

Education Updates



Question of the Week

Q: I'm trying to make sure I have the right E-PME Performance Requirements signed off, but I've found three different versions on Coast Guard web sites. Two are almost identical, although one is dated October 2004 and the other's undated. The third (dated February 2011) is completely different from the other two. Which should I be using? The most current version currently in use – the version you should be using until further notice – is on the Coast Guard Forms Management web site (http://www.uscg.mil/forms/cg/CG_1510_2.pdf).

If you have a question you'd like answered as a Question of the Week, e-mail it to me at Kristi.L.Hilton@uscg.mil.



Reserve Service wide Exam PDEs Now Available

Personal Data Extracts (PDEs) for Reservists eligible to take the October 2011 service wide exams (SWEs) are now available in Direct Access.

Please make sure you check everything on the PDE carefully – including your examination board name and OPFAC. PSC will automatically send a SWE for you to the ESO at the examination board listed on your PDE. Your ESO has nothing to do with PDEs and you cannot request a SWE.

Are you going to be on leave or TAD on the date of your SWE?

- Will you be in-transit due to a PCS move on the date of your SWE? Are you going to be away from the unit on the date of your SWE for any other reason? If so (and if you want to take the SWE), do the following:
 - find a unit you know you'll be geographically near on your SWE date,
 - contact the ESO at that unit and ask if it's OK to take your SWE there,
 - assuming the ESO says "yes", ask for the unit's OPFAC,
 - notify PPC (e-mail address: PPC-DG-ADV) of the name and OPFAC of that unit so the info on your PDE is changed.

PPC will automatically send your exam to the unit list as your exam board on your PDE. Substitute exams are authorized ONLY in emergencies. Regular leave (even if you scheduled a Caribbean cruise six months ago) is not an emergency. A wedding – even your own – is not an emergency. For more information on just what circumstances justify requesting a substitute exam, see Article 5.D.3 of the Personnel Manual.

If you change the Exam Board on your PDE and later find out you won't be able to take your SWE at that location, let your ESO know immediately.

ALCGRSV 024/11 lays out the guidelines for the Reserve service wide exams this year. The exams will be administered on Saturday morning, 15 October 2011. For details (including what is required of all examinees), see the ALCOAST http://www.uscg.mil/announcements/alcgrsv/024-11_alcgrsv.txt
For info on studying and test-taking skills, go to <http://chronicle.com/article/Close-the-Book-Recall-Write/31819/>

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Monday August 29th 4-8pm 8 week on base English class starts

Thursday Sept. 5th 4-8pm 8 week on base College math starts

DeVry will be on base July 21st for registration and info from 11- 5pm.



Featured Books Available in Education Center

50 Best College Majors for a Secure Future

- Online Learning
- Financial Aid for Veterans, Military Personnel, and Their Families
- 2011 Guide to Military Friendly Schools*
- DANTES College Career Workbook*

TA & Dropped/Changed Courses

If you drop a course you're using TA to pay for, remember you have to go down two separate but parallel paths: the schools and the Coast Guards.

With respect to the school's path, make sure you follow its procedures for dropping a course; don't just stop going to class. And after you've dropped the course, be sure you let your ESO know. If you don't, the Coast Guard Institute (and Navy) won't have any idea you're not taking it and will expect a grade report after the course ends.



Military Scholarship Opportunity

Until 02 September 2011, the National Association of Institutions for Military Education Services (NAIMES) is accepting applications for the 2011 Student Spotlight Scholarships. All Coast Guard personnel (regulars and reservists) who are on active duty and are currently pursuing a degree using tuition assistance are eligible to apply. Application, resume, and project must be submitted online at www.naimes.org/upload.asp.



Watch Out for Diploma Mills Masquerading as Legitimate Colleges

(courtesy of Troy Blappert, full-time ESO at Base Seattle)

Before responding to an ad or other hype describing how easy it is to get a college degree, check out a web site that will help you figure out if the school you're interested in is a legitimate. "Phony online colleges crank out fake diplomas and phony college degrees at a dizzying pace," one page of the web site's Diploma Mill Police page states (<http://www.geteducated.com/diploma-mill-police>).

"Diploma Mills almost always promise a fast college degree based on life experience. GetEducated's online education researchers have prepared these Top 10 Signs of an Online College Degree Mill to help online students protect themselves from this popular online education scam."



How to Go to College Almost for Free

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Whether you'd like more money for your own education (even if you're using TA or receiving GI Bill benefits) or for a dependent, you should check out the book [How to Go to College Almost for Free Ben Kaplan](#). You'll see that finding money for college is possible using a logical, linear (and not all that daunting) methodology devised by Ben Kaplan.



Do I Need a Degree to Get the Job I Want?

Many Coast Guard personnel are more interested in working with their hands (for example, carpentry, gunsmithing, plumbing, locksmithing, electrical work) than they are in sitting in class for five hours a day to get a degree. Still, everyone tells them they need to get a degree to succeed in the civilian labor market so they feel they have to do so.

But before you jump into a degree program, think about your ultimate employment goal and work backwards from it. When planning a car trip, you don't just start driving and hope to end up somewhere you wanted to go. You have a destination in mind and figure out the best route to get there. This should be the way you also plan your career, both in the Coast Guard and in the civilian world.

Is Distance Learning for You?

Before you plunk down the application fee for a distance learning course, check out the information about distance learning at <http://www.ion.illinois.edu/Resources/tutorials/pedagogy/StudentProfile.asp>. Before you hop on the on-line course bandwagon, spend a little time with the University of Georgia's on-line assessment tool to help you determine if computer-based distance learning is for you <http://goml.readi.info/>. Log on using GOML password georgia

Reserve Resource Guide

In addition to the web site of the Coast Guard Office of Reserve Affairs (<http://www.uscg.mil/reserve/>), Reservists should also check out TraCen Petaluma's Reserve Resource Guide (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg1/tracenetpetaluma/RRG/>). Together, these provide info on and links to info on every facet of Coast Guard affairs related to service in the Reserve.

Sector Columbia River available testing:

- Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) - monthly
- CLEP, DSST, ACT, SAT – available through DeVry University email LTorgerson@devry.edu
- APEX testing for OCS

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- Air Force University E-Exams <http://www.au.af.mil/au/afiadl/printcatalog-5Nov2010Update.pdf>
- ASVAB as needed
- Proctoring exam services provided
- EOCT/EPME - scheduled (praqs have to be signed off)

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. During the transition to leaving you might check out: [preseparation counseling checklist](#)

You should also request an education assessment from the Coast Guard Institute [USCG Transcript](#) .

If you're not planning to go to school right away, you'll probably need to find work. Military.com has a very good series of web pages devoted to veterans (<http://www.military.com/Careers/Home>).

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.

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