

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

UNIVERSAL ILE POLICY: CONCEPT, REALITY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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ABSTRACT

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This paper discusses why education is integral to maintaining a professional Army officer corps and addresses the Army's policy for providing institutional education for majors. The Army's ability to fully implement its Universal Intermediate Level Education (ILE) policy and ensure 100% of majors attend a resident staff college has been impacted by Army Transformation efforts and the growth of major's positions in modular units as well as the operational requirements of GWOT. The growth in positions has resulted in an untenable backlog of officers to attend ILE. The author identifies the most likely recommendations Army senior leaders will consider to reduce the backlog but rejects their implementation without first attempting to change current Army culture about ILE attendance. The author first suggests the Army's senior leadership address officers affected by the Universal ILE policy. Second, the author recommends the Army's senior leaders develop a plan which addresses the backlog, applies constructive credit to selected officers and establishes measures to fill the Army's available ILE seats.

UNIVERSAL ILE POLICY: CONCEPT, REALITY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Expert knowledge and the application of that knowledge have long been the hallmark of a profession. The primary boundary between a profession and an organization or bureaucracy is that a profession singularly develops and employs expert knowledge. The possession of expert knowledge gives the profession its singularity and its jurisdiction. Singularity is an essential piece because it establishes a profession's jurisdiction and its ownership of expertise in a select area. And the repository for this expert knowledge resides in its people. For, "those who learn and employ that knowledge in unique contexts are rightly described as professionals; in them lies the heart and soul of the profession."¹ These professionals continually learn, adapt and innovate through education, training and personal experiences.

Providing educational opportunities for professionals can be difficult because of other important requirements for the professional. This paper will focus on the difficulty of educating professionals, specifically the institutional education of U.S. Army majors. The author will discuss the impact of education in a profession, and enunciate why education is an integral part of maintaining a professional Army officer corps. The author will also describe the Army's recent policy change for Intermediate Level Education (ILE) for majors, argue its merits, and examine the current progress in reaching the policy's intended end state. Shortfalls in current procedures will be identified as well as the reasons why the Army has been unable to successfully implement this policy. Finally, the author will offer several recommendations, both short and long term to successfully realize the vision that was intended when the Army introduced the Universal ILE policy.

In order to remain relevant, a profession must not be content to rest on its current knowledge, but be driven to expand its knowledge and its applicability. The ability to better understand a complex and adaptive system will require professionals to process and correlate the mass of information to provide a means to evaluate its relevance, reliability and importance.² In this way they gain and expand their knowledge. And based on their experience, education, training and personality, professionals use their judgment to turn knowledge into understanding for although "we may know what is going on; we *understand why*."³

The U.S. Army is currently undergoing a transformation to maintain its relevance and expertise for the future, emphasizing the requirement for full-spectrum capabilities to address whatever actions our adversaries take against us.⁴ This transformation effort is changing the Army in several ways, from changes in headquarters and organizational structures, to development of several new pieces of equipment and platforms, to changes in doctrine and

personnel policies. It is an immense undertaking, especially considering the Army's involvement in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). Although the above-mentioned programs are the most visible of the initiatives being developed as part of this transformation, there is a far more important factor required for the Army to transform successfully to a relevant and ready campaign-quality force – that is education. For “transformation is first and foremost an intellectual exercise...therefore, the road to transformation begins with a strong program of education and leader development.”⁵ The CSA, General Peter J. Schoomaker, clearly understands this importance, since six of his sixteen focus areas for the Army directly relate to education.⁶

The terms experience, training and education are often used to describe the elements of a military officer's professional development. Training and education are oftentimes used together or interchangeably with no clear appreciation for the differences. However the difference is stark, because, “while training is more concerned with teaching *what* to think and what the answers ought to be, education is all about teaching *how* to think and what the *questions* ought to be.”⁷ Alfonso Montuori defines the difference between what he calls maintenance learning (training) and evolutionary learning (education). Maintenance learning is concerned with the amount of information, not necessarily the understanding of the information. With evolutionary learning, “the focus of our entire educational thrust shifts as we attempt to foster a capacity rather than fill a container with information.”⁸

For example, think of a glass of water. Maintenance learning deals with the amount of water present in the glass, always trying to fill the glass as full as possible. Evolutionary learning concerns itself with the capability of the glass to transform to accept more water than the original glass. Evolutionary learning concerns itself not only with the amount of water present in the glass, but also with the water *not* present in the glass – namely, the uncertainty. This is the other distinction between training and educating someone. Training addresses certainty, such as squads conducting battle drills, staffs employing the military decision making process (MDMP), or leaders reading field manuals; training takes known information to develop an appropriate response. In some ways, it takes a checklist or recipe approach, and it is not necessarily a bad approach. Battle drills allow small units to take concerted immediate action when attacked and the MDMP provides a construct for staff members to rely upon when developing courses of action for a specific mission. However, professional education goes much further, and seeks a context within which to apply knowledge and judgment providing a greater understanding of the overall issue. The role of education within transformation is

therefore paramount because “only education informed by experience will encourage Soldiers and leaders to meet the irreducible uncertainties of war with confidence.”⁹

Universal Intermediate Level Education (ILE): The Original Concept...and Why It's a Good Idea

The Army's Officer Education System (OES) has undergone several changes in the last 10-15 years as the Army has continually modified curriculum and changed the classroom environment and teaching techniques to provide a better and more relevant education throughout an officer's career. Junior officers typically attend two schools, the basic course, presently called the Basic Officer's Leadership Course, as a lieutenant and the advanced course, now called the Captain's Career Course, as a captain. In the recent past, approximately the top 50% of majors¹⁰ were selected by a Department of the Army board to attend Command and General Staff College (CGSC) in residence, primarily at Fort Leavenworth, KS while a lower percentage of Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels are given the opportunity to attend a Senior Service College in residence.

In 2001, the rules for CGSC attendance changed dramatically. In large part, this was driven by the Army Training and Leader Development Panel (ATLDP) Officer Study Report, released on 25 May 2001.¹¹ A year prior, the Chief of Staff, Army (CSA), General Eric K. Shinseki, had directed Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) to assess current training and leader development programs and attitudes (the group surveyed over 13,500 leaders and their spouses), and provide recommendations and proposals for developing 21st-century Army leaders.¹² The study group's report named seven strategic imperatives, and identified these as the key to success in order for the Army “to make substantial improvement in training and leader development.”¹³ Of these seven imperatives, five relate directly or indirectly to education.¹⁴ With respect to CGSC, the panel recommended a change in the attendance criteria. Instead of 50% of a year group being selected to attend resident CGSC at Fort Leavenworth, the board recommended that all majors attend ILE, a 3-month course taught at Fort Leavenworth as well as satellite sites.¹⁵ This program became Universal ILE with education opportunities tailored to the individual officer depending on an officer's career field and functional area. All majors would attend ILE, and Operational Career Field (OPCF) officers would attend the Advanced Operations and Warfighting Course (AOWC) at Fort Leavenworth; thus they would relocate via a permanent change of station to Fort Leavenworth for 10 months with 3 months in ILE and 7 months in AOWC. At the time, officers in the other three career fields would be given graduate-level training focused on their career field's requirements and needed expertise after their ILE attendance at a satellite site.¹⁶

The study group's recommendations were indicative of the belief that all majors should have the opportunity for "quality resident intermediate level education."¹⁷ Following through with this proposal would eliminate this educational opportunity as a discriminator for "branch qualification, promotion and command selection."¹⁸ The bottom line is the study group believed an educational opportunity such as CGSC/ILE should be an enhancer for growing leaders in the profession as opposed to serving as a method used to discriminate among officers in a year group. If the Army saw fit to promote officers because of their increased potential to be future leaders at the rank of major, then the profession owed the officers the opportunity for institutional education to better prepare them for those leadership challenges. General Shinseki approved the group's recommendations and starting with academic year 03-04, the Army eliminated the CGSC selection board and established ILE as an educational requirement for all majors. This initiative was a huge cultural shift for the Army, because the 50% selection rate for CGSC had been "dividing year groups immediately after officers [were] selected for promotion to MAJ."¹⁹ This system had and still has its proponents. Two notable military writers, Martin Van Creveld and Douglas A. Macgregor, believe attendance to a staff college should be determined through competitive examinations with Macgregor favoring a system that affords an officer with three opportunities in three years. Both agree attendance and successful completion of a staff college must be used as a vehicle for selection to promotion and further command opportunities.²⁰

However, in espousing this view, they both miss a key point – that of the profession's responsibility to educate its officers. No one will disagree that an individual's growth in a profession relies heavily on self-education; it is still a key pillar for an officer's professional development. Creveld and Macgregor place a huge importance on self-education, which is reflected in their insistence on an officer's entrance examination to a staff college. But they and others who agree with them see acceptance to a staff college as a qualifier for better promotion and command opportunities and miss the premise that the Army has already used a qualifier – the officer's selection and promotion to major. Therefore, having promoted an officer to major, the Army has the inherent responsibility to institutionally educate the officer with the potential for higher rank, for "as an officer progresses, the educational demands of the profession grow and the intellectual component increases."²¹ Simply put, the concept should be if the Army believes an officer merits promotion, it is incumbent upon the Army to professionally educate the officer on higher responsibilities to help ensure both the officer's and profession's continued growth and success.

Universal ILE: The Current Reality...and It's Not Good

Much of the infrastructure and resources to realize the goal of Universal ILE have now been put in place. Fort Leavenworth can accommodate approximately 1,300 students per year; in addition, ILE training sites with Leavenworth-trained instructors have been established at Forts Gordon, Lee and Belvoir with approximately 800 students being trained annually.²² The Army's challenge is the number of operational career field majors attending the Fort Leavenworth ILE and AOWC every year. With the majors' promotion rate approaching 100% in the previous two years, approximately 1,700 officers are being selected for promotion each year; of the officers promoted, approximately 1,300 officers, or 75%, are expected to attend ILE at Fort Leavenworth.²³ Therefore, in order to keep up with the number of majors being promoted each year, the Army needs to send approximately 1,300 officers to the Fort Leavenworth ILE and AOWC each year. However, this has not been happening. For the past few years, the Army has struggled to send 800 officers to Fort Leavenworth, which increases the backlog of majors every year who require ILE at Leavenworth. In addition, the Army began this process with a backlog of officers requiring attendance already in place. The backlog for the purposes of this paper reflects the operational career field majors and promotable captains who have not attended ILE and AOWC at Fort Leavenworth. As the table below reflects, estimates of future promotions and attendance at ILE for the next five academic years paint a current concern and emerging crisis for the ILE backlog.

	AY06/07	AY07/08	AY08/09	AY09/10	AY10/11	AY11/12
Junior YG eligible ¹	YG97	YG98	YG99	YG00	YG01	YG02
Eligible Officers ²	4,908	5,617	6,037	6,457	6,877	7,297
Officers Attending ³	770	880	880	880	880	880
Resulting Backlog	4,138	4,737	5,157	5,577	5,997	6,417

¹ includes year group promotable to major

² includes promotion of most recent YG; OPCF officers only (estimate 75% of YG)

³ 770 are attending in AY06/07; following year attendance numbers are estimations

Table 1. Estimated ILE Backlog

In just this short time, the backlog is estimated to increase over 2,000 officers – and this is a conservative estimate.²⁴ The reasons for this increasing backlog, to include how the Army got to this point, both rely heavily on increasing requirements for Army Transformation and GWOT. Army Transformation has added significant new positions at the grade of major. Combined with the under-accession of officer year groups in the mid-90's, this initially created a large shortage of majors to fill these new modular requirements. In addition, the requirements for majors in support of GWOT also continued to grow. Not all of these requirements were solely the growth seen in modular units deploying to Iraq or Afghanistan; significant growth was seen in the "off-

the-book” requirements, namely those Army requirements that were not listed on the Personnel Management Authorizations Document (PMAD).²⁵ These assignments continued to grow from 2003 to the present and can best be viewed in the 12-month temporary change of station (TCS) assignments into theater, specifically the number of majors assigned to the transition teams and headquarters elements in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

To deal with this shortage at the grade of major, which approached 80% fill in FY04, the Army elected to accelerate the promotion of majors. This was accomplished by lowering the pin-on point for majors from 11.5 years to 10 years and accounts for the two major promotion boards held in April and September 2006. High promotion rates for these boards have resulted in an additional influx of officers into the rank of major that the Army had not foreseen when the Universal ILE policy was announced. Thus the pressure has been felt at both ends. The Army is promoting officers to the rank of major earlier, creating more majors in the Army, while at the same time sending fewer majors to ILE and AOWC at Fort Leavenworth.

This double-edged sword is placing thousands of majors in increased positions of responsibility and authority without the requisite education the Army deemed necessary when it announced the Universal ILE policy. Some leaders may not see this as a significant issue and may contend that institutional education is not as important given today’s current environment. They see the majority of officers receiving critical experience while deployed in support of GWOT.²⁶ While officers are gaining invaluable experience in Iraq and Afghanistan, the experiences attained by these officers are disparate and discrete, and dependent largely on what unit they belong to, what theater they are assigned to and the operational tempo and type of missions they are performing. A signal officer assigned to Kuwait is not receiving the same experience or knowledge as an infantry officer in the streets of Baghdad. And the disparity in these experiences, although essential for professionally developing our officers, does not address the profession’s requirements to prepare its leaders to “defeat any adversary and control any situation across the full range of military operations.”²⁷

Although individual experiences provide educational value in growing individual officers, it remains that “officers must be trained to a set of common standards, *those that certify professionals to the nation*, consistent with the emerging principles of officership.”²⁸ In essence, officers’ experiences are essential for developing their personal knowledge, but should be used to complement, not replace, professional education in staff college. Staff college is where officers have the opportunity to learn from other officers and their experiences, collectively learning the Army’s required knowledge to support their continued service to the profession.

There is also a school of thought that the backlog overstates the problem of ILE attendance. The proponents of this argument think of ILE as a “gate” to reach prior to selection to lieutenant colonel. In other words, as long as an officer completes ILE prior to the LTC promotion board, the Army has fulfilled its responsibility in making him competitive for advancement. However ILE is much more than a gate to meet for promotion. It is an educational requirement – a necessity – for those officers attaining the field grade rank of major. Although the education attained at the staff college is important for a LTC, it is even more important for a less experienced major. This education must not be viewed as a “gate,” but an essential element of an officer’s professional development entering the field grade rank, regardless of personal experiences. As the ATLDP Study Group identified, “Many officers have not been properly developed at their current level or position before they are moved to a higher position for which they have been neither educated [n]or trained.”²⁹ The long-term goal should be to send officers to ILE prior to the end of their second year as majors; in this way, they can employ the knowledge gained at ILE for the majority of their time as a major.

Sadly, the Army is not close to achieving this goal. In fact, the Army’s inability to fulfill the Universal ILE policy for its field grade officers is already having a noticeable effect, foreshadowed by the recent statistics on the LTC promotion board. In each of the LTC promotion boards from FY03, FY04 and FY05, only two majors without resident and non-resident ILE were selected for promotion. In each year, the total selection rate for non-ILE lieutenant colonels was .3% across above, below and primary zones.³⁰ The selection rates for non-ILE lieutenant colonels in the FY06 LTC board drastically increased. Those same officers without ILE were selected for promotion at almost a 7% rate, 41 total officers, across the three promotion zones, with the primary zone select rate of 25%.³¹ These statistics do not reflect an increase of non-ILE officers presenting themselves to the board – not yet. For these four boards, the range of non-ILE majors in each year group, primary zone only, was from 88 to 134 officers.

The major reason for the increase in the selection rate for non-ILE officers was the increase in the overall selection rate for LTCs, increasing from 79% in the FY03 board to 91% in the FY06 board for primary zone officers. This reflects the effect of Army Transformation and the increased authorizations for LTCs in the Army structure as well as a possible rise in LTC attrition. For future LTC promotion boards, the number of non-ILE majors presenting themselves to the board will not rise dramatically in the next two, possibly three years. But beginning with the FY10 board, the numbers will most assuredly increase to above 200 officers with further increases guaranteed if the current estimate of an increasing backlog holds true.

The Army will be promoting larger numbers of officers to LTC who have not attended ILE, while continuing to follow the Universal ILE policy enacted in AY03-04.

The Army's senior leadership has been silent on the subject. A review of three periodicals from January 2005 until the present produced no article which addressed the ILE attendance issue or the concerns and challenges with the increasing backlog.³² Nor was any mention made of the ILE backlog or attendance in recent Army posture statements or CSA writings such as "The Way Ahead." The only references to ILE concerned the new ILE policy and the faculty's efforts, and success, in modernizing the curriculum to maintain currency for educating leaders for tomorrow's environment. As recently as January 2007, AUSA News included a special report on ILE entitled "Building For The Future." Of the eight articles included in the section, not one of them addressed the failure to fill class seats with Army officers, even though the article states that, "100 percent of the Army's officers can go to residential courses in the CGSC."³³

Failure by the Army's leadership to communicate its intentions to its officers may have an unwelcome effect. It is possible that officers who are eligible for ILE will become frustrated and disgruntled if they are repeatedly told that they must be deferred because of operational requirements. It is not that the officers do not understand the deferments; they acknowledge the importance of operational requirements and the vast majority are willing to do their part. But with the lack of communication from the senior leadership, many officers may also fear they are being left behind. The simple reality for them is that their commanders or assignment officers are deferring them from ILE attendance because of operational requirements. Yet these same officers are reading articles and posture statements by senior leaders which state that education is the most important part of transformation. This may leave many officers with the perception that the Army is not as committed to them as they believe they are to the Army.³⁴

In approving the policy of Universal ILE, the Army's leadership created a vision for change. The previous policy of selecting the top 50% of majors for attendance at Fort Leavenworth was replaced with the concept that all majors should attend resident education. But announcing the policy and making tremendous strides at Fort Leavenworth and the other ILE sites will not change the culture of professional education and development in the Army. Only when the senior leadership continues to share and reinforce its vision to the officer corps, and the change is seen and realized by individual officers will Army officers truly embrace the new culture.

Recommendations to Reduce the Backlog...and Sustain Universal ILE in the Future

The current ILE situation with unfilled seats and a large backlog in the foreseeable future is untenable. Continuing along the current path will result in thousands of officers unable to attend ILE prior to their LTC promotion board. As the Army's leadership begins to develop a suitable course of action to address the backlog as well as the long-term viability of Universal ILE, some of the following options may be offered as solutions but the Army's leadership must reject these actions.

One possible option for reducing the backlog is to focus attendance on those officers from the senior year groups to get them ILE-qualified prior to their LTC board. In order to meet this goal, the Army must start filling the seats at Fort Leavenworth prior to AY10. This option emphasizes the ILE requirement as a gate for promotion and its selling point is that it will cause the least cultural change in the Army. Proponents will argue this option follows the Universal ILE policy because it allows every officer an opportunity to attend ILE. Supporters may also argue that time and education should not be spent on an officer who may resign in the next couple of years because the Army is educating senior majors who are less likely to leave the service. However, this option may do a disservice to majors in the junior year groups who require education for service in their years as a major, which fails to "provide a quality resident education for all new field grade officers to prepare them for their next 10 years of service."³⁵

Perhaps more importantly, focusing on senior majors lessens the impact and importance of institutional education, serving merely as a block to check in preparation for an officer's LTC promotion board, rather than an integral pillar of an officer's professional development. If the Army is intent on developing adaptive field grade officers, "whose versatility and agility...will enable them to learn and adapt to new situations in a constantly evolving environment,"³⁶ then the profession should not pursue an option providing education for the vast majority of majors after they have served in the positions for which the education was designed to prepare them, such as executive officers and operations officers in operational units as well as key and influential staff officers in training, testing and other major Army commands.

Another method may be to grant constructive credit to select groups of officers, meaning the Army will recognize the officer as ILE-certified without attendance to the staff college. Although constructive credit will most likely be needed in the future, there are two options that the Army leadership must not approve. First, in order to reduce the backlog and begin to assign majors to ILE in their first two years of attaining the rank of major, some may suggest an option of granting constructive credits to all majors in the senior four, possibly five year groups. In this option, the Army would provide constructive credit to officers in senior year groups in order to

focus ILE attendance on the junior majors. However, by using only a criteria based on officers' seniority with no appreciation of previous education, training and experiences, the Army would lose the opportunity to educate officers within those senior year groups who may truly need it the most.

A second option may be to provide constructive credit for officers who have been deployed to Afghanistan, Iraq, and possibly Kuwait. The justification for this course of action would be that these officers possess more real-world experiences than their peers, and are therefore more prepared for follow-on assignments and positions. Although this option takes into account officers' experiences based on deployment history, it once again separates mid-level officers on one criterion – deployment history. As stated previously, officers' experiences during deployments are different and unique, based in part on their ranks and positions when deployed, their areas of operations, the timing of their deployments and the specific situations inherent on the ground. In addition, assuming these officers' experiences prepare them for future assignments and responsibilities without attendance to ILE may be unwise; it would prevent the opportunity to educate officers with deployments who may truly need the ILE experience the most.

A third option that could gain momentum would be to encourage officers to complete a non-resident ILE and AOWC course. In this option, the senior leadership admits the Army cannot provide resident ILE instruction for all majors per the current policy, at least for a time. Majors would be encouraged to take a non-resident course, much like officers did previously who were not selected for resident attendance. Most likely the senior four or five year groups would be targeted for a non-resident program so the Army could begin to focus resident attendance on junior majors. Implicit, yet unstated, is that senior majors take the non-resident course to ensure they are fully prepared for their LTC board in case the Army simply can not get them to the Leavenworth course. This option may appear disingenuous since the Army's leadership established Universal ILE because they saw the need for every officer to attend a staff college. Reversing this decision a few years later could hurt the credibility of the senior leadership and may make a bad situation even worse by showing a lack of commitment to mid-grade officers and their professional education.

The preferred solution to address the Army's inability to implement the Universal ILE policy is much more complex, time consuming and precise. The first step is the easiest; yet incredibly important. The CSA should address the Universal ILE issue with the officer corps. The key here is communication, not resolution. Even remarks simply acknowledging the issue and its importance to the affected officers would be a start. At least the officer corps would

know their senior leadership is concerned about the ILE backlog and is working towards a solution. The remarks could simply be:

I recognize that we have been unsuccessful in implementing the Universal ILE policy the Army announced for AY03/04. The reasons for our inability to fill the ILE seats at Fort Leavenworth are many, but rest primarily with our requirements for both GWOT and Army Transformation. The backlog of majors awaiting attendance to ILE has grown to such an extent that we will be unable to ensure attendance for officers currently in the grade of major to resident ILE and AOWC at Fort Leavenworth. This will not be an easy situation to correct, yet it is imperative that we move forward in implementing Universal ILE attendance for all majors at the first practical opportunity. As an Army, we have an obligation to professionally develop our leaders; but we are currently falling short in achieving ILE attendance for some majors in the Army. This is an extremely important issue for me, and I and the rest of the Army's senior leadership will produce a viable and concrete course of action to help us achieve the vision that was intended with Universal ILE attendance.

With this announcement, the senior leadership should formulate a plan to 1) develop a strategy to ensure officers receive ILE education; 2) apply constructive credit to selected officers to reduce the backlog for Fort Leavenworth instruction and; 3) establish measures to ensure the seats are filled at Fort Leavenworth. Constructive credit is necessary because the Army must significantly reduce the backlog to successfully implement the vision for Universal ILE. Given that approximately 1,300 Fort Leavenworth ILE-eligible officers are being promoted annually, the Army must fill 1,300 seats at Fort Leavenworth annually to ensure that the backlog does not again increase to unmanageable levels. Although the Army can not successfully send all eligible officers to Fort Leavenworth, it is still possible to send them to an ILE course at a satellite installation if an additional one or two sites are temporarily established until the ILE backlog is cleared. This will ensure that all majors receive a base foundation of knowledge and also receive Joint Professional Military Education (JPME), phase 1 qualification. However, the challenge then becomes to identify which officers are to attend ILE and AOWC instruction at Fort Leavenworth.

There has been, in the past, generally one school of thought for the officers attending Fort Leavenworth; that is, they are the "best and the brightest," or officers with the greatest potential. This was reflected in the previous CGSC policy when a board selected the top 50% of a year group to attend the staff college. Current Army commanders and leaders may fall back on this approach unless fresh thought and perspective are introduced into the culture. It will be important to break this paradigm by giving constructive credit to the most experienced, knowledgeable and educated officers and focus on providing resident ILE and AOWC at Fort Leavenworth for those officers *who need it the most*. This approach is more than just tectonic

plates shifting and grinding against each other; this is no small change. This is the equivalent of a major earthquake, a huge cultural shift which changes the landscape of thinking about the Officer Education System. Before this approach is discarded, think of the advantages of sending, quite literally, the bottom half of a year group. The potential for learning and growth at ILE and AOWC is substantially higher for officers who may not be as knowledgeable or professionally developed as their peers, and therefore have much more to gain from the experience. In other words, the Army should not bestow constructive credit on officers who have the most to gain from ILE and AOWC, the so-called "bottom half" of a year group; the constructive credit should be applied to those officers who have exhibited they have the experience, the education and the maturity to continue to serve well in the Army, even without resident ILE and AOWC at Fort Leavenworth.

Selection for constructive credit should not be developed with simply one criterion, such as seniority or deployment experience as previously discussed. In order to select those most qualified for constructive credit, the Army should look at a course of action which resembles the following. A board for constructive credit should be held to consider three qualifications: 1) deployment experience; 2) Officer Evaluation Reports (OERs); 3) written input from raters and senior raters. Only officers with deployment experience should be considered because they presumably possess the professional experience their non-deploying peers do not. The board should consider duty titles and descriptions during their deployment by considering positions in which the officer served as a captain or major; experiences as a lieutenant should not be considered because of the reduced scope of operational expertise and level of responsibility. In addition, the board should take into account the level of joint or combined operations in which an officer may have coordinated or participated. Then having validated the creditable positions, the board should review the rater and senior rater comments of officer's service in creditable positions and make an assessment of performance and resultant potential.

The final step for consideration by the board would be a written evaluation by the officer's current rater and senior rater. This evaluation would be done once for the initial board, reflecting the chain of command's assessment of the officer's professional development, experience and education. Evaluations would be developed solely for the constructive credit board and completed for all majors and promotable captains for the year the board is being held. To prevent this written evaluation requirement from being included in follow-on boards, raters and senior raters would be required to specifically rate an officer's aptitude for ILE constructive credit in their portion of the officer's OER which would be viewed by subsequent ILE constructive credit boards. Although this method will not eliminate the backlog in one year,

it will account for the continued education and experience being gained by those eligible officers. The Army should continue the board annually until it determines the backlog has been sufficiently reduced to the point the Army can provide OPCF majors with the opportunity for ILE attendance at Fort Leavenworth within the first two years of their promotion to major.

Finally, the Army must begin to fill all 1,300 seats at Fort Leavenworth. As a start, TRADOC has already begun to start two classes a year, in August and in February, to make it easier to get additional majors to ILE and AOWC, considering the operational deployment cycle. But more must be done to achieve this result. The Army must leverage the Army Force Generation Model (ARFORGEN) to create opportunities for more majors to attend the staff college. The ARFORGEN reset phase is estimated to last six to nine months, with the ready phase following at approximately 15-18 months. ILE and AOWC amounts to an 11-month permanent change of station tour for an officer. Majors could be pulled from units during the reset phase and rejoin their units after graduation, which would be approximately two or three months into the ready phase. In most cases, a major would still have a year with their unit before entering the available phase and possible deployment. It may not be possible to ensure all majors attend ILE during the reset phase, but the Army could greatly reduce the number of majors assigned to reset units, especially in higher-level headquarters and organizations. Majors in assignments in the institutional Army should also be considered for attendance to ILE based on their unit's priority. The primary onus must be on the operational Army because of phasing included in ARFORGEN, and not on the institutional Army as many would prefer it. Employing this methodology will leverage ARFORGEN phasing and allow more officers the opportunity to attend ILE and AOWC at Fort Leavenworth.

These recommendations represent a change in culture with respect to OES and may not be met with open arms by some leaders in the Army. However, incorporating these recommendations supports the Universal ILE policy and provides the best opportunity for the Army to educate officers who most need the education the Fort Leavenworth resident course provides until the ILE backlog is significantly reduced. To ensure the Universal ILE policy remains viable in the long term, the Army's senior leadership must leverage the reset phase inherent in the ARFORGEN model to provide adequate numbers of majors to attend resident staff college. As important as these officers' presence is in units during the reset phase, their presence should not overshadow the importance of their institutional education. By emphasizing and enforcing the Universal ILE policy, the Army will posture itself for the future by providing educated, creative and adaptive leaders to lead the U.S. Army in service to the nation.

Endnotes

¹ George Reed et al., "Mapping the Route of Leadership Education: Caution Ahead," *Parameters*, 34 (Autumn 2004): 47-48.

² A brief discussion on processing and correlating a mass of information is found at U.S. Department of the Navy, *Naval Command and Control*, Naval Doctrine Publication 6, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Navy, 19 May 1995), 22.

³ *Ibid.*, 6, 23.

⁴ Peter J. Schoomaker and Anthony W. Vassalo, "The Way Ahead," *Military Review*, 84 (May-June 2004): 2.

⁵ Henry H. Shelton, "Professional Education: The Key to Transformation," *Parameters*, 31 (Autumn 2001): 7.

⁶ The focus areas are explained in Schoomaker and Vassalo. The six focus areas related to education are: the Soldier; the Bench; Leader Development and Education; Joint and Expeditionary Mindset; Authorities, Responsibilities and Accountability; Strategic Communications.

⁷ Jeffrey D. McCausland and Gregg F. Martin, "Transforming Strategic Leader Education for the 21st-Century Army," *Parameters*, 31 (Autumn 2001): 22.

⁸ Alfonso Montuori, "Evolutionary Learning," *World Futures*, 36 (1993): 197.

⁹ Les Brownlee and Peter J. Schoomaker, "Serving a Nation At War: A Campaign Quality Army with Joint and Expeditionary Capabilities," *Parameters*, 34 (Summer 2004): 14.

¹⁰ Neal Bralley et al., "Understanding ILE: How is it Different from CGSOC?," *Special Warfare*, 16 (February 2004): 32.

¹¹ William M. Steele and Robert Walters, Jr., "Training and Developing Leaders in a Transforming Army," *Military Review*, 81 (Sep-Oct 2001): 4.

¹² William M. Steele and Robert P. Walters, Jr., "Training and Developing Army Leaders," *Military Review*, 81 (July-Aug 2001): 4-5.

¹³ U.S. Department of the Army, *The Army Training and Leader Development Panel Officer Study Report to the Army* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Army, 2001), OS-22. Hereafter cited as ATLDP.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, OS-22 – OS-23.

¹⁵ CGSC and ILE are both schools for majors. CGSC was a 10-month course taught at Fort Leavenworth for approximately 50% of a year group. ILE is a 3-month course taught at Fort Leavenworth and three satellite locations for all majors. Both schools provide officers credit for Military Education Level 4 (MEL4) and Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) phase 1.

¹⁶ For recommendations reference the alternate paths for different career fields, see ATLDP, OS-13. For a discussion of the career field designation process, see U.S. Department of the Army, *Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management*, Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-3 (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 28 December 2005), 15. In addition to the Operational Career Field, there are the: Operational Support Career Field; Institutional Support Career Field; Information Operations Career Field. Hereafter cited as DA PAM 600-3.

¹⁷ ATLDP, OS-10.

¹⁸ Steele and Walters, Jr., "Training and Developing Leaders in a Transforming Army," 6.

¹⁹ James R. Rowan and Dallan J. Scherer II, "Educational Changes in the Transforming Army," *Engineer*, 31 (May 2001): 47.

²⁰ Discussions concerning competitive examinations for staff colleges and the selection for staff college as a promotion and command requirement can be found at Douglas A. Macgregor, *Transformation Under Fire*, (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2003), 212-215 and Martin Van Creveld, *The Training of Officers: From Military Professionalism to Irrelevance*, (New York: The Free Press, 1990), 65-67, 106.

²¹ McCausland and Martin, 25.

²² "CGSC extended campus 'changing real time'," *AUSA News*, 30 (January 2007): 9.

²³ Statistics for majors' promotion rates were taken from promotion board statistics from Distribution and Development Branch, OPMD, HRC. The selection percentage for primary zone officers from FY04 to Sep FY06 (two promotion boards were held in FY06 – in April and September 2006) averaged 97.5%, with 96.9% the low in FY04 and 97.9% in Sep FY06 board. Number of officers selected for promotion in each board averaged 1,725, with the low of 1,631 officers in FY05 and the high of 1,804 officers in FY04. Mr Neil Fulcher, branch chief of Distribution and Development Branch, told me that approximately 75% of a year group is in the operational career field.

²⁴ According to DA PAM 600-3, 27, "to be eligible to attend a Command and Staff College (CSC), officers must be senior CPTs or higher with between 8 and 12 years of service, and have less than 14 years of Active Federal Commissioned Service (AFCS)." The author obtained backlog statistics from the Leader Development Division at the Human Resources Command in Alexandria, VA. These backlog statistics included the two senior year groups of captains. I have elected to remove these two captains' year groups from my statistics to portray a more accurate picture of the backlog for the rank of major.

²⁵ The PMAD is an authorization document developed by the Army G1 and used by Human Resources Command to build requisitions for officer assignments. The PMAD captures the latest decisions on Army force structure and shows authorized positions for each unit by grade and occupational skill, within fiscal constraints.

²⁶ The author, while serving in the Officer Professional Management Division at HRC from 2004 to 2006, was present with select senior leaders at they discussed the experience level of current officers due to GWOT, and the implications for attendance to ILE.

²⁷ Director for Strategic Plans and Policy, J5, *Joint Vision 2020*, (Washington D.C.: Joint Staff, 200), 6.

²⁸ Thomas A. Kolditz and Eric B Schoomaker, "Three Case Studies on the Army's Internal Jurisdictions," Chap. 22 in *The Future of the Army Profession*, ed. Lloyd J. Matthews. Don M. Snider and Gayle L. Watkins, Project Directors. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2002), 493.

²⁹ ATLDP, OS-9.

³⁰ An officer is considered "in the zone" when he is in the primary zone, meaning that his year group is the primary group being considered for promotion. Usually, between 90 and 95 percent of officers on a promotion list come from the primary zone. An above zone officer is one whom was not selected for promotion during his primary zone look, and is being reconsidered for promotion. A below zone officer is being considered early, meaning that his year group will be in the primary zone at a later board and only apply at the grades of major, lieutenant colonel and colonel. According to DA PAM 600-3, 35, below zone promotion capability "is designed to allow the accelerated promotion of outstanding officers who have demonstrated performance and indicated potential clearly superior to those who otherwise would be promoted."

³¹ Promotion statistics were taken from promotion results and analysis conducted by the Distribution and Development Branch, OPMD, HRC.

³² The author surveyed Field Artillery magazine because branch personnel issues are commonly addressed in the branch publications, Military Review because many senior leaders use it as a medium to transmit thoughts and ideas, and the Army Times because of its general coverage of Army issues. I surveyed each publication for Field Artillery and Military Review; I did a computer search of terms "ILE attendance" in Army Times from 2001 to the present.

³³ "CGSC Extended Campus 'Changing Real Time'," 9.

³⁴ Steele and Walters, Jr., "Training and Developing Leaders in a Transforming Army," 3.

³⁵ DA PAM 600-3, 20. The purpose of ILE is reiterated in the pamphlet; see also pages 9, 25 and 27.

³⁶ Francis J. Harvey and Peter J Schoomaker, *2007 Posture Statement, A Campaign Quality Army With Joint and Expeditionary Capabilities: A Statement on the Posture of the United States Army 2007*, Posture Statement presented to the 110th Cong., 1st sess. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, 2007), i-ii.