



# MOUNTAIN CLIMBER

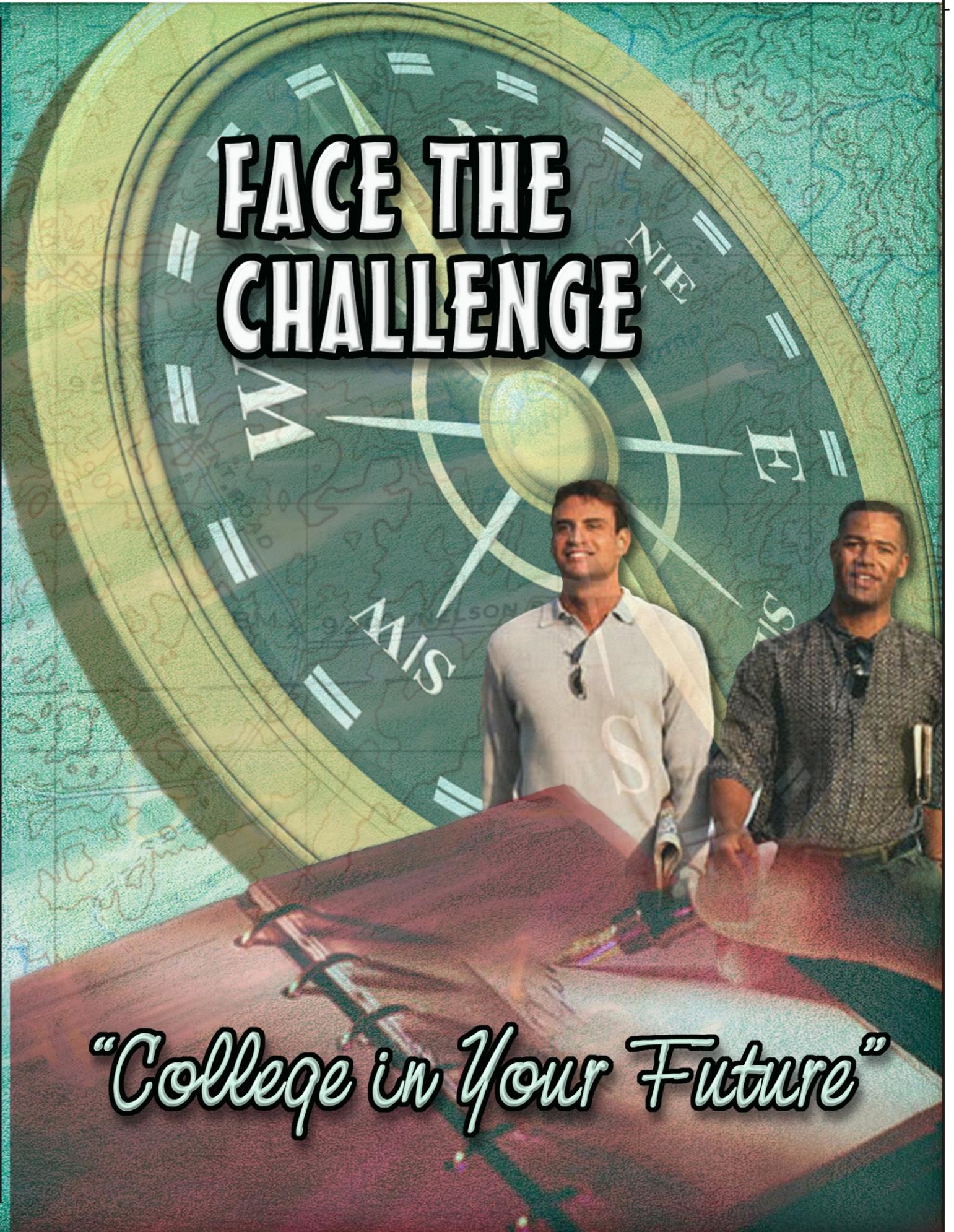


Volume 1, Issue 10

FORT DRUM

March 2003

## FORT DRUM EDUCATION CENTER



# FACE THE CHALLENGE

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## "College in Your Future"

## On the Education Services Officer's Desk

The  
Army Education  
Center  
at the  
McEwen Library and  
Education Complex

Hours of Operation

Monday, Tuesday,  
Thursday, and Friday

0900-1600

Wednesday

1245-1600

(315) 772-6878



The Fort Drum  
Education Center  
Mountain Climber

Garrison Commander  
COL Emory R. Helton

Director, Directorate  
of Plans,  
Training and  
Mobilization  
LTC Alan D. Fessenden

Education Services  
Officer  
Carla K. Ortiz

Editor  
Joseph A. Agresti

Cover Art  
Reggie Cullen

*This month's edition is being guest chaired by Mary Anne Hamel, one of our counselors currently serving in Bosnia as the ESS at Camp McGovern. We hope to get her back full time this fall.*



Attending any college involves two processes. One is the admissions process and the other is the financial aid process. This month's *Mountain Climber* focuses on the admissions process.

You have spent time exploring your personal interests and possible career choices. You have picked up college materials/brochures from the colleges you are interested in. Our Education Counselors answered particular questions you had and advised you accordingly. You have narrowed down your list and are ready to go. Now what do you do?

You need to contact the admissions office and apply to the school by filling out the admissions application. College applications request academic information (high school and former college transcripts and college-level examinations transcripts), personal information, (an essay, any extracurricular activities, and family members who may have attended the college) and your degree and major selection. You will need to request all official academic transcripts from high school, all colleges, testing programs such as CLEP and DSST, and your AARTS be sent to the college. Keep in mind that your degree is the credential you will receive after

you have completed a specific number of credits from the college. Your major is the emphasis or focus of courses you wish to complete. (Example: you are applying for an Associate of Applied Science degree totaling 60 semester hours in the Criminal Justice major. Of these 60 total credits, 30 semester hours will be criminal justice classes.)

Additionally, an application fee may be required for processing. Remember to keep a copy of the application and to mail the application before the deadline date, if applicable. You can expect to be notified of an admissions decision within four to six weeks or less from smaller colleges.

*Good Luck !*

Mary Anne Hamel

Education Services Specialist  
OJF-Camp McGovern

### Other Voices Thoughts from outside the box

#### PICKING A MAJOR

Picking a major is not easy for many students. The average college student will change majors three times. Even that may not be enough. The Wall Street Journal reported that more than one third of adults would change their major if given the chance. So how do you pick a major that will lead to a successful career or promotion? First, select your major slowly and deliberately. Take advantage of time you're spending studying the basics to find a major that not only matches your academic interests, but also leads to a rewarding outcome. Investigate before you pick a major. What works for one person may not work for the next.

#### SOME TIPS TO PICKING A MAJOR

**Take a self-assessment.** A self-assessment or career interest inventory can help you narrow your choices. A guidance tool or interest inventory will single out two or three fields that match your goals, skills, and interests. These guidance materials and interest inventories can be taken at most military education centers.

**Try out a career.** In addition to volunteering, you can gain experience by doing freelance work outside your military job. Moonlighting can also expose you to another career.

**Talk to a counselor.** All military branches have excellent educational programs. Take advantage of those. Seek input from your military education center counselors, friends, and

families about your choice. The people close to you may do a better job identifying your strengths and weaknesses.

**Consider outside factors.** Few students have the luxury of selecting courses based solely on interests, likes, and dislikes. Other factors, including potential employment, influence choices. A lot of good people are enticed into the computer field because there's a high demand. But don't make a college major choice based solely on money. Your major may determine how you spend one-third of the rest of your life.

**Explore alternatives.** Few majors are limited to just one career. On average, people in the workforce will change careers - not jobs - five times. Broad majors, such as liberal arts, offer career flexibility. However, narrow majors often lead to more lucrative careers. Your education center and library can provide books that will help you in your decision. The *Occupational Outlook Handbook* by the Department of Labor includes detailed job descriptions, training or education needed, working conditions, and salary ranges. Education centers also may carry a reference publication called *Index of Majors and Graduate Degrees* and one called *Quick Guide to College Majors and Careers*. Many bookstores also carry a book entitled *Guide to College Majors*, published by the Random House Information Group.

Whatever your major, chances are your educational interests will need to continue to grow as your career progresses. Education is a lifelong process. You have to be prepared to continually update your skills.

*Courtesy of the Staff of the Navy College Program*



### Service Members Opportunity Colleges Army Degrees (SOCAD)

#### What is the SOCAD program?

The Servicemembers Opportunity College, Army Degree (SOCAD) program was designed to make it easier for soldiers to complete a college degree while serving their country. The program capitalizes on three factors to do this:

- SOCAD supports alternative admissions criteria that may eliminate the need for national standardized admissions test scores.
- SOCAD limits the number of college credits a service member must take to meet the college's residency requirements.
- SOCAD allows for the ease of transferability of college credits, while minimizing the loss due to transferring college credits from one college to another.
- SOCAD also provides for the fair evaluation of military experience and provides an opportunity to earn college credits through national testing programs, such as CLEP, ECE, and DSST.
- SOCAD documents, through the SOCAD Agreement, a degree plan that clearly explains academic requirements and records student accomplishments.
- SOCAD accepts not only servicemembers but their family members.
- SOCAD allows for degree completion after leaving the service.

#### How does it work?

SOCAD is a system of colleges networking together to service specific military students. Operating under the umbrella of the Servicemembers Opportunity College or SOC, SOCAD participants are colleges with a history of close association with Army installations. Both soldiers and their adult family members are eligible to participate in SOCAD.

SOCAD's main goal is to enhance the quality of programs offered to

soldiers and their family members at both the associate and bachelor degree levels.

#### How do I Participate in SOCAD?

You need to meet with a counselor at your Army Education Center. Together, you discuss the appropriate course of study that will meet your long term educational and career goals. Then, you will be referred to a participating college. Once you have enrolled in the suggested SOCAD college, this becomes your "home college". After completing six (6) credit hours, you will request an official evaluation of your prior learning experiences and you will then receive your SOCAD Student Agreement. In order for your home college to become the degree granting institution, you will need to complete at least 25% of the degree to meet academic residency requirements.

#### What are your responsibilities as a SOCAD Student?

- Once you have enrolled in a SOCAD program, you are responsible for sending all the necessary documents to the home school to ensure a complete review.
- You are required to update your SOCAD Student Agreement after the successful completion of all college courses, military training, military experience or test.
- When you relocate to a new duty station and successfully complete courses at another college regardless of its SOCAD affiliation, you need to send official transcripts back to your home college.
- Upon successful completion of your degree plan, you will then fill out the graduation request with the your home college.

Diane Turo-Hughes  
Army Guidance Counselor



**College Challenge - Case Study A**

*PFC Bobby Turner is a first term 11B10 assigned to one of the Infantry Battalions. He is just arriving from Advanced Individual Training at Fort Benning. Prior to his enlistment, PFC Turner graduated from his hometown High School. He had no plans for college after he met his Army Recruiter; he has the Army College Fund on top of his Montgomery GI Bill.*

*Two weeks have elapsed since PFC Turner's last session.*

Counselor: Welcome PFC Turner. After our last session you were going to explore your goals and develop a career plan.

PFC Turner: Yes. I have a desire to become a Certified Public Accountant. I plan to return to Boulder and begin my education toward that career goal. I found that Boulder has two college campuses that I would be able to attend; the University of Colorado and Front Range Community College. I'm unsure which one to attend.

Counselor: You have done some excellent research and self exploration.

When choosing a school look at such factors as tuition and fees, on-campus housing, and which school has the degree plan that best meets your goal. A community college can be an excellent place to begin your educational experience. Community colleges generally have a diverse population, smaller class sizes, and are more economical. Remember, you can apply to more than one college and it is never too early to start this process.

Now we need to look at the

procedures for applying to college.

Prior to enrolling for classes at college, students must complete and submit an application for admission. This form is available on campus, or can be requested from the Admissions office or generally can be completed online as well.

In this application you will declare a major of study and will need to provide some supporting documentation. For example, your high school diploma and residency qualification information. You would want to forward an Army/ACE Registry Transcript System (AARTS) transcript to the college so your military training can be evaluated for college credit. Many schools will require placement testing or standardized tests such as the SAT/ACT for students with no prior college. You might also want to look at the application requirements for transfer students (those students who bring prior college level experience into the picture).

Those credits would have to be accepted by the college, and be consistent with the degree program you choose.

Today, through technology, we have the ability to gain advanced placement into the college of choice by doing distance learning or independent learning. You may want to look at print-based correspondence credit or online course credit through the colleges you have selected. The colleges' website will usually have a distance learning or online course link on their home page.

Another avenue is to take classes locally with Jefferson Community College to meet general education requirements. As a SOCAD participant, JCC has developed alternatives to national admissions testing, and college experience and courses in Math and English there may substitute for standardized placement exams later.

It will be very important for you to establish contact with the school. You will need to inquire

about what procedures you will need to complete before starting classes, such as academic advising or physical examinations including immunizations. Contact should also include the financial aid office for information on grants, state aid and scholarships. Most state colleges and Universities will have a Veteran's Administration representative right on campus. You will need to submit an application, VA Form 22-1990, for your MGB and ACF. It is always a good idea to keep copies of everything you submit.

PFC Turner: Thank you for your help, guidance and assistance. I will begin making contact with my school of choice.

Counselor: You're welcome, I hope to see again soon.

Les Barbour  
Army Guidance Counselor

Diane Smith  
Army Guidance Counselor

**Helpful References**

**Occupational Outlook Handbook**, US Dept of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, <http://www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm>

The College Board Series:

**The College Handbook**

**The Index of Majors and Degrees**

The College Board, Princeton NJ  
<http://www.collegeboard.com>

The Peterson's Guide Series:

**Peterson's Guide to Two Year Colleges**

**Peterson's Guide to Four Year Colleges**

**Peterson's Guide to Vocational and Technical Schools**

**College and University Almanac**

**Insider's Guide to College Admissions**

Peterson's, Princeton NJ  
<http://www.CollegeQuest.com>

IPEDS Website for College Opportunities:  
<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cool/>



**SCOREBOARD FY 03**

Students Briefed	Students Counseled	Student Participation Agreements Signed
<b>983</b>	<b>768</b>	<b>661</b>



**College Challenge - Case Study B**

*SSG MaryJo Hooch is a 16 year veteran of the United States Army and a 92Y30 with minimal college experience having taken a few college classes while overseas at the University of Maryland. She needs to complete her Associate degree. Her education goal is a Bachelor degree in Business.*

*SSG Hooch has returned a week after her initial counseling.*

SSG Hooch learned that choosing a college is a big decision. Counselors at the Army Education Center can help you decide if a local college, or perhaps an on-line/non-traditional college, is best for you. The key is to remember that there's no such thing as a "perfect" school -- you'll find many that match your preferences. Keep in mind, too, that you're in control of this process. It's all about exploring your interests and finding what's right for you.

**The Application Process**

Applications vary from college to college, but most require some or all of the following parts:

**Application forms.** Fill out all forms neatly and proof your answers for accuracy. Do not attach documents that are not requested or relevant. In the old days (well, a few years ago), you had to handwrite or type forms and send them off via "snail mail."

Today you can apply electronically, entering your information just once.

**Application fee.** The average college application fee is around \$25. (Some colleges charge up to \$60, while others don't have an application fee at all.) The fee is usually nonrefundable, even if you're not offered admission.

**Transcripts.** All prior college credit must be officially documented, whether it was attained through an examination program (such as CLEP) or from actual coursework. If you have previously attended another college, you must contact them and request they send an official transcript to your new college. Most colleges charge a small fee (approximately \$2 - \$8). In most cases you will also have to provide a high school transcript or

proof of graduation/GED.

**Admission test scores.** At many colleges, you have to submit SAT or ACT test scores. Test scores are a standard way of measuring a student's ability to do college-level work, especially in Math and English. The Army Education Center administers both tests monthly, free of charge to active duty soldiers if it is your first test.

Additionally, most colleges working with servicemembers have established alternative admissions criteria and waive admissions testing.

**Placement test.** Most colleges require that you take a placement test. The purpose of this test is not to determine eligibility for admission, but only to assess your Math and English skills for placement in the appropriate level class.

**Program of Study**

When you say you want to earn a "college degree," that could mean any number of things. Here are some of your options:

**Certificate or diploma.** These nondegree offerings generally lead to employment in an occupational field. For example, to enter fields

such as computer science, automotive technology, or teaching, you may first have to get a certificate or diploma.

**Associate degree.** You receive an associate of arts (A.A) or associate of science (A.S) degree after completing two years of study similar to the first two years of a four-year college. Community colleges or four-year universities offer associate degrees. After earning an AA or an AS, you may transfer to a four year college to complete the requirements for a bachelor degree. The associate of applied science (A.A.S) degree is awarded on completion of technological or vocational programs of study.

**Bachelor or baccalaureate degree.** Complete a four- or five-year, full-time program of study (or its part-time equivalent) at a college. The bachelor of arts (B.A.) and bachelor of science (B.S.) are the most common.

**How Important is the Choice of a College Major?**

There's considerable debate as to how important this decision really is. Some say it doesn't matter because the skills you build are universally valued. Others say it

does matter because the major you choose can dictate the scope of your opportunities.

**Why your major matters -**

Here are some reasons for taking the decision seriously:

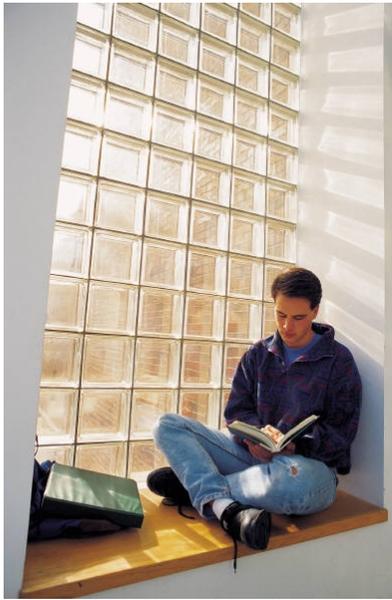
- You're about to invest several years of your life in studying something in great detail. It might as well be a subject in which you're interested.
- To maximize your psychological and financial payback from this investment of time and money, pick a launch pad that will send you in the desired direction.
- There are many careers that favor (or even require) one degree over another. You should be aware of what these careers are before you choose.

Marian Weisz  
Army Guidance Counselor

Kerry Parker  
Army Guidance Counselor



# SUNY COLLEGES IN THE NORTH COUNTRY



## College Basics 101 - College Admissions

Hurray! You've selected the college you want to attend and the degree program you want to pursue. Ok, now what?

Every college has an admissions process through which you state your chosen degree program, i.e. business, criminal justice, computers, liberal arts, etc. This admissions process is often referred to as *matriculation*. Matriculated students are those who have been accepted for admission into a degree program.

### Admission Applications

To begin this process, you will need to complete an application for admission. Most colleges have their applications for admission available to download from their websites. Some allow you to apply for admission online. All colleges have paper-base applications available in their Admissions offices. The SUNY College office on Fort Drum has the paper based applications for the SUNY Colleges as well as specific applications for Jefferson Community College and SUNY Empire State.

### Verification of High School Completion

Most New York colleges require that you provide proof of high school graduation or GED completion. You may need to request a copy of your high school transcript or provide a copy of your diploma or GED certificate and test scores.

### Skill Assessment Testing

Most colleges require that you complete some type of skill assessment testing in reading, English, and mathematics. Each school uses a different testing instrument. Jefferson Community College offers its placement testing on Fort Drum on a regular basis. Visit the SUNY College office here on post to make an appointment.

### Transcripts of Prior Learning

As part of the application process, you will be required to provide official transcripts from other colleges you have attended. Often, there are nominal fees for these transcripts. Today, many colleges allow you to order official transcripts at their websites, but generally a letter or request form with your signature is required. It is important to remember that official transcripts are those sent directly from one school to another. Transcripts that have been addressed to the

student or opened by the student are not considered official.

### Transcripts of Non-Traditional Learning

You may have other sources of potential college credit. Military training schools, military occupational specialties, CLEP/DSST/ECE examinations, Defense Language Proficiency Tests are just some of these potential sources. See your Army Education Counselor to learn how to order official transcripts from these nontraditional sources.

### Proof of Immunization

New York State law requires that you provide proof of vaccination against measles, mumps, and rubella to attend a New York State college.

### SOCAD Student Agreement Request

Many colleges serving Army installations participate in the Army's Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges Army Degree program. You can obtain a SOCAD Student Agreement Request form at the Army Education Center or the SUNY Colleges office in the Library and Education Complex on Fort Drum. Some colleges have the SOCAD Student Agreement Request available at their websites.

Once you have completed the above admissions requirements, you will either receive an admissions acceptance or non-acceptance letter in the mail. If you are accepted for admission, most institutions will begin the formal process of evaluating your prior learning and non-traditional learning for credits which might be applicable to your degree. Just because you have prior learning or non-traditional credits does not mean they will automatically be accepted or automatically applied to your new degree program. Within weeks of being accepted for admission, you should receive a transfer credit report showing how your prior learning credits have been evaluated.

Why matriculate?

- to receive federal or state financial aid.
- to continue to use Army Tuition Assistance.
- to use Veteran's Administration benefits.
- to lock in a set of specific degree requirements.
- to have your prior learning experiences evaluated.

- to have non-traditional learning experiences evaluated.
- to receive the benefits of the Army SOCAD program.

Listed below are the Websites for all of the institutions in the SUNY Colleges of the North Country consortium. You may want to visit their websites to learn about the specific admissions requirements you need to complete. You can also obtain information at the SUNY Colleges office in P4300

- Jefferson Community College  
[www.sunyjefferson.edu](http://www.sunyjefferson.edu)
- SUNY Canton  
[www.canton.edu](http://www.canton.edu)
- SUNY Empire State College  
[www.esc.edu](http://www.esc.edu)
- SUNY Oswego  
[www.oswego.edu](http://www.oswego.edu)
- SUNY Plattsburgh  
[www.plattsburgh.edu](http://www.plattsburgh.edu)
- SUNY Potsdam  
[www.potsdam.edu](http://www.potsdam.edu)
- SUNY Institute of Technology  
[www.sunyit.edu](http://www.sunyit.edu)
- SUNY College of Environmental Science & Forestry  
[www.esf.edu](http://www.esf.edu)
- SUNY Upstate Medical University  
[www.upstate.edu](http://www.upstate.edu)

Compiled by the Staff of SUNY Colleges of the North Country

## Jefferson Community College

### Late Spring Classes at Fort Drum -3/24-5/13/03

ACC102	851	Accounting Principles 2	M/W	1800-2135	4sh
ART115	851	Art Appreciation 1	M/W	1800-2100	3sh
CIS110	851	Intro to Computers	M/W	1800-2135	3sh
CRJ205	851	Crim Investigation 1	M/W	1800-2100	3sh
ENG100	851	Composition 1	M/W	1800-2100	3sh
ENG101	851	Composition 2	M/W	1800-2100	3sh
ENG102	851	Comp & Literature	M/W	1800-2100	3sh
GEG101	851	Intro to World Geog	M/W	1800-2100	3sh
PSY133	851	Intro to Psychology	M/W	1800-2100	3sh
SOC246	851	Juvenile Delinquency	M/W	1800-2100	3sh
BUS160	851	Spreadsheet Applications	Tu/Th	1800-2135	3sh
BUS221	851	Human Resources Mgmt	Tu/Th	1800-2100	3sh
CRJ212	851	Intro Security Prin/Prac	Tu/Th	1800-2100	3sh
ECO102	851	Microeconomics	Tu/Th	1800-2100	3sh
GEO102	851	Planet Earth	Tu/Th	1800-2100	3sh
HIS112	851	Western Civilization 2	Tu/Th	1800-2100	3sh
MTH144	851	Elementary Statistics	Tu/Th	1800-2100	3sh
POL121	851	Intro to Amer Gov't	Tu/Th	1800-2100	3sh
PSY235	851	Abnormal Psychology	Tu/Th	1800-2100	3sh
SOC144	851	Intro to Sociology	Tu/Th	1800-2100	3sh
HIS151	805	Amer Hist since 1865	MTuWTh	1130-1245	3sh
SOC241	805	Marriage & Family	MTuWTh	1130-1245	3sh

Mr. Donald Johnson is JCC's advisor at Fort Drum. You can see him to discuss your JCC degree and for course advisement. Call 773-9007 for appointments.

