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AUTHOR Hawkins, Jean L.  
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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses community college extension services available to Air Force personnel stationed abroad. A review of the characteristics of the enlisted serviceman indicates the similarity of his educational needs to those of typical community college students, as compared to those of four-year college students. Programs operated by four community colleges (Los Angeles Community College, Harford Community College, El Paso Community College, and Big Bend Community College) at Air Force bases around the world are briefly reviewed. Such programs need strengthening and expansion. Six recommendations are presented to promote cooperation between community colleges and American military installations overseas.  
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THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE EXTENSION PROGRAM

On USAF Foreign Installations

Its Implications for the

Serviceman and for

Foreign and International

Education

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Jean L. Hawkins

July 6, 1976

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## INTRODUCTION

Twentieth century American democracy has given birth to the ideal of mass education. In no institution is this policy more clearly exemplified than in the American community college. Outreach programs seek to give all ages, occupations, and races a piece of the educational pie. Alternate learning centers are springing up to cushion the problems encountered with open door admissions policies. Community resources are utilized and developed as this curious modern amalgamation inhales the flavor of its community and exhales refreshing opportunities for its populace.

One segment of that American community is the military student. His education and career development became the object of intense study and interest as the Vietnam veteran flooded the economy in the early 70's. Many fine programs were funded for his benefits as well. It seems logical that the community college, an institution so inherent with flexibility, should continue to adapt programs to the higher education needs of the military man regardless of the location of his assignment. This paper is an attempt to review the services available to Airforce personnel stationed at remote bases around the world. It is hoped that these observations and suggestions may be generalized to any military branch.

First, the atypical educational needs of the military man will be discussed. Secondly, the basic programs available to enlisted servicemen will include an analysis of four American community colleges, which are involved in the issuing of certificates and degrees to remotely stationed Air Force personnel. Thirdly, the goals and problems of international education will be discussed as they suggest cooperation with local military installations.

## I. The Atypical Military Student

The enlisted military man has been stereotyped and generalized throughout the literature. From research on Vietnam vet, many of whom have not yet separated, and from professional experience with new, young recruits in the PREP program, this author will cite a few atypical characteristics which can best be dealt with in the community college. 1 Statistics show that in April of 1973, 45% of all undergraduate veterans entered 2 year institutions upon their separation from the service. At that time, veteran unemployment rated 11%, compared with 7.3% for the nation at large. For racial minority vets, the percentage was 50% higher. Lee John Betts describes the situation vividly:

"According to 1971 Harris poll, 44% of returning servicemen claimed they had received no occupational training in the military.

Of those who did receive occupational training, the majority considered their training of minimal applicability in civilian society.

(from U.S. Congress statistics, 1972). Obviously, the need for additional education and training among many veterans remains a major national priority." 2

For those Vietnam era serviceman who stayed in, the problem may be even worse. A 45 year old man is retiring after 20 or 30 years of service is scared to death of 4 year institutions, yet may have no immediately marketable skills. Similarly, the young, inexperienced enlistee who serves four years and separates at age 22 or 23 has failed to compete with his civilian peer group for educational or career experience. Many have families to support, and again, no hireable skill. Thus, the need for occupational training is common to the military enlistee today.

A second atypical characteristic of the student serviceman is his need for academic remediation. Betts cites D.E. Johnson's Report of the President's Committee on the Vietnam Veteran as follows:

"...as many as 30% of the servicemen who have received a high school diploma have marginal skills in basic communication and computation areas." (1969)

The high school graduate who enters the service as an enlisted man is often the one who has failed to adjust to the traditional academic climate of secondary school.

Thirdly, enlisted service personnel closely parallel the typical community college student body, and in the same manner are quite divergent from the typical 4 year college student body. A survey conducted by the American Council on Education on the Vietnam vet entering college in 1972 summarizes the profile well:

"by almost every traditional measure of socioeconomic status and at every level of postsecondary education, veterans are clearly from more disadvantaged backgrounds. They are more likely to have come from working class backgrounds, less likely to be white, much more likely to be married, more likely to attend an institution close to their home, and more likely to have had poor academic records in high school. " 3

Fourth and finally, the enlisted student must participate in a flexible institution. Inflexible admissions, transfers, alternate learning methods, and schedules must not

( 3 )

slam the door to education before he steps inside. In effect, such a man is searching for a "revolving" door: one that will allow him to enter and exit non-punitively. He hasn't the key to unlock the traditional doors of most senior colleges.

## II. Opportunities for the Military Student

The wealth of references and quotes above indicates the characteristics discussed surely do not represent any real discovery. Educators have recognized them, though mostly in relation to the Vietnam returnee, and several programs have been organized to help alleviate some of the divergencies described above.

In Germany several years ago, there was an attitude among U.S. Army officers reflected by these words of General Ratton:

"When we take a young man into the armed forces, we have an obligation to turn him back to civilian life a better man." 4

Part of this obligation involved bridging the academic described by Betts and others.

PREP was established in conjunction with Big Ben Community College to provide an intensive refresher course in reading, writing and mathematics for personnel about to enter post-secondary training. The response was so great that the Air Force initiated a PREP as well, and today the program has had widespread participation from numerous community colleges at military installations around the world. It has been this author's experience through two years of instructing the PREP program that most graduates of PREP do not enter 4 year colleges. Almost all go on to local community colleges for career or general transfer training.

For those who do not need remediation, but who are already knowledgeable in viable disciplines, opportunities are provided to challenge the credit course, receiving full credit for it. The College Level Examination Program is the most common of these programs. Some institutions will accept as many as 45 of a curriculum's total basic units through CLEP. Others offer specific credit by examination opportunities. To facilitate transfer opportunity for the transient military person, a growing network of community colleges subscribe to the Serviceman's Opportunity College. Some rely on the Commission of Accreditation of Service Experience (CASE) to transmit service experience into credit.

An attempt to centralize and expand these various aspects of serviceman's benefits was made in 1971 when representatives of the USAF Academy, the Air University, and Air Training Command met "to explore ways of increasing benefits of Air Force training and educational programs for the individual, the Air Force, and the Nation. 5 The result was the Community College of the Air Force, which awarded its first certificate in August 1973. This unique organization acts as a depository for all regular college credits earned and for any military training completed. The military training is converted into college credit, and one of two certificates may be obtained. When 64 semester hours are accumulated, a Career Education Certificate is available. Twenty four of these hours must be technical training, 25 hours in related educational subjects, and 6 hours on management and military science studies. Completion of this certificate plus two years teaching experience and a 26 hour program entitles one to earn an Instructor of Technology Certificate. The recipients of either of these two program certificates is responsible for securing those 25 hours of general education coursed through an accredited institution or through exemption by examination.

Community colleges serve military personnel stationed in their districts all over the nation. Official Air Force statistics reveal that five American community colleges also serve personnel in foreign countries. 6 No catalogue information was available from Technical Institute in Washington, D.C. which allegedly serves bases in Spain, England, and Greece. The other four schools will be discussed in two ways: What locations are served and how their catalogues describe actual programs offered at those foreign locations.

1. Los Angeles Community College, California      Technical and Occupation degree

A. Locations:

|                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Yokota, Japan  | Clark, Phillipines |
| Misavia, Japan | NKP, Thailand*     |
| Osan, Korea    | Korat, Thailand*   |
| Kunsan, Korea  | U-Topao, Thailand* |
| Kandena, Japan | Adoin, Thailand*   |

B. Programs

"Los Angeles Community College overseas offers courses in career fields at military bases in the Pacific and Far East... (to earn a degree) a maximum of 80% may be completed at other colleges or through non traditional means... under a contract for degree agreement, servicemen may plan to earn an associate degree from LACC as a result of a variety of options". 7

No specifics of courses offered are cited, and a review of the faculty roster does not reveal which are stationed at these foreign locations.

2. Harford Community College, Maryland      Technical and Occupational degree

A. Locations

\*See page 13 for footnote



Alconburge, England

Lakenbeath, England

Mildenhall, England

Bentwates, England

Tarrejon, Spain

Anthens, Greece

Zeuebrucken, Germany

Spangdahlem, Germany

Incirlik, Turkey

Karamursel, Turkey

Adana, Turkey

Chicksands, England

Brindisi, Italy

Ramstein, Germany

Betbug, Germany

Rheim Man, Germany

Sembach, Germany

Wiesbaden, Germany

Upper Heyford, England

West Ruislip, England

Zaragoza, Spain

Aviano, Italy

#### B. Programs

"Under contract to the Department of Defense, HCC is providing educational services for military personnel, dependents, and employees of government organizations...the goal of the European program is to upgrade or initially provide opportunity for the development of marketable skills in a career of law enforcement. Through the close cooperation of other educational institutions with programs in Europe, students may also continue their education beyond the programs offered by HCC." 8 Nowhere is it specified what these additional programs are, or exactly how the insinuated cooperations with foreign universities is carried out. A review of the faculty roster revealed that one director and two law enforcement instructors are assigned to this European program.

3. El Paso Community College, Texas

Technical and Occupational degree

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A. Locations

|                             |                        |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Ramstein, Germany           | Aviano, Italy          |
| Zeweibrucken, Germany       | Mildenhill, England    |
| Hahn, Germany               | Sculthorpe, England    |
| Weisbanden, Germany         | Weithersfield, England |
| Memmingen, Germany          | Thule, Greenland       |
| Kleine Brugel, Belgium      | Goose Bay, Canada      |
| Camp New Amsterdam, Holland | Woomara, Australia     |

B. Programs

"Military personnel may be awarded a degree or certificate upon completion of 15 quarter hours from EPCC, provided all other course requirements have been met." 9

The catalogue states that a maximum total of 75 quarter hours of credit may be accepted from such alternatives a CLEP (45 hours), USAFI courses, military experience, and Servicemen's Work Experiences Evaluation (SWEEP). No mention is made of the foreign programs, and a coordinator of military programs is the only pertinent staff listed on the faculty roster.

4. Big Bend Community College, Washington AA, Technical Occupational degrees

A. Locations

|                   |                        |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Aviano, Italy     | Alconbury, England     |
| Lajes, Ajors      | Bentwaters, England    |
| Brindisi, Italy   | Chicksands, England    |
| Katamural, Turkey | Upper Heyford, England |

## B. Programs

The only mention of military students in BBCC recent catalogues is the veteran's office.

### III. International Education and the U.S. Military Installation Abroad

The American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, recognizing the growing need for international perspective, has established an office of international programs. A report issued in September, 1974, cites 5 goals that are conducive to the establishment of community colleges abroad. It is this author's contention that community colleges' extension programs on military bases abroad may serve a useful function in realizing these goals.

1. Distribution of community college materials to educators and institutions outside the U.S.
2. Development of materials of special interest to other countries.
3. To put educators in other countries in touch with colleges and other private and government agencies in the U.S. that might prove to be useful sources of information and counsel.
4. To provide member colleges with access to educational establishments and representatives in other countries for the development of information and personnel exchanges and programs.
5. To bring about opportunities for participation in international workshops and assemblies for representatives of other countries as well as officials from member colleges of AACJC. 10

Military personnel in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Central and South America, Europe, the North Atlantic, the Near East, and North America can find some native institutions which

ascribe to this organization and its goals. Some have significant ties with sister institutions in the states. Working directly with American community colleges extensions at military installations could so functionally and economically strengthen those ties and promote these goals on a real sharing basis!

Raymond Schultz, in William Thomas' American Education Abroad, cites valid reasons why more community college programs are needed overseas. Increased educational opportunities for elementary and secondary students around the world are encouraging such students to pursue higher education. Yet graduates of these typically liberal arts 4-year semi - professional people is expanding. Schultz also cites various changes that are needed so that the American type community college can be successful. The conditions demanding change include non-transferability, lack of credit hour systems, strict entrance requirements and quotas, lack of financial and human resources. Cooperation with extension programs on military installations could help alleviate these problems. A particularly critical need is that political leadership must be ripe for any foreign education system to be successful. Schultz cites South Korea's recent failure as a case in point:

"Here seems to be a classic case of attempting to transplant an American educational institution into another country without making needed adjustments and without an understanding of the concept or a commitment to it by educational leaders of the country." 11

By using the military base as an initial campus, the institution is not "transplanted" onto the foreign culture in the brash manner alluded to above. The program is already there, functioning as a model, tactfully offering its resources, gently encouraging a real

sharing of ideas and resources.

A Six-State Regional Workshop on International Education in 1974 expounded ideas which are congruent with the situation described above and with the suggestions which conclude this paper.

Seymour Eskrow's address includes these pertinent remarks:

"as we struggle toward multi - cultural, international, and global insights we are learning...that if the world is to be the teacher, there are essentially two directions in which must go, literally and spiritually: (1) we must bring the world to our campus in a kind of educational implosion, and (2) we must lend our teachers and students off campus, and into the community and into the world in new kinds of educational explorations." 12

Similarly, Goldrick exemplifies how the goals of study abroad programs may be realized by servicemen, dependents and foreign natives participating in a program such as this paper suggests:

"The origins of many disciplines are overseas, and even though courses in these areas are taught in English in both cases, the overseas course offers insight into the reason for divergent development. Often students can see world change and progress." 13

In conclusion, Isaac Becker's remarks point to the broader aspects of promoting international relations for the average citizen. Again, this author would point out the congruency of this remark to the situation described in this paper:

(the community college)...community-based as it is, is in a key position to develop a consistent, philosophically sound interpretation of the international

relations and to reach the average citizen with a program to share that interpretation on a broad basis." 14.

IV. Suggestions for Promoting Cooperation between Community Colleges and American Military Installations Abroad

1. American community colleges which claim to offer certificates and degrees to American service personnel abroad should offer general education courses on those bases, so that servicemen who can't exempt them through examination can complete those 25 hours on location.
2. American community colleges participating in foreign military programs should provide liaison personnel to work with local foreign institutions in developing programs to propagate the sharing of ideas and resources.
3. The AACJC should support such efforts academically and through funding.
4. Any such community college programming should be available to military dependents and other Americans living in the foreign location, as well as to interested natives.
5. A planning committee responsible for long range planning and evaluation of such programs should be established. Members should represent the CCAF, participating American community colleges, foreign affiliated personnel, and AACJC personnel.
6. The efforts of the USAF to promote education for its world wide community should be duplicated by other U.S. military branches of service.

## FOOTNOTES

1. Betts, Lee John, "The Vietnam Era Veteran", New Directions for Community Colleges, Understanding Diverse Students, page 84.
2. Ibid., page 85.
3. Drew, D.E. and Creader, J.A., "The Vietnam Era Veteran Enters College," Council on Education Office of Research, 1972, as cited by Betts, page 87.
4. CJJC, "Prep at Big Bend Community College," page 23.
5. CCAF Catalogue, 1976, page 1-3.
6. These statistics were made available to me by Don Britt, Education Director, DMAFB, Arizona.
7. LACC Catalogue, 1975-1976
8. HCC Catalogue, 1975-1976
9. EPCC Catalogue, 1975-1976
10. AACJC, Report of the Office of International Programs, 1974.
11. Schultz, "Development of the Community College concept abroad," page 61.
12. The Community College Looks to the 21st Century, 1974, page 4.
13. Ibid., Workshop on Study Abroad for 2 year College Students.
14. AACJC, "The International Dimension of U.S. Community Colleges" page 4.

\* (page 6) It is doubtful that, with the recent political situation in Thailand, these extensions still exist.

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