

How to Seek an Equivalency for a PMCDP Training Course

Applicable for CEG version 6 (all revisions)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

How to Use This Guide:.....	3
Proficiency Levels for PMCDP FPD Competencies.....	4
Understanding PMCDP's FPD Competencies.....	5
Mapping Competencies to PMCDP Training Courses:.....	8
Pre-Approved Equivalencies:	11
Documenting Equivalency for a PMCDP Training Course:	13
Equivalency via Work Experience - Example.....	14
Equivalency via Alternative Training - Example.....	16
Input into the ESS FPD Certification Application.....	20
Key Things to Remember	22

How to Use This Guide:

The intent of this guide is to “de-mystify” the process for seeking an equivalency to a PMCDP training course, by way of work experience or another course (i.e., alternate training) not identified in the Certification Equivalency Guide (CEG). This Guide will explain the foundation for FPD certification, including the four proficiency levels, competencies, and how to justify an equivalency to the PMCDP training course identified in the CEG for each competency.

If you have extensive experience in project management or have taken project management courses at a college or with another agency, you may be able to seek equivalencies to some PMCDP training courses. However, many PMCDP courses are DOE-centric so general project management experience/courses may not be equivalent. Hopefully this Guide will help you decide on whether to seek an equivalency or take the PMCDP course. Good Luck!

Revisions:

Rev	Date	Updates
0	1/18/2024	

Proficiency Levels for PMCDP FPD Competencies

The CEG defines four (4) proficiency levels which are used throughout the CEG.

Per the CEG: “The proficiency level, which is the knowledge/skill level that an individual must possess for each competency, varies by level of certification.”

The four (4) proficiency levels are as follows:

Definitions of Proficiency Levels for PMCDP Competencies	
Proficiency Level	Definition
Foundational	Has a general understanding of the fundamental principles, concepts, and techniques for the given competency and can employ understanding in routine settings under predictable conditions with supervision. Recognizes situations in which assistance from more advanced FPDs is needed and uses sound judgment on whether to escalate issues.
Intermediate	Has a strong working knowledge of fundamental principles, concepts, and techniques for the given competency and can apply them in routine situations. Requires only occasional guidance but recognizes situations in which more advanced or senior level input is needed and exercises sound judgment on whether to escalate issues.
Advanced	Has a comprehensive knowledge of the advanced principles, concepts, and techniques for the given competency and applies knowledge in a range of settings, which may include considerably difficult and/or changing conditions. Requires little or no guidance but recognizes the limitations of their knowledge and knows when to escalate issues. Serves as a subject matter expert in their program and trains or advises others in the competency.
Expert	Has a comprehensive knowledge of the full scope of the subject matter, including advanced principles, concepts, and techniques for the given competency and applies knowledge to the most complex projects, which may involve rapidly changing and/or exceptionally difficult situations. Is recognized across the agency as a subject matter expert and can coach and mentor others on the subject matter and its applications for projects. Handles issues and is fully proficient in communicating and coordinating with others across DOE organizational levels to resolve matters as needed.

The proficiency levels are not exactly commensurate with the FPD Certification Levels. For instance, there are many competencies that are at the ‘Intermediate’ level for a Level I FPD. Therefore, it is important to be cognizant of the four (4) proficiency levels and **when seeking an equivalency, understand the level of proficiency you must demonstrate in order for your equivalency to be accepted.**

Understanding PMCDP’s FPD Competencies

Appendix B of the CEG has a detailed matrix of the various Required learning (RL) and Elective Learning (EL) competencies and what proficiency level is required for each FPD certification level. In the below screenshot from the CEG, you can see each competency listed and the corresponding proficiency level for each level of FPD certification.

ID	Competency	FPDLevel			
		1	2	3	4
1. Project Lifecycle Management					
1.1	FPD Roles and Responsibilities	In	In	In	In
1.2	DOE Order 413.3B	In	In	In	In
1.3	Systems Engineering		In	In	In
1.4	Program Management and Portfolio Analysis			In	In
1.5	Pre-project Planning	Fo	In	In	In
1.6	Analyzing Project Alternatives	Fo	In	In	In
1.7	Defining and Forming an Integrated Project Team (IPT)	In	Ad	Ad	Ad
1.8	Safety Planning in Project Management	In	In	In	In
1.9	Acquisition Strategy and Planning	In	In	In	In
1.10	Planning for Project Closeout and Transfer of Ownership	Fo	Fo	Fo	Fo
1.11	Managing Project Artifacts	In	In	In	In
1.12	Configuration Management	In	In	In	In
1.13	Reporting Lessons Learned	In	In	In	In

It is interesting to note that for this example, only three (3) of the 13 competencies require a Foundational (lowest level) proficiency level for a Level 1 FPD. Since most are Intermediate, you will need to demonstrate “strong working knowledge” and “require only occasional guidance” for these competencies. For a competency like ID # 1.3 “DOE Order 413.3B”, this would be nearly impossible for somebody coming from outside DOE, even if they have 20+ years project management experience. Please keep this in mind.

continued on next page...

The competency requirements for FPD certification levels are presented in tabular format within the CEG. The associate PMCDP training course for the competency is shown. For Level 1 certification (as an example), you will see a table which can be quite confusing:

Level I REQUIRED (RL1) Equivalent Competencies and Knowledge Examples	Training Course	Other Equivalency
1. Project Lifecycle Management		
RL1.1.1 FPD Roles and Responsibilities - <i>Intermediate</i> knowledge of the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of FPDs. Knowledge Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the FPD's roles, responsibilities, and expectations as specified in DOE O 413.3B and associated guides. • Understand responsibilities relative to the Management & Operating (M&O) or Management & Integrating (M&I) contractor. 	Project Management Systems and Practices in DOE	Pass a comprehensive exam available through PMCDP
RL1.1.2 DOE Order 413.3B - <i>Intermediate</i> knowledge of the principles, requirements and tailoring enumerated in DOE O 413.3B. Knowledge Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the Critical Decision process and requirements. • Understand roles and responsibilities of PME and project organizations (PM, PMSO, HQ Program Offices, etc.). • Understand roles and responsibilities of IPT • Understand project document required (PEP, AS, Lessons Learned, etc.) • Understand tailoring methodology • Familiar with the principles, requirements, and Guides associated with DOE O 413.3B. 	Project Management Systems and Practices in DOE	Pass a comprehensive exam available through PMCDP
RL1.1.5 Pre-project Planning - <i>Foundational</i> knowledge of the processes used to define requirements, scope, schedules, controls, and related elements for project execution. Knowledge Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding of the front-end planning process to include feasibility analysis, pre-conceptual design, detailed scope definition, and preliminary design. • Facilitates federal scope definition process and contract requirements process with supervision. • Assesses contractor development of detailed scope statement, work breakdown structure, integrated master schedule and project controls system. • Identifies and prioritizes requirements as functional/non-functional and discretionary/non-discretionary. 	Project Management Systems and Practices in DOE	Pass a comprehensive exam available through PMCDP

When reading this table, it is important to understand that the PMCDP is looking for candidates to demonstrate all the listed competencies, such as RL1.1.1., RL1.1.2, RL1.1.5, and so on and so forth. **The PMCDP training courses merely provide a means for demonstrating you have that competency at the required proficiency level.**

The CEG allows candidates to demonstrate they have the required competencies *without* taking the PMCDP training course:

“A candidate may choose to fulfill the competencies by documenting education, training, and/or experience.”

So, the PMCDP training courses are **NOT** required. However, demonstrating your competency at the required proficiency level will require a detailed narrative with strong

backup documentation. For most candidates, taking the week-long course is easier and more straightforward.

It gets even more complicated because most PMCDP courses satisfy multiple competencies. For instance, Project Management Systems and Practices in DOE (Level 1 course) satisfies 13 competencies! Other courses, like Planning for Safety in Project Management, only satisfy one (1) competency for Level 1 certification.

From a strategic perspective, it makes sense to seek equivalencies for courses that satisfy fewer competencies. In the next chapter, you will find a matrix of all PMCDP courses mapped to the competencies they satisfy.

Mapping Competencies to PMCDP Training Courses:

Below tables can be found in Appendix B of the CEG:

Course Title	Competencies Covered	Proficiency Level Developed			
		Fo	In	Ad	Ex
FPD Level 1 Required Courses					
Project Management Essentials	2.1 Scope, Baseline, and WBS		•		
	3.1 Cost Estimation		•		
	3.3 Cost Analysis and Management	•			
	8.1 Project Scheduling and Critical Path Identification		•		
	9.1 Interpersonal Communications	•			
	9.5 Conducting Effective Meetings	•			
	10.2 Team-building	•			
10.3 Motivational Techniques	•				
Project Management Systems and Practices in DOE	1.1 FPD Roles and Responsibilities		•		

Course Title	Competencies Covered	Proficiency Level Developed			
		Fo	In	Ad	Ex
	1.2 DOE Order 413.3B		•		
	1.5 Pre-project Planning	•			
	1.6 Analyzing Alternatives	•			
	1.7 Defining and Forming an IPT		•		
	1.10 Planning for Project Closeout and Transfer of Ownership	•			
	1.11 Managing Project Artifacts		•		
	1.12 Configuration Management		•		
	1.13 Reporting Lessons Learned		•		
	2.3 Managing to Quality and Performance Expectations		•		
	3.2 Federal Budget Process		•		
	7.2 Quality Management	•			
	7.4 Environmental Laws and Regulations	•			
	Project Risk Analysis and Management	4.1 Assessing Project Risks		•	
4.2 Managing Project Risks			•		
Planning for Safety in Project Management	1.8 Safety Planning in Project Management		•		
	7.3 Safety Management		•		
Acquisition Management for Technical Personnel	1.9 Acquisition Planning and Strategy		•		
	5.3 DOE Acquisition Systems		•		
Managing Contract Changes	5.2 Contract Change Management		•		
Earned Value Management	6.1 Project Control and Baseline Management		•		
	6.2 Earned Value Management (EVM)		•		
	6.3 Analysis, Monitoring and Control, and Reporting on Plan Execution		•		
Contracting Officer Representative	5.1 COR Roles and Responsibilities		•		
FPD Level 1 Elective Courses					
Managing Performance-based Contracts	1.9 Acquisition Planning and Strategy		•		
	5.3 DOE Acquisition Systems		•		
Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design	2.1 Scope, Baseline, and WBS		•		
Capital Planning for DOE O 413.3B Capital Asset Projects	3.2 Federal Budget Process		•		

Course Title	Competencies Covered	Proficiency Level Developed			
		Fo	In	Ad	Ex
FPD Level 2 Required Courses					
Monitoring and Controlling in Project Execution	1.7 Defining and Forming an IPT			•	
	2.3 Managing to Quality and Performance Expectations		•		
	6.3 Analysis, Monitoring and Control, and Reporting on Plan Execution			•	
	7.1 Safeguards and Security		•		
	7.2 Quality Management		•		
	7.3 Safety Management		•		
	9.2 Effective Briefing Techniques		•		
Scope Management	1.6 Analyzing Alternatives		•		
	2.1 Scope, Baseline, and WBS				•
Cost and Schedule Estimation and Analysis	3.1 Cost Estimation		•		
	3.3 Cost Analysis		•		
	8.1 Project Scheduling and Critical Path Identification		•		
Leadership Through Effective Communication	9.1 Interpersonal Communications		•		
	10.1 Leading People		•		
	10.3 Motivation Techniques		•		
	10.4 Group Facilitation		•		
	10.5 Conflict Resolution		•		
	10.6 Building Coalitions		•		
	10.7 Leading Change		•		
Project Management Simulation	1.7 Defining and Forming an IPT		•		
	8.1 Project Scheduling and Critical Path Identification		•		
	8.2 Automated Scheduling Software		•		
FPD Level 2 Elective Courses					
Front-end Planning	1.5 Pre-project Planning		•		
	1.7 Defining and Forming an IPT		•		
Course Title	Competencies Covered	Proficiency Level Developed			
		Fo	In	Ad	Ex
Federal Budgeting Process in DOE	3.2 Federal Budget Process			•	
Environmental Laws and Regulations	7.4 Environmental Laws and Regulations		•		
Scheduling 24/7	8.1 Project Scheduling and Critical Path Identification		•		
	8.2 Automated Scheduling Software		•		
Systems Engineering	1.3 Systems Engineering		•		

Course Title	Competencies Covered	Proficiency Level Developed			
		Fo	In	Ad	Ex
FPD Level 3 Required Courses					
Advanced Risk Management	4.1 Assessing Project Risks				•
	4.2 Managing Project Risks				•
Program Management and Portfolio Analysis	1.4 Program Management and Portfolio Analysis		•		
Executive Communications	9.1 Interpersonal Communications			•	
	9.2 Effective Briefing Techniques			•	
	9.3 Managing External Communications				•
	9.4 Managing Stakeholder Relations				•
Advanced Earned Value Management Techniques	2.3 Managing to Quality and Performance Expectations			•	
	3.3 Cost Analysis and Management			•	
	6.1 Project Control and Baseline Management				•
	6.2 Earned Value Management (EVM)				•
	6.3 Analysis, Monitoring and Control, and Reporting on Plan Execution				•
	8.1 Project Scheduling and Critical Path Identification				•
FPD Level 3 Elective Courses					
Strategic Planning	10.1 Leading People			•	
Facilitating Conflict	10.2 Team Building			•	
Course Title	Competencies Covered	Proficiency Level Developed			
		Fo	In	Ad	Ex
	10.5 Conflict Resolution			•	
	8.2 Automated Scheduling Software		•		
Negotiation Strategies and Techniques	10.6 Building Coalitions			•	

Pre-Approved Equivalencies:

You may have noticed that in the CEG’s table for each FPD certification level, there is a column for “Other Equivalency” which provides the PMCDP’s “pre-approved” equivalencies to the official PMCDP training courses. If you have completed these courses or possess the noted credential, you can simply enter the justification in your ESS/PMCDP application that you completed the course (or have the credential) and provide the course completion certificate (or credential certificate) with your application. *Easy!*

Level I REQUIRED (RL1) Equivalent Competencies and Knowledge Examples	Training Course	Other Equivalency
1. Project Lifecycle Management		
RL1.1.1 FPD Roles and Responsibilities - <i>Intermediate</i> knowledge of the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of FPDs. Knowledge Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the FPD’s roles, responsibilities, and expectations as specified in DOE O 413.3B and associated guides. Understand responsibilities relative to the Management & Operating (M&O) or Management & Integrating (M&I) contractor. 	Project Management Systems and Practices in DOE	Pass a comprehensive exam available through PMCDP
RL1.1.2 DOE Order 413.3B - <i>Intermediate</i> knowledge of the principles, requirements and tailoring enumerated in DOE O 413.3B. Knowledge Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the Critical Decision process and requirements. Understand roles and responsibilities of PME and project organizations (PM, PMSO, HQ Program Offices, etc.). Understand roles and responsibilities of IPT Understand project document required (PEP, AS, Lessons Learned, etc.) Understand tailoring methodology Familiar with the principles, requirements, and Guides associated with DOE O 413.3B. 	Project Management Systems and Practices in DOE	Pass a comprehensive exam available through PMCDP
RL1.1.5 Pre-project Planning - <i>Foundational</i> knowledge of the processes used to define requirements, scope, schedules, controls, and related elements for project execution. Knowledge Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates understanding of the front-end planning process to include feasibility analysis, pre-conceptual design, detailed scope definition, and preliminary design. Facilitates federal scope definition process and contract requirements process with supervision. Assesses contractor development of detailed scope statement, work breakdown structure, integrated master schedule and project controls system. Identifies and prioritizes requirements as functional/non-functional and discretionary/non-discretionary. 	Project Management Systems and Practices in DOE	Pass a comprehensive exam available through PMCDP

Here are some courses and credentials that provide equivalency:

- PMI’s PMP Certification – equivalent to the *Project Management Essentials* course.
- DAU CON 100 – equivalent to the *Acquisition Management for Technical Personnel* course.
- FAI’s FPM 133 (FPM 103) – equivalent to the *Earned Value Management Systems* course.
- Project Leadership Institute (PLI) – equivalent to *Leadership Through Effective Communication, Advanced Risk Management, Executive Communication, Strategic Planning, and Facilitating Conflict Resolution* courses.
- AACEI CCP Certification – equivalent to the *Project Management Simulation* course.

So, it is recommended that you browse through the CEG to see if you have any pre-approved equivalencies. This is especially true if you are already PMP certified, FAC-P/PM certified, or have gone through PLI.

Documenting Equivalency for a PMCDP Training Course:

The CEG provides guidance on how to document equivalency, including training and work experience.

The CEG requires a candidate “choosing to meet the competencies through alternative education or training must document that the alternative training meets the competencies of the PMCPD course.”

Documentation that is acceptable includes (but is not limited to):

- Detailed curriculum
- Detailed course outlines
- Course and learning objectives
- Length of course
- Date the course was taken (to ensure content is relevant and current)
- How the candidate had to demonstrate mastery of the material
- Documentation that the candidate successfully met all requirements of the course (such as a signed course completion certificate)

The CEG provides two (2) narrative examples, one for a work experience equivalency and the other for a training equivalency:

Experience Equivalency for competency RLI.X.X: I am currently a Level 2 COR and have successfully taken a course on M&O contracts as part of my professional development (my course completion certificate is attached). My experience working with contractors on my projects described below fully satisfies the Level I contracting competency. I have been serving as the procurement specialist on the XYZ project from 5/2019-present (12/21) where I work daily with an M&O contractor providing oversight of contract activities that encompass over \$100M of work scope annually. This includes review of technical deliverables, recommendations for approval of baseline change proposals, monthly subjective feedback, recommendations for program-based incentives, and oversight of multiple direct program and indirect accounts. I have attached monthly progress reports to the project leadership team documenting my role on the project.

Alternate Training: I completed an EPA training class entitled Contract Administration from August 20-21, 2020. The course met for 8 hours each day. Credit is awarded after successfully completing the required examination. The relevant course topics included reviewing and approving contractor submitted scope, approval of change requests, and roles and responsibilities of Contracting Officer Representative (COR).

In the CEG examples you can see how detailed the narratives are. You will also see how for the experience equivalency example, backup documentation (in the form of monthly progress reports) is provided to document the candidate’s role on the project.

Equivalency via Work Experience - Example

Let’s say we want to use our work experience to avoid taking the *Managing Contract Changes* (Level 1) course.

We will first look at what competencies this course satisfies. There is only one (1): RL1.5.2 *Contract Change Management*. This competency requires an *intermediate knowledge* of the techniques, processes, and requirement for evaluating and managing contract changes:

<p>RL1.5.2 Contract Change Management – <i>Intermediate</i> knowledge of the techniques, processes, and requirements for evaluating and managing contract changes.</p> <p>Knowledge Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzes, establishes, and documents a formal change control process and change requests for the project. • Ensures the IPT and contractor follow the process to evaluate and recommend the need for contract changes or Requests for Equitable Adjustments (REA) and manages or oversees the process accordingly. • Ensures that contract management and project management are aligned throughout all phases of the project and in the event of a baseline change request. • Communicates changes with project stakeholders. 	<p>Managing Contract Changes</p>
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We can recall that an intermediate knowledge means that you have “a **strong working knowledge** of fundamental principles, concepts, and techniques for the given competency and can apply them in routine situations. **Requires only occasional guidance** but recognizes situations in which more advanced or senior level input is needed and exercises sound judgment on whether to escalate issues.”

The CEG provides us with some knowledge examples to help us:

- Analyzes, establishes, and documents a formal change control process and change requests for the project.
- Ensures the IPT and contractor follow the process to evaluate and recommend the need for contract changes or Requests for Equitable Adjustments (REA) and manages or oversees the process accordingly.
- Ensures that contract management and project management are aligned throughout all phases of the project and in the event of a baseline change request.
- Communicates changes with project stakeholders.

If you were a COR/COTR in your past job, or perhaps a Project Engineer in the field with USACE or NAVFAC, you likely will have done many of the knowledge examples presented. You would be a strong candidate to seek an equivalency.

Now let's put together our narrative:

In my previous position with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), I was the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) for multiple construction projects (post CD-3 equivalent). I was the COR on the Renovate Barracks Project (\$30M)(05/2019 – 08/2021) and the Upgrade Utilities Project (\$10M)(04/2019 – 10/2020). During my tenure, I worked independently and required only occasional guidance from the Contracting Officer. I provided contracting oversight of these two (2) projects for the Contracting Officer. My duties included executing change orders, drafting Pre-Negotiation Memorandum (POM), negotiating with the contractor, drafting the Post-Negotiation Memorandum (PNM), completing the SF-30 modification document, and analyzing contractor REAs and Claims. I also documented and briefed senior leadership and the Contracting Officer on all project matters, including contract changes as they occurred. With my application, I provide a sampling of monthly project status updates which detail I was the COR on the projects identified. I am also providing my COR appointment letters for both projects.

In the example, you will see the following key items included:

1. Experience that is relevant to the competency and knowledge examples.
 2. Since contract changes happen during execution, it is noted that the projects were "post CD-3 equivalent."
 3. Contract names (which the scope of self-explanatory), the TPC, and dates.
 - a. If scope is not clear from the project title, provide a brief description of the scope.
 4. Statement that the experience is commensurate with the Intermediate Proficiency definition:
 - a. *During my tenure, I worked independently and required only occasional guidance from the Contracting Officer.*
 5. List of roles and responsibilities which match up well with the knowledge examples for this competency.
 6. Statement that backup documentation is provided, to include a sampling of monthly project status updates and COR appointment letters.
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Equivalency via Alternate Training - Example

Now let's try to get an equivalency for alternate training for the *Managing Contract Changes* (Level 1) course.

As a reminder, this course satisfies RL1.5.2 *Contract Change Management*. This competency requires an *intermediate knowledge* of the techniques, processes, and requirement for evaluating and managing contract changes:

<p>RL1.5.2 Contract Change Management – <i>Intermediate</i> knowledge of the techniques, processes, and requirements for evaluating and managing contract changes.</p> <p>Knowledge Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyzes, establishes, and documents a formal change control process and change requests for the project. Ensures the IPT and contractor follow the process to evaluate and recommend the need for contract changes or Requests for Equitable Adjustments (REA) and manages or oversees the process accordingly. Ensures that contract management and project management are aligned throughout all phases of the project and in the event of a baseline change request. Communicates changes with project stakeholders. 	<p>Managing Contract Changes</p>	<p>Other Training</p>
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The first step is to look at the PMCDP course description for *Managing Contract Changes*, which can be found on PM Connect (formerly PM MAX) or in Learning Nucleus:

Managing Contract Changes
 Level 1 Required Course
 32 CLPs

Description: This course aims to better prepare DOE Contracting Officers (COs) and Federal Project Directors (FPDs) to manage project changes on complex construction projects through effective management of contract modifications and change orders. The course includes discussions of DOE's historical and current contracting environment, authorities for contract modifications, and the various contract provisions and legal doctrines that define and limit the ability for the Government to change contracts. Additionally, the course examines the doctrine of constructive change, potential differences between project management changes and contract changes, and actions DOE senior level contracting, and program officials can take to improve the effectiveness of the change management process.

Intended Audience: Primary: Prospective Level 1 Federal Project Directors, certified FAC-Cs and FAC-CORs; Secondary: DOE Program Managers, and Integrated Project Team members assigned to projects (including matrixed personnel). Other members of the acquisition workforce may wish to take this course for continuing education credit.

Course Format: Synchronous webinar available through the Learning Nucleus, conducted over 4 days.

Some important pieces of information to note:

1. Number of CLPs for the course. This is a 4-day course with 8 hours of learning per day. So, 32 CLPs.
2. What the course teaches:
 - a. Authorities for contract modifications
 - b. Various contract provisions and legal doctrines that define and limit the ability for the Government to change contracts.
 - c. Doctrine of constructive change
 - d. Potential differences between project management changes and contract changes
 - e. Actions DOE senior level contracting, and program officials can take to improve the effectiveness of the change management process.
3. The course is virtual and synchronous (meaning training is not “on-demand”).

An equivalent alternative training course should provide at least 32 CLPs, teach similar topics, and be instructor-led. Therefore, an 8-hour on-demand contracting course would not be equivalent. The knowledge examples for this competency also provide some additional topics which the alternate training could cover:

- Analyzes, establishes, and documents a formal change control process and change requests for the project.
- Ensures the IPT and contractor follow the process to evaluate and recommend the need for contract changes or Requests for Equitable Adjustments (REA) and manages or oversees the process accordingly.
- Ensures that contract management and project management are aligned throughout all phases of the project and in the event of a baseline change request.
- Communicates changes with project stakeholders.

We also know that all PMCDP courses have an exam at the end of the course and students are required to get a passing grade. Students that pass the course receive a certificate of completion. Therefore, an equivalent course will have an exam (with passing grade requirement) and provide a certificate of completion.

Putting it all together, a course equivalent to *Managing Contract Changes* must:

1. Provide 32 CLPs (or more).
2. Be instructor-led.
3. Teach most of the following topics:
 - a. Authorities for contract modifications
 - b. Various contract provisions and legal doctrines that define and limit the ability for the Government to change contracts.
 - c. Doctrine of constructive change

- d. Potential differences between project management changes and contract changes
 - e. Actions DOE senior level contracting, and program officials can take to improve the effectiveness of the change management process.
 - f. How to analyze, establish, and document a formal change control process and change requests for the project.
 - g. How to evaluate and recommend the need for contract changes or Requests for Equitable Adjustments (REA) and manages or oversees the process accordingly.
 - h. How to communicate changes with project stakeholders.
4. Have a course completion exam that requires a passing grade.
 5. Provide a course completion certificate.

The Defense Acquisition University (DAU) has many contracting courses, including some specific for construction contracting. One relevant course is CON 2440V *Construction Contracting*. This is a virtual instructor-led course and is 5 days long. The course provides 38 CLPs (more than the 32 CLPs provided with *Managing Contract Changes*). The description of the course is as follows (relevant topics **bolded**):

This virtual instructor led training (VILT) course focuses on unique construction contracting issues, such as acquisition planning, contract performance management, funding, environmental concerns, **construction contract language**, **construction contracting in a commercial setting**, the Construction Wage Rate Requirements Statute, design/build, basic schedule delay analysis, **constructive changes**, acceleration, and construction contract quality management.

If we look at the course’s learning objectives (which are available on the DAU site). We will see some relevant topics:

CON 2440V.U06.01	Given a changed condition on a construction contract, select the appropriate clause(s) and formulate the remedy for the situation in accordance with Federal and DoD acquisition laws, regulations, and best business practices.
CON 2440V.U06.01.01	Identify unique construction clauses used in changed conditions.
CON 2440V.U06.01.02	Predict the impacts of differing site conditions.
CON 2440V.U06.01.03	Explain the necessary elements of constructive changes.
CON 2440V.U06.01.04	Given a construction project scenario and schedule analysis techniques, determine construction time, delay, and other equitable adjustments.
CON 2440V.U06.01.05	Evaluate contract acceleration and expediting.
CON 2440V.U06.01.06	Identify and discuss the overhead method that best protects the government while equitably compensating the construction contractor.
CON 2440V.U06.01.07	Recognize the rights and responsibilities of the government and the contractor in construction terminations.
CON 2440V.U06.01.08	Interpret the unique construction claim issues.
CON 2440V.U06.01.09	Analyze and defend specific court cases that support various construction changed condition clauses.

It seems this course could be considered an equivalent alternative training course.

Now let’s write up our narrative to include in the FPD certification application:

I completed the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) instructor-led course CON 2440V *Construction Contracting*. The course was held November 6-10, 2023.

The course met for 8 hours each day. The course provided 38 CLPs which is more than the 32 CLPs provided with *Managing Contract Changes*. The relevant course topics included identifying unique clauses used in changed conditions, explaining the necessary elements of constructive changes, determining construction time, delay, and other equitable adjustments, evaluating contract acceleration and expediting, recognizing rights and responsibilities of the government and the contractor in construction terminations, interpreting the unique construction claim issues, and analyzing and defending specific court cases that support various construction changed condition clauses. Credit is awarded after receiving a passing grade on the required final examination. My course completion certificate is provided with my application along with the course's learning objectives (downloaded off the DAU website).

Input into the ESS FPD Certification Application

In the ESS/PMCDP module, go to “Update certification package” where you will see a table of all PMCDP courses, the course status, completion date, and a link for “Enter/update justification”

<i>Electives Level 3 (select 1 from each category)</i>			
Course Name	Course Status	Justification	Action
Technical Management			
CD-4 Project Closeout	Not Completed		Enter/update justification
Strategic Planning	Completed	Course Completed 03/30/2023	Enter/update justification
Leadership			
Facilitating Conflict Resolution	Not Completed		Enter/update justification
Negotiation Strategies and Techniques	Information Entered	View justification	Enter/update justification

In the above example, you can see the *Strategic Planning* course was completed. However, the *Negotiation Strategies and Techniques* course was not completed and a justification is entered. The justification is the candidate’s narrative describing an equivalency (work experience and/or alternate training).

To enter a justification, click the “[Enter/update justification](#)” link.

This link will take you to a page where you can enter your narrative for every competency that the PMCDP training course satisfies. For the *Negotiation Strategies and Techniques* course, this is just one (1): EL3.10.6 *Advanced knowledge of Building Coalitions*.

continued on next page...

Course Format: Synchronous webinar available through the Learning Nucleus, conducted over 2 weeks.
Equivalent Courses: None

Knowledge Examples for Negotiation Strategies and Techniques Competencies

Competency Number and Name	Knowledge Examples
EL3.10.6 - Advanced knowledge of Building Coalitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops and maintains productive relationships with and obtains consensus among a wide range of stakeholders with diverging interests through an understanding of their roles, expectations, and communication needs and active engagement. • Applies knowledge to analyze and cultivate the best alternative to a negotiated agreement (BATNA) to lead to project success.

For Competency EL3.10.6 (CEG v6.1/Feb 2023), I am submitting "Other Training" completed as an equivalency to the "Negotiation Strategy and Techniques" PMCDP course. As part of my training to achieve DAU Contracting Level 2 certification, I had to successfully complete two (2) negotiation classes: (1) CON 290 Contract Administration and Negotiation Techniques in a Supply Environment and (2) HBS 428 Negotiating. The syllabi for the courses was downloaded from www.DAU.gov and is provided with this certification package, along with my course completion certificates. Both courses provided training on the Behavioral Indicators for Competency EL3.10.6. With regards to contact hours, the two courses provided a combined 78 contact hours (2 hours for HBS 428 and 76 hours for CON 290) which is significantly more than the 9 contact hours provided with the PMCDP course.

In the above screenshot, you can see the justification entered. Once you enter your justification, click “Save Changes” to record it.

You will return to the previous page where you will see confirmation that “LEVEL 3 ELECTIVES REQUIREMENTS MET” is shown in red:

Electives Level 3 (select 1 from each category)

Course Name	Course Status	Justification	Action
Technical Management			
CD-4 Project Closeout	<i>Not Completed</i>		Enter/update justification
Strategic Planning	Completed	Course Completed 03/30/2023	Enter/update justification
Leadership			
Facilitating Conflict Resolution	<i>Not Completed</i>		Enter/update justification
Negotiation Strategies and Techniques	<i>Information Entered</i>	View justification	Enter/update justification
LEVEL 3 ELECTIVES REQUIREMENT MET			

Key Things to Remember

1. **PMCDP training courses are NOT required (really!?)**. Theoretically, a candidate can use a mix of work experience and alternate training to satisfy all competencies. However, demonstrating your competency at the required proficiency level requires a detailed narrative with strong backup documentation. **For most folks, taking the week-long course is easier and more straightforward.**
2. It is important to **be cognizant of the four (4) proficiency levels** and when seeking an equivalency, understand the level of proficiency you must demonstrate in order for your equivalency to be accepted.
3. **PMCDP training courses merely provide a means for demonstrating you have that competency at the required proficiency level.** In many cases, they are the most straightforward way to demonstrate competency.
4. From a strategic perspective, it makes the most sense to **seek equivalencies for courses that satisfy fewer competencies.**
5. Narratives that “check all the boxes” in concert with strong backup documentation is critical for an equivalency to be considered.
6. **Be honest with yourself** when documenting an equivalency. When considering the competency and knowledge examples provided in the CEG, is your work experience relevant and at the appropriate proficiency level?
7. Be deliberate in documenting your equivalency. **Use the step-by-step approach detailed in this Guide** to draft your narrative so that you include all required information. Failure to do so opens up your application to scrutiny. Don’t give the CRB any hooks.
8. **Backup documentation is absolutely critical for providing credibility to your equivalency.** If you do not have adequate backup documentation, it is likely that your equivalency will be rejected.
9. **The CEG provides “pre-approved” equivalencies for the PMCDP training courses.** If you have a PMP, are FAC-P/PM certified, or completed PLI (among others), you can get equivalencies for several courses.
10. After identifying potential equivalencies, **communicate with OPA before drafting your application.** This will save you time and potentially identify weaknesses in the equivalency.