

**U.S. Department of Energy**  
**Washington, D.C.**

**ORDER**

**DOE O 361.1**

Approved: 11-10-99  
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This directive was reviewed and certified as current and necessary by (Enter Name), (Enter Title)  
Director, Office of Management, Budget and Evaluation/Chief Financial Officer, XX-XX-XXXX.

**SUBJECT: ACQUISITION CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

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1. OBJECTIVES.

- a. To set forth requirements and responsibilities for the Department of Energy (DOE) Acquisition Career Development (ACD) Program, which implements Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) requirements, Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) requirements, Federal Acquisition Reform Act (FARA) requirements, and the career development objectives of Executive Order (E.O.) 12931.
- b. To establish training and certification requirements for the acquisition workforce, thereby establishing the common foundation of knowledge, tools, and capabilities necessary to fulfill the needs and expectations of the DOE community for a highly skilled acquisition workforce.
- c. To establish a means for providing continuity of effective acquisition management and support of our customers.
- d. To define the Acquisition Workforce to include program management, property management, and financial assistance, in addition to contracting and purchasing, consistent with the statutory intent of Public Law 93-400. This Order is the overarching directive governing training and career development for the newly defined Acquisition Workforce.
- e. To convey the following acquisition training modules:
  - Attachment 1, Basic Acquisition Career Development Program Module;
  - Attachment 2, Property Management Program Module (Reserved);
  - Attachment 3, Financial Assistance Program Module;
  - Attachment 4, Program Management Program Module (Reserved)
  - Attachment 5, Masters Program Module (Reserved); and
  - Attachment 6, Top XX Program Module (Reserved).

2. BACKGROUND. On May 4, 1998, DOE implemented the Acquisition Career Development (ACD) Program via Acquisition Letter (AL) 98-06. The AL established specific training to

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Office of Deputy Assistant Secretary  
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achieve certification at the level required by the position. The AL and the ACD Program applied to GS-1102s and GS-1105s, and those with significant acquisition responsibilities. The requirements of the AL are incorporated into this Order. No significant changes to the ACD Program, as articulated in the AL, have been made.

3. CANCELLATION. This Order cancels and supercedes Acquisition Letter 98-06.

4. APPLICABILITY.

- a. DOE Elements. The requirements of this Order apply to the DOE Acquisition Workforce as defined in 1d above.
- b. Contractors. The requirements of this Order do not apply to DOE contractors.
- c. Exclusions. Waivers to certification requirements set forth in this Order must be obtained in accordance with the applicable program module.

5. REQUIREMENTS.

- a. The qualification requirements set forth in FARA, if applicable, must be applied as indicated in the appropriate program module. See Attachments 1 through 4.
- b. The “core curriculum” must contain the following elements:
  - (1) specific accredited courses, which must be passed before employees are eligible for higher-level certification;
  - (2) completion of core courses in a logical sequence, so that the appropriate level of knowledge is available for performance at a particular level, and so that later courses can build on the knowledge gained in earlier offerings.
- c. DOE core courses required for certification at each level are indicated in the appropriate program module. See Attachments 1 through 4.
- d. Priority for training spaces must be given to employees in the following order:
  - (1) employees in positions for which the training is required by law;
  - (2) employees in positions for which the training is established as mandatory by this Order and who need the training to qualify for the position they currently occupy (i.e., personnel who are training for a new assignment should have priority within this group);

- (3) employees who need the training to become eligible for the next-higher career level and who have completed mandatory training for the positions they currently occupy;
  - (4) employees for whom the training requirement has been established as “desired/elective”; and
  - (5) employees who are not required to attend the course.
- e. To maintain currency of knowledge and skills, individuals in the acquisition workforce who have satisfied the mandatory training requirements shall obtain at least 80 hours of continuing education or training every 2 years.
- f. A specific certification standard path must be established for each position, including education, training, and experience standards, which the incumbent must meet for that career level (i.e., Level I, II, or III).
- g. All acquisition workforce members must meet all requirements for certification at their current level before being assigned to positions requiring the next higher level of certification. For example, an employee at the GS-7 level (Level I position under the Basic ACD Program) cannot be promoted to GS-9, a Level II position, without having completed the certification requirements for Level I.
- h. If a potential assignee to a vacant position in the next-higher level has not met the requirements for certification at the next-higher level, the head of the contracting activity has 18 months to qualify him or her to meet the requirements or justify a waiver from this requirement. For example, a GS-7 (Level I) promoted to GS-9 (Level II) has 18 months to complete all Level II requirements.
- i. An individual certified at a particular level retains that certification regardless of any new requirements made effective thereafter, unless Congress enacts a statutory requirement for a new education or training standard and designates it as “continuing education and training.” Individuals must complete a requirement of this kind within 36 months. Failure to complete new requirements, or to justify a waiver, will result in loss of certification.
- j. Requests for waivers to the certification requirements must be in writing and must describe how disapproval would affect the contracting activity and the course of action being taken to rectify the situation. All requests for waivers must be sent to the career manager identified in the appropriate program module.
- k. All acquisition workforce career employees must have an individual development plan (IDP) that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- (1) short-term (1-year) and long-term career goals and objectives;
- (2) courses scheduled;
- (3) rotational, on-the-job training, details, and mentoring assignments;
- (4) other professional development; and
- (5) refresher training.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES.

- a. Senior Procurement Executive. Responsible for ensuring that each member of the Acquisition Workforce is certified to the career level appropriate to the grade they occupy or to their responsibilities, in accordance with this Order.
- b. Career Managers. The career manager for each functional area is identified in the appropriate program module. The career manager for each functional area has the following responsibilities for his/her functional area:
  - (1) establishes acquisition career development policy;
  - (2) administers the acquisition career development program;
  - (3) manages development of the acquisition career development core curriculum;
  - (4) identifies critical acquisition-related duties and tasks in which, at a minimum, acquisition career employees must be competent to perform at full performance grade levels;
  - (5) grants or denies any waivers to the certification requirements on a case-by-case basis.
- c. Heads of Contracting Activities.
  - (1) Identify training needs and provide funding for training.
  - (2) Create plans for individual acquisition personnel development consistent with site and program mission-strategic needs.
  - (3) Ensure members of the acquisition workforce develop and implement IDPs in accordance with this Order and DOE O 360.1.
  - (4) Facilitate rotational assignments.

- (5) Ensure that holders of purchase cards receive initial and refresher training on their authorities and responsibilities sufficient to protect the interests of the government.
- (6) Budget for and set aside appropriate funds for required training of acquisition workforce members.
- (7) Provide funding on a per-student basis for mandatory courses, in accordance with the interagency agreement with the training sources approved by the appropriate career development manager.

d. Functional Area Directors.

- (1) Conduct an initial structured analysis of future acquisition skills needed to support planned or emerging program needs.
- (2) Periodically assess current and projected workforce skills to ensure that a strategic skills imbalance does not occur; identify any skill gaps and plan development strategies accordingly to ensure the latest acquisition policies, approaches, and techniques are not overlooked.

e. Individual Acquisition Professionals. Prepare and periodically update IDPs with the assistance and counsel of supervisors.

7. REFERENCES.

- a. OFPP Policy Letter 92-3, dated 6-24-92, establishes policies and a Governmentwide standard for skill-based training for the Federal acquisition workforce. The OFPP policy letter also establishes a set of contracting competencies and requires contracting professionals to complete course work and related on-the-job training to attain an appropriate level of skill in each contract management duty.
- b. FAR 1.603-1 links the selection and appointment of contracting officers to OFPP standards that require skill-based training for contracting and purchasing duties.
- c. Public Law 104-106, enacted in 1996, amended the OFPP Act (Section 4307) and expanded OFPP responsibility to include establishing education, training, and experience requirements for civilian agencies, comparable to those established for Department of Defense (DoD) in 1991 by the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA).
- d. Public Law 104-106, the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996, known as the Federal Acquisition Reform Act (FAR), established a new Section 37 of the OFPP Act and strengthened the statutory responsibility of the Director of OFPP.

- e. OFPP Policy Letter 97-01, "Procurement System Education, Training, and Experience Requirements for Acquisition Personnel," issued 9-12-97, implements Public Law 104-106.
  - f. The National Performance Review directed the Federal Government to establish a well-trained, professional, procurement workforce to keep pace with the demands of an increasingly complex procurement process.
  - g. E.O. 12931, "Federal Procurement Reform," underscores the Administration's approach to procurement management and requires agencies to establish career education programs for procurement professionals.
8. CONTACT. Questions concerning this Order should be addressed to the appropriate career manager for each functional area.
9. DEFINITIONS.
- a. Accredited Courses. Courses approved by DOE as providing a specific body of knowledge.
  - b. Acquisition. The planning, design, development, testing, contracting, production, logistics support, and disposal of systems, equipment, facilities, supplies, or services that are intended for use in, or support of, DOE missions.
  - c. Acquisition Experience. Experience gained while assigned to an acquisition position. Also includes cooperative education and other developmental assignments. Includes experience in DOE acquisition positions and in comparable positions outside of DOE.
  - d. Acquisition Positions. Positions in the acquisition system with duties that fall in an acquisition category. These positions are located both in Headquarters and field organizations.
  - e. Acquisition Position Categories. Functional subsets of acquisition positions. These subset positions include purchasing, contracting, financial assistance, property, and program management.
  - f. Acquisition Workforce. Personnel comprising the acquisition system. The acquisition workforce includes permanent employees who occupy acquisition positions, including contracting, purchasing, financial assistance, property management, and program management.
  - g. Career Development. The professional development of employee potential by integrating the capabilities, needs, interests, and aptitudes of employees in acquisition positions,

- through a planned, organized, and systematic method of training and development designed to meet organizational objectives. Career development is accomplished through a combination of work assignments, job rotation, training, education, and self-development programs.
- h. Career Levels. Categories of education, training, and experience standards that provide a framework for potential progression in a career field. The three career levels are (I) Entry, (II) Intermediate, and (III) Advanced or Senior.
  - i. Career Manager. The individual delegated responsibility for the day-to-day organizational management of the career development program for acquisition related areas; that is, procurement, program management, property management, and financial assistance.
  - j. Career Path. The range of opportunities at each career level and the optimum route for vertical and horizontal progression in a career field.
  - k. Certification. The process through which DOE determines that an individual meets mandatory education, training, and experience standards established for a career level (Levels I, II, and III) in the acquisition field.
  - l. Certification Program. A structured program of education, training, and experience that provides a framework for attaining career levels commensurate with positions in the acquisition field.
  - m. Continuing Education. Education and/or training for the purpose of improving or maintaining skills, or to learn new skills. This can take the form of professional association meetings or seminars.
  - n. Core Courses. A DOE-approved course taught by an approved training provider, required as part of the core curriculum.
  - o. Core Curriculum. A DOE-approved course of study comprised of specifically identified courses required to attain a specific career level.
  - p. Defense Acquisition University (DAU). A consortium of DOD education and training institutions and organizations providing DOE-prescribed acquisition courses for certification.
  - q. Elective courses. Courses that cover functional-specific initiatives or that provide more in-depth coverage than is offered in the core course. Electives are not required for progression to the next highest career level.

- r. Equivalent Course. A course that has been determined by the appropriate career manager, DOE/HQ, to contain the level of knowledge that would enable individuals who take the course to perform as if they had completed the comparable, designated, mandatory course.
- s. Fulfillment. The process by which acquisition workforce members may satisfy mandatory training requirements based on previous experience, education, and/or alternative training successfully completed and documented based on course competency standards and procedure.
- t. Functional area. Segments of the acquisition process responsible for a specific area of expertise, such as program management, property management, and financial assistance.
- u. Functional Area Director. The Headquarters Office director of one of the acquisition-related functions. These positions would be Director, Office of Management Systems for procurement; Director, Office of Field Integration for program management; Director, Office of Contract and Resource Management, for property management, and Director, Office of Procurement and Assistance Policy, for financial assistance.
- v. Individual Development Plan (IDP). Document used to plan an employee's education, training, and experience needs. It should specify developmental needs as well as those required in support of the career field position. Developing the plan is a joint effort of the employee, supervisor, and possibly other knowledgeable persons in the training and/or acquisition fields.
- w. Mandatory DOE Acquisition Course. An approved course of study that meets DOE's acquisition education and training requirement for a career level.
- x. Senior Procurement Executive. The Agency senior official appointed under the "Office of Federal Procurement Policy Act," who is responsible for managing the direction of the organization's procurement system, including implementation of unique procurement policies, regulations, and standards. In DOE, this is the Director, Office of Procurement and Assistance Management.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF ENERGY:



DAVID M. KLAUS  
DIRECTOR OF MANAGEMENT AND  
ADMINISTRATION



## **BASIC ACQUISITION CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM MODULE**

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**DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**  
**BASIC ACQUISITION CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM MODULE**

1. **BACKGROUND.** On June 24, 1992, the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) issued Policy Letter 92-3 to establish policies and a Governmentwide standard for skill-based training for the Federal acquisition workforce. The OFPP policy letter established a set of contracting competencies that required contracting professionals to complete course work and related on-the-job training to attain an appropriate level of skill in each contract management duty. The policy letter was implemented as a change to Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 1.603-1, linking the selection and appointment of contracting officers to OFPP standards for skill-based training in performing contracting and purchasing duties.

Public Law (P.L.) 93-400, enacted in 1995, amended the OFPP Act (Section 4307) and expanded OFPP's responsibility to include establishing education, training, and experience requirements for civilian agencies comparable to those established in 1991 for the Department of Defense (DOD) by the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA). On September 12, 1997, OFPP issued Policy Letter 97-01 titled, "Procurement System Education, Training, and Experience Requirements for Acquisition Personnel," which implemented P.L. 93-400.

Additional impetus for acquisition career development was provided by the National Performance Review, which directed the Federal Government to establish a well-trained, professional, procurement workforce that would keep pace with the demands of an increasingly complex procurement process. Moreover, President Clinton signed Executive Order (E.O.) 12931, "Federal Procurement Reform," in which he underscored the Administration's approach to managing procurement and required agencies to establish career education programs for procurement professionals.

Accordingly, the Department of Energy (DOE) issued DOE O 361.1, ACQUISITION CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, to implement the OFPP and FAR requirements, Federal Acquisition Reform Act (FARA) requirements, and the career development objectives of E.O. 12931. The ACD Program's new performance expectations should increase acquisition personnel efficiency and effectiveness on the job, and potentially enhance their opportunities in the job market. This attachment provides supplementary information and guidelines for DOE acquisition personnel to plan their career development to become more competitive for higher-level acquisition positions both inside and outside DOE.

2. **CONTRACTING SERIES QUALIFICATION STANDARDS.** FARA gave to the Administrator, Office of Federal Procurement Policy, the responsibility for establishing qualification requirements for acquisition workforce positions in non-DOE agencies. The new qualification standards are comparable to those already established for DOD positions in 1990 by the DAWIA. See Appendix A for a complete list of standards.

Beginning January 1, 2000, all GS-1102 employees who have continuously encumbered GS-1102 positions since January 1, 1998, or earlier, will be considered to have met the “new” standard for positions they occupy on January 1, 2000. Employees who occupy GS-1102 positions at Grades 5 through 12 will be considered to have met the new basic requirements for other GS-1102 positions up to and including those classified at GS-12. This includes positions at other agencies and promotions up through Grade 12. Employees who occupy GS-1102 positions at Grades 13, 14, and 15 will also be considered to have met the new standard for other GS-1102 positions at their same grade, including positions at other agencies. However, they will have to meet the new basic requirements to qualify for promotion to a higher grade, beginning January 1, 2000. In addition, all employees must meet specialized experience requirements when seeking another position.

3. **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.** Overall responsibility for the contracting and purchasing career development module rests with the DOE Senior Procurement Executive, while day-to-day organizational management has been delegated to the Director, Office of Management Systems (OMS), Headquarters, who serves as the Department’s “Procurement Career Manager.”

Individual procurement professionals are ultimately responsible for their own career progression and development, in conjunction with supervisory career guidance and opportunities presented for career growth. In planning their careers, individuals should pursue the training and growth opportunities offered them. They should also consider requesting increasingly difficult and challenging assignments, entering mentoring relationships, becoming involved with professional societies, seeking education and training outside the DOE/ACD curriculum, and taking other courses offered by DOE.

4. **ACQUISITION CERTIFICATION PROGRAM.** Three proficiency levels—Levels I, II, and III—have been established covering training, experience, and education requirements. The three levels are outlined below.

<b>Certification Levels for Contracting (1102) and Purchasing (1105) Personnel</b>	
<b>1102 Series Certification Levels</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Level I - Entry	GS-05 thru 07
Level II - Intermediate	GS-09 thru 12
Level III - Advanced	GS-13 and above
<b>1105 Series Certification Levels</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Level I - Entry	GS-05
Level II - Intermediate	GS-06 thru 08
Level III - Advanced	GS-09 and above

The following guidelines describe what is expected of contracting and procurement personnel at each career level, within the parameters of the qualification standards. See Appendix A for a complete list of qualification standards.

- a. Level I - Entry. Entry-level training standards are designed to establish fundamental qualifications and expertise in an individual's job series or career field. Development at the entry level lays the foundation for career progression and prepares qualified and motivated personnel for positions of increasing responsibility.

At the entry level, trainees should be exposed to fundamental procurement procedures and the roles of various support functions, such as pricing, property administration, quality assurance, etc. In addition to participation in education and training courses, it is extremely beneficial to rotate new trainees through structured, on-the-job assignments among a variety of functional offices.

- b. Level II - Intermediate. The intermediate level emphasizes specialization. Development continues, including on-the-job rotational assignments, but the length of time an individual spends in each position generally increases. While specialization is emphasized at the beginning of this level, the individual should later begin to broaden his/her background and gain more general expertise in the overall process of his/her career field. Development of the generalist normally involves establishing a good foundation of experience in the employee's primary specialty, followed by lateral movement to a related specialty, to broaden the employee's overall expertise and value to the procuring organization and customer.
- c. Level III - Advanced. By the time an individual reaches the senior levels of acquisition, he or she must have completed all the mandatory training and education requirements (or equivalents) leading up to that level, and should have advanced through a career pattern that has imparted in-depth knowledge in his/her functional areas and breadth of knowledge across the entire acquisition process.

Advanced acquisition education and training become imperative for a more global perspective. The lower-level standards and courses form the basis for the next progressively higher levels of acquisition career development, and the requirements are cumulative.

5. CORE AND DESIRED/ELECTIVE CAREER PATH CURRICULUM. The structured approach to training as articulated in the ACD Program allows employees to demonstrate comprehension and ability to apply course knowledge and skills to analyze and resolve on-the-job performance issues indicating the desired level of proficiency.

In addition, to provide the DOE acquisition community with a knowledge base of the highest quality and to provide the student with not only the requisite skills and knowledge but also with the widest range of procurement thinking, approaches, and practices, the following DOE core courses are necessary at each of the career levels:

Level I (Entry) Core Courses

- CON 101 Fundamentals of Contracting
- CON 104 Contract Pricing

Level II (Intermediate) Core Courses

- CON 210 Government Contract Law
- CON 202 Intermediate Contracting
- CON 204 Intermediate Contract Pricing

Level III (Advanced) Core Courses

- CON 301 Executive Contracting
- CON 333 Management for Contracting Supervisors

The Basic ACD Program is comprised of core (required) and desired/elective courses. Core courses are developed by the Defense Acquisition University (DAU), and are available through an Interagency Training Support Agreement with the DAU's Naval Center for Acquisition Training. DAU has been chosen as the Acquisition Career Development training source, so that DOE course texts, training materials, instructor certifications, and training experiences are consistent with the acquisition career development programs of the Department of Defense, NASA, and an increasing number of other civilian agencies.

In addition, DOE has identified some desired/elective courses that cover procurement initiatives or specific areas of procurement requiring more in-depth coverage than is offered in the core courses. Courses listed as "desired/elective" are designed to improve the qualifications of the acquisition workforce and in many cases lead to accomplishing mandatory standards at a higher level.

Completion of desired/elective courses is not required to progress to the next-higher career level. Individuals should choose whether to take desired/elective courses based on their specific interests, needs, and work assignments.

Alternate Education and Training Methods. Although it is highly recommended that students attend the DOE/ACD core course offerings (and desired/elective courses, if needed) whenever possible, the following education and training programs and courses may be substituted:

- certain academic courses offered by institutions of higher education that are approved by DAU as equivalent to the mandatory education and training courses and
- accredited academic degree or certificate programs offered by institutions of higher education that are approved by the Procurement Career Manager as equivalents to those mandatory courses offered by DAU.

Information regarding alternate education and training methods can be found at [www.acq.osd.mil/dau/](http://www.acq.osd.mil/dau/).

## 6. PROGRAM CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.

- a. Substituting Education for Experience. In determining if an employee has the requisite experience for acquisition positions at Level III, up to 12 months of time spent pursuing a program of academic training or education in acquisition may be counted toward fulfilling the EXPERIENCE standards for acquisition positions, for the purposes of certification.
- b. Comparability of DOE and DOD Certification Programs. It is important to note that the DOE Certification Program does not automatically correlate to the DOD Certification Program. Because DOE initially used parameters different from those used by DOD (e.g., 10 years prior experience) to determine course grandfathering and/or equivalency, the two agencies have no reciprocal agreement to accept each other's certifications.

Each Agency's "certifications" are currently limited to the Agency itself; for example, a Level III certification at NASA or DOE will not automatically result in a Level III certification outside that Agency. In reaching decisions as to the appropriate career level for an individual, each Agency will review the individual employee's education, training profile, and experience, and may or may not reach the same conclusions as other agencies as to the use of experience or alternative courses in lieu of core courses.

7. CAREER PATHS. Normal pathways for career progression include both vertical and lateral movement. Lateral movement within and between career fields is highly encouraged, primarily at the intermediate level, to broaden the experience base of the individual. This can be done through rotational assignments. Multi-specialty experience for most upper-level positions is desirable and is particularly important for those who strive for senior-level and other key acquisition positions. To obtain this experience, the individual should strive to get work assignments and training in more than one of the functional areas of acquisition.

In addition to multi-specialty experience, a mixture of operational and staff experience will strengthen an individual's competitive position when seeking high-level positions in acquisition career fields. Operations and Field Offices are encouraged to provide multi-specialty experience through structured programs necessary for career progression to the most senior acquisition positions.

- a. Skills Currency/Continuing Acquisition Education/Succession Planning. DOE must provide for the present by ensuring that the existing workforce has the training and experience needed, both to remain current in a dynamic acquisition profession and to prepare for leadership roles in the future.

Accordingly, heads of contracting activities (HCAs) should ensure that existing acquisition staff and managers receive “refresher” training as needed to comply with DOE O 361.X and to keep current on emerging acquisition requirements, policies, issues, and techniques. This may include, but is not limited to, DOE-sponsored training and management/executive seminars, special jobs and/or professional association-related projects, and/or participation in seminars/workshops, or other appropriate developmental assignments.

The training and experience needs of existing acquisition staff and managers should be determined, and individual development plans should reflect “currency” training and assignments, as well as career development. In addition, as the role of the acquisition professional evolves, DOE procurement directors and their staffs need to provide the strategic business advice and consultation needed to support their customers, including increasing their knowledge in the acquisition of commodities and services not previously required. There also needs to be a periodic, forward-looking assessment of local workforce demographics, skills, and capabilities to ensure that the procurement organization is prepared for the future. (See Section 8, Strategic Skills Assessments, and Section 9, Individual Development Plans.)

- b. Mandatory Training Completion by Fulfillment. Fulfillment of mandatory training generally occurs in one of three ways:
- an employee is at a career level above the level at which the training is mandatory;
  - an employee has been at the full performance level of a career field for a substantial period of time and is performing at a more-than-satisfactory level;
  - an employee has received training equivalent to that required by the core curriculum.

If, given one of these situations, the Director of Procurement at the contracting activity and the employee believe that the employee does not need to attend the mandatory course, the HCA must petition the Procurement Career Manager, OMS/HQ, in writing for course completion by fulfillment, detailing the rationale for the request. If the DOE Procurement Career Manager concurs, the cognizant director of procurement will be so notified.

8. STRATEGIC SKILLS ASSESSMENT. Managers and employees must grow to keep pace with the Department’s aggressive pursuit of reengineering and redesign, its evolving mission needs, and its ever-changing budgets and staff resources. If the skills and capabilities of the DOE workforce do not match the acquisition needs of DOE customers, the Department’s mission may be jeopardized.

Therefore, as part of the ACD Program, each procurement director is required to conduct an initial structured analysis of future acquisition skills that will be needed to support planned or emerging program needs. Against this forecast, the procurement director should assess current and projected workforce skills to identify any gaps that need to be filled. In this assessment, the need for acquisition professionals to “keep current” in the latest acquisition policies, approaches, and techniques should not be overlooked. (See Section 7a above, “Skills Currency/Continuing Acquisition Education/Succession Planning.”) This strategic skill assessment will be conducted periodically to ensure currency of skills vis-a-vis mission needs.

9. INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS. A necessary component of any comprehensive career development program is an institutionalized process of individualized career development training. IDPs should be updated periodically to ensure accuracy and currency. The following voluntary activities should be considered in formulating a comprehensive IDP.
  - a. Rotational Assignments. Rotational assignments are a valuable source of experience and opportunity for growth. They allow employees to demonstrate their ability to apply course knowledge and skills through on-the-job performance, indicating that they have achieved the desired level of proficiency. In addition, rotational assignments promote positive team relationships through cross-training and exposure to skills in other disciplines, in that way enhancing employees’ appreciation of how the various functions contribute to the acquisition process.
  - b. Mentoring. Mentoring is a structured, but informal, agreement between two individuals outside the normal employee/supervisory relationship, wherein the “mentor” provides assistance to the participant (protege) in his/her career development planning process. Mentoring can provide valuable coaching and feedback regarding career plans and choices.
  - c. Professional Associations. Membership in professional associations allows the acquisition professional to keep abreast of current topics and trends important to job performance, and can provide opportunities for an exchange of knowledge, experiences, information, and ideas on a variety of issues. Professional associations can also provide the acquisition professional with sources of conferences, seminars, workshops, video-telecasts, printed literature, research, databases, training, and other valuable career-development information and opportunities. In addition, professional associations enable employees to meet others who have similar interests and careers, and facilitates networking opportunities.
10. PROMOTIONS AND CONTRACTING OFFICER WARRANTS. Contracting and procurement personnel must clearly understand that any future promotion or issuance of a contracting officer’s warrant will be contingent upon the successful completion of the DOE/ACD core courses within their appropriate levels. Any requested exceptions to this policy must be submitted in writing by the HCA to the Procurement Career Manager, OMS/HQ, for approval by the DOE Procurement Executive.



11. RELATION TO OTHER ACQUISITION WORKFORCE PROGRAMS. The DOE ACD is directed primarily at the career contracting employee; however, other members of the DOE acquisition workforce require acquisition training. For example, the Department's extensive purchase card program has resulted in limited procurement authority being delegated to a number of individuals outside the contracting series. The Department's current Contracting Officer Warrant Program (DOE O 541.1) provides extensive coverage on the training and educational requirements for those delegated procurement authority, including purchase card holders.

Formal classroom and on-line training resources are currently available for training purchase card holders. Similarly, formal acquisition training focused on and appropriate to their needs and responsibilities is available for contracting officer representatives (CORs). To comply with DOE Order 541.1, APPOINTMENT OF CONTRACTING OFFICERS AND CONTRACTING OFFICERS REPRESENTATIVES, CORs are required to receive a minimum of 24 hours of formal training in basic government procurement or contract administration, or to have had at least 1 year of experience as a COR at a Federal Agency.

CANCELLED

**APPENDIX A**  
**QUALIFICATION STANDARDS FOR**  
**CONTRACT SPECIALISTS AND PURCHASING AGENTS**

1. QUALIFICATION STANDARD FOR CONTRACT SPECIALIST (GS-1102).<sup>1</sup>

a. Basic Requirements (GS-5 through GS-12).

- (1) Participant must have completed a 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree with a major in any field.

OR

- (2) Participant must have—
- at least 24 semester hours in any combination of the following fields: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management; or
  - a passing score on an examination or examinations considered by the Director, Office of Personnel Management, to demonstrate skills, knowledge, or abilities comparable to those of an individual who has completed at least 24 semester hours (or the equivalent) of study in any of the above academic disciplines, plus appropriate experience or additional education.

Applicants who meet the criteria for Superior Academic Achievement qualify for positions at the GS-7 level. The following table shows the amounts of education and/or experience required to qualify for positions GS-7 through GS-12 covered by this standard.

Grade	Education OR	Specialized Experience
GS-7	1 full academic year of graduate education or law school or superior academic achievement	1 year equivalent to at least GS-5
GS-9	2 full academic years of progressively higher-level graduate education, master's or equivalent graduate degree, LL.B., or J.D.	1 year equivalent to at least GS-7
GS-11	3 full academic years of progressively higher-level graduate education or Ph.D. or equivalent	1 year equivalent to at least GS-9
GS-12 and above	Not Applicable	At least 1 year in next-lower grade

Equivalent combinations of education and experience are qualifying for all grade levels for which both education and experience are acceptable.

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<sup>1</sup> Effective 1/1/98

Graduate Education. To qualify for GS-1102 positions on the basis of graduate education, graduate education in one or a combination of the following fields is required: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management.

NOTE: For positions at GS-7 through GS-12, applicants who qualify based on experience must possess at least 1 year of specialized experience at or equivalent to work at the next lower level that provided the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform successfully the work of the position, in addition to meeting the basic requirements in Paragraphs 1a(1) or (2), above.

- b. Basic Requirements (GS-13 and higher). Participants must complete all mandatory training prescribed by the head of the Agency before advancing to GS-13 or higher-level contracting positions, including at least 4 years' experience in contracting or related positions. At least 1 year of that experience must have been specialized experience at or equivalent to the next lower level of the position, which provided the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform successfully the work of the position.

AND

Participants must have completed a 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree, which included or was supplemented by at least 24 semester hours in any combination of the following fields: accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management; OR the senior procurement executive of the Agency must certify that the applicant possesses significant potential for advancement to levels of greater responsibility and authority, based on demonstrated analytical and decision-making capabilities, job performance, and qualifying experience. Any applicant certified under this provision must either meet the requirements of Paragraph a for GS-5 through 12 positions or receive a passing score on an examination or examinations considered by the Director, Office of Personnel Management, to demonstrate skills, knowledge, or abilities comparable to that of an individual who has completed at least 24 semester hours (or the equivalent) of study in any of the academic disciplines listed above.

- (1) Special Inservice Placement Provision. Employees currently in GS-1102 positions, and persons hired into GS-1102 positions by January 1, 1998, will be considered to have met minimum qualification requirements for other GS-1102 positions until January 1, 2000; that is, those GS-1102 employees will not have to meet the new educational requirements imposed by this standard and will continue to qualify for other GS-1102 positions, including positions at a higher grade and in another Agency, by meeting specialized experience requirements. This 2-year special in-service placement provision provides a reasonable opportunity for current GS-1102 employees to acquire the educational background specified in the new standard.

Beginning January 1, 2000, all GS-1102 employees who have continuously encumbered GS-1102 positions since January 1, 1998, or earlier, will be considered to have met the “new” standard for positions they occupy on January 1, 2000. Employees who occupy GS-1102 positions at Grades 5 through 12 will be considered to have met the new basic requirements for other GS-1102 positions up to and including those classified at G-12. This includes positions at other agencies and promotions up through Grade 12. Employees who occupy GS-1102 positions at Grades 13, 14, and 15 will also be considered to have met the new standard for other GS-1102 positions at their same grade, including positions at other agencies. However, they will have to meet the new basic requirements to qualify for promotion to a higher grade, beginning January 1, 2000. In addition, all employees must meet specialized experience requirements when seeking another position.

- (2) Waiver Authority. The DOE Senior Procurement Executive may waive one of the two sets of education requirements set forth above for applicants for positions at Grade GS-13 and above. A request for Procurement Executive waiver shall be submitted in writing with a certification by the HCA that the applicant has significant potential for advancement to levels of greater responsibility based on demonstrated analytical and decision-making capabilities, job performance, and qualifying experience. It is expected that this waiver authority will be used only in rare and unusual circumstances, such as when no other qualified candidates are readily available.

NOTE: OFPP has not indicated any provision for waivers for applicants for positions at Grade GS-12 and below.

2. QUALIFICATION STANDARD FOR PURCHASING AGENT (GS-1105).

- a. Basic Requirements (GS-05). Selection into the 1105 series is based on demonstrated or potential abilities in the field.
- b. Basic Requirements (GS-07). Progression to a GS-07 purchasing position requires completion of all mandatory training prescribed by the head of the Agency under Section 37 of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy Act, including 1 year of specialized experience equivalent to at least the next lower grade level.
- c. Basic Requirements (GS-09 and above). Progression to GS-09 purchasing positions requires completion of all mandatory training prescribed by the head of the Agency under Section 37 of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy Act, including 1 year specialized experience equivalent to at least the next lower grade level.

**APPENDIX B**  
**LEVEL I, II, AND III MANDATORY AND DESIRED/ELECTIVE COURSES**  
**DESCRIPTION OF COURSES**

The following courses are sponsored by the DOE Acquisition Career Development (ACD) Program. Each course is designated either “C” for core (mandatory) or “D/E” for “desired/elective” (refresher or continued development). Any course prerequisites are also noted along with a mandatory (“M”) or desired (“D”) designation.

**Level I: (Entry) Courses**  
**Contract Specialist GS-05/07**

**Contracting Fundamentals - (Basic Procurement) (C)** is a general survey course in contracting basics for personnel just entering or those with up to 3 years of practical experience in the field of contracting. It covers the broad range of contracting procedures prescribed by the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR); the Department of Energy Acquisition Regulations and Procurement Guidebook; applicable statutes; ethics; policies; and other pertinent authorities that govern contracting operations. (20 class days)

**Contracting Pricing - (Cost and Price Analysis) (C)** is designed for entry-level contracting personnel. This course provides the foundation for the study and practice of cost and price analysis. Topics include a review of various types of contracts, sources of data for cost and price analysis, methods of analyzing direct and indirect costs, methods for performing profit analysis, ethics in contract pricing, and a selection of current pricing topics. Individual and group negotiation workshops address fundamentals of the negotiation process, including essential techniques, strategies, and tactics. An actual cost analysis is used to illustrate various concepts and methods covered in the course.

NOTE: Basic algebra skills are required for successful completion of this course. Personnel accepted for this course will receive a math review book and are encouraged to complete that review prior to attending the course. (14 class days)

**Level II: (Intermediate) Courses**  
**Contract Specialist, GS-09 through 12**

**Government Contract Law (C)** provides information about the effect of Government contract law on daily decision making in acquisition. It introduces basic legal principles and sources of contract law as they apply to the Government’s acquisition of supplies, services, and construction. Court cases and administrative decisions (Government Accounting Office, Boards of Contract Appeals) are discussed, emphasizing the law’s effect on Government/contractor relationships and ethics, and how to avoid and handle legal disputes. This course is designed for intermediate-level personnel who have some experience with Government contracting and are responsible for contract formation or management. (10 class days)

**Intermediate Contract Pricing (C)** reinforces pricing skills taught in Contracting Pricing and develops skills in performing more advanced pricing duties. The course concentrates on quantitative methods for cost and price analysis, advanced pre-award pricing decisions, post-award pricing decisions, and general contracting pricing issues. Students receive MS DOS public domain software to use in the quantitative methods section of instruction. Students will develop skills in pricing leases, developing pre-negotiation positions on proposed indirect rates with emphasis on depreciation, and analyzing the cost realism of best and final offers. Students will also be instructed in how to develop general and administrative costs, individual research and development costs, bid and proposal costs, and costs associated with fringe benefits, environmental pools, and uncompensated overtime. Students will also develop skills in estimating cost-to-complete, pricing equitable adjustments (with exercises related to claims and contract modifications), adjusting and applying indirect cost rates (which features an exercise in “quick closeout”), and defective pricing. Students will be required to develop a case study on a contract pricing problem based on their prior contracting experience. These problems provide a basis for classroom presentations and situations analysis corresponding to relevant contract pricing topics, as well as for applying ethical principles and developing appropriate solutions. (10 class days) (Prerequisite: Contracting Pricing)

**Intermediate Contracting (C)** concentrates on management functions of all phases of contracting. Emphasis is placed on problem analysis and resolution, two major management functions. It is anticipated that knowledge acquired through previous courses and on-the-job training will be applied throughout this course. Case studies and practical exercises offer ample opportunity to apply knowledge and past experience in analyzing problems and formulating decisions. In addition, discussions of alternative solutions, and the identification and evaluation of relevant facts, help students develop depth-of-knowledge in the complex areas of contracting. This course is specifically designed for intermediate-level personnel in the contracting series. Pre-award contracting concentrates on management functions and contracting problem analysis and resolution. Case studies and classroom activities in the pre-award phase help students use ethical principles and develop decision-making skills relevant to the management of a wide variety of Government acquisitions. (19 class days)

**Incentive Contracting (D/E)** is a comprehensive course that addresses the full spectrum of contract types ranging from firm-fixed-price to cost-plus-fixed-fee with a particular emphasis on award-fee and incentive contracts. Through discussion and individual and group exercises, the course addresses Government policy; selection and negotiation of contract type; and description, application, and limitations of all variations of fixed-price, cost reimbursement, and incentive contracts. This course will also address indefinite-delivery, time and materials, and cost sharing contracts.

Upon completing the course, the participant will be able to recognize the major elements of a fixed-price-incentive (FPI) structure and to graph the share ratio line. Skills to define the major elements of a cost-plus-incentive-fee (CPIF) structure and to calculate amounts of incentive fee for multiple incentives will be acquired. The major elements of cost-plus-award-fee (CPAF) contracts will be discussed and a recommended award fee amount will be computed. Major topics include contract types, FPI and CPIF contracts, multiple incentive contracts, CPAF contracts, and administrative issues. (4.5 class days)

**Performance-Based Contracting (PBC) (D/E)** is a specialized course focusing on the acquisition of routine, recurring services. Performance-Based Contracting is designed to give both technical and contracting personnel a general knowledge of the basic principles of PBC. The course covers writing a PBC statement of work, developing incentive contract structures (both positive and negative), developing a PBC quality assurance plan, and monitoring contractor performance. The course also describes the roles of the surveillance team and the quality assurance plan. Students develop a performance requirements summary stating the standard performance with the Quality Assurance Plan and maximum defect rates. Different methods of surveillance and instructions on how to decide which method to use are also reviewed. (4.5 class days)

**Performance-Based Contracting for Non-Routine Supplies and Services (D/E)** covers the essential elements of performance-based contracting as they pertain to non-routine supplies and services (e.g., research and development efforts), the differences between PBC for routine services and non-routine services, and the development of performance-based work statements. The course also discusses problems in developing the project surveillance plan and its importance. Contractor performance and the differences between oversight surveillance and surveillance by insight, and the juxtaposition of these two philosophies as they relate to PBC policy disseminated by the Office of Federal Procurement Policy, are also addressed. Methods of incentive contracting and the importance of multiple incentive contracts within the context of PBC are major course considerations. This course is recommended for all contracting personnel, project/program managers, and contracting officer's technical representatives (4.5 class days).

### **Level III: (Advanced) Courses** **Contract Specialist GS-13 and above**

**Executive Contracting (CON 301) (C)** is a unique forum for senior contracting personnel to examine a wide range of acquisition issues. Through guest speaker lectures, discussions, workshops, and a Capitol Hill visit to observe Congressional activities, this course provides an intensive, executive-level view of current issues and events in acquisition, and in particular, contracting. Topics include contracting policy (FAR Council, Office of Procurement Policy); current, actual, and proposed changes; changing technologies; external forces (the Small Business Administration, the General Accounting Office, and legislative statutes); and work environment (contracting innovations, change, ethics, etc.). Upon completing the course, participants will be able to discuss current, actual, and projected DOE contracting and contract management issues, and they will be able to identify and discuss the effect of recently established or proposed policies, regulations, directives, or studies on present acquisition and contracting policies. They will also gain an awareness of how legislation and procurement policy makers operate and work with issues, problems, and the community at large. Participants will network with other contracting personnel on various approaches as a means of understanding and, if appropriate, implementing, ideas presented in the course. (5 class days)

**Management for Contracting Supervisors (CON 333) (C)** spans management and leadership theory and practices applicable to a wide range of situations ranging from complex pre- and post-award procurement scenarios and detailed management cases, to the legal and ethical analysis of current acquisition practices. This interactive workshop is designed for supervisors, managers, and

other senior procurement personnel. It uses case studies, critical incidents, small group interaction, and self-assessments to analyze and discuss government procurement management issues to sharpen skills in assessment and interpretation of the variables that affect contract performance and mission accomplishment. Participants are encouraged to apply and share their experiences and expertise. The case scenarios are supplemented and reinforced through guest lecturers, panel discussions, management leadership self-assessments, and issues brought to class by the students. Participants apply their expertise within the case scenarios and supplementary activities to expand their knowledge of supervisory and management techniques and approaches to meeting mission requirements. (5 class days)

**Source Evaluation Board (SEB) (D/E)** provides a comprehensive overview of the SEB process employed in major procurements (>\$50 million). Sessions are structured to expose participants to the entire SEB process using the FAR and DOE FAR Supplement procedures. The course will provide information about the SEB process and tools/techniques associated with the activity. The process includes roles and organizations, contents of statements of work, schedules, evaluation factors (Section L and Section M), scoring, briefing the source selection official, and writing the selection statement. Although the process focuses on awarding under the new procedures with initial proposals, how to conduct discussions and compile best and final offeror evaluation results will be reviewed. Debriefing the successful and unsuccessful offerors will be discussed.

Recommended experience/education: enrollment in this course is limited to mid- and senior-level technical, procurement, or resources personnel expected to perform SEB-related duties in the next 12 to 18 months. (4.5 class days)

### **Level I and II Courses for GS-1105 Series**

#### **Level I: (Entry) Courses Purchasing Agent GS-05**

**Simplified Acquisition Fundamentals (C)** teaches acquisition personnel to use simplified acquisition procedures (SAPs) to accomplish acquisitions below the simplified acquisition threshold (SAT). Participants will learn to locate and apply policies, procedures, and guidance contained in the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). The course emphasizes the importance of customer satisfaction, market research, performance-based specifications, buying commercial items, best-value source selection, and administration of contracts for commercial items when using SAPs.

#### **Level II: (Intermediate) Courses Purchasing Agent GS-07 through 08**

Prerequisite: Simplified Acquisition Fundamentals

**Intermediate Simplified Acquisition Procedures (C)** provides current or potential simplified acquisition contracting officers with the skills necessary to provide guidance and direction about the more complex actions under the simplified acquisition threshold (SAT). Participants use an integrated



case study to assess and make decisions on a more complex simplified acquisition. The course provides practical experience in procurement planning, customer satisfaction, market research, performance-based specifications, buying commercial items, best-value source selection, and innovative problem solving skills. (2 weeks)

**Level III (Advanced) Courses**  
**Purchasing Agent GS-09 and higher**

[No courses identified to date for this level]

CANCELED

**PROPERTY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM MODULE  
(RESERVED)**

CANCELED

## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM MODULE**

1. **BACKGROUND.** The Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) issued Policy Letter 92-3, "Procurement Professionalism Program Policy—Training for Contracting Personnel," dated 6-24-92, to establish Government-wide policies and standards for skill-based training for the Federal acquisition workforce. The OFPP policy letter established a set of contracting competencies and required contracting professionals to complete course work and related on-the-job training in order to attain an appropriate level of skill in each contract management duty. The policy letter was implemented as a change to Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 1.603-1, linking the selection and appointment of contracting officers to OFPP's standards for skill-based training in performing contracting and purchasing duties. In addition, Public Law (P.L.) 104-106, enacted in 1996, amended the OFPP Act (by adding section 37) and expanded OFPP's responsibility to include establishing education, training, and experience requirements for civilian agencies comparable to those established in 1991 for the Department of Defense. On 9-12-97, OFPP issued Policy Letter 97-01, "Procurement System Education, Training, and Experience Requirements for Acquisition Personnel," which implemented P.L. 104-106.

In addition, the National Performance Review directed the Federal Government to establish a well-trained, professional, acquisition workforce that would keep pace with the demands placed upon it by an increasingly complex procurement process. Moreover, in 1994, President Clinton signed Executive Order (E.O.) 12931, "Federal Procurement Reform," in which he underscored the Administration's approach to managing procurement and required agencies to establish career education programs for procurement professionals.

These developments led to the current GS-1102 career standards and career development training curriculum and certification program. Within the Department of Energy (DOE), contract specialists often award and administer financial assistance instruments in addition to acquisition contracts; however, the Federal standards do not address financial assistance careers or offer a training curriculum. To ensure that its contract specialist workforce is as qualified in the award and administration of financial assistance as they are in acquisition, DOE offers its employees training resources. The application of OFPP's policy letter concepts to financial assistance responsibilities will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of DOE's contract workforce. Implementation of a DOE financial assistance training and career development certification program will help in meeting the career development objectives of E.O. 12931. The new performance expectations will ensure an effective and efficient workforce, enhance their future opportunities in the job market, and ensure that the specialized training needed in this area is available. This program provides the information and guidelines to plan career development programs for procurement professionals performing financial assistance duties to enable them to become more competitive for higher-level positions in acquisition-related fields.

2. **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.** Each individual performing financial assistance work, working in conjunction with his or her supervisor's career guidance and the opportunities presented for career growth, is ultimately responsible for his or her career progression and

development in DOE. However, overall responsibility for DOE/financial assistance career development (FACD) implementation rests with the DOE Procurement Executive. Day-to-day organizational management has been delegated to the Director, Office of Procurement and Assistance Policy, who will serve as the Department's Financial Assistance Career Manager. This office is responsible for FACD policy, administration of the program, design and content of the recommended curriculum, identification of the critical financial assistance related duties, and tasks in which, at a minimum, employees in the financial assistance career path must be competent to perform at full performance grade levels.

In planning their careers, individuals should pursue the training and growth opportunities offered them and request increasingly difficult and challenging assignments, enter a mentoring relationship, become involved with professional societies, and seek education and training outside the DOE/FACD curriculum and other DOE course offerings.

3. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE QUALIFICATION STANDARDS. The DOE financial assistance community is composed of GS-1102 contract specialists, and those qualification standards are relevant but not fully sufficient for performing financial assistance duties. Appendix A to Attachment 1 of DOE O 361.1 contains those standards. Contract specialists performing financial assistance in addition to, or in place of, acquisition duties must also meet the certification requirements established by this program no later than 2 years from the effective date of this change to the Order.
4. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM. Financial assistance award and administration in DOE is performed by contract specialists. The DOE/FACD is built upon the skills acquired by the contract specialists in the performance of their acquisition duties and the training provided by the DOE GS-1102 Acquisition Career Development Program. This is possible because of the similar skills required for acquisition and financial assistance. These skills include planning, preparing solicitation documents, proposal analysis, cost analysis, negotiation, selection of award instrument type, financing performance, audits, preparing award documents, debriefing, administration, monitoring, terminations, and close out.

Certification is the process through which the Financial Assistance Career Manager determines that an individual meets the requirements (education, training, and experience) established for a career level in the financial assistance career field. Contracting activities are expected to ensure that contract specialists involved in the award and administration of financial assistance attain the training necessary for certification. Contract specialists who perform financial assistance work on an occasional basis are not required to pursue this supplemental training. Contracting officer's warrants which include financial assistance will require the successful completion of the DOE/FACD courses. See DOE O 541.1A, APPOINTMENT OF CONTRACTING OFFICERS AND CONTRACTING OFFICER REPRESENTATIVES.

5. CAREER PATH CURRICULUM. The DOE/FACD Program will provide employees the opportunity to analyze and resolve on-the-job performance issues and methods or techniques to determine their level of proficiency. The DOE/FACD Program curriculum is designed to provide students with the necessary financial assistance skills and with experience in a wide range of thinking, approaches, and practices. The required DOE courses are listed below. Detailed course descriptions are provided in Appendix A.

- Federal Financial Assistance
- Cost Principles OMB Circulars A-21, A-87, A-122 and FAR 31.2
- Federal Funds Management

6. CAREER PATHS. Normal pathways for career progression include both vertical and lateral movement. Lateral movement within and between career fields is highly encouraged, primarily at the intermediate level, to broaden the experience base of the individual. This can be done through rotational assignments. Multi-specialty experience is desirable for most upper-level positions and is particularly important for those who strive for senior level and other key positions. To obtain this experience, individuals should seek work assignments and training in more than one functional area.

In addition to multi-specialty experience, a mixture of operational and staff experience will strengthen an individual's competitive position when seeking high-level positions in acquisition career fields. Operations and field offices are encouraged to provide multi-specialty experience through structured programs necessary for career progression to the most senior positions.

7. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS.

- a. Skills Currency/Continuing Financial Assistance Education/Succession Planning. DOE must ensure that the existing workforce has the training and experience needed to remain current in a dynamic financial assistance profession and to prepare for leadership roles in the future.

Accordingly, HCAs should ensure that existing staff and managers receive refresher training as needed to comply with DOE O 361.1 and keep current on emerging requirements, policies, issues, and techniques. This may include, but is not limited to, DOE-sponsored training and management/executive seminars, special job or professional association-related projects or participation in seminars/workshops, or other appropriate developmental assignments. To remain current in financial assistance knowledge and skills, contract specialists and contracting officers should obtain 80 hours of continuing education or training every 2 years. If employees perform a mix of acquisition and financial assistance responsibilities, continuing education should include both functional areas. These requirements should be viewed as a complement to the acquisition requirements and therefore need not exceed 80 hours every 2 years.

Supervisors should evaluate the training and experience needs of staff and managers performing financial assistance work; individual development plans should reflect both “currency” training and assignments and career development. In addition, as the role of the individuals performing financial assistance work evolves, DOE Procurement Directors and their staffs need to provide the strategic business advice and consultation needed to support their customers, including increasing their knowledge in the financial assistance arena of services not previously required. A periodic, forward-looking assessment of local workforce demographics, skills, and capabilities is needed to ensure that the Procurement organization is prepared for the future. (See paragraph 7, Strategic Skills and Assessments, and paragraph 8, Individual Development Plans.)

- b. Training Completion by Fulfillment. If an employee believes he or she has acquired the knowledge provided by a mandatory financial assistance training course through experience, or other courses, he or she may petition the Financial Assistance Career Manager, Office of Procurement and Assistance Policy, for credit for the course. If the request is approved, course attendance will not be required and fulfillment will represent credit for that training. Fulfillment generally occurs when a participant has attained the full performance level for an extended period of time at a satisfactory level of performance. If the Director of Procurement at the contracting activity believes attendance at a required course is unnecessary, the HCA may submit a written request for fulfillment of the requirement and detailing the rationale for the request to the Senior Procurement Executive.
7. STRATEGIC SKILLS ASSESSMENT. Managers and employees must grow to keep pace with DOE’s aggressive pursuit of reengineering and redesign, its evolving mission needs, and its ever-changing budgets and staff resources. If the skills and capabilities of our workforce do not match the needs of our customers, the Department’s mission may be jeopardized.

As part of the DOE/FACD Program, each HCA is required to conduct an initial structured analysis of future financial assistance skills that will be needed to support planned or emerging program needs. Against this forecast, the HCA should assess current and projected workforce skills to identify any gaps that will need to be filled. In this assessment, the need for acquisition professionals to keep current in the latest acquisition policies, approaches, and techniques should not be overlooked. (See paragraph 7a, Skills Currency/Continuing Acquisition Education/ Succession Planning.) This strategic skill assessment will be conducted periodically to ensure currency of skills to meet mission needs.
8. INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS. A necessary component of any comprehensive career development program is an institutionalized process of individualized career development training. Individual development plans should be updated periodically to ensure accuracy and currency. The following voluntary activities should be considered when formulating a comprehensive individual development plan.

- a. Rotational Assignments. Rotational assignments are a valuable source of experience and opportunity for growth. They allow employees to demonstrate their ability to apply course knowledge and skills through on-the-job performance, indicating that they have achieved the desired level of proficiency. In addition, rotational assignments promote positive team relationships through cross-training and exposure to skills in other disciplines, in that way enhancing employees' appreciation of how the various functions contribute to the financial assistance process.
  - b. Mentoring. Mentoring is a structured, but informal, agreement between two individuals outside the normal employee/supervisory relationship, wherein the mentor provides assistance to the participant (protege) in his/her career development planning process. Mentoring can provide valuable coaching and feedback regarding career plans and choices.
  - c. Professional Associations. Membership in professional associations allows financial assistance personnel to keep abreast of current topics and trends important to job performance and can provide opportunities for an exchange of knowledge, experiences, information, and ideas on a variety of issues. Professional associations can also provide the acquisition professional with sources of conferences, seminars, workshops, video-telecasts, printed literature, research, databases, training, and other valuable career developing information and opportunities. In addition, professional associations enable employees to meet others who have similar interests and careers, and facilitates networking opportunities.
9. RELATION TO OTHER ACQUISITION WORKFORCE PROGRAMS. The DOE/FACD complements the DOE Acquisition Career Development Program required of all GS-1102 Federal personnel.

The DOE/FACD Program is directed primarily at the contract specialist financial assistance career employee; however, other members of the DOE acquisition workforce may benefit from financial assistance training. For example, the Department's cost and price analysis personnel, contracting officer technical representatives and sponsoring program personnel. Contracting activities are encouraged to tailor courses such as these for such employees. Cost price analysts, for example, would benefit from the cost principles, and Federal funds management courses of this curriculum.

Formal acquisition training focused on and appropriate to their needs and responsibilities is available for contracting officer representatives. DOE O 541.1A, APPOINTMENT OF CONTRACTING OFFICERS AND CONTRACTING OFFICER REPRESENTATIVES, contains the minimum qualification requirements for contracting officer representatives.

## APPENDIX A

### FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND CERTIFICATION CURRICULUM

**Federal Financial Assistance.** This course introduces Department of Energy (DOE) employees to the basic processes and applications of the Federal financial assistance program. Entry-level personnel who take this course will gain the ability to negotiate, award, and administer a Federal financial assistance instrument. Evening reading is required. Topics include types of assistance, overview of assistance requirements, selection process, determining and negotiating award details, making the award, and post-award management of an assistance instrument. Students gain in-depth experience with cooperative agreements and the key feature that distinguishes these instruments from other award instruments (i.e., awarding agency substantial involvement). Length 5 days.

**Cost Principles: Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars A-21, A-122, and A-87.**

In this course, students gain a firm grounding in the basic premises underlying all of the sets of cost principles, as well as practical experience applying each set of cost principles to assistance agreement situations. Students will discuss reasonableness and allocability of costs, classify costs as typically direct or indirect, and determine the allowability of selected items of cost. The course will include discussion of highly visible problems (e.g., lobbying costs). Acquisition budget negotiations will be contrasted to financial assistance budget analysis. Students will perform a cost analysis of a grant budget and identify cost areas requiring explanation. Length 2 days.

**Federal Funds Management.** Students will gain the basic skills needed to determine whether current and prospective Federal award recipients have adequate business systems and are capable of managing Federal funds, whether a determination of financial responsibility is possible, and when it may be necessary to impose special award conditions. Students will discuss and develop special award conditions. Students will review a recipient's business management systems to identify deficiencies and determine appropriate corrective actions and will use cost reports and audit reports to assess a recipient's management capabilities.

Students will gain an in-depth understanding of the audit requirements for Federal grants. Students will review OMB Circular A-133 audit requirements, review audit report excerpts, and discuss the significance of audit findings and an adequate recipient response. Major topics include OMB Circular A-133, A-133 Compliance Supplement, General Accounting Office Yellow Book, American Institute of Certified Public Accountants audit standards, audit process, major program determinations, assessing program risk, internal controls and compliance testing, monitoring the auditor's performance, single audit reporting, follow-up, and resolution. Students also learn when and under what circumstances they may need to obtain special audits of their own. Length 2 days.



**PROGRAM MANAGEMENT PROGRAM MODULE  
(RESERVED)**

CANCELED

**MASTERS PROGRAM MODULE  
(RESERVED)**

CANCELED

**TOP XX PROGRAM MODULE  
(RESERVED)**

CANCELED

12/20/01

SUBJECT: DOE Order 361.1, Acquisition Career Development Program

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1. **PURPOSE:** The comment resolution process for DOE Order 361.1 Addition of Financial Assistance Training Module identified 2 errors in the DOE Order which require correction.
2. **EXPLANATION OF CHANGE:** This administrative change corrects the references listed below:
  - At page 5, section 7.c., "Public Law 93-400, enacted in 1995" should be corrected to read "Public Law 104-106, enacted in 1996."
  - At page 6, section 7.e., "Public Law 93-400" should be corrected to read "Public Law 104-106."
3. **FILING INSTRUCTIONS:**
  - a. Remove Page Dated Insert Page Dated  
5 (and 6) 11/10/1999 5 (and 6) 12/20/01
  - b. Attachment 3 11/10/1999 1 - 7 12/20/01  
1 (and 2)
  - c. After filing the attached page, this transmittal may be discarded.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF ENERGY:



Francis S. Blake  
Deputy Secretary

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**DISTRIBUTION:**  
All Departmental Elements

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**INITIATED BY:**  
Office of Deputy Assistant Secretary for  
Procurement and Assistance Management