

## **POSTSECONDARY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS CONDUCTED BY ACCREDITED OR CANDIDATE INSTITUTIONS ON MILITARY BASES**

The Commission is pleased to note that the military services are very much aware of the critical need for well-educated manpower and fully endorse on military bases the development of educational programs designed to provide for the personal and professional growth of personnel, through educational courses and programs in cooperation with accredited and candidate postsecondary institutions.

Institutions are encouraged to cooperate with the military services in designing appropriate courses and programs for both military personnel and also such military-related or civilian personnel as it may be considered feasible to accept. In establishing courses or programs, institutions should recognize that special considerations frequently must be made; for example, courses designed for professional preparation in an academic discipline may not adequately meet the needs or capitalize on the experience of military personnel. The usual fixed requirements of residence and traditional methods of accumulating credits may fail to allow for the unique circumstances of the military person. Hence, it is the Commission's view that an institution offering such courses, while holding to the basic quality essential to good educational programs, should feel free to adapt methods, policies, and procedures to the regimen and conditions under which the military student must perform his duties and pursue his studies.

Providing educational opportunities for interested personnel on military bases is a dual responsibility. Certain guides and requisites can be established which may provide both incentive and direction for military officers in positions of responsibility on base. Likewise, there are helpful guides that might provide direction for those from the college campus responsible for such services. Successful programs in these situations will not be realized unless there is mutual understanding, a sharing of responsibilities, and a marshaling of resources essential for such offerings.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF INSTITUTIONS**

Programs offered should relate to the purposes and adhere to the educational standards of the institution.

Provisions should be made for students to work toward completion of appropriate programs offered by the institution. Without compromising the principle that quality will be equivalent to that on campus, course offerings might be more flexible for non-traditional than those required of the campus student. Thus the educational goal of the military-based student might be given special consideration within the general education requirements of the institution without depreciation of standards. Although institutions should refrain from offering work unrelated to either their mission or resources, they may provide service or cultural courses without credit when such experiences can be of personal worth or upgrade competencies required of the military person.

In organizing and administering base programs, institutions should take into consideration the uniqueness of military situations.

The staff member assigned the responsibility of representing an institution in its military base effort must recognize the unique demands of the situation. He must realize that the first demand upon the base personnel is a military commitment, and arrangements for such individuals must fit into this demand. Although organization and administration practices need not duplicate or conform to campus routines, appropriate standards should be maintained.

Student personnel policies and services should be such as to facilitate the success of a program on a military base.

Admission requirements should reflect the demands of postsecondary level studies and requirements and at the same time take into consideration the student's background in terms of equivalencies. Registration procedures should be accommodated to the conditions under which the military works, and counseling services should be provided by relevantly prepared and experienced individuals. Special provisions should be made for program advising so students may know requirements, as well as how to make adjustments in terms of their own educational goals. Adjustments may need to be made in resident requirements and/or the substitution of courses for transfer credit or degree purposes. Provision should be made for the possibility of advanced placement or credit by examination or evaluation.

Both faculty and instruction should be of recognized quality.

For military-based education programs, the faculty are drawn from the cooperating institution, the military base staff, and from other institutions. Qualified specialists without institutional affiliation may also be employed. Instructors must be professionally competent in regard to specific preparation and recency of involvement in the field. When participating institutions employ faculty from other institutions on a part-time basis, it is recommended that they do so with permission from the faculty members' full-time employer to avoid the danger of excessive overloads.

The quality of the instruction should be comparable to that on campus, with the same degree of concern for teaching tools and learning resources. Necessary library materials must be available or accessible. Special provisions may be needed for the completion of course work when students are called from base. Regardless of departures from campus practice, grades should not be given until students meet all course requirements.

Integrity among institutions offering programs on a single base is essential.

Institutions placed in competition with each other in making bids to provide services must guard against erosion of quality of instruction. To avoid negative aspects of competition, several participating institutions on a base should consult among themselves and with the military education services officer. In all deliberations and negotiations, it is expected that a high degree of integrity will be maintained.

## **GUIDELINES AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE MILITARY**

The military should not hesitate to initiate negotiations for the purpose of providing educational programs on base.

When postsecondary educational opportunities are not being provided, and when personnel on base express an interest in them, military officials should initiate the action necessary for securing such programs. The leadership should first assess and identify the types of programs and services desired before approaching an institution. It is always helpful to know at the outset precisely what is desired, the approximate number of students who are likely to be involved, and the resources which the base might be able to provide. Education officers should be open in making needs known to interested institutions and in inviting proposals for programs.

Memoranda of understanding or contracts should be negotiated directly between military bases and participating institutions. Where possible, it is recommended that such memoranda of understanding or contracts run for more than one year to assure program stability. Perhaps bases could work toward standardization of contracts and thus insure greater consistency in the services provided by an institution.

A joint meeting of both institution and base leadership should occur early.

After the educational needs of base personnel are determined, there should be a joint exploration and planning session of base and institution representatives. Such a meeting should define the needs, identify essential resources, describe the general nature of programs desired, and define the specific responsibilities of all parties. Written agreements should be reached prior to initiation of the program to guide both the base and the participating institution in carrying out the program.

The military will have responsibility for supplying certain essential resources.

In addition to identifying programs desired, the number of persons involved, and the costs, the military should be expected to provide certain essentials for such programs on base as follows:

- suitable and adequate classrooms
- space and facilities for a library or learning center
- adequate learning resources to support the program
- laboratory space and essential equipment for courses requiring laboratory experiments
- other equipment and supplies (e.g., computers, business machines, etc.) essential to courses offered

It is the responsibility of the educational institution to notify the military base of additional or extraordinary needs sufficiently in advance to make it possible for the base to fulfill the request.

The military must give full support and backing to the program once it is initiated.

No program will succeed without the continuing support of the post commander, his staff, and the highest officials of the respective service branch. A postsecondary program will also need the attention of an educational officer who is a qualified educator and is given time and staff to manage and evaluate the program and provide essential academic advisement. The educational officer will need the full support of all base officials. The success of such programs is highly dependent upon the experience, leadership, and resourcefulness of such an individual.

There is need for greater uniformity of policy and practice among the various branches of the military.

It has been noted that differences exist in both policy and practice among various branches of the service. The Commission urges that steps be taken to achieve the following:

- coordinated administrative organization of educational programs throughout the services
- standardized scales of tuition support
- greater understanding and agreement on what constitutes adequate classroom space and equipment

Uniformity of commitment on the part of the various branches could do much to increase comparability of programs and services among military bases, and it would improve efficiency and reduce the administrative burden on institutions providing educational programs to more than one base.

On bases where non-military personnel are permitted to take courses, it is understood that the first responsibility in terms of space and instructional services is to the military student. However, the inclusion of community people on a space-available and self-paid basis may be beneficial to all parties concerned and is encouraged.

#### **EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS ON MILITARY BASES**

Educational programs conducted by accredited or candidate postsecondary institutions on a military base should be evaluated by the appropriate regional accrediting commission in conjunction with an institutional evaluation.

Although informal evaluations may be made by military education staff, it is not appropriate for the military to engage in formally evaluating the programs of an accredited postsecondary institution. It is recommended, however, that appropriate military educational personnel confer with the institution in doing the relevant part of its self-study. An evaluation team may wish to confer with the military regarding the support, resources and effectiveness of a given program.

If an accredited institution offers educational programs on a military base within another accrediting region, the evaluation should be conducted jointly by the affected Commissions with primary responsibility in the parent Commission. In the case of overseas programs conducted outside the United States or its possessions, the evaluation should be conducted by the appropriate regional Commission.

Those responsible for postsecondary military base programs will be cognizant of and generally expected to meet the appropriate military, state, and Commission guidelines for operation of the programs.

### **CONSORTIA ARRANGEMENTS**

Where two or more institutions are joined together in consortia to provide educational programs on military bases, certain common administrative arrangements and educational policies need to be agreed upon. This can be handled by a consortium board with appropriate representation from each of the participating institutions and the military. Such matters as calendar, admissions, course requirements, transfer of credits and tuition should be developed.

From the outset, the Commission should be notified of and involved in the development of the consortia. Evaluation of the consortia educational program will be in conjunction with the evaluation and accreditation process with each participating institution. Consortia arrangements will not be independently evaluated for separate accredited status.