

Florida Certified Election Professional Program



Student Manual

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History

The Florida Supervisors of Elections (FSE) certification program was developed after FSE's strategic planning process in August 2005, expressed both the need and initial commitment for such a program.

Designed to address statewide conformity, consistency of practices and voter confidence, the Florida Certified Election Professional program (FCEP) was initially coordinated through the Florida Institute of Government at Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) with assistance from Schroeder Management Consultants in Fort Myers, FL. Each of the 67 counties was contacted and included during the research phase in one or more of the following methodologies: focus groups, telephone interviews and an online survey. All resulting recommendations were channeled through FSE's Education and Certification Committee.

FCEP is presently coordinated through a collaborative effort with Florida State University (FSU). The nationally-awarded FCEP program provides Florida Supervisors of Elections, their staff, public officials responsible for election-related duties, and election vendors who are eligible to participate in the program, the opportunity to receive additional election education on topics such as voter registration, media relations, and election workers, to name a few. In 2015, the FCEP program was awarded the Professional Practice Award from the Election Center and in 2016, the FCEP program was awarded the Eagle Award from IGO (formerly known as IACREOT).

About

The FCEP program consists of 30 core courses, renewal courses and is comprised of classroom content, workbooks, activities, and shared best practices. Courses are based on real-life, practical experience for Florida elections and effective workplace practices. The program provides 120 hours of classroom content and is delivered by experienced practitioners and expert trainers. Florida Supervisors of Elections, their staff, public officials responsible for election-related duties, and election vendors are eligible to participate in the program.

Upon completion of the program, students are awarded the Master Florida Certified Election Professional (MFCEP) certification or election industry vendors may obtain the Master Florida Certified Election Vendor (MFCEV) certification.

The **FCEP mission** is to provide and support continuing education and certification programs that encourage the highest level of professionalism.

An overarching set of **core values** directs all course content and the selection of content expert trainers. The values are as follows:

- Apply the highest ethical standards, integrity, competencies and professionalism.
- Seek to continuously improve the election experience in Florida.
- Maintain transparency in relationships with citizens, colleagues, staff and other agencies.
- Communicate openly and honestly, inviting the free expression of ideas.
- Collaborate as a team acknowledging diverse roles and expertise.
- Strive for personal excellence and professional development through purposeful and continual learning.

FCEP Objectives:

- To increase the knowledge and skill levels of elected officials and staff in elections offices in Florida.
- To provide incentives to Supervisors of Elections and their staff to continually enhance their levels of professional and personal development.
- To integrate current courses and programs from IGO and the Election Center with additional learning options in elections law, administrative skills, research and technology, and human relations.
- To share common perspectives, issues, and challenges in a structured, collegial atmosphere.

Program Structure

FCEP Curriculum

20 different core courses are offered in odd years during four program sessions. Five core courses are offered in each session. One live renewal course is conducted each program year as well as past renewal courses are available online and on demand.

Session Format

Frequency:	4 sessions offered bimonthly in odd years (Feb/April/June/August)
Courses/Session:	5
Schedule:	Wednesday 8:00am – 12:00pm Lunch 12:00pm – 1:00pm Wednesday 1:00pm – 5:00pm Thursday 8:00am – 12:00pm Lunch 12:00pm – 1:00pm Thursday 1:00pm – 5:00pm Friday 8:00am – 12:00pm

Course Format

Type:	Instructor-led classroom
Length:	4 hours
Welcome:	5 minutes
Content:	3.5 hours
Breaks:	20 minutes (2 x 10 min.)
Close:	5 minutes
Workbook:	Yes
Evaluation:	Yes
Frequency:	Twice over a six year period
Min. Attendees:	45
Max. Attendees:	75
Course Cost:	\$90

Session & Course Calendar (2019-2025)

2019:

February Courses 101 - 105
 April Courses 106 - 110
 June Courses 111 - 115
 August Courses 116 - 120

October Renewal Course: 202 Civic Engagement

2021:

February Courses 121 - 125
 April Courses 126 - 130
 June Courses 101 - 105
 August Courses 106 - 110

October Renewal Course: 203 Redistricting & Reapportioning

2023:

February Courses 111 - 115
 April Courses 116 - 120
 June Courses 121 - 125
 August Courses 126 - 130

October Renewal Course: 204 TBD

2025:

February Courses 101 - 105
 April Courses 106 - 110
 June Courses 111 - 115
 August Courses 116 - 120

October Renewal Course: 205 TBD

NOTE: Courses do not have to be taken in sequential order. In order to expedite MFCEP/MFCEV certification, courses should be taken whenever they are offered.

Program Courses

Core Courses

- 101 Basic Election Law
- 102 Voter Registration
- 103 Voting Systems
- 104 Fundamentals of Customer Service
- 105 Ethics & Liability
- 106 Vote-by-Mail
- 107 Polling Place Management & Facilities
- 108 Budget Development
- 109 Human Resource Management: Laws & Hiring
- 110 Human Resource Management: Development & Separation
- 111 Information Technology
- 112 Professional Communication Skills
- 113 Effective Meeting Management
- 114 Canvassing Board Process
- 115 Post-Election Ballot Management: Audits & Recounts
- 116 Candidate Qualifying
- 117 Voter Outreach & Education
- 118 Election Worker Management
- 119 Public Records Management
- 120 Continuity of Operations
- 121 Media Relations
- 122 Conflict Resolution
- 123 Performance Management & Coaching
- 124 Developing & Maintaining an Effective Team
- 125 Stress & Time Management
- 126 Managing Change
- 127 Making Powerful Presentations
- 128 Fundamentals of Leadership
- 129 Systems Thinking
- 130 Creativity & Innovative Thinking

Renewal Courses

- 201 History of Elections in Florida
- 202 Civic Engagement
- 203 Redistricting & Reapportioning
- 204 TBD
- 205 TBD

Program Requirements

Program Admittance

New students to the FCEP program must complete an application for admittance (see appendix) prior to registering for FCEP core courses.

The application form, after it is completed, must be submitted via email to FSE.FCEP@gmail.com. Once the student has been accepted into the FCEP program, the student will be sent a welcome email which will provide instructions on how to track their completion of FCEP core courses.

Registration

Course registration information will be prepared by the FCEP administrative support and emailed to all Supervisors of Elections, public officials responsible for election-related duties, and election vendors as well as being posted on the FSE website.

Registration for each course will commence on an established date and remain open until 10 days prior to the session start date or when each course reaches its maximum number of students. Students are encouraged to register early as courses regularly fill up and registrations are taken on a first come first registered basis.

Upon registering for a course, a confirmation email will be sent to the address listed on the student's registration.

Once a course has reached its maximum number of students, a wait list will be formed. Registrants on the wait list will be contacted on a first come first registered basis.

Refunds & Cancellations

Requests for refunds will be granted if received at least three business days prior to the scheduled class. A cancellation fee will be deducted if the registrant pays via a credit card. Fees may be up to \$25.00 and are per registrant.

Should a student need to cancel, that student's county/organization will have the first option to substitute a different student from their county/organization. The substitution decision must be made within 24 hours and all other program admittance requirements must be met.

Attendance

Students **MUST** attend the full course and its total time. Credit will **NOT** be given to those who enroll, attend a portion of the course, leave to conduct business, etc. and then return to the course. Therefore, should a student miss any portion of a course, that student will be required to reregister and retake the course in order to get credit.

Student Conduct

To receive credit for a course participants must:

- Register and pay for each course.
- Attend the full session.
- Arrive prepared for each course with printed materials, if applicable.
- Recognize that classes are expected to begin on time and end on time. Requests to end early are not appropriate.
- Maintain the appropriate classroom decorum as to maintain an atmosphere of learning and inquiry — everyone can still have fun!
- In order to improve the quality of the program, the use of cell phones is not permitted.
- Business casual attire is requested.
- Take time to complete the evaluation after each course. Place the completed evaluation on the registration table.

Verifying Course Completion

Approximately 10 business days after each session ends, students will receive an email encouraging them to access the tracking program via <https://fse.electionworkers.com/log-in/> in order to verify their course completion status and to print certificates for any courses that were completed.

Graduation Requirements

In order for a student to obtain the Master Florida Certified Election Professional/Vendor (MFCEP/MFCEV) certification, students must complete all of the items on the checklist for graduation (see appendix) which includes taking the 30 core courses and submitting an application for graduation. Please adhere to all deadlines or your graduation date may be delayed to the next offering.

Graduation ceremonies are held in conjunction with the FSE Annual Summer Conference. Students attending the graduation ceremony will be recognized and receive their MFCEP/MFCEV certification plaque and pin.

Students unable to attend their assigned graduation ceremony will have their MFCEP/MFCEV certification plaque and pin mailed to them.

Recertification

Once a student earns their MFCEP/MFCEV certification, they can retain that certification for life by continuing to recertify every two years. This includes individuals who retire from the industry, persons who move to different jurisdictions or organizations, etc.

To maintain your MFCEP/MFCEV certification, a renewal course is required every two years following your graduation year or recertification period.

For example, if you graduated in June of 2018 your certification would remain active until December 31, 2020. During that time period you would need to complete one renewal course in order to maintain your certification for another two year period i.e. until December 31, 2022. A different renewal course would then need to be taken during every two year recertification period, i.e. 2020 to 2022, and hereafter.

Renewal courses are offered in two different formats, a live classroom session and an online session. Live courses are conducted in October of odd numbered years. Online courses are recordings of the previously offered live courses which can be viewed on demand at any time during your recertification period.

To receive credit for recertification, a student must register and take a different renewal course each recertification period. Registration for both live and online renewal courses is on the FSE website. If requested, students can take a renewal course 3 months in advance of their next recertification period.

Should a student fail to meet the recertification requirements by their recertification deadline, the student will no longer be listed as an active MFCEP/MCFEV on the FSE website. Participants will be listed as "inactive" until their recertification requirements have been met.

Frequently Asked Questions

When will session and course dates/times be announced? – Approximately 90 days before the start of the session.

Is lunch included in the course cost? – Yes, the cost of lunch is included in the course fee.

Can I take the 30 core courses online? – No, core courses are not available online.

How do I gain admittance into the FCEP Program? – New students must first complete and submit the Application for Admittance before being accepted into the FCEP Program.

When can I register for courses? – Once course registration has opened, an email will be sent to Florida Supervisors of Elections, public officials responsible for election-related duties, and election vendors.

I need to cancel my course registration. Who should I contact? – Please contact FCEP Administrative Support via email FSE.FCEP@gmail.com.

How do I verify which courses I have completed? – Students can access their course records via <https://fse.electionworkers.com/log-in/>.

When is graduation? – Graduation occurs during the FSE Annual Summer Conference.

When do I have to take a renewal course? – A renewal course is required every two years following your graduation year or recertification period.

What happens if I do not take a renewal course in the allotted 2-year timeframe? – Should a student fail to meet the recertification requirements by their recertification deadline, the student will no longer be listed as an active MFCEP/MCFEV on the FSE website. Participants will be listed as "inactive" until their recertification requirements have been met.

Core Courses

101 Basic Election Law

- 1) Identify key elements of Florida election law.
- 2) Recognize vital issues associated with HAVA.
- 3) Analyze “what if?” scenarios on conducting elections.
- 4) Review essential resources on Florida and federal election laws.

102 Voter Registration

- 1) Analyze the impact of voter registration history on current procedures.
- 2) Identify legal requirements for election offices and 3PVRO.
- 3) Discuss key updates in the voter registration system.
- 4) Problem-solve potential dilemmas dealing with voter registration.

103 Voting Systems

- 1) Identify key terms and definitions associated with Florida voting systems.
- 2) Distinguish between voting system software and tabulator firmware.
- 3) Identify various voting systems used in Florida.
- 4) Recognize the major components of configuration management.

104 Fundamentals of Customer Service

- 1) Identify key moments of truth for the customer within the election experience.
- 2) Recognize the importance of non-verbal communication and body language.
- 3) Develop effective strategies for gaining confidence and compliance from the customer.
- 4) Practice effective telephone etiquette.

105 Ethics & Liability

- 1) Recognize six key concepts of ethical behavior in public service.
- 2) Evaluate scenarios involving hypothetical issues in the workplace.
- 3) Identify and explain relevant state disclosure forms.
- 4) Assess personal character and responsibility.
- 5) Analyze warning signs of potential ethical compromises.

Note: This class meets the statutory requirement for elected officials.

106 Vote-by-Mail

- 1) Review the history and development of vote-by-mail in the U.S. and Florida.
- 2) Analyze local and statewide vote-by-mail trends.
- 3) Evaluate vote-by-mail legal and procedural requirements.
- 4) Share best practices in the administration of vote-by-mail.

107 Polling Place Management & Facilities

- 1) Analyze the selection and evaluation of polling places.
- 2) Evaluate the process to determine equipment allocation.
- 3) Share best practices in managing campaigning at the polling places.
- 4) Practice resolving polling place challenges.

108 Budget Development

- 1) Identify various steps associated with a county budget process.
- 2) Develop a sample core operating budget.
- 3) Develop a sample elections office budget.
- 4) Discuss and evaluate the formal and informal procedures for county and elections budget development.

109 Human Resource Management: Laws & Hiring

- 1) Identify key employment laws relating to elections offices.
- 2) Practice effective interviewing techniques.
- 3) Create an action plan for enhancing employee on-boarding.
- 4) Evaluate various approaches for handling “problem” employees.
- 5) Recognize guidelines for adherence to EEO statutes.

110 Human Resource Management: Development & Separation

- 1) Evaluate common employee appraisal and development methods.
- 2) Demonstrate conducting an effective employee appraisal.
- 3) Identify key components in successfully coaching employees.
- 4) Develop a draft of an employee incentive plan for workplace use.
- 5) Discuss the dos and don'ts in terminating an employee.

111 Information Technology

- 1) Identify key terms and definitions associated with technology.
- 2) Explain how critical systems operate.
- 3) Develop a technology security plan.
- 4) Share best practices in elections information technology.

112 Professional Communication Skills

- 1) Practice effective communication skills to facilitate constructive office relationships and team productivity.
- 2) Develop listening skills to process and respond to diverse information.
- 3) Assess and discuss strengths and developmental needs in communication.
- 4) Develop individual action plan for enhancing communication skills.

113 Effective Meeting Management

- 1) Identify effective meeting management and facilitation practices.
- 2) Practice using parliamentary procedure and Robert's Rules of Order.
- 3) Draft an action plan for integrating meeting management skills.

114 Canvassing Board Process

- 1) Identify and dramatize common canvassing board practices.
- 2) Recognize relevant duties of the canvassing board.
- 3) Classify relevant canvassing board court decisions.
- 4) Evaluate canvassing board issues associated with the public and the media.

115 Post-Election Ballot Management: Audits & Recounts

- 1) Identify legal requirements for audit and recounts.
- 2) Identify security and prior planning needs.
- 3) Distinguish between a machine recount and a manual recount.
- 4) Distinguish between various methods of post election audits.

116 Candidate Qualifying

- 1) Identify applicable administrative rules for candidate qualifying.
- 2) Recognize the steps involved in the qualifying process.
- 3) Participate in a case study of petition requirements.
- 4) Evaluate current court cases relating to candidate qualifying.

117 Voter Outreach & Education

- 1) Identify best practices in community and student engagement.
- 2) Share ways to maximize outreach activities through volunteers and partners.
- 3) Develop a plan to meet community needs and statutory requirements.
- 4) Evaluate effectiveness of education and outreach programs.

118 Election Worker Management

- 1) Evaluate strategies for locating and hiring election workers.
- 2) Examine various election worker training materials and equipment.
- 3) Recognize best practices for serving voters with diverse needs.
- 4) Identify and discuss common election issues facing election workers.
- 5) Share election worker evaluation and retention practices.

119 Public Records Management

- 1) Identify key terms and definitions relating to records retention.
- 2) Demonstrate knowledge about public records through a case study.
- 3) Identify legal requirements involving privacy and the public's right to know.
- 4) Share best practices and create an action plan for records management.

120 Continuity of Operations

- 1) Identify key facilities essential for elections.
- 2) Develop a list of critical staff and tasks necessary to carry out an election.
- 3) Analyze "what if?" scenarios on conducting elections, such as hurricanes.
- 4) Recognize effective strategies and reactions in an active shooter scenario.
- 5) Discuss and create a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP).

121 Media Relations

- 1) Evaluate examples dealing with positive and negative media coverage.
- 2) Identify key elements of an effective press release/media message.
- 3) Identify target audiences and effective communication channels.
- 4) Develop a communications plan for the elections office.

122 Conflict Resolution

- 1) Identify main components of organizational conflict.
- 2) Assess personal conflict resolution style.
- 3) Examine participatory decision-making and when to use various options.
- 4) Practice effective skills for resolving conflict/negotiation in role-play scenario.
- 5) Create an action plan for dealing with conflict situations.

123 Performance Management & Coaching

- 1) Identify the steps to performance management.
- 2) Recognize the five roles of coaching.
- 3) Distinguish between mentoring, coaching and counseling.
- 4) List and evaluate a variety of ways to motivate others.
- 5) Practice a coaching/feedback session.

124 Developing & Maintaining an Effective Team

- 1) Identify the differences between a work-group and a team.
- 2) Explore how generational experiences impact workplace relationships.
- 3) Gain understanding of the characteristics of a high performance team.
- 4) Practice developing and maintaining a team in a role-play scenario.
- 5) Create an action plan to promote teamwork within your department.

125 Stress & Time Management

- 1) Recognize the physical and emotional damage caused by stress.
- 2) Identify characteristics of stress triggers.
- 3) Evaluate effective time management skills.
- 4) Create an action plan to manage stress and improve time management.

126 Managing Change

- 1) Recognize how and why people resist change.
- 2) Identify strategies for accepting change.
- 3) Explore the connection between accepting change and optimistic thinking.
- 4) Develop skills to promote positive change in the workplace.

127 Making Powerful Presentations

- 1) Identify key elements of the communication process.
- 2) Demonstrate proficiency in developing an effective presentation.
- 3) Evaluate strategies for personal stress reduction as a speaker.
- 4) Analyze techniques for increasing effectiveness and impact of presentations.
- 5) Create and deliver a 3-minute presentation.

128 Fundamentals of Leadership

- 1) Distinguish between leadership and management.
- 2) Assess personal leadership characteristics.
- 3) Consider the impact of personal ethics in the leadership role.
- 4) Assess personal delegation style and strategies.
- 5) Create action plan for mentoring and building leaders.

129 Systems Thinking

- 1) Recognize elements of systems thinking and their impact on decisions and behaviors.
- 2) Identify the system structures behind problems.
- 3) Evaluate mental models and their overall affect on the system.
- 4) Create a plan to implement changes in the system.

130 Creativity & Innovative Thinking

- 1) Recognize elements of creative/innovative thinking.
- 2) Assess brain dominance and preference.
- 3) Identify a workplace opportunity for problem solving in six steps.
- 4) Practice strategies for idea generation.
- 5) Share strategies for fostering creativity and innovative thinking.

Renewal Courses

201 History of Elections in Florida

- 1) Recognize Florida's importance in presidential elections.
- 2) Review the expansion of voting rights in the US and Florida.
- 3) Evaluate Executive, Legislative, and Congressional elections in Florida.
- 4) Explore election reform in Florida since the 2000 Presidential Election.

202 Civic Engagement

- 1) Identify key terms and definitions associated with civic engagement.
- 2) Recognize the value of voter outreach and education.
- 3) Share best practices in civic engagement in Florida and in other states.
- 4) Discuss ways to measure the success of outreach practices.
- 5) Project potential changes in civic engagement in the next 25 years.

203 Redistricting & Reapportioning

- 1) Recognize key terms pertaining to redistricting and reapportioning.
- 2) Evaluate concepts, methods and criteria in the process.
- 3) Explore redistricting and reapportioning impacts and outside influences.
- 4) Create a redistricting and reapportioning plan that balances multiple criteria.

Appendix



**Application for Admittance
Florida Certified Election Professional
Program**

Name: _____

Title: _____

Employer: _____

Office Address: _____

Phone: _____ **Fax:** _____

Email: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Submission Instructions: Please complete the application for admittance, scan and email the completed application to: FSE.FCEP@gmail.com

For Office Use Only

Date Received

Entered into Tracking System

Email Sent w/Username



Checklist for Master Florida Certified Election Professional/Vendor Graduation

_____ Complete all 30 Florida Certified Election Professional Courses

_____ Submit by May 1st deadline

_____ Check for \$150.00 for graduation costs made payable to:

FSE, Inc.
P.O. Box 350
Tallahassee, FL 32302

_____ Complete the Application for Graduation

_____ Confirm name on the Application for Graduation

Submission Instructions: Please complete the application for admittance, scan and email the completed application to: FSE.FCEP@gmail.com



**Application for Graduation
Master Florida Certified Election
Professional/Vendor**

Name: _____
(As to appear on graduation materials)

Title: _____

Check the applicable Master certification: MFCEP: _____ **MFCEV:** _____

Employer: _____

Office Address: _____

Phone: _____ **Fax:** _____

Email: _____

By completing and submitting this form you are certifying that you have completed the required 30 Florida Certified Election Professional courses.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

For Office Use Only:

Date Received

Check Received

30 Course Complete

Grad Materials Ordered