Salem STATE COLLEGE

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

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GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN FINANCIAL PLANNING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is this program?
The Graduate Certificate in Financial Planning at Salem State College is a graduate-level program available to those who have already completed their undergraduate degree and are interested in the financial planning field as a career.

How long is the program?
The program consists of five courses. Because the courses will be offered at an accelerated pace, the program can be completed in one year.

When and where will the classes be held?
All classes are scheduled either in the evenings or on weekends. The schedule for the current academic year can be viewed at salemstate.edu/gcfp. All classes are held in state-of-the-art classrooms in the Bertolon School of Business at Salem State College.

Who will teach the courses?
All faculty in the program have graduate credentials, and most have certifications/licenses in their respective fields. Faculty credentials include Ph.D, MBA, CPA, CFP® and JD. Faculty in this program are also practicing attorneys and financial planners. For each course, faculty members are chosen based on their expertise in that field.

How does this program compare to others in the region?
There are many points of comparison:
1. There is no other Massachusetts State Colleges that offer such a program.
2. The private colleges that offer such programs are more expensive.
3. Salem State College's program is one of the very few 'for-credit' graduate programs offered in the region.
4. This program also offers you the opportunity to transfer credits into our MBA program if you wanted to pursue your MBA as well.
5. The classes will be offered in a way that allows a cohort of students to go through it together. This process affords students the opportunities to build relationships with peers in the same field.

I am an MBA student. Can I still take these courses?
Anyone who has an undergraduate degree can take any of these courses. However, in order to get a graduate certificate, you must fulfill the admission requirements for the program. Once you are admitted into the program and complete the courses with a minimum 3.0 GPA and no more than one C, you are eligible to receive the certificate.

If I already enrolled in the Graduate Certificate in Financial Planning program, can I count the courses I did in the certificate as electives in my MBA?
Yes, you can count four out of five courses of the Graduate Certificate in Financial Planning toward your MBA degree. These four courses will count as electives for your MBA (specialization in financial planning) program.

What is the cost of the program?
The cost of each course is the same as any graduate course at Salem State College. For current tuition and fees please visit salemstate.edu/graduate/funding. The cost of textbooks and other materials is extra.

Is there any financial assistance available?
Please contact the Financial Aid Office at salemstate.edu/finaid or 978.542.6112.

What materials will I need for the course?
You will need to purchase the books and other material required by professors teaching the courses. The book for each course is selected after reviewing comments from various sources including the CFP Board-AFS committee that reviews such materials, Salem State College faculty and input from students. Every student will also be required to buy a financial calculator, and should have access to a computer. Those who wish to use the computers in the College labs must check out the computer lab schedule in advance.

Will I have access to any career advice?
The program director is constantly working to establish relationships with individuals/organizations in the financial planning field to afford students internship opportunities and also build a network of potential employers. You may also contact professors teaching in the program and the program director for more information.

How large are the classes?
The class size for all Graduate Certificate in Financial Planning courses is limited to 20-25 students.

How will I be able to obtain the CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ professional credentials after completing the Graduate Certificate in Financial Planning program?
Since the Graduate Certificate in Financial Planning program is registered with the Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards, it satisfies the education requirement to sit for the CFP® Certification Examination. For further information on the issue, please visit the CFP Board's website at cfp.net

Will there be a review course before the certification examination?
Yes! The review course will be required of all those who wish to take the CFP® Certification Examination. This course will be provided by one of the established review course providers. The list of review course providers can be viewed on the CFP Board's website at cfp.net.

What do I receive upon completion of the program?
Successful completion of the five courses with a minimum of a 3.0 GPA and no more than one C will entitle you to receive a Graduate Certificate in Financial Planning.

Where can I get more information on admission requirements, applications, etc.?
You can email Dr. Raminder Luther at rluther@salemstate.edu or call her at 978.542.7006.