



THE COLUMBIA INSTITUTE

School of Valuation Studies ♦ www.columbiainstitute.org

School Policy Manual

The Columbia Institute is a non-profit educational foundation with its mission
"To provide quality education programs at a reasonable cost structure."

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1) **CLASSROOM COURSES**

a) Attendance:

To receive credit students must be present 100% of the time scheduled. Time missed may be made up within one year at no cost to the student, if permitted by regulatory authority. Credit can not be awarded until all work is completed.

b) Instructor Hiring Policy:

Columbia practices equal opportunity hiring. Faculty members are practitioners with teaching experience in various aspects of appraisal, real estate and legal education. (USPAP instructors are each certified by the Appraiser Qualifications Board.)

(Most members of Columbia faculty are approved to teach by various regulatory agencies in several states).

c) Refunds:

Student Cancellation:

Should a student cancel after registering and paying tuition for a class, a full refund will be made, or credit given as student prefers.

Course Cancellation:

Should a course be cancelled due to lack of participation or inclement weather, persons who have registered will be issued a full refund or have credit applied, as desired.

The Columbia Institute Refund and Cancellation Policy is stated in all advertising materials.

When a course is cancelled, students are notified via telephone (if no answer, the Columbia representative leaves a message and also faxes a confirmation notice).

d). Pricing

Price may vary due to location, dates, and course. Pricing is subject to change at the discretion of Columbia's Board. Any price changes will be issued an "as of" date. A surcharge of \$20 will be charged for registrations received within 7 days of the course date.

28 Hour String Policy:

If a student is registering for only 1-3 courses in a string, he/she will have 6 months to take the remaining course(s) to receive the string price. This will only be valid for locations that are scheduled on a regular basis. The student may

take the remaining course(s) at a different location as long as it is within the 6 months. The student is charged the full price for the initial course(s). The discounted price is taken off the remaining course(s).

Audit Fee:

A student may audit a previously taken course for \$75. The student will not receive a transcript.

Returned Checks:

The student will be charged \$25 fee for returned checks.

e) **Grading/Exam Policy:**

A final exam is given at the end of each qualifying class to assess the student's understanding of course topics. Students must attain a minimum score of 70%, or as mandated by the regulatory authority. Students failing to make a passing score on the first exam are allowed to take a second exam at no additional cost. Students failing the second exam are encouraged to retake the course for no additional cost.

Most CE Courses include a post-course assessment (similar to an exam) but is not graded and intended for student's use only. An exam is required for all qualifying education (pre-license) courses. There are at least two exam questions per course hour.

f. **Records Retention Policy:**

All students' records are available for audit for a period of 7 years.

g. **Location:**

Classes are held in comfortable hotel meeting rooms in selected cities.

h. **Course Completion Certificates:**

A Course Completion Certificate or Course Transcript is issued when course work is completed. **See Attached**

2. *e-Campus* COURSES (Online)

Notice to *e-Campus* Student: This document contains important information about the procedures necessary for completing your course(s). Please read it carefully, to avoid any delay in obtaining your credit.

a. Applicability:

This Statement is a supplement to other published policies and is specific to course administrators and instructors.

b. Course Administration:

i. The *e-Campus* Administrator provides primary oversight of the following online activities:

- Registrations
- Student progress monitoring
- Providing responses to student inquiries
- Control of examination materials
- Proctor approvals
- Proctor communications and mailings
- Grading of exams
- Issuance of course completion transcripts
- Prepare reports as required by regulatory agency

ii. The *e-Campus* administrator also communicates with instructors to assure that qualifications data are up to date, and that instructors are responding as required.

c. Course Instruction:

i. The *e-Campus* Instructor:

1. Communicates directly with the *e-Campus* Administrator
2. Must sign and adhere to the requirements of the contractor agreement

ii. The student/instructor relationship requires that:

1. The instructor must be available during normal business hours to respond to administrator – or student – as required
2. In the event the instructor is unable to respond in a timely manner, an inquiry will be referred to another instructor, or a response may be provided based on research in the Columbia Library, at the instructor's request.

d. General Student Information:

i. Cancellation and Refund Policy:

You have the right to cancel your registration for any reason up to five (5) business days from the date of purchase. Requests for cancellation of a registration must be made by contacting Columbia Institute by phone, FAX, or e-mail. The request must be received by Columbia Institute before midnight of the fifth business day from the date of purchase.

A cancellation fee will be charged to cancel a registration. The amount of the cancellation fee is 15% of the total purchase amount. If the course includes one or more textbooks, the books must be returned at the student's expense. The request for cancellation will not be processed until any book(s) are returned to the school in reusable condition.

Technical Issues: Outside of the five business day refund policy, you will be eligible for a refund only if Tech Support determines that your problem is not correctable. After a technician determines that your technical problem is not correctable, then you will be instructed to contact Columbia Institute to initiate a refund. Please note: Tech Support can not issue a refund to you under any circumstances.

ii. Class Term and Review:

In most cases lessons must be completed within 180 days of the date of enrollment. Access to the lessons will expire at midnight on the 180th day following enrollment. The student has 90 days to access and review the course content after he/she has completed the final lesson, regardless of when the course is completed.

iii. Course Transcripts:

On completion of all course requirements, Hondros students will receive their certificate automatically. For Cengage (CompuTaught) The Columbia Institute Registrar will issue a course transcript. This is normally emailed to the student within three days of completion, however, under most circumstances it can be faxed to the student on the day of completion. An administrative fee of \$5 is charged for duplicate transcripts.

iv. Tech Support:

1. To talk to the instructor, Registrar or Administrator, call the Columbia *e-Campus* (800) 766-1936.
2. For assistance regarding software or internet issues call:
 - a. For **CompuTaught** courses: Tech Support at (800) 743-8703 (e-mail at techsupport@mycoursepage.com.)
 - b. For **Hondros** courses, Tech Support at (866) 455-3278.

v. Course Extensions:

If a course is not completed within 180 days, the student can generally purchase an extension of up to 60 days (effective from the course expiration date). It is the student's responsibility to contact the school regarding any extensions before the course expires.

vi. Student Identity Verification (SIV) (Applicable only in some courses):

While taking courses online, students may be asked Student Identity Verification (SIV) questions randomly. These questions are taken from the information provided during enrollment. Students will have 45 seconds to respond correctly to these questions. During The Course: Students will be asked random SIV questions. If students miss two consecutive SIV questions, they will be denied access to the course and will need to contact Columbia.

IMPORTANT: If a student is denied access more than once (due to missing the required number of SIV questions), they must contact Columbia. Columbia's *e-Campus* Registrar will have to RESET this student course back to Lesson 1 (once they have successfully proven their identity by answering questions by the Registrar).

During an Online Examination: Students will be asked random SIV questions. If student misses ANY SIV question during the online final examination, student will be denied access to the exam and must contact Columbia to schedule a paper and pencil examination. Once student starts the online final examination they must complete the exam in one sitting. NOTE: Online examinations are not permitted for appraisal courses.

e. Continuing Education Courses:

A final exam is not required for appraiser continuing education (ACE) credit.

All ACE courses are completed on line. The student may stop at any point and pick up where he/she left off, the same as for qualifying/pre-license courses. For **Hondros** courses, student progress is monitored by Hondros and the course transcript is emailed following completion.

For **CompuTaught** courses, on completion the student: 1. should complete the "Real Estate Course Survey Evaluation," and 2. must print out the "Student Affidavit," sign the affidavit and send it to The Columbia Institute Registrar by mail or fax, (210) 804-0212. The course is not complete until the Registrar receives the signed affidavit. The Registrar often may fax the transcript to the student on the same day it is received, with the original being mailed. Under normal circumstances, however, students should allow three business days for issue of the transcript.

f. Qualifying Courses:

Qualifying courses require a proctored final examination, while ACE courses do not.

i. Examination and Grading:

You must attain a minimum score of 75%. All final exams are proctored. If you do not make a passing score on the first exam you may schedule a make-up exam no sooner than the time required to mail to the proctor. Should you not pass the make-up exam, you must reregister and repeat the course before taking the final exam again. A discounted re-enrollment fee will be charged.

Scheduling Final Exam: You must locate a suitable proctor, then call (800) 766-1936 or e-mail Columbia Institute registrar@columbiainstitute.org to schedule your exam.

Schedule Your Exam:

For your benefit, because of possible mail-delivery delays, you should provide your proctor information to Columbia as soon as possible and schedule your exam no later than 10 days before you actually need your completion certificate. Your certificate will be e-mailed to you but exams are sent by mail. You may not receive a completion certificate until your course is completed and you have passed your exam.

Delivery of Proctored Exams:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Standard Delivery, 1st Class US Postage | No. Charge |
| • Overnight Delivery | \$20.00 minimum—call for specific price |

Note: Exams may not be faxed or e-mailed, but answer sheets may be faxed to our special toll-free fax number (866) 885-0212

Proctor Requirements:

All qualifying courses require a proctored final exam. The proctor shall not be related to the student by blood or marriage and may not be engaged in any association (personal or business) with the student. The proctor may be selected from the following:

- A university or college testing center
- Public library (Librarian)
- School professionals (superintendent, principal, guidance counselor, professors or instructors, librarian, etc.)
- Attorney
- A notary public
- Active clergy
- Individuals approved to teach similar courses in a classroom environment

(Arkansas Students Please Note: – Proctors must be pre-approved by the Arkansas Appraisal Board. Please call for a list of Board-approved proctors.)

Note:

Fees charged by the proctor, if any, are the responsibility of the student. Columbia will mail the examination materials and instructions to the proctor, along with a stamped return envelope. The proctor materials can not be faxed or e-mailed, but the proctor may, under some circumstances, fax the completed answer sheet to Columbia. It is often possible for Columbia to fax transcripts to the student.

Exams are normally sent to the proctor via first-class US Postage, but students may request a more expeditious delivery. If a student should request over-night delivery it will be charged as indicated below.

- Overnight delivery, proctor package: \$20.00

Exams may not be faxed or e-mailed, but answer sheets may be faxed to us for grading, and the transcript issued based on the faxed answer sheet. In any case, the proctor must return all materials to Columbia, including the “hard copy” of the answer sheet.

ii. Processing Times:

Generally, you should allow the following times for processing to receive your transcript (Course Completion Certificate):

- Scheduling the proctored final exam - 3 business days
- Mailing of exam from proctor to Columbia Institute - 3 days (estimated)
- Grading of Exam and issuing Course Transcript - 2 business days
- Transcript Emailed 1 day (estimated)

Note: The Registrar must receive the signed “Student Affidavit” before a transcript can be issued.

iii. Course Materials:

All the lessons for the course are completed online. Some courses have a handout along with the online lessons. You may access the online course immediately and begin working as soon as you complete the registration process. Once you have completed the registration information, the Columbia Institute will ship any required materials to you via U.S. mail.

iv. Summary of Requirements for A Qualifying Course:

There are three important steps in completing a course:

1. Complete ALL lessons and answer ALL questions. Most questions are timed and need to be answered within the prescribed time for credit. A lesson is not complete until it is checked off on the main menu.
2. Once you have completed the lessons on the computer, you must submit a signed "Student Affidavit" to the Columbia Institute attesting to the fact that you personally completed the entire course yourself.
3. You must complete a proctored exam with a score of 75% correct or higher.

Adopted, August 1, 2004

Revised June 17, 2009

3. SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

a. Hours of Operation:

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

b. School Holidays:

New Years Day

Martin Luther King Day

President's Day

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Columbus Day

Veteran's Day

Thanksgiving and the day after)

Christmas Day

(The school is closed the last week of the year for our employees to enjoy the holidays, however a limited staff is available to handle student emergencies.)

c. Student Behavior/Disciplinary Policies:

Students are expected to comply with all policies as stated herein. Failure to adhere to these policies may invalidate eligibility for course credit.

In live classes, a student may be dismissed and barred from class at the sole discretion of the instructor, in which case a full refund of tuition will be paid.

d. Non-Discrimination Policy:

The Columbia Institute does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, handicap, or familial status in the establishment of fees, entrance qualifications, participation in school programs or standards for successful completion of any course.

e. Grievance Policy:

If a student should have a grievance, which may involve the administration of policies as stated within this school policy, he or she should state the grievance in writing to: The Columbia Institute, Attn: President, 8546 Broadway, Suite 165, San Antonio, TX 78217, Phone - (800) 766-1936, Fax - (210) 804-0212.

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