



## CIP Code Assignment and Review Process

The Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes is a taxonomy developed and maintained by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) at the US Department of Education. NCES released the first CIP codes in 1980 to provide higher education institutions with a standard code for classifying, tracking, and reporting educational programs. Higher education institutions assign CIP codes to educational offerings, including class subjects, academic programs, and credentials. Since 1990 and every decade, NCES has released CIP code modifications, additions, and retirements to reflect new disciplines and changes to higher education institutions' educational offerings.

A CIP code is a six-digit code in the form of ##.#### that consists of a two-digit Series classification followed by four digits Discipline code. An example of this structure is the Biological and Biomedical Sciences Series is 26, and the Zoology/Animal Biology Discipline code is 0701 resulting in a CIP code of 26.070 for Zoology/Animal Biology.

Institutions of Higher Education assign CIP codes to educational offerings to provide consistent classification over time and across institutions for state and federal reporting purposes. For this reason, it is crucial to assign a CIP code that closely identifies the content of educational offerings.

The Director of Institutional Research and the University Registrar at the University of Colorado Boulder campus assign CIP codes to all educational offerings. For new credential offerings, the information provided by the academic department sponsoring the credential, including a description of the offering, peer institutions offering a similar credential, and other information, are used to assign the CIP code. It is most important to identify the CIP code that best matches the academic credential's subject area(s). For this reason, it is vital to determine the CIP code that most closely 'defines' the content of a program following these general guidelines.

At the University of Colorado Boulder, a CIP code is assigned during the new credential review and approval process at the campus level before receiving approval by the University of Colorado Board of Regents and being accepted by the Colorado Commission of Higher Education. The Director of Institutional Research and the University Registrar perform a comprehensive review of all CIP code assignments when the NCES releases new CIP codes. The most recent NCES CIP code update occurred in winter 2020, with the campus completing a comprehensive review of CIP codes assignments in summer 2020 in advance of the 2020–21 reporting cycle. These CIP code assignments are in effect through 2030, when NCES provides a comprehensive CIP code release.