



CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM RULES

Council of the Academy of Professional Reporters
National Court Reporters Association

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This document defines the rules under which the National Court Reporters Association's Continuing Education Program operates.

NCRA promotes excellence among those who capture and convert the spoken word to text and is committed to supporting every member in achieving the highest level of professional expertise.

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Article I. Overview of the Continuing Education Program

SECTION 1.01 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This document has been developed, approved, and promulgated by the Council of the Academy of Professional Reporters (CAPR) of the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA) to define the rules under which the NCRA's Continuing Education Program operates. These rules apply to both continuing education activity sponsors seeking preapproval of those activities as well as to individuals seeking to claim CEUs from NCRA for non-preapproved activities.

At its most basic level, continuing education is defined as an individual's education beyond the basic preparation for his or her profession. In the NCRA setting, as in many other professions, continuing education plays a crucial role in ensuring that the high levels of knowledge, ability, and professional competence that are needed to become certified are maintained and improved over time.

The goal of continuing education for NCRA is to equip credential holders with the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a world of ever-changing information and technology. A uniformly applied continuing education program ensures that clients will experience a consistently high level of quality, proficiency, and knowledge among NCRA credential holders. The body of knowledge in the world changes approximately every seven years. In this spiraling explosion of information, NCRA credential holders must keep abreast of new developments or face being left behind. The obvious benefits of continuing education are learning new skills, keeping up with technological advances, and developing new areas of expertise. However, the hidden benefits may be even more valuable—keeping the mind open to new ideas, honing the skills of learning, and developing as a well-rounded professional.

SECTION 1.02 AUTHORITY

NCRA's Continuing Education Program is established and administered under the authority of the Council of the Academy of Professional Reporters (CAPR). The operation of this Council is mandated by NCRA's Constitution & Bylaws, and its members are appointed by the NCRA President with approval from the Board of Directors. Any request for exemption from the policies outlined below must be addressed to CAPR.

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SECTION 1.03 CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM ACCREDITATION AND STANDARDS

NCRA's certifications are developed, independently validated, and maintained on an ongoing basis through a nationally recognized certification entity, Pearson VUE. In addition, NCRA strives to meet the highest credentialing standards, as established by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies and the American National Standards Institute. NCRA is a proud member of the Institute of Credentialing Excellence, which advances credentialing through education, standards, research, and advocacy to ensure competence across professions and occupations.

NCRA's Continuing Education Program, via which NCRA credential holders maintain their certification, is accredited by the Accrediting Council for Continuing Education and Training (ACCET). Furthermore, NCRA is listed as an approved organization by the American Council on Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

SECTION 1.04 DEFINITION OF THE CONTINUING EDUCATION UNIT (CEU)

The Continuing Education Program uses the ACCET-defined Continuing Education Unit (CEU) to measure formal continuing education activities. The ACCET-approved definition of a CEU is as follows:

The Continuing Education Unit (CEU) is in the public domain and is commonly recognized as a standard unit of measure for attributing continuing education and training activities, particularly as it applies to the personal and professional development of adult learners in a formalized, educational setting.

The CEU is defined as ten (10) contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction, and qualified instruction. To compute the number of clock hours that can be awarded, the number of 60-minute clock hours attributed to actual classroom activity is divided by ten (10). Therefore, if a class is two days at eight (8) hours per day, the units awarded would equal 1.6 CEUs. Instructional hours do not include breaks, meals, registration time, etc.¹

NCRA and CAPR strongly believe that different individuals learn differently, and therefore continuing education must be flexible. To that end, credential holders may earn CEUs

¹ ACCET Document 17, "ACCET Continuing Education Unit (CEU)," Date Revised: April 2005/April 2011 (<http://docs.accet.org/downloads/docs/doc17.pdf>)

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through activities that have been preapproved by NCRA. Preapproved activities are subject to the same criteria for CEU eligibility.

SECTION 1.05 DEFINITION OF THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CREDIT (PDC)

The Professional Development Credit (PDC) was instituted by CAPR to measure professional development activities that do not conform to the definition of a CEU but nonetheless hold significant value to NCRA and/or its constituent professions as well as to the credential holder's professional development.

Unlike the CEU, the PDC is not based on clock hours but on the relative value of the activity as determined by CAPR (see below). Also unlike the CEU, PDCs are available only via specific, preapproved activities.

PDCs are awarded for activities on the following basis unless otherwise specified:

1–4 hours of activity	0.25 PDC
5–8 hours of activity	0.50 PDC
9–12 hours of activity	0.75 PDC
13 or more hours of activity	1.00 PDC

SECTION 1.06 MANDATORY CREDIT REQUIREMENTS AND CYCLES

Each NCRA credential requires the holder to earn a certain number of credits (CEUs and/or PDCs) per continuing education cycle. A continuing education cycle consists of a three-year period. An individual's first cycle shall begin immediately upon being awarded his or her first NCRA credential. The cycle end date for the first cycle will be the first September 30 that occurs at least three years after the cycle start date. The next three-year cycle will begin on the following October 1, and so forth.

The credit requirements for each NCRA credential are below:

NCRA credential(s)	Credit requirement per cycle
RPR, RMR, RDR, CRR, CRC, CRI, MCRI, CPE, CMRS	3.0 total credits, at least 2.0 of which must be CEUs
CLVS	1.0 CEU

CEU/PDC requirements are not cumulative, but all requirements must be satisfied. For example, an individual who holds the RPR certification and CLVS certification would need

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to earn 3.0 total credits, with at least 2.0 of them being CEUs. Earning an additional certification will not change an individual's cycle start or end dates.

SECTION 1.07 CYCLE EXTENSIONS

In the event that a credential holder fails to earn the required credits by the cycle end date, one four-month extension shall be available. This four-month extension will be subtracted from the beginning of the credential holder's next cycle. No more than one extension per credential holder per cycle will be allowed. NCRA may charge a reasonable fee for cycle extensions.²

SECTION 1.08 CARRYOVER CREDIT

Credential holders who earn more units than are required to fulfill the above-mentioned requirements may carry over up to 0.5 unit into the next cycle.

SECTION 1.09 REINSTATEMENTS

In the event that any NCRA credentials are allowed to lapse, the credential holder may be eligible for a once-per-lifetime reinstatement.³

Requirements are as follows:

- (a) If the individual's certification(s) lapsed less than three years from submission of application, the individual will have one year from application for reinstatement in which to earn 1.0 CEU and maintain current membership. CEUs earned less than six months prior to application may be applied to this requirement; no PDCs may be applied to this requirement.
- (b) If the individual's certification(s) lapsed three years from submission of application to less than seven years, the individual will have one year from application for reinstatement during which to earn 2.0 CEUs if only one certification is being reinstated or 2.5 CEUs if more than one certification is being reinstated. The individual will also be required to maintain current membership. CEUs earned less than six months prior to application may be applied to this requirement; no PDCs may be applied to this requirement.
- (c) If the individual's certification(s) lapsed seven or more years ago, the individual will have one year from application for reinstatement in which to earn 1.0 CEU and

² See NCRA Policies and Procedures Manual, Section G, Subsection 1a.

³ See NCRA Policies and Procedures Manual, Section G, Subsection 1a.

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pass the skills exam for the highest certification being reinstated. CEUs earned less than six months prior to application may be applied to this requirement; no PDCs may be applied to this requirement. No reinstatement of the CMRS will be granted if it lapsed seven or more years ago.⁴

⁴ See NCRA Policies and Procedures Manual, Section G, Subsection 1a.

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Article II. Criteria for CEU eligibility

In order to be eligible for CEUs, an activity must meet ALL of the following criteria:

SECTION 2.01 VALID EDUCATIONAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The activity must include stated learning objectives. Those learning objectives must be designed primarily to provide instruction within an eligible topic area or areas.⁵

SECTION 2.02 PRIMARY TARGET AUDIENCE(S)

The activity must be designed primarily to meet the continuing education needs of a specific NCRA credential holder segment or segments, including court reporters, captioners, legal videographers, and court reporting educational instructors and administrators.

SECTION 2.03 RELATION TO PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

The learning objectives of the activity must be closely related to improving or maintaining the professional competence of one or more of the target audiences mentioned above.

SECTION 2.04 CAPABLE INSTRUCTOR(S)

Each activity or session must be led by at least one instructor who is demonstrably and objectively capable to instruct participants on the topic(s) relevant to the stated learning objectives.

SECTION 2.05 QUALIFIED RESPONSIBLE SPONSOR(S)

The activity must be sponsored by at least one established education provider in good standing with NCRA. Qualified sponsors include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Independently accredited schools, colleges, and universities
- (b) Local, state, national, and international professional and trade associations
- (c) Entities that employ or contract the services of NCRA certification-holders

⁵ See Article III for a list of approved topics.

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Sponsor organizations or entities formed exclusively for the purpose of conducting one educational activity typically are not considered qualified for the purposes of determining CEU credit.

SECTION 2.06 MINIMUM DURATION

In order to qualify for CEUs, each portion of the activity must be at least 60 minutes in duration, excluding any breaks and non-CEU-eligible content.

SECTION 2.07 ATTENDANCE VERIFICATION FOR IN-PERSON ACTIVITIES

The sponsor must be willing to certify that the participant was present and participated in the activity. For in-person activities, the exact method of attendance verification may be determined by the sponsor.

If a participant does not fully complete an activity, it is his or her ethical duty to report partial completion to the sponsor. The sponsor must then certify only partial credit for that participant.

SECTION 2.08 EVALUATION PROCEDURES

The sponsor must establish and implement evaluation procedures in order to determine participant satisfaction and the effectiveness of the continuing education offering.

SECTION 2.09 ATTENDANCE VERIFICATION FOR DISTANCE LEARNING ACTIVITIES

For distance learning activities (i.e., those that are delivered remotely, with the participant in a different physical location from the instructor), the sponsor must use an approved tracking method to verify completion of at least 80 percent of the approved activity. Approved verification methods include:

- (a) Key letters or words embedded in the content that are required to certify completion
- (b) Intermittent prompts that require input from the participant before the activity can continue
- (c) Mandatory quizzes or content summaries at the completion of the activity
- (d) Minute-by-minute tracking of how long the attendee participated in the activity

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At least 80 percent of the activity must be verified. For instance, if a distance-learning activity consists of 60 minutes of continuing education, the final verification point cannot occur more than 12 minutes before the end of the activity. Asynchronous activities must prevent the user from bypassing attendance verification points or skipping ahead to complete the activity in less time.

SECTION 2.10 GENERAL EXCLUSIONS

CEU credits may *not* be claimed for the following types of activities:⁶

- (a) Courses primarily intended to teach a non-verbal skill, including but not limited to sports, general fitness and exercise, arts, and music
- (b) Any activity for which one receives remuneration as part of one's regular employment (This is not meant to exclude employer-provided training for which the employee will be paid as if working but will include explanations of benefits, general business meetings, and training on benefits management and timesheet software programs. Pro bono activities for PDC credit must be activities for which one does not receive any remuneration.)
- (c) Attending association business meetings and/or elections
- (d) Any activity primarily intended for advertising or promotional purposes, including but not limited to, visiting exhibit and tradeshow booths
- (e) Any activity primarily intended for recreational purposes, including but not limited to beer/wine tastings, receptions, parties, boat cruises, recreational tours, and meals. "Lunch and learn" sessions and educational dinner speakers are acceptable, provided that all other requirements in Article II are met. In such cases, CEUs will be determined based on the duration of instruction rather than the duration of the meal.

SECTION 2.11 EXTERNAL ACTIVITY ELIGIBILITY

Starting October 1, 2018, if a member wishes to take a course outside of NCRA events, approved events, or pre-qualified learning opportunities, the member should request a determination of eligibility *before* taking the course. The member should email the Continuing Education Coordinator the following information:

- (a) The course title, description, and topics covered
- (b) The duration of the course in hours

⁶ For specific topics that have been deemed ineligible for CEUs and PDCs, see Section V.

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- (c) The instructor's name and qualifications
- (d) How the proof of completion will be provided
- (e) Which Section under Article III of the continuing education rules would the course fall under (ex: Section 3.01 Language skills, literature, and linguistics)

If the course is determined eligible for credit, the member will receive an email stating how much credit will be awarded for the course and a note will be made in the member's record. The member will still be required to provide the required information upon completion and pay submission fees. If the course is determined ineligible for credit, the member will receive an email explaining the decision.

If the member is seeking approval for PDCs for an activity not specifically detailed in Article IV of the continuing education rules, the member should request determination of eligibility *before* participating in the activity. The member should email the Continuing Education Coordinator with the following information:

- (a) The program or activity description
- (b) The duration of the program or activity
- (c) How the proof of participation will be provided
- (d) Which Section under Article IV of the continuing education rules would the program or activity fall under (ex: Section 4.01 Promoting the profession to external audiences)

If the program or activity is determined to be eligible for PDCs, the member will receive an email stating how much credit will be awarded for the program or activity and a note will be made in the member's record. The member will still be required to provide the required documentation to submit for credit and pay submission fees. If the program or activity is determined ineligible for credit, the member will receive an email explaining the decision.

Failure to request prior approval may result in the member's request being denied.

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Article III. Topics eligible for CEUs

The following topics of instruction meet Sections 2.01 and 2.02 and thereby qualify for CEUs, provided that all other criteria in Article II are met. Other topics may be deemed eligible on a case-by-case basis by CAPR.

SECTION 3.01 LANGUAGE SKILLS, LITERATURE, AND LINGUISTICS

Activities designed to teach language

- (a) English grammar, punctuation, usage, and syntax
- (b) English spelling and vocabulary
- (c) Etymology and history of the English language
- (d) Literature courses
- (e) Linguistics, speech patterns, and speech impairments
- (f) Accents, dialects, colloquialisms, and common slang
- (g) Sign language
- (h) Foreign languages

SECTION 3.02 THE REPORTING PROFESSION, THE LAW, AND THE COURTS

- (a) Courtroom and deposition procedure
- (b) Transcript formatting, preparation, and chain of custody
- (c) Legal terminology
- (d) History of court reporting and legal history
- (e) Legal research
- (f) Continuing Legal Education (CLE) courses (approved by a state, local, or national CLE authority)
- (g) Basic trial advocacy

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- (h) NCRA certification training (Realtime Systems Administrator Workshop, Certified Legal Video Specialist Seminar, Trial Presentation Workshop, etc.)
- (i) Notary training
- (j) Paralegal training
- (k) Process server training

SECTION 3.03 MEDICINE AND MEDICAL TERMINOLOGY⁷

- (a) Medical and pharmaceutical terminology
- (b) Medical jurisprudence
- (c) Forensic medicine
- (d) Clinical pharmacology
- (e) Medical ethics
- (f) Hearing loss, hearing disorders, and assistive listening devices

SECTION 3.04 SOFTWARE AND TECHNOLOGY

- (a) CAT software
- (b) Realtime connections and troubleshooting
- (c) Remote realtime technology
- (d) Electronic transcripts
- (e) CART technology
- (f) Captioning technology and broadcast engineering
- (g) Technology tips sessions

⁷ See Section 5.04 for specific exclusions related to health and medicine.

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SECTION 3.05 LEGAL AND BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY

- (a) Operating systems and general office software
- (b) Basic computer repair, maintenance, and troubleshooting
- (c) Basic website design
- (d) Cloud storage and delivery
- (e) Data backup solutions and practices
- (f) Data privacy and protection

SECTION 3.06 LEGAL VIDEOGRAPHY

- (a) Equipment procurement, setup, operation, maintenance, and troubleshooting
- (b) Video deposition procedure
- (c) The video signal and video formats
- (d) The CLVS standards and code of ethics
- (e) Legal video camera technique
- (f) Video editing software
- (g) Video certification, duplication, and chain of custody
- (h) Video synchronization to transcript
- (i) Tapeless video acquisition and workflow
- (j) Legal video camera technique

SECTION 3.07 TRIAL PRESENTATION

- (a) Trial presentation hardware and software
- (b) Visual advocacy and demonstrative graphics
- (c) Data management

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SECTION 3.08 BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

- (a) Marketing, public relations, and social media for business
- (b) Accounting practices and software
- (c) Strategic planning, finance, and administration
- (d) Management and human resources
- (e) Succession and exit planning
- (f) Legal issues and risk management

SECTION 3.09 ETHICS AND PROFESSIONALISM

- (a) NCRA's Code of Professional Ethics and Advisory Opinions
- (b) Professionalism and business etiquette

SECTION 3.10 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELFARE⁸

- (a) Test preparation and test-taking skills
- (b) Networking, public speaking, and business communication
- (c) Work/life balance
- (d) Workplace gender issues
- (e) Repetitive stress injuries, carpal tunnel, and other physical and psychological health issues directly related to court reporting
- (f) Professional mental health and stress management
- (g) Violence and sexual harassment in the workplace
- (h) Substance abuse and depression in the workplace

⁸ See Section 5.04 for specific exclusions related to personal development as opposed to professional development.

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SECTION 3.11 SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- (a) CPR/AED, first aid, and emergency preparedness (up to 0.4 CEU per cycle)
- (b) Safety and security

SECTION 3.12 EDUCATIONAL TOURS

- (a) Tours of courts, law firms, law schools, or seats of government
- (b) Tours of police stations and correctional facilities
- (c) Historical tours closely related to the law, literature, the English language, hearing loss, or the court reporting profession

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Article IV. Activities eligible for PDCs

Unlike CEUs, PDCs may only be earned through the following pre-defined activities. No other activities may be submitted for PDC consideration.

SECTION 4.01 PROMOTING THE PROFESSION TO EXTERNAL AUDIENCES

- (a) Eligible credential holders may earn 0.25 PDC by promoting the stenographic court reporting and realtime captioning profession in presentations to schools (as a guest speaker or career day participant), law schools, judges associations, organizations focused on deafness, and corporations that embrace diversity and inclusion. One may also claim credit under this section for sessions taught pro bono at NCRA-approved events and NCRA-sponsored events and webinars.
- (b) To claim PDCs under this section, the credential holder will be required to submit an outline or agenda of the presentation. This must be accompanied by either a signed NCRA submission form or a letter signed by a representative of the host event.
- (c) If a question arises as to whether an event qualifies for credit under this section, CAPR will review the request for approval.

SECTION 4.02 PROVIDING PRO BONO REPORTING OR CAPTIONING SERVICES

- (a) Eligible credential holders may earn 0.25 PDC for a minimum of 2.5 hours of pro bono service, of which 30 minutes can be the preparation involved. Services for two one-hour events plus 30 minutes of preparation, for example, can be combined for one submission.
- (b) Pro bono services are defined by the Council of the Academy of Professional Reporters (CAPR) as “providing court reporting or captioning services for which compensation in any form was not rendered.”
- (c) The individual requesting PDCs will be required to present a signature from the deaf consumer or the primary agent of the event or entity for which the pro bono services were performed.

SECTION 4.03 INVOLVEMENT IN A FORMAL MENTORING PROGRAM

- (a) Eligible credential holders may earn 0.25 PDC for qualifying involvement in a formal mentoring program. To qualify for PDCs, mentoring must take place with students enrolled in a court reporting program. A minimum of five (5) hours will

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be required for earning the 0.25 PDC, and those hours can be divided up among multiple students or can all be spent with the same student. A mentor may submit the same student up to two times per cycle (for a total of 10 hours and 0.5 PDC).

- (b) Eligible credential holders may also earn 0.25 PDC under this section by hosting students completing their internships. To qualify for PDCs, interns must be involved in a formal internship via an independently accredited educational institution.
- (c) To claim PDCs under this section, the credential holder will be required to maintain a log of the mentoring or internship, and to provide that log to NCRA when applying for PDCs. In order to qualify for PDCs, the mentoring relationship or internship must be completed during the three-year cycle in which the certificate-holder is claiming credit.
- (d) Mentors may not receive any remuneration for mentoring to be eligible for PDCs. (This is not meant to exclude those who mentor students while on the job, but does exclude court reporting instructors who provide mentoring to their students.)

SECTION 4.04 SERVICE ON AN NCRA, NCRF, OR AFFILIATE BOARD OR COMMITTEE

- (a) Eligible credential holders may earn 0.25 PDC per year of service on an NCRA, NCRF, or NCRA-affiliated state court reporting association board or committee. Service on a board or committee of the United States Court Reporting Association (USCRA) also qualifies for this category, as does service on any board or body at the state level or higher that is authorized by the government to regulate court reporters or captioners.
- (b) The year of service must be completed prior to submission.
- (c) A cross-check with NCRA or NCRF board and committee rosters will provide sufficient documentation for national service. For state association service and USCRA service, the individual requesting PDCs will be required to present a signed letter from the state or USCRA board president.

SECTION 4.05 NCRA CERTIFICATION TESTS

- (a) Credential holders who pass the NCRA Skills Test or Written Knowledge Test portion of the RMR, RDR, CRR, CLVS (if already an RPR), or CRC (if already an RPR) will earn 0.25 PDC per exam.
- (b) No PDCs shall be awarded for passing certificate exams.

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SECTION 4.06 SPEED AND REALTIME CONTESTS

- (a) In order for a member to be granted 0.25 PDC for a speed or realtime contest, the sponsoring organization must receive preapproval from NCRA. NCRA will grant credit for these contests so long as they meet the published criteria for the speed and realtime contests held at the most recent NCRA Convention & Expo.

SECTION 4.07 NCRF ORAL HISTORIES PROJECTS

- (a) Credential holders who complete and submit a transcription as part of any oral histories program sponsored by the National Court Reporters Foundation, such as the Veterans History Project, may earn 0.25 PDC for each transcription completed.

SECTION 4.08 NCRA-SPONSORED BOOK AND ARTICLE TESTS

- (a) Eligible credential holders may earn 0.25 PDC for passing one NCRA article test. A passing score is defined as correctly answering at least 85 percent of the quiz questions.
- (b) Eligible credential holders may earn 0.25 PDC for passing one NCRA book test. A passing score is defined as correctly answering at least 85 percent of the quiz questions.

SECTION 4.11 SPEEDBUILDING PRACTICE

- (a) Eligible credential holders may earn the following PDCs for structured speedbuilding practice at speeds of 160 wpm or faster.

1–4 hours of activity	0.25 PDC
5–8 hours of activity	0.50 PDC
9–12 hours of activity	0.75 PDC
13 or more hours of activity	1.00 PDC

- (b) Structured speedbuilding practice will be defined as a program that records speed and accuracy or private or group dictation practice with a live instructor. This will not include individual speedbuilding practice done with the use of recorded material for which there is no verifiable tracking provided.

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Article V. Ineligible activities

Unless proof is provided to CAPR that the following topics are directly related to judicial or captioning job duties, the following topics are deemed not to meet Sections 2.01, 2.02, and/or 2.03 and are therefore ineligible for CEUs or PDCs, even if the other requirements in Article II are met. Other topics may be deemed ineligible on a case-by-case basis by CAPR.

SECTION 5.01 SPORTS, FITNESS, AND EXERCISE

- (a) Yoga, Pilates, etc.
- (b) Zumba and similar workout programs
- (c) Weightlifting, calisthenics, and aerobics
- (d) Exercise science
- (e) Organized sports (participation or study)

SECTION 5.02 ARTS AND MUSIC

- (a) Musical instruments
- (b) Music appreciation, theory, and history
- (c) Arts and crafts
- (d) Art appreciation and art history

SECTION 5.03 RECREATION AND HOBBIES

- (a) Cooking and food
- (b) Recreational tours and events
- (c) Relaxation and meditation

SECTION 5.04 PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH AND WELFARE

- (a) Community service unrelated to the professions of court reporting, captioning, legal videography, or trial presentation (e.g.; volunteer social work)

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- (b) Holistic and/or alternative medicine
- (c) Diet classes, meetings, and programs
- (d) Childbirth, parenting, caregiver, and family classes
- (e) Self-help and rehabilitation
- (f) Massage, acupuncture, and hypnosis
- (g) Pseudoscience and proto-science

SECTION 5.05 RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY

- (a) Theology and belief systems
- (b) Religious languages, literature, art, and music
- (c) Religious history and philosophy
- (d) Worship, prayer, and faith healing