Certificate Requirements

Applicants eligible for the Executive Financial Planning Advanced Certificate Program should have a bachelor’s degree and three or more years of experience in the fields of financial services, law, or accounting. Others will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To be admitted to the program, candidates must meet the departmental and university admission requirements. Students who earn the certificate will complete 18 units of coursework including FIN 522, FIN 590, FIN 651, FIN 657, FIN 705, and ACCT 503.

SDSU offers three CFP Board-registered financial planning programs that qualify graduates to sit for the CFP Board’s comprehensive exam. In addition to this six-course (18 units) off-campus program, students may also qualify for the CFP Board exam by earning either of the following on-campus degrees:

- BS in Financial Services with a Certificate in Personal Financial Planning
- MS with a Concentration in Financial and Tax Planning

For more information, visit the Financial Planning website at www.sdsu.edu/finplan
Personal Financial Planning Curriculum
Each 12-week, three-unit class meets Tuesdays 2:30-5:45 pm. Courses are offered on a rotating basis. Students may begin the program with any of the first five courses (FIN 590 is always taken last). Visit www.sdsu.edu/finplan for the course schedule.

Individual Insurance Management
FIN 522: Economic, legal, social, and ethical considerations of individual, business and group insurance, including life, health, property, liability, and social insurance.

Financial Counseling
FIN 657: Decision-making process and theory of individual financial needs. Planning and implementation of financial strategies that aid in meeting family goals. Counseling, ethics, preparation of financial plans using cases and individuals.

Estate Planning
FIN 705: Identification and analysis of those aspects of federal and state law affecting estate planning and taxation.

Seminar in Investments
FIN 651: Characteristics of financial markets and instruments; pricing individual securities; portfolio selection and analysis; measurement of risk.

Federal Taxation of Individuals
ACCT 503: Taxation of individuals, including income, deductions, credits, social security taxes, and property transactions.

Personal Financial Planning Practicum
Note: This final course is to be completed after the other five courses.
FIN 590: Preparation of family financial plans using comprehensive cases and/or real financial data. Financial planning software, counseling and communication skills, behavioral finance, client psychology, practice standards, discipline, and ethics.

Executive Financial Planning Advanced Certificate Program
This CFP Board-registered certificate program is a step in achieving the Certified Financial Planner™ certification. Upon successful completion of this 18-unit program, participants will be awarded an SDSU Advanced Certificate in Personal Financial Planning, and will be eligible to sit for the CFP Board certification exam. It is intended for:
- Financial services firm employees with client contact experience
- Attorneys, CFA’s, and CPA’s with experience in estate planning, investments, or tax
- Accountants and financial professionals
- Other financially-experienced personnel interested in a career as a financial planning professional

Program Highlights
- Qualifies students to sit for the CFP Board Certification exam
- Offers high-quality, face-to-face program
- SDSU has the only in-person programs in San Diego (next closest on-campus program is in Los Angeles)
- Provides great opportunities for networking/interacting with other students in the field
- Requires no prerequisites – all necessary info is built into the curriculum (though students who decide to later enter the Master’s program will need to complete some prerequisites)
- Offers 15-18 units toward a master’s degree, if student is accepted in SDSU’s graduate school (the Master’s degree may require as few as four-five additional on-campus courses)

* Classes currently meet in downtown San Diego at the California Western School of Law.

For More Information
To apply, click here to download the preliminary application form. Send the completed form to the Program Director, Thomas Warschauer, Ph.D., CFP®, at tom.warschauer@sdsu.edu before the next class.

The prospect for employment as a personal finance advisor is projected to grow by 30% in the next eight years. Professional financial planners will be needed to help the millions of workers set to retire in the next ten years. Financial planners have many industry employment options including securities and brokerage firms, private banking, credit unions, insurance and finance companies, as well as the option to become self-employed. The annual salary for experienced employees in the field ranges from $80,000 to $180,000.