



## REGISTRAR'S OFFICE (RO) DIVISION

### DISCONTINUATION OF DEGREE PLANS

The Coast Guard Institute is going to stop producing "degree plans" effective 1 January.

I understand this is quite a change as producing "degree plans" is a well known service and seen by many as an excellent counseling tool and this change therefore might strike some as a move in the wrong direction. It was not without a lot of discussion and analysis that we arrived at the conclusion this is indeed the right direction to take.

Some history on the service..."degree planning" as we know it today started at the Institute in the mid 90s, 1994-1996. It was a phenomenal idea brought to the Institute by a collateral duty ESO that helped an emerging voluntary education program expand and motivated members by providing a roadmap to pursue off duty voluntary, higher education degrees. The idea evolved at a time before the Coast Guard had hired 49 professional full time civilian ESOs with backgrounds in guidance, counseling, and education. Additionally, we are all well aware of the advances in internet technology since the debut of "degree plans" in 1994. The expertise and experience the Coast Guard now has in its full time, civilian ESOs coupled with the information available on the web, has outdated the need for "degree plans" in the same manner they were needed in 1994.

The "degree plans" the Institute produces are unofficial and nonbinding on the part of the school. Schools vary in their practices, but certainly all schools have the capability of outlining to a student the classes necessary to earn a degree. The Institute producing "degree plans" is a duplication of efforts and when matched head to head, the degree plan from the school is the more necessary degree plan. After all, the school is awarding the degree.

American College of Education or ACE credits are the foundation on which our "degree plans" are built. Outside of taking college courses, opportunities to earn college credit as a result of Coast Guard training exists. ACE credits are derived from an in-depth assessment of training courses. With the discontinuation of the production of "degree plans", the Institute's Registrar's Office Division Staff will have more of an opportunity to focus on obtaining and maintaining the very important ACE credits.



# CG Institute Campus News

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"Assessments" conducted at the Institute and Coast Guard transcripts will remain unchanged with one small exception. We will no longer add credits from other transcripts on to a Coast Guard transcript. The main reason is time. It takes time to add those credits on to a Coast Guard transcript slowing the process. Additionally, a good number of schools require an original, official transcript from other schools anyway. So not only are we spending additional time adding the credits on to the transcript, but members are incurring additional costs as they are sending an official transcript to both the Institute and their school of choice. Other than that small change, the assessment and transcript processes remain unchanged.

Just to be clear for those who may be new to all of this, "assessments" assess a Coast Guard member's ACE credits earned through training. The credits assessed are placed on the Coast Guard transcript. The student can take the Coast Guard transcript to their school of choice. The school decides which ACE credits it will accept and substitute for course credit towards the completion of a degree.

Just as the Institute is moving forward with electronic tools such as NCMIS, ETA, and eTesting, we are making this "degree plan" change to modernize our processes to adapt to the changes that have occurred around us and remain an efficient unit at the top of its game. We will continue to evaluate the impact of this change.