

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 students. Lab formats are limited to 20—24 students. Design courses are limited to 16 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 most courses, but select classes may be taken prior to fulfilling this requirement.

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

A Sample 2.5 year course of Study for the Professional Gardener Level 2

Year 1:

Gardening Techniques: Session B, Winter

Botany 1, Spring

Hardy Bulbs, Spring

Gardening Tech: Session C, Spring

Small Flowering Trees, Spring/Summer

Gardening Tech: Session D, Summer

Ground Covers and Vines, Summer

Deciduous Trees, Autumn

Soils and Water, Autumn

Gardening Tech: Session A, Autumn

Plant Health 1, Autumn

Year 2:

Botany 2, Winter

Graphics, Winter

Project Basics, Spring

Deciduous Flowering Shrubs, Spring

Annuals and Biennials, Spring/Summer

Herbaceous Perennials, Summer

Plant Health 2, Summer

Conifers & Broad-leaved Evergreens, Autumn

Hardscape Basics, Autumn

Planting Design, Autumn

Year 3:

Project Management, Winter

Certificate of Merit Programs

Come Grow with us!

Professional Gardener Levels 1 & 2

www.chicagobotanic.org/certificate



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

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT PROGRAMS

Professional Gardener

Level 1 & 2

Certificate of Merit Program (PGL 1 & 2)

In the Professional Gardener Program, students gain the fundamental knowledge and skills required of garden professionals. This training program features hands-on learning leading to a new career or career advancement in the green industry.

This certificate represents a competency based qualification relevant to the region's industry. Learn what it takes to meet and exceed standards of horticultural excellence.

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

Who Should Participate

- Aspiring professional gardeners and landscape technicians
- Gardeners, landscape maintenance professionals and other green industry individuals seeking professional development

Program Requirements

After completing Botany 1, all remaining core courses may be taken in any order. If Botany 1 is not listed as prerequisite, the course may be taken at any time.

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.

PGL1 Required Courses

Botany 1
Choice of any four OPC core courses
Gardening Techniques: Session A*
Gardening Techniques: Session B*
Gardening Techniques: Session C
Gardening Techniques: Session D*
Plant Health 1
Hardscape Basics*

PGL2 Required Course

Botany 1
Botany 2
All OPC core courses
Gardening Techniques: Session A*
Gardening Techniques: Session B*
Gardening Techniques: Session C
Gardening Techniques: Session D*
Plant Health 1
Plant Health 2
Soils and Water
Graphics*
Hardscape Basics*
Project Basics*
Planting Design
Project Management

Students pursuing the PGL2 certificate are encouraged to complete their Ornamental Plant Materials certificate as well. This only requires the addition of 24 hours of elective credit.

**Class may be taken prior to fulfilling the Botany 1 requirement.*

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

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