



MOUNTAIN CLIMBER

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FORT DRUM EDUCATION CENTER



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On the Education Services Officer's Desk

Hours of Operation

The Army Education Center at the McEwen Library and Education Complex

Monday, Tuesday
Thursday and Friday

0900-1600

Wednesday
1245-1600

(315) 772-6878



Taking college courses online seems to be the newest and most popular trend in the education arena. Colleges that have previously resisted are now realizing that they can no longer continue to do business as they did twenty, or even ten years ago, and are adding online courses to their curriculum. Many of the colleges that had the foresight to realize that online education was the wave of the future are now doing a booming business, far above the norm. For instance, the University of Maryland is on the cutting edge, offering online education in 1996 with only 3,842 enrollments for the school year. In the 2000-2001 school year, enrollments had increased to 62,686.

Distance education is particularly advantageous for soldiers who are busy trying to juggle work, family and recreational activities, along with frequent deployments locally and varied settings world-wide. Unfortunately, soldiers taking courses in a traditional classroom environment often have to sacrifice a large portion of their family time to meet the Army's increasing

demand for an educated and technology savvy force and to pursue their personal future career goals. Increasingly, these soldiers have begun to replace traditional classes with distance education, as a means to meet the Army's demands, while not giving up vital and much needed time with family that may already be curtailed by long work hours. With the advent and expansion of the Internet, the preferred method of distance learning has become online education.

As we draw nearer to the start date of the 1 July for the Army's new and innovative program, eArmyU, our focus is centered on online education. The premise for eArmyU is that soldiers can complete courses anytime, anywhere that Internet connectivity is available, allowing soldiers to complete the whole degree online. Additionally, there is no cost to soldiers enrolled in eArmyU, other than the cost of the phone line. eArmyU has opened doors for soldiers whose work hours have prevented attendance of more traditional class instruction, and who could not afford the costs of tuition, books, and fees. This has initiated a new era in Army education, making it accessible to the majority, not the

minority.

I would be amiss if I did not issue a word of caution. *On line education is not for all.* From my previous experience as a teacher, I know we all learn differently and we all have varied skills. Some of our soldiers require hands on activities or structured lessons to learn, or they may not be knowledgeable in the use of computers or may prefer interaction with students or faculty when learning.

Its important to weigh strengths and weaknesses when considering online education and to realize that commitment and motivation is a must in order to succeed.

Carla K. Ortiz
Education Services Officer



MGIB Changes

The Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA) and Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA) have implemented a number of changes to the existing Montgomery GI Bill program. These changes are based on recent passage of public law; and affect all MGIB eligible service members.

Qualification for MGIB in subsequent enlistment
Public Law 106-419 (PL 106-419) passed in November Of 2000, allows for qualification for the MGIB in a subsequent enlistment. This change allows those service members, who elected to enroll in the MGIB, but were discharged short of the qualifying time-in-service of 30 months, to reenroll during a second enlistment. These service members must have been discharged with a fully honorable discharge, and must have returned within 10 years of their initial discharge. Also effected under this change are enlisted personnel who took a disqualifying discharge to enter the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) under Green to Gold scholarships. Public Law 107- 14 clarifies the total time in service required to qualify.

Contribution of Additional Monies to MGIB

PL 106-419 also allows certain MGIB participants to contribute additional monies to their accounts prior to their ETS. Those SM who are enrolled directly into the MGIB, and were on active duty after November 2000 may contribute an additional amount up to \$600.00 during their military career. The minimum amount is \$20.00 and may be contributed through payroll reduction, or lump sum payment to local Finance and Accounts Offices. The benefits of making the full \$600.00 deposit is a \$5400.00 increase in the total value of their base MGIB account or \$150.00 per month increase when using the benefit as a veteran.

Use of MGIB to pay Examination Costs

PL 106-416 authorizes the use of MGIB dollars to pay for approved license and certification examinations. The VA may disburse up to \$2000 per examination not to exceed 100% of the exam. Retesting is also covered by this authorization. The VA web site www.gibill.va.gov can be used to check if a particular examination has been approved.



Enlisted Spouses Club Announces Scholarship Winners

The winners of the *Robert and Gloria Sexton Memorial Scholarship* sponsored by the Enlisted Spouses Club (ESC) of Fort Drum were announced at the ESC meeting on 12 June 2002. There were three \$500.00 full time scholarships and two \$250.00 part time scholarships awarded this year. The contest was open to both Undergraduate and Graduate school students. The winners are:

Full time Scholarship Recipients

Shelly Benson is currently a student at Carthage Central High School. She will graduate this June. Shelly plans to attend Central Michigan University as a freshman this fall, majoring in Speech Pathology.

Kristen Brittingham was Active Duty with the Army and is now an Army Family member whose husband is assigned to Fort Drum. She is attending graduate school at the Citadel, in Charleston, South Carolina.

Kristen plans to major in education and become a school principal.

Robert Sanchez, Jr. is currently attending Indian River High School and will graduate this June. He plans to attend Jefferson Community College, Watertown, New York in the fall. Robert plans to major in Business Administration.

Part Time Scholarship Recipients

Veronica Jackson-Patrick is an enlisted spouse at Fort Drum. She is currently on a Master of Science degree in Health Promotions at the California College for the Health Sciences.

Amanda Sena is an Active Duty soldier currently stationed at Fort Drum. She is currently working on an undergraduate degree in Communications at the University of Maryland University College.

The ESC Scholarship Chairperson for 2002 was Dr. Marcia Norton; the committee was Dahlia Sanchez, Bessie Parker, and Cinthia Mercante.

Dr. Marcia Norton



The Fort Drum
Mountain Climber

Garrison
Commander
COL James J. Kelly

Director, Readiness
Business Center
LTC Arthur J. Fessenden

Education Services
Officer
Ms. Carla K. Ortiz



Online Education Wants You!

"Dear Professor:

I'm dropping you this email from my laptop to explain why my electronic final for POL 241 will be late. Last Friday nite 1SG came to my room and said that we had a late quota for Airborne School and I was it. Sunday I drove to Benning, unpacked, and got ready for Day One. This morning after chow they trucked out here to Fryar Field, now we're chuted up and waiting to manifest for a Battalion Mass Tac w/ a heavy drop.

Man, its a great first day....."

Now what's wrong with this picture?

Taking advantage of the latest technological opportunities in education can be as personally rewarding as Airborne School, but it can provide just as many chances to crash and burn as compressing Airborne into a New York Minute.

So let's use Airborne School's three weeks as framework to get there from here.

Ground Week (ASSESS for Success)

There are a number of self assessment tools on the street, most of them linked to colleges and universities

that sponsor online education.

My favorite is University of Massachusetts at Lowell's self evaluation (<http://continuinged.uml.edu/online/123.htm>); and we have similar a questionnaire in print at the Ed Center.

What you want to look at next is the fit between your academic program and online learning. Are you enrolled in a degree program with a particular college? Does that college offer online education? Having online classes at your home college offers residency credit and a link in case you have problems. If not, the college search is on, and your guidance counselor can assist in fitting possible colleges to your degree plan.

Finally assess your technology and your ability to use it. Will your home computer and connection support the tech requirements for online education? Can I use the computers at the Ed Center or the Library? What's the school and Ed Center policy on online exams? And if I have the mechanics,

how savvy am I in using them? The electronic version of "my dawg ate my homework" involves connection speeds, version interfaces, and the ever present, "oops" that trying to get a submission in after a full day of work and family.

Tower Week-Standing up for Online

After the assessment is done, you should have a short list of schools you're interested in. Come to the Ed Center, you're on your way to the short tower.....how do I enroll?

Army tuition assistance policy, allows TA to be given for distance learning courses if they meet specific criteria as shown in the box right. You must apply for TA before the last day of the late enrollment period. You should be prepared to pay for the remaining TA and any fees at enrollment.

The TA document must be sent via traditional mail, so plan to make your deadlines.

Any exam proctor forms should be signed and sent in at this point to ensure that when the exam is ready you can get it at the Ed Center. They must be scheduled through the Admin staff.

Army Distance Learning TA policy

- School must be regionally or nationally accredited.
- Courses must be offered in terms of less than six months.
- Begin and end dates for the course must be published.
- SM must have at least six months remaining on the installation.
- SM must apply and receive TA before the end of the late registration period.

Jump Week - Getting it Done

You've filed the paperwork, you're online, you've heard the professor yell "Stand in the DOOR!"...and then that thought hits...did I forget anything? As you feel the rush of electrons and the whip of the first assignment brings you around..remember the Ed Center is on the ground, watching your descent.

If anything goes wrong, use that reserve.

Joe Agresti
Lead Counselor

A Personal Adventure in Online Learning

" People sometimes think of distance education as technology, but it's not that at all....technology just drives it.

Distance Education is a different paradigm of teaching and learning. It's about teacher-learner relationships and learner-to-learner relationships. It's about opening opportunity to people who otherwise would not have opportunity. " (Michael Grahame Moore, former director of the Distance Learning Center at the University of Pennsylvania)

Distance Education offers more than just Bachelors programs, but also programs at the Masters and Doctoral level.

As an individual who was seeking to continue her education at the Doctoral level, it was difficult to find a college close to home that would offer me the flexibility to work, stay close to my family and friends, and yet, provide me the challenges of academia. After, some research, I discovered a college that had the very program I was seeking. I was able to construct a program, combining online courses and directed study, that fit my lifestyle and provided the stimulus I needed to work toward my credential.

Each online course was 12-15 weeks in length; the instructor would post 1 to 3 questions each week, based on the assigned readings.

Each student in the chat room was required to answer the questions online. It was through this experience that I gained an insight into how other people relate to the subject matter. Using this chat based program, I have "met" people from all over the world, enjoyed interesting conversation within my academic niche. I find the "virtual debate" with active duty classmates the most interesting. They bring a different perspective to the online class that would have been lost otherwise.

One of the best parts was the connection I made with several of my "virtual" classmates through the college's main chat room that allows learners to express their concerns and opinions.

It also serves as a virtual cheering section when one of us completes the degree program, and provides a needed mutual support system for the dispersed student body. This lack of feedback proved to be one of the difficult areas of online learning.

Currently I am completing my last course and will be heading for my comprehensives. I have safely sailed the waters of higher education through distance learning, and it has proved to be the best experience of my academic life.

Diane Turo-Hughes
Guidance Counselor



Multi-Use Learning Facility (MLF)

Take this scenario.

It's a warm and sunny day at Fort Drum, you're about to enter the McEwen Library, intent on picking up the scores from your College Level Examination Program Freshman English exam, or maybe you want to do a college search for colleges in Wisconsin offering animal management science, or you're looking to get your AARTS transcript.

STOP.

Do an about face.

The Multi-Use Learning Facility (MLF) has relocated to Rm 141 of the Education Center wing to better support you and future programs.

The hours of operation have been expanded beginning 1 July. The MLF will be open Monday thru Friday 0900-2145, Saturday and Sunday 0900-1200, 1300-1745.

The MLF staff can assist soldiers and family members within a number of academic areas:

- Internet Accessible computers - the MLF has 24 computers. They're available for college search, Army links, and research. The computers are equipped with standard Office packages to allow students to work on homework

and are equipped with the Discover and Guidance Information System, as well as SAT and ACT prep software.

- CLEP, DANTES Standardized Subject Test (DSST), and Excelsior College Examination (ECE). These are Credit by Exam (CBE) products that are available to both soldiers and family members. There are 111 in the inventory and the MLF stocks study guides or fact sheets on all. These give the student a breakdown of what the examination covers, and recommends references. Some of these references are available in the MLF, many can be ordered through the McEwen Library. Practice tests for the DSST and CLEPs are available at no charge; examinations are free to service members and are offered

at a charge (\$35.00 for DSST and \$ 56.00 for CLEP) to civilians. ECE exams are not available to civilians at Ft Drum; but may be at a national test center.

The MLF offers

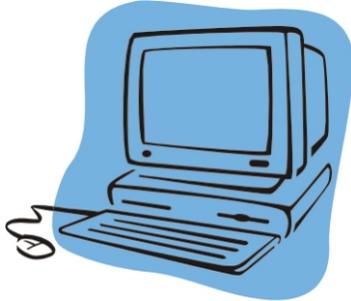
- Assistance with obtaining references and resources. The MLF is hooked into the Army Correspondence Course Program (ACCP) for enrollments and coursework, the electronic libraries at TRADOC and DA for regulations, forms, and manuals. Sample DA 4187s for Army personnel testing, and informational packets, are stocked and available.

The MLF strives to be a one Stop educational resource. Try it.



SUNY Colleges... in the NORTH COUNTRY

SUNY Colleges Online



If your schedule demands that you choose an online delivery mode to earn your degree, there are many SUNY Campuses that participate in online learning. Degrees are available in many disciplines at the Associate, bachelor, and Graduate levels.

A word of caution, however: This popular, new delivery mode, while convenient, is not for everyone. Unlike the traditional classroom, where it is often tempting to sit back and let the professor pour out all the facts and figures that comprise a class, online learning places that responsibility on the learner and often requires much more work than traditional classroom study.

The following members of the SUNY Colleges of the North Country offer either online classes or degree programs:

Jefferson Community College
www.sunyjefferson.edu

SUNY Canton
www.canton.edu

SUNY Empire State
www.esc.edu

SUNY Oswego
www.oswego.edu

SUNY Plattsburgh
www.plattsburgh.edu

SUNY College of Environmental
Science and Forestry
www.esc.edu

SUNY Upstate Medical University
www.upstate.edu

SUNY Institute of Technology at Utica/Rome
www.sunyit.edu

Here are a few of the degree programs offered online:

SUNY Institute of Technology at Utica/Rome

Master of Science, Accountancy
Master of Science, Business
Administration, w/ Concentration in
Health Science Management

SUNY Empire State College

B.S. Business Administration
B.S. Business Management
B.S. Marketing
B.S. Health Services Mgmt
B.S. Human Services
B.S. Human Services Admin
B.S. Mental Health Services
B.S. Mental Health Admin
A.S. Human Services
A.S. Business

SUNY Oswego

B.A. Broadcasting & Mass
Media
B.S. Vocational Teacher Prep

Check out the individual campus' website for more information on these programs or Check out the SUNY Learning Network, www.SLN.suny.edu for more SUNY colleges and degree programs.

New this fall!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

In other news, SUNY Canton is making plans to deliver two of its popular programs to Fort Drum:

Automotive Technology (Automotive Mechanics Certificate)

Criminal Investigation (Four course certificate)



The automotive courses will be taught in the Automotive Craft Shop and will include such classes as Automotive Electrical Systems, Engine Performance I and II.

According to SUNY Canton, graduates average \$25,000+ by the third year of employment and a master technician can earn \$70,000 to \$100,000.

The Criminal Investigation Certificate Program includes courses such as Forensic Photography; Latent Prints and Impressions; Interviews and Interrogations; and Crime Scene Investigation, Courses are taught in a compressed three week format with experts flown in from around the country. If you're a fan of the television show *C.S.I.* this program is what its all about.



SUNY North Country Members Announce Fort Drum Graduates

SUNY Empire State College recently announced the following individuals from the Fort Drum community having completed the requirements for graduation:

| | |
|---------------|------------------|
| Amy Crowell | David Boyce |
| William Jones | Veronica Navarro |
| Larry Chapman | Robert Hubble |
| John Hild | Kaylah Bonebrake |
| Darsi Yeager | Ingrid Jimenez |
| Mark Adams | Michelle Chaney |
| Reisa Peters | Marvin Jeffcoat |

On Friday, June 12, Jefferson Community College held its 2002 graduation ceremony. Of the 630 students receiving degrees or certifications, over 130 or 20.5% were military or military related.

Congratulations on your achievements. The SUNY office wishes each graduate the very best !!

The 2002 graduation ceremony was the final one presided over by Dr. John Deans, JCC President. He is retiring at the end of this year. Our best wishes and fondest regards go to President Deans, who was one of the most instrumental individuals credited with establishing our consortium. May his retirement be as long and productive as his stellar career at JCC was.

Compiled by the SUNY Consortium