

TraCen Cape May Education Update #406

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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:

Name	Work Site	Test
SK3 Brian Christina*	TraCen (GSK)	SK2

* First attempt

Also, Ms. Amy Denke (at the Child Development Center) has just completed a Master of Arts degree in early childhood education and HS1 Robert Lesko has just completed a Master of Science degree in Health Care Management, both from Trident University International. Both Ms. Denke and PO Lesko demonstrate what’s possible, even while working full time and maintaining a normal family life, with all the responsibilities that entails.

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 – What's this TA letter I got from the Navy all about?

Q: I finished a college course about two months ago, and just got a computer-generated letter in the mail from the Navy telling me I have to pay for the course, even though TA paid for it. What's going on?

A: If you had read the "After You've Submitted Your Application" section on my web site (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/ta-b.asp#grades>) or read the Navy's letter more carefully you'd know that whenever you use TA, you have to provide a grade report for the courses TA paid for. If you don't (or if you fail a course TA paid for) you have to repay the Navy/Coast Guard for the amount it shelled out in TA.

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.

Web Page in the Spotlight

There's a lot of stuff on the TraCen Cape May web site you might not check out if you didn't know it was there. So this week, I'm spotlighting three pages: **Studying & Test-taking Skills** (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/studying.asp>).

Grammar & Usage Corner

A number of people have asked that I expand my weekly "Frequently-Confused/Misused Words" entry to cover grammar and usage questions other than confused/misused words as well. This week, the difference between **cite**, **sight**, and **site**. (These definitions are taken from *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*.)

The word *cite* is a verb meaning to quote by way of example, authority, or proof ("When speaking before the city council, Ms. Smith cited *Roberts Rules of Order* as support for the point she was trying to make") or to refer to, especially to mention formally in commendation or praise ("Petty Officer Brown was cited for the outstanding work he had done during the previous year").

Sight is usually used as a noun describing something that is seen ("That was quite a sight!", said Marie as she watched a whale come almost completely out of the water"; "Gemal showed me the sights of the city"; "You look a sight!", Tia laughed when Bob awoke from a long nap"). It can also be used as a verb, as in to catch sight of ("The group sighted a lion within the first hour of their safari").

Site describes the spatial location of an actual or planned structure or set of structures such as a building, town, or monument ("The site of Washington, DC was decided over dinner during a political discussion between Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson").

If there are any word usage, grammar, or similar issues you've encountered, please e-mail them to me at andrew.g.webb@uscg.mil.

Common Latin Phrases Everyone Should Know

Sic: This word translates as "so" or "thus". It's usually written parenthetically to denote that a word, phrase, passage, etc., that may appear strange or incorrect has been written intentionally or has been quoted verbatim. Example: "He signed his name as e. e. cummings (sic)."

From: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/sic>

How to Pay for College

Between 1400 and 2200 Eastern Time on Thursday, 10 January 2013 CollegeWeekLive will be holding a free event to help students and their parents decide the best way to pay for college. Login at <http://www.collegeweeklive.com/> anytime during that period to live chat with admissions officers from 250+ universities and financial aid experts from the U.S. Department of Education, College Goal Sunday and the Hispanic Scholarship Fund to learn how to:

- uncover the best scholarship opportunities online,
- understand the difference between private and public scholarships,
- access financial aid programs.

Participants will also be automatically entered to win the \$2,500 HP Time is Money Scholarship after visiting three colleges during the event.

Learning Another Language & Foreign Language Testing

There are a number of software applications that help you learn a foreign language. “Tell Me More” (http://us.tellemore.com/free_demo), Mango (www.mangolanguages.com), and “Rosetta Stone” (<http://www.rosettastone.com/>, which everyone’s seen on TV) are but a few of these.

But don’t go out and buy one just because everyone’s talking about it. Before you order the software, do some research, including <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/LanguageLearning.pdf>.

- **Check the price.** The only direct Coast Guard-related funding available to reimburse you language software you buy on your own is the Coast Guard Foundation grant – which is only available to regular Coast Guard enlisted personnel and Reserve enlistees on active duty (i.e., not drilling Reservists or officers).
- **Ask around; see if you can find others who have it.** Find out if it helped them learn what they need to know to talk about Coast Guard-related matters (e.g., law enforcement) in the target language. Unless you just want to learn another language for fun, if the software doesn’t help you learn what you need to learn it’s probably not worth buying.
- **Foreign Language Proficiency Pay (FLPP).** If you want to earn FLPP as one of your unit’s designated interpreters, it’s highly unlikely a commercially-available language course will give you the proficiency needed to get the necessary rating on the Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT, see <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/dlpt.asp>). And keep in mind that even if it does, your unit has to have designated interpreter billets *and* you have to be formally assigned to one of those billets. (Most operational units have only two or three interpreter billets.)

If you really need to know a second language for work, the Coast Guard will probably pay for you to learn it. But a method other than software may be more effective. That is, if all you can do after months of using a computer program is make small talk that helps you locate a good restaurant, it’s probably not worthwhile for Coast Guard purposes.

Check around to see if there are any intensive language training courses available in your area through a college/university, a commercial language school, or a government agency. For example, now that the Coast Guard and the Customs and Border Protection agency work for the same cabinet secretary, you may find that you can get into a CBP language training program that either the Department or Coast Guard will pay for.

And, of course, you can always take college courses in the target language. Tuition assistance will pay for them and you’ll also earn college credit from them.

You can also find loads of (mostly) free resources for learning and/or practicing foreign languages at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/languages.asp>.

Free Language Software

Mango Languages on-line now available to District 5 personnel, courtesy of Ms. Monica Bailey (full-time ESO at Base Portsmouth). Its features include:

- 50+ basic courses (35 foreign languages and 15 ESL Courses)
- 45 complete courses (32 foreign languages and 13 ESL Courses)
- Ability to download and use mobile versions (for iPhone and Android App)
- Unlimited remote access to all online course material.

You can get more information from Mango's web site at www.mangolanguages.com. If you're interested in using the program, contact Ms. Bailey at monica.r.bailey@uscg.mil.

Short-fuse Scholarship Deadline

The National Military Family Association (NMFA) is currently accepting applications for the Joanne Holbrook Patton Military Spouse Scholarship program. **The application deadline is 31 January 2013.**

Scholarships are awarded to spouses of members of all uniformed services. Spouses of current, retired, or deceased active duty and reserve service members may apply. Applications are accepted online only. The scholarships (worth up to \$1,000) may be used for tuition, fees, and residential room and board for: GED, ESL vocational training, professional certification, undergraduate, or graduate programs. Programs may be taken live or on-line, full-time or part-time. A valid military ID is required to apply for this program. Scholarship selection is based on short-answer questions and an essay question that will help NMFA get to know the applicant better. The application also includes a survey that will help NMFA advocate for education changes on behalf of military spouses. For details and to apply, go to www.militaryfamily.org/our-programs/military-spouse-scholarships.

Free Downloadable Books, Audiobooks, Music, and Videos

You can download thousands of free entertainment files (over 100,000 items to choose from) via the Navy General Library Program (<http://navy.lib.overdrive.com/>). To use it, you'll first need to register as a new user at Navy Knowledge Online (<https://www.nko.navy.mil/>). This service is available to all uniformed personnel, retirees, and their dependants.

Don't limit yourself to just the Navy General Library Program, however. Navy Knowledge Online contains

- reference materials of all kinds (e.g., *Navy Times*, national magazines, academic and professional journals, and more),
- Peterson's Lifelong Learning resources (e.g., CLEP & DSST prep; prep resources for various military tests; ACT, SAT, PSAT prep; career & certification test prep);
- academic, military, and career e-books;
- search engines for finding colleges and scholarships;
- personal development resources (physical and mental health, fitness, financial management, safety); and
- leadership resources.

All these are free.

Interested in Becoming a Pilot?

Start with the Federal Aviation Administration's web site (<http://www.faa.gov/pilots/become/>), then check out these and other sites you can find through a search engine:

- <http://www.fapa.aero/>
- <http://jetcareers.com/becoming-an-airline-pilot.html>.

Find the Right College for You

Check out the Department of Education's "College Navigator" web site (<http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>).

Confused About Touro University International, TUIU, and Touro University Worldwide?

If you are or have been a student at Touro University International or TUIU and wondered what this new "Touro University Worldwide" is, read the following article by George Altman in the December issue of *MilitaryTimesEDGE* magazine.

A former military education powerhouse is trying to re-establish itself after being out of the market for years. The nonprofit Touro College and University System University sold off its on line operation serving largely military students – now a for-profit known as Trident University International – in 2007 to raise money for a medical school. Now Touro is back in the military market after serving out the terms of a five-year noncompete agreement. Its new online school, Touro University Worldwide, must rebuild from a total of 200 students and hopes to do much of that by going back to the military community, said Yoram Neumann, the school's chief executive officer and a veteran of the Israel Defense Forces. Neumann and wife Edith founded the old TUI, which quickly became one of the nation's biggest educators of military students. "Certainly, Touro was a very big player," said Jeffrey Cropsey, a former director of the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support. By 2007, Touro was bringing in \$50 million in revenue annually. Neumann then took the helm of the for-profit school, which changed its name to TU I University and later Trident.

The new TUW offers four master's degrees and one certificate program, focusing on business, psychology and communications. Officials said Touro is planning to add a handful of additional programs at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels. The military education market that Touro returns to is much more crowded than the one it started in back in 1998. "It would be a tough road for anybody" to return to the position Touro once held, Cropsey said. "Having said that, they do have a tradition." Neumann said TUW will implement a "learning guarantee" in 2013 for students who complete all of a course's requirements but don't take away the promised skills. The courses could be retaken at no cost. Students will have access to Touro's electronic materials, eliminating the need to buy books.

For more information about the new Touro University Worldwide, go to <http://www.tuw.edu>.

Interested in Starting a Physical Training Business?

Another article in the current *MilitaryTimesEDGE* magazine profiles three military veterans who've started their own physical training businesses. Check out "The Training Business" at <http://www.MilitaryTimesEDGE.com> or drop by the Education Center to pick up a copy of the magazine.

Before Diving In, Find Out if Distance Learning is for You

If you're trying to decide between taking courses in a classroom or via distance learning (aka distance education), you owe it to yourself to use one or more of the on-line assessment tools available from DANTEs and various colleges (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/distance.asp#01>). Spending some time with these tools could save you time and a lot of aggravation down the road.

Got Student Debt?

A recent issue of *The Washington Monthly* contained a short guide to different types of student loan repayment plans. You can find it at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/finance005.doc>.

Also, check out the info at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/loans.asp#repayment> and http://files.consumerfinance.gov/f/201210_cfpb_servicemember-student-loan-guide.pdf.

Cape May County Evening/Continuing Education

Cape May County Technical School's evening and continuing education latest course guide is now available at <http://www.capemaytech.com/2013SpringEveningBrochure.pdf>. The Evening and Continuing Education Division offers courses to provide academic, vocational, technical, and avocational instruction in arts, crafts, welding, dance, computers, cooking, baking, language, health & fitness, special training, state license, vocational/technical programs, and GED, ABE, ESL instruction. **Classes will begin during the week of 14 January 2013.**

Virtually Free SAT & ACT Preparation Software

eKnowledge Corporation has teamed up with the NFL, MLB, and over a hundred corporate sponsors to provide free SAT and ACT preparation software to servicemembers and their families. While the software is free (retail price \$200), there is a nominal charge for each standard SAT or ACT program to cover the cost of materials, processing, distribution, and customer service. (If you received the software last year, you'll need to get a free upgrade.)

Parents of high school students applying for college next year should get this software early, so their children can begin preparing ASAP.

To obtain a military discount when you order, go to www.eknowledge.com/DANTES, or call 951-256-4076.

Rating Advancement Tests for OSs and Aviation Rates

For the information of all OS3s, OS2s, and aviation rate personnel in pay grades E-4 and E-5, the Rating Advancement Tests (RATs) you will take for the next higher pay grade are open-book tests. Your ESO will provide you with a CD that includes all the material you are allowed to consult while taking the test. There's an hour and 40 minute time limit on each of these tests.

Parents: Associate's Degree Before Bachelor's Saves Money

A report released yesterday by the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center (<http://www.studentclearinghouse.info/snapshot/docs/SnapshotReport8-GradRates2-4Transfers.pdf>) found that 71% of the students who earned an associate's degree "and then moved to a four-year college graduated with a bachelor's degree within four years of transferring," according to Katherine Mangan in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* on 08 November. For those who didn't have an associate's degree before transferring, the number was 55%.

Become a Teacher Without Majoring in Education

Are you interested in teaching after you leave the Coast Guard? Are you aware you don't necessarily have to have a degree in education to teach? That is, in many states you can have a bachelor's degree in some other major and still teach. And some states

are actively looking for people who have degrees in a subject for which there's a shortage of teachers. For example, math are sought to teach math. Check out the information throughout the Teachers Count web site (start at <http://www.teacherscount.org/wannateach/fag.shtml#5>).

Also, Troops to Teachers 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) 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.

USMAP

USMAP (United Services Military Apprenticeship Program, <https://usmap.cnet.navy.mil/usmapss/static/usmap.jsp>), is a program through which active duty enlisted personnel 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 thing 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.

"USMAP enhances your job skills and shows your motivation for more challenging military assignments." Once you've completed the required work hours in each of the skills listed for the trade, your record will be verified then submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor from which you'll receive a certification that you've completed the specified apprenticeship program. This will be "a definite advantage in getting better civilian jobs since employers know the value of apprenticeships."

For more information about USMAP, go to <https://usmap.cnet.navy.mil/usmapss/static/usmap.jsp>.

Certification & Licensing

If you plan to continue working in the field represented by your rating, after you leave the Coast Guard, and don't plan to get a college degree right away, you should seriously consider getting a certification or license in your chosen field beforehand.

For you, it . . .

- bridges the gap between your educational experience and real-world work requirements,
- verifies your understanding of fundamental software engineering principles,
- shortens your training cycle and quickly increases your contribution,
- demonstrates your commitment to expanding your knowledge and increasing responsibilities and level of professionalism,
- confirms your proficiency of established software development practices, and
- sets you apart from others via a credential developed by, and for, software engineering professionals.

For civilian employers, it . . .

- reduces the new-hire training cycle,
- protects the organization's investment in a competent and proficient workforce,
- standardizes software development practices, and
- provides independent assurance that employees can perform on real-world projects.

With advancements being slow, those who get advanced in the Coast Guard have almost certainly done something (or a number of things) to distinguish themselves from the competition. Licensing, certification, and college degrees are ways to do that.

You can take tests for certificates and licenses in hundreds of career fields, a sampling of which you can see at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/cert.asp#tests>. The cost of most of these tests is reasonable, but you can get reimbursed (up to \$2,000 per test) from your GI Bill benefits if you don't want to absorb the cost yourself (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/cert.asp#gibill>).

Another way to demonstrate to future employers your ability to do well in a given job is via ACT's National Career Readiness Certificates (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/cert.asp#ACT>). More and more employers are using these certificates to determine which applicants are the best qualified for their jobs.

Helmets to Hardhats

If you're leaving the Coast Guard and are interested in working in construction and construction-related career fields, you should check out Helmets to Hardhats (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/h2h.asp>). To quote the Helmets to Hardhats web site,

Making a successful transition from the military into the civilian workforce can be difficult. Transitioning military veterans face the same challenges as any other job hunter – getting their résumé to the right people, learning how to sell themselves, tracking down promising leads, following-up with employers, headhunters, job placement agencies... etc. Not many people are comfortable with this process and veterans have the added stress of trying to translate the skills they learned in the military into language that civilian employers can understand. The process can feel overwhelming, especially if it seems like meaningful help is unavailable.

Helmets to Hardhats (H2H) was formed for this reason and is dedicated to helping National Guard, Reserve, retired and transitioning active-duty military members connect to quality career and training opportunities in the construction industry.

More Scholarship Sources

The scholarships described here are just a few of thousands you or your dependents may be eligible for. They're the low-hanging fruit, the ones most often publicized and (as a result) the ones that have the most applicants. If you really want some serious money from scholarships, you'll apply to all you're eligible for – especially those not widely known. For more about scholarships (including how to find and apply for them in a systematic manner), go to <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/scholarships.asp>.

CGES Dependents' Scholarships

Every year (assuming funds are available), the CG Exchange System offers scholarships to dependents of Coast Guard personnel (regular and Reserve military, retired military, current civilian NAF and appropriated-funds employees, uniformed PHS personnel, and Auxiliaries.) This year, the application **deadline is 28 February 2013**. For complete information, see ALCGPSC 147/12.

ScholarshipAmerica

Among other things, the web site ScholarshipAmerica (http://scholarshipamerica.org/open_scholarships.php) has descriptions of and links to not-so-widely-known scholarships. (The less well-known they are, the more likely you are to be successful in getting them.) The descriptions include opening and closing dates.

Laying Out Your Life Path

A lot of people drop into the Education Center to tell me “I want to take on-line classes” without any idea what courses they want to take or what they want to do with the courses they do take. While I could respond with “Pick a course and we’ll set you up with TA”, any ESO would be doing you a disservice if that was her/his response.

Why? First, every college and university in the country decides for itself whether to accept credits from any other source. So if you just blindly start taking courses without knowing where you want to get your degree or what you want to major in, you may find that the school you start with doesn’t offer your desired degree or major. Worse, you may also find that when you try to transfer the credits you earned the school that you want to get your degree from won’t accept them.

Also, you may not need a degree to accomplish what you want in life. Do you want to open your own car repair shop, picture framing business, or beauty shop? You probably don’t need a degree to do so. That’s not to say you don’t need specific education (and training), but you can often get that for free or without taking all the courses needed to get a degree.

So before jumping into college courses, work backward from your ultimate goal. Start by asking yourself this question “Do I need a degree to _____?”

To answer the question, call the HR department of companies (or government agencies) which hire people who do what you want to do. (Make sure you make it clear you’re not looking for a job, but just information.) Or, if you want to work for yourself, drop by some businesses which do what you want to do and ask the owners.

In either case, ask them: do I need a degree to _____? If they say “Yes”, ask what you should major in, whether you need an associate’s, bachelor’s, or master’s degree, and what schools you should look at to get the required degree in the required major. If the answer is “No”, ask what kind of training, education, and/or experience you need.

A really good source of ideas and information is the Department of Labor’s *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (<http://www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm>). It’s a gold mine of information about every career field imaginable including what prospects for finding work are for each field, what training/education you need to get into it, etc. Another is “G.I. Jobs” magazine (<http://gijobs.com>) which – every month – highlights career fields that do and don’t require degrees.

The bottom line is that you shouldn’t just start taking courses – even general education courses – unless you know whether you’ll be able to use them to complete your chosen degree and whether you even need to get a degree.

Five Surprising \$100K Jobs That Don’t Require a Degree

Practically everyone you talk with about your future tells you, “Get a degree!!” Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that people with degrees generally face a reduced prospect of unemployment and have a higher earning potential (http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_chart_001.htm and <http://www.focus.com/images/view/8740/>). But that doesn’t mean that to avoid unemployment or earn a better-than-average income you have to have a degree. A recent article on Monster.com highlights this fact and lists five high-paying careers available to people who don’t have college degrees (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/jobmisc029.doc>).

Thinking About Taking College Courses?

If you’re interested in taking college courses, but are unsure where to start or what to do first, go to <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/starting.asp>. The seven steps provided there will help you

- understand terminology and how you progress toward a degree,
- figure out whether you need a degree to enter the field you want to work in,
- if a degree will be helpful, determine what you want to major in,

- find colleges/universities which offer degrees in your desired major,
- request degree plans from your chosen school(s),
- submit a request to the Coast Guard Institute for an education assessment and to have official transcripts of your assessment sent to colleges you've identified, and
- pick your first course.

This is the hardest part of the process. Once you've done this, it's just a matter of deciding which type of funding to use (tuition assistance, GI Bill, scholarships, loans, or a combination of these) and applying for it. Tuition assistance (TA) and GI Bill funding is easy to use and readily available. You've got to plan ahead if you want to get scholarships because applications are usually due at specific times of the year that might not coincide with dates your courses begin. And loans, while they're readily available, should be your last recourse.

TraCen Cape May Testing Schedule

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

Mondays (0745): EOCTs, RATs, and AQEs

Tuesdays (0745): EOCTs, RATs, and AQEs

Wednesdays (0745): EOCTs, RATs, and AQEs* **or** Defense Language Proficiency Tests (DLPT)

Thursdays (0745): EOCTs, RATs, and AQEs; college tests, DSSTs, SATs, ACTs

Fridays (0745): EOCTs, RATs, and AQEs

* If someone has made an appointment to take a DLPT (a 6-hour test), there will be no EOCTs, RATs, and AQEs.

College placement, AFCT, and all other tests will be scheduled on a case-by-case basis.

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 I'm otherwise busy with someone in the office. E-mail is the best way to get in touch with me at andrew.g.webb@uscg.mil.

Education Center Library

The TraCen Education Center 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>.

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) and Rating Performance Qualifications (RPQs) for each rate.

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.