



10.3 Required: Definitions of Profession, Professional and Professionalism Handout

What is the definition of a profession?

A **profession** is “a vocation requiring knowledge of some department of learning or science.”

A **professional** is one who follows “an occupation as a means of livelihood or gain,” or one who is “engaged in one of the learned professions.”

Professionalism is exhibited by “professional character, spirit or methods” or the “standing, practice or methods of a professional as distinguished from an amateur.”

American College Dictionary

What are the major elements of a profession?

Philosophy

Professions have their own philosophy articulated in both written and oral form.

Body of Knowledge

Professions have a body of professional literature of research, study and comment.

Leaders or Philosophers

Professions have, both historically and currently, individuals who write about and research the profession. Leaders can be writers, role models and those active in service.

Guidelines for Behavior

Professions have codes, guidelines, creeds, oaths, commitment statements and belief statements, such as statements on ethics and professionalism.

Admission Requirements

Professionals in many professions are licensed or certified. They have specific initial and advanced education, as well as requirements for ongoing education. In addition, many professions require both initial and ongoing testing for admission and maintaining membership.

Other

Many professions require support and/or professional development opportunities outside the work environment, such as associations or professional organizations.