AFCPE® Registered Education Program Overview:

**AFCPE Mission:**
To ensure the highest level of knowledge, skill, and integrity of the personal finance profession by certifying, connecting and supporting diverse and capable professionals who serve communities worldwide.

**AFCPE Vision:**
A future where all people — regardless of income or background — are empowered to achieve lasting financial well-being through the highest standards of financial counseling, coaching, and education.

**What is the Accredited Financial Counselor (AFC®) designation?**
The AFC designation provides individuals with the knowledge and experience to meet individuals and families where they are, help them build a strong financial foundation, realize their goals, and achieve lasting financial well-being.

**Why become an AFC?**
- History: AFC designation established January 1, 1993
- Accreditation: The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) accredited the AFC certification in 2015 for a five-year period.

**What is an AFCPE Registered Education Program?**
Registration as an AFCPE Registered Education Program provides your students with the opportunity to pursue the AFC designation at a deeply discounted rate through our University Program pathway. Students who complete the required curriculum within an AFCPE Registered Education Program can
use that coursework as a substitute for purchasing educational materials from AFCPE. Additionally, students receive a discounted rate on the AFC exam.

The AFC designation provides students with a valuable credential that can be used in a variety of career paths. Of the 3,200+ AFC professionals, many are working within banking/credit unions, private practice, academia/cooperative extension, non-profit, and government/military sectors, to name a few.

To highlight this unique opportunity, our most used Self-Study pathway to the AFC designation is compared with the University pathway below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-Study Pathway</th>
<th>University Program Pathway</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registration Fee: $50</td>
<td>Registration Fee: $50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Materials:</td>
<td>Educational materials: $0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webinar Review Sessions and AFC Online Course: $600</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>and/or</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Books and AFC Online Course: $650</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam Fee: $700</td>
<td>Exam Fee: $440</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Cost: $1,350-$2,000</td>
<td>Total Cost: $490</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Registration Criteria for AFCPE Registered Education Programs:**

- Programs interested in becoming an AFCPE Registered Education Program may apply by:
  1. Completing the “AFCPE Registered Education Program Application.” The application and fee ($200- initial, $100-renewal) can be submitted to sparrish@afcpe.org.
  2. Upon application approval, the “AFCPE Registered Education Program Agreement” will be executed by the university/college and AFCPE.
- All AFCPE Registered Education Programs must be post-secondary institutions accredited by one of the six regional accrediting organizations recognized by the Department of Education, and all coursework should be, at a minimum, at an undergraduate level of study.
- Coursework (6 credit hour minimum requirement) must cover subject areas corresponding to the AFC Core Competencies.
- Required curriculum should be within a program that supports student development in personal finance, debt management, and counseling skills through additional coursework and/or other educational or experiential opportunities.
- The ‘Supervising Professor’- a faculty member of the college or university- must be an AFC in
good standing or have a graduate level degree in financial planning or counseling, consumer science, business, or other relevant degree.

AFCPE Registered Education Programs wanting to continue offering their students the opportunity to pursue the AFC designation through the University Program pathway are required to submit a renewal application ($100) to AFCPE every three years and report any substantive changes to programs and curriculum between renewal periods.

**Student Requirements:**

- **Education:**
  - Complete coursework in an AFCPE Registered Education Program.

- **Exam:**
  - Register for AFC certification at [www.afcpe.org](http://www.afcpe.org) and pass the AFC certification exam.

- **Experience:**
  - Acquire 1,000 hours of relevant financial counseling/education experience.
  - Submit three letters of reference attesting to professional competence – one each from a supervisor, a colleague, and a client.

- **Ethics:**
  - Sign and agree to abide by the AFC Code of Ethics.
  - Maintain AFC designation by paying annual certification fees and completing required continuing education units (CEUs).

**Certification Process:**

**Register with AFCPE:** Once a student has completed the required coursework at an AFCPE Registered Education Program, they may register for AFC certification through the myAFCPE online system at [www.afcpe.org](http://www.afcpe.org). They will be required to upload a copy of their transcript (official or unofficial) and pay the registration fee (currently $50, but subject to change at any time at AFCPE's sole discretion). The transcript must clearly show the student’s name and passing grades for the required courses.

During the registration process, students may elect to purchase the AFC Online Course ($50) to help them prepare for the AFC exam. Additionally, students will have the option to join AFCPE membership at the student discounted rate of just $35/year! AFCPE membership benefits can be explored [here](http://www.afcpe.org).

Students have up to one-year post-graduation to take advantage of the University Program pathway to AFC certification. Students have three years from their AFC registration approval date to complete the AFC certification requirements listed above.
**Schedule the AFC Certification Exam:** After a student’s registration has been processed and eligibility verified, the student may schedule a time to take the AFC certification exam. To do so, they must return to their myAFCPE account and pay the exam fee (currently discounted to $440, but subject to change at any time at AFCPE’s sole discretion). Within 2-3 business days of paying the exam fee, they will receive communication from the testing company (AMP/PSI) with scheduling instructions. The exam date will be subject to date/time availability of the chosen testing site.

**Pass the AFC Certification Exam:** The AFC certification exam consists of 1 comprehensive exam covering all competencies determined through the most recent AFCPE Job Analysis Study. The computerized exam contains 165 multiple choice questions designed to test recall skills and the candidate’s ability to apply knowledge, interpret data and solve problems. Candidates are given 3 hours to complete the exam. In the event a student does not pass the exam on the first attempt, they may retake the exam up to four times with a 30-day pause in-between each attempt. Retakes are currently priced at $210 per attempt.

**Attain the Required Experience:** All candidates must attain 1,000 hours of relevant financial counseling/education experience. Experience may be either paid or volunteer but must be specific to personal or family finance. Experience may be obtained in conjunction with exam preparation or following successful completion of the exam, as long as all requirements are completed within the designated timeframe. Students may also include relevant hours obtained up to 2 years before registering for AFC Certification.

AFCPE understands the value of having a good mentor, especially for students and young professionals. Therefore, experience obtained under the supervision of an AFC certified professional is weighted for students, allowing an accelerated path to reaching the experience requirement. Every hour worked in one-on-one counseling activities under the supervision on an AFC certified professional in good standing will be valued at 1.5 experience hours. For example, 100 hours worked=150 experience hours earned.

**Reporting and Completing within Time Constraints:** After passing the exam and attaining the experience hours, students must report their experience and agree to the Code of Ethics through their myAFCPE account and submit all requirements prior to their deadline.

Students are encouraged to review the [AFC Candidate Handbook](#), which contains valuable information on all aspects of the certification process. Sheena Parrish, AFCPE Special Programs Manager, may be contacted directly with any questions at: [sparrish@afcpe.org](mailto:sparrish@afcpe.org) or 614-368-1132.