



## Western Colorado Peace Officers Academy (WCPOA)

### Application and Selection Process: Frequently Asked Questions

(Updated June 16, 2016)

#### **How old must I be to apply to the Academy?**

You may NOT sit for the State of Colorado Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) final exam unless you are 21 years of age. You must be 21 years of age prior to entering the academy.

#### **Is there a maximum age limit to enroll in the WCPOA?**

No, we encourage middle aged applicants with quality life, education and work experience to apply.

#### **What disqualifies an applicant from admission to the academy?**

**Any felony conviction!** Also, any misdemeanor conviction that involves a crime of violence, any conviction for a crime of Domestic Violence, any DUI conviction less than 2 years from the date of the academy start date and any illegal drug use less than 2 years from the start of the academy start date.

#### **Do Honorably Discharged US Military Veterans get preference for admission?**

Yes, and post 911 veterans usually have all their tuition, fees, and uniforms paid for by the GI Bill. They may also be eligible for housing and sustenance benefits.

#### **Who gets preference in the application process?**

Western Colorado Community College (WCCC) and Colorado Mesa University (CMU) students who are in their **last** semester of the Associates Degree or Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice.

#### **What are the key steps in the application process?**

- 1. Online Application to Western Colorado Community College:** (Disregard if you are already a student of WCCC or CMU). No fee is necessary. Have your official high school or college transcripts mailed to WCCC- Student Services address on the application page:  
<http://www.coloradomesa.edu/wccc/apply.html>
- 2. Written Application to Western Colorado Peace Officers Academy:** Complete the on-line fillable application at <http://www.coloradomesa.edu/wccc/poa.html> , print and mail to the address listed on the application packet. The application should be submitted at least 5 months prior to the start of the academy start date. While cancellations may open up slots one or two months prior to the academy start, it should not be counted on.
- 3. Directors Interview:** Call to make an appointment with the Director for a 30 minute suitability interview appointment. If you live out of the area, this interview may be conducted over the telephone.

4. **Pre-Assessment Screening:** A written pre-assessment screening will be conducted. A \$25.00 fee made payable to WCCC is assessed to the candidate.
5. **Oral Board:** Once you have passed the Director's interview, you will sit for a 3 member law enforcement officer's professional Oral Board interview. Passing the interview is mandatory for acceptance to WCPOA.

### **Can I just go to the academy and expect to get a law enforcement career after graduation?**

It's possible, but very unlikely you will be hired. The majority of Colorado local and state law enforcement agencies require at least 2 years of college. The exception is for US Military Veterans. State Parole Officers, Probation Officers, Wildlife Managers and high paying local law enforcement agencies require a Bachelor's Degree. All Federal law enforcement agencies require a Bachelor's degree or better to apply, with suitable previous (professional) employment experience.

### **How long is the Academy?**

The Academy is 16 weeks long with 10 to 12 hour days and some Saturdays.

### **Can I hold down a full time job while attending the Academy?**

There is no regulation stating that you can't, but it is very unlikely you will be able to with the demanding hours, short weekends, after hours study time needed and busy schedule of the academy. The academy will require 100% of your attention during the 16 week semester. **We strongly recommend you do not work while attending this rigorous program.**

### **What can I expect during my academy experience?**

You can expect very challenging academic classes in every field of law enforcement which culminates in a 100 question State of Colorado POST examination. You will receive outstanding instruction with the finest law enforcement personnel on the Western Slope of Colorado. You will participate in strenuous physical fitness training led by a nationally certified fitness instructor. You will receive in depth Defensive Tactics and Arrest Control Techniques training. You will be trained and timed in Emergency and Pursuit Driving Training at the new Colorado Law Enforcement Training Center (CLETC). You will have 2 weeks of intense Law Enforcement Firearms Training, firing over 1,500 rounds and then testing out at 100% for your POST pistol qualification. You will participate in extensive role playing

scenario training utilizing Simunitions as a training tool. You will make lifelong friends and be part of an exciting, rewarding and challenging career that will change your life!

**How does the academy apply towards my CMU degree?**

The WCPOA provides 37 credit hours which can be applied towards:

1. The Associates of Applied Science Degree in Criminal Justice.
2. The Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice with a Law Enforcement Emphasis.
3. The Bachelors of Applied Science in Public Administration with a Public Safety Emphasis.

**What is the cost of attending the WCPOA?**

The current Spring 2016 Tuition and Fees is \$1 2651.41 for all 37 credit hours. This equates to \$341.93 per credit hour. If you are Colorado Opportunity Fund (COF) eligible, you can get a credit of \$2,775.00 for the 37 credit hours or \$75.00 per credit hour to bring the cost of tuition down to \$9,876.41 for the entire 37 credit hours or \$266.93 per credit hour. \*\*\*Tuition and Fees are subject to change\*\*\*

**Are there any scholarships available?**

Scholarships are available through the financial aid office. Please see the following link for information and financial aid:

<http://www.coloradomesa.edu/finaid/index.html>

Veterans, please use the following link:

<http://www.coloradomesa.edu/registrar/va/index.html>

Please see the following for Colorado Opportunity Fund information:

<http://www.coloradomesa.edu/finaid/cof.html>