

CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Competitive Development Group (CDG) Program

The CDG Program is a three-year professional and developmental training program that offers high-potential Army civilians expanded training, leadership, and other career development opportunities. It is designed to develop acquisition leaders for the Army of the 21st century. Civilian selectees will be assigned to a centrally funded position on the ASC TDA. Selectees will then be placed in a developmental assignment within the acquisition community based on career objectives outlined in an IDP developed for and in conjunction with each CDG member. Application is open to Army GS-12s and GS-13s/personnel demonstration project broadband equivalent who have CE status and are Level III certified in an acquisition career field.

Members of the CDG Program will receive priority access to cross-functional training, experience opportunities, and advanced leadership and management courses. Graduation from the program will entail successful completion of the requirements identified in each member's IDP. During years two and three of the program, CDG members are required to apply to the Army's PM and Acquisition Command Selection Boards. Failure to apply shall result in removal from the CDG program.

Applications for the CDG Program are reviewed annually through a board process. Application instructions are posted annually to the PERSCOM home page, <https://www.perscomonline.army.mil/Opfam51.ambmain.htm>. Information may also be found on the ASC home page, <http://asc.rdaisa.army.mil/>.

The Acquisition Education, Training and Experience (AETE)

The AETE Catalog serves as an important reference for career development information and outlines all training, education, and experience opportunities available for military and civilian personnel. It also provides information on how to compete for board selection. The catalog may be found at <http://asc.rdaisa.army.mil/>. Each opportunity identifies any special requirements and who may apply. Opportunities are divided into four categories. Examples of each category follow: (Note: For purposes of the AETE selection board, the Web-based electronic catalog is the official catalog for determining opportunities.)

1. *Educational/Academic.* Opportunities offered under this section enable civilian AL&TWF members to complete a bachelor's or master's degree, obtain the 12 or 24 semester hours in a business discipline for AAC membership, or meet the qualification requirements for the contracting career field.
 - The University of Texas Senior Service Fellowship Program is a structured program with a trilateral focus on the relationships among national security policy and process, emerging critical technology, and the industrial base.
 - The Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) offers resident and distance learning courses in acquisition-related fields. Those attending the NPS for their resident master's degree receive DAU equivalency credit for these courses completed in conjunction with their degree program.

- School of Choice provides civilian members of the AAC or CE Program with Level III certification an opportunity to obtain or complete a graduate degree by attending a college or university that is within the individual's local commuting area. Members of the AL&TWF may also apply for undergraduate degree completion. Funding limits are established for School of Choice.

(Military officers pursue fulltime master's or doctoral degrees through the Army's Advanced Civil Schooling (ACS) Program. Processing and selection guidelines are stated on the AMB Web site at <https://www.perscomonline.army.mil/Opfam51/ambmain.htm>. AAC officers are selected for ACS through an internal competitive board-select process and all tuition costs and fees are fully funded.)

2. *Training* Training opportunities enable AL&TWF members to have continuous exposure to leadership skills at appropriate stages throughout their careers. Examples of institutions that offer leadership courses funded by the AAC follow:
 - Federal Executive Institute
 - The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania
 - Darden Executive Education, University of Virginia
 - OPM Management Development Center
3. *Experiential and Developmental.* This section includes developmental opportunities offered to AAC/CE members.
 - Military Training with Industry (Applicants apply to a board held by the AMB, PERSCOM.)
 - Operational experience assignments. (Contact your Regional Director for more information.)
4. *Professional Activities.* Although the AAC does not pay for professional certifications within professional associations, this section lists certifications that will enhance the AL&TWF member's skills and competencies.

Participation in opportunities outlined in the AETE Catalog and funded by the AAC (designated by the "eagle" emblem) is through a competitive selection process. Detailed information on all the opportunities offered, directions on how to apply, when to apply, and what documents are required are included in the "Application Instructions" section of the AETE Catalog.

The AETE Program Policy/Procedures provide guidance on the selection process and information needed to apply. The AETE Program Policy/Procedures may be found at <http://asc.rdaisa.army.mil/>, scroll down to "Policy & Procedures."

The Army Acquisition Corps Qualification Course (Q-Course)

The AABC is a graduate-level course designed to provide a broad spectrum of knowledge pertaining to the materiel acquisition process. It covers legal and regulatory policies and objectives that shape the acquisition process and the implementation of these policies and objectives by the U.S. Army. Areas of coverage include acquisition concepts and policies; research, development, test, and evaluation; financial and cost management; acquisition logistics; software acquisition; force modernization; production management; and contract management. More information can be found at their Web site http://www.almc.army.mil/AMD/Huntsville/aaqc_homepage.htm

Acquisition Tuition Assistance Program (ATAP)

ATAP is a competitive program that provides funding to enable civilian AL&TWF employees to meet the requirements of DAWIA. Individuals may attend an accredited institution of their choice. ATAP funding covers tuition, lab fees, and textbooks, within established funding limits. The ATAP Policy/Procedures, along with the application, may be found at <http://asc.rdaisa.army.mil/> under the "Policy/Procedures" button. ATAP boards are held periodically throughout the year by AMB, PERSCOM.

A comparable program for military personnel is the Army tuition assistance (TA) program for personnel voluntarily pursuing a degree during off-duty hours. The program is non-competitive and applications are considered on an individual basis. Currently, the program pays 100 percent of the tuition charges. Officers interested in tuition assistance should contact their local Army Education Center for application information.

ARNG applications for training other than through AITAS must be routed through the ARNG ACMB. This includes ATAP and AETE programs. This allows the ACMB to monitor, track and assist ARNG personnel in these processes.

AETE Regional Training Program

The AETE Regional Training Program allows Regional Directors the chance to offer onsite training and experience opportunities that are geared specifically to the needs of their AL&TWF community. Watch for advertisements of these local opportunities via e-mails from your ACMBs and on the regional Web page of the ASC home page.

Regional Rotational Development Assignment Program (RDAP)

RDAP is a locally managed program with central oversight by the DDACM and the ASC. It is a program established to support the Army Acquisition Corps' objective of having a highly skilled and multi-functional civilian workforce. It is structured to allow AL&TWF members to gain experience in another career field, another organization and/or another commodity while being maintained on the parent organization's TDA. The ASC home page posts TWI-RDAP board announcements.

The Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF)

ICAF was an initiative by the USD(AT&L) to present the Senior Acquisition Course as part of DAU. Not only is this the preeminent course for AAC members, but it also

fulfills the OPM educational requirements for Senior Executive Status. For civilians, see the Army Civilian Training, Education and Development Catalog for application dates and further information.

Acquisition Career Experience (ACE) Program

The ACE Program is intended to recruit high-potential, full-time undergraduate sophomore and junior college students into the Army's civilian acquisition and technology workforce. It is a two-year academic/government summer employment program. The student's discipline of study must be one that underpins one of the acquisition career fields. The goal is to give students a realistic job preview, develop their skills through meaningful and challenging work, and encourage them to consider a career as a civilian employee working for the Department of the Army. The ACE Program was developed in response to the Army Acquisition Corps' need to augment the workforce and its mission to develop future leaders. Additional information may be found on the ASC home page: <http://asc.rdaisa.army.mil/>.

Defense Acquisition University (DAU) Courses

DAU is a consortium of DOD education and training institutions and organizations that administers various courses that provide mandatory training for Level I, II, and III certification in all acquisition career fields to include assignment-specific and continuous learning courses. The DAU Web site is located at <http://www.dau.mil>.

Anyone may apply for DAU courses; however, priority is given to members of the AL&TWF currently serving in an acquisition position. Individuals are placed in DAU courses according to the following priorities:

- Priority 1:** *Position/Program Requirements.* Training required by position or program.
- Priority 2:** *Next Level Certification.* Training through Level III certification in primary career field.
- Priority 3:** *Cross-Functional Training.* Training in another career field after Level III certification in primary career field.
- Priority 4:** *Previously Taken or Certified.* Individuals who previously completed a DAU course or received equivalency. Individuals already certified at the career level and did not previously take a course.
- Priority 5:** *Non-Acquisition Workforce.* Individuals who are not in a designated Acquisition Workforce position. Individuals will be on a space-available basis. If selected, the individual's command will fund the travel and per diem. No cost for the training.

DAU courses or any courses offered in the AETE Catalog and paid for by the AAC must be annotated and approved on the IDP before applying. Individuals applying for DAU courses will submit their application via the ATRRS Internet Training Application System (AITAS) found at <https://www.atrrs.army.mil/channels/aitas>. Please direct any questions on completing the IDP to your ACM.

Non-Acquisition Workforce personnel can apply using the Web site and are not required to have an automated IDP. Non-acquisition workforce personnel will be placed on a space-available basis—priority 5. If a reservation is made, the individual's command is responsible for funding the travel and per diem.

An example of non-acquisition personnel who benefits from and may apply for DAU training are ARNG United States Property and Fiscal Officers (USPFOs). USPFOs who apply for DAU courses, as non-acquisition workforce members, should coordinate their requests with the ARNG ACMB in Arlington, VA.

Student cancellations or substitutions should be limited to extreme emergencies. To cancel a confirmed class registration, students must request a cancellation by going to <https://www.atrrs.army.mil/channels/aitas> and clicking on “Cancel Reservation/Wait.” After completing the request, it is forwarded to the supervisor for concurrence or non-concurrence. If the supervisor recommends approval, it is then forwarded to the approval authority for final approval. Students are not canceled until they receive notification from the approval authority.

The DAU Catalog contains information on meeting the 12/24 semester hours in business requirement for AAC membership and the 1102 Series, and military AOC 51C in the contracting ACF through equivalency.

DAU class vacancies may be found on the ATRRS Data-on-Demand at <http://www.atrrs.army.mil/channels/dataondemand/>.

Frequently Asked Questions on Acquisition Education, Training and Experience (AETE) Board

Training:

Who is responsible for providing TDY orders?

The individual traveling prepares the TDY orders with only Sections 1 through 15 completed. The orders are included in the application package. Once selected, the orders are provided to ASC, Resource Management Division, where the fund site is placed on the orders and then returned to the individual.

Who does the registration process with the school?

It is the responsibility of the individual receiving training to contact the supplier of the training and complete the registration process. Each training course description offered in the AETE Catalog contains a phone number and an e-mail address.

Who makes hotel and travel arrangements for movement to the training site?

It is the responsibility of the individual receiving training to make his/her own travel arrangements. TDY orders usually provide funding for one day before and one day after the scheduled training course for travel to and from the course.

How do I pay for my training course?

The DD Form 1556 must be provided to the training supplier as payment for the course. The training supplier will bill the address provided on the DD Form 1556.

What if the course on the date for which I have applied is full?

If the course is already full, select another course date and notify the ASC of the new date, and new TDY orders and a revised DD Form 1556 will be provided. The start date must be within the Fiscal Year on the AETE announcement.

What if there is an error on my travel orders or they need to be changed?

Contact the AMB POC who notified you of your selection and indicate the change and the reason for the change.

Who do I contact with questions about the process, changes, issues or concerns?

Contact the AMB POC who notified you of your selection.

Education:

School of Choice (civilian):

Who provides the funds for the School of Choice costs?

The funds are provided by the Army Acquisition Corps and dispersed by the ASC.

What is funded under the School of Choice?

School of Choice provides funding for lab fees, registration, and up to \$1,000 per undergraduate course and \$1,700 per graduate course. Up to \$100 per course for books is allowed.

When must I apply to the school for acceptance?

A letter of acceptance from the school must be provided along with your application package to the AETE Board.

If a GMAT or GRE test is required, will the AAC provide funding for the test?

The cost and the scheduling of a GMAT or GRE are the responsibility of the selected individual.

What if I am not able to complete my degree in the prescribed time?

Under the School of Choice program the AAC will only pay for 18 months of full-time school and you are expected to complete your degree in that timeframe. Application to the school should ensure the program can be completed in the 18-month timeframe. If you are unable to uphold your commitment, you may be asked to repay the entire cost of your schooling.

What if I fail a course or fail to meet the minimum grade required by the college/university?

You will be expected to repay the entire cost of that class. The minimum grade for graduate and under-graduate courses is a "B."

Who is responsible for my time and attendance while I am away at school?

Your home organization is to continue tracking your time and attendance.

What about my work schedule?

The School of Choice program is a full-time (unless designated part-time) program and you are not required to work while classes are in session.

What do I do when the school is on semester break, Spring Break or Christmas Break?

Your time and attendance is the responsibility of your home organization. If you wish to take leave during that time, this should be reported to and approved by your organization. If you do not wish to take leave, the organization will require you to report to the organization during breaks from class.

Does my rating chain change while I am at extended training?

No, you retain the same rating chain, but your supervisor may wish to ask for input from the course facilitator.

Can my organization backfill my position while I am gone and will the AAC pay for the backfill?

Your organization may backfill your position on a temporary basis only. The AAC will not pay for backfill.

Do I return to my position after completion of the program or will I be placed in another job?

You are expected to return to your current position after completion of the program.

What happens if a RIF occurs in my organization while I am away at school?

You are subject to the same RIF procedures as you would be if you were not at school.

Will I be paid for local commuting costs?

Local commuting costs are not covered under this program. Local commuting costs are the responsibility of the selected individual.

Does it matter if I take the courses in the evening or the daytime?

It does not matter when you take the required courses as long as the degree can be achieved within the specified timeframe.

What if I complete my degree sooner than the allotted time?

If you complete your program earlier than the time allotted for the degree, you are expected to return to work.

Will my class attendance during this program count as credit towards my requirement for Continuous Learning Points (CLPs)?

Your attendance at college may count towards your CLP requirement as outlined in the DOD CL policy.

What if the college/university raises its tuition once I have started the program?

Notify the ASC office immediately and the funding line of the DD Form 1556 can be adjusted appropriately.

How do I pay for my tuition and lab fees?

The DD Form 1556 is used as a “contract” with the college/university and they will bill the address provided at the bottom of the DD Form 1556.

Senior Service College (SSC)/Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) (civilian):

From where do I get my TDY orders (if required)?

The individual traveling prepares the TDY orders and submits with the application package.

Do I need a DD Form 1556 and if so, where does it come from?

A DD Form 1556 is required for billing purposes. Section 1 through 15 only of the DD Form 1556 are completed by the individual and his/her organization. The orders are included in the application package. Once selected, the submitted 1556 will be completed by ASC Resource Management Division and returned to the individual. The individual must also sign the payback agreement on the back of the form.

How do I get paid while in school?

You remain on the rolls of your home organization. Your home organization provides salary and is responsible for your time and attendance accountability.

Do I have to move from my current organization?

You can remain in your current organization, but you should not remain in your current position. You should return to a position that offers additional duties, new challenges and additional functions. The new position should have been outlined in your Individual Development Plan that was provided with your application package.

How do I find a new position if I cannot return to my current organization?

The AAC will identify various possible positions to you at your same grade. Because SSC students have exemption to the Priority Placement Process (PPP), you can be placed into lateral positions without having to compete for the position. You are also encouraged to apply for positions that offer promotions or to compete for the Product/Project Managers boards.

Who do I talk with to identify my preferences for a new position?

You should be talking to the Acquisition Career Manager in AMB. A list of ACMs can be found on the ASC homepage, <http://asc.rdaisa.army.mil/> under “Organization/POC” or on the PERSCOM Web site at www.perscom.army.mil/opfam51/ambmain.htm.

When will I be notified of my new position?

As positions become available, they will be identified to you for review. Once the organization has agreed to accept you and you have agreed to accept the position, the appropriate CPACs will be notified and the necessary paperwork processed.

If a PCS move is required, who pays the cost?

If a PCS move is required, the AAC will pay the PCS expenses.

How do I obtain PCS orders?

The gaining organization provides the orders, with an estimated cost, to ASC. ASC will provide a fund site on the orders and return them to the gaining organization.

What else is required prior to my acceptance of a new position?

Each student is required to sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that includes a Mobility Agreement and a Tenure Statement. The MOA indicates your agreement to accept the offered position and the gaining organization’s agreement to accept you.

The above questions and answers apply primarily to the civilian workforce. The military workforce should address their questions to the appropriate point of contact at the AMB.

Participation Agreement

The following agreement is a condition for participants enrolled in the Acquisition Tuition Assistance Program:

I, _____ (printed name), agree to pay back to the government the cost of tuition for a class if I fail to successfully complete the course or fail to maintain grade requirements.

Printed Name

Signature

Date

Applicant

Signature

Date

Agreement to Continue In Service

This agreement applies to all non-government training that exceeds 80 hours (or such other designated periods, 80 hours or less, as prescribed by the agency) and for which the Government approves payment of training costs prior to the commencement of such training. Nothing contained in this section shall be construed as limiting the authority of an agency to waive, in whole or in part, an obligation of an employee to pay expenses incurred by the Government in connection with the training.

- a. I agree that after completion of the Government sponsored training described in this request, I will serve in the Department of Defense (DOD) three times the length of the training period; except that if I receive no salary for the time spent in training the period of obligated service will be either one month or a period equal to the amount of time spent in training, whichever is greater. (The length of part-time training is the number of hours spent in class or with the instructor. The length of full-time training is eight hours for each day of training, up to a maximum of 40 hours a week.)
- b. If I voluntarily leave the DOD and Federal service before completing the period of service agreed to in item (a) above, I AGREE to reimburse the DOD for the tuition and related fees (excluding salary) paid in connection with my training. However, the amount of the reimbursement will be reduced on a pro-rata basis for the completion of the obligated service.
- c. If I voluntarily leave the DOD to enter the service of another Federal agency or other organization in any branch of the Government before completing the period of service agreed to in item (a) above, I will give my Training Office and NCR CSO advance notice, during which time, in accordance with Federal regulations, a determination concerning reimbursement or transfer of the remaining service obligation to the gaining agency will be made.

- d. I understand that any amounts which may be due the employing agency as a result of any failure on my part to meet the terms of this agreement may be withheld from any monies owed me by the Government, or may be recovered by such other methods as are approved by law.

Privacy Act Statement

Authority: The Government Employees Training Act of 1958 (USC, Title 5, 4101 to 4118), EO 9397, November 1943.

Purpose and Use: The information on this form is used in the administration of the Federal Training Program. The purpose of this form is to document the application of employees utilizing the Acquisition Tuition Assistance Program; it also serves as the principal repository of personal, fiscal, and administrative information about applicants and the course of study in which they participate. The form becomes a part of the permanent employment record of participants in education programs and is included in the Government's Central Personnel Data File.

Disclosure: Personal information provided on this form is given on a voluntary basis. Failure to provide this information, however, may result in ineligibility for participation in education programs.

ATAP Application Form - Rev. 11/09/01