

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)
FOREIGN AREA OFFICER (FAO) GRADUATE EDUCATION CONSTRUCTIVE
CREDIT WAIVER (CCW) REQUESTS**

07 Feb 2024

Ref: (a) DODD 1315.17 of 28 April 2005
(b) SECNAVINST 1301.7B of 06 Apr 2023
(c) OPNAVINST 1301.10C of 30 June 2016

Encl: Graduate Education Constructive Credit Waiver Request Memorandum Template

1. Purpose. This SOP establishes the process for Navy Foreign Area Officers (FAOs) to request graduate education constructive credit.
2. Applicability. This SOP applies to all active component (AC) and reserve component (RC) Navy FAOs, supersedes previous versions, and remains in effect until superseded by update or by incorporation into OPNAVINST 1301.10.
3. Background.
 - a. Navy FAOs must complete a graduate-level degree program per references (a) - (c). The degree should focus on, but is not limited to the historical, political, military and or security, cultural, sociological, economic, scientific and or technical, and geographic factors of specific foreign countries and regions. FAOs who complete a qualified course of instruction at a foreign war college in their assigned region have successfully completed the Master's degree requirement, even if the program does not grant a Master's degree, per reference (c).
 - b. FAO Detailers make every effort to detail active component officers requiring graduate education to a qualifying program prior to in-zone consideration for commander. In exceptional circumstances, where there was not opportunity to attend graduate school due to timing or needs of the Navy, that member may request graduate education constructive credit. Officers who possess an equivalent level of regional expertise may apply for a constructive credit. Approval authority is delegated by SECNAV to the FAO Community Leader per reference (b).
 - c. RC FAO applicants must possess a regionally focused international relations or strategic studies graduate degree upon transfer, per reference (c). In exceptional circumstances, where an officer transfers into the RC FAO community without a qualifying graduate degree, that officer may request a graduate education constructive credit via the procedure in section 4.
 - d. The NPS Regional Security Studies curricula (681-684) establish the baseline for graduate education regional expertise through defined educational skills requirements (ESRs): <https://nps.smartcatalogiq.com/en/Current/Academic-Catalog/Graduate-School-of-International-and-Defense-Studies-IDS/Department-of-National-Security-Affairs-NSA>.

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4. Procedure.

FAOs may request graduate education constructive credit from the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs using the enclosed template. A single in-country tour, in most cases, is insufficient to qualify for constructive credit.

i. Required elements of the request include:

(1) Region for constructive credit request

(2) Documented experience (FITREPs, awards, etc.) that shows:

(a) 3 or more years (aggregate) in-region experience that results in expertise equivalent to the ESRs, or

(b) 3 or more years (aggregate) working in regionally-focused assignment(s) (CONUS or OCONUS) that leads to regional expertise equivalent to the ESRs, or

(c) Combination of 3 or more years of in-region experience and regionally-focused assignments that leads to regional expertise equivalent to the ESRs

(3) Completion of joint professional military education level one (JPME I)

ii. Recommended additional elements include:

(1) Graduate degree(s) in other field(s) of study

(2) Progress in a graduate degree program (in-progress transcript)

(3) Participation in non-degree or certificate academic programs

(4) Published or unpublished research or articles that demonstrate regional expertise

(5) Documented language proficiency (DLPT or OPI) in a regional language

(6) Endorsement by senior officer(s) with direct knowledge of requestor's expertise

b. FAOs must route graduate education constructive credit requests through their Council of Captains Regional Lead for review.

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- c. Regional Leads will review and forward graduate education constructive credit requests to FAO Policy.
 - d. FAO Policy will staff graduate education constructive credit requests through the Community Chief of Staff for final adjudication by the Community Leader.
5. Responsibilities.
- a. Regional Leads (as designated by community sponsor) Regional leads will review graduate education constructive credit requests for accuracy of regional expertise claims prior to submission to FAO Policy.
 - a. FAO Policy (OPNAV N51) FAO Policy will staff request packages to the Community COS and Community Leader for adjudication.

Approved 07 Feb 2024

R. L. Owens III, CAPT, USN
OPNAV N51
FAO Chief of Staff

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DD Month YYYY

MEMORANDUM

From: LCDR William T. Door, USN

To: Community Sponsor, Foreign Area Officer Community

Subj: REQUEST FOR GRADUATE EDUCATION CONSTRUCTIVE CREDIT WAIVER

Ref: (a) DODD 1315.17 of 28 April 2005
(b) SECNAVINST 1301.7B of 06 April 2023
(c) OPNAVINST 1301.10C of 30 June 2016

Encl: (1) Fitness Reports YYYYYY – YYYYYY (documentation of type and length of experience cited as justification for the CCW; include all reports that cover the experience timeframe)
(2) JPME I completion documentation (as applicable)
(3) Transcript from XYZ University (as applicable)
(4) Language Proficiency Verification (i.e., DLPT scores, as applicable)
(5) Letter of Recommendation(s) (as applicable)

1. In accordance with references (a) through (c), I respectfully request a constructive credit waiver of the regionally focused graduate degree requirement for the [USXXXCOM] area of responsibility.

2. EDUCATION: [Purpose: List any/all graduate degrees earned, previous academic accomplishments, or current enrollments. Highlight any coursework contributing to regional expertise. Provide JPME I completion date. Ensure enclosures match justification listed here.]

3. LANGUAGE: [Purpose: List relevant DLPT/OPI/DLAB scores with dates for each exam. Ensure enclosures match justification listed here.]

4. EXPERIENCE: Documented experience (FITREPs, awards, etc.) that shows: [indicate which one you're requesting (a), (b) or (c).]

(a) 3 or more years (aggregate) in-region experience that results in expertise equivalent to the ESRs, or

(b) 3 or more years (aggregate) working in regionally-focused assignment(s) (CONUS or OCONUS) that leads to regional expertise equivalent to the ESRs, or

(c) Combination of 3 or more years of in-region experience and regionally-focused assignments that leads to regional expertise equivalent to the ESRs

[Purpose: Substantiate specifics of expertise gained through experience that meets or exceeds the educational skills requirements established by the Naval Postgraduate School. Ensure enclosures match justification listed here, i.e., FITREPS].

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W. T. DOOR
LCDR USN
Job Title