



MOUNTAIN CLIMBER



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FORT DRUM

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FORT DRUM ARMY EDUCATION CENTER

eArmyU @Fort Drum



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"ONE YEAR LATER"

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

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On The Education Services Officer's Desk



How time flies! It seems that it was just a short time ago that we were frantically preparing for the start of the eArmyU program here at Fort Drum. It is now more than a year since the start of that program and we feel like we are pros..... NOT!

In January 2001, eArmyU was underway at three major installations, Forts Hood, Campbell and Benning. These installations had very little time to prepare and knew nothing about the program or the impact that it would have on Army education. Soldiers began standing in line as early as 2200 hours the night before in order to enroll. When opening time rolled around, as many as 1,000 soldiers were standing in line. The response was astounding and also overwhelming for the Education Center staff. Soldiers often spent many hours in the Education Center attempting to get complete information and go through the enrollment process without success because of the unexpected numbers and lack of preparation.

By the time eArmyU was set to begin at Fort Drum on 1 July 2002, the Education Center had taken all of the lessons learned at other eArmyU installations and came up with a system that would minimize the amount of time spent in the enrollment process. This system reduced the amount of stress on the staff and allowed us to closely track soldiers through the enrollment process. The tracking program also allowed the Education Center to produce statistical information for use in reports. Using the Ft Drum model, senior leadership chose which soldiers were deserving and academically ready to enroll in eArmyU, using a set of criteria provided by the Education Center. The enrollment process was so seamless

and successful that we shared it with not only HQDA Army Continuing Education System (ACES), but other other installation education centers as well. Portions of our enrollment system have been adopted by other eArmyU installations. HQDA ACES has directed all eArmyU installations to use a merit system to choose soldiers for the eArmyU program based on Fort Drum's model.

In October 2001, a major change was made to the eArmyU program. Soldiers entering the program prior to October 2001 had no limits as to the cost of courses they chose to take and they had no tuition limit for the FY. After October 2001, soldiers could only spend \$3,500 for course costs, to include books and Internet fees for the FY. In October 2002, the program changed once again, matching the eArmyU students with the same \$250 limit per semester hour and a FY ceiling of \$4,500 per students using traditional Tuition Assistance. If soldiers exceeded these amounts, they were required to pay out of pocket. In spite of the changes, eArmyU enrollments were booming, and expanded to fourteen installations. The Army discovered that eArmyU is a great retention program, with 20% of the enrollees reenlisting or extending to join. The majority of the soldiers participating in eArmyU are senior NCOs, many attending college for the first time or returning after a long absence from taking college courses. eArmyU has almost doubled the number of clientele serviced by participating Education Centers.

Also in October 2002, the Army decided to provide 100% tuition assistance (TA) for all nationally and regionally accredited college courses. In order to

enroll in eArmyU, soldiers must have three years remaining on active duty; however, 100% TA has no strings attached for enlisted personnel. For this reason, many have opted to stick with traditional TA to pursue a degree. About this time, the Army began to question the need for both eArmyU and 100% TA for distance learning. This issue is still unresolved, but studies are ongoing.

Many senior enlisted soldiers close to retirement were unable to take advantage of eArmyU due to the eligibility requirement to be on active duty at least three years from the date of enrollment. Some Army leadership questioned the need for the laptop to make the program work. The Army recently conducted the Rand Study involving nine installations, of which Fort Drum was one. Some of these installations had the option to enroll soldiers in eArmyU with an eligibility requirement of one year of active duty remaining. Instead of completing 12 semester hours of credit in two years, soldiers had to complete three semester hours of credit and enroll in a course within thirty days of program enrollment. Soldiers choosing this option would also not receive a laptop computer. Overwhelmingly, soldiers chose the laptop over the non-laptop option. However, as a result of this study, the Army saw the need to provide both options for soldiers to choose. So once again, the eArmyU program will change in October 2003, giving the soldiers some flexibility in choice of program.

If you have questions about the eArmyU program, this issue of the Mountain Climber should answer most of them, if not all. Further questions can be addressed to the eArmyU office at 772-1844 /3635 /2773.

Carla K. Ortiz
Education Services Officer



eArmyU from an Overseas Perspective

Thinking about distance education while on deployment?

eArmyU, and for that matter, any distance education class(es) you may be taking can prove quite challenging while deployed. In particular, I'm looking at this from the technology perspective. Yes, there are computers for most places you could be deployed, but that's the end of the similarities. Be prepared and forewarned. You will be dealing with considerably less bandwidth overseas. One soldier made it very simple to understand when he said it was like shoving an elephant through a straw. You and hundreds of other soldiers will be vying for time on the Internet for either educational or personal use. You need to understand it takes longer, and that's when the weather is cooperating. In the Balkans, you are not allowed to hook up your own personal computer to the Internet in the education centers. Check and see if this is allowed through MWR.

Almost anything you can think of can prevent you from completing work on time via the Internet.

Weather, mission, vehicle breakdowns, etc, can all bring even the most prepared student to his/her knees. Please plan ahead for any distance education class you are looking at.

Remember the military has, justifiably so, firewalls and some courses will not be allowed. Some SMARTFORCE classes will not work overseas due to the lack of proper equipment and they are sometimes banned for other reasons. Military coursework on the Internet can be even worse than stateside. Just do your homework, keep it simple, and you should be able to knock out a few classes while deployed.

Keep in mind that you are still required to perform your mission in addition to your coursework. I have spoken to enough soldiers downrange to say that even the most prepared soldier could come in and have to withdraw due to mission requirements.

Be sensible about school. Wait until you have gone through "left seat right seat" before signing up for a class. Be familiar with your job while deployed. It can save you your time and money.

Mary Anne Hamel
Education Services Specialist



End of an Era at Ft Drum An Interview with Marian Weisz

The Army Education Center is sad to say farewell to Marian Weisz who has enriched the lives of service members, family members, and educators in the Fort Drum community.

Marian has been a strong advocate for the Army Education program, supplying service members with information, knowledge and resources to continue their educational journey.

Prior to accepting her current position, Marian served as a counselor with the Army Continuing Education System in Fulda, Germany, from 1984-1989 where she provided educational services to aviation squadrons, combat support squadrons, and tenant units. Marian understands the problems many service members face while attempting to start or complete their education. Marian's primary motivation has been to ensure that "the soldier comes first." While in Fulda, Marian was instrumental in starting two and four year degree programs with Embry Riddle and eight other college programs.

Arriving at Fort Drum in January 1989, Marian counseled individuals in aviation units assigned here at Fort Drum and at Griffiss Air Force Base. In 1991, she became the lead counselor at 1st Brigade. For nine years, Marian enjoyed working within the unit organization, which enabled her to understand the mission of each unit. She was privileged to work with a professional team of leaders who saw the vision in her goal of ensuring unparalleled education opportunities for individuals to pursue their educational goals were offered in their units.

In 2000, after the Army Education Center was consolidated Marian moved into her current office, Room 130D. During her tenure at Fort Drum her collateral duties included: DANTES Test Control Officer, Equal Opportunity Representative.

In a recent interview Marian stated, "The rewarding part of this job is getting to know the soldiers. Daily, I see a cross section of American life walk through my door. Individuals who grew up in cities and on farms, in our heartland, along our borders and on our coast and those who have come from other countries have volunteered and responded

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EArmyU One Year later

It was just a year ago that the long-awaited eArmyU program became available to 10th Mountain Division soldiers, making Fort Drum one of only 14 Army installations worldwide able to offer this innovative educational opportunity to soldiers. And since that first enrollment, the Fort Drum's eArmyU program has grown considerably.

Often hailed as the "biggest leap in Army education since the GI Bill," eArmyU equips soldiers with a "Technology Package" to pursue college studies anytime and anywhere Internet access is available. The Tech Pack, which includes a laptop computer and Internet Service Provider (ISP) account, enables soldiers to pursue both degrees and certificates at the associate's, bachelor's, and master's levels.

The eArmyU portal provides easy access to more than 130 online degree programs offered through over 25 regionally accredited colleges and universities. The portal (www.eArmyU.com) includes access to virtual classrooms, materials, discussion groups, library resources, tutoring, academic advisement, and 24/7 technical support. In addition, academic and technical assistance are available locally at the Fort Drum Education Center through the eArmyU office and the Multi-Use Learning Facility.

Along with the tech pack, eArmyU participants are provided with 100% tuition (up to the \$250 per semester hour cap and a \$4500 yearly tuition ceiling), and fees and books. Program participants must successfully complete 12 semester hours within two years and remain in service three years to fulfill their eArmyU program obligations. The cost of the Technology Package is deducted from the student's tuition ceiling during their first year of eArmyU program participation.

Since August of 2002, the Fort Drum Education Center has enrolled close to 1,600 soldiers into the eArmyU program; 30% of those soldiers either reenlisted or extended their enlistment in order to participate in eArmyU. Currently over 15%

of Fort Drum's enlisted population participates in eArmyU, among more than 35,000 soldiers Army-wide who have enrolled in this innovative distance education program. Many of our enrollees have already PCS'd to other installations, joining 9,000 other soldiers who are accessing portal classes from all 50 states and 47 countries worldwide.

"Anytime, anywhere" education is not just a catchy slogan in eArmyU. Often referred to as the most deployed Division in the Army, 10th Mountain soldiers have participated in classes while deployed to Afghanistan, Kosovo, Bosnia, Kuwait, and Uzbekistan, among other locations. As an example, SSG Carl Palmore, HHC, 10th AVN BDE, just graduated from Central Texas College with an Associate's degree in General Studies while deployed to Afghanistan. Fort Drum soldiers - from Privates to Command Sergeants Major - have successfully completed classes during deployments, rotations, while TDY, during a PCS move, and even on convalescent leave.

Early this year Fort Drum was chosen as one of only nine Army installations to participate in the "Rand Study," an independent program evaluation commissioned by the Assistant Secretary for Manpower and Reserve Affairs and ACES HQ. This selection resulted in an allocation of 1,000 enrollment slots for soldiers stationed on the installation or in its service area of upstate New York. As we began the daunting task of filling 1,000 slots within a mere eight-week time frame, we found ourselves enrolling many soldiers on the eve of their deployment to Iraq. Members of the 511th MP Battalion and the 95th Engineers completed an accelerated one-day enrollment, shipping their laptops to family members to await the soldiers' return from combat operations.

This optempo continues today as 10th Mountain Division soldiers deploy to Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Horn of Africa. Recently, eArmyU Counselor Support staff members found themselves enrolling 10th MP BN soldiers immediately before their evening flight to Afghanistan.

Considering the level of deployment Army-wide, a policy decision was made to extend the 2-year/12-semester hour requirement by six months to all eArmyU students. An additional 6-month extension is available if

needed. This means that most redeploying soldiers will have experienced no setbacks to program completion on their return to Fort Drum.

This past year has also seen an increase in colleges participating in eArmyU, bringing the total to 25 postsecondary educational institutions offering over 130 degree programs. New schools include Jefferson Community College, the University of Alabama, Pierce College, and Southern Christian University. In addition, the University of Maryland and Southwestern College will be open for eArmyU enrollment in Term IV (beginning September 8th 2003).

In FY 04 eArmyU will also offer a *no-laptop* enrollment option, reducing the soldier's Service Remaining Requirement to one year, and course completion requirement to 3 semester hours. The no-laptop option still includes 100% tuition (up to a \$250 per semester cap and \$4500 yearly tuition ceiling), books, fees, free online tutoring and ISP (internet service provider). The *laptop* enrollment option with a 3-year SRR will continue to be available as well.

Flexibility, convenience, and ease of access continue to foster college success among Fort Drum's eArmyU students. Completing course enrollments online through the portal, soldiers can choose classes from any eArmyU school, as long as the class fits within their degree map. This allows soldiers to begin courses at the best time for them, and not have to wait

until a needed course is offered through their home institution. All eArmyU colleges offering degrees belong to Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges Army Degree (SOCAD), guaranteeing transferability of credit among schools and maximum ACE-recommended credit for prior learning and military experience. For soldiers, who often accumulate numerous college credits as they move from installation to installation throughout their Army careers, this means that a college degree is finally within their reach.

Today, Fort Drum's eArmyU office continues to enroll soldiers, thanks to a recent reallocation of available slots from other installations. Primary candidates are referred by their units according to Order of Merit and readiness for success in a distance learning environment. Interested soldiers should contact their NCO chain of command for this educational opportunity.

Fran Lueders
Educational Services Specialist, eArmyU



SCOREBOARD FY 03

<p>Students Briefed</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">1857</p>	<p>Students Counseled</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">1688</p>	<p>Students Enrolled</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold;">1548</p>
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eArmyU Testing

The eArmyU initiative over the past year has provided a wonderful opportunity to Fort Drum soldiers to complete college courses. An integral part of the distance learning process is evaluation. The Education Center has an independent testing office for eArmyU students at P4300 room 149. The eArmyU testing office has conducted over 1700 tests to date.

One of the main functions of the testing center is providing proctor services, allowing you to take your course examinations or assessment tests. These college examinations may be delivered in different formats. When applying to a college or enrolling into a course you should investigate how your

examinations will be conducted or if examinations will be required.

Some colleges use exams that are paper based with a proctor, or online with a proctor, or even online without a proctor. The examination requirements can vary from school to school or even from professor to professor. Many schools that require proctored exams will need a proctor form submitted to them with the name and address of who will be providing the service. Often these proctor information forms are available online at the schools website. Remember, it is your responsibility to provide proctor information to the school or course professor.

Remember!

- Bring your ID card
- Know your school, course number and name
- Arrive early and allot enough time

to take your test

- Contact your instructor if you need an extension

Another important facet for the eArmyU testing office is providing TABE testing for potential candidates. The TABE (Tests of Adult Basic Education) is a requirement for individuals applying to eArmyU who have less than a 110GT score. The TABE is a diagnostic tool that provides information on the candidates reading and language skills. The baseline score the education counselor will be looking for is 12.0 in each subject area.

Distance learning requires self-motivation and usually quite a lot of reading and writing. The education counselor will be looking for indicators to success. A GT score higher than 110, prior success in college, a consistent high TABE battery of scores are individual factors taken into consideration

when evaluating an eArmyU candidate. Please visit your education counselor to discuss educational opportunities and goals.

For more information or questions about testing call the eArmyU Testing Office at 772-1848 or the Multi-Use Learning Facility in P4300 Room 141 at 772-9993.

Les Barbour
Army Guidance Counselor

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when our nation needed their service. Such diversity makes our military great."

Marian, as you prepare to continue on a tremendous journey and depart for Anchorage, Alaska, the land which is called "North to the Future", it is our privilege to congratulate you on your promotion as you begin a new dimension of leadership in the Army Continuing Education System. The lives you have impacted at Fort Drum will long remember and remain eternally grateful for your dedicated service. Don't forget the plastic jug or birch bark so you can call the moose - "Mu-wah", my friend.

Diane Smith
Army Guidance Counselor



SUNY COLLEGES IN THE NORTH COUNTRY



SUNY Online Offerings

Because the September issue of the Mountain Climber is devoted to eArmyU, we have chosen to highlight our consortium member colleges that are a part of eArmyU, Jefferson Community College and SUNY Empire State College.

However, even if you are not enrolled in eArmyU, you can still take college classes online. Take a look at the online degree programs that our member SUNY Colleges offer:

"Your doorway to higher education"

SUNY Institute of Technology at Utica/Rome

Master of Science in Accountancy
Master of Business Administration in Technology Management
Master of Science in Health Services Administration

SUNY Oswego

B.A. Broadcasting and Mass Communication
B.S. Vocational Teacher Preparation

Jefferson Community College

A.S. Business Administration
A.S. Criminal Justice
A.A. Liberal Arts-Humanities and Social Sciences
A.A., A.S., A.A.S. Individual Studies

SUNY Empire State College

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

Empire State College - Bringing Education to Soldiers in New York and Around the Globe

For over 10 years, Empire State College has offered soldiers a quality, flexible education on base at Fort Drum. Since 2001, the college has educated soldiers around the globe with the eArmyU program. Through eArmyU and Empire State College's Center for Distance Learning, soldiers can continue their education wherever the Army takes them.

Robert Tobin, an Empire State College student and an Army non-commissioned officer, had the chance to experience just how far Empire State College could carry him. He notes, "The Center for Distance Learning afforded me the opportunity to continue my studies when I was transferred from Fort Drum, New York to Panama. I am now a civilian completing my bachelor's degree in Business Administration two years ahead of schedule."

At Empire State College, Tobin is not alone. The college's combination of student-centered education geared toward the adult learner, flexible study options and experience with military students has led to increasing popularity of the program.

Over 100 soldiers have applied to Empire State College through eArmyU, enrolling in over 800 courses. Empire State College currently offers 10 eArmyU degree programs. The most popular of these degree programs for eArmyU students are Business Management, Criminal Justice and Mental Health Administration.

A Military Career and a Degree

Although she was concerned about fitting an education into her busy schedule in the military, Michelle Coleman of Atlanta,

Georgia began her education at Fort Drum and completed her degree with Empire State College despite numerous relocations. During her address to the Center for Distance Learning graduation ceremony in Saratoga Springs, New York Coleman expressed her thoughts on her experience at Empire State College. Coleman explained, "Thanks to the Center for Distance Learning, I was able to pursue my education and protect the freedom of this great country simultaneously. Without Empire State College's innovative nontraditional approach to education, I would never be where I am today." Although her undergraduate degree is completed, Coleman is not finished pursuing her education. She is now working on her Master of Social Work.

A military-friendly school, Empire State College helps students pursue their education even before they apply. By offering complementary pre-enrollment advising, the college enables students to find out where they stand in terms of completing a degree without any further obligation. Once students are matriculated, the school also assigns them an academic mentor. The mentor works with the student on a one to-one basis through degree completion, helping to focus the degree program on the student's individual educational goals. Although eArmyU students meet with their mentors over the phone or via e-mail, students and spouses at the Fort Drum location also have the option to meet face-to-face with mentors if they prefer.

Along with providing pre-advising and mentors, the college offers courses in five convenient 15-week terms throughout the year. Courses are delivered online via the SUNY Learning Network (sln.suny.edu) and are completely self-contained, eliminating the need for students to find proctors to oversee test taking. Course evaluations are based on reading and/or writing assignments, online discussion and/or class

participation, research papers and, when necessary, phone conversations with instructors.

About Empire State College

The College's Center for Distance Learning offers courses in a variety of media, primarily Internet and print formats. As a founding member of the SUNY Learning Network, the college was among the first in the State University of New York to offer online courses, and the first to offer a bachelor's degree totally online. The Center for Distance Learning works with individual students, employers and professional organizations, and currently has partnership programs with the U.S. Army and Navy, as well as corporations and unions such as Lucent Technologies, U.S. Steelworkers and AT&T.

Empire State College was designed to meet the educational needs of adult students. Founded in 1971, the college offers degree programs in the arts and sciences through independent study, web-based courses and study groups, as well as credit earned through college-level life learning. With 40,000 alumni, Empire State College enrolls 17,000 students per year in its accredited associate, bachelor's and master's degree programs. Easily accessible at more than 35 locations across New York State and through its Center for Distance Learning, Empire State College is the SUNY solution for working adults.

More information on the college's eArmyU program can be accessed through www.esc.edu/army, as well as the eArmyU web site at www.earmyu.com.

Jefferson Community College and eArmyU

Jefferson Community College became a participating eArmyU host institution on April 1, 2003. It was selected as one of 30 nationwide colleges and universities to offer five of its six online degree programs to eArmyU soldier/students around the world.

Jefferson has a long and distinguished record of serving soldier-students and their family members. It has been a member of the Army's SOCAD program since 1985 and has executed well over 3,700 SOCAD Student Agreements.

Jefferson accepts the maximum allocation of credit for Army Service School training and MOS experience, as recommended by the ACE Guide posted to the AARTS Transcript. The College also accepts all of the CLEP, DSST, and Excelsior examinations for credit toward degree completion.

Being a member of the eArmyU program, now allows soldiers from all eArmyU installations worldwide to take advantage of Jefferson's quality degree programs and online courses.

Since April, over 110 eArmyU soldier/students have selected Jefferson Community College to be their host institution. These soldiers' duty assignments are at 14 Army installations in the continental U.S. (including Drum) and overseas.

Jefferson's eArmyU courses are NOT self-paced. The courses have specific deadlines for assignments, papers, quizzes, projects, exams, etc. and require students to participate in online discussion threads two to four times per week. It does not matter what time of day or which specific day of the week a soldier participates in the online discussion threads, as long as he participates on a regular basis. Soldiers must realize that regular participation is important to

effective learning in the online environment just as it is in the traditional "brick and mortar" classroom environment.

Soldiers do NOT take proctored exams for any of Jefferson's eArmyU courses. All assessment of student learning is conducted within the online environment. Jefferson's courses eliminate the need for a soldier to schedule periodic testing sessions at the Education Center.

You can learn more about Jefferson Community College's eArmyU offerings by following the links to Jefferson from the www.eArmyU.com website or by going directly to Jefferson's home page, www.sunyjefferson.edu, and clicking on "Information about eArmyU." You can also contact Jefferson's eArmyU Advisor by calling 773-4535 or e-mailing: earmyu@sunyjefferson.edu.