



## Certified Biological Safety Professional Certification Maintenance Program

The American Biological Safety Association (ABSA) Certification Maintenance (CM) Program assures that Certified Biological Safety Professionals (CBSPs) and Registered Biosafety Professionals (RBPs) maintain their professional qualifications. The CM Program requires CBSPs/RBPs to participate in professional development activities in addition to the biological safety activities encountered through their daily job functions. CBSPs/RBPs must meet the requirements of the CM Program to maintain their CBSP/RBP certification. CBSP holders who fail to fulfill the program requirements and fail to recertify by examination will be removed from ABSA's CBSP listing and may no longer use the CBSP designation. NRCM recertification does not automatically allow for CBSP recertification; however, ABSA encourages CBSPs to maintain their NRCM certification. Activities used for NRCM recertification may also be used for CBSP recertification by listing them in the appropriate CBSP category.

The Certification Maintenance cycle is a five-year cycle that begins on January 1 of the calendar year following the granting of a certificate and ends on December 31 of the fifth year. ABSA will send CBSPs/RBPs notification when the initial certification is granted, and a reminder at the beginning of the calendar year in which the 5-year cycle is due to end. Recertification worksheets are available in the Certification section on the ABSA website. These worksheets must be submitted to the ABSA Credentialing Maintenance Board (ABSA CMB) by February 1 of the year following the end of the 5-year cycle.

The CM Program mandates that 40 CM points must be earned in every five-year cycle from among the categories of activities defined below in *Acceptable Activities and Documentation*. A minimum of 15 of the 40 CM points per five-year cycle must be earned from professional development Categories 5-7 and 9. At the time of recertification, the CBSP/RBP must use the CM worksheets to report their professional activities and point accrual. CM worksheets should be submitted to the ABSA Office without supporting documentation. Each cycle, a portion of worksheets will be selected at random for an audit. If selected, CBSPs/RBPs will be requested to submit supporting documentation for the activities listed on their worksheet. Results of the evaluation of CM worksheets or audit documentation will be sent to the CBSP/RBP by the ABSA CMB. Individuals who are audited will have one month to submit the required documentation. Documentation records should be kept until the end of the calendar year following recertification, so that individuals chosen for an audit may submit materials within one month of notification. Individuals who have not accrued adequate CM points during their 5-year cycle may recertify by taking and passing the NRCM certification examination for biological safety microbiology.

### INSTRUCTIONS

The Certification/ Registration Maintenance Worksheet MUST be typed. The form must be completed properly or it will not be reviewed until it is complete. Please be sure all items are listed in the correct section of the form.

Any courses or activities which require CM approval must be submitted for review prior to submitting the worksheet. The approval number for any activities which require CM approval must be provided on the form. Provide the ABSA CM points where requested on the form. Do not use

IACET points or other agencies' approval points/contact hours.

## ACCEPTABLE ACTIVITIES AND DOCUMENTATION

Biological safety- or biosafety-related activities are defined as any of the tasks covered by the CBSP examination (NRCM Biosafety Microbiology SM examination). Acceptable documentation has been developed for many of the professional and educational activities related to the practice of Biological Safety. However, not all situations can be anticipated and CBSPs/RBPs are encouraged to contact ABSA to apply for CM points for biosafety-related activities that are not covered in the list below.

### 1. Professional Biosafety Practice

(Maximum points allowed per year: 2.0)

- CBSPs/RBPs engaged in acceptable professional biosafety practice for 50% or greater per year – 2.0 CM points.
- CBSPs/RBPs engaged in acceptable professional biosafety practice for 20% or greater but less than 50% per year – 1.0 CM point.
- You must include a description of your biosafety-related duties.

#### Acceptable Support Documentation:

A letter from your employer verifying dates of employment and biological safety responsibilities. Biological safety consultants who are self-employed may document their practice by letterhead, employee identification number (if incorporated) and a list of clients for the documentation period.

### 2. Professional Biological Safety Organization Membership

(Maximum points allowed per year: 2.0)

- Membership in the American Biological Safety Association – 1.0 CM point per year.
- Membership in an official ABSA affiliate – 0.5 CM point per year.
- Credit is NOT given for membership in NRCM, ASM, or other alliance organizations.

#### Acceptable Support Documentation:

A copy of your membership certificate(s) indicating dates of membership, dues receipts or canceled checks.

### 3. Technical/Professional Organization Service

(Maximum points allowed per year: No limit)

- Service as President or President-Elect on the ABSA Council – 3.0 CM points per year.
- Service on the ABSA Council (excluding President or President-Elect) – 2.0 CM points per year.
- Service on the Council or Board of an official ABSA affiliate – 1.0 CM point per year.
- Service in ABSA as Team Leader – 2.0 CM points per year.  
(Note: Service by a team leader on one of his/her committees does not receive CM points.)
- Service as chairperson or co-chair on an ABSA committee – 1.0 CM point per year.
- Service on an ABSA committee or subcommittee – 0.5 CM point per year.  
(Service by an ABSA officer as liaison on an ABSA Committee does not receive CM

points).

- Service on an ABSA affiliate committee – 0.5 CM point per year.
- Service as a mentor in the ABSA mentoring program – 0.5 CM points per mentee.
- Service on a non-ABSA biosafety-related governmental commission, council, and committee (national, state, and local) – 0.5 CM point per committee per year.

Examples of such service include serving on a committee to revise BMBL, working on an NIH Office of Biotechnology Activities (OBA) activity, or a local public health committee. (Note: CBSPs who are government employees do not receive credit for these activities, if it is considered part of their job description.)

- Service on a non-ABSA, biosafety-related non-governmental commission, council or committee (e.g. community member of an IBC, AIHA biosafety committee member) – 0.5 CM point per year.

#### Acceptable Support Documentation:

A letter or other documentation supplied from the organization verifying the dates of your committee membership, service as an officer or mentor.

#### 4. Professional Publications and Presentations

Maximum points allowed per year: No limit

- Each peer-reviewed, biosafety-related paper or article which has been published during the current certification cycle – 1.0 CM point per author.
- Each published, single author biosafety-related book – 5.0 CM points.
- Editors of biosafety-related books – 3.0 CM points per volume editor regardless of the number of editors.
- Each published chapter in a biosafety-related book – 1.0 CM point per author.
- CM points for articles in non-peer reviewed publications will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the CMC. Complete an Application for CM Credit for determination. If approved, - 0.5 CM points per author.
- Chief Editors of Applied Biosafety, the Journal of the American Biological Safety Association – 2.0 CM points per year
- Associate and Assistant Editors of Applied Biosafety – 1.0 CM point per year
- Reviewers for Applied Biosafety or reviewers of a biological safety-related paper in a recognized (indexed) journal – 0.5 CM point per article reviewed.
- Giving a biosafety-related technical/scientific presentation before a professional audience – 1.0 CM point. (Note: Credit may be claimed only once for the same scientific information presented.)
- Development of a biosafety-related technical/scientific exhibit displayed in a poster session at a national technical/ scientific meeting – 1.0 CM point. (Credit may be claimed only once for the same scientific information presented).

#### Acceptable Support Documentation:

Article/Paper/Book Chapter: A copy of the first page indicating the title, name of the publication, date of publication, the CBSP's name as author and other authors (if applicable).

Book: A copy of the title page indicating the title, publisher, date of publication, the CBSP's name as author and other authors (if applicable).

Editors/Reviewers: Letters or other documentation of service as a reviewer of papers or articles.

Presentations/exhibits: A copy of the program indicating the name of the meeting, the date of

the meeting, the scheduling of the paper/exhibit, the author(s), and identification of the presenter.

## 5. Conferences, Symposia, Local/Regional Meetings

Maximum points allowed per year: No limit

- Attendance at the annual ABSA Biological Safety Conference – 0.5 CM point per half-day or 1.0 CM point per day.
- Biological safety-related conferences or symposia where ABSA co-sponsors the activity with a recognized national organization, such as CDC, NIH, ASM, APIC, etc., are acceptable for CM points.– 0.5 CM point per half-day or 1.0 CM point per day.
- Programs (formally organized scientific or career-related seminars, roundtables, symposia, or colloquia) sponsored by official ABSA affiliates – 0.5 CM point per half-day or 1.0 CM point per day of technical program.
- Luncheon or dinner meeting of ABSA affiliates, typically a business meeting followed by a technical or biosafety-related guest presentation – 0.25 CM point per meeting.
- Biosafety-related conferences, symposia, and meetings not sponsored or co-sponsored by ABSA or ABSA affiliates may be acceptable for CM points. Approval for these activities should be sought from the CMB.\*

### Acceptable Support Documentation:

CBSPs must document the name of the conference or symposium, sponsoring organization, dates of attendance and proof of attendance (i.e. registration receipts, canceled checks, approved travel/expense reports, hotel receipts, or airline tickets, etc.). Certificates of completion with the CBSP's name and date are acceptable.

\* Attendees or sponsors of non-ABSA and non-ABSA affiliate conferences, symposia, programs, and meetings must apply to ABSA before CM points will be granted. A CM Credit Application form, available in the CM section at [www.absa.org](http://www.absa.org), should be used to provide the CMC with information about the sponsor, agenda or program, date(s) of the program and contact hours. The CMB will determine whether points will be awarded, based on the relevance of the activity to biosafety. The CMB uses the National Registry of Certified Microbiologists Examination Content document (available on the ABSA website) as a basis for determining relevance to biosafety. Applicants for CM credit should indicate the appropriate domain(s) and task number(s) from the NRCM Examination Content document that characterizes the conference content. Approval numbers and associated CM points will be listed in the CBSP section of the ABSA website.

## 6. Professional Development Courses (Sponsored or co-sponsored by ABSA)

(Maximum points allowed per year for students and teachers: No limit)

- Attending an ABSA Biological Safety Conference pre-conference or other ABSA-sponsored course - 0.5 CM points per half day, 1.0 CM point per day.
- Teaching an ABSA Biological Safety Conference pre-conference or other ABSA-sponsored course – 1.0 CM point per half-day, 2.0 CM points per full day of instruction. Where multiple teachers are involved, as long as they are actively participating during the entire course, the points apply to all teachers. For courses where periods exist when a teacher is not involved or responsible for the class, points should be based only upon actual class involvement time (e.g. Biosafety Review Course) – 0.125 CM point = 1 hour of involvement.

- Facilitating an ABSA Biological Safety Conference pre-conference course or other ABSA-sponsored course – 0.25 CM point per half day, 0.5 CM point per day.  
(Note: Facilitators do not receive attendance CM points for courses they facilitate.)

Note: Points will not be awarded for teaching or attending the same course or program more than once during a year.

**Acceptable Support Documentation:**

**Student:** A copy of the course attendance certificate will serve to verify attendance at Biological Safety Conference Pre-Conference courses and other ABSA-sponsored courses.

**Teacher:** A copy of the course brochure or relevant program indicating the course you taught and the number of hours involved.

**7. Professional Development Courses (Non-ABSA Sponsored)**  
(Maximum points allowed per year for students and teachers: No limit)

Sponsors or attendees of non-ABSA professional development courses must apply to ABSA before CM points will be granted. Information on the sponsor, detailed course content and date(s), and contact hours should be submitted using the CM Credit Application form, which is located in the CM section of [www.absa.org](http://www.absa.org). The CMB will determine whether points will be awarded, based on relevance of the course to biosafety. The CMB uses the National Registry of Certified Microbiologists Examination Content document (available on the ABSA website) as a basis for determining relevance to biosafety. Applicants for CM credit should indicate the appropriate domain(s) and task number(s) from the NRCM Examination Content document that characterizes the course content. Approval numbers and associated CM points will be listed in the CBSP section of the ABSA website.

- Attending an approved biosafety-related educational course - 0.5 CM point per half day, 1.0 CM point per day.
- Teaching an approved biosafety-related education course – 1.0 CM point per half day, 2.0 CM points per day of instruction.

Where multiple teachers are involved, as long as they are actively participating during the entire course, the points apply to all teachers. For courses where periods exist when a teacher is not involved or responsible for the class, points should be based only upon actual class involvement time and 0.125 CM point = 1 hour of involvement.

**Notes:**

- Teaching courses does not earn CM points under this category if it is part of your job description.
- Points will not be awarded for teaching or attending the same course more than once during a year.

**Acceptable Support Documentation:**

**Student:** A copy of your certificate of completion indicating course title, date(s) of attendance and CMC approval number. Attendance may also be documented by a letter, attendance roster or some other documentation from the sponsor verifying the completion of the entire course or educational program along with the CMB approval number.

**Teacher:** A letter from the academic institution or course sponsor verifying that you taught the course, program, or seminar and a copy of the catalog description or information brochure indicating title of the course or program, date(s) taught, topics covered, length of your

presentation (in hours), and the CMB approval number.

## 8. Writing NRCM Examination Questions (Maximum points allowed per year: No limit)

One (1.0) CM point will be awarded for every five (5) examination questions accepted by the NRCM Examination Development Committee.

- To assist with writing suitable examination questions, contact the National Registry of Certified Microbiologists Office at 202-942-9281 for a copy of the NRCM Item Writers Guide.
- Submit questions to the National Registry of Certified Microbiologists Office with a note that these questions are being submitted for the Biosafety Examination Development Committee's review for credit toward CBSP recertification. The submitter should include his/her name at the top of every page submitted. Contact information for the NRCM is 1752 N Street, NW; Washington, DC 20036-2904 or email to: [certification@asmusa.org](mailto:certification@asmusa.org).
- When questions are accepted or rejected, the Examination Development Committee will issue a letter indicating their decision to the submitter.

### Acceptable Support Documentation:

A copy of your letter of documentation from the Examination Development Committee.

## 9. College/University Courses Maximum points allowed per year: Student: No limit Teacher: No limit

CM points can be earned by completing biological safety-related college or university courses. Courses must be given through an institution accredited by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). Non-college courses with American Council on Education (ACE) credit are also acceptable for CM points.

- Students – 1.0 CM point per semester hour.
- Teachers – 2.0 CM points per semester hour.
- MA/MS dissertation- 2.5 CM points; PhD dissertation- 5.0 CM points
- International courses will be evaluated for U.S. equivalence by the CMB.
- Attendees must apply to ABSA before CM points will be granted. A CM Credit Application form, available in the CM section at [www.absa.org](http://www.absa.org), should be used to provide the CMB with information about the course contact hours. The CMB will determine whether points will be awarded, based on the relevance of the activity to biosafety. The CMB uses the National Registry of Certified Microbiologists Examination Content document (available on the ABSA website) as a basis for determining relevance to biosafety. Applicants for CM credit should indicate the appropriate domain(s) and task number(s) from the NRCM Examination Content document that characterizes the course content. Approval numbers and associated CM points will be listed in the CBSP section of the ABSA website.

### Acceptable Support Documentation:

Student: A copy of the official transcript bearing the Registrar's stamp or seal indicating the date of completion and credits earned. A description of the course content, passing grade, date of completion & credits earned.

**Teacher:** A letter from the academic institution or course sponsor verifying that the CBSP was appointed to teach the course, program, or seminar and a copy of the catalog description or information brochure indicating title of the course or program, date(s) taught, topics covered and the number of credits earned per student.

## 10. Recertification by Examination

CBSPs may choose to recertify by taking and passing the NRCM certification examination for biological safety microbiology. Passing the examination earns all 40 CM points required for the current five-year CM cycle. The NRCM exam is offered in conjunction with the annual ABSA meeting each October. To recertify by examination, CBSPs must have active status (paid current year's dues), and submit the full examination application fee and the NRCM Recertification form to NRCM by July 1 of year 5 of their cycle. There are no other requirements. Note that the NRCM examination can be taken for CM point credit only during the last year of the five-year cycle. This will ensure that the CBSP's active status is not lost.

### Acceptable Support Documentation:

Each year NRCM forwards documentation to ABSA when exam candidates have successfully passed the exam.

Approved by ABSA Council on September 14, 2005

Updated: December 2010