

# TraCen Cape May Education Update #296

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## Congratulations!!

The following personnel in the Cape May area passed Coast Guard Institute end-of-course, AQEs, and other tests since the last update:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Work Site</b>	<b>Test</b>
MK2 Nick Mersch	CGC Mako	MK1
YN3 Syreeta Bromfield	TraCen (SPO)	YN2
SN Gerard Wynne	ANT Cape May	BM3
BMC Jennifer Stanton	ANT Cape May	DWINTR

Well done, all of you!!

And if you've just finished a degree program or have any other noteworthy academic achievement to brag about, please let me know so I can recognize you for it.

## Question of the Week

**Q:** I'm going to be taking the DWINTR test in a couple weeks and am confused about what I can and can't use since it's an open-book test.

**A:** Unfortunately, you're not alone. Guidance for anyone but ESOs is sparse and, in some cases, that which exists is incorrect.

As you know, the study materials for the DWINTO (closed-book test), DWINTR (open-book test) and NavRul (closed-book until you pass, thereafter always open-book) consist of the following:

- Navigation Rules course book

- Navigation Rules flash cards
- the latest version of the "Navigation Rules: International-Inland" (COMDTINST M16672.2 (series))
- a CD with COMDTINST M16672.2 on it.

The previous version of the Navigation Rules course book had incorrect information in it about what you could and couldn't have with you during an open-book test. The current course book (revised March 2009) states, correctly, that

The only reference material that is authorized during this open book proctored exam is a corrected-to-date copy of the Navigation Rules, International-Inland, COMDTINST M16672.2(series). The only acceptable markings in the book are those that denote changes and updates. The book can NOT contain personalized tabs, indexes, or notes.

If you have a question you'd like answered as a Question of the Week, e-mail it to me at [andrew.g.webb@uscg.mil](mailto:andrew.g.webb@uscg.mil).

## Frequently-Confused/Misused Word Pairs

The English language includes hundreds of word pairs which leave people unsure as to which they should use in a given situation. Today, the pair in focus is **dual** vs. **duel**.

The word **dual** is an adjective, a word used to modify nouns and pronouns. It indicates the word modified has two parts or that there are two of them. "His vintage car has dual carburetors" and "She has dual Italian and US citizenship".

**Duel** is a noun meaning combat between two persons. "Alexander Hamilton was killed in a duel with Aaron Burr" and "The last battleship duel ever fought was between USS Washington and IJNS Kirishima".

If there are any words you often mix up, please e-mail them to me at [andrew.g.webb@uscg.mil](mailto:andrew.g.webb@uscg.mil).

## 25JUN Scholarship Deadline!

The National Association for Uniformed Services (NAUS) is offering four \$2,000 scholarships for the 2010-2011 school year to NAUS members or spouses, children, or grandchildren of NAUS members. For more information, go to <http://www.naus.org/scholarship/>. **The deadline is 25 June 2010.**

## Avoid Taking Out Student Loans!

TraCen's Education Center has a few copies of the hardback book *Financial Aid for Veterans, Military Personnel, and Their Dependents (2008-2010)* available for the taking, first come, first served. Stop by and pick up a copy.

These are especially useful to parents of college-bound children who want to avoid taking out college loans.

## CLEP English Tests to be Replaced

On 01 July, the CollegeBoard will replace three CLEP tests with two new tests as shown in the table below.

### Old CLEP Test

English Composition (with essay)  
English Composition (without essay)  
Freshman College Composition

### Replacement CLEP Test

College Composition  
College Composition Modular  
College Composition Modular

Both of the new tests will be available in a paper-based format.

**College Composition** includes multiple-choice items and two mandatory essays scored by Prometric (the CollegeBoard). You take the multiple-choice portion in one sitting then, after you receive a passing score, your TCO (not all ESOs are TCOs) will order the essays.

**College Composition Modular** is a multiple-choice test that may be supplemented either with an essay section provided by CLEP and scored by the college, or an essay section provided and scored by the college. (This exam is intended for colleges that want a valid, reliable multiple-choice assessment and greater local control over the direct writing assessment.)

In addition, if you took the Freshman College Composition (multiple-choice) test before 01 July, you can order an optional essay the score from which will be included with the score from your multiple-choice test in what's reported to your college/university.

## Attention, Parents of College-Bound Children!

- The U.S. Department of Education has produced a really excellent booklet (*College Preparation Checklist*) people at all stages in life. The first section ("Money for College") covers student aid; the second section ("Your 'To Do' List") provides check-off lists for elementary, junior high/middle, high school students and their parents and for adult students. You can download this pub from [http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/attachments/siteresources/College\\_Prep\\_Checklist.pdf](http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/attachments/siteresources/College_Prep_Checklist.pdf). The DoEd's web site has many other useful pubs which you can download. Check 'em out: (<http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/publications.jsp>).
- If you're looking for a financial aid (including scholarship) search engine that won't try to steer you toward specific loans or scholarships, check out the Department of Education's various wizards: [https://studentaid2.ed.gov/getmoney/scholarship/scholarship\\_search\\_select.asp?13817/](https://studentaid2.ed.gov/getmoney/scholarship/scholarship_search_select.asp?13817/).
- So you've decided you want to take college courses, but you're not sure which school's right for you. Or you've already decided on college but made your choice more by gut feeling or based on others' recommendations than through deliberate process. In either case, check out the Department of Education's College Matching Wizard.
- There are two versions. One is for people who already have an idea what kind of college they would like to attend. The other asks more questions so as to provide you with a more tailored college fit. You can find them both at [https://studentaid2.ed.gov/gotocollege/collegefinder/wizard\\_intro1.asp](https://studentaid2.ed.gov/gotocollege/collegefinder/wizard_intro1.asp).
- The Scholarship and Financial Aid Explorer (SFEX) was developed by the Marine Corps to make it easier for military personnel to find scholarships directly relevant to them and their dependents. SFEX provides a listing of over 600 scholarships and is open to all servicemembers at no cost. You can check it out at <http://www.mcsfex.net/Default.aspx>.

## USMAP

USMAP (United Services Military Apprenticeship Program), at <https://usmap.cnet.navy.mil/usmapss/static/usmap.jsp>, is a program through which active duty servicemembers can earn certification for skills learned on-the-job and through related technical instruction.

You can complete apprenticeships in 125 trades through USMAP by documenting work experience you acquire on the job, while performing your regular military duties.

No after-hours work is required.

The only extra work you have to do is keep track of hours spent in each category of work, fill out your record sheets, and once a quarter send a report of your accumulated hours to USMAP to receive credit for them.

For more information about USMAP, go to the web site above or see Chief Boone (TraCen Cape May's CDA) or me.

## Are You Interested in Receiving Tutoring or Being a Tutor?

A lot of people ask me how to study for CLEP tests, SWEs, ASVAB re-tests, and other exams. When I point them to the many resources I've dug up (whether on-line or physical study materials), they look disappointed. So I'm trying to gauge the level of interest in receiving help from a tutor, what subject(s) people would like help in, and how many people with in-depth knowledge of various subjects would be interested in tutoring others.

Possible subjects for tutoring are academic subjects (e.g., math, English, history, physics, biology, etc.), rate-related subjects, and E-PME.

If you're interested in receiving tutoring, please e-mail me ([andrew.g.webb@uscg.mil](mailto:andrew.g.webb@uscg.mil)) and let me know what subject(s) you'd like help in.

If you're interested in being a tutor, please e-mail me ([andrew.g.webb@uscg.mil](mailto:andrew.g.webb@uscg.mil)) and let me know what subject(s) you feel qualified to tutor in.

## Preparing for CLEP Tests or DSSTs?

In addition to dozens of free resources you can use to study for CLEP tests, DSSTs, and ECEs (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/studymaterials.asp>), there are also a number of commercial test preparation companies. Although the Coast Guard can't endorse any of them, some Guardians have found InstantCert Academy (<http://www.instantcert.com/>) a very effective way to prepare for these tests. It's a subscription site, but you can use it for 30 days for free. After that, it's \$20 per month for the standard membership.

Another company is iStudySmart.com (<http://www.istudysmart.com/>). It charges by the course, rather than a monthly fee. One of its selling points is that it has been "endorsed by DSST" and "was the first test preparation company to meet Excelsior College's Best Practices for Test Preparation Providers."

## Free Tutoring

If you haven't yet discovered it and are trying to prepare for a CLEP test, DSST, SAT, ACT, or college course or want help with a civilian job search, preparing a civilian resume, or financial questions, check out tutor.com on Navy Knowledge Online (<https://wwwa.nko.navy.mil/portal/home/>). Once you've logged in, click on the "Reference" tab and you'll see a section for tutor.com.

There, you can find on-line tutorials for many subjects in the areas of math, science, English, and social studies as well as standardized test preparation (e.g., SAT, ACT, GRE), and adult services such as resume preparation, job search, helping children with homework, etc. You can also find live tutoring on the same site.

This is an EXCELLENT resource!!

## Servicewide Exam Deadlines Closer Than You Think

Coast Guard regulars: remember that your deadline for completing *all* qualifications for the servicewide exams (SWEs) is 01 August 2010. Reservists: your deadline is 01 July.

## Reserve Servicewide Exam (16 October 2010)

The message announcing the Reserve Servicewide Exam (RSWE) was published this week. If you're a Reservist, please read it through, paying particular attention to paragraph 4.A. (Member Responsibilities). To see a reader-friendly format, go to <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/ALCGRSV027-10.pdf>.

## Thinking of Starting Your Own Business?

If you're thinking about starting your own business, either while you're still in uniform or after you leave the Coast Guard, check out a sampling of resources for entrepreneurs at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/smallbiz.asp>. There you'll find general resources applicable to all types of small businesses on many different subjects (e.g., drafting a business plan, finding funding, etc.).

There are also sections aimed at those interested in starting not-for-profit businesses and those interested in social entrepreneurship. Contrary to the popular notion, not-for-profit doesn't mean "no profit" or that you can't earn a substantial salary. It just means most of the profit has to be put toward specific things, usually plowed back into the business. There's also a section with links to labor market information.

Finally, drop by the Education Center to pick up a copy of the book *Best Career and Education Web Sites*. Chapters 7 ("Self-Employment and Small Business") and 8 ("Temporary Work, Contract Employment, Freelancing, Teleworking, and Volunteering") have many great leads.

## Studying for the ASVAB AR Test?

If you're trying to raise your ASVAB AR test score and are finding the traditional study resources aren't that helpful, check out the word problem resources at Salman Khan's on-line Khan Academy:

- Word Problem Solving Strategies (<http://khanexercises.appspot.com/video?v=SpDIXJ2I2D4>)
- Word Problem Solving 1 (<http://khanexercises.appspot.com/video?v=Xz6rT9k8ftg>)
- Word Problem Solving 2 (<http://khanexercises.appspot.com/video?v=s1QN7sSfBM8>)
- Word Problem Solving 3 (<http://khanexercises.appspot.com/video?v=LRKMoqrMbGw>)
- Word Problem Solving 4 (<http://khanexercises.appspot.com/video?v=5EdbPz1ZVn0>)

While watching these videos, don't forget to pause them occasionally and practice the skill/knowledge you just learned.

## YN1 Course Cancellation Clarification

In accordance with ALCOAST 233/10 (dated 07MAY2010), version 0176-1 of the YN1 course became obsolete on at 2400 on 01 June 2010. That was also the deadline for taking the EOCT for this course.

If you weren't advanced to YN1 by 2400 on 01 June 2010, you will have to complete the yet-to-be published YN1 course and pass the yet-to-be published YN1 EOCT, even if you previously passed the older version (version 0176-1) of the YN1 test. But, because no course or tests is available, the YN1 EOCT requirement will be waived for YN2s who wish to take a SWE in October and November 2010.

Even though the course and test are not yet available, the most up-to-date EPQs are available and you can begin preparing for advancement to YN1 by downloading them from the Coast Guard Learning Portal (<http://learning.uscg.mil>) and carefully reviewing them.

## CG Foundation & Vander Putten Grants

Many recipients of grants under the Coast Guard Foundation and Vander Putten grant programs are unaware that the money they receive is a generous gift of individuals who contribute their own money to fund the programs. Many tens of thousands of dollars of their own money.

That is, when you apply for one of these grants, there is no guarantee that there will be money available to fund it and you shouldn't expect there will be. Moreover, common courtesy dictates that when you receive one of these grants you should thank those who made it possible. You can easily send a quick thank-you note via the Coast Guard Institute's web site ([http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cgi/tag/fg\\_feedback.asp](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cgi/tag/fg_feedback.asp)).

Those who contribute to these grant programs are truly interested in knowing if the money you receive made a difference to you and, specifically, how it made a difference. Without feedback, they may assume it's not all that helpful or (worse) that it's going to people who are ungrateful. Take five minutes to send some feedback.

## Free College Reference Books

The following books are available in limited quantities in the Education Center:

- *Financial Aid for Veterans, Military Personnel, and Their Dependents (2008-2010)*
- *Guide to Online Learning*
- *College Majors That Work*

Also available, are the following:

- *Need a Liff?* (this is the American Legion's guide to educational opportunities, scholarships, grants, student loans, careers, and employment)
- *DANTES College Career Workbook*
- *College Success Tips for Adult Learners*
- *College.edu – Online resources for the cyber-savvy student*
- *Don't Miss Out – the ambitious student's guide to financial aid*
- *Best Career and Education Web sites: A Quick Guide to Online Job Search*

If any or all of these interest you, drop by and pick one up – first come, first served.

## Is Distance Learning for You?

The University of Georgia has come up with an on-line assessment tool you can use to determine if computer-based distance learning is for you. It's called SORT (Student Online Readiness Tool, <http://www.alt.usg.edu/sort/html/sortlau1.html>) and is based on research that says there are "six main topics closely related to a student's success in the online learning environment". These are, Experience with Technology, Access to Technology, Study Habits, Lifestyle, Goals and Purposes, and Learning Preferences. "Each section of SORT has a brief description followed by a questionnaire. Based on your responses to questions, feedback is provided on your personal readiness profile, along with suggested strategies for success and links to more information."

## Wondering What to Major In?

Are you interested in getting a college degree, but unsure about what to major in? Drop by the Education Center and pick up a copy of *College Majors that Work*. This book has an excellent, easy-to-follow system for determining what major best matches your interests.

You should also check out chapters 3 ("Career Exploration Information") and 5 ("Researching Employer and Labor Market Information") of the book *Best Career and Education Web Sites*. Before you dive into a major, with the intention of going into a particular career field, read these chapters. They can help you figure out if there's actually a future in your chosen field. The last thing you want is to invest a lot of time and money in getting a particular degree only to find when you're done that there aren't many jobs available in the field you prepared for or that advancement in that field is slow or frozen.

## TraCen Cape May Testing Calendar

Tests at TraCen Cape May are administered by appointment according to the following schedule:

Mondays (0800): Defense Language Proficiency Tests

Tuesdays (0800): EOCTs and AQEs\*

Thursdays (0745): colleges tests, CLEP tests, DSSTs, SATs, ACTs

- \* If operations or your work schedule make it impossible for you to take an EOCT or AQE on a Tuesday morning, you can take it on a Thursday morning.

This schedule leaves most of the day on Tuesdays, as well as all day on Wednesdays, Fridays available for other occasional tests, counseling, and other face-to-face interactions with you. When no one is taking a language test, the doors to the Education Center are open on Mondays, as well.

If you call and I don't answer the phone, I'm usually administering a test (and, because of the noise, can't talk on the phone) or otherwise busy with someone in the office. E-mail is the best way to get in touch with me.

## Thinking of Teaching?

Are you interested in teaching after you leave the Coast Guard? Troops to Teachers also provides counseling and referral services to military personnel interested in beginning a second career in public education as a teacher. And the DANES Troops to Teachers office will help you identify teacher certification requirements, programs leading to certification, and employment opportunities. The main web site

([http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes\\_web/troopstoteachers/index.asp](http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes_web/troopstoteachers/index.asp)) has all kinds of information about the program.

Including a new on-line way to determine if you're eligible to participate in Troops to Teachers:

[http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes\\_web/troopstoteachers/eligibility.asp](http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes_web/troopstoteachers/eligibility.asp).

## Leaving the Coast Guard?

If you're leaving the Coast Guard within the next twelve months (whether through retirement, resignation, or expiration of your enlistment), you should be making plans for what you'll be doing after you take off your uniform for the last time. Check out the information on my web site related to career transition

(<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/careertrans.asp>).

You should also request an education assessment from the Coast Guard Institute

(<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/collegefaq.asp>) to get a transcript of college credit you've acquired through your service in the Coast Guard. If you don't request an assessment before you leave active duty, you can't get one later.

If you're not planning to go to school right away, you'll probably need to find work. Here are two excellent resources for finding a job – or even a second career. Also, Military.com has a very good series of web pages devoted to veterans

(<http://www.military.com/Careers/Home/0,13373,,00.htm>).

And don't discount the idea of working in the public sector. Not only are there thousands of jobs in the federal government, identical to private-sector jobs in which you can put your skills, knowledge, and experience to use while maintaining job security unavailable in the private sector (<http://www.fedjobs.gov/>), governmental entities at all levels – state, county, municipality, school district, port district, etc. – provide similar benefits.

## Microsoft Software Home Use Program

If you're on the Coast Guard's payroll (i.e., not a contractor), you're eligible to participate in Microsoft's Software Assurance Home Use Program. The program enables you to get a licensed copy of most Microsoft® Office desktop PC applications to install and use on your home computer. You're also eligible for discounts on other Microsoft software via the Employee Purchase Program.

For more information, go to <https://cgportal.uscg.mil/lotus/my poc/?uri=wcm%3a5b18ff004d89b9a6ae7fbe259abd3cf4>.

## ACCC's Library Open for Studying

One more thing: the new campus's classrooms, labs, and library are all state-of-the-art. Even if you're not ready to register for classes right away, you should take the opportunity to visit the campus and look around. The Director of

Academic and Student Services has extended a personal invitation to anyone who'd like to use the library to study, for research, or for pleasure reading. It's very quiet, well-lit, and has very comfortable furniture.

### **Quick Reference Study Guides**

The TraCen Education Center also has a binder full of SparkCharts Quick Reference Guides on almost 40 subjects. You're welcome to use these in the Education Center or make copies to take with you. You can check out the subjects available at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/books.asp#spark>.

### **Education Library**

In addition to SparkCharts, the Education Center also has a library of books on leadership, management, Coast Guard history, and other topics. Also in the library are the latest Professional Qualification Guides (PQGs) for each rating.

The Education Center also has dozens of brochures and books on college, financial aid, the officer program application process, and other things. If there are multiple copies, you're welcome to take one.

### **Get It in Writing!**

A recent article on [military.com](http://military-education.military.com/2009/06/new-gi-bill-advice-get-it-in-writing.html) by retired Coast Guard Chief Terry Howell (<http://military-education.military.com/2009/06/new-gi-bill-advice-get-it-in-writing.html>) provides extremely good advice about how to avoid making costly mistakes when dealing with the VA about your education benefits.

The advice is equally applicable to dealing with *any* government or corporate bureaucracy, for that matter.