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### **Noncredit Certificates in Nonprofit Management: An Exploratory Study**

**Author: MORDECAI LEE**

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In US colleges and universities that provide education in nonprofit management, the central focus is invariably on credit-based degrees, certificates and courses. Less frequently, some institutions also offer nonprofit management education in a noncredit context. The latter is often offered through a separate campus entity dedicated to continuing education, outreach, extension and professional development that tends to exist in the shadow of credit-based education. While credits measure educational attainment, continuing education units (CEUs) are used to measure professional development. However, little comprehensive information is known about this parallel universe of CEU-based certificates in nonprofit management. This article provides the results of an exploratory survey of noncredit certificates in nonprofit management at US colleges and universities. It identified 33 colleges and universities offering 36 certificates. The survey found a wide disparity in the nomenclature, curriculum, requirements, finances, duration and management of these programs. The results of the survey indicate the absence of a pedagogic consensus regarding what a noncredit certificate in nonprofit management should be. The survey data suggest a need for development of basic professional standards and curriculum to enhance the value and credibility of noncredit certificates nonprofit management that are issued by colleges and universities.

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