

Program management information for the college and military educators of the SOC Navy degree networks.

Hail and Farewell

Dr. Steve F. Kime, President of Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges for the last 16 years, announced his retirement effective March 7, 2005. During his tenure, Dr. Kime fostered enormous growth in both the SOC Consortium and the SOC Degree Network programs and solidified the respect for Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges' role as the litmus test for balance between academic and military interests. Fair winds and following seas, Steve!

Welcome Dr. Kathryn Snead to her new role as SOC President! Kathy's primary focus is to continue helping servicemembers and military families pursue and complete college degrees. This role has been important to her not only in her previous positions as SOC-MAR and SOCAD Project Director, but in higher education administrative positions at Syracuse University, University of Central Texas (now a campus of Tarleton State University), Armstrong Atlantic State University, Georgia Southern University, and Leeward Community College. Kathy, as the spouse of an active-duty Army officer, understands the challenges of completing a degree while undergoing frequent changes of location. As she accepted the SOC presidency she said, "Strengthening and creating collaborative relationships between the military and higher education communities, for the benefit of men and women in uniform, will be my highest priority."

Getting Ready for Annual Updates

In April, SOCNAV colleges, as well as other SOC Degree Network institutions, will be receiving their annual update packages in preparation for the Fall *SOCNAV Handbook* publication. Why is this important to Navy College Offices and academic institutions?

Information for the *Handbooks* comes from three sources: institutional information from colleges and universities; location information from Navy College Offices, Navy Education and Training Professional Development and Technology Center (NETPDTC) and the academic institutions; and SOC Degree Network information including the Transferability Tables from SOC. The Navy, particularly through the Navy College

Program Distance Learning Partnerships, is placing more emphasis on process automation. When data are automated, "the devil is in the details." Everyone is part of the process of keeping information current. A typo in a course number can be the difference in a sailor receiving guaranteed course transfer credit or not.

Not every curriculum offered by a college is listed in the *SOCNAV Handbooks*. NETPDTC and Navy College Offices identify programs for possible inclusion in the SOCNAV Degree Networks based on the needs of the Navy. As the needs of the Navy change, Navy College Offices and NETPDTC review their Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and contracts to determine if the programs are still of interest to sailors. When MOUs and contracts change or selected programs are no longer of interest to sailors and their families, notifying SOCNAV of changes is critical in keeping the system responsive to the educational needs of the sailor and the SOCNAV curricula up-to-date.

Staff of academic institutions review college information pages for policy changes and changes in points of contact. The college staff member listed as a point of contact should be the person Navy College education specialists or sailors can contact to answer specific questions about the academic programs. It is critical that names, addresses, phone numbers and fax numbers are correct and working. These changes can be sent to SOC as soon as they happen rather than just during the annual update, but often it is the update request that reminds people of changes.

Course numbers, course titles, course content, and the number of hours required for a given course may change. Many states are moving to standardized course numbering systems and in some cases standardized course descriptions. All of these are items of which SOC needs to be aware because they directly impact the degree network system and guaranteed transfer of courses with SOC Course Category Codes. Academic institutions and SOC are working together closely to keep the transferability information current.

As April showers come our way, let's all make an effort to have the most thorough and timely updates possible. After all, sailors completing degrees as quickly and hassle-free as possible is why this consortium exists.

Using the SMART Summary Page and SOC Course Category Codes

The SOC Course Category Codes appear in the last column of the Sailor, Marine, American Council on Education Registry Transcript (SMART) supplemental Summary page where collegiate level credit recommendations appear for Navy training and Rate/Rating experience. The codes come from the *SOC Credit Supplement* and are linked to American Council on Education credit terms. Their purpose is to assist academic institutions in mapping military credit recommendations to curriculum requirements in the major or major-related electives rather than merely applying them to free electives. These recommendations apply where appropriate to the degree. They do not have guaranteed transfer of credit. Only college courses listed in the transferability tables of the *SOC Degree Network Handbooks* have guaranteed credit transfer.

Appropriate Etiquette on Navy Bases

Some Navy College Offices have expressed concern that a number of academic institutional representatives, including some from SOC and SOCNV members, are unfamiliar with base access regulations and how to identify the appropriate point of contact for voluntary education programs. Department of Defense and Navy guidance are outlined in a number of instructions, several of which are highlighted here. Department of Defense Instruction 1322.25, "Voluntary Education Programs" and its enclosures outline the operation of the Service voluntary education programs. SECNAVINST 1560.4, "Department of the Navy Voluntary Education (VOLED) Program" provides Department of the Navy guidance for both the Navy and the United States Marine Corps (USMC) voluntary education policies. SECNAVINST 1740.2D, "Solicitation and the Conduct of Personal Commercial Affairs on Department of the Navy Installations" and its enclosures govern a number of items including the activity of military retirees representing outside organizations on Navy and USMC bases and solicitation by senior active duty members of more junior active-duty personnel in non-duty-related matters. OPNAVINST 1560.9, "Navy Voluntary Education Programs (Navy Campus)" is the document for regulations regarding the Navy's voluntary education program now referred to as Navy College.

The bottom line is that there is a process to follow when approaching Navy installations and Navy educa-

tion personnel with proposals for educational programs. The Navy College Office is the official representative of the base commander for voluntary education programs on a given installation including tenant commands. NETPDTC determines Navy-wide voluntary education programs through contracts and MOUs. All program information should be coordinated through the Navy College Office or NETPDTC. Just because an employee has an active-duty or military retiree identification card, does not give that employee the right to solicit business on an installation to which he/she has access. These instructions are available on the Internet. Links are provided on the SOCNV Web site, as well. Knowledge of these instructions and following the etiquette outlined in them can lead to a respected professional relationship between academic institutions and Navy College/NETPDTC representatives for a long time to come.

Upcoming SOC College Workshops

One of the best ways to stay informed on the latest developments for both experienced and brand new college and education center staff is to attend a workshop. The next SOC College Workshops will be in April at Chattahoochee Technical College (Atlanta, GA) and Florida Community College at Jacksonville. Other workshops this fiscal year are scheduled for Portland, OR; Seattle, WA; Salt Lake City, UT; Minneapolis, MN; and Oklahoma City, OK. As plans are finalized, times and specific locations of the workshops will be announced on the SOC Web site at: <http://www.soc.aascu.org> and registration materials will be available.

SOCNAV-specific workshops will be held in conjunction with Navy College Education Fairs beginning with Gulfport, MS on March 14, 2005.

Rating Updates

The Signalman Rating was disestablished as of September 30, 2004. Currently there is a proposal to merge the Journalist, Photographer's Mate, Lithographer and Draftsman ratings into the Mass Communication Specialist (MC) rate.

Footnote:

(Webster's *New Collegiate Dictionary* defines "Scuttlebutt" as "a cask on shipboard to contain fresh water for a day's use." Later the term came to mean "drinking fountain" on Navy ships or at ashore installations. Naval personnel often come to the "fountain" not only for water but also for the latest news.)