Continuing Education is an Option for Busy Professionals

by Jason White

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Whether your goal is to change careers, update your existing skills or augment new skills to launch a new career path, continuing education has a course or program that will help you to reach your goals. This learning option often involves enrollment in post-secondary, credit-granting courses by part-time students, and is often offered through a division or school of continuing education of a college. As the term suggests, it is assumed that the student already has an education and is simply continuing it.

At Centennial College in Toronto, Ont. students have a few continuing education options thanks to the institution's School of Continuing Education. These options include: part-time, evening, weekend, online and alternative format courses â€" all of which are designed to help students improve their skills, further their education and pursue a variety of interests. In addition, Centennial College's continuing education options: provide experienced instructors who understand adult learning needs and offer flexible, learner-centered teaching methodologies; provide practical hands-on knowledge to place relevant theory into context and perspective; recognize and respect both the level of maturity and work experience of students; and provide effective instructor to student ratio and an optimal classroom size enabling competent peer interaction. As a result, the school's Continuing Education school sees nearly 22,000 learners each year in 160 programs that feature more than 1,200 courses and a 97 per cent learner satisfaction.

All programs facilitated through the continuing education school have their own prerequisites and it's best to check each individual program's page to ensure that students have the necessary requirements to apply. It should also be noted that within certain programs there might be qualification requirements and costs for external accreditations, designations, certifications or recognitions. These are set by the granting bodies and not by Centennial College. In order to qualify for any of those external accreditations, designations, certification or recognition, students and graduates will need to follow the processes and meet the applicable requirements listed on the websites and materials of those external bodies. Among the continuing education areas of study are: Addiction Studies, Business, Computers and Information Technology, Early Childhood Education, Engineering Technology, Food Service Worker, Media and Design, Part-time Health Studies, Retirement Communities Management/Long Term Care Management, Transportation, and more.

Two other Continuing Education School options are Distance Learning and Print Based Courses. First, Distance Learning programs and courses are offered in an online learning format that is instructor-led but allows students to complete course material and assignments in their own time and space, with 24- hour access to the online classroom. Meanwhile, correspondence or print based courses (PB) are also available offering students the ability to work at their own pace within typically a six-month time frame. Print-based courses are best suited to students who work independently with minimal supervision. In most cases both delivery methods (online & PB) require that students attend the campus towards the end of their class to write a continuing education final exam.

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Jason details the a continuing education option at Centennial College, which includes part-time on-campus studies, distance online learning or print based courses.

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