

**DEPARTMENT OF ARMY
NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PROGRAM
MANAGEMENT (NPS-MSPM) POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

1. **REFERENCES:** SEE APPENDIX 1.

2. **APPLICABILITY:** This policy and procedures applies to all current civilian Army acquisition workforce members. All instructions in the NPS-MSPM policy and the annual announcement must be followed. Failure to comply will result in non-selection or removal from the program.

3. **PURPOSE:** This document establishes the policy and procedures for application and selection of Army acquisition workforce members for the NPS-MSPM program and supersedes any previous versions.

4. **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

a. The Deputy Director, Acquisition Career Management (DDACM).

(1) Provides oversight and management of the announcement and board process.

(2) Serves as final approval authority for Army acquisition workforce members selected to participate in the NPS-MSPM program each year.

(3) Serves as approval authority for the NPS-MSPM program Relative Standing List (RSL).

b. U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC), Workforce Management Division (WMD). Coordinates with Organizational Acquisition Points of Contact and Acquisition Career Management Advocates (ACMAs) to ensure target audience is notified.

c. The Naval Postgraduate School.

(1) Partners with the DDACM to offer the NPS-MSPM program.

(2) Evaluates candidates for admission to the NPS-MSPM program prior to close of the current announcement.

(3) Provides grade reports of all students enrolled in NPS-MSPM each quarter to the USAASC Program Manager.

d. USAASC NPS-MSPM Program Manager (PM).

- (1) Develops, issues and implements the NPS-MSPM program policy and procedures.
- (2) Partners with the NPS in the execution of the NPS-MSPM announcement and selection board.
- (3) Markets the NPS-MSPM program to the Army acquisition workforce.
- (4) Publishes the NPS-MSPM program announcement on the USAASC website and ensures the widest dissemination of information.
- (5) Provides assistance with submission of NPS-MSPM applications in the Army Acquisition Professional Development System (AAPDS).
- (6) Plans, organizes and conducts the NPS-MSPM program selection process.
- (7) Reviews and determines eligibility of all NPS-MSPM program applications.
- (8) Provides DDACM with the RSL for approval.
- (9) Notifies board members, selectees, and non selectees once RSL is approved by the DDACM.
- (10) Monitors grades and collects repayment of tuition.
- (11) Provides the NPS a list of selectees each year.

e. Organization/Current Supervisor.

- (1) Completes the Post Utilization Statement by describing in 1,500 characters or less the utilization and benefit of the applicant to participate in the NPS-MSPM program. The current supervisor should also comment on the applicant's demonstrated potential for positions of increased responsibility and how their lack of education has impeded their career progression. This document must be physically signed and dated by the current supervisor and uploaded into the AAPDS by the applicant. (Note: This physically signed and dated document endorses the applicant's participation, if selected.)
- (2) Ensures employees have met current position Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) certification requirement prior to participation in the NPS-MSPM program.
- (3) Approves continuous learning points earned by Army acquisition workforce members who complete courses under the NPS-MSPM program.
- (4) Reviews, approves or disapproves all Program Management courses for the

NPS-MSPM program on the IDP. Ensures the employee is allowed the specified time to complete the 24-month distributed learning program. No employee will be required to use leave or make up time when devoted to completion of the program.

(5) Notifies and provides the employee's servicing civilian personnel office a copy of the service agreement for entry into the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System and placement into the employee's official personnel management file.

(6) Notifies the NPS-MSPM PM if an employee fails to complete the obligated period of service specified in the Continued Service Agreement.

(7) Notifies the new supervisor that a service obligation agreement is in effect, if applicable.

f. NPS-MSPM Participant.

(1) Must meet all eligibility requirements specified in the NPS-MSPM program announcement.

(2) Must meet the required DAWIA level of certification for current acquisition position prior to participation in program.

(3) Must complete all the course requirements for graduation within the specified timeframe identified in the announcement.

(4) Must maintain a grade of at least a "B" in all courses. If two or more grades are received that are less than a "B", individual will be removed from program. NPS-MSPM participants must reimburse the Federal Government for the cost of tuition for each incomplete, failed or withdrawn course within 30 days of notification. Failure to reimburse the Federal Government will result in removal from the program.

(5) Must submit grades to the USAASC Program Manager within 30 days of completion of each quarter. Failure to provide grades can result in removal from the program.

(6) Must notify supervisor, NPS Instructor, NPS Program Manager and USAASC Program Manager before withdrawing from the NPS-MSPM program.

(7) Participants who receive a "withdrawal", "incomplete", "failed" or a grade less than a "B" in any course will be required to reimburse the Federal Government. If tuition is not paid in full or financial arrangements are not made within 30 days of notification of payment, the employee will be removed from the program and the supervisor will be notified regarding the debt owed to the Federal Government.

(8) Reimbursement is required upon departure from the Federal Government prior to completion of the service agreement. This reimbursement does not include

unusual circumstances, such as serious illness or sudden death. All reimbursements for the NPS-MSPM will be made by money order or certified check and payable to the U.S. Treasury and mailed to: U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center, ATTN: NPS-MSPM, 9900 Belvoir Road, Bldg 201, Suite 101, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5567.

(9) Students who are unable to reimburse the Federal Government in full within 30 days may request a payment plan to resolve debt. The plan must be submitted to the USAASC Program Manager within 30 days of notification of the requirement to reimburse the Federal Government.

5. POLICY:

a. NPS-MSPM Program. NPS-MSPM is a highly competitive 24-month master's degree program. It is designed to provide Army acquisition workforce members GS-11 through GS-15 and equivalent or broad band/pay band who have met their current position certification requirements an opportunity to pursue a Master's degree in Program Management. The USAASC announces and conducts the NPS-MSPM program selection process. The target audience for the NPS-MSPM program is the highest performing workforce member who has been identified by their organization as demonstrating the potential for positions of increased responsibility and their lack of education is impeding their career progression. Army acquisition workforce members will be notified of AETE program announcements through direct email if their email address is listed correctly on their Acquisition Career Record Brief (ACRB).

b. NPS-MSPM Program of Study.

(1) The NPS-MSPM is an 8-quarter part-time degree program that is conducted by distributed learning. All classes use an internet tool called "Elluminate." Elluminate uses Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology to send both video and audio over the Internet to any computer logged into the course site. The NPS-MSPM is delivered exclusively over the internet using two 3-hour sessions a week (Tuesdays and Thursdays) from 0800-1100 (Pacific Time). To use Elluminate, students will need internet access, a personal computer (PC) microphone, and a PC camera (optional). There is no special software for Elluminate.

(2) USAASC is the sponsor of the Master of Science in Program Management curriculum. The curriculum is designed to provide acquisition professionals with the knowledge, skills and abilities to lead and manage effectively. Students will engage in the study of concepts, methodologies and analytical techniques necessary for successful leadership of programs/projects within complex organizations. The curriculum focuses on problem-solving and decision-making within the acquisition environment using case studies, teaming exercises, hands-on applications, active participation, research and integrative exercises.

(3) Several Defense Acquisition University (DAU) course equivalencies are earned while attending this course of study. Students who complete the degree

program earn DAWIA equivalency training requirements for Program Management (PMT352 A&B); Systems Engineering (SYS101, SYS202, SYS203); Contracting (CON100, CON121, CON124, and CON127; Software Acquisition Management (SAM 201); Production Quality Management (PQM101 and PQM201); and Test and Evaluation (TST201). While completion of the NPS-MSPM provides some of the required training for certification in the above acquisition career fields, individuals must complete the additional DAU training, experience and education standards required for certification in the acquisition career field.

(4) Army acquisition workforce members may apply for consideration to obtain a second master's degree under the NPS-MSPM; however, the applicant's request may be given lower priority in the needs-based board selection process. The DDACM has final review and approval authority for these selections. The DDACM's decision to approve and fund a second master's degree will be based on funding constraints and the needs of the Army.

c. Academic Standards. The NPS-MSPM program participant must complete all courses with at least a grade of "B" for each course. The participant must reimburse the government for all costs associated with withdrawn, failed or incomplete NPS-MSPM program funded courses.

d. NPS-MSPM Participation.

(1) The individual's home organization is responsible for salary, administration of leave and maintenance of leave records. Army acquisition workforce members selected for the NPS-MSPM program will remain on the rolls of their current organization.

(2) Army acquisition workforce members who are selected for the NPS-MSPM program must attend the NPS offering designated in the announcement. Deferrals will not be granted. Deployment and compassionate requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. All requests must be in writing and forwarded to the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center, ATTN: Branch Chief, Acquisition Education Training and Experience, 9900 Belvoir Road, Building 201, Suite 101, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060.

(3) Army acquisition workforce members who are deployed must provide a copy of their orders to the USAASC PM. These individuals will be allowed to return to the NPS-MSPM program, if feasible, or will be placed in the next offering. These individuals are not required to reapply.

e. Program Completion. Army acquisition workforce members selected for participation in the NPS-MSPM must achieve the degree within the timeframe specified for the NPS-MSPM program. Upon completion, it is desirable that the individual assume a position of increased responsibility or a position that will benefit from the degree completion.

f. Funding.

(1) USAASC is responsible for providing funding each year for the NPS-MSPM program.

(2) The number of participants may increase or decrease each year based on funding constraints and the needs of the Army.

g. Continued Service Agreement (CSA).

(1) Army acquisition workforce members selected to participate in the NPS-MSPM must complete an Agreement to Continue in Service before assignment to the training. Employees will be denied training if he/she fails to sign a CSA before the training begins. Supervisors will ensure the employee is informed in advance of the obligation. A signed copy of the agreement must be maintained in the organization's case file. The completion of the NPS-MSPM must be achieved within the timeframe specified by the program. The period of CSA obligation begins at the completion of the program. The employee is in full pay status while participating in the NPS-MSPM.

(2) The employee is agreeing to the terms and period of obligation and is required to sign the CSA prior to the start of training. The period of continued service obligation is equal to three times the length of the training period. For example, if the training period is 24 months the obligated continued service would be 72 months or 6 years (24 months times 3 months).

(3) An employee is required to continue in service for three times the amount of time the employee participated in the program even if the employee voluntarily drops out of the program. Employees dropped from the program do not have to reimburse funds but need to continue service within the Federal Government. The determination on whether or not an employee is involuntarily removed from the program, (e.g. for performance related issues) to continue service will be decided on a case by case basis.

(4) An employee is required to reimburse the NPS-MSPM if he/she departs from the Federal Government prior to completion of the service agreement. Training costs include course tuition, books and materials, lab and technology fees. Salary and benefits are not included in the cost of training. If the employee fails to complete the obligated service period, action can be taken to recover training costs. USAASC has the option of recovering the cost of training by setoff against accrued pay, compensation, retirement credit, or other monies due the employee if the employee fails to serve in the Federal Government for the agreed amount of time.

(5) Supervisors at all levels are charged to protect the Federal Government's interests should an employee fail to successfully fulfill his/her signed training agreement by not completing the continued service obligation period. The supervisor, or a designated official, will review the status and circumstances of each unexpired

agreement to decide whether to transfer, waive or require repayment of expenses incurred other than salary costs. Managers should contact the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) immediately if it appears that an obligated service agreement may not be fulfilled.

h. Consequences for Academic Failures and No-Shows.

(1) Army acquisition workforce members who academically fail a resident Defense Acquisition University (DAU) course required for their acquisition certification will not be eligible to participate in the NPS-MSPM until they successfully meet their certification requirements.

(2) The program restrictions listed in the above paragraph will also apply to any Army acquisition workforce members who are enrolled in any resident DAU course (regardless if the course is required for certification or not) and fail to show up for the class. The Army Director Acquisition Career Management office and the DAU consider these students "no-shows". This status can negatively impact the Army's future seat allocations for these courses. "No-show" Army acquisition workforce members will remain ineligible to apply for the NPS-MSPM for a period of one year starting on the last day of the scheduled resident course for which they failed to appear.

6. PROCEDURES.

a. Announcement Process. The USAASC plans, manages and announces the NPS-MSPM program each year. The announcement will be advertised no later than April each year. The announcement will be posted on the USAASC web site at <http://asc.army.mil>. Applications must be submitted no later than the closing date identified in the NPS-MSPM program announcement or applicants will not be eligible for consideration.

b. NPS-MSPM application.

(1) Army acquisition workforce applicants must apply and be accepted in the NPS-MSPM program prior to applying for USAASC funding. All Army acquisition workforce applicants must obtain a conditional letter of acceptance from the NPS. Once you receive your conditional letter of acceptance from NPS, you must apply to USAASC for funding. A copy of the conditional letter of acceptance must be uploaded into AAPDS.

(2) Individuals admitted to the NPS-MSPM program as a result of prior NPS-MSPM program announcements can use the prior year's letter of acceptance to apply for the current announcement. Individuals should verify their current admission eligibility with NPS before using the prior year's acceptance letter. Only applications of individuals who have been admitted to the NPS-MSPM program by the closing date of the announcement will be considered for funding.

(3) Applicants may apply for admission to the NPS at the following website <http://www.nps.edu/Academics/Schools/GSBPP/Academics/MSM/MSPM836/Prospective.html>. For additional information on the NPS-MSPM please contact Professor Brad Naegle, Program Manager/Academic Associate, at bnaegle@nps.edu, (831) 656-3620, or Ms. Ronda Spelbring, Program Administrator, at rlspelbr@nps.edu, (831) 656-2091.

c. USAASC NPS-MSPM Application.

(1) The NPS-MSPM program announcement and policy may be found on the USAASC website at <http://asc.army.mil/web/career-development/programs/naval-postgraduate-school-master-of-science-in-program-management/>. Army acquisition workforce members must obtain approval from their supervisor to participate in the NPS-MSPM program during duty hours.

(2) The NPS-MSPM program application is an automated process using AAPDS. To access AAPDS, please login to the Career Acquisition Management Portal at <https://rda.altess.army.mil/camp/>. Once you log in, click Career Acquisition Personnel and Position Management Information System (CAPPMIS). Once in CAPPMIS, click the "AAPDS" tab, then select the "Apply" link and select the current NPS-MSPM program opportunity.

(3) Applicants must complete and submit all of the following documents for the NPS-MSPM program in AAPDS: (1) NPS-MSPM Applicant Data; (2) Acquisition Career Record Brief (ACRB); (3) IDP; (4) Statement of Interest; (5) Signed and dated Post Utilization Statement; (6) Conditional Letter of Acceptance obtained from the NPS; and (7) the Continued Service Agreement. The requested documents must be completed and the entire application submitted in AAPDS by the closing date of the announcement or the individual will not be considered for funding.

(4) Applicants must check the small boxes next to the ACRB link and the supervisor's verification link within the application verifying their ACRB and their current supervisor's information are correct.

(5) Applicants must include the entire course of study for the MSPM program on the IDP and obtain their supervisor's approval. Under the "Education Plan" section on the IDP, click on "add other acquisition education training." Select the 17 courses with each corresponding date. The cost for the books is \$200.00 per course. The cost of tuition is \$2,000 per course. Enter "AETE" as the funding source. A curriculum of the 17 courses is located on the NPS link below:
<https://www.nps.edu/Academics/Schools/GSBPP/Academics/MSM/MSPM836/Prospective.html>.

(6) In AAPDS applicants must describe in 1,500 characters or less the Statement of Interest describing reasons for participating in this training opportunity, the contribution you will bring to the program, the benefits to the organization, and the benefits to the Army upon graduation.

(7) Applicants must upload in AAPDS the Post Utilization Statement physically signed and dated by their current supervisor. The Post Utilization Statement must describe the applicant's demonstrated potential for positions of increased responsibility, how his or her lack of education has impeded his or her career progression, and the utilization and benefits of the completed degree to the organization and the Army. (Note: This physically signed and dated document endorses the applicant's participation, if selected.)

(8) Applicants must use the link identified in the announcement to access and print a copy of the CSA. Enter the dates identified in the announcement as the service obligation period and physically sign the CSA. The completed CSA must then be uploaded in AAPDS to be considered for funding.

(9) Applicants must upload in AAPDS a copy of the NPS-MSPM conditional letter of acceptance obtained from NPS. Individuals who obtained a conditional letter of acceptance for prior year admission can submit their letter of acceptance for the current NPS-MSPM announcement. Please confirm with the NPS that there are no additional requirements.

d. NPS-MSPM Selection Board Process.

(1) All applicants will receive fair and equitable evaluation under the announcement and board process.

(2) The NPS-MSPM PM receives and reviews all submitted applications for completeness and eligibility. Then, all eligible applications are forwarded to the Final Review Board for review and selection recommendations. The Final Review Board will evaluate and rate all applications submitted for the NPS-MSPM program. The Final Review Board will compile an RSL of submitted applications. The NPS-MSPM PM will compile application statistics and provide the RSL from the selection board to the DDACM for final decision.

(3) The DDACM will approve applicants for acceptance into the NPS-MSPM program based on availability of funds. After the DDACM has approved the RSL, the NPS-MSPM PM will notify the applicants, NPS, and selection board of the final results.

(4) Army acquisition workforce members who apply with sufficient lead-time before the closing date of the announcement will be notified if their application is incomplete. Applicants will then be given the opportunity to resubmit the completed NPS-MSPM application no later than the closing date of the announcement.

e. NPS-MSPM Acceptance. Upon acceptance, selectees must acknowledge receipt of acceptance via email or phone no later than 14 business days from notification or risk having to reapply for the next opportunity. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure contact information is current on the ACRB or risk not being selected.

7. **LABOR RELATIONS.** Activities are reminded to meet all statutory labor relations obligations in the implementation of this policy.

8. **EFFECTIVE DATE AND IMPLEMENTATION.** The policy and procedures are effective immediately and will remain in effect until superseded.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CRAIG A. SPISAK". To the right of the signature, the date "APR - 5 2015" is stamped in a small, light font.

CRAIG A. SPISAK
Deputy Director
Acquisition Career Management

APPENDIX 1.

1. Title 10, United States Code, Chapter 87, Defense Acquisition Workforce, Section 1701-1764, Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act of 1990, as amended (DAWIA II) - http://www.library.dau.mil/DAWIAPL108_136.pdf.
2. Department of the Army, "Acquisition Career Field Certification Policy and Procedures," June 1, 2010 – <http://asc.army.mil/web/policies-main/alt-workforce-policy-procedure/>.
3. Department of the Army, "Continuous Learning Policy and Implementation Guidelines," April 11, 2011 – <http://asc.army.mil/web/policies-main/alt-workforce-policy-procedure/>.
4. Memorandum, "Consequences for Academic Failures and No-Shows in Defense Acquisition University (DAU) Resident Courses," March 30, 2012 – <http://asc.army.mil/web/policies-main/alt-workforce-policy-procedure/>.
5. Memorandum, "Enforcement of Mandatory Acquisition Certification Requirements," August 18, 2010 – <http://asc.army.mil/web/policies-main/alt-workforce-policy-procedure/>.
6. Memorandum, "Director Acquisition Career Management Guidance – Enforcement of DAWIA Certification Compliance Policy Memorandum #8," January 30, 2012 – <http://asc.army.mil/web/policies-main/alt-workforce-policy-procedure/>.