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ADMISSIONS POLICY

Introduction

Columbia Central University (CCU) gives people the opportunity to continue undergraduate and graduate studies through our certificate, associate, baccalaureate, and master's degree programs. Anyone interested and who can benefit from continuing their studies at our university must meet the established admission requirements. Once people complete and comply with the admission process, they will be able to begin their studies in the selected program that will lead them to become professionals in the chosen discipline.

Our admission policy requires a high school diploma or its equivalent (for undergraduate programs), and graduation from a bachelor degree program for graduate programs. CCU welcomes applications for admission from students who are studying or have studied in other post-secondary educational institutions, which are duly authorized and/or accredited to operate in Puerto Rico and the United States, as well as those of recognized foreign institutions.

This policy provides individuals the opportunity to continue postsecondary studies through our various academic programs. The university does not exclude participation, nor does it deny benefits, nor does it discriminate against any person based on race, sex, color, birth, sexual orientation, origin, or social condition, physical or mental handicap, or because of political, religious, social, or union ideals.

Admissions Office

The Admissions Office is responsible for offering clear and complete information about academic programs to any person interested in attending the University. Among the main information that is given to the prospective student is the curriculum for the program of interest, the admission requirements to be completed, practice requirements and licensure disclosures (if applicable), and the eligibility criteria to apply for licensure and/or licensure exams per board review requirements (if applicable), among other documents. In addition, the interested party is directed to go through the Financial Aid Office and the Bursar's Office to receive all the information about the available financial aid, if he/she qualifies, and about the alternative payment methods.

General Admission Requirements

Certificate and undergraduate level admission

To be admitted as a regular student at CCU, each applicant must meet the following requirements and documents:

1. Complete the admission application and sign it.
2. Be a high school graduate or have the recognized equivalent preparation:
 - a. High school completion must be verified by submitting the official high school

transcript or original diploma. A student who cannot provide an official high school transcript or a copy of his/her diploma because the school closed may be permitted to provide a signed affidavit of high school completion. Such exceptions are only allowed in the most exceptional cases and must be reviewed and approved by the Academic Opportunity Program.

- b. Documentation of successful completion of the general education development (GED) or other state sanctioned test or diploma equivalency certificate is accepted as equivalent to high school completion.
 - c. If the student is transferring from another post-secondary institution, an official college transcript documenting completion of 1) an associate's degree 2) successful completion of at least 60 semester or trimester credit hours or 72 quarter credit hours that does not result in the awarding of an associate's degree, but that is acceptable for full credit toward a bachelor's degree at any institution or 3) enrollment in a bachelor's degree program where at least 60 semester or trimester credit hours or 72 quarter credit hours have been successfully completed, including credit hours transferred into the bachelor's degree program.
 - d. Documentation of completion of home schooling at the secondary school level (additional details below under "Admission of Homeschooling Students").
3. The student must have earned a minimum grade point average of 2.00 or more in high school or from the postsecondary institution they are transferring from. Those students who do not meet the required GPA of 2.00, may be eligible for admission as regular students under the "Academic Opportunity Program" (POA). (see Academic Opportunity Program Policy published in the institutional catalog).
 4. If the student cannot present an official transcript or the results of the equivalency exam, the high school diploma will be accepted and a true and exact copy of the original diploma will be taken by college personnel as evidence of the high school degree or Graduation Certification (original document, not copy). These students are admitted as a student under the POA, since we will not have a way to document the GPA earned in high school.
 5. Students who have graduated from a high school outside of Puerto Rico and the United States must submit evidence of their academic credentials validated by the Puerto Rico Department of Education.
 6. Students under 18 years of age must be accompanied by their parents or their sponsors when completing the admissions process.
 7. For programs in which there is an internship component or in which there is a requirement to request the revalidation exam of the Examining Boards, the prospect must be 18 years of age or older by the time the requirement applies.
 8. Submit the Certificate of Vaccines by the Department of Health (students under 21 years of age), in compliance with Law 25 on School Immunization of PR. See Immunization Policy published in the Institutional Catalog.

Admission to the Graduate Level for New Students and CCU Graduates

To be admitted as a regular student to a graduate program at CCU, each applicant must meet the following requirements and documents:

1. File an application for admission, which can be obtained at the Admissions Office or Graduate Program Office. Students who have graduated from CCU will also have to file an application for admission to the preferred graduate program.
2. Submit one (1) official copy of the valid credit transcript(s) of the institution where the

baccalaureate degree or higher was completed. The corresponding university where the baccalaureate was obtained must have proper authorization and/or accreditation.

3. Submit three (3) letters of recommendation from 3 people who can offer an opinion about the candidate's chances of success for graduate studies. See forms included in the application.
4. International students must provide the official transcript, diploma or degree received with their grades and grade point average must be submitted. Said transcript must be approved by an agency accredited by NACES (National Association of Credential Evaluation Services) and must include course by course, average and grade awarded, if any.

Specific admission requirements for Master's Degrees for new students and graduates of undergraduate programs at CCU:

Master's in Business Administration

- Have a 2.50 cumulative baccalaureate grade point average. Students interested in being admitted who have a lower grade point average, refer to the POA.

Master's in Nursing Science

- Have a 2.75 cumulative baccalaureate grade point average. Students interested in being admitted and having a lower grade point average, refer to the POA.
- Have a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing
- Present evidence of a current license as a general nurse

Admission requirements at the graduate level under the Non-Residential(distance) modality, in addition to the aforementioned requirements, the applicant must:

- Distance education students enrolled in graduate programs must be residents of Puerto Rico. Prospective students must present the university with a copy of an identity document from the state which proves their identity and residence. At the time of the interview, this document can be sent by email.
- Later, to validate the registration, the same document in a copy legalized by a notary of the city in which you reside must be sent. This document must be the National Identity Document (DNI), identification issued by the state or country of origin or a valid unexpired passport. If an applicant can visit the CCU offices personally, they have the option of presenting their identification and validating it at our offices without notarization.

Verification of High-School Documents in the Admission Process for Puerto Rico students

CCU, as part of its admission policy, verifies the origin of the document evidencing that a student has graduated from high school.

The admissions officer will use the document provided by the Board of Postsecondary Institutions (or the appropriate predecessor or successor agency), which indicates the school's license date, to determine if the high school was licensed when the student graduated. If the school was licensed when the student graduated, the documentation of high school completion is accepted. If the school was not licensed at the time the student graduated, the student is directed to consult with the school. If the school was not registered/licensed at the time the student graduated, the student will not be admitted to the University.

In those cases that the documents presented by the student for validation reflect inconsistencies in identity or difference in name as provided in the admission application, the corresponding

verification will be carried out, guaranteeing that no discrimination against any person based on race, sex, color, birth, sexual orientation, origin, or social condition, physical or mental handicap, or because of political, religious, social, or union ideas is met. Given this, they must submit:

- Affidavit certifying the change in name.

Verification of High School Documents in the Admission Process for students from Accelerated Schools

CCU, as part of its admission policy, verifies high school graduation documents in the admission process for students from accelerated schools in Puerto Rico. This policy applies to all incoming students who earned their high school diploma from an accelerated school and do not provide documentation of a recognized equivalent to a high school diploma.

Through the established procedure, the following will be verified:

1. The validity of the license of the accelerated school from which the student comes.
2. The year the accelerated school diploma was awarded.
3. That the students from said schools completed their studies according to the applicable requirements according to the Board of Postsecondary Institutions (or the appropriate predecessor or successor agency).

Documents to be delivered by the student from an accelerated school:

1. Official accelerated school credit transcript.

Once the documents delivered by the student have been verified and validated, their admission to the institution will be determined.

High school credentials of questionable validity

All high school diplomas and/or transcripts submitted by prospective and admitted students are individually reviewed by admissions officers. If CCU has any reason to question the validity of a student's documentation of high school completion, the admissions officer will check with the high school to confirm the validity of the student's diploma and will confirm with the relevant department or agency in the state in which the secondary school is located (including via a published list) that the secondary school is recognized as a provider of secondary school education. A student's self-certification of high school graduation is not sufficient to validate a questionable high school credential.

Admission of Homeschooling Students

Students from homeschooling may apply to CCU in three ways:

1. Present evidence of having completed a program of study equivalent to high school graduation in Puerto Rico. The equivalency must be certified by the Puerto Rico Department of Education. The equivalence of the academic index obtained must meet the minimum requirement of 2.00.
2. If there is no certification from the Puerto Rico Department of Education, the student's parent or guardian will present:
 - a. Credit transcript: the person or entity that certifies home studies will prepare a transcript of the courses completed by the student. It should include the name of the course, period in which the course was taken, and grade obtained. The student must

- complete all courses required by the Puerto Rico Department of Education to complete High School.
- b. Affidavit that highlights that the student completed their studies through the home learning modality (homeschooling).
3. If the completed a program of study equivalent to high school graduation in the United States or a foreign company, the student must submit their transcripts to the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) for evaluation. NACES will confirm if the student's program of study is equivalent to high school completion.

Requirements for Admission for Professional Improvement

A Professional Improvement (PI) student is one who is interested in taking certain courses, without being enrolled in an academic program at the University. The most frequent reasons for this type of request are for continuing professional education purposes or to request transfer credits to another university. PI students are not eligible for financial aid. The requirements for admission as a PI student are:

- Submit a duly completed application for admission.
- Full payment of the admission application fee.

Transfer Credit

CCU will accept transfer credits from postsecondary institutions authorized and/or accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education and legitimate foreign institutions, as determined by CCU. The courses completed in the institution of origin will be considered individually for validation; CCU reserves the right to determine the awarding of transfer credit for courses completed at other institutions. For more details, refer to the Course Validation Policy.

- For students at the graduate level, transfer credit hours will be accepted up to a maximum of 18 credits. Ordinarily, completed courses with a grade of less than B will not be accepted as transfer credits. Courses accepted in transfer will not be considered to compute the student's grade point average at CCU.
- For students with professional experience who are applying to the Master of Business Administration Program, CCU offers the opportunity to consider and credit the knowledge and skills acquired through their professional work experience, as established by the PROSIGUE alternative. Through this alternative, a maximum of 18 credits can be awarded. At the undergraduate level, a student can also be awarded credits for professional experience (residency requirements apply)

In case of institutions that have ceased functions and therefore it is impossible to obtain an official credit transcript, the student may submit a student credit transcript or any other document that attests to their completed courses for consideration by CCU, provided they are supported by an affidavit. However, CCU reserves the right to validate said knowledge through its evaluation instruments prior to the acceptance of transfer credit. This provision applies only to undergraduate programs.

The student with veterans benefits and/or their beneficiaries, having studied at any post-secondary or university institution, will be required to present the official credit transcript of the institution of origin, in order to qualify for the educational benefits of the Veterans Administration. If the official credit transcript is not presented, CCU will not be able to certify it to the Veterans Administration.

Special cases - "Experiential Learning"

- People who have acquired knowledge through other means, other than traditional academics, and wish to have it considered for academic credit, should request guidance regarding this at the Admissions Office, so that it can be referred to the Dean of Academic Affairs.
- In those cases that present evidence of having completed the parts of the Mathematics, English and/or Spanish with 560 points or more on the College Board, the course will be validated according to their study program, regardless of whether they come from high school or transfer.

Residency Requirements

Graduate programs: Regardless of how many credits a student can obtain through transfer, professional experience, or other methods accepted by the academic community, each student must complete at least 21 credit hours in their study program in residence within CCU.

Undergraduate programs: Regardless of how many credits a student may obtain through transfer, professional experience, or other methods accepted by the academic community, each student must complete at least 24 credit hours credited towards their program of study in residence within CCU.

For certificate or associate degree programs, these credits in residence must include at least 12 credit hours in the student's area of specialization. Students enrolled in a baccalaureate program must complete at least 24 credit hours in residency in their area of specialization or related courses, except in the Bachelor of Science program in Nursing RN to BSN, in which at least 18 credit hours must be completed in the student's area of expertise or related courses.

Notification of Admission

All applicants will be informed in a timely manner about the institution's decision regarding their admission to the university, through a letter from the Admissions Office.

Acceptance to the university and an educational program does not authorize the applicant to begin classes unless all required documentation has been submitted or an extension has been granted to submit the documents.

Other Conditions for Admission

A student who does not have an application accompanied by all the required documents will have a period of 30 days after classes begin to submit the missing documents. The Recruitment and Admissions Officer will notify the student of the documentation that is needed to complete their file and the deadline for its delivery. Such a student is considered to be conditionally admitted and financial aid will not be disbursed to the student until all admission requirements have been satisfied.

If the student does not deliver the required documentation in the specified period, the enrollment will be canceled, and the student will be dropped from the University.