



U.S. Department of Defense

Advanced Technical Degree Guidebook

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U.S. Department of Defense Advanced Technical Degree Guidebook

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PREFACE

The U.S. Department of Defense's (DoD) engineering workforce is integral to developing and fielding effective defense systems, sustaining its high-tech military capabilities, and retaining the DoD's technological superiority.¹ Technical training, particularly in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), underpins DoD's ability to defend the Nation and to ensure the vitality of the Nation's defense industrial base.² Building and rebuilding U.S. deterrence to preserve peace through strength is a top priority.³ Even a U.S. Army Report studying the effective use of scientists and engineers after World War II declared highly trained scientists and engineers were a "necessity" for national security and noted that the minimum education of would require 4 years, and "by the time a scientist becomes really effective he has expanded at least three times this period in education and experience."⁴ The need to recruit, develop, train, and retain top engineering talent has been and remains at the forefront of DoD's human capital priorities.⁵

Although DoD civilian engineers make up over 96 percent of the engineering career field in the Defense Acquisition Workforce, only 42 percent of civilian engineers hold advanced technical degrees, compared with 62 percent of military engineers. DoD attributes the gap to the greater number of opportunities provided for military engineers to attain advanced degrees. In a 2018 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS), DoD civilian engineers reported only a 54-percent satisfaction level with the job training they were receiving.

To remain competitive in recruiting and retaining top talent, DoD needs to be viewed as an exceptional place to work, and the pursuit of advanced training and education is integral to recruitment and retention efforts. To this end, the DoD office of the Deputy Director for Engineering (DD, ENG) developed this Advanced Technical Degree Guidebook to identify and explain the available opportunities for DoD civilian engineers to pursue advanced education. This guidebook will assist civilian engineers and their organizations to navigate the complex framework for identifying, enrolling in, and funding advanced degree programs.

Training and educational opportunities encourage engagement and retention while ensuring the Department maintains a highly qualified workforce. DD, ENG promotes professional development to support its critical mission in national security and to improve job satisfaction. The office of DD, ENG will maintain and revise this guidebook periodically to reflect updates to the educational opportunities available to civilian engineers. References to dollar amounts and other values in this publication are as of January 2020.

¹ See generally, A Report to the Deputy Director for Research and Development Logistics Division, General Staff, U.S. Army, *Scientists in Uniform World War II* (Washington, DC, 1948). See also, Committee on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Workforce Needs for the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Defense Industrial Base, *Assuring the U.S. Department of Defense A Strong Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics [STEM] Workforce* (The National Academies Press: Washington, DC, 2012).

² Ibid. See also, Executive Office of the President Office of Science and Technology Policy, *Progress Report on Coordinating Federal Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics [STEM] Education* (Washington, DC, 2016).

³ Ibid.

⁴ A Report to the Deputy Director for Research and Development Logistics Division, General Staff, U.S. Army, *Scientists in Uniform World War II* (Washington, DC, 1948), p 2.

⁵ See generally, A Report to the Deputy Director for Research and Development Logistics Division, General Staff, U.S. Army, *Scientists in Uniform World War II* (Washington, DC, 1948). See also, Committee on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Workforce Needs for the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Defense Industrial Base, *Assuring the U.S. Department of Defense A Strong Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics [STEM] Workforce* (The National Academies Press: Washington, DC, 2012); Executive Office of the President Office of Science and Technology Policy, *Progress Report on Coordinating Federal Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics [STEM] Education* (Washington, DC, 2016); Moshe Schwartz, Kathryn A. Francis, Charles V. O'Connor, *The Department of Defense Acquisition Workforce: Background, Analysis, and Questions for Congress* (Congressional Research Service: Washington, DC, 2016).

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I. OVERVIEW

A. HOW TO USE THIS GUIDEBOOK

1. Purpose

The purpose of this guidebook is to assist civilian Defense Acquisition Workforce engineers in attaining advanced technical degrees. For purposes of this guidebook, “advanced technical degree” means an advanced degree, above a bachelor’s level, to include graduate certificates. This guidebook assists with the process for selecting, applying, and paying for advanced education programs and aims to offer guidance and tips for navigating these processes.

Before proceeding, please be aware that this guidebook makes assumptions about its audience. The prospective students:

- Have a desire and willingness to remain with or return to DoD during or upon completion of the degree.
- Intend to offset as many personal costs incurred in pursuing the degree as possible by receiving monetary support in the form of tuition assistance, scholarships, etc.

2. Organization of the Guidebook

All Defense Acquisition Workforce engineering applicants, regardless of their respective DoD Component, may use this guidebook. However, some information herein will also be useful for non-Acquisition workforce members. The guidebook contains four appendices, organized by DoD Component:

- [Appendix A](#): U.S. Air Force (USAF)
- [Appendix B](#): U.S. Army
- [Appendix C](#): U.S. Navy (USN) and U.S. Marine Corps (USMC)
- [Appendix D](#): The DoD 4th Estate Agencies (4th Estate)

B. INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section outlines initial considerations and questions. Some thoughts involve feedback or conversations with your manager and leadership chain.

- One of the first steps is considering what type of advanced education you would like to pursue—a certificate, a master’s degree, or a doctoral degree.
- As part of the initial decision to return to school for an advanced degree, students and managers should consider whether the individual will continue working during his or her degree pursuit, or whether the person will take a leave of absence from work and return upon completion of the degree. This will influence whether the applicant is pursuing a degree full time versus part time, in person, or online (also called Distance Learning (DL)).
- **Appendices A, B, C, and D** discuss the funding process for each DoD Component. This guidance is designed to help students and managers navigate the process for getting DoD support in paying for advanced degrees. Attaining funding can be a lengthy endeavor, and these conversations should start as early in the process as possible. It is recommended that everyone review this information thoroughly and early.

Student Tip!

“Select a program that will develop a competency that is valued by your organization.”

- JH, B.S. Mechanical Engineering, M.S. Engineering Management, PhD Industrial and Systems Engineering, U.S. Army

- Managers and students should consider the benefit of the advanced education to their immediate organization and what the individual will be doing in his or her role after obtaining the degree. In some cases, the benefit to the Command directly affects whether the degree is eligible for DoD funding. For example, some tuition assistance programs require the applicant to prove the benefit to the Command for each course funded.
- You must consider the admissions lifecycle for the type of program you want to enroll in. Programs for Ph.D.'s generally require a longer "runway" for the preparations and application process, whereas certificate programs don't require as much preparation. Master's and Ph.D. programs usually require standardized tests, such as the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE), and prep for and the taking of these exams requires weeks or months. Certificate programs usually do not require standardized testing.
- You should evaluate programs at national colleges and universities, those offered by each of the Service Schools, and the programs offered by your DoD Component.

A Note About Online Degrees:

For students who are geographically restricted or who wish to continue working, an online program is a viable option. Many master's programs are also available in an online (DL) format to encourage participation from a wider geographic audience and to accommodate rigorous work schedules.

- Make sure the online university you select is accredited.
- Align your program with your career series.
- Consider requesting a waiver of the GRE. Many schools will allow you to waive the GRE if you provide your transcripts and recommendation letters.
- For one peer, going to school online was helpful with respect to holding down work obligations because he could complete courses as they fit into his schedule. He allocated two days per week to do homework and study ahead.
- Drawbacks include the potential to lose focus and fall behind without the typical class structure and that some online courses do not have a means for students to ask questions during the classes, since the classes are often pre-recorded.
- One peer recommended the University of Florida's (UF) EDGE (Electronic Delivery of Gator Engineering) program. All of UF's classes are available online. There are 7 engineering departments, and each master's degree program consists of 10 courses.

Example Timeline

- May:** Begin school research; take practice admissions test(s)
- June:** Begin studying for admissions test(s)
- July:** Request information on schools that interest you
- August:** Take the admissions test; if unhappy with score, schedule a retest; begin drafting admissions essays
- September:** Register for the GRE subject test, if necessary; finalize list of prospective schools; contact people writing letters of recommendation (if necessary)
- October:** Request official transcripts from undergraduate institution; send materials to recommenders
- November:** Edit and revise personal statement/admissions essays; seek feedback from friends or family
- December:** Complete and submit all graduate applications; maintain records of submissions
- August/September: Classes begin**

Generally, your decision to pursue an advanced technical degree will follow this rhythm:

1. Big Picture

- Think about your career goals and the reasons why you are returning to school; consider the timing and whether now is the appropriate point in your career and personal life to be pursuing a degree.
 - While there is no "perfect" time, you want to make sure you are setting yourself up for success and that you are able to complete your course requirements and make the grades required by your organization or program.
 - Determine when you would be able to start a program.

2. **Identify Programs and Degrees.** Review program and degree options and keep notes on these. Please see [Exhibit A-1](#) of this guidebook for an example “worksheet” that you can use to track your notes on the different programs. Outlining the options on the sheet will allow you to compare them and narrow your focus to select programs and schools. You will also begin to understand the school’s timelines for applying; you will need to synthesize this with your own schedule. The worksheets in [Exhibit A-1](#) and [Exhibit A-2](#) will help you track deadlines.
3. **Standardized Tests.** You need to know the tests required by each potential school. The process of studying for and taking standardized tests can take months—account for this in your planning. The worksheet in [Exhibit A-1](#) will help you keep track of these requirements.
4. **Begin to Secure Funding**
 - Consult this guidebook for your options on funding.
 - Begin talking with your manager about obtaining funding assistance for this pursuit.
 - Discuss how your identified programs will benefit the Command and Mission.
5. **Narrow Program List.** If you have a large list of programs, you may want to narrow them down. Application costs add up quickly. Be mindful of the entry requirements for each of the programs and make sure you have a mixture of “safety” schools (i.e., those you are likely to be accepted into), “moderate” schools, and “stretch” schools (i.e., programs that are very competitive). As you narrow, begin creating a calendar of deadlines and tracking the items needed for each application. The worksheet in [Exhibit A-2](#) is a helpful tool for tracking the application items and respective deadlines.
6. **Apply and Gain Admittance to Program.** The [Exhibit A-2](#) worksheet is a tool for tracking applications and the respective requirements. Applications require materials such as admissions essays, transcripts, test scores, letters of recommendation, etc. Make sure you thoroughly understand what each school requires.
7. **Compiling a Strong Application.** Of course there is the standard academic evaluation (transcript, test scores, etc.). The school is also looking at publications and presentations, the applicant’s field experiences, awards, and honors – anything that shows initiative on the applicant’s part. Educators want to know that you are going to *use* the knowledge professionally and to further your career. You should demonstrate your interest in research because you are trying to show the school that your research interest aligns with that of the program or school. If you know a faculty member at the school has conducted that type of research, then the alignment will be even more natural. You should also highlight teamwork and leadership experience to distinguish yourself.
8. **Secure Funding.** Generally, you will secure funding after you choose and gain acceptance to a program. You will need to monitor the funding deadlines. Some funding options, such as scholarships or student loans, may require advanced planning.

Student Tip!

“Ask Questions! Admissions personnel will tell you to read their website for information, but very rarely are the intricacies of the process posted anywhere. Be persistent and ask the same question to different people. This will clarify what you need to do and what is required of you. Karl visited a lot of schools and asked face-to-face questions. It’s really easy for people to give short answers over email, even if they are in a position to help. In this situation, he found professors to be the most helpful in answering questions and pushing his paperwork through.”

- KK, USAF Mechanical Engineer, Master’s in Mechanical Engineering and Solid Mechanics

9. **Consider Accreditations.** Certain schools carry certain accreditations. If you are using the degree as a stepping stone, you need to research the process for doing so. The accreditations and recognitions for the programs can make it easier or harder to continue on to a PhD from a master's, for example, if the accreditations do not line up.

C. NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES VERSUS SERVICE SCHOOLS

There are two types of schools: (1) national colleges or universities and (2) the Service Schools. For purposes of this guidebook, national colleges or universities mean accredited educational institutions (see <http://www.chea.org> for accreditation information). This guidebook will speak generally about the process for pursuing a degree through one of these educational institutions; however, school-specific and program information should be obtained from the school itself.

A few notes about potential benefits pertaining to national colleges and universities:

- The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has established tuition discounts and benefits with select national colleges and universities for Federal employees. Please see **Section III** and [Exhibit B](#) for an explanation.⁶
- Some DoD Components have a tuition assistance program, which offers a set amount of money, typically each calendar year, to civilian employees seeking advanced education at a national college or university. The Service appendices describe tuition assistance benefits.

DoD has its own schools that offer advanced degrees and educational opportunities. The Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT) and the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) have a STEM focus, and each offers a wide variety of certificate, master's and Ph.D. programs in both a "resident" format (in person) and a DL (online) format.⁷ In order to attend one of the Service Schools, you must be fully sponsored by your Command, so this process is different from pursuing a national university.⁸ It is important to note that both AFIT and NPS accept civilian employees from any DoD Component. (i.e., you do not have to work for the USAF to attend AFIT, and you do not have to work for the U.S. Department of the Navy (DON) to attend NPS).⁹

D. STANDARDIZED TESTING

Many master's and Ph.D. programs require a GRE score as part of the application process.¹⁰ School admissions officers use the test scores to supplement undergraduate records, recommendation letters, and other qualifications for graduate-level study.¹¹ Typically, students spend weeks or months studying and preparing for these exams; you should build this into your application plan.¹² GRE scores are valid for 5 years from the date you take the test. As you identify programs you are interested in, you should see which standardized tests are required or preferred by the school.¹³ See [Exhibit C](#) for more information on standardized testing.¹⁴

⁶ "Training and Development Policy Wiki Federal Academic Alliances." OPM.gov, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, www.opm.gov/WIKI/training/Federal-Governmentwide-Academic-Alliances.ashx.

⁷ "Programs & Degrees." Naval Postgraduate School, www.my.nps.edu/web/quest/degree-programs. "All Graduate School Programs." AFIT Graduate School of Engineering & Management, Air Force Institute of Technology, December 14, 2018, www.afit.edu/EN/allprograms.cfm.

⁸ See generally, "AFIT's Mission & Vision." Air Force Institute of Technology, October 24, 2018, www.afit.edu/ABOUT/index.cfm.

See generally, "Schools & Departments." Naval Postgraduate School, www.my.nps.edu/schools-and-departments.

⁹ "Programs & Degrees." Naval Postgraduate School, www.my.nps.edu/web/quest/degree-programs. "About the Graduate School." Naval Postgraduate School, <https://my.nps.edu/about>. See e.g., *AFIT Graduate School of Engineering & Management*, Air Force Institute of Technology, December 14, 2018, www.afit.edu/EN/page.cfm?page=134.

¹⁰ "About the GRE General Test." ETS GRE, https://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/about.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

II. PROGRAM TYPES: CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS, MASTER'S DEGREES, AND DOCTORAL DEGREES

A. GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Graduate certificate programs¹⁵ are typically completed after one has obtained either a bachelor's degree or an associate's degree. They require approximately half of the number of credits needed for a master's degree. Graduate certificate programs are great for retraining in a particular area or for refocusing a career. If you are not feeling ready to take on a full degree program, this is a good way to explore the possibility. Frequently, the courses taken for a graduate certificate program are graduate-level classes and are transferrable toward a master's degree or doctorate later on, should you decide to pursue one.

Certificate programs are great for retraining in a particular area or for refocusing a career. Frequently, the courses taken for a certificate program are graduate-level classes and are transferrable toward a master's degree or doctorate later on, should you decide to pursue one.

When evaluating a graduate certificate program, consider whether the credits are transferrable to a master's or doctorate program and which schools would be accepting of those credits. For example, do the credits only transfer within the school or do other universities honor the credits? This will give you an idea of what paths you could pursue down the road, should your advanced education pursuits change. It is also important to find out for how long the credits would be valid for transfer.

B. MASTER'S DEGREE

A master's degree¹⁶ is an academic degree awarded by universities or colleges upon completion of a course of study. The degree demonstrates mastery of a specific field of study or area of professional practice. A master's degree allows specialization or concentration within a field so that the student focuses his or her studies in-depth, on a particular aspect of a subject. Pursuing a master's works especially well when the student has been working in a particular career for some time and hopes to qualify for a leadership position.

A master's degree usually requires previous study at the bachelor's level. (The exception being a master's degree that is "tacked on" to a bachelor's program.) A stand-alone master's program (versus one integrated with a bachelor's program) is approximately 2 years in length. Many universities offer alternative schedules, such as evening programs or DL, so students can work during the day and earn a master's degree part time. These alternatives are likely to have different timelines for completion.

Master's programs vary in the number of credits required, the core classes required, and the number of electives permitted. This is something you will want to review.

Master's degrees tend to be career oriented, while doctorates tend to focus on research since a doctorate is preparing people for research-oriented careers or academia. A master's usually requires less time and money than a doctorate. A master's distinguishes you from someone who only has a bachelor's degree. They are a great vehicle for enhancing employment opportunities and career advancement at DoD.

¹⁵ See e.g., "Graduate Certificates." Harvard Extension School, President and Fellows of Harvard College, <https://www.extension.harvard.edu/academics/graduate-certificates>.

¹⁶ See e.g., "What is a Master's Degree?" The Best Schools, <https://thebestschools.org/degrees/what-is-a-masters-degree/>.

C. DOCTORAL DEGREES

The title “doctor” applies, technically, to anyone who has earned any doctoral degree.¹⁷ It originally meant a learned person or an expert in any field and, in that sense, modern higher education has formalized the term. A Ph.D., or doctor of philosophy, is one of a number of types of doctoral degrees; the difference between it and other doctorates concerns primarily the focus and methods of study.

Holders of the Ph.D. do not necessarily study philosophy, despite the name. Institutions award Ph.D.’s in a number of fields, including the humanities, hard sciences, social sciences, and education. The U.S. Department of Education’s International Affairs Office calls the Ph.D. and other research doctorates “the highest academic qualification” in American education.

A Ph.D. usually requires at least 5 to 6 years in an accredited graduate school. Many students take up to 9 years depending on exams, coursework, and the dissertation requirements. Additionally, many Ph.D. programs require that you have earned a master’s degree. Some Ph.D.s build the master’s degree into the program, so you end up obtaining a master’s degree by way of fulfilling the Ph.D. requirements.

A Ph.D. requires original research that contributes new information to the field of study. One of the less tangible, although important, reasons for getting a Ph.D. is the idea of creating knowledge. Holders of Ph.D.s are regarded as experts. A doctoral degree enhances transferable skills, such as critical reasoning, problem-solving, and in-depth analytical skills. The degree also adds to the research and knowledge of the field. Doctoral degrees may be pursued as part of a full-time or part-time curriculum. This offering varies by university or program.

The remainder of this guidebook focuses on the funding options for certificate, master’s, and doctoral programs. Your employment status with DoD and the type of degree you pursue will frame the type of funding for which you are eligible.

¹⁷ See e.g., “What is a Doctorate Degree?” GetEducated.com, <https://www.geteducated.com/career-center/detail/what-is-a-doctorate-degree>; “What is a Doctorate Degree?” The Best Schools, <https://thebestschools.org/degrees/what-is-a-doctorate-degree/>.

III. FEDERAL ACADEMIC ALLIANCES

OPM Partnership Institutions¹⁸

OPM's Government-wide mission is to recruit, retain, and honor a "world-class workforce" to serve the American people. OPM's Government-wide talent development focus is to ensure Federal employees have access to high-quality talent development opportunities in identified mission-critical occupations. The Chief Human Capital Officers Council (CHCOC) and OPM identified STEM among the mission-critical occupations.

As such, OPM collaborates with colleges and universities to provide current Federal employees with the opportunity to pursue post-secondary education at reduced tuition rates. This program is a benefit that Federal employees may use to pursue or enhance their higher academic education. Some of the agreements extend the benefits to spouses and legal dependents.

Via the "Federal Academic Alliances," 15 academic institutions have designated benefits for Federal employees, typically in the form of tuition discounts and fee waivers. These academic alliances address current Government-wide and Agency-specific skills gaps, support career development for Federal employees, and provide greater opportunities for Federal employees to obtain educational opportunities.

Applicants considering an advanced technical degree from a national college or university should check the programs and benefits available via the Federal Academic Alliance to determine programs that qualify. Please see the links inset for more information.

The OPM has negotiated discounts, but please note that applicants seeking more complete coverage by their Service or Command will still need to undergo the respective funding processes (and justify the value of the program). Not all of the programs offered by the OPM Partnership Schools may be eligible for tuition assistance, and many of these schools have limited or no offering of advanced technical degrees.

Federal Academic Alliances: More Information

- <https://www.opm.gov/WIKI/training/Federal-Governmentwide-Academic-Alliances/Print.aspx>
- <https://www.opm.gov/wiki/training/our-academic-partners.ashx>
- <https://www.opm.gov/wiki/training/federal-academic-alliances-FAQs.ashx>
- [Exhibit B](#) to this guidebook

Management Tip!

The funding sources for each DoD Component are identified in this section, but sometimes money that is "left over" from other projects or sources can be rolled into funding for advanced education. Other times, different funding sources may be cobbled together year over year to fund a degree to completion.

Management Tip!

Host an information session within your agency and/or collaborate with the academic partners to meet your training needs. Please contact learninganddevelopment@opm.gov.

¹⁸ "Training and Development Policy Wiki Federal Academic Alliances." OPM.gov, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, www.opm.gov/WIKI/training/Federal-Governmentwide-Academic-Alliances.ashx.

IV. INTRODUCTION TO FUNDING: MONETARY SOURCES BY DOD COMPONENT

This section provides a general discussion around the sources of advanced technical degree funding by DoD Component. Service-specific processes for obtaining funding are discussed in **Appendices A, B, C, and D** of this guidebook.

A. DEFENSE ACQUISITION WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FUND

The Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Account (DAWDA) (formerly known as Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Fund (DAWDF)) is a monetary allocation made to each DoD Component.¹⁹ It permits DoD to recruit and hire, develop, train, and retain its Acquisition Workforce.²⁰ Each of the DoD Components uses DAWDA money to help sponsor advanced degrees and training for its civilian engineer employees.²¹

B. WORKING CAPITAL FUND OVERHEAD

The Army and Navy report using excess working capital funds for tuition assistance.²² The USAF stated they have not needed to do this because DAWDA has been adequate.²³

C. ARMY CAREER PROGRAM PROPONENCY OFFICES

Army Career Program Proponency Offices may offer academic degree training as a means of closing identified competency gaps. The Army Civilian Training, Education, and Development System (ACTEDS) funds the Army's 32 Career Program Offices, which encompass all of the Army's civilian occupational series.

The 32 Career Programs are mutually exclusive. Every U.S. Army civilian is in one Career Program, but it is the Position Description (PD), rather than the person, that belongs to the Career Program. The Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs (ASA M&RA) determines the assignment of occupational series to Army Career Programs (including STEM occupations). An employee can find their Career Program by reviewing their personnel records and can contact their Career Program via Army Career Tracker to determine if their Career Program offers academic degree training.

The Career Program Proponency Office determines what competencies are needed and how to fund them. This guidebook focuses on the Army's CP-16 segment. The CP-16 Office will fund advanced degrees all the way to the PhD level.

CP-16 is described as:

CP-16: Engineers and Scientists (Non-Construction). CP-16 Careerists are technically oriented professionals responsible for the research, design, development, production, and field support of advanced materiel ranging from missiles, vehicles, ammunition, protective equipment, and software to food, shelter, clothing, and equipment to enable the Soldier in the field. CP-16 is the career field for those Army civilian engineers, scientists, and technicians, conducting Army research, development, and acquisition functions.

¹⁹ NDAA for Fiscal Year 2008, Public Law 110-181, Section 852.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² J. Velez, personal communication, May 14, 2018; J. Barnett, personal communication, October 22, 2018.

²³ K. Molder, personal communication, May 14, 2018.

Army CP-16 has ACTEDS funds to pay for ADTs in support of developing the CP-16 workforce to accomplish the mission described in the definition. If you are interested in ACTEDS funds, please follow up with the Office.

More information on this process is contained in Appendix B – U.S. Army.

D. NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

The Army reports using some of its funds from the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) to fund advanced education and training.²⁴ This is a permissible use under the “workforce development” stipulation.

Table 1 shows where each of the DoD Components pulls its funds from and the allocation of funds to Service Schools, such as AFIT and NPS, or to codified tuition assistance programs. Tuition assistance programs vary by DoD Component and even by team or Command within each DoD Component.

Table 1. Funding Sources

DoD Component	Funding Sources				Funding Spend: Graduate Programs				Does Funding Supply Meet Demand?
	DAWDA	Working Capital Fund Overhead	Army Career Program Propensity Offices	NDAA Section 219	AFIT	NPS	USAF Test Pilot School	Codified Tuition Assistance Program	
USAF	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	Yes
U.S. Army	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			Yes
U.S. Navy	✓	✓			✓	✓			No
4th Estate	✓				✓	✓		✓	N/A

Each of the DoD Components reports using its funds to send civilian engineers to AFIT or NPS. Only the USAF reports sending (a very small number of) civilians to the USAF Test Pilot School. Each of USAF and the 4th Estate Agencies (i.e., non-combat agencies that support each of the Military Departments) report on their codified tuition assistance programs.

²⁴ Ibid.

V. FUNDING PROGRAMS

There are different types of financial academic support: scholarships, tuition assistance, student loans, and some Federal benefit arrangements. The focus of this guidebook is on scholarships and tuition assistance, but this section also includes information on certain Federal programs and loans.

A. TUITION ASSISTANCE

Tuition assistance²⁵ is the term used to describe a DoD Component's help in generally funding educational pursuits. Tuition assistance means that DoD pays the school directly, in advance of the start of class. This differs from "tuition reimbursement" where the payment is retroactive. The amount of tuition assistance available per person, per year varies, but generally it is enough to cover tuition expenses over the course of a year. The demand level for advanced training and education also varies by DoD Component. For example, as of 2020 the Navy has a large demand, whereas the USAF has less demand.²⁶ This demand has a direct effect on the ability of each DoD Component to fund its civilians' endeavors. When demand is low, it is easier to allocate funds to tuition assistance and, when it is high, it can be much more difficult to provide this benefit to every person who is interested.

Typically, tuition assistance can be used for a program of the student's choice, provided management sees a benefit from the degree to DoD. A student may use tuition assistance at a national college or university. If a student wishes to attend one of the Service Schools (e.g., NPS or AFIT), the person must be fully sponsored by his or her Command. Tuition assistance does not pay these schools.

B. IPA MOBILITY PROGRAM

The Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) Mobility Program²⁷ provides for the temporary assignment of personnel between the Federal Government and State and local governments, colleges and universities, Indian tribal governments, federally funded research and development centers, and other eligible organizations (referred to as "non-Federal organizations"). The aim of the IPA Mobility Program is to facilitate cooperation between the Federal Government and non-Federal entities. For guidebook purposes, this section focuses on assignment for educational purposes.

Management Tip!

Consider the benefits of sending a DoD engineer to colleges and universities and what they might be able to offer. If an educational institution is looking for a particular type of research, or diversity in a cohort, they might be willing to absorb some of the costs of attendance. This program might also be useful to fill billets, since it can work in the reverse—by using non-Federal employees in DoD positions.

Purpose. IPA Mobility Program assignments allow civilian employees of Federal Agencies to serve with eligible non-Federal organizations for a limited period without loss of employee rights and benefits. Similarly, employees of non-Federal organizations may serve in Federal Agencies for similar periods. The intent of the Mobility Program is to provide mutual benefit to the Federal Agency and to the non-Federal organization. To date, Agencies report they do not take full advantage of the IPA Mobility Program and its benefits.

²⁵ See e.g., United States Department of the Air Force Tuition Assistance Administrator, Operating Instructions SECFT-TA, June 8, 2015.

²⁶ J. Velez, personal communication, May 14, 2018; K. Molder, personal communication, May 14, 2018.

²⁷ "Hiring Information Intergovernmental Personnel Act." OPM.gov, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/intergovernment-personnel-act/#url=Overview.

Statutory Reference. The legal authority for assignments under the IPA is 5 United States Code (U.S.C.) Sections 3371 through 3375 located in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 5, Chapter 334.

**IPA Mobility Program:
More Information**

<https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/intergovernment-personnel-act/#url=PurposeOfProgram>

Length of Assignment. The assignment may last up to 2 years and may be intermittent, part time, or full time. The Agency head may extend an assignment for an additional 2 years when the extension will benefit both organizations.

Reimbursement for Assignment. The Federal Agency and participating organization negotiate the cost-sharing arrangement for mobility assignments. The participating organization should base the cost-sharing arrangements on the extent to which the participating organizations benefit from the assignment. The organization benefiting most from the assignment should absorb the larger share of the costs. The Federal Agency may agree to pay all, some, or none of the costs associated with an assignment. Costs may include basic pay, supplemental pay, fringe benefits, and travel and relocation expenses. A Federal Agency may pay the travel expenses authorized under the Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) (41 CFR Chapters 301-304) for a Federal employee on an IPA assignment.

Arranging an Assignment

- Assignments are management initiated, and management should control development of the proposed assignment.
- The “Assignment Agreement” codifies the assignment. The Agreement may vary according to the assignment, but a minimum amount of information is required.
- The Agreement must make clear that if an employee is paid allowable travel, relocation, and per diem expenses, he or she must complete the entire period of the assignment or 1 year, whichever is shorter, or reimburse the Government for those expenses.

C. THE GI BILL

The term “GI Bill”²⁸ refers to any U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) education benefit earned by members of Active Duty, Selected Reserve, and National Guard Armed Forces and their families. The benefit helps service members and eligible veterans cover the costs associated with getting an education or training. GI Bill programs are dependent on a person’s eligibility and duty status. [Exhibit D](#) to this guidebook outlines the GI Bill programs pertaining to advanced education; it also identifies helpful resources for pursuing these benefits. GI Bill benefits may be used for many types of training and, in particular, may be used for advanced degrees and technical training, licensing and certification reimbursement, national testing programs (e.g., the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT), GRE, Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT)), and tuition assistance (the GI Bill may be used to supplement the tuition and fees not covered by military tuition assistance). Please see [Exhibit D](#) for information on the active GI Bill programs.

Student Tip!

If you have served in the military or you are related to someone who has or is currently serving, you might be eligible for the GI Bill education benefits.

²⁸ “Education and Training.” U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, www.benefits.va.gov/gibill.

D. STUDENT LOANS

A student loan is a type of loan designed to help students pay for post-secondary education and the associated fees such as tuition, books, supplies, and living expenses.²⁹ Typically, this type of loan differs from others in that the interest rate may be substantially lower, and the repayment schedule may be deferred while the student is in school.³⁰

In the United States, there are two types of student loans: (1) Federal loans, sponsored by the Federal Government and (2) private student loans (e.g., a bank or financial institution or other organization). The overwhelming majority of student loans are Federal loans because they usually have more benefits than private loans. Interest does not accrue on subsidized loans while the students are in school.³¹ Schools offer student loans as part of a total financial aid package that may also include grants, scholarships, and/or work study opportunities. If you decide to take out a loan, make sure you understand who is making the loan and the terms and conditions of the loan.

Student Loans: More Information

- FAQs on Federal Student Loans: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/loans>
- FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) Form: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/>
- Scholarships and Grants: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/grants-scholarships#federal>

E. FEDERAL STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM

The Federal Student Loan Repayment Program (FSLRP)³² permits agencies to repay eligible federally insured student loans as a recruitment or retention incentive for candidates or current employees of the Agency. Agencies have the discretion to offer this program based on their Agency training policy.

For more information, visit <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/student-loan-repayment/>.

F. PUBLIC LOAN FORGIVENESS PROGRAM

The Public Loan Forgiveness Program³³ encourages individuals to enter and continue to work full time in public service jobs. Under this program, borrowers may qualify for forgiveness of the remaining balance of their direct loans after they have made 120 qualifying payments on those loans while employed full time by certain Government or public service (not-for-profit) employers.

For information on qualification, visit <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/public-service#what-is-the-public>.

²⁹ “Federal Student Loans for College or Career School Are an Investment in Your Future.” Federal Student Aid, U.S. Department of Education, <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/loans>.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ “Types of Aid.” Federal Student Aid, U.S. Department of Education, <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types>.

³² “Pay & Leave Student Loan Repayment.” OPM.gov, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/student-loan-repayment/>, “Student Loan Repayment and Forgiveness.” GoGovernment, Partnership for Public Service, http://gogovernment.org/government_101/student_loan_repayment.php.

³³ “Public Service Loan Forgiveness.” Federal Student Aid, an Office for the U.S. Department of Education, <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/public-service#what-is-the-public>.

VI. FELLOWSHIPS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

There are scholarship and fellowship opportunities available for DoD civilian engineers. These monetary awards help offset the costs of tuition and expenses and, in some cases, provide excellent career opportunities or the ability to receive one's salary while attending school.

A. STEM SCHOLARSHIPS

DoD scholarships provide cash awards to students who have a demonstrated ability and aptitude for excelling in STEM fields in disciplines of importance to DoD. At the graduate level, there are two options:

1. National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate (NDSEG) Fellowship
2. Science, Mathematics, and Research for Transformation (SMART) Scholarship for Service

NDSEG Fellowship³⁴

The NDSEG Fellowship is awarded to U.S. citizens and nationals pursuing a doctoral degree in one of 15 supported technical disciplines that are of interest to DoD. DoD is committed to increasing the number and quality of the Nation's scientists and engineers and has thus awarded nearly 3,400 NDSEG fellowships since the program's founding in 1989. The eligible engineering-related disciplines are the following:

- Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering
- Chemical Engineering
- Civil Engineering
- Electrical Engineering
- Materials Science and Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering
- Naval Architecture and Ocean Engineering

The other technical disciplines are: Biosciences, Chemistry, Cognitive, Neural and Behavioral Sciences, Computer and Computational Sciences, Geosciences, Mathematics, Oceanography, and Physics. Please note that since this a doctoral program, backgrounds tailored to these disciplines probably apply.

The fellowship allows the recipients to attend whichever U.S. institution they choose. The NDSEG Fellowship lasts for 3 years and pays for full tuition and all mandatory fees, a monthly stipend, and up to \$1,000 a year in medical insurance. Applications are due in January of each year.

Did You Know?

In 2016, 34 Federal Agencies provided 9,868 employees with a total of more than \$71.6 million in student loan repayment benefits. The average student loan repayment benefit in 2016 was \$7,258. That year, DoD increased its usage of the program by 13.1 percent compared to the year before. That year, DoD used this program extensively as an incentive for engineers and provided the benefits to a total of 848 employees in engineering positions. Engineers who received the most student loan repayment benefits included nuclear engineers (215), electrical or electronics engineers (156), and mechanical engineers (148).

NDSEG: More Information

- <https://ndseg.asee.org/>
- <https://www.ndsegfellowships.org/> (application information)
- <https://www.onr.navy.mil/Education-Outreach/undergraduate-graduate/NDSEG-graduate-fellowship>

³⁴ "NDSEG Information." National Defense Science & Engineering Graduate Fellowship, American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE), https://ndseg.asee.org/about_ndseg; "Welcome." National Defense Science & Engineering Graduate Fellowship, ASEE, <https://ndseg.asee.org/>.

SMART Scholarship for Service³⁵

The SMART Scholarship for Service program was established by DoD to support undergraduate and graduate students pursuing technical degrees in STEM disciplines. This program aims to increase the number of civilian scientists and engineers working at DoD facilities. This is a full scholarship and results in employment by DoD upon degree completion. The eligible engineering-related disciplines are:

- Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering
- Chemical Engineering
- Civil Engineering
- Computer and Computational Sciences and Computer Engineering
- Electrical Engineering
- Industrial and Systems Engineering (technical tracks only)
- Materials Science and Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering
- Naval Architecture and Ocean Engineering
- Nuclear Engineering

**SMART:
More Information**

- <https://www.smartscholarship.org>
- https://smartscholarshipprod.service-now.com/smart?id=smart_index
- https://smartscholarshipprod.service-now.com/smart?id=kb_article&sys_id=0383c5d6db2a03006bb8f4b40f961956 (application information and instructions)

This scholarship is a school for service program and awardees must be willing to accept post-graduate employment with DoD and must be able to participate in summer internships at a DoD facility.

Awardees must be:

- A citizen of the United States, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, or the United Kingdom at the time of application.
- A student in good standing with a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale
- Currently enrolled in a regionally accredited U.S. college or university or awaiting notification of admission to such.
- Have taken the GRE.
- Must be pursuing a technical degree in one of the 19 STEM disciplines.

Upon selection, awardees are assigned to a DoD facility where he/she will be expected to serve as a summer intern and complete a period of post-graduate employment service as a DoD civilian. Students may select up to three preferred DoD facilities for placement, but placement is not guaranteed.

The employment obligation to the DoD civilian Science and Technology (S&T) workforce upon graduation is a one-to-one commitment. For each academic year of a participant's award, he/she is required to commit to 1 year of civilian employment with DoD. Failure to comply with the service commitment requires prompt reimbursement of all funds expended under the program by the U.S. Government on behalf of the participant.

³⁵ "SMART Scholarship Program." Science, Mathematics, and Research for Transformation Part of the National Defense Education Program, www.smartscholarship.org, www.smartscholarshipprod.service-now.com/smart.

B. NATIONAL PHYSICAL SCIENCE CONSORTIUM DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM³⁶

The National Physical Science Consortium (NPSC) is an organization of leading universities, national laboratories, and corporations that aims to increase the number of qualified U.S. citizen Ph.D.'s in the physical sciences and related engineering fields. It emphasizes recruitment of a diverse applicant pool of women and historically underrepresented minorities.

The National Security Agency (NSA) is a corporate member of the consortium, and it sponsors students pursuing doctorates in mathematics, engineering, computer science, and physics. In addition to providing financial support through membership dues, the NSA also provides technical mentoring and at least two summers of employment to each sponsored student.

NPSC: More Information

- <http://www.npsc.org/Applicants/Applicants/fellowshipinfo.html>
- <http://www.npsc.org/index.html>
(application is displayed on the home page when it is "open" for applicants)

C. FEDERAL EMPLOYEE EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE FUND

The Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund (FEEA)³⁷ is the only independent, nonprofit 501c3 organization devoted solely to providing emergency financial assistance and scholarships to civilian Federal and postal public servants and their families. The FEEA does a myriad of support endeavors, including scholarships. While the bulk of the scholarship awards are for undergraduate studies, some are for graduate programs.

For more information, visit <https://feea.org/our-programs/scholarships/#scholar> or visit the DoD Civilian Careers website.

D. OFFICE OF NAVAL RESEARCH HISTORICALLY BLACK ENGINEERING COLLEGE FUTURE FACULTY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The Office of Naval Research Historically Black Engineering College Future Faculty Fellowship Program³⁸ was developed to attract qualified engineering faculty to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) with engineering programs. Each year, three recipients, who have agreed to join the engineering faculty of an HBCU after receiving their degrees, are competitively selected for study and research support leading to doctoral degrees in engineering.

For more information and points of contact (POCs), please visit <https://www.onr.navy.mil/en/Education-Outreach/HBCU-MI-Historically-Black-Colleges>.

³⁶ "SMART Scholarship Program." Science, Mathematics, and Research for Transformation Part of the National Defense Education Program, www.smartscholarship.org, www.smartscholarshipprod.service-now.com/smart.

³⁷ "Scholarships." Federal Employee Education & Assistance Fund, <https://feea.org/our-programs/scholarships/#scholar>.

³⁸ "Historically Black Colleges and Universities/Minority Institutions." Office of Naval Research Science & Technology, Office of Naval Research, <https://www.onr.navy.mil/en/Education-Outreach/HBCU-MI-Historically-Black-Colleges>.

E. MITRE'S SYSTEMS ENGINEERING FELLOWSHIP FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

MITRE's Systems Engineering Fellowship for Federal Employees³⁹ is in partnership with the University of Virginia (UVA). Please see below for general information about the MITRE Corporation program.

About. This is an accelerated master's degree in systems engineering from UVA. The program is 12 months. Classes are held on the UVA campus in Charlottesville, VA. All hands-on work takes place Monday through Thursday on MITRE's campus in McLean, VA. Classes are held at UVA on alternating Friday/Saturdays with breaks between each trimester. The first and last weeks of the program are full week courses.

Eligible Participants. Eligible participants are active military and civilian Government employees with excellent performance reviews and an undergraduate degree.

To Apply. To apply, visit <https://www.mitre.org/capabilities/systems-engineering/collaborations/mitre-systems-engineering-fellowship-program-for>. Check the website for application deadlines and additional information.

Submit. Submit an application form, résumé/cover letter, official undergraduate transcripts, two letters of recommendation, a two-page white paper that addresses a key systems engineering capability area or interest, and a separate application to UVA (information can be reused).

Coverage/Benefit. An applicant's Government employer pays all costs, including the employee's salary, approximately \$32,000 in UVA tuition, and any expenses for relocation and temporary housing for the fellowship participant. Sponsors can also leverage the OPM IPA Mobility Program as a source of funding for a Systems Engineering Fellow.

F. FRY SCHOLARSHIP

Please see [Exhibit D](#) for GI Bill benefits.

G. GRADUATE EDUCATION FOR MINORITIES (GEM) FELLOWSHIP

GEM is a network of leading corporations, government laboratories, top universities, and top research institutions that enables qualified students from underrepresented communities to pursue graduate education in applied science and engineering.

For more information visit: <http://www.gemfellowship.org/>

³⁹ "MITRE Systems Engineering Fellowship Program for Federal Employees." The MITRE Corporation, <https://www.mitre.org/capabilities/systems-engineering/collaborations/mitre-systems-engineering-fellowship-program-for>.

VII. SUCCEEDING IN SCHOOL AND MAXIMIZING YOUR INVESTMENT

Below is anecdotal advice from a peer with knowledge and experience on the advanced degree process and its impact on careers. This contributor has personally undergone this process and has advice on succeeding in school and maximizing an investment in education.

From JH, B.S. Mechanical Engineering, M.S. Engineering Management, PhD Industrial and Systems Engineering, U.S. Army:

- Can you be organized? Can you manage the time? Are you dedicated to what you're doing? Usually if you get into the program, you have the knowledge and ability to succeed.
- Work, school, and family: when you're doing all three, you're going to succeed in two of these categories. You cannot succeed on all three of these over a long period of time. It is not sustainable. Consider doing distance learning or a sabbatical program, where you can take time off from work to focus completely on school. Work, family, and school are probably the three main aspects of your life, and you have to give and taken in order to be successful in school.
- Think long term about this investment and not just three years out. Consider, "What am I going to do with this knowledge to be more successful in my career 10, 15, 20 years from now." Make short-term decisions with the long-term implications in mind. You are not getting a degree to only satisfy something in the near term.

This advice is from RK, Quality Assurance Specialist, Former USAF Instructor, MA in Education with Adult Specialization:

Why Return to School?⁴⁰

1. **Practicality:** Will the degree get you where you want or need to go?
 - Many jobs "require" obtainment of a master's degree before employment in that sector.
 - DAWIA Levels 1 & 2 & 3 do not require completion of an advanced degree for any certifications. There are "desired" levels of education.
 - Your competitive edge for future promotions may be helped by having an advanced degree, but it is not a silver bullet.
 - Example DAWIA Certification CORE PLUS DEVELOPMENTAL *desired* Education:

PQM-"Master's degree in engineering, chemistry, physical science, mathematics, statistics, manufacturing or production management, industrial technology or management, business, quality assurance, or a related field"
2. **You Get to Learn More About What You Love:** Knowing more about what you love is how you nurture that love and let it blossom into a rewarding career that you can take pride in, but remember that what you love may not be what your employer will help you

⁴⁰ Sources:

1. <https://www.mastersprogramsguide.com/earn-masters-degree/>
2. <https://icatalog.dau.edu/onlinecatalog/CareerLvl.aspx>
3. <https://www.salary.com/passages/8-college-degrees-with-the-worst-return-on-investment/3/>
4. <https://evollution.com/opinions/significant-challenges-facing-adult-students/>

pay for. You still have to consider the alignment of your goals with employer goals, if you want your employer to fund the degree.

3. **Research Opportunities:** When you sign up for a master's program, particularly in a science-related field, you will gain a unique opportunity to do research into niche topics that interest you.
4. **Sense of Accomplishment:** Getting a master's degree is something that can really boost self-esteem and sense of self-worth, because you will know that you put forth the effort and time and really worked hard to achieve this goal that not everyone is able to achieve. Like a bachelor's degree, many people are not working in the field of their degree specialization, but they may well have been selected because of their accomplishment.
5. **Increased Respect and Credibility:** Obtaining a master's degree is more than just earning a degree. It's going above and beyond what is expected of the average person in the pursuit of knowledge and career advancement, which is viewed by many as a very respectable pursuit and they respond as such.
 - Caution: it is likely many supervisors do not know or care whether you have an advanced degree, unless you do something to make that accomplishment valuable to their career or the office mission.
6. **Free Tuition:** Agency budget cuts can impact this process. Before you cancel your plans to get an advanced degree, consider whether the return on investment is worthy of your personal investment of finances. Is the degree valuable enough to pursue at your own expense? Also, just because tuition assistance may not be available, it does not mean funding isn't available in another way.
7. **Easier to Get the next Job:** There is LIFE after this job! This is especially important if you are early in your employment life.
8. **Career Advancement:** Leverage your interest as you broaden your career horizons.
 - Caution: For many major employers, a master's degree has become the credential of choice for leadership roles within the company. However, this may not be the case for a career DCMA employee. Your past work and career potential should round out your academic success to drive your career forward. If your career has already stalled, then having an advanced degree may not help.
 - Reminder: Just about EVERY DCMA job ad in USAJOBS.GOV for management positions has the following statement, "education cannot be substituted for experience."
 - However, if you are applying for a GS11 or below, you will likely see the following statement, "education can be substituted for experience."
 - You may also see job ads that state, "For the GS-09: successful completion of a master's or equivalent graduate degree"
 - Do you want to get an advanced degree to qualify for a GS-09 position?
9. **Greater Possibility for a Career Change:** Another great benefit to earning a master's degree is the versatility it will offer in your professional life. Not only will you be qualified

for the niche field that your master's degree is actually in, but it will allow you to be qualified for a broader spectrum of careers in that career field. Remember ROI isn't just cash— it can be travel, experiences, moving, etc.

10. **Higher Earning Potential – Maybe:** On average, individuals with a master's degree make \$17,000 more annually than a person with a bachelor's; however, lower ROI advanced degree fields include sociology, fine arts, education, religions/theology, hospitality/tourism, nutrition, psychology, and communications. On average, these do not have a high ROI.

Finally, you should understand the required commitment of an adult student. If you haven't been to school in a while, be advised that things have changed! Consider:

1. School and Life Responsibilities: it's a balancing act but you already knew that and you've got this!
2. Accessibility: you can attend in person, online, etc. you've got this!
3. Cost: costs per credit hour have increased over time.

VIII. APPLYING DEFENSE ACQUISITION UNIVERSITY CREDITS

- In some cases, tuition assistance is paid out by credit hour or individual credits. Thus, getting “free” credits, or figuring out how to overlap credits, maximizes tuition assistance dollars. For example, there are classes that you take through the Defense Acquisition University (DAU), or there are university courses you can apply toward DAU credits for a DAU certificate. Many schools offer some credit hours for courses taken at DAU, or in exchange for achieving certification from the DAWIA Career Field Certification.
- The DAU transcript shows the “American Council on Education (ACE)” credit hours for Lower Division, Upper Division, and Graduate Studies, which is usually what the college is looking for when they award any credit hours as a course equivalent or elective. The schools use the certifications from DAU to give credit for their courses.

Master’s Requirements Program Curriculum

The 36 credit hours required for the master of arts (MA) in procurement and acquisitions management or the 48 credit hours required for the master of business administration (MBA) with an emphasis in procurement and acquisitions management must include the following courses:

- PROC 5000 Procurement and Acquisitions Management (Requisite Course) (3 hours)
- PROC 5810 Acquisitions Law (3 hours)
- PROC 5820 Operations Management (3 hours)
- PROC 5830 Pricing (3 hours)
- PROC 5840 Negotiations (3 hours)
- PROC 5850 Logistics (3 hours)
- PROC 6000 Integrated Studies in Procurement and Acquisitions Management (3 hours)

In addition, the student chooses elective courses offered in this major and/or from the program curricula of other George Herbert Walker School of Business & Technology majors.

Certificate Requirements Requirements

The curriculum requires 18 credit hours of specialized courses in contracting, acquisitions management, pricing, negotiations, and procurement law. These government contracting certificate courses are equivalent to certain Defense Acquisition University (DAU) courses and can be used to meet the educational certification requirements of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA). Specifically, the 18 credit hours required for the graduate certificate in government contracting must include the following courses:

- PROC 5000 Procurement and Acquisitions Management (3 hours)
- PROC 5830 Pricing (3 hours)
- PROC 5840 Negotiations (3 hours)
- PROC 5860 Government Contracting (3 hours)
- PROC 5870 Pricing and Contract Integration (3 hours)
- PROC 5890 Government Procurement Law (3 hours)

Identify overlapping credits so you can get a graduate certificate as you work toward a master’s.

Certifications			
Career Field	Level	Certification Date	Certificate
Engineering	1	05/20/2016	
Engineering	2	08/08/2016	
Engineering	3	09/09/2019	
Information Technology	1	11/02/2016	
Program Management			
Test and Evaluation			

Many schools offer some credit hours for courses taken at Defense Acquisition University or in exchange for achieving certification from the DAWIA Career Field Certification



DEFENSE ACQUISITION UNIVERSITY
9820 Belvoir Road, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5565

UNOFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT AS OF DECEMBER 5, 2019

STUDENT: [REDACTED]
DAU ID: [REDACTED]

Course Code	Course Title	Started	Completed ¹	ACE ²	CEU ³	CLP ⁴	RRP ⁵	VCC ⁸
SECTION I: DAU Classroom and Web Course Completions								
ENG 302	ADVANCED SYSTEMS ENGINEERING	2019-07-30	2019-08-09	6U	7.10	71.00	N/A	N/A
CME 204	ENGINEERING CHANGE PROPOSAL REVIEW	2018-05-22	2018-05-23	2L	1.70	17.00	N/A	N/A
CME 202	CONFIGURATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM REVIEW	2018-04-30	2018-05-04	N/A	2.90	29.00	N/A	0.00
TST 102	FUNDAMENTALS OF TEST AND EVALUATION	2017-08-08	2017-10-26	2L	1.80	18.00	5	N/A
CMI 140	MULTIFUNCTIONAL SURVEILLANCE OF PRIME CCS	2017-03-22	2017-05-19	N/A	0.70	7.00	2	N/A
EVM 202	INTERMEDIATE EARNED VALUE MANAGEMENT	2017-03-14	2017-03-24	N/A	5.90	59.00	N/A	N/A
CME 201	ENGINEERING SURVEILLANCE	2016-12-07	2017-01-04	N/A	0.70	7.00	2	N/A
STM 101	INTRODUCTION TO S&T MANAGEMENT	2016-08-03	2016-09-06	N/A	0.40	4.00	1	N/A
ENG 202	APPLIED SYS ENGINEERING IN DOD ACQ PART II	2016-06-13	2016-06-17	N/A	3.60	36.00	N/A	N/A
CMI 100	INTEGRATED PROGRAM REPORTING BASICS	2016-04-05	2016-05-19	N/A	1.10	11.00	3	N/A
LOG 103	RELIABILITY, AVAILABILITY, & MAINTAINABILITY	2016-03-14	2016-05-10	2L	2.20	22.00	6	N/A
SYS 202	INTERMEDIATE SYSTEMS PLANNING, RD&E- PART 1	2016-03-01	2016-03-10	N/A	0.90	9.00	2	N/A
ENG 101	FUNDAMENTALS OF SYSTEMS ENGINEERING	2016-02-11	2016-03-07	N/A	3.50	35.00	9	N/A
LOG 101	ACQUISITION LOGISTICS FUNDAMENTALS	2014-11-18	2015-01-17	N/A	2.70	27.00	7	N/A
ACQ 201B	INTERMEDIATE SYSTEMS ACQUISITION	2014-03-10	2014-03-14	N/A	3.40	34.00	N/A	N/A
ACQ 201A	INTERMEDIATE SYSTEMS ACQUISITION	2014-01-07	2014-02-25	N/A	2.50	25.00	6	N/A
SAM 101	BASIC SOFTWARE ACQUISITION MANAGEMENT	2013-12-12	2013-12-30	N/A	3.50	35.00	9	N/A
EVM 101	FUNDAMENTALS OF EARNED VALUE MANAGEMENT	2013-12-13	2013-12-20	N/A	1.80	18.00	5	N/A
SYS 101	FUNDAMENTALS OF SYSTEMS PLANNING, RD&E	2013-11-13	2013-11-28	N/A	3.50	35.00	9	N/A
ACQ 101	FUNDAMENTALS OF SYSTEMS ACQUISITION MGMT	2013-08-17	2013-08-25	N/A	2.50	25.00	6	N/A

On the Defense Acquisition University transcript they show the American Council on Education (ACE) credit hours for Lower Division, Upper Division and Graduate studies which is usually what the college is looking for when they award any credit hours as a course equivalent or elective.

IX. CONCLUSION

This guidebook contains resources, forms, and other sample documents. Please be advised that these are all subject to change over time and that you should use them as references. Before relying completely on any document or reference in this guidebook, please do a check with your Command's resources to ensure you are using the most current versions.

X. EXHIBITS

The following exhibits are provided for reference:

- Exhibit A-1: Program Tracking Worksheet
- Exhibit A-2: Application-Tracking Worksheet
- Exhibit B: OPM Partnership Schools
- Exhibit C: Standardized Testing
- Exhibit D: Active GI Bill Programs
- Exhibit G: NPS Application Information
- Exhibit H: Policy Instruction for Department of the Navy Civilian Career Development
- Exhibit I: CAE Guideline Number 013 Dated September 1, 2016
- Exhibit J: DISA's Competitive Programs Summary
- Exhibit K: Glossary

EXHIBIT A-1: PROGRAM TRACKING WORKSHEET

Program Tracking Worksheet								
School Name	Program Type	Application Due Date	Testing Requirements	Tuition & Fees	Program Length/ Course Requirements	Full-Time/ Part-Time	Live or Distance Learning	Notes

EXHIBIT B: OPM PARTNERSHIP SCHOOLS⁴¹

School	Benefit	Online/On Campus
The Catholic University of America Metropolitan School of Professional Studies https://metro.catholic.edu/admission/opportunities/opm-federal/index.html	10% scholarship toward tuition for any of the schools online or in-person courses. Application fee waived.	Online, face-to-face, and hybrid
Central Michigan University https://www.cmich.edu/global/fed/Pages/default.aspx?utm_source=redirect	15% discount and application fee waived for all civil service Federal employees, spouses, and their dependents.	Online, face-to-face, and hybrid; condensed 8-week courses; master's and bachelor's degrees and certificate programs.
Champlain College http://www.champlain.edu/truedfed	Up to 50% off standard tuition (this makes online tuition: \$265 per undergraduate credit and \$398 per graduate credit). No program exclusions. No application fee.	Online
College for America (CfA) at Southern New Hampshire University http://collegeforamerica.org/Gov	As of 2020, the 6-month term tuition rate is \$1,500. CfA reserves the right to adjust tuition costs for subsequent years. This model provides an "all you can learn" approach. Graduation fee of \$150 waived. There is no applicant fee to enroll in CfA.	
Drexel University Online https://online.drexel.edu/opm	The tuition will be discounted 10 to 40%.	Online
Excelsior College https://www.excelsior.edu/partner/fed-education/	15% discount on graduate classes (\$550/credit hour).	Online
Georgetown University School of Continuing Studies http://scs.georgetown.edu/opm-federal-scholarship-alliance/	10% scholarship applied to Georgetown's published tuition rate for the relevant School of Continuing Studies program each academic semester.	Online, resident
Pace University https://ipaceinfo.pace.edu/pace-federal-portal	iPace programs, the per-credit rate is discounted by about 50%. The Master of Arts in Management for Public Safety and Homeland Security per credit rate is discounted by 20%. The MPA and the M.S. in Internet Technology are also discounted at 20% of the regular tuition rate.	Online
Park University https://a2e.park.edu/ (navigate to "Federal Academic Alliance")	A 16% discount off normal undergraduate tuition, which is the same rate as our military veteran rate. A 12% discount off normal graduate tuition, which is the same as our military veteran rate. Admission fee will be waived for this Alliance.	Online, resident, and hybrid

⁴¹ "Training and Development Policy Wiki Federal Academic Alliances." OPM.gov, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, www.opm.gov/WIKI/training/Federal-Governmentwide-Academic-Alliances.ashx.

School	Benefit	Online/On Campus
Penn State University World Campus https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/gov/federal-government/overview	5% tuition reduction on competitive Penn State World Campus tuition rates, with no program exclusions or out-of-state rates.	Online, hybrid
Saint Mary's University of Minnesota https://landing.onlineprograms.smumn.edu/FedGov	10% tuition grant, making online tuition range from \$405 to \$571.50. Waived application fee. Online courses range in credit hours from 1-4. On campus tuition ranges \$310.50 to \$711. Waived application fee. On campus courses range in credit hours from 1-5.	Online, resident, and hybrid
University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law http://www.law.umaryland.edu/prospective/FEDEM/	Federal Employee (FEDEM) Grant equivalent to a 10% tuition discount.	Resident, small selection of online
University of Maryland Robert H. Smith School of Business https://www.rhsmith.umd.edu/fedgrant	FEDEM Grant in the form of a 30% credit to their student tuition. The dollar amount of the grant will vary based on which Eligible Smith Program the participants enroll in and whether the tuition rate is in-State or out-of-State or per semester or per credit.	Resident, online
University of Maryland University College https://www.umuc.edu/business-partners/federal-training-officer-resources/index.cfm	Application fee waiver. 25% discount on out-of-State tuition for most programs. 5% discount on tuition for graduate specialty programs.	Online, hybrid
Utica College https://landing.online.utica.edu/federalgovernment	10% tuition reduction Waived application fee (a savings of \$50).	Online

EXHIBIT C: STANDARDIZED TESTING

The GRE is the most widely used graduate admissions exam. There is a GRE General Test and also subject-specific tests. Some schools may allow you to submit GRE Subject Test in lieu of the GRE General Test, or the school may require more than one of these tests. It is important to track these requirements. Ideally, you will want to take only one of the tests, and it might be beneficial to apply to schools with uniform testing requirements so you avoid duplicating testing efforts.

If you are a non-native English speaker and you are thinking about studying in an English-speaking country, you may have to demonstrate your proficiency with the English language by taking a standardized test. The **TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)** is the most widely used, and we have covered the basics of this below.

Student Tip!

The GMAT (Graduate Management Admissions Test) is a test used for business school applications. Information about the GMAT is found at www.mba.com. The MCAT (Medical College Admissions Test) is used for medical school applications, and the LSAT (Law School Admissions Test) is used for law school applications (in some cases, a GRE may be used for law school applications).

Student Tip!

You might be able to waive the GRE or other entrance exam. The big thing here is ASK. One student was able to waive the GRE based on the fact that he passed his state level Engineer in Training (EIT) Exam.

Also ...

Some programs do not require standardized tests. For example, Johns Hopkins does not require tests or letters of recommendation.

A. Graduate Record Examinations

General Information⁴²

Information about the GRE can be found at <https://www.ets.org/gre>.

In order to register to take the GRE General Test or GRE Subject Test, you will need to create an Educational Testing Service (ETS) account (https://www.ets.org/gre/revise_general/register/your_ets_account/), and you will register to test by signing into this account.

The GRE General Test is widely accepted and required by graduate schools of all varieties. More likely than not, the programs you are interested in will require a GRE General Test score. The GRE General Test features question types in verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning, and analytical writing or general skills (skills developed over time and not related to a specific field of study, but are important for all).

GRE Subject Test⁴³

A GRE Subject Test can highlight your strengths in a specific subject area, such as biology or math. In rare cases, a graduate program will actually require a GRE Subject Test score (again, be sure to check as these are more likely required by a graduate program at a top university; for example, the University of Notre Dame requires a GRE Subject Test for its graduate programs in math and physics, as do New York University, Yale, and Stanford). More often than not, a GRE Subject Test is simply recommended by the Admissions Office as an additional boost to your application. Sometimes, taking a GRE Subject Test can give you a competitive edge over other applicants if the school doesn't expressly require or expressly recommend taking the test. For example, UC-Berkeley's program for Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences does not require or even recommend taking a GRE Subject Test, but the graduate admissions frequently-asked-questions page for this department says that they do accept the Subject GRE

⁴² "About the GRE General Test." Educational Testing Service, https://www.ets.org/gre/revise_general/about.

⁴³ "About the GRE Subject Tests." Educational Testing Service, <https://www.ets.org/gre/subject/about>.

in math or physics. There is no penalty for not taking one; however, a strong score on this test would likely increase your chances for acceptance into this program. Information on the GRE Subject Tests is located at <https://www.ets.org/gre/institutions/about/subject/>.

GRE General Test⁴⁴

The GRE General Test is available at more than 1,000 test centers in more than 160 countries. In most regions of the world, the computer-delivered test is available on a continuous basis throughout the year at “Prometric” test centers. Appointments to take the test are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. In mainland China; Hong Kong, China; Taiwan, China; and Korea, the computer-delivered test is available up to three times per month. In areas of the world where computer-delivered testing is not available, the paper-delivered test is available up to three times a year in October, November, and February.

Information on test centers and dates can be found at https://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/register/centers_dates.

You may take the computer-delivered GRE General Test once every 21 days, up to five times within any continuous rolling 12-month period (365 days). You may take the paper-delivered GRE General Test as often as it is offered. The GRE test provides the “Score Select” option, which means you can take the GRE multiple times and only send schools your best set of scores.

The paper-delivered test center list can be found at https://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/register/centers_dates/pdt_test_centers.

Please note that not all test centers are open on all test dates.

Preparing for the GRE

You will need to study and practice for the GRE General Test before you sit for the exam. Many schools have minimum score expectations for admittance, and achieving those scores requires studying for most students. ETS offers a variety of free and low-cost tools to help you prepare for the test. Please see https://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/prepare/.

There are also Facebook pages and smartphone apps you can download as low-cost preparations for the GRE. Here are a few smartphone apps you could explore for GRE (or TOEFL) preparation:

- Ready4GRE
- Magoosh GRE Prep
- Barron’s 1100 for GRE
- Manhattan Prep GRE
- Magoosh TOEFL App
- IntelliVocab for GRE and GMAT
- TOEFL Preparation
- Exam English: TOEFL Grammar
- GRE Daily Vocabulary

Student Tip!

When selecting a test date, make sure your scores will be reported in time for your application deadlines. For computer-delivered tests, score reports are sent to your designated score recipients approximately 10 to 15 days after your test date. Please allow for delivery of scores and processing by the institution. For paper-delivered tests, score reports are sent to the score recipients you designate according to the approximate score report mailing dates listed at https://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/register/centers_dates.

⁴⁴ “About the GRE General Test.” Educational Testing Service, https://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/about.

- GRE Flashcards by Magoosh
- Ultimate Vocabulary Prep for English, GRE and Exams

Test-prep companies, such as the Princeton Review, Manhattan, Barron's, and Kaplan, offer full preparation courses for these standardized tests. These are more costly. If you are going to take a course, it is worthwhile to conduct research on what format and teaching style is best suited for you.

Cost of the GRE

As of 2020, the cost of sitting for the GRE is \$160 for individuals testing in the United States, U.S. Territories, and Puerto Rico. It is \$190 for individuals testing in all other locations. There are additional costs for late registration or for changing your testing center.

B. Test of English as a Foreign Language⁴⁵

If you are a non-native English speaker and you are applying to programs in English-speaking geographies, you may be required to take the TOEFL. Each institution sets its own score requirements. The TOEFL may be taken online. The test in its online format is called the "TOEFL iBT" test. It is offered more than 50 times a year and is administered online at testing sites around the world. The TOEFL test may also be taken as a paper-delivered test. This is called the TOEFL PBT test.

C. Study and Test-Taking Tips

These test-taking tips were provided by M.R., Program Analyst, MBA, MA in Strategic Studies.

- Research the test itself: Whether it is the LSAT, GRE, MCAT, or a test for a special certification, each test is going to have its own approach and type of questions, for example, content based, question/answer, judgment, or scenarios.
- There is no substitute for knowing the material.
- Do not overthink the questions; do not introduce material that isn't there; do not presume facts not in evidence. Each question is its own universe.
- Focus on the question itself. The test makers will give you an answer that is TRUE but not relevant to the question. Read the question twice and focus on key words.
- All of the tests have time limits. Do some quick math on how much time you can allocate to each question.
- Pace yourself: you will find some questions easy. Budget your time to know when you should be halfway done, etc. Answer the easy questions first. Skip hard questions and return to them.
- Approaching a hard question: can you discard one or two answers? Then make an educated guess among the remaining options.
- Many people get test anxiety. Go into the test with the mindset of going slow to go fast ... be deliberate and smooth. Smooth is fast.

TOEFL: Resources

- Frequently Asked Questions: <https://www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/faq> (Please see the "TOEFL Destination Search" on that page to view score requirements by institution)
- About TOEFL: <https://www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/about/>
- Fees: <https://www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/about/fees/>
- Register: <https://www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/register/>
- Prepare: <https://www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/prepare/>
- Smartphone Apps: You may also use apps on your smartphone to prepare for TOEFL; a few suggested apps are Magoosh TOEFL App, Exam English: TOEFL Grammar, and TOEFL Preparation

⁴⁵ "The TOEFL Test." ETS TOEFL, Educational Testing Service, https://www.ets.org/toefl/?WT.ac=etshome_toefl_flagship_180417.

- You can't bring anything into the test: use acronyms as memory and learning tricks.
- Digest the material so that you are in control of it. One of the best ways to do this is to explain the material to someone else - join a study group, explain it to your dog. Gain experience dealing with the material and demonstrate your facility with the material.
- There is also no substitute for the test itself. Obtain copies of past tests and practice tests. You can purchase practice tests, but be sure they are from a reputable source.
- Some of the tests are programmed/adaptive and the questions will increase in difficulty based on how you've been doing. For this test, you have to employ a different strategy. This test has a different flavor and philosophy and you won't be able to jump between questions. Again, this comes down to knowing the philosophy of the test you will be taking.
- For veterans and Service members, the Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) at Syracuse University provides (among other career services) test fees, study materials, and advice at no charge. Apply for their programs at <https://ivmf.syracuse.edu/>

EXHIBIT D: ACTIVE GI BILL PROGRAMS

Currently there are three GI Bill programs, each with a slightly different beneficiary group, which might be beneficial for the attainment of an advanced technical degree. These are:

1. **Post-9/11 GI Bill.** This GI Bill provides educational benefits for those who served on active duty for 90 or more days after September 10, 2001.
2. **Active Duty Montgomery GI Bill.** This program helps Service members and veterans meet their education and training costs with monthly benefit payments.
3. **Reserve and Guard Montgomery GI Bill.** These benefits are available for Selected Reserve and National Guard members to help with education and training costs.

GI Bill Programs

GI Bill Program	Eligibility	Benefit	Transferability	More Information
Post-9/11 GI Bill	Must have served at least 30 days of continuous active duty service after September 10, 2001, and be discharged due to a Service-connected disability or served an aggregate of 90 days of active duty service and received honorable discharge. For Reservists and Guard members, there are certain active duty qualifiers.	Can pay your full tuition and fees at school, provide you with a monthly housing allowance while you are going to school, and give you up to \$1,000 a year to use for books and supplies. May also provide a one-time relocation allowance to move to where your school is located.	Allows an eligible Service member to transfer their unused benefits to family members.	https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/post911_gibill.asp https://www.military.com/education/gi-bill/new-post-911-gi-bill-overview.html
Active Duty Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB)	You qualify for the MGIB if: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You contribute \$100 a month for the first 12 months you are in active duty, or qualify under Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP) conversion. 2. You have completed high school or have an equivalency certificate before you apply for benefits. 3. You have served at least 2 years active duty. 4. You have received an honorable discharge from active duty. 	The MGIB helps Service members and veterans meet their education and training costs with monthly benefit payments. It provides over \$69,000 in cash and numerous support programs. The value of the MGIB is based on the current maximum monthly payment rate of \$1,928 multiplied by the 36-month limit. The benefit is up to eight semesters (4 years) of traditional academic education.	N/A	https://www.military.com/education/gi-bill/montgomery-gi-bill.html

GI Bill Program	Eligibility	Benefit	Transferability	More Information
Reserve and Guard MGIB	<p>The MGIB Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR) is available to members of the Army, Navy, USAF, USMC, and U.S. Coast Guard Reserves, as well as the National Guard.</p> <p>You must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have a 6-year obligation to serve in the Selected Reserve or Guard signed after June 30, 1985. If you are an officer, you must have agreed to serve 6 years in addition to your original obligation. 2. Complete your initial active duty for training (IADT). 3. Meet the requirement to receive a high school diploma or equivalency certificate before completing IADT. 4. Remain in good standing while serving in an active Selected Reserve Unit. 	<p>The MGIB-SR benefit is worth over \$11,000.</p> <p>The steps to apply for the GI Bill are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Find a school that has VA-approved training or education programs. Be sure to ask the admissions counselor if the school meets the requirements to use the GI Bill. 2. Complete the Application for Education Benefits on the VA's VETS.gov website (https://www.vets.gov/education/apply/). 3. In most cases, the school will send your enrollment information to the VA regional office with jurisdiction over the State or area where you will train. This expedites the process. In 4 to 8 weeks, you should receive a declaration of eligibility and a letter explaining your VA GI Bill benefits. It is not uncommon to get a letter from the VA requesting more information. 4. Once you begin receiving benefit payments, you will have to complete the VA's Web Automated Verification of Eligibility (WAVE) process each month to continue to receive the monthly benefits payments. The WAVE requires you to log on to the VA WAVE website (https://www.gibill.va.gov/wave/index.do) or call 888-GIBILL-1. 	N/A	<p>https://www.vets.gov/education/apply/</p>

There are two programs available to survivors of Service members who die in the line of duty or dependents of totally disabled veterans:

1. **Dependents' Education Assistance (DEA).** This program provides education and training opportunities to eligible dependents of certain veterans. The program offers up to 45 months of education benefits.
2. **Fry Scholarship.** This education benefit is provided to the surviving spouses and children of Service members who die in the line of duty after September 11, 2001.

GI Bill Programs (continued)

GI Bill Program	Eligibility	Benefit	More Information
Dependents' Education Assistance (DEA)	<p>You must be the son, daughter, or spouse of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A veteran who died or is permanently and totally disabled as the result of a Service-connected disability. OR ▪ A veteran who died from any cause while they had a VA-recognized Service-connected disability. OR ▪ A Service member missing in action or captured in line of duty. OR ▪ A Service member whom VA determines has a Service-connected permanent and total disability and, at the time of determination, is a member of the Armed Forces who is hospitalized or receiving outpatient medical care, services, or treatment and is likely to be discharged or released from Service for this Service-connected disability. <p>Children must be between the ages of 18 to 26 to get this benefit. In certain cases, it is possible to begin before age 18 and to continue after age 26. Getting married doesn't end your eligibility.</p> <p>If you are a spouse, benefits end 10 years from the date VA finds you eligible or from the date of death of the veteran. However, if you are a surviving spouse of a Service member who died on active duty, your benefits end 20 years from the date of death. If you divorce the veteran, your benefits end on the date of divorce. If you remarry before age 57, your eligibility ends on the date of remarriage.</p>	Up to 45 months of education benefits. These benefits may be used for degree and certificate programs, apprenticeship, and on-the-job training. If you are a spouse, you may take a correspondence course.	https://www.military.com/education/money-for-school/dependents-educational-assistance-dea.html

GI Bill Program	Eligibility	Benefit	More Information
Fry Scholarship	<p>Children and surviving spouses of an active duty member of the Armed Forces who died in the line of duty on or after September 11, 2001, are eligible for this benefit.</p> <p>Children. Children are eligible as of their 18th birthday (unless they have already graduated high school). A child may be married or over 23 and still be eligible. If they became eligible before January 1, 2013, their eligibility ends on their 33rd birthday. The age limitation is removed if the child became eligible on or after January 1, 2013.</p> <p>Spouses. Although surviving spouses do not have a time limit with which to use their benefits, they will lose eligibility to this benefit upon remarriage.</p>	<p>Eligible beneficiaries attending school may receive up to 36 months of benefits at the 100% level.</p>	<p>https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/fry_scholarship.asp</p>

EXHIBIT G: NPS APPLICATION INFORMATION⁴⁶

Please review the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) admissions website (see table) and contact NPS for complete and current information about the application process. This exhibit provides a general summary of NPS application requirements.

A. Resident Programs

1. Resident Master's Programs

Applicants should apply at least 6 months before the expected start of the program. Staff and employees of local Commands can enroll in classes prior to the completion of the formal admission process. Until that process is complete, the student will be in the basic 999 curriculum.

To gain admittance to a specific curriculum, students must submit the following items.

✓	Item	Details
	Online Application for Admission	See: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Landing Page: https://web.nps.edu/Admissions/AMS/Login.aspx ▪ Host Page: https://my.nps.edu/web/admissions/apply1 The "Curriculum Number" must be included in your application.
	Cover Letter	Example: https://my.nps.edu/documents/106447375/107832267/Staff+Admissions+Form/979c4492-c958-4b93-93e4-4391a5cd64eb (page 2)
	Signed Supervisor Approval to Participate in the Classes	Example: https://my.nps.edu/documents/106447375/107832267/Staff+Admissions+Form/979c4492-c958-4b93-93e4-4391a5cd64eb (page 3)
	Approved Matrix for Specific Curriculum	Example: https://my.nps.edu/documents/106447375/107832267/Staff+Admissions+Form/979c4492-c958-4b93-93e4-4391a5cd64eb (page 4)
	Official Sealed Transcript(s) Ordered and Provided to Admissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Official transcripts from ALL undergraduate and graduate schools. ▪ An official transcript is different from an unofficial transcript. You must send an official transcript, which goes directly to NPS from the university. These contain the institution's seal and the Registrar's signature among other identifiable marks. ▪ All transcripts should be mailed to: <p style="text-align: center;">Admissions Office (Official Transcripts) Naval Postgraduate School 589 Dyer Road, Root Hall – 100 Monterey, CA 93943-5100</p> <p>If the sending school delivers transcripts electronically through secure means, they should send to admissions@nps.edu. The average time it takes to receive and process a transcript is 10 to 14 business days from the date ordered.</p> <p>If you have previously submitted materials or documents to the NPS Admissions Office, please contact the office directly to verify the documents are on file before ordering a new set of documents. The best method of requesting information is via email. Please provide as much pertinent information as possible. The email address is admissions@nps.edu. The phone number is 831-656-3093.</p> <p>NOTE: U.S. students with degrees from international institutions are required to have their degrees evaluated by a Service credentialed by the National Association for Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) (http://naces.org).</p>

⁴⁶ "Apply Online to NPS." Office of Admissions, Naval Postgraduate School, <https://my.nps.edu/web/admissions/apply1>.

✓	Item	Details
	GRE Score	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Must be submitted if you are a U.S. Army and USAF officer or a Federal civilian. ▪ Must submit official scores dated within the last 5 years. ▪ NPS' GRE code is 4831. ▪ Required for some programs and not others.

Staff Admissions Form

This form is located at <https://my.nps.edu/documents/106447375/107832267/Staff+Admissions+Form/979c4492-c958-4b93-93e4-4391a5cd64eb>.

As mentioned, staff and employees of local Commands can enroll in classes before completing the formal admissions process. Until the formal process is complete, the student will be in the basic 999 curriculum. There is no access to the student's record by the departments until the Director of Admissions signs the formal acceptance letter.

The following is required for the formal admission to a specific curriculum:

- Cover letter
- Signed supervisor approval to participate in the classes
- Academic Associate-approved matrix for specific curriculum
- Online application for admission
- Official sealed transcripts ordered and provided to Admissions

2. Resident Ph.D. Programs

Doctoral degree programs are available to officers of most U.S. Services and civilian employees of the Government. Naval Officers (USN and USMC) can only apply to Ph.D. programs under the annual USN Permanent Military Professor (PMP) or Doctoral Studies Program or under the USMC Special Education Program (SEP). As of July 2020, SEP has no quotas for Ph.D. programs, so applications from active duty USMC officers are not being accepted.

✓	Item	Details
	Online Application for Admission	<p>See:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Landing Page: https://my.nps.edu/web/admissions/apply1 ▪ Host Page: https://web.nps.edu/Admissions/AMS/Login.aspx
	Official Sealed Transcript(s) Ordered and Provided to Admissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Official transcripts from ALL undergraduate and graduate schools. ▪ An official transcript is different from an unofficial transcript. You must send an official transcript, which goes directly to NPS from the university. These contain the institution's seal and the Registrar's signature among other identifiable marks. ▪ All transcripts should be mailed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admissions Office (Official Transcripts) Naval Postgraduate School 589 Dyer Road, Root Hall – 100 Monterey, CA 93943-5100 <p>If the sending school delivers transcripts electronically through secure means, they should send to admissions@nps.edu.</p> <p>If you have previously submitted materials or documents to the NPS Admissions Office, please contact the office directly to verify the documents are on file before ordering a new set of documents. The best method of requesting information is via email. Please provide as much pertinent information as possible. The email address is admissions@nps.edu. The phone is 831-656-3093.</p>

✓	Item	Details
		The average time it takes to receive and process a transcript is 10 to 14 business days from the date ordered. NOTE: U.S. students with degrees from international institutions are required to have their degrees evaluated by a Service credentialed by NACES (http://naces.org).
	GRE Score	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Must be submitted if you are a U.S. Army and USAF officer or a Federal civilian. ▪ Must submit official scores dated within the last 5 years. ▪ NPS' GRE code is 4831.
	Letter of Intent	A letter of intent (200 words or fewer) of specific areas of interest within the proposed major field of study. Email to admissions@nps.edu .
	Letters of Recommendation	Two letters of recommendation regarding academic potential (three letters are required for Information Sciences Curriculum 474). Email to admissions@nps.edu .
	Writing Sample	A writing sample from applicants pursuing the following programs: Security Studies and Systems Engineering. This sample may be a master's thesis or paper that you published in a journal or conference proceeding or some other writing example from a class or work project that you alone authored and which best exemplifies your ability to do advanced academic work. Email to admissions@nps.edu .

B. Distance Learning Programs

NPS DL enables students to earn certificates or degrees at locations across the Nation and around the globe. Although program lengths and costs vary, certificate programs are typically four courses (three to four credit hours each), while master's degrees typically run 12 to 16 courses. For more information, visit <https://my.nps.edu/web/dl/dl-programs>.

1. For master's degree application requirements, please see above.
2. For certificate program application requirements, please see below.

Timing. Online applications for certificate programs must be submitted on or before the first day of instruction of the quarter immediately preceding your intended start date. For instance, if you are applying to AY17 Quarter 2, you must submit an application on or before September 26, 2017. Please refer to the Academic Calendar for exact dates at <https://my.nps.edu/web/admissions/important-academic-dates>

✓	Item	Details
	Online Application for Admission	Located at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Landing Page: https://web.nps.edu/Admissions/AMS/Login.aspx ▪ Host Page: https://my.nps.edu/web/admissions/apply1
	Participation Agreement Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Landing Page: https://my.nps.edu/documents/106447375/107832267/Latest+PA+update+USE+THIS+ONE%21/9fcfd538-45fe-4c6a-a867-a441f8b0fd2a ▪ Host Page: https://my.nps.edu/web/admissions/required-forms Submit with the online application.

EXHIBIT H: POLICY INSTRUCTION FOR DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY CIVILIAN CAREER DEVELOPMENT⁴⁷

The Office of the Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV), the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), the Commandment of the Marine Corps (CMC), and all USN and USMC installations, Commands, Activities, field offices, and all other organizational entities within the DON are required to abide by the guidelines set forth in SECNAV Instruction 12410.25A (the “Instruction”) for civilian employee career management. The Instruction applies to all civilian employees and to military members who supervise DON civilian employees. The Instruction covers the pursuit of advanced education, but also the maintenance of professional credentials and licenses. The following is general information about the Instruction—additional restrictions and requirements apply. A current, full version of the Instruction should be consulted and relied upon.

The Instruction establishes that the DON policy is to provide training to ensure that its civilian workforce possesses the skills needed to meet current and projected performance requirements, and that training and development is approved on the basis of requirements generated from needs assessments, functional community managers, law and regulations, and other sources such as performance appraisals, Individual Development Plans (IDPs), position function, and approved organizational training plans.

The policy:

1. Requires all DON civilian employees create an IDP for training and career development.
2. Encourages the use of telework to support the completion of mandatory, online, and distance training.
3. Requires the establishment of procedures for using Continued Service Agreements (CSAs).
4. Requires Human Resources Development (HRD) Strategic Advisors/Training Managers to establish a Command Training Plan each year.
5. Mandates that Program Managers must work with the Office of Civilian Human Resources (OCHR) for the establishment of mandatory training.

Programs Eligible for Funding

Only individuals competitively selected and participating in planned, systematic, and coordinated professional development programs are authorized funding. The financial support for the program must be preplanned rather than ad hoc, and the program must consist of a sequenced set of instruction, courses, or assignments that support organizational objectives and/or are necessary for degree attainment.

Commands may pay for or reimburse employees from appropriated or other available funds for all or part of the direct and indirect costs of enrolling in individual academic courses or a series of courses leading to an academic certificate relating to the current position of the employee or the current or future mission requirements of the employee’s organization. The institutions must be accredited.

- Only officials with budget authority may approve the use of appropriated funds or funds otherwise available to pay for academic courses and certificates.

⁴⁷ R.A. Brown, Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel. “Civilian Workforce Development Program for Bureau of Naval Personnel.” SECNAV Instruction 12410.25A, December 15, 2017, located at https://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/reference/instructions/BUPERSInstructions/Documents/BUPERSINST_12410.25.pdf.

- Payment or reimbursement can include expenses such as application fees, books, equipment, supplies, etc.
- Prior Command approval must be obtained before incurring any expenses for which they are requesting reimbursement from the Command.
- Commands must ensure the training is not for the sole purpose of providing an employee the opportunity to obtain an academic course, certificate, or degree or qualify for the appointment to a particular position for which the academic course, certificate, or degree is a basic requirement (except for DON Acquisition Workforce and technology and logistics workforce personnel in certain circumstances).

Standard Form 182

The Standard Form (SF) 182 documents trainee information, training course data, costs and billing information, concurrences, approvals, and certification of training completion and evaluation as well as a binding agreement to CSAs for training through a Government or non-Government training facility. You will be required to complete an SF 182 for each course that is receiving funding or reimbursement. SF 182 may be found online at https://www.opm.gov/forms/pdf_fill/sf182.pdf. Please ensure you are using the current version of SF 182.

Continued Service Agreements

The Heads of Command establish the written procedures that include the minimum requirements for CSAs. A CSA is required for all training programs in excess of 160 hours, but a Command may impose a CSA requirement for lesser durations. If the employee received salary covering the training period, the CSA must provide for continued service with the Command after training for at least three times the length of the training period. This is computed based on the employee's work schedule.

Other Professional and Career Development Programs

The Instruction states that DON Commands may participate in other professional and career development programs; for example, the IPA Mobility Program (please see guidebook **Section V.B.**).



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
1000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON DC 20350-1000

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ASN (M&RA) (OCHR)
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SECNAV INSTRUCTION 12410.25A

From: Secretary of the Navy

Subj: CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Ref: See enclosure (1)

Encl: (1) References
(2) Definitions
(3) Responsibilities
(4) Evaluation of Training and Career Development Programs
(5) Employee Training and Career Development Program Policy Requirements
(6) Accepting Contributions, Awards, and Payments from Non-Government Sources
(7) Foreign Training Requirements

1. Purpose

a. To establish and implement policy, assign responsibility, and identify requirements for civilian employee training and career development within the Department of the Navy (DON). Guidance in this policy is in alignment and is consistent with the provisions of references (a) through (o).

b. This revised instruction establishes requirements for all DON civilian employees to create an Individual Development Plan (IDP) consistent with reference (a); encourages the use of telework during emergent situations to support the completion of mandatory, online, and distance training; requires the establishment of procedures for using Continued Service Agreements (CSAs); requires Human Resources Development Strategic Advisors (HRD SAs)/Training Managers to establish a Command Training Plan each year; and mandates that program managers must work with the Office of Civilian Human Resources (OCHR) for the establishment of mandatory training.

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2. Cancellation. This policy cancels and replaces SECNAVINST 12410.25 of 5 July 2011 and Civilian Human Resources Manual Subchapter 410 of December 2003.
3. Definitions. See enclosure (2).
4. Applicability
 - a. This instruction applies to the Office of the Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV), the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), the Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC), and all U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps installations, Commands, Activities, field offices, and all other organizational entities within the DON.
 - b. This instruction applies to all civilian employees paid from appropriated and non-appropriated funds to the extent permitted by law and applicable regulations. Certain provisions apply to military members who supervise DON civilian employees.
5. Policy. It is the DON policy:
 - a. To provide training to ensure that its civilian workforce possesses the skills needed to meet current and projected performance requirements.
 - b. To establish a needs assessment and fulfillment process that will incorporate the creation and update of IDPs for all civilian employees.
 - c. To invest sufficient resources and to monitor the effective use of those resources to meet immediate and long-range training requirements, ensure development of individual employee competencies, provide career development opportunities, and ensure that employees are afforded equal opportunity to acquire identified competencies during their career progression.
 - d. To systematically foster leadership development, succession planning, mentoring, and equality of opportunity to guide the development of employees consistent with established DON-wide goals.
 - e. To approve training and development on the basis of requirements generated from needs assessments, functional

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community managers, law and regulations, and other sources such as performance appraisals, IDPs, position function, and approved organizational training plans.

f. To ensure that, to the extent possible, the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS) is used as the authoritative system of record for capturing completed training, education, and certifications. DCPDS is the system of record that will be used when providing all training data and reports associated with mandatory training requirements.

g. To have Program Managers or Project Leads who are responsible for programs with mandatory training requirements work with the DON OCHR to identify those training requirements and establish the official mandatory training course and reporting requirements. Mandatory training curriculum that Program Managers and Project Leads submit to the DON OCHR to establish as a mandatory course must be accessible to employees with disabilities and section 508 compliant per reference (a).

6. Responsibilities. See enclosure (3).

7. Authority. Heads of Major Commands/Budget Submitting Offices (BSOs) have delegated authority to establish and maintain training and career development programs within their Command to ensure employees have the skills needed to support optimum mission readiness. The civilian career development program requirements for each Command may vary to some extent. Commands are therefore authorized to further delegate elements of their training and career development program to the lowest level possible unless otherwise specified.

8. Procedures. Procedures and guidelines that must be followed in implementing this policy are located in enclosures (3) through (7).

9. Records Management. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of media and format, shall be managed per SECNAV Manual 5210.1 of January 2012.

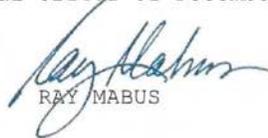
10. Forms and Reports

a. Form. Standard Form (SF) 182, Authorization, Agreement and Certification of Training is available electronically from

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the Department of Defense (DoD) Forms Management Library:
<https://www.opm.gov/forms/pdf fill/SF182.pdf>.

b. Report. The reporting requirements contained in enclosure (3), paragraph 3h are assigned SECNAV Report Control Symbol 12410-2 per SECNAV Manual 5214.1 of December 2005.



RAY MABIUS

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REFERENCES

- (a) DoD Instruction 1400.25, Vol. 410 of 25 September 2013
- (b) DoD Instruction 1430.16 of 19 November 2009
- (c) 5 CFR Part 410
- (d) 5 CFR Part 412
- (e) DoD Instruction 1400.25, Vol. 250 of 18 November 2008
- (f) SECNAV Manual 5210.1 of January 2012
- (g) NAVSUP Instruction 4200.99B of 12 September 2012
- (h) 5 U.S.C. Chapter 41
- (i) DoD Financial Management Regulation 7000.14R, Volume 10, Chapter 12 of September 2015
- (j) 48 CFR Chapter 2
- (k) SECNAVINST 1320.1
- (l) 10 U.S.C.
- (m) DoD Directive 5000.52 of 12 January 2005
- (n) DoD Instruction 5000.66 of 21 December 2005
- (o) DoD Instruction 1322.06 of 15 November 2007
- (p) 5 U.S.C. § 4111

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DEFINITIONS

1. Academic Degree. An award or title conferred by an educational institution that signifies the completion of a particular level of study, such as post-secondary education, in the form of an associate, a bachelor's or a master's degree, a doctorate, or a specialist program (e.g., a type of degree that is typically earned in addition to a master's such as an Education Specialist (Ed.S) degree). Institutions granting this type of degree must meet standards and accreditation criteria from an entity recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.
2. Accreditation. The voluntary process of evaluating institutions or programs to guarantee acceptable levels of quality. Additionally, recognition by the following agencies: Accrediting Agency Evaluation Branch Office of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, and/or Council for Higher Education Accreditation.
3. Activity. A unit, organization, or installation performing a specific mission or function and established under a commanding officer or officer in charge.
4. Budget Submitting Office (BSO). A four-position alphanumeric code that identifies the major command that is authorized resources directly by the SECNAV, CNO, or CMC for the accomplishment of assigned missions and tasks.
5. Career Development Program. Structured plans, processes, and activities directing, as well as supporting the systematic organizational, occupational, and individual growth of employees in designated career fields. Entails a progression through a series of training and/or development programs and assignments involving broader knowledge, improved skills, or greater responsibility.
6. Certification. The recognition given to individuals who have met predetermined qualifications set by an agency of government, industry, or a profession.
7. Competencies. Observable and measurable skills, knowledge, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics allowing individuals to perform work roles or occupational functions.

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8. Continued Service Agreement (CSA). A contract between the employee and the Command, signed prior to the commencement of training, requiring the employee to either continue federal service as determined by the Command, for a period of at least three times the length of the training, or to repay the expenses incurred.

9. Development. Engagement of an employee in a set of learning experiences designed to achieve specific goals and long-term objectives. Learning experiences often occur in the workplace, and include coaching, mentoring, job rotation, developmental assignments, on-the-job training, and self-study courses.

10. DoD Civilian Leader Development Continuum. Depicts the progression of competencies needed as a DoD civilian rises through the leadership ranks, from fundamental competencies required of all leaders to strategic capabilities required of the most senior leaders.

11. DoD Civilian Leader Development Framework. The DoD Civilian Leader Development Framework defines five core leadership competencies and one technical core competency that DoD civilian leaders need to accomplish the 21st century national security mission. It also lists the 25 components of these core competencies, plus six fundamental competencies that form the foundation for success in each of the core competencies.

12. Education. Development of an employee's general knowledge, capabilities, and character through formal schooling in theories, concepts, and information. Traditionally delivered by an accredited institution. May relate to a current or future mission-related assignment.

13. E-Learning. A wide set of applications and processes, such as Web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual classrooms, and digital collaboration. Includes delivery of content that may take place via Internet, intranet/extranet, local area network/wide area network, audio- and videotape, satellite broadcast, interactive television, DVD, and CD-ROM.

14. Formal Training Plan. A structured plan whereby a student follows a goal-oriented, planned program with measurable results at each phase. Completion of the formal training plan is often

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followed by some form of formal recognition, such as a certificate. Some examples of employees on formal training plans include employees occupying intern positions, apprenticeship positions, Civil Service Mariner positions, and Veterans' Readjustment Appointment positions.

15. Human Resources Development Strategic Advisor (HRD SA). An individual who manages and consults on training, education, and professional development programs essential for organizational productivity, individual proficiency, and personal career growth.

16. Individual Development Plan (IDP). A tool used to assist employees in career and personal development. Its primary purpose is to help employees reach short- and long-term career goals, as well as improve competencies. An IDP is not a performance evaluation tool or a one-time activity. It should be executed as a partnership between the employee and the supervisor. It involves preparation and continuous feedback. IDPs are mandatory for all employees. IDPs do not imply or provide a guarantee of requested training.

17. Intermittent Positions. Positions in which work occurs at sporadic or irregular intervals so that an employee's tour of duty cannot be scheduled in advance of the administrative work week.

18. Learning. Cognitive and/or physical process where a person assimilates information. Temporarily or permanently acquires or improves skills, knowledge, behaviors, and/or attitudes.

19. Licensing. The process by which a government agency (federal, state, or local) grants permission to an individual to engage in a given occupation upon finding the applicant has attained the minimum degree of competency required to engage in that occupation.

20. Mandatory Training. Training mandated by executive order, federal statute, regulation, or at the direction of the SECNAV or Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) (ASN (M&RA)).

21. Merit System Principles. The basic standards governing the management of the executive branch workforce. The principles

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are part of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 and can be found in section 2301(b) of 5 U.S.C.

22. Mentoring. A developmental process under which a senior or more experienced individual (the mentor) is assigned to act as an advisor, counselor, or guide, providing support and feedback to a junior or trainee (the mentee).

23. Nationally Recognized Body. A regional, national, or international accrediting organization recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

24. Occupational (Functional) Training Needs. Professional skills and knowledge personnel in specific occupations must acquire and maintain to perform current and future work of the organization.

25. Off-the-Shelf Training. Any commercially available training event or planned series of the same training event, activity, service, or material requiring no modification prior to use. Such training may occur on or off federal property and may include non-Federal employees.

26. Organizational Training Needs. Broad performance requirements leading to maintaining competencies, solving problems, effecting changes, and meeting projected goals of the organization.

27. Required Training. Training that is required and regulated for employees by the CNO, CMC, or Command leadership. This training is only required for employees who work under their authorities.

28. Strategic Human Capital Plan (SHCP). The full range of ongoing activities required to determine, plan for, and staff the workforce.

29. Succession Planning. A systematic approach that incorporates merit systems principles, providing fair and equitable opportunities, to build a pipeline to ensure workforce continuity. Develops potential successors in ways that best fit their strengths, identifies the best candidates for categories of positions, and concentrates resources on talent development.

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30. Training. A planned and coordinated program of instruction in professional, technical, or other field that will improve individual and organizational performance and assist in achieving the agency's mission and performance goals. Training can be accomplished through a variety of approaches such as traditional classroom training, correspondence course or self-study, online courses, university/college course, distance learning, professional conferences, seminars, and workshops that are educational or instructional in nature.

31. Temporary Employees. Employees who are under an appointment that does not exceed one year.

32. Term Employees. Employees who are under an appointment that exceeds one year, but not more than four years.

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RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The ASN (M&RA) is responsible for the issuance of Civilian Employee Training and Career Development Program policy and for delegation of authority in the DON per reference (a).
2. The Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Civilian Human Resources (DASN (CHR))) is responsible for management, oversight, and administration of the DON's Civilian Employee Training and Career Development Program.
3. The Director, OCHR is responsible for interpreting statutory and regulatory guidance as it is received and for the preparation of implementing guidance as applicable. The Director of OCHR shall:
 - a. Provide guidance for assessing, evaluating, procuring, and aligning training to the DoD Leader Development Framework and Continuum as outlined in reference (b).
 - b. Monitor DON leader development programs to facilitate measuring program effectiveness and alignment to the DON's SHCP.
 - c. Assess the need for DON-wide civilian leadership training and career development programs and establish and/or manage DON-wide leadership programs.
 - d. Establish guidance for conducting gap analyses to identify skill shortages and to facilitate the development of training plans needed to close gaps in deficient skill areas.
 - e. Provide civilian employee training and career development advice and policy guidance to Major Commands.
 - f. Establish annual civilian employee training, education, and career development reporting requirements.
 - g. Establish guidance for using a CSA as a condition of employment for civilian employees attending training activities or programs of substantial duration or cost.
 - h. Publish an annual list of mandatory training and monitor training completion rates captured in DCPDS. Submit official

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reports to the DoD, Office of Personnel Management (OPM), U.S. Government Accountability Office, and others as requested.

(1) Mandatory training is defined as training mandated by Executive Order, Federal statute, regulation, or at the direction of the SECNAV or ASN (M&RA).

(2) Other training directed by any formal office may be considered required and should follow the documenting requirements included within those policies.

4. Directors of OCHR Operations Centers are responsible for maintaining a civilian employee training and career development office that is responsible for:

a. Human Resources (HR) community course administration, to include:

(1) Assessing annual learning needs and managing the demand survey process.

(2) Creating annual HR community training schedules.

(3) Managing HR course inventory.

(4) Managing the HR course evaluation process.

(5) Managing HR train the trainer sessions.

b. Providing advice and guidance on civilian employee training and career development to its serviced population.

c. Uploading training completion records to DCPDS via the Mass Upload Spreadsheet and assisting Commands in correcting errors in training related reports.

d. Managing vendor administration for OCHR-contracted courses.

5. The CNO, the CMC, and Department of the Navy, Assistant for Administration are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented within their respective organizations.

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6. The Heads of Major Commands/BSOs are responsible for establishing, aligning, and implementing civilian employee training and career development programs needed to meet the short-term and long-term SHCP of the DON and their Commands. This includes establishing administrative policies and providing adequate staffing to ensure that training being conducted or planned shall improve the performance of civilian employees and contribute to economy, efficiency, and the attainment of internal mission and program goals. Program development and implementation responsibilities may be delegated to subordinate Commands to meet organizational or operational needs. The heads of Major Commands/BSOs shall:

a. Ensure subordinate Commands and Activities comply with statutes, regulations, policy, and guidance from higher level authorities (e.g., DASN (CHR), DoD, and OPM).

b. Plan, program, budget, operate, and evaluate programs within the stated DON, DoD, and OPM policy as well as guidance per references (a) through (o).

c. Establish, implement, and update annually a five year plan to evaluate training programs to improve program effectiveness, efficiency, and economy with a focus on support of mission critical positions.

d. Identify necessary funds and resources to meet training priorities, educational requirements, and plans.

e. Integrate employee training, education, and career development into the strategic planning process to ensure each contributes to employee professional development and organizational performance goals and is aligned with organizational succession plans per references (a) through (d).

f. Create an environment that fosters continuous learning for all civilian employees.

g. Ensure merit systems principles are adhered to in providing fair and equitable opportunities for training and development.

h. Implement DoD and DON-wide career and leadership development programs per references (a) through (d).

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i. Ensure completed training, education, and certifications are recorded in DCPDS, to the extent possible, within 30 days of training completion.

j. Appoint an individual to serve as the HRD SA/Command Training Manager to oversee civilian training across the Command and to communicate with the OCHR Civilian Workforce Development Division (CWDD).

k. Evaluate training to determine how well it meets short- and long-range mission requirements.

l. Fulfill statutory and contractual bargaining obligations with designated representatives of local unions prior to implementation of any civilian employee training and career development programs.

7. Human Resources Directors are responsible for:

a. Advising Activity managers and supervisors on the proper execution of their authorities and responsibilities as it applies to civilian employee training and career development.

b. Promoting that educational, technical, and leadership training opportunities should be provided to all individuals.

c. Assisting Heads of Major Commands/BSOs and Activities in conducting periodic assessments of civilian training and career development programs.

8. HRD SAs/Command Training Managers are responsible for:

a. Supporting the OCHR CWDD with the communication/distribution and coordination of programs that Command leadership supports.

b. Providing advice, guidance, and assistance to managers, supervisors, and employees within the Command on civilian training and development.

c. Monitoring compliance Command-wide for mandatory training requirements.

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d. Establish, implement, and annually update Command Training Plans, programs, and budgets that support the incorporation and use of the best training practices and techniques. These plans should raise the level of civilian employee performance to meet present and anticipated requirements for administrative, technical, professional, supervisory, managerial, and executive competencies.

9. Managers and Supervisors are responsible for:

a. Supporting and executing civilian employee training and career development policies.

b. Assessing employee competencies for the purpose of identifying training and career development needs.

c. Ensuring subordinates complete all applicable mandatory training.

d. Ensuring all civilian subordinates develop an IDP per reference (a). IDPs should be developed through collaboration of supervisors and their subordinates and should focus on targeted proficiency levels, identifying specific needs for new or refined competencies, continuing education, professional development, and organizational, functional, or occupational training required to improve performance. For employees on formal training plans, those training plans may be attached as a supplement to the IDP.

e. Providing information about training and development policies, responsibilities, procedures, and opportunities to new employees during the initial stages of their entrance on duty, typically within their first 30 days, as well as on a continual basis.

f. Permitting and encouraging employees to use telework, as appropriate and per local Command policies, to complete training, and/or to complete online mandatory training during recurrent, situational, and/or emergency closures of the government (e.g., weather-related closures).

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EVALUATION OF TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

1. Minimum Requirements. Commands must annually evaluate their training, leadership, and mentoring plans and programs to determine how well such plans and programs contribute to mission accomplishment and meet organizational performance goals. All DON leadership programs must be in alignment with the DoD Civilian Leader Development Framework and Continuum which can be found in reference (b) and on the DoD Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service (DCPAS) website. Each Command shall conduct evaluations for:

- a. Courses of more than 80 hours in duration which are funded by the DON;
- b. Courses costing more than \$2,500; and
- c. Formal mentoring programs.

2. Evaluation Guide. The "Training Evaluation Field Guide" is available for guidance on conducting an evaluation of training programs on the OPM website at https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/training-and-development/reference-materials/training_evaluation.pdf and the Training and Development page of the OCHR private portal at <https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/MRA/DONHR/Training/Documents/OPM%20Training%20Evaluation%20Field%20Guide.pdf>.

3. Records. Commands are required to maintain evaluation records of their training programs for a period of three years per reference (f).

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**EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM POLICY
REQUIREMENTS**

Reference (a) requires Commands to operate under written policies governing the training of their employees. The following requirements are to be incorporated in the Command's policies and programs:

1. Learning Needs Assessment

a. Training Delivery Methods. Commands may use a full range of developmental activities to meet mission-related organizational and employee development needs, such as classroom training, on-the-job training, technology-based training, satellite training, employee self-development activities, coaching, mentoring, details, rotational assignments, and cross training.

b. Identification of Training Needs. Managers and supervisors are responsible for determining organizational and individual training needs at least annually per references (a) and (d). Individual training needs should be determined in conjunction with applicable performance appraisal cycles. Designated Activity officials, such as HRD SAs/Command Training Managers or equivalent, are to ensure that all approved training is in full compliance with governing laws and directives.

c. IDPs. Commands must base approval of training, educational, and professional development activities for civilian employees on their IDPs. IDPs are required for all employees to assist in developing strengths, career planning, and as a guide to help close competency gaps. Per reference (a), Commands must monitor the execution and evolution of IDPs to ensure civilian employees are provided appropriate opportunities to satisfy identified training needs.

(1) IDPs should be developed through collaboration of supervisors and their subordinates and should focus on targeted proficiency levels, identifying specific needs for new or refined competencies, continuing education, professional development, and organizational, functional, or occupational training required to improve performance. For employees on formal training plans, those training plans may be attached as a supplement to the IDP.

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(2) The IDP is an ongoing, continuous process and should be periodically reassessed to determine its effectiveness. At a minimum, an IDP should be reviewed semi-annually. An IDP is not a binding contract. Every effort should be made by supervisors and employees to follow the IDP, however, some circumstances may require modifications to the IDP.

(3) Organizations may assign their employees to training and development activities required for current or anticipated duties related to the mission of the Command or the DON.

(4) In emergency situations, training that has not been included in an IDP may be approved. Commands must specify the circumstances that would constitute an emergency exception and establish appropriate approval processes.

d. Command Training Plan. At a minimum the Command Training Plan should be reviewed annually to determine training needs and anticipated costs necessary to accomplish organizational objectives per references (a). Guidance for conducting needs analysis can be found on the OPM Training and Development Policy website.

2. Prioritizing Training. Every training and development need must be assigned a priority. This priority allows the Command to allocate training funds to those training needs which have the most urgency. A priority must be specified for all types of formal training. The following priorities should be used for all training, including mission critical, occupational, and/or functional skill training:

a. Priority I - Mandated/Critical

(1) Mandatory training as defined in this instruction as training mandated by executive order, Federal statute, regulation, or at the direction of the SECNAV; or

(2) Training that is typically a condition of employment, including but not limited to certifications and/or licensures required by the position; or

(3) Training required during the forthcoming annual training cycle considered essential to mission accomplishment; or

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(4) Training needed to ensure attainment of performance objectives, to close competency gaps, or to correct serious performance deficiencies which adversely impact mission accomplishment; or

(5) Training that must be successfully completed within a specified time period.

b. Priority II - Essential

(1) Training which, if omitted, might adversely impact mission accomplishment in the next two or three fiscal years; or

(2) Training to provide for systematic replacement of skilled workers.

c. Priority III - Recommended

(1) Training of a broadening nature that is helpful in enhancing the overall performance levels of employees already considered competent; or

(2) Training recommended for individuals to improve or enhance competencies needed to perform the job.

3. Documenting Completed Training. To the extent possible, all instances of completed civilian training must be recorded and entered into the DCPDS. DCPDS is the authoritative system of record for capturing completed training, education, and certifications. The DCPDS is the system of record that will be used when providing training data and reports associated with mandatory and regulatory training requirements.

a. Courses completed in DON systems such as Navy eLearning/Navy Knowledge Online, Total Workforce Management Services (TWMS), and Navy Enterprise Resource Planning are uploaded routinely into DCPDS.

b. Courses completed outside of DON systems should be recorded into an employee's training record through the MyBiz Self-Service, TWMS Mass Update process, or the DCPDS Mass Upload Spreadsheet.

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(1) DCPDS Mass Upload Spreadsheet - HRD SAs/Command Training Managers may verify training completion and enter training into employee training records in DCPDS through a Mass Upload Spreadsheet. To receive verified course credit, employees should provide their course completion certificate to their HRD SA/Command Training Manager. The DCPDS Mass Upload Spreadsheet can be found under Training Resources on the Training and Development page of the OCHR private portal at <https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/MRA/DONHR/Training/Pages/Training-Resources.aspx>.

(2) TWMS Mass Update process - HRD SAs/Command Training Managers with approved access may enter employee training completions through the Mass Update process within the TWMS System. A job aid on this process can be found under Training Resources on the Training and Development page of the OCHR private portal. Records updated through TWMS may take additional time to process into the training records available on DCPDS.

(3) MyBiz Self-Service - Employees may enter completed training into their training record through MyBiz Self-Service. Trainings entered by the employee in the self-service system will be listed as self-certified. A job aid on how to complete self-service records can be found under Training Resources on the Training and Development page of the OCHR private portal.

4. Funding Training Expenses

a. Determining Training Expenses

(1) Heads of Commands determine which expenses constitute training expenses and may pay or reimburse an employee for necessary expenses, such as application fees, registration fees, tuition, books, equipment, supplies, and parking fees, incurred in connection with approved training per reference (c). Training expenses do not include an employee's pay or other compensation.

(2) All payments or reimbursements for expenses are discretionary and should be based on Command needs, talent availability, and other mission-related criteria and standards

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established by the Command. Employees must obtain prior approval before incurring any expenses for which they are requesting reimbursement from the Command.

b. Leveraging Military Training. Military training sources open to civilians, including education and professional development, should be utilized, where possible, in further support of the total force approach to mission execution per DoD Directive 1322.18.

c. Protection of Government Interest. Heads of Commands shall establish procedures necessary to protect the government's interest when employees fail to successfully complete training for which Commands pay the expenses.

d. Conferences as a Training Expense. As per reference (a), employee attendance at a conference may be considered a training expense if the purpose of the conference is educational; more than half of the time is spent in planned, organized sessions between presenters and audience; the content of the conference is germane to the organization's mission; and the conference will assist in improving the employee's performance and contribute to the employee's development. Conference attendance should be requested following the most recent conference guidance as well as local Command policy.

e. Adjustment of Work Schedules. Supervisors have the authority to adjust an employee's normal work schedule for educational purposes to allow an employee to take college or university coursework per 5 CFR 610.122. The head of the Command may authorize a special tour of duty of no less than 40 hours that meets the following conditions:

(1) Courses taken are not training under 5 U.S.C. chapter 41;

(2) The tour of duty does not appreciably interfere with work accomplishment;

(3) Schedule adjustment will not cause the Command to incur any additional costs;

(4) Completion of the courses will equip the employee to work more effectively; and,

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(5) Except as provided in 5 CFR 410.402, the employee receives no premium pay while on the adjusted schedule, even if it would otherwise entitle them to premium pay.

f. Salary. The Activity will pay the salary of all employees attending Command-approved training during their normal work hours with the exception of displaced and surplus employees under the authority of reference (c).

g. Travel. If an employee is approved for training by the Command and travel is required for successful completion, Commands must ensure funding is provided. Employees may not be permitted to travel on "no cost orders" per the Joint Travel Regulations.

h. Records of Training Expenses. Each Activity shall maintain records of correspondence, memoranda, agreements, authorizations, reports, requirement reviews, plans, and objectives relating to the establishment and operation of training courses and conferences for five years per reference (f). In addition, per reference (g) each Activity must retain certified billing statements and supporting documents, including purchase logs for six years, three months; and ten years for documents using Foreign Military Sales funding.

5. Allocation of Resources, Prioritizing, and Funding Training. Reference (a) provides guidance for paying the costs of training from appropriations made for the purpose of training or from other funds available notwithstanding exceptions outlined above. Training costs associated with an approved training program may be funded by appropriations applicable to that program area. In addition, reference (c) provides the authority for agencies to share the expenses of training with employees. This authority allows Commands to support training and education that benefits both the DON and the employee. If agreed upon by both the Command and the employee, a Command may pay for some of the costs of training while the employee pays the balance or a Command may also reimburse an employee for all or part of the costs of the training. Specific guidance on allocating resources for academic degrees can be found in paragraph 7 of this enclosure. Employees not covered under this instruction may utilize DON training resources as follows:

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a. Military Personnel. Military personnel may attend civilian training programs when the training is related to their present duty assignment and they:

(1) Have direct or indirect supervision over civilians;
or,

(2) Are officially assigned to a regularly scheduled, on-site civilian training course at no additional cost to the government; or,

(3) Are attending a non-supervisory course on a space available basis that is directly related to, or required by, the military member's current duties; or,

(4) Are attending non-supervisory courses on a space available basis as per the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act. Civilian employees shall not be displaced by a military member attending civilian courses.

b. Other Government Employees

(1) Employees of other government agencies on details or rotations to a DON Command or Activity, including state and local governments, may participate in training at DON facilities and schools in classroom or on-the-job training, or through existing training agreements. These employees may not displace DON employees, and reimbursement to the DON can be required in these instances;

(2) Employees from other DoD components may be trained in DON facilities on a space available basis. These employees may not displace DON employees, and reimbursement to the DON can be required in these instances;

(3) Temporary and intermittent employees are eligible to attend training in non-government facilities when critically needed skills can be obtained at less cost through such training. Appropriate records of such instances are to be maintained at the Activity level;

(4) Employees from non-DoD agencies may be trained in DON facilities on a space available basis. Reimbursement to the DON may be required in these instances; and,

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(5) Non-DON agencies may request the use of qualified DON instructors and facilities.

6. Use of Standard Form 182 (SF-182)

a. SF-182. The SF-182 or any formalized automated system that captures the SF-182 data elements are authorized for use by DON Activities to document trainee information, training course data, costs and billing information, concurrences, approvals, and certification of training completion and evaluation as well as a binding agreement to CSAs for training through a government or non-government training facility.

b. Responsibilities. HRD SAs/Command Training Managers or Command Training Officers at Activities must ensure that all approved documents, such as SF-182s, are in compliance with regulations. Employees may not attend training until all certification and approval signatures are obtained.

c. Payment. Per reference (a), DON Commands may use the government-wide Commercial Purchase Card (GPC) or other contracting vehicle in concert with the SF-182 to purchase and pay for training, education, and professional development services. The following provisions must be met per reference (g):

(1) The price of the training, education, or professional development service does not exceed the micro-purchase threshold as defined in section 213.201 of reference (j); or

(2) For purchases exceeding the micro-purchase threshold but not exceeding \$25,000 (excluding travel and per diem):

(a) The duly appointed GPC cardholder is trained on DON procedures for purchasing training, education, and professional development services using the SF-182 or other approved electronic system.

(b) The training, educational, or professional development event is for a regularly scheduled, off-the-shelf training, educational, or professional development service that

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is available to the general public and priced the same for everyone in the same category (i.e., price per student, course, program, service or training space).

(c) A price comparison is completed to determine price reasonableness and source selection has been justified and documented.

(3) Any training, educational, or professional development services acquisition requiring new design or development or with a price exceeding \$25,000 for a training, educational, or professional development event must be acquired under provisions of reference (j) by a warranted contracting officer.

(4) Internal controls must be used to ensure compliance with procedures and accountability for the expenditure of funds.

d. Unauthorized Use of the SF-182. The SF-182 may not be used to substitute formal acquisition procedures, purchase, or contract for training. In cases where use of the SF-182 is not authorized, the Activity contracting officer makes determinations on appropriate procurement procedures for training services, products, courses, etc. In addition, when a service or training need is identified that falls within the general terms of an established procurement agreement, the Activity must execute a separate contract for each service desired.

e. Reimbursement. A Command may pay directly for, or reimburse an employee for, expenses incurred in connection with training approved in advance as provided reference (h). Necessary training expenses do not include an employee's pay or other compensation.

7. Academic Degree Program. Commands may select and assign employees to academic degree training and may pay or reimburse employees for all or part of the necessary direct and indirect costs of such training.

a. Selection Process. The selection of employees to an academic degree training program must be done fairly and equitably per Merit Systems Principles, without regard to political affiliation, race, color, religion, national origin,

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sex, marital status, sexual orientation, status as a parent, age, or handicapping condition. The selection and assignment must be accomplished to meet one or more of the criteria outlined in reference (i), to meet identified agency training needs, to resolve an identified Command staffing problem, or to accomplish the objectives of a Command's strategic plan. Therefore, Commands must establish policy to publish opportunities to the entire eligible population, competitively select and assign employees to an academic degree training program that qualifies the employee for promotion to a higher graded position or to a position that requires an academic degree. Per reference (a), and except as provided for the acquisition, technology, and logistics workforce, Commands must ensure that training is not for the sole purpose of providing an employee the opportunity to obtain an academic course, certificate, or degree, or to qualify for appointment to a particular position for which the academic course, certificate, or degree is a basic requirement.

b. Accreditation. Participating colleges and universities must be accredited as a nationally recognized body by the U.S. Department of Education. The listing of national accrediting bodies is available on the U.S. Department of Education's website.

(1) Academic degree payment is not authorized to an institution of higher education or any sub-element of that institution that discriminates on the basis of political affiliation, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, status as a parent, age, or handicapping condition.

(2) Academic degree payment is not authorized to an institution of higher education or any sub-element of that institution if either the parent institution or any sub-element of that institution has a policy or practice that prevents Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) units, student ROTC participation, military recruiting on campus, or access to student directory information per reference (a).

(3) Per reference (a), academic degree payment is not authorized if the institution or program facility and curriculum are not accessible to employees with disabilities.

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c. Allocating Resources for Academic Degree Programs

(1) Funding. Only individuals competitively selected and participating in planned, systematic, and coordinated professional development programs are authorized funding. Such programs must meet both of the following criteria as per reference (a):

(a) Financial support for the program is pre-planned rather than ad hoc; and

(b) The program consists of a sequenced set of instruction, courses, or assignments that support organizational objectives and/or are necessary for degree attainment.

(2) Funding Additional Expenses. Funding may include such additional expenses that may be necessary to ensure successful participation including, but not limited to books, supplies, equipment, application fees, registration, and parking fees.

(3) Recruitment and Retention. Costs associated with obtaining an academic degree may be paid in an effort to recruit and retain employees. Payments are not restricted to occupations in which there is a shortage of qualified personnel identified as per reference (a).

d. Restrictions. Academic degree payment is not authorized for non-appropriated fund employees, employees occupying Schedule C and non-career (political) Senior Executive Service (SES) positions as per reference (i).

(1) Failure to complete or earn a passing grade in a course where tuition assistance was provided could result in repayment to the government. Each Command is responsible for providing specific guidance on tuition assistance.

(2) Any bargaining obligations must be satisfied prior to implementation of this subchapter as per reference (a).

(3) This authority does not apply to the Navy Student Loan Repayment Program.

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8. Academic Courses and Certificates

a. Commands may pay or reimburse employees from appropriated or other available funds for all or part of the direct and indirect costs of enrolling in individual academic courses or a series of courses leading to an academic certificate relating to the current position of the employee or the current or future mission requirements of the employee's organization.

b. Institutions offering individual academic courses, programs, and certificates must be accredited as listed in the U.S. Department of Education's Database of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions and Programs and meet all of the conditions listed under paragraph 7b of this enclosure.

c. To promote fair, equitable treatment of civilian employees, Commands must provide supervisory, managerial, and executive oversight of training and development activities and/or programs. This oversight shall ensure adherence to equal employment opportunity regulations, merit system principles, and collective bargaining obligations. The use of funds under this authority must be reviewed annually for accountability and compliance.

d. Only officials with budget authority may approve the use of appropriated funds or funds otherwise available to pay for academic courses and certificates.

e. Payment or reimbursement for academic courses and certificates may include expenses such as application fees, registration fees, tuition, books, equipment, supplies, and parking fees. Commands may also grant administrative leave to an employee for specific purposes, such as applying for admission, registering for classes, and purchasing books and other required items.

f. All payments or reimbursements for expenses and all grants of administrative leave are discretionary (i.e., not an employee entitlement, and should be based on organizational need, talent availability, and other mission-related criteria and standards established by the Command). Employees must obtain prior Command approval before incurring any expenses for which they are requesting reimbursement from the Command.

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g. Commands must ensure that the training is not for the sole purpose of providing an employee the opportunity to obtain an academic course, certificate or degree (unless the provisions of paragraph 7 of this enclosure are met), or qualify for appointment to a particular position for which the academic course, certificate, or degree is a basic requirement, except for DON acquisition, technology, and logistics workforce personnel per section 1745 of reference (1), and references (m) and (n). Academic degree training must be authorized and approved per paragraph 7 of this enclosure.

9. Payment of Expenses to Obtain Professional Credentials

a. Payment of costs associated with obtaining and renewing professional credentials including professional accreditation, state-imposed and professional licenses, and professional certifications; and examinations to obtain such credentials is authorized per reference (a) to support the DON's human capital goals. Dependent on the availability of funding, Commands may pay for professional credentials that are necessary or beneficial in the performance of an employee's official duties as per reference (a).

b. This authority will be implemented in a manner consistent with Merit Systems Principles as set forth in reference (a) and as described by the following criteria when the license or certification:

- (1) Enhances productivity;
- (2) Improves performance;
- (3) Maximizes recruitment opportunities, especially for shortage category occupations and other labor market conditions;
- (4) Increases retention, especially for "high turnover" career fields; and,
- (5) Broadens and develops the skill base for a quality workforce to accomplish the DON's mission and ensure readiness.

c. Payment or reimbursement for initiation fees or periodic dues for membership in a professional organization or expenses

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for attendance of a member at meetings or conventions of the organization is prohibited unless:

(1) Membership or attendance is a prerequisite to acquiring or maintaining a required professional credential.

(2) The Command pays for an employee to acquire or maintain a professional credential and the employee maintains a membership in the professional organization as an incidental by-product of acquiring or maintaining the credential and attends its meetings or conventions to maintain the credential.

d. Per reference (a), payment or reimbursement for expenses of voluntary memberships in professional organizations of already credentialed employees is prohibited. Payment or reimbursement may be made for expenses of employees attendance at a meeting or convention related to the functions or activities for which appropriations available to DoD Components for travel expenses were made, or that will contribute to improved conduct, supervision, or management of those functions or activities.

e. All payments or reimbursements for expenses are discretionary and should be based on organizational need, talent availability, and other mission-related criteria.

f. Employees must obtain prior approval before incurring any expenses for which they are requesting reimbursement.

10. CSA

a. Requirements. Heads of Commands shall establish written procedures which include the minimum requirements for CSAs. These requirements shall include procedures the Command considers necessary to protect the government's interest and collect repayment should the employee fail to successfully complete any training program, course, or instructional event.

(1) An employee selected for training may be subject to a Command CSA and must sign an agreement to continue in service prior to obligation of funds for any training program, course, or instructional event, if required.

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(2) A CSA is required for all training programs, courses, and instructional events in excess of 160 hours; however, Commands may determine training of shorter durations or high costs to be appropriate to require CSAs per reference (a).

(3) If the employee received salary covering the training period, or received academic training as outlined in this enclosure, the CSA must provide for continued service with the Command after training for at least three times the length of the training period. Commands may establish longer minimums as appropriate. If academic training has been received, the continued service may begin on the day after all requirements for the degree, certificate, or course have been met.

(4) If the employee received no salary covering the training period, the CSA must provide for continued service with the Command after training for a period equal to at least the length of the training, but in no case less than one month. Commands may establish longer minimums as appropriate.

(5) The length of a part-time training period is the number of hours spent in class or with the instructor. The length of a full-time training period is eight hours for each day of training, up to a maximum of 40 hours a week. For an academic degree, certificate, or course authorized and approved, the length of the training period must be based on the number of contact hours established by the academic institution.

(6) A CSA must be signed by the nominee for training prior to the commencement of training for which the Command approves payment of training costs. Commands may not require an employee to sign a CSA after the training commences.

b. Failure to Fulfill Agreements or Complete Course

(1) Commands must establish procedures to protect government interests when an employee fails to complete or successfully complete approved training when the Command pays for that training.

(2) Heads of Commands must ensure the CSA includes provisions for an employee to reimburse the Command for training costs, except pay or other compensation, if the employee voluntarily separates from federal service before completing the

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agreed period of service or is involuntarily separated for cause or poor performance before completing the agreed period of service.

(3) Heads of Commands must ensure the CSA provides for reimbursement of training costs, except pay and other compensation, in instances when an employee voluntarily leaves the Command for service in another DON Command, DoD Component, or other organization in any branch of the federal government before completing the agreed upon period of service.

c. Recovery of Funds. When repayment cannot be obtained directly from the employee, action to recover funds may be taken per reference (a).

d. Waiver of Repayment. The Command head is authorized to waive any part of an employee's obligation to pay training expenses when a waiver is deemed in the best interest of the government, or when recovery would be contrary to equity and good conscience or the public interest. This authority may not be delegated. Denial of a waiver request may be appealed to the next higher level of management in the chain-of-Command where a final DON decision must be rendered.

e. Protection of Government Interests. Commands shall establish procedures to protect government interests when an employee fails to complete or successfully complete approved training when the Command pays for that training.

f. Computing Time in Training. For the purpose of computing time in training for a CSA under reference (a):

(1) An employee on an eight hour a day work schedule assigned to training is counted as being in training for the same number of hours he or she is in pay status during the training assignment. If the employee is not in pay status during the training, the employee is counted as being in training for the number of hours he or she is granted leave without pay for the purpose of the training.

(2) For an employee on an alternative work schedule, the Command is responsible for determining the number of hours the employee is in pay status during the training assignment. If the employee is not in pay status during the training, the

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employee is counted as being in training for the number of hours he or she is granted leave without pay for the purpose of the training.

(3) For employees on a compressed work schedule (CWS), Commands may require that the employee be placed on a standard work schedule (eight hours per day) for any pay period(s) in which training or travel would require the employee to perform job duties on a day that would normally be the employee's regular day off. After completion of the training and/or travel event, the employee may be restored to their CWS following local Command policy.

(4) An employee on an eight hour or an alternative work schedule assigned to training on less than a full-time basis is counted as being in training for the number of hours he or she spends in class, in formal computer-based training, in satellite training, or in formal self-study programs unless a different method is determined by the Command.

(5) When an employee is pursuing an academic degree through a Command's academic degree training program, formally established in written policy, the Command may compute the length of the academic degree training period based on the academic institution's official calendar.

11. Fellowships, Scholarships, Training with Industry (TWI), and Grants. In accordance with reference (k), employees may accept fellowships, scholarships, TWI opportunities, and grants from corporations, foundations, funds, or educational institutions organized and operated primarily for scientific, literary, or educational purposes.

12. Other Professional and Career Development Programs. DON Commands may participate in other professional and career development programs. Examples of such programs include, but are not limited to, the following:

a. Developmental assignments that provide Commands a way to enhance competencies by giving employees an opportunity to perform duties in other occupational, functional, or organizational elements. This enhances employee understanding of other operations, systems, and relationships.

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(1) The length of the assignments may vary and may include such assignments as special projects, cross training, job exchanges, shadow assignments, details, temporary reassignments, and temporary promotions.

(2) These opportunities must have a well-defined learning objective and be established in conformance with all applicable civilian personnel management regulations pertaining to work assignments, details, reassignments, and promotions.

(3) Developmental assignments outside of the DoD must be implemented per reference (o).

b. Use of the Intergovernmental Personnel Act Mobility Program for temporary assignment of personnel between Components and other federal agencies, State and local governments, Indian tribal governments, institutions of higher education, federally funded research and development centers, and other eligible institutions. It is a vehicle for developing employees by providing experiential opportunities in settings and organizations outside the permanent position of the employee.

c. Mobility programs that provide Commands with a way to develop employee competencies and enhance career progression as part of an overall civilian workforce development strategy to improve mission effectiveness.

d. The National Security Professional Development Program, a government-wide initiative to develop a cadre of national security professionals through access to education, training, and professional opportunities to enhance mission-related knowledge, skills, abilities, and experiences per Executive Order 13434.

13. Prohibited Practices

a. Premium pay to an employee engaged in training activities is prohibited except as provided in 5 C.F.R. 410.402.

b. An employee who is attending a course of training, education or professional development paid for by a Command may not receive another financial benefit from another source for the same course, that combined, exceed the actual cost.

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c. Academic institutions that prevent Senior ROTC access or military recruiting on campuses are ineligible to receive federal funds, except as provided by section 983(c) or section 983(d)(2) of reference (1).

d. In accordance with reference (a), appropriated funds may not be used for a training activity that is offensive to employees and unnecessary in the execution of current or anticipated duties.

(1) These restrictions apply to training activities that could induce high levels of emotional response or psychological stress; do not require prior employee notification of the content and methods to be used in the activity and written end-of-course evaluations; contain any methods or content associated with religious or quasi-religious belief systems or "new age" belief systems; or is offensive to, or designed to change participants' personal values or lifestyle outside of the workplace.

(2) Training on the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) may not be made mandatory, except for HIV/AIDS training necessary to protect the health and safety of the employee and individuals served by the employee.

(3) These restrictions are not intended to prohibit, restrict, or otherwise preclude Commands from conducting training activities bearing directly upon the performance of official duties.

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**ACCEPTING CONTRIBUTIONS, AWARDS, AND PAYMENTS FROM NON-
GOVERNMENT SOURCES**

1. A Command head may authorize an employee in writing to accept a contribution or award (in cash or in kind) incident to training, or to accept payment (in cash or in kind) of travel, subsistence, and other expenses incident to attendance at a meeting, as per subpart E of reference (c) and reference (p) if:

a. The organization providing the contribution, award, or payment is certified as a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization by the U.S. Treasury;

b. The contribution, award, or payment is not a reward for services previously rendered;

c. Acceptance of the contribution, award, or payment would not:

(1) Prevent an employee from performing their duties in a fair and objective manner;

(2) Compromise the honesty and integrity of the government or its employees;

d. The contribution, award, or payment is given per the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, as amended; and,

e. It would otherwise be proper and ethical for the employee concerned given the circumstances of the particular case.

2. When more than one non-Government organization participates in making a single contribution, award, or payment (whether in cash or in kind), the "organization" to which this enclosure applies is the organization which selects the recipient and administers the fund from which the contribution, award, or payment is provided.

3. Commands utilizing this authority must maintain written records of each award presented to an employee for 3 years in accordance with reference (f).

Enclosure (6)

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FOREIGN TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

1. The use of foreign training instrumentalities for employees who are located within the United States requires consultation between the DON, DoD, and U.S. Department of State. Planning ahead for foreign training requests is imperative.
2. OCHR CWDD will work with DCPAS to facilitate the U.S. Department of State coordination to confirm that the foreign training facility is eligible to provide services. Eligibility must be determined before use of a foreign training facility and at least once every three years thereafter.
3. At least 120 days prior to scheduled departure, the Command training representative should submit a request package to CWDD. The package should include at a minimum:
 - a. A justification letter as to why foreign training is the only acceptable option, showing that the training, education, or professional development course is not available within the United States or that attendance at the foreign training is critical to the DON mission;
 - b. Completed SF-182; and
 - c. Detailed information about the training to be attended.
4. OCHR CWDD will verify that similar training is unavailable in the United States and if travel is permitted to the country specified.
5. OCHR CWDD will email the Command directing them to have the employee who is attending a foreign training, education, or professional development course submit a request through the Aircraft and Personnel Automated Clearance System (APACS) at <https://apacs.dtic.mil>.
6. OCHR CWDD will contact the appropriate U.S. Department of State contact listed in the Electronic Foreign Clearance Guide (FCG) <https://www.fcg.pentagon.mil/fcg.cfm> with a confirmation that the training is not available in the United States and will include all of the following information:

Enclosure (7)

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a. Country or countries to be visited. This should include a list of the country or countries the traveler will be visiting.

b. People Traveling. This should include their names, citizenship or nationality if non-US, grade, title, Command, and security clearance.

c. Dates of travel and itinerary. This should include flight information if available, specific locations to be visited in each country (city, province, state, or island), date and time arriving and departing each location, and alternate dates if the original dates cannot be accommodated.

d. Purpose of travel. This should be specific and include subjects to be discussed as well as the classification level and disclosure authority if briefing foreign nationals. Sufficient detail should be given to permit evaluation against prescribed criteria, including the field of interests and the scope of the material to be covered.

e. Organization(s) to be visited. This should include the name and address of organization(s) and/or individual(s) to be visited. The name, grade or title, and local phone number of the point of contact or person extending the invitation shall also be provided.

f. Support required and source of funding. This shall include any logistical and/or administrative support as well as funding sources as described below:

(1) Logistical and/or administrative support such as hotel accommodations, group and air transportation, drivers, required onward bookings, courier service or storage for classified material, security guards or forces, assistance in preparing or presenting briefings, and assistance in arranging meetings should be outlined if requested.

(2) Funding sources should be listed for services requiring payment. This should include how the requested services are to be paid (e.g., with program funds, official credit card, fund cite, etc.).

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g. Statement(s). This should include if Special Area Clearance is or is not requested as well as the date of completion or expected date of completion of Antiterrorism/Force Protection training.

h. Theater-specific requirements. This should include the country name and any theater-specific requirements.

i. County-specific requirement. This should include any country specific requirement.

j. Information for contacting travelers at their home station. This should include each travelers name, grade or title, organization, commercial phone and fax numbers, Defense Switched Network phone and fax numbers, and email address.

k. If the travel clearance request is classified, include paragraph markings and downgrade instructions per Executive Order 12958. Mark any classified paragraph whose contents can be released to foreign nationals appropriately, i.e., with the marking "US and [name of specific country or countries] only."

l. If personal information is required, e.g., social security number, birthplace, etc., include the marking "Personal Data - Privacy Act of 1974."

7. The State Department will review the information submitted by OCHR CWDD and will locate the employee's paperwork in APACS.

8. OCHR CWDD will remind the employee of any special travel restrictions and any special mandatory training(s) for the region he/she is visiting as listed in the FCG.

9. The State Department will notify the employee of their ability to proceed with booking their travel.

EXHIBIT I: CAE GUIDELINE NUMBER 013 DATED SEPTEMBER 1, 2016



DEFENSE INFORMATION SYSTEMS AGENCY
P. O. BOX 549
FORT MEADE, MARYLAND 20755-0549

SEP 1 2016

CAE GUIDELINE NUMBER 013

**ACQUISITION WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT (AWD) -
TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP)**

1. PURPOSE. This guideline:

(a) Establishes policy, implements procedures, and assigns responsibilities to develop and train the Defense Information Systems Agency Acquisition civilian workforce

(b) Compliance with Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act, U.S. Code, Title 10, Section 87, Defense Acquisition Workforce.

2. APPLICABILITY. This guideline applies to all DISA government civilian employees who are members of the acquisition workforce.

3. AUTHORITY. Under the authority delegated by Department of Defense (DoD) Directive (DoDD) 5000.52, "Defense Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Workforce Education, Training and Career Development Program", dated January 12, 2005.

4. RELEASABILITY. UNLIMITED. This guideline is approved for public release.

5. EFFECTIVE DATE. By order of the Component Acquisition Executive, DISA, this guideline is effective September 1, 2016


ANTHONY S. MONTEMARANO
Component Acquisition Executive

Enclosures

- Enclosure 1 - References
- Enclosure 2 - Responsibilities
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OPR: CAE

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ENCLOSURE 1: REFERENCES

- (a) Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act, U.S. Code, Title 10, Section 87, Defense Acquisition Workforce.
- (b) 10 U.S. Code § 1705 - Department of Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Fund.
- (c) 5 U.S. Code § 4108 - Employee agreements; service after training.
- (d) DoDD 5000.52 "Defense Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Workforce Education, Training, and Career Development Program," January 12, 2005.
- (e) DoDI 5000.66 "Operation of the Defense Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Workforce Education, Training, and Career Development Program," December 21, 2005.
- (f) DoD Directive 5124.02, Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)), June 23, 2008
- (g) DoD Instruction (DODI) 1322.25, Voluntary Education Programs (USD(P&R)), July 7, 2014
- (h) DoD Instruction (DODI) 1400.25, Volume 410, DOD Civilian Personnel Management System: Training, Education, and Professional Development, September 25, 2013
- (i) Title 29, CFR, Part 1614, Federal Sector Equal Employment Opportunity
- (j) DoD 7000.14-R, DoD Financial Management Regulation (DFMR), current edition
- (k) The U.S. Department of Education Web Site, The Database of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions and Programs.
- (l) The Defense Acquisition University (DAU) Catalog for the current fiscal year
- (m) DISA Memorandum, DISA Continued Service Agreement (CSA), April 28, 2016
- (n) DISA Instruction 220-210-7, DISA Training and Workforce Development Policy, June 18, 2012

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ENCLOSURE 2: RESPONSIBILITIES

1. VICE COMPONENT ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE (VCAE). The VCAE will:

1.1. Serve as the final approval authority for Acquisition Workforce members selected to participate in the program. The VCAE provides oversight and management.

1.2. Set the acquisition workforce development strategy.

1.3. Align acquisition workforce development policies and programs with the Agency's mission and strategic goals.

1.4. Develop and advocate a culture of continuous learning.

1.5. Direct review of Acquisition workforce development and training activities and programs.

2. AWD-TAP TUITION COORDINATOR. The AWD-TAP Tuition Coordinator will:

2.1. Validate training requests, (e.g., eligibility, course of study, funding availability, and prioritization through DISA Online Training System (DOTS)).

2.2. Verify the applicant is in good standing to meet the educational requirements of the approved academic institution.

2.3. Provide Acquisition professional training, certification, and development advice and consultation to managers, supervisors, and employees.

2.4. Assist the VCAE and supervisors in analyzing the effectiveness of civilian acquisition workforce development initiatives.

2.5. Act as DISA policy representative, evaluate and interpret legislation, policy, and regulations pertaining to acquisition workforce development and training.

2.6. Establish metrics on program use, program health, and return on investment.

3. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.

3.1. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (RM). The RM will:

3.1.1 Receive notification of approved courses for the member in DOTS. Approve or disapprove each class based on supervisory approvals and justifications.

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3.2. AWD TRAINING COORDINATOR. The AWD Training Coordinator will:

3.2.1. Receive notification and approvals of an applicant from the AWD-TAP Tuition Coordinator.

3.2.2. Provide a welcome email to each approved applicant.

3.2.3 Provide a Tuition Request Form (TRF) with instructions relating to the submission process.

3.2.4. Provide notification to the member to confirm order completion along with the vendor's expected arrival date.

3.3. TUITION ASSISTANCE GOVERNMENT CARD (TAGC) HOLDER. The TAGC holder will:

3.3.1. Have the responsibility to pay for all approved tuition invoices.

3.3.2. Receive and track invoices from universities/colleges for the member.

3.3.3. Receive and track receipts from universities/colleges acknowledging that payment was accepted.

4. SUPERVISOR. The Supervisor will:

4.1. Coach mentor employees on Acquisition career development.

4.2. Assures the skill and knowledge gained during training is incorporated into the employee's current position.

4.3. Ensure Acquisition training requirements are developed, documented, and maintained in the employee's Individual Development Plan (IDP).

4.4. Review for approval each class the member submits into the DOTS, under the Program Based Training category.

4.5. Evaluate the effectiveness of training and development efforts in terms of increased job competency and efficiency of operations, and provide feedback and recommendations for improvement.

4.6. Give all eligible employees reasonable opportunity for consideration in selections for training.

4.7. Monitor training according to the DISA Continued Service Agreements (CSA) and take action to ensure no obligated service is outstanding when employee separates from the organization.

4.8. Counsel employees who fail to satisfactorily complete training.

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5. EMPLOYEE. The Employee will:

5.1. Be responsible for self-development, successfully completing and applying authorized training, and for fulfilling continued service agreements (CSA).

5.2. Complete a competency assessment on the DISA Talent Management System (DTMS) in CMIS and review results with supervisor to identify training and development requirements. Document training in the employee's IDP.

5.3. Follow the application procedures addressed in Enclosure 3 of the CAE Guideline Number 013. Submit application, which will then be validated by first and second line supervisor within established time frames and in accordance with the DISA approved process.

5.4. Submit each class individually in DOTS under the Program Based Training category for approval.

5.5. Attend and participate fully in all approved classes and complete all required coursework with at least a grade of "C" in each undergraduate course and a grade of "B" in each graduate course.

5.6. Ensures first and second line supervisors are made aware of academic or other challenges that might interfere with success in the education process.

5.7. Provide final course grades within 30 days of course completion to the AWD-TAP Tuition Coordinator.

5.8. Notify the AWD-TAP Tuition Coordinator when a change in employment no longer qualifies the employee for program participation.

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ENCLOSURE 3: PROCEDURES

1. ELIGIBILITY. Eligibility for AWD-TAP is confirmed through DISA's official repository of personnel and acquisition records and through the supervisor's confirmation that the employee is eligible to participate.

1.1. CIVILIAN ACQUISITION WORKFORCE: Tuition assistance is available for all DISA civilian acquisition members who:

1.1.1. Are permanent civilian employees who occupy a designated acquisition workforce position.

1.1.2. Are DAWIA certified to the Level required at the time of application with the following exceptions:

1.1.2.1 Civilians in AT&L workforce positions who have not met their career field certification education requirements or Acquisition Corps education requirements.

1.1.2.2 Civilians occupying developmental AT&L Workforce positions with a target grade of at least GS-11 or equivalent and who demonstrate they are making progress toward their certification.

1.1.3. Meet minimally acceptable performance standards.

1.1.4. Are not pending disciplinary actions.

1.1.5. Do not already meet the highest required or desired education standards.

1.2. MILITARY, CONTRACTOR, INTERN WORKFORCE:

1.2.1 Contractors, military, and employees in the Intern Program, Student Temporary Employment Program, or Student Career Experience Program are not eligible.

2. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS. The Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) has outlined several mandatory education, training and experience standards for acquisition personnel throughout Department of Defense. These standards are addressed in the DoD Instruction 5000.66, "Operation of the Defense Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Workforce Education, Training, and Career Development", dated December 21, 2005. DISA AWD-TAP Supports the educational goals described under the Core Plus Certification Requirements for the applicant's primary acquisition career field and DoD policy to provide tuition reimbursement for courses or degree assistance required by law or policy to recruit, develop or retain DoD employees in acquisition

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positions, subject the availability of funds and in accordance with competitive procedures. AWP-TAP Tuition Coordinator along with the VCAE verifies the request against the specified requirements prior to approving the application.

2.1. APPROVED COURSES OF STUDY.

2.1.1. Courses required to meet Acquisition Corp membership and/or certification in selected career fields.

2.2. ALLOWABLE PROGRAMS.

2.2.1. Pending the availability of funds, AWD-TAP will support tuition towards certificate programs, baccalaureate degrees, and master's degrees that are described as a required or desired education standard for the Defense Acquisition Corps or identified in the Certification Standards Checklists published by USD (AT&L) for the applicant's primary career field.

2.2.2. Mandatory: DAWIA directly established the following education standards for acquisition workforce members to achieve Acquisition Corps Membership and for all Contracting Officer personnel:

2.2.2.1 Acquisition Corp: Completion of 24 semester credit hours in specified disciplines, or 24 semester credit hours in one's career field and 12 semester credit hours in the specified disciplines. Completion of a baccalaureate degree is a mandatory standard for Acquisition Corps membership.

2.2.2.2. Contracting: Completion of 24 semester credit hours in specified disciplines is the minimum mandatory standard for GS-1102 series and those holdings warrants above the small purchase threshold. A baccalaureate degree an alternate mandatory standard for contracting personnel

2.2.2.3. DISA AWD-TAP will focus support on courses and degrees in those disciplines that underpin the acquisition functions specified in 10 U.S.C. 1721. These disciplines include the sciences, engineering and other technical fields, business, and management.

2.2.3. A second master's degree may be approved if the following conditions apply:

2.2.3.1. AWD-TAP funding was not used for any previous course work or degree program, AND;

2.2.3.2. The Acquisition Workforce member wishes to pursue a masters in another DAWIA career field (e.g., masters of business

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administration and holds a master's degree in a DAWIA-related technical field, such as engineering, logistics, computer science, physics, mathematics, operations research, statistics, physical science, architecture, chemistry, and biology), OR;

2.2.3.3. The Acquisition Workforce member wishes to pursue a DAWIA-relates master's degree and holds a non-DAWIA related master's degree.

2.3. APPROVED SCHOOLS.

2.3.1. The course or degree granting institutions must be accredited by an agency approved by the United States Department of Education. These schools can be found on the Internet at <http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/Search.aspx>.

3. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

3.1. APPLICANT. The Applicant will:

3.1.1. Be accepted into an accredited university/college prior to application. Costs associated with an employee's application prior to acceptance to a university/college are the responsibility of the applicant and costs are not reimbursable.

3.1.2. The applicant must submit all requested elements of the application by email to the AWD-TAP Tuition Coordinator in the required submission deadlines.

3.1.3. The applicant will provide a list of any other training program or courses that they have taken in relation to their requested discipline.

3.1.4. An electronic/scanned copy of the applicant's transcripts must be included if the applicant has completed any college level courses.

3.1.5. The applicant will provide a current resume.

3.2. SUPERVISOR. The Supervisor will:

3.2.1. Provide an assessment and endorsement letter of the applicant's capabilities and their potential in this program.

3.2.2. Develop a detailed plan on how the training will be incorporated into the duties of the applicant upon completion of the training.

3.2.3. Notify applicant of acceptance or rejection of their application should an applicant fail to meet the eligibility requirements

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or if there are insufficient funds. If rejected, the supervisor will discuss the reasons for the rejection with the employee.

3.3. REVIEW BOARD. The Review Board will:

3.3.1. The AWD-TAP Tuition Coordinator, Acquisition Workforce Division Chief and VCAE will comply with the equal employment opportunity requirements. Civilian employees will be selected for training without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, (including pregnancy and gender identity), sexual orientation, national origin, age (40 and over), disability, genetic information, or retaliation against any person because that person opposed an unlawful policy and/or practice.

4. PRIORITIZATION. DISA's AWD-TAP is structured to support both mandatory and desired training in accordance with DAWIA and DoD policies. Properly completed applications received from eligible applicants will be processed on a first come, first served basis. Where alternative education standards are prescribed or are available (e.g. a degree or a lower number of credit hours in specialized courses) funding will be provided for the course work necessary to meet the less costly standard. Applications will be ranked in accordance with the priorities outlined below.

4.1. Priority 1: Courses that enable acquisition workforce members to meet "mandatory" education standards established by statute will take precedence for funding over courses that meet "mandatory" standards established only by DoD policy.

4.1.1 Acquisition Workforce members who do not meet educational standards established by statute or policy, will receive priority for support. Of these, contracting personnel including civilians in 1102 series positions and those holding warrants above the small purchase threshold, and incumbents of critical acquisition positions for whom membership in the Acquisition Corps is a requirement, will be given precedence.

4.2. Priority 2: Courses that enable acquisition workforce members to meet standards established as mandatory in DoD policy will take precedence for funding over courses that meet "desired" standards.

4.2.1. Incumbents of critical acquisition positions who are exempt from education requirements as a result of position incumbency and who possess a bachelor's degree but lack the required hours in specified disciplines shall receive secondary consideration, followed by incumbents of critical acquisition positions exempt from education requirements as a result of position incumbency and who lack a bachelor's degree.

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4.3. Priority 3: Courses in acquisition-related disciplines shall have priority for support over courses in non-acquisition related disciplines for Acquisition Workforce members enrolled in approved degree programs.

4.3.1. Acquisition Workforce members requesting tuition assistance to pursue courses or degrees desired for the employee's current career field, or for the purpose of developing mobility among other acquisition career fields.

4.4. Priority 4: Acquisition Workforce members, who are new applicants or occupying developmental AT&L Workforce positions with a target grade of at least GS-11 or equivalent, seeking mandatory or desired education.

5. TRAINING

5.1. ATTENDANCE.

5.1.1. Employees, supervisors, and managers must ensure successful training attendance. Managers and supervisors must ensure employees are available to attend scheduled training. Duties and activities should be scheduled around the employee's attendance.

5.1.2. Employees must adjust alternative or flexible work schedules so they are available for the entire event.

5.2. GRADES.

5.2.1 The AWD-TAP participant is required to reimburse the government for classes with an incomplete grade, withdrawal, or a grade below "C" for undergraduate level classes and a grade below "B" for graduate level classes. All reimbursements for AWD-TAP will be made by money order, certified or personal check and payable to the U.S. Treasury and mailed to: Defense Information Systems Agency, ATTN: Office of the Component Acquisition Executive (AT4), P.O. Box 549, Fort Meade, MD 20755-0549.

5.2.2. Full repayment must be received within 30 days of notice by AWD-TAP Tuition Coordinator. If full reimbursement is not received the student will be considered inactive in AWD-TAP until full payment is received. The student will be eligible for reinstatement once full payment is received.

5.3. COMPLETION.

5.3.1. Within 30 days of course completion, the employee will submit a grade report or transcript to the AWD-TAP Tuition Coordinator.

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5.3.2. Submit an end-of-course evaluation within 14 days of completion to the AWD-TAP Tuition Coordinator.

5.4. DISA CONTINUED SERVICE AGREEMENT (CSA)

5.4.1. Training law requires each employee to sign a Continued Service Agreement (CSA) with the Government before assignment to training that exceeds his or her agency's prescribed minimum period. The employee agrees to continue to serve DISA at least three times the length of the training period, commencing upon completion of the training. DOTS enable the signing of a CSA each time an employee signs up for a Program Based Training. The employee also agrees to pay back training expenses if he or she (1) voluntarily separates from Federal service, (2) transfers from DOD to another Federal agency, or (3) is involuntarily separated for cause.

Course Credit Hours	CSA Months
1	3
2	6
3	9
4	12
5+	= course credit hours * 3

5.5. FUNDING

5.5.1. AWD-TAP is not a reimbursable program. Payments are made directly to the college or university when the school presents proper documentation to the designated AWD-TAP billing office. Accordingly, participants should not have to prepay approved AWD-TAP tuition expenses.

5.5.2. Reimbursement and training shall be provided under U.S. Code 4107(b) of Title 5.

5.5.3. Educational institutions that bundle tuition, fees, or books into a consolidated cost, must detail the charges of fees and books separately for AWD-TAP participants.

5.5.4. Mandatory prerequisite coursework, instructional fees, laboratory fees, and mandatory fees required for course completion will be considered part of the cost of the course and count as part of the total yearly funding limit.

5.5.5. Funding will not be authorized for applicable personal student expenses to include parking, travel expenses, entrance exams, graduation fees, the cost materials and equipment that becomes property of the student (e.g., books, computers, calculators, etc.), late or delinquent fees incurred by the student, courses completed or started at the time of acceptance into the program, courses for which other reimbursement has been or will be obtained (e.g., GI Bill), or any requested courses which do not provide semester credit hours.

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5.5.6. The maximum amount of tuition assistance available per acquisition workforce member, per fiscal year is \$12,000.00. This figure is subject to change and will be reviewed annually.

5.5.7. DISA may reimburse tuition at accredited two-year institutions, if the student's program of study leads to eligibility for and transfer of credits to accredited institutions which grant baccalaureate degrees in an acquisition discipline.

5.5.8. Workforce members who are approved for AWD-TAP funding will receive funding assistance for the length of time required to complete their educational goal, limited to the authorized enrollment period and subject to the availability of funding. AWD-TAP eligibility shall not exceed five consecutive years.

5.5.9. AWD-TAP will not be used to fund professional degrees (i.e., PhDs, MDs or JDs).

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ENCLOSURE 4: APPLICATION

NAME: Last 4 of SSN:

GRADE:

TITLE:

SERIES:

DISA ORGANIZATION:

ACQUISITION WORKFORCE MEMBER: YES/NO

ACQUISITION CAREER FIELD:

- Auditing (0511 Series)
- Business - Cost Estimating (0343, 0801, 0803, 0855, 1101, 1515, 1520, 1599 Series)
- Business - Financial Management (0343, 0801, 0803, 0855, 1101, 1515, 1520, 1599 Series)
- Contracting (1102 Series)
- Engineering (08xx and 15xx Series)
- Facilities Engineering (0018, 0020, 0301, 0340, 0343, 08xx, 1176, 13xx, 1601, 1640 Series)
- Industrial/Contract Property Management (1103 Series)
- Information Technology Management (0301, 0343, 0391, 0392, 0801, 0854, 0855, 1101, 1515, 1550, 2210 Series)
- Life Cycle Logistics (0301, 0340, 0343, 346, 0801, 1101, 1515, 1670, 2001, 2003, 2010 Series)
- Production, Quality, and Manufacturing (03xx, 08xx, 11xx, 1910 Series)
- Program Management (340, 0343, 06xx, 08xx, 1101, 13xx, 1515 Series)
- Purchasing (1105 Series)
- Science and Technology Manager (0180, 04xx, 08xx, 13xx, 15xx Series)
- Test & Evaluation (04xx, 08xx, 13xx 15xx, 2210 Series)

Telephone Number:

Home Address:

Supervisor:

Length of Service at DISA:

Degree(s): Yes/No
If yes, indicate discipline and date acquired.

Proposed College/University:
(Attach listing of all courses applying for with costs per course of tuition and credits.)

Continued Service Agreement (CSA) signed: Yes/No

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

EXHIBIT J: DISA'S COMPETITIVE PROGRAMS SUMMARY

2018 DISA Competitive Programs Summary

Competitive Education Program (CEP)	
Program Title	Grade Eligibility
CEP (Undergraduate)	Any *
CEP (Graduate, Post-Graduate)	Any *
CEP (Pathways Recent Graduates)	Any *
CEP (Certifications)	Any *

*Civilian only

Competitive Development Program (CDP)

Program Title	Description	Length of Program	Grade Eligibility	Continuing Service Agreement (CSA)
Graduate School USA – New Leader Program Various Locations	New leader program designed to provide assessment; experiential learning; and individual development opportunities.	6 months (3, 1-week sessions)	GS-7 thru 11; E-8	6 months
Defense Civilian Emerging Leaders Program (DCELP) ++ Washington, DC	DCELP builds on the competencies generally required for the Lead Self and Lead Teams/Projects level of the DoD Civilian Leader Continuum and supports the DoD Civilian Leader Development Framework.	6 months	(Finance; Acquisition; HR) GS-7 thru 12	12 months
Darden - Women's Leadership Program Charlottesville, VA	Builds strengths and highlights specific behaviors that are critical in effective leadership through the use of simulations, workshops, network assessment exercises and one-on-one professional and personal coaching.	1 week	Women only; GS-12 and above; O-4 and above	6 months
Excellence in Government Fellows (EIG) Williamsburg, VA/Washington, DC	Hands-on, results-based program prepares Federal leaders to solve national challenges by driving innovation, inspiring employees and delivering results.	1 year (approx...21 contact days)	GS-13 and above; O-4 and above	12 months
University of Notre Dame - Executive Certificate in Business Administration Online	Program consists of 3 courses that incorporate topics covered in traditional MBA programs to ensure solid foundational understanding of the principles and disciplines of business.	3 courses – up to 8 weeks per course	GS-12 thru 14; O-4 and above	6 months

Program Title	Description	Length of Program	Grade Eligibility	Continuing Service Agreement (CSA)
<p>NDU-iCollege - CIO Leadership Development Program (formerly Advanced Management Program (AMP)) ++ Washington, DC</p>	<p>Graduate-level education focused on policies and imperatives that enable agencies to leverage information for strategic advantage. Curriculum focuses on enhancing leadership competencies in the areas of communication, critical thinking, leading change, and collaboration.</p>	<p>14 weeks</p>	<p>GS-13 and above; O-4 and above</p>	<p>36 months</p>
<p>Smith College - Specialist to Strategist for Women in STEM Northampton, MA</p>	<p>Prepares aspiring managers in science, technology, and engineering with career transforming skill development and preparation for success in management.</p>	<p>1 week</p>	<p>Women only; GS-13 thru 14; O-4 thru 5</p>	<p>6 months</p>
<p>Villanova – Master Certificate in Organizational Leadership Online</p>	<p>Promotes personal confidence, professional integrity and management techniques used by the country's top business leaders.</p>	<p>3 online courses – up to 8 weeks per course</p>	<p>GS-12 thru 14; O-4 and above</p>	<p>6 months</p>
<p>GWU - Senior Manager Course in National Security Washington, DC</p>	<p>Examines the 3 sets of forces that influence U.S. defense decision-making; interagency process, the wider policy community, and threats and opportunities in the international arena. Includes site visits, experiential learning, and briefings from policymakers.</p>	<p>2 weeks</p>	<p>GS-15; O-6</p>	<p>12 months</p>
<p>GWU – Senior Leader Program Washington, DC</p>	<p>Objectives and curriculum are built around the OPM Executive Core Qualifications and focuses on higher-level competencies, such as external awareness, strategic thinking, political savvy and accountability.</p>	<p>80 hours</p>	<p>Civilian only; GS-14 thru 15;</p>	<p>12 months</p>
<p>NDU-iCollege - Masters in Cyberspace Strategy ++ Washington, DC</p>	<p>The sessions include Cyber Law, Cyber Strategy, Leadership Foundation, and more. Graduates receive a Masters' Degree from NDU in Cyber-S and JPMIE-II certification.</p>	<p>10 months</p>	<p>Bachelor's Degree TS/SCI GS-14 thru 15; O-5 thru 6</p>	<p>36 months</p>
<p>Defense Senior Leader Development Program (DSLDP) ** ++ Washington, DC</p>	<p>Uses a competency-based approach to develop senior civilian leaders with an enterprise-wide perspective needed to lead organizations, people and programs in a joint, interagency, and multi-national environment.</p>	<p>2 years</p>	<p>Civilian only; GS-15</p>	<p>36 months</p>

Program Title	Description	Length of Program	Grade Eligibility	Continuing Service Agreement (CSA)
<p>NDU – Senior Colleges and Centers**++ Washington, DC</p>	<p>Provides the opportunity to attend the National Defense University (NDU) to obtain a Master’s degree from one of three schools: The Eisenhower School (ES); National War College (NWC); or College of International Security Affairs (CISA). DISA determines which school you will attend. NDU-The Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy - Senior Acquisition Course: Prepares senior leadership throughout the acquisition community. At completion, awarded a Master of Science degree in National Resource Strategy. NDU - National War College: Provides grounding in national security strategy, military strategy, policy and operations with emphasis on the joint and interagency perspective. NDU - College of International Security Affairs (CISA) – Master of Arts in Strategic Security Studies: Through seminar participation and independent study/research, students develop strategies for working with other agencies, with the United States, and with other partner nations. The program prepares professionals to develop and implement national and international security strategies for use in conditions of peace, crisis, and war.</p>	<p>10 months</p>	<p>Civilian only; Bachelor’s Degree TS/SCI GS-15</p>	<p>36 months</p>
<p>Federal Executive Institute (FEI) - Leadership for a Democratic Society** Charlottesville, VA</p>	<p>Fosters executives to excel in a 21st-century world while remaining connected to the Constitutional principles forged in the 18th century. Builds knowledge and skills in personal leadership, transforming public organizations, and the policy framework of Government leadership.</p>	<p>4 weeks</p>	<p>Civilian only; GS-15</p>	<p>36 months</p>
<p>Harvard - Senior Executive Fellows Program (HSEFP)** Cambridge, MA</p>	<p>Provides a strategic approach to problem-solving that discovers ways to look at issues from new perspectives to generate a more diverse array of possible interpretations and a wider range of possible solutions.</p>	<p>4 weeks</p>	<p>Civilian only; GS-15</p>	<p>36 months</p>
<p>Central Michigan University (CMU) Graduate Certificates Online</p>	<p>Provides a graduate certificate in advanced skills and knowledge in a “SELECT” concentration. Courses offered through condensed, 8-week online sessions. Approved concentrations are: Acquisitions Administration; Cybersecurity; Human Resources Administration; Information Resource Management; Leadership; Project Management; Public Administration; Training and Development</p>	<p>1 year (8 week courses) Varies Based on Certificate</p>	<p>Bachelor’s Degree GS-12 thru 14</p>	<p>6 months</p>

Program Title	Description	Length of Program	Grade Eligibility	Continuing Service Agreement (CSA)
Excelsior Cyber Foundation Certificate Online	Provides an introduction to the information technology sector of cybersecurity through foundational knowledge in emerging cybersecurity trends; computer/application security; personal, physical, and mobile/wireless security; the Internet and its vulnerabilities; security awareness education; compliance, laws, standards, and ethics; security professional roles and certifications; and risk assessment and management.	4 months	GS-12 thru 14 O-4 and above	6 months
National Intelligence University Master of Science and Technology in Intelligence ⁺⁺ Bethesda, MD	Focuses on better opportunities for effective science-based research, focused education, and interagency outreach within a science-based educational paradigm. The five concentrations are Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), Information Operations and Cyber, Emerging and Disruptive Technologies, Geospatial Resources and the Environment, and Foreign Denial and Deception.	1 year (FT) or 2 year (PT)	Bachelor's Degree TS/SCI GS-13 thru 15	36 months
National Intelligence University Master of Science of Strategic Intelligence ⁺⁺ Bethesda, MD	Focuses on the intelligence required to support the National Security Strategy and component strategies through curricula on global issues, regional studies, intelligence practices, and capabilities including those of potential adversaries.	1 year (FT) or 2 year (PT)	Bachelor's Degree TS/SCI GS-13 thru 15	36 months
Partnership for Public Service: Federal IT Leaders Program Washington, D.C.	Over the course of the 8-months, participants will learn, connect and collaborate on key challenges facing the IT community. Each session provides participants with practical tools and guidance for immediately incorporating lessons learned into their day-to-day work. Graduates of the program possess an enterprise-wide view of IT management and leave the program better equipped to drive individual and agency performance.	Over 8 Months (5, 3-day sessions)	Minimum 3 years Federal IT Experience GS-12 thru 14	6 months
Mr. William A. "Bill" Keely Scholarship	A \$25K scholarship, IHO Mr. William A. "Bill" Keely, former DISA Risk Management Executive, to a high-potential employee pursuing a degree in the Cyber field. Candidate must possess a strong foundation and passion for Cyber and exhibit strong leadership skills. Mr. Keely developed the Information Assurance Intern Program, recruiting approximately 250 students; many whom contribute to securing and defending the DoD information infrastructure, today!	2 years	(Cyber, Information Assurance) GS-11 thru 13	36 months

⁺⁺ Institution has final decision on acceptance

^{**} ECQs/SES Endorsement/Interview Board required

Leadership Programs: SLP, MLLP, and ELP

Program Title	Description	Length of Program	Grade Eligibility	Continuing Service Agreement (CSA)
Senior Leadership Program (SLP) **	Designed to develop the competencies of the Organization's present and future senior leaders by focusing on preparedness to face the challenges and responsibilities commensurate with the highest organizational levels in a changing and evolving Cyber and IT environment.	6 months	GS15	12 months
Mid-level Leadership Program (MLLP)	Provides the continuing development of leadership skills and competencies to examine and learn some of the latest thinking on best practices of managerial leadership. Expands the awareness of the organization's environment through self-assessment, confidential feedback and reflection. Coaches will provide individual assessment and feedback.	8 months	GS-13 thru 14; O4 thru 5; CWO3 thru 4; E7 thru 9	6 months
Explorations of Leadership Program (ELP)	Focus is on three key leadership requirements: (1) Self-Mastery-ability to understand oneself and one's impact on others and to develop strategies to increase one's personal effectiveness; (2) Relationship Mastery-the development of interpersonal leadership competencies focused on effective communication, team leadership, and influence, and; (3) Influencing Organizational Systems-the ability to understand the social, political, and technological forces impacting the organization, assess the impact of these forces on projects and programs, and develop proactive influence strategies.	3 months	GS-09 thru 12; O2 thru 3; CWO2 thru 3; E5 thru 6	6 months

**** ECQs/SES Endorsement/Interview Board Required**

EXHIBIT K: ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Term	Definition
51C	51 Contracting
AA	Academic Associate
AAPDS	Army Acquisition Professional Development System
AASA	Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army
AAW	Army Acquisition Workforce
ABET	Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology
ACQ-TA	Acquisition Tuition Assistance
ACTEDS	Army Civilian Training Education and Development System
ADT	Academic Degree Training
AFB	Air Force Base
AFIT	Air Force Institute of Technology
AFPC	Air Force Personnel Center
AFVEC	Air Force Virtual Education Center
ALCP	Acquisition Leadership Challenge Program
APDP	Acquisition Professional Development Program
ASEE	American Society for Engineering Education
ATAP	Acquisition Tuition Assistance Program
CAE	Certified Association Executive
CAMP	Career Acquisition Management Portal
CAPPMIS	Career/Acquisition Personnel and Position Management Information System
CfA	College for America
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CHCOC	Chief Human Capital Officers Council
CMC	Commandment of the Marine Corps
CNO	Chief of Naval Operations
CSA	Continued Service Agreement
CTAP	Civilian Tuition Assistance Program
DA	Department of the Army
DACM	Director, Acquisition Career Management
DATMS	Defense Acquisition Talent Management System
DAU	Defense Acquisition University
DAWDA	Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Account
DAWDF	Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Fund
DAWIA	Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act
DCMA	Defense Contract Management Agency
DCPDS	Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (also known as MyBiz+)
DDACM	Deputy Director, Acquisition Career Management Office
DEA	Dependents' Education Assistance
DISA	Defense Information Systems Agency
DL	Distance Learning
DoD	U.S. Department of Defense

Term	Definition
DON	United States Department of the Navy
DTRA	Defense Threat Reduction Agency
E-LMS	Employee Development Center-Learning Management System
ELH	Educational Learning Hours
ETS	Educational Testing Service
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
FAQ	Frequently Asked Question
FCR	Functional Chief Representative
FEDEM	Federal Employee
FEEA	Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund
FEVS	Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey
FM	Functional Managers
FSLRP	Federal Student Loan Repayment Program
FTR	Federal Travel Regulations
GMAT	Graduate Management Admissions Test
GPA	Grade Point Average
GRE	Graduate Record Examinations
HBCU	Historically Black Colleges and Universities
HR	Human Resources
HRD	Human Resources Development
IADT	Initial Active Duty for Training
IDP	Individual Development Plan
IPA	Intergovernmental Personnel Act
IT	Information Technology
LEAP	Leadership Excellence for Acquisition Professionals
LSAT	Law School Admissions Test
LTFT	Long Term, Full Time
MCAT	Medical College Admissions Test
MDA	Missile Defense Agency
MGIB	Montgomery GI Bill
MGIB-SR	Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserve
MKO	MDA (Missile Defense Agency) Knowledge Online
MOS	Military Occupational Specialty
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSMP	Master of Science in Program Management
MSP	MDA (Missile Defense Agency) Scholarship Program
MSSE	Master of Science in Systems Engineering
N/A	Not Applicable
NACES	National Association for Credential Evaluation Services
NCO	Noncommissioned Officer
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
NDSEG	National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate

Term	Definition
NPS	Naval Postgraduate School
NPSC	National Physical Science Consortium
NPS-MSSPM	Naval Postgraduate School Master of Science in Program Management and Master of Science in Systems Engineering
NSA	National Security Agency
OCHR	Office of Civilian Human Resources
OPM	United States Office of Personnel Management
Ph.D.	Doctor of Philosophy
PMI	Project Management Institute
PMP	Permanent Military Professor
POC	Point of Contact
S&E	Scientist and Engineering
S&T	Science and Technology
SECFT	Science and Engineer Career Field Team
SECFT-TA	Science and Engineer Career Field Team Tuition Assistance
SECNAV	Office of the Secretary of the Navy
SEP	Special Education Program
SES	Senior Executive Service
SF	Standard Form
SLRP	Student Loan Repayment Program
SMART	Science, Mathematics, and Research for Transformation
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
STEM+M	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics plus Management
TAP	Tuition Assistance Program (DISA)
TDY	Temporary Duty
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
U.S.C.	United States Code
USAASC	U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center
USAF	United States Air Force
USD(AT&L)	Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment
USMC	United States Marine Corps
USN	United States Navy
UVA	University of Virginia
VA	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
VEAP	Veterans Educational Assistance Program
WAVE	Web Automated Verification of Eligibility (VA)

EXHIBIT L: TIP SHEET – PERSONAL STATEMENTS

TIP SHEET: Personal Statements

General Tips

- **Read the Instructions:** Some graduate schools will provide a “prompt” for the personal statement or statement of intent or the essay or question they want you to answer. If this is the case, make sure you respond to the prompt. You could write a beautiful essay, but if it does not respond to the prompt or it exceeds the word length, it will not matter.
- **Address Potential Shortcomings:** A personal statement is a good opportunity to address gaps or discrepancies or setbacks in your application. For example, if your GPA suffered because you were ill at the time, this is the opportunity to explain that to the admissions committee. However, make sure that the overall messaging is about your positive qualities such as resilience and diligence, or the learning that followed, rather than providing excuses.

Personal Statement v. Statement of Intent

- A personal statement is an opportunity for the admissions committee to understand your goals and passions, what you’ll bring to the program and what you’re hoping to gain from the program. It is a good place to highlight significant things about you that do not appear elsewhere on your application.
- A statement of purpose tends to focus on academic or professional credentials and your future research or professional interests.
- If the program asks for both a personal statement and a statement of purpose, the personal statement is likely to be more focused on life experiences and personality assets, while the statement of purpose will focus more on academic/research experiences and goals. The two statement types should address many of the same themes. They are both intended to explain why you are a valuable addition to or candidate for the program.

Getting Started

- **Self-Reflect:** Before putting pen to paper, spend time thinking about your strengths and what you want to convey to admissions committees. Think about the qualities that you bring to a cohort of students or what you offer that the program doesn’t know it needs. You should feel confident about the positive qualities you are conveying to the graduate program. Think about interesting experiences you have had or research you have conducted that will add dimension to the graduate cohort.
- **Talk to Friends and Family:** Talk to family and friends who know you well and ask them what elements they think you should highlight about yourself. The people who have been with you throughout your journey can tell you what they have observed; ask them to help you describe your true self and what makes you stand apart from others.

Strong Personal Statements Share the Following Attributes

- **Clear Narrative:** A good personal statement communicates clear messages about what makes you a strong applicant who will succeed in graduate school.
- **Specific Examples:** Much like an interview or your recommendation letter, your personal statement should include specific examples to illustrate key messages.
- **Relevance and a Good Fit:** The admissions committee wants to know why you are a good fit for the program and why the program is a good fit for you; try to convey information that shows you have done your research about the program. The focus

should remain on why you are qualified and why you want to attend that particular program. For example, a student might be drawn to a program because a faculty member conducts research that aligns with that student's interests. Anecdotes and stories bring a personal element, but it is important to emphasize practical, academic, and career-focused details.

- **Strong Writing:** Review your personal statement for grammar and spelling.
 - **Avoid clichés and hyperbole:** Avoid overused phrases such as “ever since I was a child” or “the truth is...” Try to write in clear, direct statements that show confidence without pretense.
 - **Concise, precise:** Do not feel compelled to fill all of the space; brevity can be just as effective.
- **Appropriate Boundaries:** Do not share inappropriately about past experiences or personal matters. Ensure you write about inoffensive topics. You don't want to be too stiff and formal, but you want to have a conversational, professional tone.
- **Authenticity:** Of course your entire application should reflect this, but admissions staff read hundreds or thousands of essays each year and can detect phoniness. Make sure your voice is polished but true to yourself.
- **Draft, Edit, Repeat:** Provide ample time to write and revise multiple drafts. Above all, make sure you have two or three trusted friends or colleagues review your personal statement. It is important to know how the essay is perceived by others, be careful not to have too many reviewers – you don't want to lose your own voice.

EXHIBIT M: TIP SHEET – RECOMMENDATION LETTERS

A recommendation letter reflects someone else’s perspective about you, your potential, and your accomplishments. The letters should be positive, of course, but the best letters also have substance to them. You should pick individuals who know you well and can provide concrete examples of your successes and quantifiable results you have achieved. Typically this person is a former supervisor at work or a college professor.

Once you have selected the person you want to ask to write your letter, you should set up an in-person meeting with him or her. Make sure you are prepared for the meeting, because you are asking this person for a favor.

TIMING

Make sure you give your reviewer ample notice that you have selected him/her. As soon as you begin the application process, you should start considering the reviewers you would like to ask. If the review process is electronic, you will be asked to submit the names and contact information for your reviewers and they will receive an email with instructions for the electronic review. You should meet with your reviewers *before* they receive this email and make your request in-person or on the phone.

BRING TO THE MEETING:

You should come to the meeting prepared with organized packets for your reviewer. Some schools have specific instructions for the submission format. Make sure you are adhering to those. For schools that require an electronic submission, do not provide the items listed in #2. However, you should still provide your reviewer with the “about you” packet.

- 1) An “about you” packet and general information about the letter:
 - Your Résumé. The résumé will help the reviewer know or remember more details about your work history
 - Sample letters. Provide your reviewer with sample letters (the internet has plenty) in the format you would like the reviewer to follow
 - List of achievements or anything you want the reviewer to highlight. You might write out highlights in sentence form so the reviewer can insert them “ready to go” into the letter.

- 2) School-specific packets (there may be one or several, depending on how many applications you are submitting):
 - The school’s paperwork/form. Sometimes the school will have a questionnaire or survey for the reviewer to complete and sign. Bring this printed out. If they differ by school, you’ll need to bring the form for each program.
 - If there is not a form the reviewer needs to print/sign, you should make a cover page that the reviewer can include with his or her letter. The cover page would say something like “Letter of Recommendation for [Name] for [his/her] application to [Name of Program].” If you have an application ID number, include that too. Often, the school will have specific submission instructions. Make sure you follow the instructions.
 - An addressed and stamped envelope. This is important! You want your reviewer to be able to drop the letter in the mail easily.

APPENDIX A – UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

Introduction to the U.S. Air Force Appendix

There are several ways civilian engineers may receive advanced technical degrees with monetary aid by the USAF and Federal Government. Tuition assistance, established by the Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC), funds degrees from national colleges and universities; **Section I** herein explains this process. Whereas, Commands fund attendance at a Service School directly; **Section II** herein explains this.



Overview

The USAF categorizes its civilian workforce, and the respective education benefits, between Acquisition-coded billets and non-Acquisition-coded billets; in other words, Defense Acquisition Workforce or not. Before reading further, you should determine whether you are in an Acquisition-coded position. Please consult the Acquisition Professional Development Program (APDP) as identified on the Unit Manpower Document and in the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (also known as DCPDS or MyBiz+) to determine your status.

Table A-1 is a basic roadmap for understanding the “funding program” for which your educational goal is eligible. You should start by identifying which type of program you will be attending (column A); this is what drives the funding source (column C) and your process. This appendix will discuss each of these processes.

Table A-1. AFIT Funding Roadmap

A	B	C
Degree Program/School	Acquisition Workforce or Non-Acquisition Workforce	Support Methodology
Master's Degree from an Accredited National College or University*	Acquisition-coded (APDP) position	Acquisition Tuition Assistance (ACQ-TA)
	Non-Acquisition-coded position	Civilian Tuition Assistance Program (CTAP)
Master's or Ph.D. from a Service School (e.g., AFIT)	Acquisition-coded (APDP) employee or non-Acquisition-coded position	Funded directly by the USAF/Command using DAWDA money
Ph.D. from an Accredited National College or University	Acquisition-coded (APDP) position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CTAP ▪ Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics plus Management (STEM+M) Program

*OPM has negotiated discounts at several institutions. Please see the guidebook for a list of schools and programs covered by OPM tuition breaks.

**While the funding source is the same, please note that the requirements, application process, and benefits are different for Acquisition-coded employees and non-Acquisition-coded employees.

First and foremost, for all tuition assistance provided by USAF, the school must be verified on the DoD Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) website. Please visit <http://dodmou.com> to determine which schools are eligible.

The following sections outline the eligibility, benefits, and application process for Acquisition-coded positions and non-Application-coded billets (separately).⁴⁸

I. Tuition Assistance: ACQ-TA and CTAP

Overview on Tuition Assistance

Tuition assistance is the primary method for financial assistance for the attainment of degrees taken at accredited colleges and universities for USAF civilian engineer (and scientist) employees.⁴⁹ Tuition assistance funds cover the completion of a full degree.⁵⁰ This means they are not used for training; contracted courses; Defense Acquisition University (DAU), AFIT, or Project Management Institute (PMI) courses; or a course taken at a college/university for job-specific technical knowledge not part of an approved degree plan.⁵¹

Student Tip!

Institution accreditation can be found on the DoD MOU website. For any employee to get tuition assistance, they have to have a MOU on file and published on <http://dodmou.com>.

Engineers must be from an Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET)-certified institution. You can check this at <http://main.abet.org/aps/Accreditedprogramsearch.aspx>.

Generally speaking, the Science and Engineer Career Field Team (SECFT) facilitates the process for attaining tuition assistance. This team assists with approving goals and degree plans, approving the funding request each term. Whereas, the AFPC actually provides the funding for the tuition assistance.

A. Acquisition-Coded Master's Degree (ACQ-TA)

The Acquisition-Coded Master's Degree program is always open for new participants, and the application process is rolling throughout the year. As long as funds are available (and historically funds supply has met demand for this program), enrollment is open.⁵²

Please visit <https://www.my.af.mil/gcss-af/USA/content/edoptuition>. Please see the link on the left side of the page called "Education Opportunities Home."

Student Tip!

The Acquisition/Career APDP POCs may be found here: <https://www.my.af.mil/gcss-af/USAF/ep/browse.do?categoryId=p2D8EB9D62DDC54D3012E058D6A8506EB&channelPageId=s6925EC1348B50FB5E044080020E329A9>.

Applicants submit Acquisition Tuition Assistance via the Air Force Virtual Education Center (AFVEC).⁵³

B. Non-Acquisition, Master's Degree (CTAP)⁵⁴

The Civilian Tuition Assistance Program (CTAP) is available to almost all USAF, permanent, full-time employees. Acquisition-coded employees will then be rerouted to the ACQ-TA program (see **Section A** above). The exception is that Acquisition-coded employees can use CTAP for a Ph.D. outside of the STEM+M program. (See **Section C** below for information on doctorates.)

CTAP aims to assist civilians in their continued development and includes coursework at the associate, bachelor's, master's, and doctorate levels. CTAP is to be used for course(s) that

⁴⁸ United States Department of the Air Force Tuition Assistance Administrator, Operating Instructions Science and Engineer Career Field Team Tuition Assistance (SECFT-TA), June 8, 2015.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ "Civilian Tuition Assistance Program & Request Process." United States Air Force, https://mypers.af.mil/app/answers/detaila_id/32991/p/2/c/549/p/2/c/549.

contribute to occupational and institutional competencies, special interest needs, and readiness by supporting the current and future needs of the USAF. Please visit https://mypers.af.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/32991/p/2/c/549.

Please note that tuition assistance is granted on a first-come, first-served basis. Submission of a mission-related request for tuition assistance does not constitute automatic approval. Applicants must have an approved education goal in the AFVEC. It is important that each applicant's information in AFVEC is accurate and up to date. Upon registering in AFVEC, you might be required to complete a CTAP Annual Training course and to submit an evaluated degree plan.

Application Resources

AFVEC is located on the Air Force Portal. Here (<https://afvec.us.af.mil/afvec>) you will also find application instructions. Sample Degree Plan: https://mypers.af.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/35490

C. Acquisition, Doctorate Degree

There are two options for Acquisition-coded personnel seeking a doctorate. These individuals may receive funding via CTAP or via the STEM+M program.

CTAP

For information on CTAP, please see **Section B** above. Applicants will be required to contact his or her Career Field Team, since this process is manual.

STEM+M Program

The STEM+M program may be used by Acquisition-coded employees who are seeking a second master's degree or a Ph.D. The Ph.D. program must be technical in nature. The USAF STEM+M program is a part-time/full-time competitive program that provides mission-related technical and management skills and expertise that cannot be obtained by other means (i.e., through hiring, reassignment, or a series of short courses).⁵⁵ This program is for those who wish to pursue a technical Ph.D. or a second master's degree in a technical field.⁵⁶ The program is focused on a select pool of Intermediate Development Team and/or Senior Development Team vectored and vetted civilian Acquisition-coded personnel within the S&E (Scientist and Engineering) career field.⁵⁷ The selected personnel pursue the required coursework to complete an approved second master's degree or a doctorate on a part- or full-time basis.⁵⁸ Consideration and application to the STEM+M program is by invitation only.⁵⁹

STEM+M Resources

Please visit the S&E STEM+M myPers page at https://mypers.af.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/30335.

The S&E STEM+M Program Manager may be reached at:

HQ AFPC/DP2LA
ATTN: STEM+M Program Manager
550 C Street West, Suite 57
Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4759
Email: afpc.se.cft@us.af.mil

STEM+M participants maintain USAF civilian employment for the duration of their time in the program.⁶⁰ Participants are subject to all of the rules and regulations of civil service employment. Participants maintain their salary, benefits, and leave accrual during their period of participation in the program.⁶¹ Participants must complete standard time accounting procedures as directed by their supervisors.⁶²

⁵⁵ AFPC SECFT. S&E STEM+M Program Handbook, November 15, 2017.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

The STEM+M program has a handbook, which contains thorough information on the program. Please visit https://mypers.af.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/30335 for complete program information. If you are going to apply to the STEM+M program, you must use the most current version of the STEM+M handbook and review it carefully.⁶³

II. AFIT and Service Schools

Air Force Institute of Technology

AFIT Admissions Office
www.afit.edu/admissions
1-800-211-5097 x3184

The USAF offers the AFIT as an educational option to civilian DoD employees (among other groups). The Air Force Institute of Technology, or AFIT, is the Air Force's graduate school of engineering and management as well as its institution for technical professional continuing education. A component of [Air University](#) and [Air Education and Training Command](#), AFIT is committed to providing defense-focused graduate and professional continuing education and research to sustain the technological supremacy of America's air, space, and cyber forces. Since 2008, AFIT has been designated as the Air Force's Cyber Technical Center of Excellence.

AFIT accomplishes this mission through four schools: the [Graduate School of Engineering and Management](#), the [School of Systems and Logistics](#), the [Civil Engineer School](#), and the [School of Strategic Force Studies](#). For purposes of this guidebook, we have focused on advanced technical education available at AFIT.

A. Graduate School of Engineering and Management (Certificate Programs and Master's and Doctoral Degrees)⁶⁴

A complete list of the degree programs (and certificates) offered by the Graduate School of Engineering and Management can be found at <https://www.afit.edu/EN/allprograms.cfm?page=600&tabname=Tab2A>.

The Graduate School of Engineering and Management is a nationally recognized, Carnegie-classified doctoral/research institution. It is the sole degree-granting (credit-awarding) entity at AFIT. As of January 2020 the Graduate School offers 25 research-based, STEM master's degree programs, 14 Ph.D. programs, and 9 graduate certificate programs. It maintains a typical enrollment of over 750 in-residence students and about 120 students in various non-resident programs. As a graduate-only, research-based institution, the Graduate School provides its students with several significant advantages, including a more personalized educational experience, with a student-to-faculty ratio of approximately 6:1 in master's degree programs, academic programs with a defense-related focus, and research on high-priority defense problems.

The Graduate School maintains a strong applied-research focus through its six multidisciplinary research centers: Autonomy and Navigation Technology Center, Center for Directed Energy, Center for Cyberspace Research, Center for Operational Analysis, Center for Technical Intelligence Studies and Research, and Center for Space Research and Assurance. The Graduate School is also the home of the Office of the Secretary of Defense-sponsored Center

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ See generally, "Graduate School of Engineering & Management." Air Force Institute of Technology, January 11, 2019, www.afit.edu/EN/.

for Scientific Test and Analysis Techniques in Test and Evaluation, which supports more than 40 major acquisition programs in all four military services. All of AFIT's research is sponsored by external organizations and is often done in partnership with other leading research universities, the Air Force Research Laboratory and other national laboratories, Federally Funded Research and Development Centers, and both large and small defense industry companies. The Graduate School continues to have a significant, positive impact on the USAF and DoD. Graduates are assigned to a wide range of positions in a rapidly changing technological environment. They serve as both uniquely trained engineers/technologists and broadly educated leaders. No matter what degree students earn, AFIT's primary goal is to graduate innovative, critical-thinking, and technology-savvy Total Force Airmen who are prepared to help the Air Force maintain its competitive advantage and meet the national security challenges it faces today and will face in the future.

B. The Civil Engineer School (Continuing Professional Education)⁶⁵

A course schedule for continuing professional education offered by The Civil Engineer School can be found at <https://www.afit.edu/CE/>.

The Civil Engineer School provides vital, relevant, and connected education that enables airmen to be mission-ready engineers and great leaders who know how to build and operate sustainable installations, while leading and inspiring change for the civil engineering career field. The school's professional continuing education 70+ courses are designed to meet the specific needs of thousands of civilians, military, and contractors in the Air Force and joint services. The Civil Engineer School provides technical engineering, environmental, asset and engineering management, and expeditionary-focused instruction. To reach a worldwide audience, it offers in-residence courses, onsite courses, and various modes of DL, to include satellite, Internet, and video teleconferences at USAF installations worldwide. The school also annually provides the initial skills education for about 150 newly commissioned civil engineer officers and newly hired civilians.

III. Additional Programs

There are additional programs you may want to consider for your pursuit of an advanced technical degree, such as:

- **SMART Program.** SMART retention is covered in the guidebook in Section VI (Fellowships and Scholarships). A quick link to the SMART program: <https://www.afcec.af.mil/News/Publications/CE-Magazine/Get-Smart-About-SMART/>.
- **USAF Test Pilot School.** A small number of civilian employees have pursued a Master of Flight Test Engineering via the Test Pilot School at Edwards Air Force Base (AFB), CA. See <https://www.edwards.af.mil/Units/USAFTPS/>.

⁶⁵ See generally, "Graduate School of Engineering & Management." Air Force Institute of Technology, January 11, 2019, www.afit.edu/EN/ and "Civil Engineer School." Air Force Institute of Technology, January 11, 2019, www.afit.edu/CE/.

APPENDIX B – U.S. ARMY

Introduction to the U.S. Army Appendix

The Department of the Army (DA) offers several paths for the attainment of advanced technical degrees and advanced technical training and coursework. This section outlines the primary options by which you may pursue advanced education and directs you to additional resources for further information on these opportunities. The U.S. Army offers a myriad of training and development opportunities for its Army Civilian Corps. This section specifically highlights the pathways leading to advanced degrees, but there are resources referenced for other professional development opportunities.



Resources

There are three primary sources of information on advanced educational development opportunities:

- **Army Civilian Training Education and Development System (ACTEDS) Training Catalogue.** This catalogue is updated yearly. ACTEDS is a directory on the training and education tools, courses, and programs available to all Army civilian employees. It covers the gamut from one-off refresher course options to tuition assistance and degree programs. The ACTEDS catalogue contains the application materials for these offerings.
- **U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC).** USAASC is a resource for the Army Acquisition Workforce (AAW) members. USAASC funds, publishes, and manages academic programs for the AAW using DAWDA money. The Career Acquisition Management Portal (CAMP) website contains the applications for these programs. USAASC is a part of the Director, Acquisition Career Management (DACM) Office.
- **Command Funding**

Table B-1 illustrates the options for degree attainment, who is eligible for each program, and the sponsor of the program. It also provides references for additional information. This section covers these programs and the respective resources in more detail.

Table B-1. Army Education Programs

Program Name	Eligibility	Sponsor	Resource(s)
Academic Degree Training (ADT)	All members of the Army Civilian Corps	Participant's local unit or participant's career program	ACTEDS Training Catalogue
Acquisition Tuition Assistance Program (ATAP)	AAW members	USAASC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CAMP website ▪ USAASC ▪ ATAP Policy Procedures
NPS Master of Science in Program Management (MSPM) and Master of Science in Systems Engineering (MSSE) (NPS-MSSPM Program)	AAW members	USAASC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NPS Policy Procedures ▪ NPS Program website ▪ CAMP website ▪ USAASC
Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP)	AAW members	USAASC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CAMP website ▪ USAASC ▪ SLRP website

I. Academic Degree Training⁶⁶

The U.S. Army defines its Academic Degree Training (ADT) as training or education with the stated objective of obtaining an academic degree. The training must contribute significantly to meeting an identified agency training need, resolve an identified agency staffing problem, or accomplish goals in the strategic plan of the agency. The student must receive training from an accredited college or university.

Subject to a couple of exceptions, all members of the Army Civilian Corps are eligible to apply for ADT. All applicants must have 2 years of permanent, full-time employment as a DA civilian at the time of application. Before training begins, employees selected for ADT must sign an agreement to continue service in the DA (after training) for at least three times the length of the training period (this may be based on semester hours).

The Career Program, with ACTEDS/central funds, or the Command may fund ADT. The funding source determines the specifics of the process. Generally, approved Career Program-funded applicants must initiate an application for training in the GoArmyEd system, and approved Command-funded applicants must initiate an application for training in accordance with local established procedures.

The authority to approve and to pay for the costs for ADT that is part of such approved programs is delegated to the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of Army (AASA), the Functional Chief Representatives (FCRs) of Army Career Programs, and the Commanders/Heads of Army Commands, Army Service Component Commands and Direct Reporting Units. Commanders and the AASA are authorized to approve ADT funded by command/organization training funds, and FCRs are authorized to approve ADT that is funded by Army Civilian Training, Education & Development Systems (ACTEDS) funds through a career program.

Please see the ACTEDS Training Catalogue for information on limitations, a checklist of requirements for applying to ADT, application materials, and other important information.

A. More Information on Career Program Funding

- The Army Career Program Proponency Offices may offer Academic Degree Training as a means of closing identified competency gaps. The Army's 32 Career Program Offices are funded by the Army Civilian Training Education and Development System (ACTEDS) and encompass all of the Army's civilian occupational series. Assignment of occupational series to Army Career Programs (including STEM occupations) is determined by the office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs (ASA M&RA). An employee can find their Career Program by reviewing their personnel records and can contact their Career Program via Army Career Tracker to determine if their Career Program offers Academic Degree training.
- CAREER PROGRAM 16 (CP-16) FOR ENGINEERS AND SCIENTISTS (NON-CONSTRUCTION) IS DEFINED AS: CP-16 Careerists are technically oriented professionals responsible for the research, design, development, production, and field support of advanced materiel ranging from missiles, vehicles, ammunition, protective equipment, and software to food, shelter, clothing, and equipment to enable the Soldier in the field. CP-16 is the career field for those Army civilian engineers, scientists, and technicians, conducting Army

⁶⁶ ACTEDS Training Catalogue. Army Civilian Training and Leadership Development HQDA DCS G-3/5/7, Fiscal Year 2019.

research, development, and acquisition functions.

- Army CP-16 provides ACTEDS funds to pay for ADTs in support of developing the CP-16 workforce to accomplish the mission described in the definition.
- **TO GET STARTED:**
 - Visit the Community Page: www.actnow.army.mil
Go to “Communities” and then to “CP-16 community”
Follow on ACT by joining the CP-16 community
Every topic ever published/printed on ADTs can be found there (as well as other community interest/information)
- Other Resources:
 - Follow on Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/ArmyCP16
 - Email: armycp16@mail.mil

Overview of the Process, Evaluation Criteria and Funding Eligibility:

- Obtain a copy of the required documentation and complete it.
 - Note:
 - The Office has people dedicated to helping you compile the packet and they will help you.
 - Getting it right is tedious. It requires tenacity and attention to detail. Inevitably you’ll be asked to revise some of the documents, so be patient and be tenacious.
 - The people in the Office will help you and will explain why a document needs to be revised if that is the case.
- Decision Process for Award:
 - Completeness of packet.
 - The competencies the applicant is trying to develop.
 - How these competencies compare to the competencies need within the CP.
- Funding: Eligible Amounts and Availability
 - There are two funding approval channels.
 - The maximum amount eligible for approval by the CP-16 Functional Chief Representative (this is a specific CP-16 Army appointed person and each Career Program has one) is \$50k.
 - The FCR approval is streamlined in terms of the length of time. It is quicker.
 - The Army's maximum funding amount is \$75k, but approval at this level takes longer. Every ADT package between \$50k and \$75k must be sent to the Army for approval. This amount is for the whole ADT program.
 - Most requests fit within the \$50k level of funding; \$50k is the easiest to obtain.
 - Requests for more than \$75K almost never receive funding.
 - Total Available Funding: The Army Career Tracker lists the communities and the dollar balance of funding available.
 - Consistency of funding year to year: The Army funding is unpredictable and has ranged from \$125k to \$650k in a year. If high-visibility activity is occurring in DoD, the Army might look for funding from different sources. The Army will set

aside funding to ensure they fund everyone they have already approved before they commit to additional people.

FAQs on CP-16 Funding:

- **Are programs or funding available for people who currently possess an advanced degree unrelated to a STEM field or who are currently pursuing an advanced degree? What programs and degrees are supported?** The Office will not consider approving a doctorate outside of the technical lane, but it may choose to fund some non-technical master's degrees. The Office has approved more than 90 percent of the degrees requested. The majority that were not funded were for more than \$75k. Again, the Office looks at the competency needed by the Army such as leadership and business administration.
- **Will the Office waive the FE/PE exam fee or include an apprenticeship under a PE after passing the FE?** No. They have ACTEDS dollars, and every type of funding comes with strings attached. One of the requirements to use ACTEDS dollars is that they can be used only for tuition and tuition-related travel, so exam fees are not covered. They will pay for developmental assignments but probably not an apprenticeship. They will not pay for books or a license. Many careerists are able to obtain funding from their command for books.
- **What academic degree programs does the CP-16 support that are work oriented rather than research focused?** There isn't necessarily a list of preferred degrees. CP-16 has approved many. Any approval requires your supervisor and other officials in your organization to validate the competency is needed to support the mission.
- **Does CP-16 require that I maintain a full-time schedule at my agency while in school, or am I allowed to attend in-person classes during work hours/enter a part-time or Leave Without Pay status?** Everything related to your pay and schedule derives from the command. Some commands will allow you to go to school full time and draw your salary. This decision is command specific and may be case by case. The CP-16 Office will help you work through questions and assemble your packet.
- **Can I attend school without losing my job?** Your organization has to approve your request to attend school, so it is difficult for them to fire you once they approve you, but the decision may be subject to other factors including the organization's needs and your performance.
- **Is funding continuous or is CP-16 subject to competing priorities?**
 - The Army funding is unpredictable and has ranged from \$125K to \$650k in a year. If high-visibility activity is occurring in DoD, the Army might look for funding from different sources. The Army will set aside funding to ensure they fund everyone they have already approved before they commit to additional people. For the most part, CP-16 funding has been continuous. The Office often is able to obtain Unfunded Requirement (UFR) money from the Army. When the Office approves your ADT, it will state the approval is contingent on funding. CP-16 has a 90% track record for paying even in the tougher funding years.

- **Is CP-16 the best option for me? Should I consider other Army funding options?** You should consider every option available to you and pick the easiest one. There is no way to know if CP-16 is the best for you.
- **What is the organizational/continued service requirement for receiving CP-16?** The rule applies to the entire Army and is found in Army Reg 350-1. The Army has standardized the service requirement, but it gives every command the leeway to require any service agreement they wish. For example, if two people are stationed at Fort Hood, Texas, and they are in different commands, one command could require a 3:1 service obligation and the other a 1:1. If you attend school part-time, online, the rule is 3:1 for teaching contact time or roughly 40 hours per class. For example: if you attend school 45 minutes twice a week, you will owe only 3:1, or about 4.5 hours per week, times the number of weeks in the course. If you attend full time, then it is 3:1 for all of the duty hours, not for the contact time. For example, if you attend school 8 hours per week on duty, you will owe 3:1 or 24 hours per week.
- **If I am currently a civil servant employee of another Service, is there a process to switch to the Army through CP-16?** No. Funding recipients may not be outside the Army, even if they are in another career program. The software for the application checks to see if you are coded as CP-16. If you are not, the application cannot move forward. The Proponency Office does not have a way around this.
- **Does CP-16 offer funding for living costs, or just tuition?** The Office funds tuition and tuition-related travel only.

II. USAASC Programs and Policies

A. Acquisition Tuition Assistance Program⁶⁷

This section provides a summary of the policy for ATAP. All potential applicants should review the complete policy. Please be advised that there is an annual announcement for ATAP enrollment (the “Announcement”), which provides specific details on enrollment dates and deadlines for each calendar year. If you are going to apply for ATAP, you must consult the most recent Announcement to ensure you know the enrollment timeframe for your application year. The Announcement also outlines application specifics and guidance for applying. You will need to consult both the policy and the Announcement, in their current versions, for the most accurate application guidance.

ATAP is a tuition assistance program that provides funding toward the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) education requirements for eligible AAW civilians and Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) 51 Contracting (51C) Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs). AAW members can pursue business credit hours toward master’s degrees or required business credit hours toward Army Acquisition Corps membership. Selectees must be in “active status” and take courses during non-duty hours at accredited learning institutions—see <http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/Search.aspx>. ATAP will fund programs of study or majors when the objective of the program addresses the subject matter in a business context or if the knowledge and skills of the program can be reasonably applied in a business environment.

ATAP Resources

⁶⁷ The ATAP Policy and Procedures. Department of the Army, July 17, 2017, located at “Policies Library: Army Acquisition Workforce Policies.” U.S. Army, USAASC, 2019, <https://asc.army.mil/web/alt-workforce-policy-procedure/>.

Funding

- ATAP is centrally funded by the USAASC – Army DACM Office.
- Funding is limited to one educational goal.
- ATAP may not be used to fund courses toward a second master’s degree regardless of whether ATAP funding was used for the first degree.
- ATAP does not fund Ph.D.’s, M.D.’s, J.D.’s, or certificate programs.
- Funding for courses toward a master’s degree will not exceed \$2,500.00 per course and \$12,500.00 per fiscal year. This limitation applies to all ATAP selectees regardless of the number of credit hours per course or the number of courses taken. Business-related semester/quarter hours at the master’s level will adhere to these funding limits.

Please visit the USAASC website for further information on its programs:
<https://asc.army.mil/web/alt-workforce-policy-procedure/>

Visit the link below for complete details on the ATAP policy and procedures:
<https://asc.army.mil/web/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/ATAP-Policy-07122017.pdf>

The link below provides an example of an Announcement:
<https://asc.army.mil/web/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ATAP-Announcement-7-May-2018.pdf>

The ATAP website houses relevant resources:
<https://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/acquisition-tuition-assistance-program/>

Service Obligation

The ensuing service obligation depends on the duration of the ATAP benefit received. For example, the DA requires DA civilians selected for non-Government training in excess of 80 hours or long-term training and developmental program in excess of 120 calendar days (Government or non-Government) to complete a CSA before assignment to the training.

Total Number of ATAP Funding Courses

Total Number of Courses	Service Obligation Requirement
1 to 6	12 months
7 to 12	24 months
13+	36 months

Other Requirements

Generally, students must complete and receive a grade of a “B” or higher in graduate classes. Failure to meet the aforementioned Service and grade requirements may trigger responsibility for reimbursing the DA for ATAP funds used. Please review the policy and procedures for details on this.

Application Process

Specific details for the application process are contained in the Announcement. General guidance is as follows:

- The ATAP application is an automated process in the Army Acquisition Professional Development System (AAPDS) located within the CAMP and Career/Acquisition Personnel and Position Management Information System (CAPPMIS). The Army Deputy Director, Acquisition Career Management (DDACM) Office ATAP Program Manager is available to assist with questions relating to this process. Instructions for accessing AAPDS and for completing the applications are contained in the Announcement. Participants may only submit one application per Announcement.
- It is imperative that each applicant makes their first- and second-level supervisors aware that they are applying for ATAP. Alerting the supervisors is important because both the first- and

second-level supervisors must approve/evaluate the application in AAPDS no later than the closing date of the announcement. The second-level supervisor must submit the application in AAPDS in order for the application to route to the ATAP Program Manager.

- The application will forward to the ATAP Program Manager only after the application has been approved in AAPDS by both first- and second-level supervisors and the final “submit” button is selected by the second-level supervisor. The ATAP Program Manager will review and forward only correctly completed applications to the Review Board for consideration of funding. A correctly completed application is one where an application followed all instructions identified in the Announcement and the application has been submitted in CAPPMS no later than the closing date of the Announcement.

B. NPS-MSSPM Program⁶⁸

The NPS-MSSPM Program is a competitive, 24-month, interdisciplinary program combining systems engineering with program management knowledge and skills. The curriculum intends to broaden the technical capabilities of AAW members with non-technical backgrounds so that they can successfully manage and lead programs or projects in support of the Defense Acquisition Workforce system. Generally speaking, eligible AAW civilians must first apply to and be accepted by NPS and then must apply for the funding via the online application process on the AAPDS.

The NPS-MSSPM Program is centrally funded by the DDACM Office. The number of participants may increase or decrease each year based on funding constraints and the needs of the Army. There are no temporary duty (TDY) costs associated with participating in the program. The Army DDACM Office will not fund a second master’s degree for any AAW civilian who already has a master’s degree in a business or AAW-related discipline.

Participants are required to maintain a “B” grade in the courses, and they must also sign a CSA. Please review the resources below, especially the NPS Policy Procedures, for guidance on applying to and gaining admission to the NPS-MSSPM Program. The NPS Policy Procedures must be followed as well as the instructions that are released each year in the “annual Announcement” on this particular program.

NPS Policy Procedures

The NPS Policy Procedures document establishes the policy and procedures for application and selection of AAW civilians into the program. All instruction in this policy document and the annual Announcement must be followed. See <https://asc.army.mil/web/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/NPS-Policy-Procedures.pdf>.

NPS Program Website

The NPS Program website houses the current information on applying for the NPS-MSSPM Program and the eligibility requirements. The “annual Announcement,” which contains deadlines and other mandatory guidance, is posted on this site. You must visit this site (<https://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/naval-postgrad-ms-sys-eng/>) if you are interested in the NPS-MSSPM Program.

⁶⁸ “Naval Postgraduate School Masters of Science in Systems Engineering.” U.S. Army, USAASC, 2019, <https://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/naval-postgrad-ms-sys-eng/>; “Naval Postgraduate School Master of Science in Systems and Program Management.” U.S. Army, USAASC, 2019, <https://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/naval-postgraduate-school-master-of-science-in-systems-and-program-management/>; NPS-MSSPM with a System of Systems Focus Policy and Procedures, Department of the Army, August 8, 2017, located at <https://asc.army.mil/web/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/NPS-Policy-Procedures.pdf> and <https://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/naval-postgrad-ms-sys-eng/>.

C. Student Loan Repayment Program⁶⁹

Eligible AAW members may be considered for personal loan repayment of up to \$10,000 per calendar year, with a potential \$60,000 lifetime maximum. More than one loan may be repaid as long as the combined repayments stay within the limits. There is a 3-year service obligation requirement for employees that use this program to repay their student loan(s). The employee must sign a written agreement to serve a minimum of 3 years with DoD.

III. Service Schools

Please see [Appendix A](#), Section II (AFIT and Service Schools), for information on AFIT and [Appendix C](#) for information on the NPS.

The primary path by which the U.S. Army's Civilian Corps attends one of these institutions is via the NPS-MSSPM Program described above. Alternative pathways are uncommon; however, Army Civilian Corps members could receive sponsorship from a Career Program or Command (similarly to how ADT is funded).

⁶⁹ USAASC Student Loan Repayment Program Policy. United States Army Acquisition Support Center, January 6, 2009, located at https://asc.army.mil/docs/programs/slrp/USAASC_Student_Loan_Repayment_Program_Policy-Signed.pdf.

APPENDIX C – U.S. NAVY AND U.S. MARINE CORPS

Introduction to the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps Appendix

In the DON, the Command approves and funds the pursuit of advanced education, regardless of the type of school or program. The best first step, if an advanced degree is your goal, is to add this to your IDP. This begins the conversation and planning with management, so that your manager may begin aiding you with the process. For general inquiries around civilian advanced education, please contact:



Mr. Jose Velez
jose.g.velez@navy.mil
850-235-5692

I. Career Development Policy and Procedure⁷⁰

The SECNAV Instruction 12410.25A (the “Instruction”) is the policy instruction for civilian employee training and career development within the DON. It delegates civilian career development to the Command-level to the Heads of Major Commands/Budget Submitting Offices. The Instruction provides the guidelines by which the Command may institute career training programs and/or provide tuition assistance or reimbursement to its civilian employees. Your Command will have its own set of rules and procedures that you will follow in order to obtain education funding. The universal first-step, regardless of Command protocol, is to include your goal(s) for advanced degree attainment in your IDP.

[Exhibit H](#) to the guidebook summarizes the Instruction. Reviewing [Exhibit H](#) will give you an idea of the types of education that your Command might provide and some of the basic steps you might be required to take to receive the benefit.

II. Naval Postgraduate School⁷¹

The DON has its own Service School, called the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS). The attendee’s Command must fully sponsor the attendee. Any civilian who is an employee of, or sponsored by, an Agency of the U.S. Federal Government is eligible for study (upon sponsorship by the Agency and academic eligibility) at NPS. NPS is not exclusively for DON personnel.

The mission of the NPS is to provide relevant and unique advanced education and research programs to increase the combat effectiveness of commissioned officers of the Naval Service to enhance the security of the United States. In support of the foregoing, and to sustain academic excellence, NPS and the DON foster and encourage a program of relevant and meritorious research to support the needs of the Navy and DoD while building the intellectual capital of NPS faculty.

NPS offers master’s degree programs, doctoral degree programs, and certificate programs. NPS provides two different learning formats: “Resident” program options (attending classes live,

⁷⁰ R.A. Brown, Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel. “Civilian Workforce Development Program for Bureau of Naval Personnel.” SECNAV Instruction 12410.25A, December 15, 2017, located at: https://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/reference/instructions/BUPERSInstructions/Documents/BUPERSINST_12410.25.pdf.

⁷¹ See generally, “Schools & Departments.” Naval Postgraduate School, <https://my.nps.edu/schools-and-departments>; “Graduate School of Engineering & Applied Sciences.” Naval Postgraduate School, <https://my.nps.edu/web/qseas>; “About Us.” Naval Postgraduate School, <https://my.nps.edu/web/qseas/about-us>.

on campus in Monterey, CA) and DL programs, conducted online. Master's and certificate programs have Resident and DL options, but doctoral degrees are offered in a Resident format only.

Degree Programs

A list of the master's and Ph.D. degree programs is located at <https://my.nps.edu/degree-programs#masters>.

Application Process

Please see [Exhibit G](#) for information on the materials needed for applications to the different types of programs. Please note that the USAF has a Service School as well. Please see [Appendix A](#) for information on AFIT.

APPENDIX D – 4TH ESTATE AGENCIES

Introduction to the DACM and 4th Estate Agencies Appendix

The Director, Acquisition Career Management (DACM) and each of the 4th Estate Agencies and DoD Field Activities place a high priority on civilian workforce education. There are several ways civilian engineers may receive advanced technical degrees with monetary aid by DACM and the individual Components.

In the 4th Estate, civilian advanced technical training can happen via two avenues. First, each Agency has its own initiatives for advanced education. Second, the 4th Estate DACM has its own set of offerings for advanced training and degree attainment. **Section I** herein discusses some of DACM's offerings, and **Section II** discusses the offerings from select Agencies. The Agencies with high concentrations of Defense Acquisition Workforce engineers are the focus.

I. Director, Acquisition Career Management⁷²

The 4th Estate DACM Office serves civilians assigned to the defense agencies outside the military departments. This community comprises more than 28,000 Defense Acquisition Workforce members. The 4th Estate DACM is responsible for collaborating with the defense agencies on all facets of career development and management of the Defense Acquisition Workforce. Defense Acquisition Workforce members are eligible to use DACM programs, whereas non-Defense Acquisition Workforce members are not.

As it relates to advanced training and education, the 4th Estate DACM responsibilities include:

- Serving as the direct advisor to the directors of the defense agencies and Defense Acquisition Workforce executives on all matters relating to the education, training, career development, and management of the Acquisition Workforce.
- Serving as the POC for the Director, Human Capital Initiatives; DAU; and the DoD military Services and agencies on Acquisition Workforce matters.
- Supporting enterprise human capital initiatives to create a high-performing Defense Acquisition Workforce.

A. Leadership and Talent Management Portfolio⁷³

The 4th Estate DACM Office's Leadership and Talent Management Portfolio was developed to support Strategic Goal #3 of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Strategic Plan, "Improve the Quality and Professionalism of the Acquisition Workforce." The portfolio furthers this goal by using career development, leadership training, and advanced education to build candidate pools at all levels of the workforce. Each year, the 4th Estate DACM offers a centralized portfolio to mature acquisition decision-makers. In 2019, the offerings broadened significantly to include technical, functional, and soft skills leadership training.

There are two facets to the centralized offerings: (1) leadership courses that students can self-register for and (2) programs that require a nomination package sent to the DACM Office (after approval by a second-level supervisor and agency-level vetting).

⁷² "4th Estate DACM Acquisition Workforce Development Opportunities." 4th Estate DACM, www.doddacm.mil/talent-management.html.

⁷³ Ibid.

Please note that the portfolio opportunities and its rules and requirements are released each year in an email memorandum by the DACM Office. Thus, they are subject to change. For a current understanding of the requirements and rules, please consult the most recent DACM email memorandum on this topic and visit <http://www.doddacm.mil/talent-management.html>.

The POC for this program is:

Ms. Hina Munir, Talent Management Lead
hina.munir@doddacm.mil
703-805-3538

B. LEAP Program⁷⁴

The purpose of the Leadership Excellence for Acquisition Professionals (LEAP) Program is designed to help Defense Acquisition Workforce professionals evolve into highly capable leaders that agencies need to spearhead cost-saving, performance-improving, and innovation-driven efforts. LEAP is a 9-month leadership/educational opportunity. During the program, participants remain in their full-time jobs, meet at appointed times, and spend a total of 14 days in session.

The program structure gives participants the time and space to become well-rounded leaders. Through core development, program graduates will be better able to tackle the Government's most complex acquisition challenges. The goal of this program is to equip attendees with the ability to:

- Apply the knowledge and tools gained to assume higher level Government positions.
- Drive innovation to lead teams toward efficiencies results.
- Manage and motivate others.

An endorsed application package, submitted to the Talent Management Lead, is required for this program. Please ensure that interested applicants use the current program instructions for the year of application. This can be found by contacting the DACM Office or visiting <http://www.doddacm.mil/talent-management.html>.

C. Acquisition Leadership Challenge Program⁷⁵

The Acquisition Leadership Challenge Program (ALCP) has three offerings focusing on the individual, supervisors/team leads, and coaches/mentors.

- Level I provides a model for understanding the dynamics of how leadership is presented with facilitated participant understanding. The specific and unique challenges of change, decision-making, and conflict resolution in the Acquisition Workforce are addressed.
- Level II promotes a willingness to build intrinsic and extrinsic value in their organization. The program helps prepare individuals for developing and implementing coherent strategies to lead organizational transformation in joint, interagency, multinational, and cross-cultural environments.
- Level III is targeted for participants to motivate others in the organization and set a vision and strategies. Strategies to improve leadership style and effectiveness are discussed for implementation at the individual and organizational level.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

Acquisition Workforce members within the 4th Estate are able to take advantage of these opportunities by registering for them in Defense Acquisition Talent Management System (DATMS) (<https://www.atrrs.army.mil/datms>).

II. Select 4th Estate Agency Programs

The majority of civilian engineers employed by 4th Estate Agencies work for the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) or for the Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA). Research efforts for this guidebook were focused on obtaining agency-specific information for MDA and DCMA. In addition, agencies that responded to the inquiry about advanced technical training for its civilian engineers are included.

A. Missile Defense Agency⁷⁶

The MDA offers (1) a tuition assistance program, which is used for attaining degrees during after-duty hours and (2) the MDA Scholarship Program, which is used for a full-time return to school.

1. Tuition Assistance⁷⁷

The MDA tuition assistance program funds a master's or doctorate program in an off-duty, part-time format.

Eligibility. All MDA Federal civilian employees (including Missile Defense Career Development Program participants) are eligible for tuition assistance. Pathway Internship Program and Science, Mathematics and Research for Transformation Program participants are not eligible for tuition assistance. (Service members may apply for tuition assistance through their respective military Service.)

MDA POC

MDA Tuition Assistance:
MDAtraining@mda.mil

MDA:

1. May approve tuition assistance for after-duty hours.
2. May pay all or part of the training expenses up to \$3,500 per course including books, subject to the availability of funds and HRD approval.
3. May approve up to six courses (approximately three credit hours each) per year.
4. May fund three degree program dissertation courses (approximately three credit hours) per employee under the following conditions:
 - a. The dissertation topic must support the MDA mission, as noted on SF 182, Section B18 (Training Objective).
 - b. The dissertation course is included in the six courses per year limit.
 - c. Employees may request approval for more dissertation course work. The request must document why the added course(s) is required to support the MDA mission, how many dissertation courses MDA has already funded, and the total number of requested courses. The employee's functional Senior Executive Service (SES) or flag officer must endorse the request and submit it through Human Resources (HR) to the

⁷⁶ "Employee Training, Education, and Professional Development." Missile Defense Agency, MDA Instruction 1430.01-INS, October 27, 2014, Substantive Change 1, September 13, 2017.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

Executive Director for approval/disapproval. HR will not approve additional dissertation course work without this approval.

- d. Will normally not fund or reimburse travel-related expenses with Agency training funding. Organizations must receive Executive Director approval to fund travel using their operational travel funds.

Employees:

1. Must submit individual training requests for each course on the SF 182 through Employee Development Center-Learning Management System (E-LMS).
2. Must sign an MDA Form 004, "Continued Service Agreement (CSA)," agreeing to serve 1 year with the Agency after completing the course. Employees sign the CSA before final HR approval of the SF 182.
3. Must submit a signed transcript release form from their college/university with each SF 182 submission.
4. Must submit an official transcript to MDA/HR upon request.
5. Must understand that falsification or misrepresentation of grades is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including removal from Federal service.
6. Must use regionally accredited colleges and universities in their local commuting/duty area.
7. May use accredited online programs even if the college or university is outside their local commuting/duty area.
8. May receive tuition assistance for not more than six courses per year. Courses must support MDA mission requirements.
9. May request supplies or service items to support approved training on the MDA Form 80, "Request for Facility Operations Support and Services."
10. May request information technology (IT)-related supplies or software to support approved training at the MDA automated service request module. The module is on the MDA Knowledge Online (MKO) portal at the IT request link.
11. Must submit their academic grade reports to GradeReports@mda.mil no later than 4 weeks following the end of the course. Employees who fail to report their grades are ineligible for future tuition assistance. Further, they may have to pay back the funds paid for the course.
12. Must receive a minimum grade of "C" for each undergraduate course and a minimum grade of "B" for each graduate/post graduate course or must reimburse MDA.
13. When applicable, must withdraw from any college/university-approved courses at least 2 days prior to the college/university requirements to enable MDA to receive a full refund or must reimburse MDA.

2. MDA Scholarship Program

The MDA Scholarship Program (MSP)⁷⁸ funds a full-time master's or doctoral program. Interested applicants should review current program operating instructions. Below is a general summary of program rules and requirements.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

1. MDA may fund long-term, full-time (LTFT) training through the MSP for MDA Federal civilian employees to pursue master and doctorate directly related to MDA mission requirements.
2. MDA limits participation in the MSP to 1 year for completion of a master's degree and 2 years for completion of a doctorate, unless the Executive Director approves an extension.
3. MDA may pay for registration fees, tuition, books, equipment, and supplies.
4. Civilian Eligibility: MDA Federal civilian employees are eligible to apply for the MSP if they:
 - Have served at least 3 years as an MDA Federal civilian employee at the time of application.
 - Have a bachelor's degree at the time of nomination.
 - Are accepted by the selected accredited university.
 - Are a DoD civilian broadband Level III or higher (or equivalent).
 - Have a performance rating of "fully successful" or higher (or equivalent).
 - Have not participated in another LTFT training program in the previous 4 years.
5. Institution Eligibility: Participating universities must be:
 - Accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting organization to provide a curriculum of post-secondary education for the selected degree. (The HRD will verify accreditation status with the U.S. Department of Education.)
 - Located in the local commuting area of the employee's official duty station or residence at the time of nomination unless the Executive Director approves an exception. Employees may also use accredited online programs, which they must clearly identify in the nomination package.
6. Employees may request supplies or service items to support approved training on the MDA Form 80, "Request for Facility Operations Support and Services."
7. Employees may request IT-related supplies or software to support approved training at the MDA automated service request module. The module is on the MKO portal at the IT request link.
8. HR will accept nominations during MDA calls for nominees. Nominees must provide the following to HR at the time of nomination:
 - MDA Form 98, "Competitive Development Nomination Form," endorsed by the nominee's flag officer/SES member.
 - Signed letter from nominee, including:
 - Proposed university
 - Desired degree
 - Planned start and graduation dates
 - Intent to attend as a year-round, full-time student
 - Statement that the nominee fully understands the MSP guidance
 - Endorsement from the Functional Managers (FM) and SES or flag officer in the chain of command
 - Copy of the employee's most recent supervisor-approved IDP
 - Civilian resume

- Copy of the planned program of instruction, showing the schedule of coursework for each semester
 - Copy of the employee's most recent annual appraisal
9. **Evaluation and Selection.** A panel of senior leaders will evaluate applicants based on the nomination packages. The panel will select based on the availability of funds, quality and diversity of applicants, and MDA's criticality of need, and make a recommendation for final approval/disapproval. HR will notify selectees/non-selectees and their supervisors.
10. Selectees will:
- Submit academic records (semester grades, academic evaluations, etc.) to the HRD MSP coordinator and gradereports@mda.mil no later than 30 days after the term ends.
 - Maintain a 3.0 GPA at all times during the program. Failure to maintain a 3.0 GPA may result in removal from the MSP and may require reimbursement of MDA funds.
 - Obtain FM approval of their dissertation topic and certification that the topic supports the MDA mission if a dissertation is required for the degree program. Provide this approval documentation to HR at the time they submit the SF 182 for the dissertation work.

B. Defense Information Systems Agency

The Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) has two primary avenues for tuition assistance.

1. DAWDA Tuition Assistance⁷⁹

DISA offers an Acquisition Workforce Development Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), which is used primarily for the attainment of required or desired education standards for the Defense Acquisition Corps or those identified in the Certification Standards Checklists published by the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (USD(AT&L)) for the applicant's primary career field. Similar to the other Service's tuition assistance programs, TAP requires the applicant gain admittance into the accredited university/college prior to applying for TAP. The applications are processed on a first-come, first-served basis, and the applications are ranked in accordance with a prioritization scale. For example, courses that enable Defense Acquisition Workforce members to meet "mandatory" education standards established by statute receive precedence for funding over courses that meet "mandatory" standards established only by DoD policy, and courses that enable Defense Acquisition Workforce members to meet standards established as mandatory in DoD policy take precedence for funding over courses that meet "desired" standards, and so on.

For more information, please see Certified Association Executive (CAE) Guideline Number 013 dated September 1, 2016, in [Exhibit I](#) to this guidebook.

2. DISA Competitive Programs

DISA competitive programs are not directed specifically at engineers, but they are the Agency's primary method to offer opportunities for advanced degrees to its employees. Please see [Exhibit J](#) to this guidebook for an example of DISA's competitive programs summary. This brochure is updated each year and can be found on the internal DISA website.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ "Acquisition Workforce Development (AWD) – Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)." Defense Information Systems Agency, CAE Guideline Number 013, September 1, 2016.

⁸⁰ See e.g., Defense Information System Agency, "2018 DISA Competitive Programs Summary." 2018.

C. Defense Threat Reduction Agency

The Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA)⁸¹ has a Graduate Fellowship Program. The DTRA Graduate Fellowship Program provides an opportunity for civilian employees to pursue a master's or a doctorate as a full-time student from an accredited college or university of their choice for one academic year. The program is developed in accordance with the Agency Vision and Strategic Plan and contributes to the success of the Agency by funding study in various disciplines needed to support and enhance mission-related performance.

DTRA POC

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The program is centrally funded by DTRA. Tuition includes the cost of all required textbooks, lab, and registration fees. This program does not reimburse for any required entrance testing or application fees. Graduate Fellowship Program costs may not exceed \$35,000.

⁸¹ "Strategic Workforce Recruiting Programs." Defense Threat Reduction Agency, www.dtra.mil/Careers/Strategic-Recruiting-Programs/.

U.S. Department of Defense Advanced Technical Degree Guidebook

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