



Western Colorado Peace Officers Academy (WCPOA)

Application and Selection Process: Frequently Asked Questions

(Updated 6-14-2017)

How old must I be to apply to the Academy?

You must be 21 years of age prior to or reach 21 during the attending year academy. 20 years of age applicants will be considered on a case by case basis.

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

No, we encourage seasoned 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 beginning of the academy start date or a conviction of any decertifying misdemeanor as outlined on the hyperlink: <https://coloradopost.gov/certification/decertifying-misdemeanors>

Do Honorably Discharged US Military Veterans get preference for admission?

Yes, and post 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. Please contact Colorado Mesa University's financial aid office for further details and processes. Follow the link at the bottom of the page.

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 and are deemed competitive.

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 out and mail to the address listed on the application packet or drop off in person to WCCC Student Services (Building B). The application should be submitted at least 5 months prior to the beginning 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. **After Your Application is Received** and reviewed for corrections you will receive an email with further instructions from the academy.
4. **Directors Interview:** The director will contact you to set up a 30-minute suitability interview appointment. If you live out of the area, this interview may be conducted over the telephone.
5. **Pre-Assessment Screening:** If you are found suitable for the program, you will be asked to take a written pre-assessment screening test. A \$20.00 fee made payable to WCCC is assessed to the candidate. The candidate must be prepared to submit a check or money order for the \$20.00 amount on the day of the director's interview.
6. **Oral Board:** Once you have passed the Director's interview and pre-assessment screening, you will be invited to sit for a 3-member law enforcement officer's professional Oral Board interview. Passing this 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 difficult to be hired. The majority of Colorado local and state law enforcement agencies require at a least 2 year AAS degree or higher. The exception is for State Parole Officers, Probation Officers, Wildlife Managers and high paying local law enforcement agencies that 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 approximately 16 weeks long with 10 to 12 hour days, some Saturdays and night training.

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.** Make sure you have budgeted for being unemployed for 16 weeks in your personal finances.

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 130 question State of Colorado POST examination. You will receive outstanding instruction with the finest law enforcement professionals 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 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 31 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 Fall 2017 Tuition and Fees are \$11,658.48 for all 31 credit hours. This equates to \$376.08 per credit hour. If you are Colorado Opportunity Fund (COF) eligible, you can get a credit of \$2,387.00 for the 31 credit hours or \$77.00 per credit hour to bring the cost of tuition down to \$9,271.48 for the entire 31 credit hours or \$299.08 per credit hour. ***Tuition and Fees are subject to change*** (Please contact Colorado Mesa University for current costs)

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>