The Boston University Certificate in

GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH

Boston University’s Certificate in Genealogical Research program is a 15-week, online course of study ideal for those who wish to develop the knowledge and skills to complete genealogical assignments.

The program’s highly respected curriculum includes interactive training in basic genealogical principles, techniques, and core competencies taught by some of the country’s premier genealogists. Students have access to real, credible online genealogical databases which can be used to gather specific, extensive genealogical data. This online program also serves as excellent preparation for anyone seeking certification through the Board for Certification of Genealogists®.

THIS PROGRAM IS IDEAL FOR:

• Adults seeking to develop their genealogical skill set for professional or personal purposes.
• Professionals wishing to augment their job qualifications.
• Those with backgrounds in librarianship, archival management, law, teaching, historical research, medicine, biology, or related fields.

CURRICULUM

The Online Certificate in Genealogical Research Program has three start dates per year and consists of the following five modules:

Module 1: Foundations of Genealogical Research

This first module is an overview of general genealogical principles, goals, ethics, and end products. It covers the research principles needed for successful results and focuses on three primary skill-building areas: problem-solving, research design, and report writing. The module will introduce and establish the “Genealogical Proof Standard®” as the basic framework for all research assignments to be covered in this program.

Module 2: Problem-Solving Techniques and Technology

This module utilizes multiple examples to impart the skills necessary to design and follow the most direct path to a supportable conclusion. The use of technological tools, particularly the Internet, is thoroughly explored. Students create and execute a research plan, with particular attention to organizing, documenting, verifying, and presenting the findings in a report for a client.

Module 3: Evidence Evaluation and Documentation

This module presents the key elements necessary to determining the credibility and authenticity of evidence and will prepare the student to recognize unreliable evidence and its origin. Once the evidence is evaluated, students learn complete citation formats and construction principles.

Module 4: Forensic Genealogical Research

This module provides practical examples, famous cases, and in-class problem solving that will define the parameters of ethical forensic work. Generally the most lucrative of the genealogical specialties, forensic research is done for the legal community, often at the direction of an attorney. Tracing heirs for probate, identifying people in old photographs, and other problem-solving exercises will provide practice and define the parameters of ethical forensic work. Techniques for solving identity issues with autosomal DNA will also be presented.

Module 5: Professional Genealogy

This module introduces the fundamental elements necessary to determining the credibility and authenticity of evidence. Students learn complete citation formats and construction principles.

THIS PROGRAM IS IDEAL FOR:

• Those with backgrounds in librarianship, archival management, law, teaching, historical research, medicine, biology, or related fields.
• Professionals wishing to augment their job qualifications.
• Those with backgrounds in librarianship, archival management, law, teaching, historical research, medicine, biology, or related fields.

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GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH CONTINUED.

PREREQUISITES
Prior genealogical experience is required. Students are expected to have spent some time searching for multiple generations of a family through record repositories and online sources, then documenting their results. In addition to demonstrating proficiency researching genealogical problems and writing reports, candidates should possess solid computer skills. Students must also be able to effectively communicate in both written and spoken English.

If a student has no or limited prior experience, we strongly recommend completion of the Boston University online Genealogical Essentials course prior to enrolling in the Genealogical Research certificate program.

BOARD FOR CERTIFICATION OF GENEALOGISTS®
This program will prepare students to pursue the Certified Genealogist® designation from the industry standard bearer, the Board for Certification of Genealogists®. Students can learn more about the BCG® certification process at bgccertification.org.

FINANCIAL AID
Because certificate programs at the Center for Professional Education are non-degree (not-for-credit), they are eligible for private loans only. We cannot accept any federal education loans. Students must work with a lending institution directly to obtain a private loan. For more information, please visit the registration page at bu.edu/professional.

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT
Many companies offer tuition reimbursement for continuing education courses, particularly if they lead to a specific designation.

GENEALOGICAL ESSENTIALS
Classes Start Fall, Spring, and Summer

Boston University’s four-week, online course in Genealogical Essentials is designed specifically for genealogy enthusiasts seeking to improve their research skills and develop a better understanding of the field’s best practices. Students will learn how to define specific genealogical concepts and terms; how to effectively locate and search public records; and how to optimize their search techniques in online research.

Genealogical Essentials serves as excellent preparation for BU’s Certificate Program in Genealogical Research.

FORMAT:
- Four weeks of online instruction and study
- Cohort-based
- Self-directed with online instructor guidance

IDEAL FOR:
- Hobbyists and enthusiasts that are currently conducting genealogical research, but seek more formal training
- Serious students new to the field of genealogy

TOPICS:
Laying the Foundation
- Recognizing clues in current family information
- Understanding best practice-basics
- Introducing the Genealogical Proof Standard

Tools and Techniques
- Using tools for efficiency and communication
- Evaluating and documenting sources
- Learning and refining search techniques

Immigration and Evidence
- Identifying clues to origins
- Assessing information
- Examining a complete case

Discovering Answers
- Applying what you’ve learned
- Correlating information
- Identifying persons in photos

PREREQUISITES:
Students should be computer literate; have access to broadband or high-speed Internet; and be comfortable with:
- Microsoft Word®
- Digital file saving and retrieving
- Citing sources and creating footnotes using Word®

PROGRAM FACULTY
For full faculty biographies, please visit genealogyonline.bu.edu.

Melinde Lutz Byrne, FASG, Program Director
Connie Lenzen, CG
Angela McGhie, CG
Julie Michutka
Allison Ryall, MA
Robert Stanhope

PROGRAM DIRECTOR
Melinde Lutz Byrne, FASG
A fellow and vice president of the American Society of Genealogists, Melinde Lutz Byrne is one of only 50 living genealogists elected to the Society based on the quality and quantity of their published work.

A cultural anthropologist and archivist, she is also vice president of the Massachusetts Genealogical Council CEO of the Graceful Companies, and a Donald Lines Jacobus Award winner. A national lecturer and noted author of numerous books—including volumes I and II of The Great Migration: Immigrants to New England, 1634-1635—Byrne is editor of the New Hampshire Genealogical Record and co-editor of National Genealogical Society Quarterly.

LEARN MORE
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To learn more about BU’s Center for Professional Education, visit bu.edu/professional.

Boston University Metropolitan College Center for Professional Education

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