



American Fisheries Society

Professional Certification Program

Est. 1 July 1998.

AFS Professional Certification Objectives

- 1) To provide governmental and nongovernmental agencies and organizations, private firms, courts, and the general public with a definitive minimum standard of experience and education for fisheries professionals***



- 2) To foster broader recognition of fisheries professionals as well-educated and experienced, acting in the best interest of the public.***

Why should I get certified as a “Fisheries Professional”

- Provide expert witness
 - ✓ Provide scientific facts + professional opinion
- Some state employers require or desire certification for employment or promotion
- Shows employers you are seriously interested in a career in fisheries

[Click here to read more](#)

Levels of Certification

I. Associate Fisheries Professional (AFP)—Applicants must meet the academic (course and degree) requirements as prescribed under Guidelines for Professional Certification.

- Associate Fisheries Professional certification may be retained for a maximum of eight years, at which time the requirements for a Certified Fisheries Professional must be met and applied for in order to retain any AFS certification. The AFP must submit a new application with all requested information, with the exception of the course list and transcripts (unless further education has been acquired).

II. Certified Fisheries Professional (CFP) and Certified Fisheries Professional (FP-C) (applying as established fisheries professional) — In addition to the academic requirements mentioned above, minimum experience and professional development requirements are listed under Guidelines for Professional Certification.

III. Emeriti — Individuals who held the FP-C designation for at least twenty (20) years (need not be consecutive) and who are employed less than full time or are retired, may request emeriti status through which they can maintain their FP-C status without the renewal requirement. Successful female applicants receive emeriti status while successful male applicants receive emeritus status. Applicants must provide your certification number and initial date of certification (must have been certified for at least 20 years).

Requirements for Certification

- ✓ Be an AFS member
- ✓ Have an appropriate degree/s (BS, BA, MS, PhD) in Fisheries or a related field
- ✓ Meet coursework requirement in the following subject areas:
 - Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences
 - Other Biological Sciences
 - Physical Sciences
 - Mathematics and Statistics
 - Communications
 - Human Dimensions
- ✓ Have appropriate professional experience
 - Amount of experience depends on highest degree attained
 - Not required for Associate level (FP-A)
- ✓ Recently earned enough Professional Development Quality Points (PDQPs)
 - Not required for Associate level (FP-A) or *Emeriti* status

Certification, graduation *before July 1, 2002*

<u>Degree & Experience</u>	<u>Coursework (Area – credits)</u>	<u>PDQP Timeframe</u>	<u># of PDPQs</u>	<u>Fee</u>
<i>Associate Fisheries Professional (FP-A)</i>				
BS or BA <u>No experience required</u>	A-12, B-18, C-15, D-6 E-6	N/A Credits are <u>semester</u> ; (sem * 1.5) ~ quarter	NONE	\$50
<i>Certified Fisheries Professional (FP-C)</i>				
BS/BA + 5 yrs MS + 4 yrs PhD + 2 yrs	A-12, B-18 C-15, D-6 E-6	Previous 2 years	30	\$100
<i>Upgrade from FP-A to FP-C</i>				
BS/BA + 5 yrs MS + 4 yrs PhD + 2 yrs	Previous FP- A designation	Previous 2 years	30	\$50

Where “A” = Fisheries & Aquatic Sciences; “B” = Other Biological Sciences; “C” = Physical Sciences; “D” = Mathematics and Statistics; “E” = Communications

Certification, graduation *after July 1, 2002*

<u>Degree & Experience</u>	<u>Coursework (Area – credits)</u>	<u>PDQP Timeframe</u>	<u># of PDPQs</u>	<u>Fee</u>
Associate Fisheries Professional (FP-A)				
BS or BA No experience required	A*-12 D-6 B-18 E-9 C**-15 F-6	N/A	NONE	\$50
Certified Fisheries Professional (FP-C)				
BS/BA + 5 yrs MS + 4 yrs PhD + 2 yrs	A-12 D-6 B-18 E-9 C-15 F-6	Previous 2 years	30	\$100
Upgrade from FP-A to FP-C				
BS/BA + 5 yrs MS + 4 yrs PhD + 2 yrs	Previous FP- A designation	Previous 2 years	30	\$50

Where "A" = Fisheries & Aquatic Sciences; "B" = Other Biological Sciences; "C" = Physical Sciences; "D" = Mathematics and Statistics; "E" = Communications; "F" = Human Dimensions

* = one must cover principles of fisheries science and management

** = eliminates college algebra; requires one calculus course and one statistics course or two statistics courses

Application for FP-C, Established

(coursework is waived for experience)

<u>Degree & Experience</u>	<u>Coursework (Area – credits)</u>	<u>PDQP Timeframe</u>	<u># of PDQPs</u>
<i>Graduated before July 1st, 2002</i>			
BS/BA + 9 years MS + 7 yrs PhD + 5 yrs	NONE	Previous 5 years or Previous 2 years	100 40
<i>Graduated after July 1st, 2002</i>			
BS/BA + 9 yrs MS + 7 yrs PhD + 5 years	NONE	Previous 5 years or Previous 2 years	100 40

Coursework Requirements

Degree earned before 2002

- BA or BS degree (or higher)
 - A: Four (4) courses in Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences
 - ≥ 2 Directly related to Fisheries Science or Management
 - B: 18 credits of Biological Sciences
 - Total of categories A + B ≥ 30 credits
 - C: 15 credits of Physical Sciences
 - D: 6 credits of Math and Statistics courses
 - ≥ 1 College algebra or Calculus & ≥ 1 statistics course
 - E: 6 credits of Communication courses

Coursework Requirements

Degree earned after 2002

- BA or BS degree (or higher)
 - A: Four courses in Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences
 - ≥ 3 Fisheries Courses
 - ≥ 1 course in Fisheries Science or Management
 - ≥ 1 course in Fisheries Techniques (new as of 2019)
 - B: 18 credits of Biological Sciences
 - Total of categories A + B must be ≥ 30 credits
 - C: 15 credits of Physical Sciences

Coursework Requirements

Degree earned after 2002 Continued

- BA or BS degree (or higher)

D: 6 credits of Math and Statistics courses

≥ 1 Calculus & ≥ 1 Statistics course or 2 Statistics courses

E: 9 credits of Communication courses

≥ 3 credits must be related to oral communication

≥ 3 credits must be related to written communication

F: 6 credits of Human Dimensions courses

G: Work Experience (**new as of 2019**)

Not required, but work experience may be used in lieu of formal course credits in each the subject areas.

Can substitute for a max of 6 semester credits

No more than 3 credits in any one category

See the FAQs for examples and more detailed information

Coursework Requirements

Common Problems

- Overall issues
 - Not including all transcripts
 - Seminar courses are not allowed
 - Foreign language courses are not allowed
 - Pass/Fail courses are not allowed
 - Must have a grade of at least a C- or higher
 - Thesis or Dissertation credits are not allowed
 - Graduate degrees reduce work experience requirements
- Other
 - If you include a non-traditional course to fulfill requirements please send a course description & syllabus

Coursework Requirements

Common Problems

- Section A:
 - Lack of a Fisheries Science/Management Course
 - Solution: Take another course or wait until you have enough experience to meet FP-C Established criteria
- Section B:
 - Including physical sciences courses (e.g., Geology)
- Section C:
 - Including biological sciences courses
 - (e.g., Environmental Science)

Coursework Requirements

Common Problems

- Section D:
 - This category rarely has issues
 - If you include a course taught outside the Math/Stats department, we may ask for a syllabus to confirm content
- Section E:
 - Including seminar and foreign language courses
- Section F:
 - For a list of approved courses see:
<https://fisheries.org/membership/afs-certification/faqs/#29>

Coursework Requirements

Common Problems

- Section G: (new as of 2019)
 - This category allows applicants to substitute formal work experience (e.g., internships, seasonal jobs, volunteer) in lieu of some coursework
 - Anticipated problems
 - Statements from both applicant and supervisor are missing
 - Cannot count experiences gained as a graduate student
 - Cannot count one experience in multiple categories
 - e.g., a seasonal internship with a state agency cannot count as 3 credits towards both Section A (Fisheries) and section F (human dimensions).

Professional Experience Requirements FP-C

- BS or BA degree
 - 5 years of full-time qualifying experience
- MS or MA degree
 - 4 years of full-time qualifying experience
 - Must be post-bachelor's degree
- PhD degree
 - Two years of full-time qualifying experience
 - Must be post-bachelor's degree

Professional Experience Requirements

Common Problems

- Including experience gained pre-BS/BA
- Most technician level positions do not count
 - Seasonal or term-employment does not count
- Including graduate student employment
 - These experiences already reduce the number of years of experience required
- Not including enough details for evaluation
 - Please provide detailed job descriptions
- See: <https://fisheries.org/membership/afs-certification/faqs/#16>

Professional Development Quality Points (PDQP's)

To keep abreast of developments in the field and ensure continued enhancement of knowledge and skills.

Category I – Continuing Ed, Fisheries

Category II – Continuing Ed, Non-fisheries

Category III – Oral communication in fisheries or non-fisheries

Category IV – Written communication

Category V – Service

Professional Development Quality Points (PDQP's)

- To apply for FP-C or
- To upgrade from FP-A to FP-C
 - In the past 2 years you must accumulate the following:

<u>Category</u>	<u>PDQP Requirements</u>
I or II	Minimum 10, maximum 20, combined
III, IV, V	Minimum 10, maximum 20, combined
Total Minimum 30	

Professional Development Quality Points (PDQP's)

- **To apply as FP-C Established**

- In the past 2 years you must accumulate the following:

<u>Category</u>	<u>PDQP Requirements</u>
I or II	Minimum 14, maximum 40, combined
III, IV, V	Minimum 16, maximum 26, combined
Total Minimum 40	

- Or in the past 5 years you must accumulate the following:

<u>Category</u>	<u>PDQP Requirements</u>
I or II	Minimum 35, maximum 60, combined
III	Maximum 35
IV	Maximum 35
V	Maximum 35
Total Minimum 100	

Professional Development Quality Points (PDQP's)

- **To renew your FP-C**
 - In the past 5 years you must accumulate the following:

<u>Category</u>	<u>PDQP Requirements</u>
I or II	Minimum 35, maximum 60, combined
III	Maximum 35
IV	Maximum 35
V	Maximum 35

Total Minimum 100

Common Problems with PDPQ's

- Including inappropriate time ranges
 - > 2 or > 5 years depending on application
- Providing vague descriptions
 - Conferences, presentations, publications
 - Provide details regarding how these fit into each category
 - Include complete title of presentations
 - Include complete citation for publications
 - Include detailed description of provider (no acronyms)
- Not providing dates (DD/MM/YY) of activities

Common Problems with PDPQ's

- Using non-fisheries related activities in category I
- Category V (service) must utilize your professional expertise in Fisheries
- Using presentations to nonprofessional audiences
 - Non-fisheries subjects can be used, but only if presented to an audience of Fisheries professionals

Application Process

1. Download application from AFS's website [here](#)
or: www.fisheries.org->Membership->Professional Certification
2. Checklist:
 - **Must be an AFS member!**
 - Follow the instructions!
 - Sign the application!
 - Don't forget official transcripts
 - Don't skip sections
 - Don't miss application quarterly deadlines!
3. See FAQs section on website:
<https://fisheries.org/membership/afs-certification/faqs/>
4. Any further questions?
Email us at certification@fisheries.org

First Time Applicants for Certification by Sector

- State biologists 28%
- Industry biologists (consultants) 24%
- Students 21%
- Federal employees 8%
- Professionals in academia 4%
- County biologists 1%
- Biologists with NGO's 1%
- Unemployed (recent postgraduates) 13%

American Fisheries Society

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Organized 1870



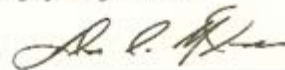
This is to certify that

Your name here !

by the American Fisheries Society and verified
by its Board of Professional Certification
is declared to be a

Certified Fisheries Professional

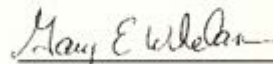
and is issued this certificate on the 8th day of May, 2007.




President



Executive Director



Chairman
Board of Professional Certification



Certificate Number: 2914 Expires December, 2012

Remember your Certification number and expiration date!

Any further questions?

Please contact:

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