

When and Where are classes held?

All classes are held at the Chicago Botanic Garden with limited site visits to outside venues. Core classes are programmed on weekday evenings and weekends to accommodate working professionals and adults with busy lifestyles.

How large are the classes?

Lecture classes can hold up to 50 registrants. Lab formats are limited to 20—24 students.

How much will this cost?

Classes average \$13 per instructional hour

How long will this take me?

We offer students a flexible approach to their education allowing them to finish a program at their own pace. Some programs can be completed in as little as 2 years and others have up to 7 years for completion. Students may enroll in a single course to address a specific need or interest; build a sequence of courses to meet individual needs; or earn a certificate of completion for a specific program of study.

Where do I start?

Botany 1 is a prerequisite for all core courses, but may be taken simultaneously with a core course.

I missed Botany 1 this semester?

Electives can be taken prior to fulfilling Botany 1 and are a great way to begin your course work.

A Sample 2 year course of Study

Year 1:

Hardy Bulbs, Spring
Small Flowering Trees, Spring
Ground Covers and Vines, Summer
Deciduous Trees, Autumn
12 hours of elective course work

Year 2:

Deciduous Flowering Shrubs, Spring
Annuals and Biennials, Spring
Herbaceous Perennials, Summer
Conifers & Broad-Leaved Evergreens, Autumn
12 hours of elective course work

Certificates are awarded once a year at our fall graduation ceremony and reception. Students must register with the office of continuing education for graduation and certificate completion.

Certificate of Merit Programs

Come Grow with us!

Certificate of merit programs provide students specialized, high-quality educational programs without the need to be enrolled in a college or university.

Many students enrolled in certificate of merits consider themselves "lifelong learners," hoping simply to become better gardeners, while others are professionals working to improve their expertise and marketability.

What is a certificate?

A Certificate signifies that a student has successfully fulfilled all the requirements of a prescribed series of courses. Certificates are awarded each year, and have been used by many individuals to prepare for entry-level positions in plant-related occupations or to obtain salary raises or increased responsibilities in their current positions.

What programs do you offer?

The School has certificate programs in

- Garden Design
- Professional Gardener Level 1 & 2
- Ornamental Plant Materials
- Healthcare Garden Design
- Midwest Gardening
- Botanical Art

Ornamental Plant Materials

www.chicagobotanic.org/certificate


CHICAGO BOTANIC GARDEN
JOSEPH REGENSTEIN, JR. SCHOOL

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT PROGRAMS

Ornamental Plant Materials

Certificate of Merit Program (OPC)

In the Ornamental Plant Materials Program, students develop knowledge of the ever expanding variety of ornamentals well suited for northeastern Illinois. The program covers more than 500 plants, focusing on identification, cultural requirements, and use in gardens and the broader landscape.

There are no prerequisites for this Certificate Program and no prior horticulture experience is needed.

Who Should Participate

- Avid amateur gardeners and plant enthusiasts
- Aspiring horticulture professionals
- Horticulture, garden design, and landscape architecture professionals seeking professional development

Program Design

The program requirements include nine core courses and 24 instructional hours of elective courses. The core courses are offered on a rotating basis over a two-year period. If you are able to take all the courses when offered, you can complete the certificate in just two years.

A selection of elective courses is offered throughout the year. Topics range from organic gardening techniques and sustainable practices to choosing the best shrubs for summer and the identification and care of specific ornamentals.

Program Requirements

After completing Botany 1, all remaining core courses may be taken in any order. For the certificate, a grade of at least 70 percent must be achieved for each core course. All requirements for the certificate must be completed within five years of the start date of your first core course.

You can prove proficiency for up to 20 percent of the coursework by passing proficiency exams or providing transcripts indicating grades of at least 70 percent for similar courses. There is no separate enrollment for the program.

OPC CORE COURSES

Botany 1

Hardy Bulbs

Small Flowering Trees

Ground Covers and Vines

Deciduous Trees

Deciduous Flowering Shrubs

Annuals and Biennials

Herbaceous Perennials

Conifers and Broad-Leaved Evergreens

Sample Elective Courses

Crabapples

Math for Gardeners

Best New Annuals

Organic Pest Control

Each elective course is typically worth 2–3 instructional hours. Classes are formatted with CEU's.

*Example: 0.3 CEU's = 3 elective hours
Credits are recorded by attendance, no testing involved.*

The mission of the Chicago Botanic Garden is to promote the enjoyment, understanding and conservation of plants in the natural world. Through the Joseph Regenstein, Jr. School, the professional expertise, and talents of the Garden's horticulturists and educators are shared with students of all levels.

For more information regarding certificate programs or upcoming classes please contact Amelia Simmons Hurt at 847-835-8293, email certificateprogram@chicagobotanic.org or www.chicagobotanic.org/certificate

To register for classes or for more information about the Joseph Regenstein Jr., School please call the registrar at 847-835-8261 or online at www.chicagobotanic.org/school

All certificate students are asked to provide an email address for program and course updates, confirmation letters, supply lists and general student correspondence.