

New Category of Continuing Education: Professional Service

Rationale: The Alabama Board of Licensure for Professional Geologists (ABLPG) recognizes the educative benefit of research activities by its licensees for the purposes of scientific publication in journals and presentations at professional meetings. Similar activities are often required in the service of committees, councils and boards of professional organizations – often without claim of authorship – to address matters of policy, inform the public and provide guidance to governments and industry. The Geological Society of America's Committee on Geology and Public Policy, for example, produces a number of the Society's position statements and white papers to provide awareness to the public on a number of geosciences and environmental issues. Members of the GPPC generally collaborate in the writing and editing of such documents. Time spent by committee members with respect to discussion, research, and writing promotes educational value. Likewise, an applied geosciences professional's service on a board or committee in the service of a related field (e.g. engineering, soil science, planning, public works, etc.), also facilitates an educational benefit by engaging the licensee on issues that he or she may not typically encounter as part of their regular activities. An engineering geologist who serves on a municipal or regional planning commission, for example, may become familiar with the environmental maintenance concerns of a residential subdivision. Professional service activities with regards to the above generally serve to enrich the applied professionals knowledge and skills.

A licensee's professional service obligation should be conducted outside of the licensee's place of employment and normal working hours. The service obligation should be conducted in association with a recognized institution, professional society, governmental board or commission. These organizations should be associated, in a meaningful way, to the practice of applied earth sciences. The ABLPG will determine if the licensee's professional organization and affiliated service role are acceptable (see below). Volunteer or service work with other non-technical societies or organizations (e.g. Rotary Clubs, school boards, civic clubs, etc.) is not appropriate for fulfilling professional service. In-house committees or working groups of a private company, corporation, academic or government institution, are also not appropriate or suitable as employees are typically expected to participate in such activities as part of their normal working obligations.

When a licensee assumes a service related role he or she should notify the ABLPG, in writing, at their earliest convenience. A downloadable form or template will be provided on the Board's website to facilitate this process. The licensee will provide a brief petition to the ABLPG for its consideration to allow continuing education units for his or hers professional service. The licensee should provide the following information:

The name of the institution, professional society, commission, association or board .

The business of said organization.

The relationship or relevance of the organization to the public practice of geology.

The name of the committee, working group, council, etc. that the licensee will be involved with for their term of participation.

The purpose of the committee, working group, council, etc.

The licensee's anticipated activities.

The licensee's anticipated duration of service.

The ABLPG will review the petition at its next meeting. The approval of three ABLPG members will be required to authorize permission for the licensee to claim continuing education for the purposes of professional development. The ABLPG Chair will decide the appropriate amount of continuing education units that the licensee may claim. The number of units allowed by the Chair may be up to, but not to exceed, four (4) professional development hours.

A response will be forwarded to the licensee within one week following the Board's decision.

The ABLPG will not consider continuing education units for professional service activities conducted prior to the Board's approval; however, exceptions to this rule may be considered.

Only professional service activities approved with the Board's consent will be deemed suitable for professional development.

The licensee should keep a log of attendance for all meetings and teleconferences, which should include dates, times, and the number of hours of participation. The licensee should also include a summary number of hours spent on specific service related activities (i.e. research, writing, editing, review, presentations, etc.)

These items should be available for review if requested by the Board (i.e. for the purposes of an audit). These items should be supplemented with the following documentation:

A brief memo from the chair of the licensee's working group, committee or board which documents their participation and dates of participation. The memo should include the chair's contact information.

An official roster or list of membership showing the licensee's official status as a member of the organization's working group, committee, board, council, etc.

If applicable, a list of meeting minutes by committee's secretary documenting the licensee's attendance.