



# MOUNTAIN CLIMBER

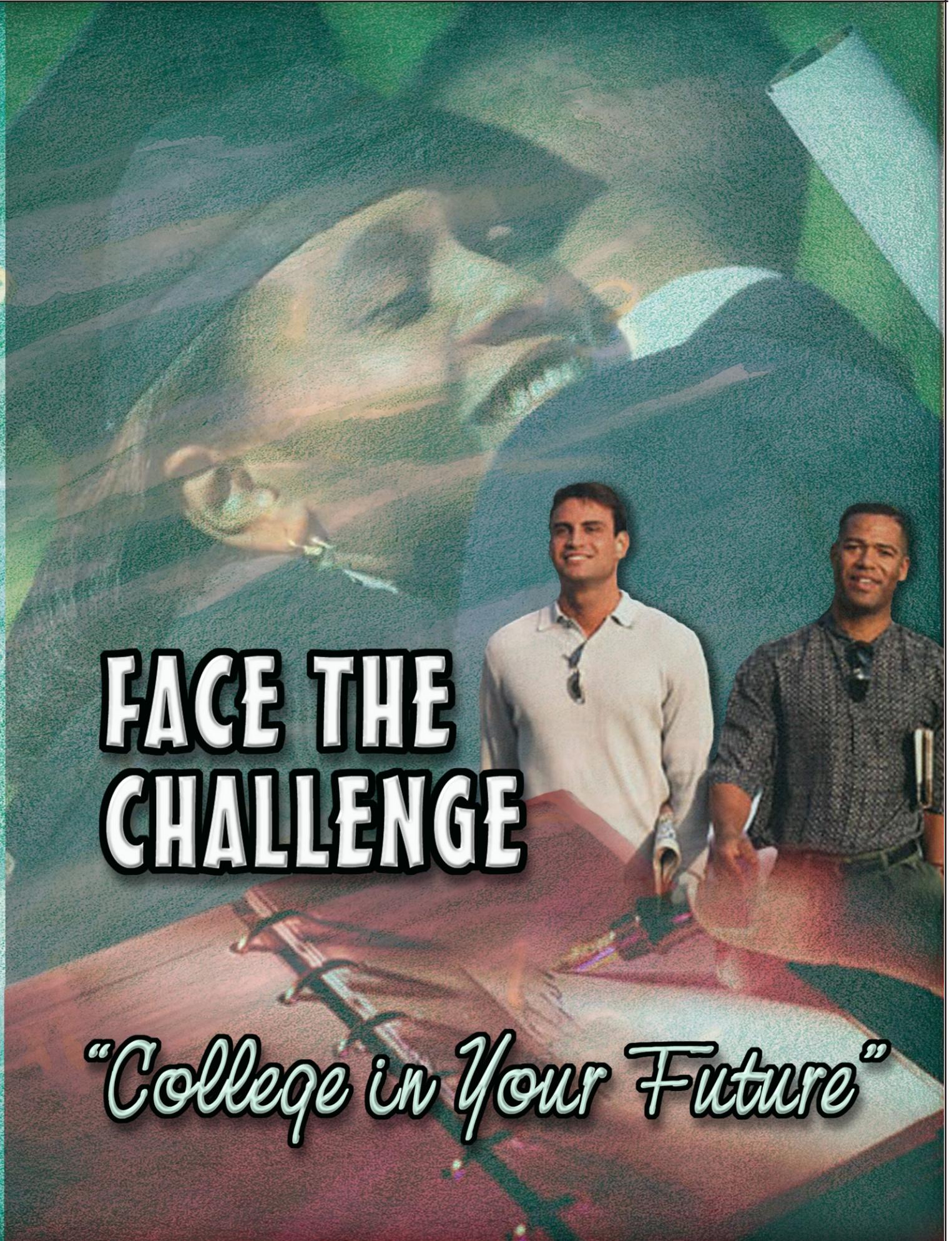


Volume 1, Issue 9

FORT DRUM

February 2003

## FORT DRUM EDUCATION CENTER



### FACE THE CHALLENGE

*"College in Your Future"*

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Your answers to...  
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## 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



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

Our desire is for all customers who enter through the doors of the Education Center to have a positive learning experience. A large portion of this responsibility falls on our shoulders; however, the customer also carries some of the responsibility as well. The Fort Drum Education Center services soldiers, other service members, adult family members, retirees, and DoD civilians. Everyone comes in with different needs and various entitlements, depending on their status and station in life.

It is important for every adult learner to do some research before visiting the counseling offices in the Education Center. Before choosing a college degree, it's a good idea to explore personal interests and possible career choices. The Multi-Use Learning Facility (MLF), located in Room 141, has a software program entitled "DISCOVER" that assists in choosing careers more suited to individual personalities. The MLF also offers two series of reference books, "Opportunities in ....." and "Careers in .....", that assist in choosing career fields. Choosing a career field that provides personal satisfaction as well as an adequate salary is important to success.

If you are in the process of choosing a college, materials and brochures for local



colleges are available in the hallway. They discuss college degrees and courses that are offered at Fort Drum, the surrounding area, and online. If researching distance learning degree/course options or looking for a college to attend after leaving the service, references are available in both the MLF and the Post Library, conveniently co-located with the Education Center in the McEwen Complex. The MLF maintains hard copy references as well as a college search program on our computers entitled "College Source Online". The majority of colleges now have websites to allow further research.

Those seeking information on veteran's education benefit programs may check the website [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov). If looking for information on state benefits for veterans, check out the website [www.nasdva.com](http://www.nasdva.com).

Once you've done as much research as you can, write down your questions before you come

in to see a counselor. There's nothing more frustrating than realizing that you forgot to ask the counselor a question fifteen minutes or more after leaving the building. If all our customers do their research before counseling sessions and have their questions ready, wait times would be considerably shortened. Please remember that counselors will not choose for you, but they are a resource for information and some advice.

Come prepared for wait times. With so many programs available to our customers, the Education Center is busier than ever. Please be courteous to front desk personnel, as they are handling many duties at a time. Their job is to answer very general questions, and if more in-depth information is required, to refer you to the appropriate source.

We will make every effort to ensure that your Education Center experience is a pleasant one. If you have a compliment or comment about our services, Customer Service Survey forms are available at the front desk, or may be accessed on the ICE website online at [ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=site&site\\_id=45](http://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=site&site_id=45).

Carla K. Ortiz  
Education Services Officer



### In and Out-processing at the Education Center

AR 621-5, Army Continuing Education System (ACES) establishes guidelines for the in- and out-processing for active duty personnel at the Army Education Center. These guidelines are implemented by the Education Services Officer and may be modified by local conditions.

#### In-processing -

AR 621-5 outlines that active duty personnel must in-process at the Education Center within 30 days of arriving on station. This is a crunch time frame for all soldiers arriving at a new unit, but in-processing with us is just as critical, particularly if you're either in **eArmyU** or a first term soldier in the **Army Loan Repayment Program (ALRP)**.

In-processing **eArmyU** participants PCSing to a new installation allows Ed Center personnel to confirm your change of station in the portal and to enter you into that installation's EDMIS data base. The listing in our database allows the portal to seamlessly enter your **eArmyU** records into EDMIS, preventing processing delays and incorrect reporting.

Soldiers who enlisted under the **ALRP** must be in-processed to ensure that they receive the latest updates from PERSCOM,

and if the soldier has any problems with the program, they are surfaced to the program manager in a timely manner.

In-processing allows all arriving soldiers to explore opportunities unique to this installation, browse our Multi-Use Learning Facility, and even visit the Post Library.

#### Out-processing -

The regulation establishes the same time frame for out-processing as well, both ETS and PCS. This allows Ed Center personnel to ensure that ETSing soldiers receive mandatory veteran education briefings, resolve issues of tuition assistance, and if necessary take recoupment action. ETSing personnel who have taken TA for classes that end during terminal leave are briefed on steps they must take to preclude recoupment; soldiers whose classes end after ETS must pay back the TA.

*Soldiers leaving the service under a "chapter" are required to present a copy of their DD214 worksheet to the counselor.*

PCSing soldiers require the same attention to detail on TA issues and recoupment, so the time frame should be followed as closely as possible.

Joe Agresti  
Lead Guidance Counselor

### Recoupment of Army TA

Chapter 6 of AR 621-5, dated November 1993, spells out the responsibilities of all parties in the issuance of Army Tuition Assistance (TA). Section 12 details the actions that the Education Center must take to recoup TA dollars issued to soldiers in specific instances.

When a soldier requests TA, they agree to repay the government by acknowledging the TA Statement of Understanding, Part II of the DA 2171, Request for Tuition Assistance, specifically:

- If they withdraw because of official separation, confinement, or similar administrative action taken by the commander for disciplinary or fraudulent causes.
- The soldier withdraws from or fails to complete the course for personal reasons.
- The soldier receives an academic failure due to nonattendance.
- The soldier fails to make up an incomplete grade within the time limits stipulated by the institution or 120 days after the completion of the class, whichever comes first.
- a commissioned officer or RC commissioned officer fails to complete the service commitment.

Recoupment action is accomplished by adjustment to a soldier's pay, or payment to the local Finance and Accounts Office by cashier's check or

money order. Soldiers who feel that this action should be mitigated for military reasons may request relief through a memorandum signed by the Company Commander and approved by the first Lieutenant Colonel in their chain of command.

Soldiers intending to take classes using TA up to their PCS or ETS date may find themselves being asked to repay the TA if they plan to depart Fort Drum prior to the class end date, unless they notify the Education Center prior to the commitment of funds. Soldiers who know they will PCS may arrange with the Ed Center to defer the action for a period of up to an additional 30 days, by completing a memorandum outlining their responsibilities for forwarding a grade back to Fort Drum. Soldiers who receive short notice PCS instruction must apply for relief for military reasons as described above.

ETSing soldiers may complete classes during *terminal leave* if the course ends NLT 3 weeks prior to their ETS date and if they remain within the Ft Drum geographical area of responsibility or repay the government prior to being cleared.

Douglas McKenzie  
Education Technician, Funding

#### Mini Customer Survey

**We've published nine issues of the Mountain Climber since May 2002, now we're asking for your feedback.**

**Send us an email at [afzs-rbc-ed@drum.army.mil](mailto:afzs-rbc-ed@drum.army.mil) or**

**Drop into the Admin Offices, Room 128, McEwen Complex, and fill out a Customer Survey Form.**

**We're looking for your reviews.**

**Thanks,  
The Education Staff**



**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. He is a bit nervous as the Admin Tech points out his counselor.*

*Counselor:* Hello, PFC Turner, welcome to the Education Center. Could I have your social security number for our records? (sound of typing) Please tell me about your academic background?

*PFC Turner:* I went to High School in Boulder, Colorado;

graduated with my diploma. I guess I was an average student. I enjoyed school but didn't take it as seriously as I could have.

*Counselor:* Do you know what you want to do when you get out of the military, enter or re-enter the workforce?

*PFC Turner:* No, I want to get some college but I have no clear idea of what I'd want to study.

*Counselor:* The number one concern in making a wise career choice is to determine what you "like" to do and to combine that with your skills and abilities. Knowing yourself is critical. Using what you know is the first step in "marketing" yourself in a direction you've chosen, one that you truly believe in! Job satisfaction is the key to success and happiness.

Choosing a career path is an important life decision. Pursuing a challenging and interesting occupation can lead to that rewarding career. The sooner you begin to consider career possibilities, the better prepared

you will be to find your dream job.

Many people change careers because of external factors, such as change in technology or business practice, or because of personal reasons, such as new interest in a different field. Self-assessment exercises may help prevent the time consuming chore of switching careers.

These exercises help you identify your personal interests, skills, talents, and abilities. We have tools to examine these indicators. The ASVAB/AFCT can give you an indication of your abilities in certain areas such as operations, clerical, mechanical, or electrical. The Education Center also has computer programs such as *Discover* and the *Guidance Information System (GIS)* that can give you ways to consider your experiences and relate them to transferable skills, interests, and priorities to education and career options.

We also have a series of manuals and references to explore careers. Some of these include

*Careers for Legal Eagles, Careers for Scholars, and Careers for Computer Buffs.* We also have reference materials for soldiers to research career opportunities in the future by using the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* in concert with another series of references - the *Opportunities in* series. Another good source of the US Department of Labor's website [www.bls.gov/oco/](http://www.bls.gov/oco/).

Equally important in selecting a career are the values and beliefs we feel are essential to ensuring job satisfaction. Some people want to work independently, others need structure and guidance. Other like to work with people; many prefer to be in front of a computer screen auditing numbers, etc. These choices are individual, and important to be aware of in the employment decision process. You may want to investigate career fields by reading books, networking with people in the field or by volunteering in that world of work.

This exploration and identification of yourself should lead you to establishing goals and

objectives. Goals should be **SMART** (Specific, Measurable, Agreed to, Realistic, and Time-bound) and coordinated with educational, financial, and family goals. They should be written down as the beginnings of objectives and goals you've established and that we can use to roadmap your future educational and career plans.

PFC Turner, let's walk down to the MLF in Room 141, and set you up with the staff with some time to explore some of the ideas we've discussed, and then we'll meet again to set up some short term objectives.

*PFC Turner:* Thanks, and I'll make sure I come back for our next session.

Les Barbour  
Army Guidance Counselor

Diane Smith  
Army Guidance Counselor

**It is a tale of two soldiers.....**

Over the next three issues, the Education Center Staff will use the Mountain Climber to develop the story of two soldiers, one a senior non-commissioned officer, one a first term enlisted soldier, to put forward some options for facing the challenge of getting a college education while on active duty.

It is a scenario that plays out in the waiting room of this Education Center daily; as many of you begin or continue your education with us.



This issue will focus on getting a target for your college endeavor, whether you're fresh from AIT or in the midcareer. Next month will focus on applying for colleges, setting degree programs, and finally in April, we'll look at financial aid( linked to our May *Financial Aid Fair*.

Our colleagues in the SUNY office will keep step with an expanded *College Basics 101*.

If you read on and find a bit of PFC Turner or SSG Hooch behind your nametag; come into the Ed Center, and see a counselor today.

Joe Agresti  
Editor



**SCOREBOARD FY 03**

Students Briefed	Students Counseled	Student Participation Agreements Signed
<b>370</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>55</b>



**College Challenge - Case Study B**

*SSG MaryJo Hooch, is a 16 year veteran of the United States Army, she is 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. She is focused when the Administrative Technician calls her name.*

Setting goals -

SSG Hooch has picked a good time to see an Army guidance counselor, because she still has time - 4 years out from her retirement, to take advantage of education benefits and options available through the Army Continuing Education System (ACES) and hopefully complete her education goal while still on active duty.

Come prepared -

She has prepared before coming to the meeting with her counselor. She has brought her Army American Council on Education Registry Transcript System (**AARTS**) Transcript and copies of college transcripts or grade slips from college classes previously taken. If she needed help to order the AARTS transcript or get addresses from her previous college, she went to the Multi-Use Learning Facility (MLF) in Room 141 of the Education Center. She is also prepared to take notes as she and her counselor talk.

Her AARTS transcript will show immediately what military credit will count towards a college degree. As a 92Y30, Unit Supply Specialist, SSG Hooch already has 18-21 semester hours of recommended credit from the American Council on Education (ACE) in management and business technology for the Army formal schools she has attended. The amount of credit actually accepted will depend on the college and degree she selects. Using her AARTS transcript and college transcripts, a counselor can

usually make a quick assessment of the minimum amount of credit needed to complete a general studies degree at either the two-year or four-year level.

Select a realistic goal -

SSG Hooch has already identified a tentative education goal - to complete at least a 2-year Associate degree and if possible a 4-year Bachelor of Science degree in business before her retirement. Through a series of questions and answers during the counseling session, SSG Hooch and her counselor can begin to determine what might be the more realistic goal in the time remaining. For example: What are her military and family priorities? How much time will she be have to spend on studies? Is she more interested in wrapping up the degree or in taking additional academic course work to develop or learn more about a particular area of study for a new career? What course work does she need to complete at a minimum such as English writing or mathematics, to satisfy most

basic degree requirements?

Consider the Alternatives -

There are many ways to earn college credit today. SSG Hooch must first ask herself if she is able to take courses in a traditional manner, where classroom attendance is required? Does she need to consider one or more of the non-traditional methods, such as: earning credit by examination through the DANTES test center - at no cost - directed study, where only occasional meeting times with an advisor are required, but the ability to work independently is a must; or perhaps online classes, where a computer is needed?

Start the search -

SSG Hooch's search may start with a review of different degree plans, or may require another kind of search first. If she is undecided about career goals after retirement, she may want to begin with an "interest inventory", that can be taken for free, in just a few minutes at the MLF. Sh might want to review information about

careers, such as the Occupational Outlook Handbook - to find our more about careers, what the job entails, and what specific education may be required. Some careers may not even require a degree, but specialized training or certification may be required instead. SSG Hooch may want to take an introductory college course or two as another way of deciding where her interests lie. She can also use the MLF to do online searches for a specific degree program and the colleges that offer them.

SSG Hooch now has the information she needs to set a realistic educational goal, conduct a search for degree plans and career information, consider alternatives for obtaining college credit, and begin working on her college degree.

Marian Weisz  
Army Guidance Counselor

Kerry Parker  
Army Guidance Counselor



# SUNY COLLEGES IN THE NORTH COUNTRY



## College Basics 101

The maze of college vocabulary, testing, application forms and registration forms can be overwhelming to a first time student. This page will hopefully define some of the college terms and clarify procedures for you.

### • Advising

Most people don't really know where to begin when it comes to taking college classes or attending college. The college advisor is a great place to start.

Here on Fort Drum we have advisors for Jefferson Community College, SUNY Empire State College, SUNY Oswego, and SUNY Potsdam. These individuals can explain the process of applying to their specific college, discuss possible degree programs, course offerings and how to register for a class.

*If you're active duty military, you will want to visit your Army Education Center first for information concerning Army Education programs.*

### • Matriculation

Matriculation simply means to apply to and be accepted into a specific degree program at a particular college. Examples of degree programs you can matriculate into are Criminal Justice, Business, Liberal Arts, and Individual Studies.

### • Registration

Registration is the process of filling out paperwork to enroll in a specific class or classes. Registration does not mean matriculation.

### • Credit Hour

College courses are assigned credit hours. Credit hour is a basic measure of how long you sit in class for a particular course. One credit hour is normally granted for satisfactory completion of fifteen 50 minute sessions of classroom instruction.

The average college course is worth 3 credit hours.

### • Full time or part time

When deciding to attend college, you must decide whether or not you will attend full time or part time. This is based on the number of credit hours you sign up for, not how many days of the week you attend class.

*Full time* means that a student registers for 12 or more credit hours.

*Part time* means that a student enrolls for as few as 1 credit hour or as many as 11.

### • Tuition

Tuition is amount of money a college charges for a class or classes.

There are two ways that tuition is figured:

- Flat rate for full time (12 credit hours or more)
- By the credit hour for part time (11 credit hours or less).

### • Fees and other college costs

Tuition is not the only expense associated with

taking college courses. There will most likely be fees and book costs for each course enrolled in. Fees are those costs charged by the college to students for support services provided. Added to the cost of textbooks, these costs rapidly add up to increase overall college costs.

## Helpful References

### Index of Majors and Graduate Degrees

Published by the College Board; lists which colleges offer the major you want at the degree level you need, grouped by the state where the college is located.  
(Available in Rm 141, Multi-Use Learning Facility)

### College Handbook

Companion volume to the Index; describes the colleges in detail, to include websites, e- and snail mail addresses, locations, phone numbers, and more.  
(Available in Rm 141, Multi-Use Learning Facility)

## SUNY Resources

### SUNY Website

Links to all of the 64 campuses of the State University of New York system. Allows potential students access to descriptions of degree programs, student services, and course offerings and schedules.  
[www.suny.edu/student](http://www.suny.edu/student)

### SUNY Learning Network

Homepage of the popular online program, displays the degree programs offered by the SUNY system entirely online.  
<http://SLN.suny.edu>

## 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.

