COURSE SYLLABUS

CON 7310: Cost Analysis for Federal Contracting Course (Self-Paced)

This course equips federal contracting professionals with the analytical skills and regulatory knowledge to evaluate contractor cost proposals and determine fair and reasonable prices under FAR Part 15 and TINA.

> Group classes in Live Online and onsite training is available for this course. For more information, email onsite@graduateschool.edu or visit: https://www.graduateschool.edu/courses/con-7310-cost-analysis-course-self-paced

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Course Outline

Module 1: Regulatory Framework — FAR Part 15, TINA, and the Cost/Pricing Landscape

- Identify the regulatory foundation governing cost and pricing data requirements under the FAR.
- Explain the purpose and applicability of the Truth in Negotiations Act (TINA).
- Distinguish between certified cost or pricing data and other than certified cost or pricing data.
- Recognize the thresholds and exceptions that trigger cost or pricing data requirements.

Module 2: Price Analysis Techniques and Applications

- Identify price analysis techniques appropriate for evaluating contractor proposals.
- Apply catalog and market price comparisons to assess price reasonableness.
- Use historical pricing data and competitive pricing benchmarks effectively.
- Determine when price analysis alone is sufficient to establish fair and reasonable pricing.

Module 3: Cost Analysis — Direct and Indirect Cost Elements

- Distinguish between direct and indirect costs in contractor proposals.
- Analyze direct cost elements including labor, materials, and subcontract costs.
- Evaluate indirect cost pools, allocation bases, and overhead rates.
- Identify inconsistencies and unsupported costs within a proposal.

Module 4: Labor, Material, and Subcontract Cost Analysis

- Evaluate proposed labor rates and labor mix for reasonableness and realism.
- Analyze material costs using purchasing records, vendor quotes, and market data.
- Apply subcontract review requirements and flow-down obligations.
- Identify risks associated with inadequately supported labor and material estimates.

Module 5: Overhead, G&A, and Other Indirect Costs

- Analyze overhead, general and administrative (G&A), and other indirect cost pools.
- Evaluate the reasonableness of proposed indirect cost rates.
- Understand the relationship between indirect rates and contract cost impact.
- Identify allocation methodology concerns that may affect proposal accuracy.

Module 6: Cost Realism Analysis for Cost-Reimbursement Contracts

- Explain the purpose and application of cost realism analysis.
- Distinguish between cost realism and cost reasonableness determinations.
- Apply cost realism techniques to evaluate proposed costs on cost-reimbursement contracts.
- Document cost realism findings in support of the source selection decision.

Module 7: Profit and Fee Analysis — Policy, Techniques, and Weighted Guidelines

- Explain the regulatory policies governing profit and fee objectives under FAR Part 15.
- Apply the weighted guidelines method to develop a pre-negotiation profit objective.
- Distinguish between fixed-fee, incentive-fee, and award-fee structures.
- Negotiate profit objectives consistent with contractor risk and performance expectations.

Module 8: Cost Accounting Standards (CAS) Overview and Application

- Identify the purpose and scope of the Cost Accounting Standards (CAS).
- Distinguish between CAS-covered and non-CAS-covered contracts.
- Recognize the impact of CAS requirements on contractor cost proposals.
- Apply CAS compliance considerations during proposal evaluation.

Module 9: Defective Pricing and TINA Compliance

- Identify circumstances that may constitute defective pricing under TINA.
- Explain government remedies available when defective pricing is identified.
- Apply procedures for reviewing contractor disclosure obligations.
- Recognize audit and oversight roles in TINA compliance and enforcement.

Module 10: Unbalanced and Unrealistic Pricing Identification

- Define unbalanced pricing and explain its risks to the government.
- Identify indicators of mathematically and materially unbalanced proposals.
- Distinguish between unrealistic pricing and unbalanced pricing concerns.
- Determine appropriate government responses to identified unbalanced proposals.

Module 11: Forward Pricing Rate Agreements and Recommendations

- Explain the purpose and use of Forward Pricing Rate Agreements (FPRAs) and Recommendations (FPRRs).
- Identify how FPRAs and FPRRs are established and applied in proposal evaluation.
- Assess the reliability of forward pricing rates when evaluating contractor proposals.
- Recognize the role of DCAA in supporting forward pricing rate negotiations.

Module 12: Should-Cost Analysis and Independent Government Cost Estimates

- Explain the purpose of should-cost analysis and when it is appropriate.
- Distinguish between should-cost review and Independent Government Cost Estimates (IGCEs).
- Apply should-cost principles to identify cost reduction opportunities.
- Develop and document IGCEs in support of pre-award pricing decisions.

Module 13: Documenting the Pricing Decision — Pre-Negotiation Memorandum

- Identify the components and purpose of the pre-negotiation memorandum (PNM).

- Document the government's cost and price analysis findings in the PNM.
- Establish pre-negotiation objectives for price, cost elements, and profit.
- Apply FAR documentation requirements for pre-award pricing actions.

Module 14: Price Negotiation Memorandum (PNM) Preparation

- Explain the purpose and required content of the Price Negotiation Memorandum.
- Document negotiation results and the basis for the final negotiated price.
- Prepare a complete and compliant PNM in accordance with FAR Part 15 requirements.
- Recognize common deficiencies in PNM documentation and how to avoid them.

Module 15: Cost/Price Analysis for Contract Modifications

- Apply cost and price analysis principles to contract modifications and change orders.
- Identify when certified cost or pricing data is required for contract modifications.
- Evaluate the cost impact of proposed modifications on contract value and terms.
- Document modification pricing decisions consistent with applicable FAR requirements.

Module 16: Advanced Cost Analysis Case Studies and Exercises

- Apply cost analysis techniques to complex, multi-element contractor proposals.
- Integrate price analysis, cost analysis, and profit objectives in a unified evaluation.
- Identify and address analytical challenges common in advanced cost analysis scenarios.
- Document analysis findings and develop negotiation positions from case study results.

Module 17: Multi-Year and Long-Term Contract Pricing Considerations

- Identify pricing challenges unique to multi-year and long-term contracts.
- Apply economic price adjustment and escalation techniques to long-term proposals.
- Evaluate contractor proposed escalation factors for reasonableness.
- Recognize the impact of contract type selection on pricing risk in long-term agreements.

Module 18: Cost Analysis in a Competitive Environment

- Distinguish between price analysis and cost analysis in competitive acquisitions.
- Apply cost analysis techniques when adequate price competition is absent.
- Evaluate proposals in sole-source and limited-competition environments.
- Identify when additional cost data is needed despite a competitive acquisition setting.

Module 19: Audit Support and DCAA Coordination

- Explain the role of the Defense Contract Audit Agency (DCAA) in the pricing process.
- Identify when and how to request DCAA audit assistance during proposal evaluation.
- Interpret DCAA audit reports and apply findings to the cost analysis.
- Coordinate effectively with audit agencies to support pre-award and post-award pricing actions.

Module 20: Capstone Pricing Scenario and Practical Application

- Apply cost and price analysis skills developed throughout the course to a comprehensive pricing scenario.
- Integrate regulatory requirements, cost element analysis, and profit objectives in a complete evaluation.
- Prepare documentation supporting the pricing decision and negotiation outcome.
- Demonstrate proficiency in the analytical and documentation skills required of federal cost analysts.