

RECOMMENDED: Unit- or module-level objectives or outcomes

REQUIRED: Course requirements / assignments

REQUIRED: Detailed course schedule or calendar, or content outline, reflecting topics (may be tentative)

REQUIRED: Textbook and/or readings including research-based texts and scholarly literature (typically refereed or peer-reviewed journals), all of which should be fully and properly cited.

The APR Committee considers the courses/syllabi proposed in the application but also draws on committee members' own experience and insight in suggesting alternatives. For example, the APR Committee may recommend that a course proposed in one content area may be better utilized in a different content area. Sometimes, the Committee suggests a new combination of courses or suggests a reduction in the number of courses.

The APR Committee strives to honor the autonomy of the applying institutions, recognizing that NCFR approval is only one aspect of a program. Judgments on quality of program are primarily limited to the scope of syllabus review. Suggested changes in course content and course assessments are made with restraint and only as they may enhance the program's standing among programs in the community of NCFR CFLE-Approved programs.

APR Committee reviewers pay attention to the clear and relevant connections demonstrated between course description; objectives and/or learning outcomes; readings and resources; learning activities and assignments; and means of assessment and evaluation. Linkages should be easily recognizable and compatible.

Appendix C: Guide to Internship/Practicum

Field experience must be documented in a minimum of 120 hours of direct contact focusing on Family Life Education practice. This is typically met by a 3-credit course called *Internship* or *Practicum* but may also involve other courses in the curriculum.

The internship is *in addition* to academic preparation centering on adult education methods and program development. Thus, it is addressed as separate from Content Area #10. The internship should focus on Family Life Education and prevention rather than therapy, counseling, social work, early childhood education, etc.

Syllabus / Handbook: Documentation of internships may differ from course syllabi. You are welcome to submit sample documents used in the internship or a copy of a handbook distributed to students.

Expected Elements of an Internship Syllabus or Handbook:

REQUIRED: Instructor or coordinator contact information

REQUIRED: Objectives / student learning outcomes

REQUIRED: Requirements / assignments related to Family Life Education

REQUIRED: Required and recommended readings, which have been fully and properly cited

RECOMMENDED: Provision for self-reflection / self-evaluation by the intern

Appendix D: Curriculum Checklist

A blank template (Word document) will be provided by the APR Liaison to create your draft CFLE checklist. Your draft version is not binding; the final version will be edited by the Academic Program Liaison and provided to the institution for local use. The final version will also appear on the NCFR website for access by students. This chart displays sample courses aligned with the content areas. *When listing your proposed courses please indicate the first term in which the course (as submitted) was taught (see content area 1, below). For example, a Spring, 2020 course syllabus is submitted by an academic program for review, but this same course was taught as far back as Fall, 2018, in a substantively identical manner.*

✓	NCFR Content Area	Approved coursework for NCFR CFLE CFLE-Approved Program Application
	1. Families & Individuals in Societal Contexts	FAM 301: Family in Society (spring 2016) <u>OR</u> SOC 242: Diversity Among Families (summer 2016)
	2. Internal Dynamics of Families	COMM 302: Family Communication <u>AND</u> FAM 402: Study of Family Dynamics
	3. Human Growth & Development across the Lifespan	FAM 403: Lifespan Human Development
	4. Human Sexuality	FAM 304: Human Sexuality
	5. Interpersonal Relationships	FAM 205: Interpersonal Relationships and Communication
	6. Family Resource Management	FAM 206: Family Resource Management
	7. Parent Education & Guidance	FAM 407: Parenting Education
	8. Family Law & Public Policy	FAM 408: Family Public Policy
	9. Professional Ethics & Practice	FAM 309: Ethics for the Helping Professions
	10. Family Life Education Methodology	FAM 410: Family Life Education
	Internship/Practicum	FAM 490: Senior Practicum

Appendix E: The CFLE-Approved Program Application Process for CFLE Applicants

It is important for staff at NCFR CFLE-approved programs to be familiar with the CFLE-approved program application process so that they can assist students in applying for the CFLE credential. Please read this information so you are prepared to work with your students.

CFLE exam option – Note that this option is available to CFLE candidates who have not graduated from an NCFR CFLE-approved program can pursue certification by successfully completing the CFLE exam. The following information is relevant to candidates applying through the **CFLE-approved program process**. You can find information about the [CFLE exam](#) on the NCFR website.

CFLE-approved program option – Upon graduation from an NCFR CFLE-approved institution, students can apply for the provisional level of the CFLE credential through the CFLE-approved program application process. Information on the [CFLE-approved program application process](#) is available on the NCFR web site.

Applicants must apply for the provisional CFLE **within two years of graduation**. Applicants submit the CFLE-approved program application, the CFLE checklist for their school, a signed CFLE Code of Ethics, an **original, official** transcript, and the CFLE-approved program application fee. **The CFLE-approved program application fee is non-refundable**. CFLE-approved program checklists can be found at <https://www.ncfr.org/cfle-certification/become-certified/cfle-course-checklists-school>. A sample checklist template is included later in this document.

Transcripts – An original, official transcript showing degree completion and successful completion of the required coursework is required. A transcript must have a watermark, or embossment, or other authenticating marks as described on the document. Print copies do not have to be mailed directly from the school or be in a sealed envelope. If the applicant would like to submit an electronic transcript it must be an official transcript and be emailed directly to cfle@ncfr.org from the university. NCFR will not accept electronic transcripts sent to the NCFR office by the CFLE applicant. Please note that we cannot accept photocopied, scanned, or faxed transcripts.

Substitutions – The courses listed on the CFLE checklist must match the courses included on the transcript including the prefix, course number and title. Up to two courses can be substituted for CFLE-approved courses. Students must provide a detailed course description or syllabus for the course being used as a substitution so that NCFR staff can ensure that the content matches that of the approved course (this information must be from the time the student took the course). Staff at NCFR headquarters can assist students in interpreting the appropriateness of substitutions, but the student may also require assistance from their school. Substitute courses must have been completed no more than seven years prior to the graduation date. *

*Age of Coursework – Coursework submitted as part of an CFLE-approved program application must have been completed within seven years of the date of submission including transfer courses. If this course is a transfer course or a non-CFLE-approved course, it would be considered one of the two allowed substitute courses and the applicant must submit a course syllabus and official transcript showing course completion. If the substitute course is a CFLE-approved course and was CFLE-approved at the time the applicant completed the course, no additional information is needed.

Transfer Credits - NCFR will not automatically accept transfer credits in place of NCFR CFLE-approved courses because the criteria used by a school in accepting transfer credits may be different than the criteria used by NCFR in evaluating coverage of the CFLE content areas. Transfer courses are still considered substitutes to the approved course on a CFLE checklist and must be approved by NCFR. Transfer courses must have been completed no more than seven years prior to the graduation date (see Age of Coursework above).

In the situation where numerous students will be using the same transfer course as part of their CFLE application, the institution can submit information to NCFR for review as a pre-approved substitution. This will eliminate the need for each applicant to have to submit the transfer course syllabus to NCFR.

Grades - Applicants must have received a C- grade, at minimum, for a course to be accepted by NCFR. Grades will be confirmed through review of the student’s official transcript. NCFR’s grade requirement is independent of the institution’s grade requirement for graduation. For example, the institution may specify that a grade of D in a course is acceptable for granting of the degree. However, that grade will not be accepted by NCFR when the student applies for the CFLE credential. NCFR will accept courses completed with a Pass/Fail grade if the transcript identifies the passing grade as at minimum C-. Audited courses are not eligible.

Upgrading from Provisional to Full Certification

Provisional certification is pursued by individuals who have recently graduated from a CFLE-approved school, but who have *not yet earned the work experience necessary for full certification*. Provisional certification is meant as a temporary certification status available for *up to* five years. The provisional CFLE can upgrade to full certification as soon as they have earned enough work experience hours to qualify for full certification; they do not need to wait until the end of the five-year period. The amount of work experience needed is contingent upon the relevancy and level of the highest degree earned. Information on the upgrade process can be found on the NCFR website under [Maintain Your Certification](#).

Requirements for Full Certification	Bachelor's Degree	Master's or Ph.D. Degree
Family Degree	3,200 hours’ work experience	1,600 hours’ work experience
Non-family Degree	4,800 hours’ work experience	

Full Certification - Family Life Education Work Experience

Although most recent graduates do not have the number of hours of experience needed for full certification, some students may have been working in Family Life Education while going to school or have gone to school after working for several years. Graduates that already have sufficient work experience in Family Life Education upon graduation may apply for full certification by completing the CFLE-approved program application process for full status.

Family Life Education work experience can include a variety of activities including, but not limited to, teaching, program development, program coordination/administration, program evaluation, needs assessments, marketing of Family Life Education materials and programs, curriculum or resource development, publications, presentations, group facilitation, community collaboration, etc.

To consider work experience activities as Family Life Education the work should meet the following criteria:

- The work is educational and preventive in nature rather than therapeutic.
- The work is related to at least one of the 10 FLE content areas.
- The work incorporates a family systems perspective.
- The work incorporates a lifespan perspective.
- The work is intentional and includes identified content or a planned curriculum or program.

Documentation of work experience should include:

- Information regarding employment experience via the online **Family Life Education Work Experience Summary** form.
- Applicants can include experience earned before graduation, but most hours should have been earned after graduation. Experience earned during an internship is acceptable but must be supported with other work experiences. Volunteer work supported with training or preparation is sometimes accepted.
- A current resume or vita.
- Job description(s).
- Examples of work including program descriptions, brochures, evaluations, course outlines, or anything that will provide an understanding of the scope and content of the work experience.
- Submission of **Employer Assessment and Verification**. This online form should verify the hours reported in the **Work Experience Summary** form. Ideally all hours listed should be verified by a supervisor or colleague, but NCFR requires verification of, at minimum, 50% of all work experience hours required, i.e. 1,600 of 3,200, etc. Candidates will be asked to provide contact information for employers as part of the online application process. Employers then complete the Employer Assessment and Verification form which is sent to them via email as part of the application process.
- The Academic Program Review application fee. See <https://www.ncfr.org/cfle-certification/cfle-fees> for current rates.

Once adequate work experience has been submitted and approved, NCFR will upgrade the provisional CFLE designation to full certification. The designate will receive a new certificate showing full certification. Full certification is valid for a period of five years and is renewable through submission of continuing education credits. CFLEs with full certification must earn a minimum of 100 hours of continuing education credit every five years. NCFR provides information on [re-certification](#) to the CFLE designate upon full approval.

CFLE-Approved Program Checklist

Provisional Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE)

Institution Name, Undergraduate or Graduate

B.S., B.A., M.S., Ph.D. / Degree Name

CFLE-Approved Program since xxxx

Submit this checklist with all other materials required for the CFLE-approved program application process. Find information and forms at: <https://www.ncfr.org/cfle-approved-program>

Instructions: Confirm that the courses and internship/practicum experience listed below appear on your transcript. For any course substitutions (maximum two), include course syllabi from the year you completed the course. Use the blank row at the bottom to indicate content area and course title.

✓	CFLE Content Area	CFLE-Approved Program Coursework
	1. Families & Individuals in Societal Contexts	
	2. Internal Dynamics of Families	
	3. Human Growth & Dev across the Lifespan	
	4. Human Sexuality	
	5. Interpersonal Relationships	
	6. Family Resource Management	
	7. Parent Education & Guidance	
	8. Family Law & Public Policy	
	9. Professional Ethics & Practice	
	10. Family Life Education Methodology	
	Internship/Practicum (minimum 120 hours)	

References

Bredehoft, D.J. & Cassidy, D. (Eds.) (1995). Family Life Education curriculum guidelines. Minneapolis: National Council on Family Relations.

Bredehoft, D.J. & Walcheski, M.J. (Eds.). (2011). The Family Life Education framework poster and PowerPoint. Minneapolis, MN: National Council on Family Relations.

National Council on Family Relations. (2015). Family Life Education Content Areas: Content and Practice Guidelines. Minneapolis, MN: National Council on Family Relations. Retrieved from <https://www.ncfr.org/cfle-certification/what-family-life-education>

Related NCFR Website links and Resources:

NCFR CFLE Certification

<https://www.ncfr.org/cfle-certification>

CFLE-Approved Program Application Process

<https://www.ncfr.org/cfle-certification/become-certified/cfle-approved-application>

CFLE Course Checklists by School

<https://www.ncfr.org/cfle-certification/become-certified/cfle-course-checklists-school>

NCFR Degree Programs Guide

<http://www.ncfr.org/degree-programs>

Benefits of Having a CFLE-Approved Program– PowerPoint

<http://bit.ly/36C3rn3>

Free webcast on *Tips for Applying for CFLE Program Approval*

<https://www.ncfr.org/events/tips-applying-cfle-program-approval>

Step by step guide to the CFLE-Approved Program Application process (PowerPoint presentation)

<http://bit.ly/36vaDkD>

Helpful articles for Academic programs written by former APR Liaison Deborah Gentry

<https://www.ncfr.org/cfle-certification/academic-institutions>