



# HEAVY EQUIPMENT

## OPERATING / ACADEMY

### CATALOG & HANDBOOK



JANUARY 1, 2025 - DECEMBER 31, 2025

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                          |           |
|------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>1. Introduction</b>                   | <b>4</b>  |
| About .....                              | 4         |
| Objective .....                          | 4         |
| Orientation .....                        | 4         |
| Disclaimers .....                        | 4         |
| Schedule .....                           | 5         |
| Attendance .....                         | 6         |
| Legal Holidays / Inclement Weather ..... | 7         |
| <b>2. HEOA Courses</b>                   | <b>7</b>  |
| Requirements to Enroll .....             | 13        |
| Financial Aid .....                      | 14        |
| Housing .....                            | 16        |
| PPE Provided by Student .....            | 17        |
| VA Benefits .....                        | 17        |
| <b>3. Evaluations</b>                    | <b>18</b> |
| Requirements .....                       | 18        |
| Grading System .....                     | 18        |
| Unsatisfactory Performance .....         | 19        |
| Improvement Plans .....                  | 19        |
| Job Placement .....                      | 19        |
| <b>4. Safety</b>                         | <b>20</b> |
| OSHA .....                               | 20        |
| Safety Score .....                       | 20        |
| <b>5. Code of Conduct</b>                | <b>21</b> |
| Sexual Harassment .....                  | 21        |
| Drug and Alcohol Policy .....            | 21        |
| Theft .....                              | 21        |
| Disciplinary Action .....                | 21        |
| <b>6. Student Records</b>                | <b>22</b> |
| Access to Records .....                  | 22        |
| Transcripts .....                        | 22        |
| <b>7. Complaint or Grievance Policy</b>  | <b>22</b> |
| Refund Policy .....                      | 22        |
| <b>8. Facility</b>                       | <b>23</b> |
| Smoking .....                            | 23        |
| The HEOA Team .....                      | 23        |
| <b>9. Common Questions and Answers</b>   | <b>24</b> |
| Q & A .....                              | 24        |

# INTRODUCTION

## About

Our goal is to provide skills and knowledge to an individual that is seeking a career as a heavy equipment operator. Whether you have no experience or are already an operator and looking to improve your abilities, HEOA is a path to help you reach your potential.

In addition to equipment operation, you will receive training on site preparation, excavation, digging techniques used in the field, dirt classifications, how to read blueprints, and safety regulations. Graduates from our heavy equipment academy are eligible for a variety of jobs in many industries such as oil, gas, railroad, waste disposal and recycling, and construction. Having a skilled trade makes your time at work more valuable. Skill trades are as important today as they have ever been, and there is a great demand for work in such fields.

## Objective

Our objective is to produce heavy equipment operators that have the knowledge and skills to better, not only themselves, but their individual communities as well. Our program is also geared to help students who want to accelerate their careers and are looking for a leadership role. It's not uncommon for our students to work their way up to a foreman position in a relatively short amount of time.

## Orientation

Student orientation is designed to give you the tools necessary to succeed at HEOA. Typically, orientation will take place on your first day. It's a good idea to try to arrive a bit early in order to familiarize yourself with the facility and it's a great opportunity to get to know your fellow students and instructors. During this time, we will also try to assess where everyone is in their current knowledge about operating, and try to address any questions and concerns you may have.

## Disclaimers

- Heavy Equipment Operating Academy is dedicated to maintaining an educational environment free from discrimination. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or any other protected characteristic.
- Completing an enrollment agreement and paying the tuition deposit does not guarantee acceptance or an immediate start date. Admission decisions are subject to review and approval by Heavy Equipment Operating Academy.
- Be advised that class start dates and end dates are subject to change at the discretion of HEOA. While we strive to provide timely and accurate information, unforeseen circumstances may necessitate adjustments to the schedule. Any modifications will be communicated in advance to minimize inconvenience.
- Please be aware that Heavy Equipment Operating Academy is not currently approved for FAFSA funding. We recommend exploring alternative funding options and encourage you to contact our financial aid office for further assistance.

- HEOA offers housing options for students, however, it operates on a first come, first served basis, and availability is not guaranteed. We recommend submitting your application and securing funding early. Please note that obtaining funding is a crucial part of the application process, and early confirmation increases the likelihood of securing accommodations.
- Occasionally unforeseen circumstances or improvements in educational practices may necessitate adjustments to our programs. HEOA reserves the right to modify or change its programs, including curriculum, faculty, and program structure, at any time without prior notice. We are committed to ensuring that any program changes maintain or enhance the overall quality of the education provided.
- All materials, including course content, textbooks, and instructional materials, provided by HEOA are the exclusive property of the school. These materials are intended solely for the use of enrolled students and are not to be shared, reproduced, or redistributed without written consent from HEOA.

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SCHEDULE

HEO Academy has set start dates. Here are the start dates for the entire 2025 calendar year. Whether you’re taking the full course or a custom course, these are the set start dates for our Programs.

2025 Start Dates – Heavy Equipment

|                              |                             |                               |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| January 6 <sup>th</sup> 2025 | April 28 <sup>th</sup> 2025 | August 25 <sup>th</sup> 2025  |
| March 3 <sup>rd</sup> 2025   | June 23 <sup>rd</sup> 2025  | October 27 <sup>th</sup> 2025 |

2025 Start Dates – CDL

New CDL classes start every week and are filled on a first come first served basis. As soon as a new seat opens up we reach out to the next person in line and fill that spot immediately. The first week of the program is designated for the “Theory” portion of the training class and can be completed remotely at your own pace. The remainder of the class is all hands training here at our academy.

2025 Start Dates – Evening Classes

Evening classes run 5:00pm – 9:00pm and are only available during the summer months and only for select programs. Programs covered include: Dozer, Excavator, and Loader. Duration is also increased due to the part time nature of these programs.

*\*Note: Training Schedule is subject to change at the school’s discretion.*

# ATTENDANCE

## Class Times

**Classroom hours:** Monday-Friday 8:00am - 4:00pm.

**Operating time:** Times vary as assigned by instructors

## Excused Absences

Our policy is to excuse student absences for the following reasons:

- Illness or Injury preventing the student from attending class
- Death of a family member
- Other compelling verifiable circumstances beyond the students control

Students who request an excused absence must provide documentation to their instructor as soon as possible. Absences that do not fall into the categories listed above will be considered unexcused. Students who are absent from class are still responsible for any and all missed work; however they will be allowed to make up missed work, but be aware some skill assessments may require students to work over and stay after class in order to complete them.

## Communicable Diseases

HEOA reserves the right to restrict school access to any student who has been diagnosed as having a contagious or communicable disease or virus. It is assumed that all students are free from any such illnesses, however, if any student knows or has reason to believe that he/she may be infected, that student must report this immediately to their instructors. Restrictions or Exclusions may be temporarily put in place to protect the welfare of all students and staff in accordance with state and federal laws and guidelines. Students may be advised to leave campus or return home immediately upon notification of a communicable disease or virus. Students may also be required to obtain documentation from their medical provider before being able to return.

## Leave of Absence (LOA)

LOA request form and any supporting documents can be submitted to the administrator for approval. When a student is seeking to return to the program an evaluation may be needed to determine placement and restart date.

## Makeup Time

Occasionally we offer extended hours after class, or even on Saturdays to makeup time that students have missed or if a student is on an improvement plan and needs extra help. The times vary and it is at the sole discretion of our instructors. This time may be used for class work or field work depending on the students needs. We highly encourage our students to take advantage of this time when it is offered.

## Attendance Policy

### Student Expectations

1. Sign in/out before & after class.
2. If taking breaks, follow on/off times the instructor has set.
3. Stay on task in assigned area.
4. Complete the day by cleaning out equipment and getting it ready for the next day.
5. Be present for at least 85% of the course
6. Take advantage of makeup time.

Anything outside of the above listed expectations is considered to be an attendance infraction.

### Attendance Infractions

1. One to fifteen-minute infractions will count as .25 hours.
2. Infractions over fifteen-minutes will count as actual time.

If a student misses more than 15% of the course, the student may be dismissed.

*Example: In our 8 week program if a student misses 6 days, this would be 15% of the program missed.*

If a student is absent and has not called in for three consecutive days, the student will then be considered withdrawn from the program.

### Legal Holidays

The following holidays will be observed: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Friday following Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

### Inclement Weather Policy

HEOA will be closed due to inclement weather when the administration deems necessary. A notification will be sent out via group text to all students in the event we close. In instances where HEOA does not close, it's each student's responsibility to determine if safe travel is possible. If it is not possible, the student should contact their instructor to inform them of their absence. Closures due to inclement weather will not be counted as an attendance infraction.

## HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR COURSE

- Must be 16 years old on or before the first day of class.
- A CDL is not required.
- Must be able to pass a drug test.
- Courses are anywhere from 2 weeks up to 8 weeks depending on the equipment you want to master.
- All tools and equipment required to complete the course will be provided by HEOA.
- This course is designed to prepare heavy equipment operators for work in oil, gas, railroad, construction, and many other areas.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of theory, equipment and troubleshooting of equipment to be used.
- Students will also get the opportunity to learn how to properly spot and swamp for operators.
- Students will use common trade math. In the vocational setting, math is sometimes easier to comprehend when applied to physical objects.

- Students will be introduced to different dirt classifications, A, B & C, and OSHA shoring methods.
- Project plans – Blueprints, legends, detailed drawings and symbols.
- After the student exhibits skills and control of each process, the instructor may allow the student to move to the next process.
- Each student during skills testing can progress individually according to the individual's skill with the direction of our instructors.
- Our tests are practical hands on equipment operation & obstacle avoidance tests.
- Students will demonstrate ability to operate each piece of equipment on site within OSHA code and follow proper digging procedures.
- Students shall wear proper PPE at all times.
- Students will get training on how to lead crews and will be given the opportunity to see what it's like to be in a foreman position.
- To graduate our course you must be able to complete all the tasks assigned to you at an efficiency rate of no less than 70%.
- Students will also be graded on the cleanliness of their work. Specifically ditching, trenching, bell holes, and grading.
- Local Contractors may visit from time to time and occasionally offer our students positions while they are still in school.
- Instructors may allow students to graduate early, but this is at the sole discretion of the instructor, and all skill tests must be completed with a passing score.
- Resume, interview and job placement assistance is provided at the end of the course.
- Upon course completion a student will receive a Certificate of Completion, provided they meet minimum skill requirements, as well as a wallet sized certification card.

## CLASS A CDL COURSE

### Why a Career in Trucking?

1. **Make Great Money** – Earn up to \$1,500 a week as a professional truck driver, and with endorsements and experience that number can grow significantly.
2. **Be In Demand** – The Trucking industry needs to attract more drivers! With the shortage of truck drivers continuing to climb, employers desperately need you. – Over the next 4 years, by 2028, the ATA anticipates that we'll have a shortage of 160,000 truck drivers.
3. **Excellent Benefits** – 401k, Medical, Vision, and Dental insurance benefits are common place .

### Our CDL School will enable you to:

- Confidently complete your road exam
- Find lucrative career opportunities anywhere in the country
- Drive Class A vehicles in any state
- Meet ELDT requirements

## COURSES - OVERVIEW AND COST

Heavy Equipment Operating Academy provides a wide array of training and certifications. We not only provide training and certifications on equipment, but also provide the skills and knowledge necessary to perform tasks on the various jobs you are likely to encounter. Here is some of the equipment you can select training for:



**Backhoes**



**Bulldozers**



**Excavators**



**Front-End Loaders**



**Skid Steers**



**Tele-handlers**



**Tractors & Pans**



**Rollers**

We also have a variety of programs to choose from. We've designed our programs to fit nearly any budget and schedule. We have courses that range from as little as 2 weeks to as long as 8 weeks. It all depends on your level of expertise and what sort of job you would like to land after graduation. Here is a list and breakdown of the curriculum and the approximate hours for each module.

### Heavy Equipment Course Curriculum Hours – 8 Week Course – 320 Hours

| Equipment Hours - 260    |    | Classroom Hours - 60                  |     |
|--------------------------|----|---------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>Backhoes</b>          | 40 | OSHA / MSHA Safety                    | 4   |
| <b>Dozers</b>            | 60 | Trench / Excavation Safety            | 4   |
| <b>Excavators</b>        | 80 | Benching / Sloping / Shoring          | 4   |
| <b>Skid Steers</b>       | 20 | Soil Types & Failures                 | 1   |
| <b>Tele-Handlers</b>     | 8  | Excavation Math                       | 4   |
| <b>Front-End Loaders</b> | 22 | Site Work & Surveys                   | 6   |
| <b>Utility Tractors</b>  | 20 | Grade Techniques                      | 4   |
| <b>Rollers</b>           | 10 | Pre-op / Job Safe Plan                | 2   |
|                          |    | Load Charts & Strapping/Shackling     | 1.5 |
|                          |    | Loading DOT Regulations               | 2.5 |
|                          |    | Hand Signals                          | 1   |
|                          |    | Hydraulic Safety & Repairs            | 2   |
|                          |    | MUTCD / 811                           | 4   |
|                          |    | Grades / Laser & GPS                  | 6   |
|                          |    | Blueprints / Civil Drawings & Permits | 6   |
|                          |    | Cut Fill Maps/Stakes/Building Pads    | 8   |

*\*Note: The amount of time spent on any one project may vary among students depending on individual progress and how quickly the student picks up on the material. Equipment operation times include student observation and equipment operation.*

## Full - 8 Week Certification Course

This is our most popular program. This program is designed to take individuals of various experience levels, even those who have little to no experience, and get them in a job working in nearly any sort of construction environment they choose. The greatest benefit about this program is first and foremost, the length. After 8 weeks you can rest assured that you'll have the skills and confidence to perform whatever task is assigned to you on any job site. Next is the flexibility. Getting certified on 8 pieces of equipment gives you the freedom to take on any project or job and the ability to work in any environment you choose.

### Equipment Certifications Included:

- Bulldozers
- Excavators
- Skid Steers
- Tele-Handlers
- Rollers
- Tractor & Pans
- Front-End Loaders
- Backhoes



**TOTAL COST OF COURSE - \$15,500**

### Program Details:

- **Duration: 8 Weeks – 320 Hours**
- **260** Hours of Hands on Training
- **60** Hours of classroom work.
- Training Includes:
  - Every training module we offer
  - OSHA, Site work, Blueprints,
  - Grading, and more!

Tuition - \$10,200

Supplies (includes fuel) - \$4,900

Books - \$300

PPE equipment - \$100

## Dozer - 3 Week Certification Course

This program is designed to take individuals who have little to no experience, and get them in a job working as a dozer operator. The dozer is a difficult piece of equipment to master, but our program is a strict 3 week intense course that focuses solely on dozer work. You'll be slot dozing, clearing land, and getting pads and foundations ready in no time by the end of this course.

### Equipment Certifications Included:

- Bulldozer



### Program Details:

- **Duration: 3 Weeks – 120 Hours**
- Over **80** Hours of Hands on Training
- **40** Hours of classroom work.
- Training Includes:
  - Safety, Blueprints, Grading
  - JSA's, Site Planning, and more!

**TOTAL COST OF COURSE - \$7,200**

Tuition - \$5,200

Supplies (includes fuel) - \$1,600

Books - \$300

PPE equipment - \$100

## Excavator - 3 Week Certification Course

This is our 2<sup>nd</sup> most popular course. The excavator is an extremely versatile piece of equipment and is used in many construction industries. You will be clearing land, trenching, digging bell holes, and much more! In this course, we exclude any of our training modules that don't pertain to this machine. This program starts with training on the mini excavators and you'll work your way up and progress to the larger machines as your confidence and skills as an operator improve.

### Equipment Certifications Included:

- Excavator
- Mini Excavator



**TOTAL COST OF COURSE - \$7,200**

### Program Details:

- **Duration: 3 Weeks – 120 Hours**
- Over **80** Hours of Hands on Training
- **40** Hours of classroom work.
- Training Includes:
  - Safety, Blueprints, Trenching,
  - Bell holes, Steps, Beaver Slides,
  - JSA's, Site Planning, and more!

Tuition - \$5,000

Supplies (includes fuel) - \$1,800

Books - \$300

PPE equipment - \$100

## Loader - 2 Week Certification Course

If you're looking to get yourself into a career as a heavy equipment operator, this is the quickest and most economical way to get started. You'll get all the safety information required, along with training on 2 pieces of equipment. Loader operators are highly sought after in many construction fields including, mining, quarries, forestry, and more!

### Equipment Certifications Included:

- Front-End Loader
- Skid Steer



**TOTAL COST OF COURSE - \$5,200**

### Program Details:

- **Duration: 2 Weeks – 80 Hours**
- Over **60** Hours of Hands on Training
- **20** Hours of classroom work.
- Training Includes:
  - Safety, Loading
  - Equipment Inspections,
  - Train on various attachments

Tuition - \$3,600

Supplies (includes fuel) - \$1,200

Books - \$300

PPE equipment - \$100

## Custom Certification Course

Heavy Equipment Operating Academy also offers custom courses. We can custom tailor a course that fits your exact schedule, time frame, and goals. We even offer specialty training on specialized equipment. The total cost and duration varies depending on the equipment you wish to be certified on. So give us a call if you'd like a custom quote.

TOTAL COST OF COURSE – CALL FOR PRICING

## NEW PROGRAMS

### CDL - 4 Week Course

Our new Commercial Driver's License (CDL) program offers an intensive, hands-on training experience designed to prepare you for a successful career in the trucking industry. Over the course of just 4 weeks, you'll gain over 120 hours of practical, real world training, ensuring you have the skills and confidence to operate a commercial vehicle safely and efficiently. With expert instructors our program provides you with the comprehensive education you need to pass the CDL exam and start driving with a competitive edge. Whether you're starting a new career or looking to advance your current job, this program is the perfect opportunity to get on the road to success.

*\*Note – Must be 18 years of age and must be able to pass DOT Physical in order to enroll in this program.*

#### CDL License

- Class A



#### Program Details:

- **Duration: 4 Weeks – 160 Hours**
- **Over 120 Hours of Hands on Training**
- **40 Hours of classroom work.**
- **Training Includes:**
  - Theory, Pre-Trip Inspections
  - Cargo Securement, Flat Beds
  - HOS Handbook, Log books, and more!

TOTAL COST OF COURSE - \$5,250

Tuition - \$3,600  
Supplies (includes fuel) - \$1,300  
Books - \$300  
MISC Supplies - \$50

## Motor Grader - 4 Week Certification Course

Our new Motor Grader program offers an intense, hands on learning experience that equips you with the skills needed to operate this essential piece of construction equipment. In just 4 weeks, you'll receive over 120 hours of practical training, gain valuable expertise in grading, leveling, and maintaining roads, construction sites, and other large scale projects. Taught by industry professionals, this program ensures that you develop both the technical skills and confidence needed to succeed in this field. Whether you're looking to start a new career or expand your construction expertise, this program provides the perfect foundation for a rewarding and in-demand profession.

*\* Note – In order to enroll in this course, students must have previous experience running heavy equipment.*

### Equipment Certifications Included:

- Motor Grader



### Program Details:

- **Duration: 4 Weeks – 160 Hours**
- Over **120** Hours of Hands on Training
- **40** Hours of classroom work.
- Training Includes:
  - OSHA, Blueprints, Grading,
  - Ditch & Road work, and more!

**TOTAL COST OF COURSE - \$8,500**

Tuition - \$6,600  
Supplies (includes fuel) - \$1,500  
Books - \$300  
PPE equipment - \$100

## REQUIREMENTS TO ENROLL

### Getting Started

1. Select the course that best suits your desired career path.
2. Fill out and submit the application form.
3. If accepted, you will receive an acceptance letter with information on financial aid.
4. Complete enrollment form and reserve your spot with a \$250 tuition deposit.
5. Secure Funding (All funding and fees are due 2 weeks before your start date.)
6. Show up ready to work hard.

## Admission Requirements

1. Must be 16 years old on or before the first day of class, or 18 if you're enrolling in the CDL course.
2. Be able to pass a drug test.
3. Be able to read, write and understand English.
4. Must be physically able to operate safely. *Please note - Individuals with physical handicaps should consult with their physician and HEO Academy to determine if the training requirements can be accomplished or if accommodations can be made.*

## Tours

We extend a warm invitation to any prospective students looking to explore a career in operating. You'll see for yourself and experience firsthand a training environment that's designed to equip you with the skills needed for a successful career in heavy equipment operation. During the tour, you'll have the opportunity to interact with our experienced instructors, get a closer look at our equipment, get a sneak peek into the curriculum, and even speak with students who are in the program right now. Whether you're passionate about excavators, dozers, or backhoes, our facility offers you a dynamic learning space tailored to your career aspirations. Discover the unparalleled training opportunities that await you at HEOA. Schedule a tour today and take the first step toward a rewarding career in heavy equipment operation.

## FINANCIAL AID

### Scholarships

Here are some of the primary scholarships that our students have used in the past with excellent results.

[www.mikeroweworks.org](http://www.mikeroweworks.org) – Awards scholarships to anyone looking for a career in the trades, the application process is simple and only takes a few minutes.

[www.bringbackthetrades.org](http://www.bringbackthetrades.org) – Awards scholarships every month and again, this one is only for tradesmen.

#### - Arkansas Vocational Rehabilitation Services -

Offers scholarships for individuals with any sort of disability. For example, if you have ADHD, Anxiety, Dyslexia, or if you are on a 504 plan in high school, or if you have learning or hearing disabilities you may qualify. Give them a call at **(479) 672-3835** and apply today.

Out of state? No problem. Every state has a vocational rehabilitation program. Find the Rehab office closest to you here. <https://rsa.ed.gov/about/states>

- WIOA -

This is the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act. This is a federal grant that helps students with education costs and is awarded to individuals based solely off income. If you're low income, you may qualify. Apply on their website at [www.ncaworks.com](http://www.ncaworks.com) or give them a call at **(501) 628-6650** for more info.

## VA Post 9/11 GI Bill

If you've been in the military, or have family who has served, there is a good chance that you can come to class free of charge. Our school is approved by the VA to accept veteran benefits. To get started all you have to do is apply at [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov). If you need help with the application process just give us a call and we can walk you through it.

## Student Loans

We have a great loan opportunity through Arkansas Rural Endowment Fund. They have an amazing student loan program for Arkansas residents. Not only will they cover 100% of the education cost, but they also have super low interest rates. Apply on their website at [www.aref.org](http://www.aref.org) or give them a call at **(501) 375-2358**.

We also have some in house financing options as well, so don't let financial stress stop you from pursuing your dream job.

## Funding for the Ladies

Attention women! Exciting opportunities await you through P.E.O., an organization dedicated to supporting women like you in acquiring the necessary training and education for a rewarding career as an operator. Benefit from their assistance in obtaining student loans at remarkably low rates, and don't miss out on their scholarship program, offering awards of up to **\$12,500!** For more details, visit their website at [P.E.O. International](http://P.E.O. International), or reach out to them directly at **(515) 255-3153**.

## Receiving SSI or SSDI?

Here is an incredible opportunity that not only funds your education but also propels you towards a rewarding career as a heavy equipment operator. Ticket to Work is a program designed to empower individuals, offering financial independence and a pathway off of government dependency. What sets this program apart is its unique feature – you can maintain SSI benefits while actively participating in work and training. Explore further details and seize this chance for personal and professional growth. Check them out here - [www.ssa.gov/work](http://www.ssa.gov/work)

## Graduating

To graduate this program we're looking for 70% efficiency on all the equipment. We understand that you're just starting your career as an operator and we don't expect our graduates to operate like an operator that's been doing this for 20+ years. But we do expect to get you most of the way there. In our experience we know that if we can get you to a point where you're that good on the equipment, there's no doubt that you'll be able to hold down a job. Upon graduating, students will receive a certificate of completion, OSHA 10 Certification and a Heavy Equipment Certification Card.

## Payment Policy

Upon enrollment, a student will be billed for the full cost of their chosen program. An invoice will be emailed to the student along with an acceptance letter. Physical copies can be mailed upon request. The program cost must be paid in full, or funding source(s) confirmed at least 2 weeks prior to the start date of the class. Students not able to complete the payment process will be moved to a future start date. HEOA accepts payments via credit/debit cards, check, cash or money order. Payments can be made online at anytime or over the phone during business hours.

## Transfer of Credits

Heavy Equipment Operating Academy programs are determined by clock hours instead of credit hours. Therefore, HEOA does not issue credits. Transferability of HEOA's clock hours to another institution is determined exclusively by the receiving institution. No person can imply or guarantee that clock hours will be converted to credits to be transferable. As a vocational training program, it is unlikely that any credit will be given at another post-secondary institution that offers credits instead of clock hours for training received by HEOA. HEOA does not give credit for prior equipment training. All students begin at the beginning of their program curriculum and progress through the entire curriculum, regardless of prior heavy equipment knowledge.

## Housing

Not everyone lives within driving distance from our campus; however, we've got you covered. We have several rental agreements from nearby landlords that have agreed to house our students at super affordable rates. All of these homes are fully furnished and we pay for all the utilities, including electric, water and gas! Here are a few questions we are often asked about our dorms.

**Q. How much does it cost?**

**A.** Our dorms are only **\$300.00** per month

**Q. Will I have my own room?**

**A.** For \$300.00 per month you will have a roommate. If you wish to have a room all to yourself the cost for that is \$600.00 per month.

**Q. Is there any sort of deposit?**

**A.** Yes. We do require a small non-refundable security/cleaning deposit of **\$100.00**

**Q. Can I bring my Pet?**

**A.** No, but we do make exceptions for service animals

**Q. Do you provide food?**

A. No, you will be responsible to provide your own meals; however, you will have access to a fridge, stove, oven, microwave, and all of our cooking utensils.

**Q. What should I bring with me?**

A. We recommend bringing appropriate clothing along with toiletries, towels, and laundry detergent. Bedding is available; however some students prefer to bring their own.

## **Dress Code & PPE supplied by student**

Students supply their own gloves and boots. No tanks or muscle shirts permitted. Good pants and good boots. Closed toed shoes are a must. Avoid loose fitting clothing. Loose clothes may get caught and snagged on tools and equipment. If proper dress code is not followed, students will incur an attendance infraction until they return with proper clothing.

## **POLICIES FOR STUDENTS RECEIVING VA BENEFITS**

### **Standards of Progress for VA Students**

Evaluation of progress of VA students will be conducted by the school's evaluation policy schedule. Students with a minimum of **70%** academic average and **75%** attendance will be considered making satisfactory progress until the next scheduled evaluation.

In order for a student to be considered making satisfactory progress the student must meet both attendance and academic minimum requirements. Students receiving VA benefits who fail to meet minimum progress and attendance requirements will be placed on **probation** for 30 days. At the end of the probationary period, the student's progress (academic and attendance) will be re-evaluated. If the student is meeting minimum requirements, the student will be determined to be making satisfactory progress and will be considered off Probation.

### **Suspension/Withdrawn/Termination**

If the student fails to meet minimum requirements in either academics or attendance, the school's certifying official will submit a 22-1999b effective on the last day of probation.

### **Reinstatement of VA student's educational benefits**

Once VA student's educational benefits has been suspended and after 30 days and the student is meeting the minimum standards of progress, the school's certifying official will submit a 22-1999.

### **Refund Policy**

In the event a veteran fails to enter the course or withdraws or is discontinued a refund will be based on a pro rata refund of the unused portion of tuition, fees and charges. This refund will be returned promptly as required under 38 CFR 21.4255

## Refunds:

Refunds will be made based on the chart below within 40 days of withdraw.

| Student Entitled Upon<br>Withdrawal/Termination | Refund %   |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 10% of program completed                        | 90% Refund |
| 20% of program completed                        | 80% Refund |
| 30% of program completed                        | 70% Refund |
| 40% of program completed                        | 60% Refund |
| 50% of program completed                        | 50% Refund |
| 60% of program completed                        | 40% Refund |
| 70% of program completed                        | 30% Refund |
| 80% of program completed                        | 20% Refund |
| 90% of program completed                        | 10% Refund |

## Prior Credit

It is the policy of this institution that an evaluation of previous education and training will be conducted, appropriate credit granted, if applicable, the institution's duration in the course will be shortened proportionately, and that the Veteran's Administration and the student will be so notified. VA credit will be given for prior training for veterans and eligible programs.

Authority 38 CFR 21.4253 and 38 CFR 21.4254

# EVALUATIONS

## Explanation of Evaluation and Completion Requirements

To satisfactorily complete an HEOA program, students must meet the following requirements:

- Complete 85% of required training hours
- Maintain daily productivity rate of at least 80%
- Score 70% or better on all skill evaluations
- Maintain at least an 80% or higher in safety
- Complete OSHA-10 Training

*Student progress folders are maintained and available for student review at any time. Students who fall below these standards may be placed on an improvement plan.*

## Academic Standards and Grading System

Student progress binders are maintained and available for student review at any time. Grades on skills will be recorded as a percentage. Students must maintain 70% or above on skill tests, meet 80% or more of daily

production and maintain a classroom GPA of 2.0. If a student falls below those requirements they will be placed on an improvement plan. Overall course score is made up of 20% Classroom GPA, 40% daily production and 40% skill evaluations.

### **Grading Scale**

|          |         |
|----------|---------|
| <b>A</b> | 90-100% |
| <b>B</b> | 80-89%  |
| <b>C</b> | 70-79%  |
| <b>D</b> | 60-69%  |
| <b>F</b> | 0-59%   |

### **Unsatisfactory Performance**

Any student who fails to meet the standards discussed above will be removed from the course. HEOA will then notify the student's funding agency to interrupt the student's educational benefits if the student withdraws or is dismissed.

### **Performance Monitoring**

An audit will be conducted at each program midpoint by the instructor. If safety, production, or skill evaluations fall below the minimum satisfactory requirements, the student will be placed on an improvement plan and monitored. Student progress is monitored daily. Students are notified on their placement on an improvement plan if they are not making satisfactory progress. If a student falls below any of the standards at any time, they may be dismissed.

### **Student Improvement Plans**

Students who fail to maintain standards may be placed on an improvement plan in order to bring their attendance, safety, production, or skill evaluations up to the minimum standards. A student improvement plan is considered a probationary period to allow a student the opportunity to meet minimum standards. Students who do not follow their improvement plan, or who do not progress, may be dismissed from the program.

### **Insubordination**

By completing an enrollment agreement, students acknowledge that the student catalog is accessible to them and they agree to abide by the school policies and procedures as stated. Failure to comply with the directives of a school official or other authorized guidelines is considered insubordination. Refusing to cooperate with efforts made to help the student adjust to their chosen program of study will be considered insubordination.

### **Job Placement Assistance**

HEOA does not guarantee employment or wages upon program completion. Students complete job placement assistance training as part of each program's curriculum. Students are provided with resume assistance, application assistance, and assistance making calls inquiring about potential jobs. Students will demonstrate the ability to apply for jobs, speak to recruiters and HR personnel, schedule interviews, and begin employment. Students are required to complete and turn in a job log during this training.

*Waivers are available for students who have a job lined up or who do not plan on obtaining employment within 30 days of completing the course.*

## **Questionable Honesty**

Any form of dishonesty, including but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, falsification of attendance, forgery, and/or lying to school officials, is prohibited and may result in dismissal. HEOA reserves the right to immediately dismiss a student based on the individual circumstance. The rules outlined above are a courtesy offered to a student and are not guaranteed in every situation.

# **S A F E T Y**

*A safety session, along with safety tests, and safety plans are part of our core safety curriculum.*

## **OSHA-10**

Students are also required to complete OSHA-10 training as part of their program curriculum. Students will log in and create an account during orientation. Students must complete the OSHA-10 training in order to graduate the course. Exceptions will be made for students that already possess valid OSHA-10 certification.

## **Safety**

Additional safety equipment is provided by HEOA and is included in all of our courses. We take safety very seriously, as such we cover all of the OSHA safety guidelines associated with operating heavy equipment as well as all the equipment manufacturer warnings and all of our machines are equipped with roll over protection.

## **Horseplay**

Horseplay around heavy equipment poses a significant danger and should be strictly avoided to ensure the safety of all students. Engaging in such acts near heavy equipment can lead to severe accidents. It is crucial for students to recognize the hazards associated with heavy equipment and to prioritize safety by adhering to the established guidelines and maintaining a respectful, focused environment in areas where machinery is present. Furthermore, students caught engaging in horseplay may be placed on an improvement plan or face disciplinary action, depending on the severity of the activity.

## **Safety Score**

All students begin the program with a 100% safety score. Each safety violation will result in a 10% grade deduction. On the first violation the student will be required to complete an essay documenting 3 cases of bodily injury or death due to specified safety violations and present it to the entire class at the next morning safety meeting. On the second violation, depending on the severity, the student can be suspended for 1-3 days or dismissed at the discretion of the lead instructor. Upon receiving a third safety violation a student will be suspended for a minimum of 3 days and may be dismissed at the discretion of the director and lead instructor. The attendance policy applies while a student is serving a suspension.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

- Students are expected to be respectful of others on and off campus.
- Disorderly conduct will not be tolerated. The focus of students needs to be set on learning the trade. Any disturbance that draws attention away from that is prohibited.
- Obscene language or images are not allowed on campus.
- Students will keep their work areas clean and orderly.
- Repeated violations of the above listed offences may result in dismissal.

## Sexual or Racial Misconduct and Harassment

Will not be tolerated. Disciplinary action will be taken for these offences up to and including dismissal from the program.

## Drug and Alcohol Policy

- Use of drugs or alcohol on campus is prohibited.
- Drug or controlled substance paraphernalia is prohibited on school campus.
- Students may be subject to drug and alcohol tests at any time during the program.
- Violation of the drug and alcohol policy or a positive test will result in dismissal.
- Safety violations may result in an immediate drug test. Failure to pass a drug screening will result in dismissal from the program.

## Theft

All students are required to report any theft or vandalism to the school. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. HEOA may also contact the county sheriff's office to investigate. Any theft or vandalism will result in dismissal.

## Disciplinary Action

For each offence, a Student Incident Form will be completed by the instructor. The student can write a response. The Student Incident Form will be signed and dated by both instructor and student. The form will be placed in the students file and a copy given to the student.

- **First offence** – Student Incident Form placed in students file.
- **Second offence** – Student Incident Form placed in students file. A suspension may occur at the instructor's discretion.
- **Third offence** – May result in student dismissal.

Time lost to suspension will count as an attendance infraction.

The School administrator has the authority to dismiss a student who violates school policies.

# STUDENT RECORDS

## Access to Student Records

Instructors and/or students are permitted to view their student folders, including enrollment information, payment information, invoices, and skill tests, at any time upon request.

## Maintenance and Retention of Student Records

HEOA shall record all student transcript records indefinitely. These will be kept in hard copy and/or electronic form. Enrollment information, payment information, production sheets, etc. will be maintained for a least three years following completion, dismissal, or withdrawal. These will be kept in hardcopy until electronically scanned and backed up.

Student records shall be open for inspection by authorized representatives of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education or the Department of Veterans Affairs. HEOA may retain a student's academic transcript, certificate of completion, or any pertinent record if a student's financial obligations are not paid in full.

## Transcript Request

Students in good standing can request a copy of their transcript from the Director.

# COMPLAINT OR GRIEVANCE POLICY

All student complaints should be first directed to the school personnel involved. If no resolution is forthcoming, a written complaint shall be submitted to the administrator of school. Whether or not the problem or complaint has been resolved to his/her satisfaction by the school, the student may direct any problem or complaint to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education 423 Main Street, Little Rock, AR 72201.

## Refund Policy

The initial \$250.00 deposit is nonrefundable, however, this deposit can be transferred to a later start date at any time, provided there is adequate space available in the class. Withdrawal (written) or termination prior to start date the student will receive a full refund of tuition, tools and materials. On or after start date only the tuition is eligible of refund. Rates are as follows:

- 0-5% of course completion the student is eligible for a 90% tuition refund.
- 5-25% of course completion the student is eligible for a 75% tuition refund.
- 25-50% or more of course completion the student is not eligible for tuition refund.
- Over 50% of course completion no refund is available.

*Example: In our 8 week program if a student dropped out after 8 days, they would only have completed 20% of the program. Based on the chart above, this would result in a refund of 75% of the tuition. (Cost for tools, deposit, books, etc would not be refundable.)*

Refunds will not be calculated or issued until the withdrawal process has been completed. Students who are dismissed by HEOA will also be subject to this refund policy. In addition HEOA will notify a student's funding agency upon their cancellation, withdrawal, or dismissal.

## FACILITY

Heavy Equipment Operating Academy is located at 12844 Highway 65 South, in Bee Branch Arkansas. It's located directly across the street from South Side High School. Our facility includes areas for classroom, bathrooms, tool room, and administrative offices. The rest of the property is sectioned off for heavy equipment training.

### Smoking

Smoking tobacco or e-cigarettes of any kind is only allowed outside of buildings in the designated smoking area. Smokeless tobacco is permitted so long as good housekeeping is observed.

### Meet the Team!



**Dennis Edwards**

(Founder / Lead Instructor)

Dennis brings over 4 decades of extensive experience in operating farm equipment and heavy machinery. Starting in 1966, he operated various farm equipment before transitioning to a family owned construction company in 1978. Throughout his career, Dennis operated backhoes, excavators, dozers, and cranes, showcasing his versatility.

His expertise led him to work as a heavy equipment training consultant for Cap Rock, Quest Communications, and Level Three Communications from 1996 to 2000. From 2001-2006 he worked for notable companies like Nabholz and Mahan Construction.

Later in his career he transitioned to consulting roles for the gas and oil companies. Dennis played a pivotal role in constructing well pads, trenching for gas, oil, and water transfer lines, and formulating lift plans for cranes at compressor sites.

Now, as a senior chief consultant, Dennis is poised to channel his wealth of experience into giving back to the community. His commitment extends to training the next generation of operators, ensuring the transfer of invaluable skills and knowledge.

**Ryan Speer** (Director) – Ryan brings over a decade of leadership experience to HEOA. He began his career with AT&T back in 2004 where he developed a strong foundation in management and a passion for telecommunications. He also has certifications in networking and hands on experience in infrastructure setup. Ryan joined HEOA in 2020 and his multifaceted background extends far beyond networking and excavation work. He has demonstrated his capabilities in various roles, including management, admissions, public relations, and accounting. All of his experience leaves him well equipped to contribute effectively to the dynamic environment at HEOA.

**Maria Speer** (Operations Manager) – Is currently serving as Operations Manager here. Maria grew up on her family's farm here in Bee Branch. After graduating college and receiving her Master's degree, Maria served for 18 years as the Executive Director of a local non-profit in Conway, Arkansas. In June 2024, she joined the team at HEOA bringing her organizational skills and managerial experience. In addition to handling day to day operations, Maria oversees the admissions and financing process for incoming students. Maria is dedicated to the mission of HEOA and is constantly striving to expand its outreach in the community and beyond.

**David Hill** (Lead Instructor) – is our lead instructor with over 22 years of hands on experience in heavy equipment operation and 14 years of specialized expertise in cranes and rigging. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Industrial Science and Jobsite Management, and is deeply passionate about mentoring the next generation of industry professionals by sharing his extensive knowledge and real world insights.

**Randy Ward** (Instructor) – is a highly experienced Heavy Equipment Operator and Team Leader with over 40 years in road construction and maintenance. He brings a proven track record of managing crews, operating a diverse range of heavy machinery, and upholding the highest standards of job site safety. Committed to developing future industry professionals, Randy is passionate about delivering hands-on training and sharing real-world expertise to prepare the next generation of operators for success.

**Matt Chappell** (Instructor) – Matt is HEOA's lead classroom instructor with over 10 years of experience in the heavy equipment industry. He previously served as a hydraulic specialist with the U.S. Air Force's 19th Combat Airlift Wing, where he gained advanced technical expertise. As an NCCER-certified instructor, Matt is passionate about teaching students the skills needed to operate at a journeyman level and succeed in the workforce. He combines real-world knowledge with a practical, supportive teaching approach.

**Mike Alexander** (CDL Instructor) – Mike is a CDL Instructor with over 40 years of experience in commercial driving and professional driving across the country, including owning his own trucking company for 14 years. With a strong background in Class A vehicle operations, he specializes in preparing students for success on the skills portions of the CDL exam. Known for his hands-on teaching style and commitment to safety, Mike emphasizes real world driving scenarios, DOT regulations, vehicle inspection procedures, and defensive driving techniques. His goal is training aspiring drivers to go on to successful careers in transportation and logistics.

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

### **Q: Will you help me get a job?**

**A:** Yes, We do have an excellent job placement program. We even invite contractors in to visit and recruit students directly out of our school, and, although we can't guarantee employment, our school has a job placement rate over 90%!

### **Q: What if I am out of state?**

**A:** We've got you covered. We offer housing for all of our students and it's extremely affordable, only \$300 per month!



We also pay for all the utilities and our houses are all fully furnished! All you need to bring is your clothes, toiletries, and bedding. We even have transportation available for students who fly in.

**Q: Is this certification good in every state?**

**A:** Yes! We've placed students in jobs as far north as Alaska and even down south in Florida. We have relationships with contractors across the country and we will work with you to find you employment in whatever state you want to work in.

**Q: Is financial aid available?**

**A:** Financial aid options are available. We have staff in our admissions department who can assist you and help walk you through the process of securing grants, scholarships, and student loans to fund this program.

**Q: What if I have bad credit?**

**A:** Having bad credit or no credit can make it a bit more challenging to secure financing, but there are resources out there like grants and scholarships to help struggling individuals. Let us help you! We try our best to locate resources for students and help guide them through the process of securing funding.

**Q: How much can I expect to make as an operator?**

**A:** The pay rate varies depending on the state you want to travel to. Some states simply have a higher cost of living than others. Students working in Arkansas can expect to make over \$20 per hour and students in California are making \$40+ per hour. Just depends on where you want to work and if you're willing to travel.



**Q: Is there career advancement in this industry?**

**A:** Yes! We aim to produce students who are not only fully capable operators, but our program is also geared to teach students all the skills necessary to become Foremen and Superintendents later in their career.

**Q: Am I too young/old to be an operator?**

**A:** No. The average age of an operator according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average age of an operator is 45. We've had students as young as 17, and as old as 67 come through this class and be successful.

**Q: Do you offer online courses?**

**A:** No, this is a hands-on course. All of our training takes place behind the controls of real life equipment.

**Q: What if I struggle operating or academically?**

**A:** If we notice a student struggling on a particular piece of

equipment or struggling with some of the book work, we may approach them and offer additional time after hours to help them catch up to the rest of the class.

**Q: Do I need a CDL?**

**A:** No! You do not need a CDL to operate heavy equipment. However, having a CDL helps when seeking employment and may result in a higher paying job offer.

**Q: Are there other certifications I can get that would help with this career?**

**A:** Yes, if you were to have a CDL for example, this would not only allow you to operate the equipment, but transport it as well. Many contractors are willing to pay more for an operator with this license. Here is a list of just a few skills and credentials that marry extremely well to this trade:

- CDL
- Welding
- Diesel Mechanic



- Surveying
- Bilingual (Spanish)



**Q: How long is the Heavy Equipment certification good for?**

**A:** Our certification card is good for 3 years from the date you graduate the course.

**Q: How do I renew my certification?**

**A:** Easy. When you're ready to have your license renewed just contact us. We have a 1-day safety refresher course and we cover any new OSHA / MSHA rules and regulation changes. Once that's done you'll be issued a new license and you're good for another 3 years.





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