

Section VII: Professional Military Education

A. Introduction. Professional Military Education (PME) covers a vast area of educational subjects, methods, and opportunities. These range from reading the *Gazette* or *Leatherneck* to resident attendance at formal schools, or even enrollment at a civilian institution to earn an advanced degree. For the professional Marine, the educational process is dynamic, constant and vital. The end of education is the beginning of stagnation. Marines of every rank should invest the time and effort to grow intellectually and to mature professionally with each passing year and each advancement in rank.

B. Career Progression and PME. The challenges of professional growth (emphasis upon PME) are as applicable to the Reserve Marine as they are to the Active component. Therefore, abundant PME opportunities are available to all Marines. The following chart graphically illustrates by example the “standard” of schooling available over a Marine’s Reserve career:

Enlisted PME Career Progression

Grade	Pvt/LCpl	Cpl/Sgt	SSgt	GySgt*	1stSgt Msgt	SgtMaj MGySgt
PME Level	-----	Basic	Career	Advance	Senior	
*Programs and Courses	-Recruit Training -BST	-NCO Basic Nonresident Crs -NCO Basic Crs	-SNCO Career Nonresident Program -SNCO Career Crs	-SNCO Advanced Nonresident Crs -SNCO Advanced Crs -Warfighting Skills Program	Regional Seminars	Annual Symposium
----- Professional Self-Study (Reading, Correspondence courses, etc.) -----						
Level of Application	Individual	Squad	Platoon	Company	Staff Functions	
Training Focus	-Basic Warrior Training -Marine Combat Training -Unit Sustainment Training	-Military Leader Training -Unit Sustainment Training -Development of Unit Trainers	-Military Leader Training -Unit Sustainment Training -Development of Unit Trainers and Supervisors	-Military Leader Training -Unit Sustainment Training -Unit Training Management	-As Directed by Unit Commanders	
Education Focus	-Service Values -History	-Development of sound military judgment -Understanding of military history in relation to today's battlefield -Understanding concepts of maneuver warfare -Leadership			-Contemporary Items Pertinent To Enlisted -Senior-Subordinate Relationships	

*Programs and courses listed above indicate the PME Marines in that grade must complete in order to be qualified for promotion to the next higher rank. Additionally, the PME programs and courses listed for GySgt's do **not** reflect all PME requirements for promotion to First Sergeant. For more complete information, read the PME narrative following this chart.

Officer PME Career Progression

Grade	Cadet/Midin	WO-Capt	Maj	LtCol-Col	General
PME Level	Pre-Commissioning	Primary/Career	Intermediate	Senior	General/Flag
PME Programs and School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Service Academies -OCS -ROTC Units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -TBS/AWS -CommO Crs/ C&S Sys Crs -Other Service Basic & Advanced Warfare Specialty Courses -Warfighting Skills MCI -Nonresident AWS MCI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -MC C&S -MC School of Adv Warfighting -Air C&S -Army Cmd & Gen Staff -College of Naval C&S -Equivalent Int'l/Civ Pgms -Nonresident Command and Staff MCI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -MC Art of War -Air War College -Army War College -College of Naval Warfare -NWC -ICAF -Equivalent Int'l/Civ Pgms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Capstone -Seminars and Courses -JFOWC
			Armed Forces Staff College		
Level of War	Tactical		Operational		Strategic
Education Focus	Introduction to Service Missions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Military Specialty -Service Doctrine -Service Values -Leadership -Staff Skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Theater-level Operational Art -Combined Arms Warfare -Intro to National Mil & Sec Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Service School: Nat'l Military Strategy -Joint School: Nat'l Military Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Theater-level Joint/Combined Operations -Synthesis of Nat'l Military Strategy with Nat'l Security Strategy
Joint Emphasis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Introduction -History -Purpose -Overview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Awareness -Organizations -Missions -Inter-service Relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Joint Forces and the Operational Level of War -Organization and Cmd Relationships -Joint C3/Intel -Defense Planning Systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Nat'l Military Capabilities Cmd Structure -Joint Doctrine -Joint Planning -Intro to Joint/ Combined Ops -Campaign Planning -Joint/Combined Warfare (Theater Context) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Synthesis of Nat'l Security Strategy with National Policymaking Requirements

Programs and courses listed above indicate the PME Marines in that grade complete in order to be qualified for promotion to the next higher rank. Additional information may be found in the following narrative.

In addition, Marines are already finding that joint operations with sister services and coalition warfare with allied nations are apt to be the “norm” in the next generation of warfighting. While some innovations will bring efficiencies to the battlefield, operational complexities and technological advances will demand higher levels of skill and knowledge from American combatants.

Political developments and religious/ethnic considerations are among the modern realities that frequently require today’s Marines to be students of world events. Career-oriented schools regularly update their materials to reflect the awesome variety of potential leadership challenges posed by ongoing geopolitical, technological, and military developments. When Marines land on foreign shores, they must sometimes be as adept in their understanding of local people and customs as they are in warfighting. Bosnia, Haiti, Somalia and Rwanda are but a few examples of this necessity.

Accordingly, Marines of today and the foreseeable future will adapt to the complex battlefield of the 21st century by combining traditional and timeless strengths of the Corps—such as courage, tenacity, leadership, esprit, and endurance—with modern training and educational opportunities.

C. PME Requirements/Expectations.

1. The link between fulfillment of PME requirements and promotion is set in concrete. ALMAR 256/93 stated: “Effective on January 1996, successful completion of an appropriate level non-resident PME course is required for promotion and retention.” Attendance at only the resident course will not fulfill the PME requirement for promotion.
 - a. Nonresident PME programs are the requirement for promotion for two reasons. First, the resident and nonresident PME programs are not identical. The nonresident programs provide instruction in areas not addressed in the resident courses. Second, because reserve Marines do not have the same opportunities as their active component counterparts to attend resident PME courses, the nonresident PME programs—which are available to all Marines—are the PME standard.
 - b. Enlisted PME requirements for promotion to First Sergeant exceed those for promotion to Master Sergeant. The reason for this difference is that promotion to First Sergeant represents a lateral move to MOS 9999.
 - c. All Reserve Marines are encouraged to attend Reserve resident PME courses applicable to their grade. These courses are normally two weeks in length and are held during the summer months to facilitate Reserve participation. Resident Reserve PME course information is available from your SMCR Career Planner, the MARFORRES G-3 Training Section, or MCRSC.
 - d. ALMAR 156/96 permits Marines who have completed Drill Instructor, Recruiter, or Marine Security Guard training to receive credit for having attended one appropriate level resident PME course providing they have completed the corresponding nonresident program.
2. Marines may obtain information or enroll in nonresident PME courses by calling the MCI Student Operations Department at 1-800-624-8762, or by visiting the

MCI website at www.mci.usmc.mil. If you have completed MCI courses but your records do not reflect that achievement, contact MCI Student Operations.

3. Detailed information regarding PME can be found in MCO P1553.4 (Professional Military Education). General information regarding MCI courses is located in Appendix J; upper level MCI courses and PME school opportunities are summarized below in Paragraph D.
4. Enlisted/Officer promotion boards. Appendix D provides basic information for all personnel to consider who are currently or will become eligible for a statutory selection board. An overview of PME Requirements is listed in Appendix J. Officer PME coordinators are listed in Appendix I.
5. Because promotion boards utilize the Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) and Master Brief Sheet (MBS) for promotion consideration, it is important that Marines ensure PME courses they have completed are reflected in their OMPF and Master Brief Sheet (MBS). Any Marine requiring a MBS for verification of completed courses, or for any other reason, may request a copy from:

Commandant of the Marine Corps (MMSB-34)
Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps
2008 Elliot Road
Quantico, VA 22134-5030

A Marine's Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) may be requested from the same address, different office code (MMSB-10). Additional information regarding the MBS or OMPF may be obtained at toll-free 1-800-268-3710; FAX: (703) 784-5792; or by email at mmsbompf@manpower.usmc.mil.

D. Descriptions of PME Opportunities.

1. **Full-Length Formal Schools.** Full-length formal PME schools are available to reserve officers. Quotas are extremely limited for these schools. Nevertheless, reserve officers who desire to be considered for full-length PME schools are encouraged to apply. Available full-length PME schools are as follows:

Full-Length Formal Schools			
School	Length	Eligible Rank	Clearance Requirement
National War College	11 months	Col-LtCol	TS
College of Naval Warfare	11 months	LtCol	TS
Navy Command and Staff Crs	11 months	Maj	Sec
USMC Command and Staff Crs	11 months	Maj	Sec
USMC Amphibious Warfare Crs	10 months	Capt	Sec

2. **Two-Week Formal Courses of Instruction.** Reserve resident PME courses are available to reserve officer and enlisted personnel. Reserve Marines are strongly encouraged to apply for these courses to continue their professional development and education.

a. **Enlisted Courses.** Two-week Reserve resident PME courses are available for Sergeants, Staff Sergeants, and Gunnery Sergeants. The Commander, Marine Forces Reserve, publishes the location and dates for these courses each year.

(1) **Sergeants Course.** The resident Noncommissioned Officer Basic Course or Sergeants Course enhances the experience, skill, knowledge, judgment, and confidence of NCOs in the grade of Sergeant. The course presents the functional concepts of leadership and stresses the responsibilities of a Marine leader in combat and combat preparation.

(2) **SNCO Career Course.** The resident SNCO Career Course expands leadership concepts and stresses the responsibilities of Marine leaders at the platoon and company level.

(3) **SNCO Advanced Course.** The resident SNCO Advanced Course completes the formal resident enlisted PME process. It is designed to improve the military judgment, leadership, training, management techniques, and confidence level of Gunnery Sergeants.

b. **General Prerequisites** for attendance at the resident PME courses include: being in a full duty status and meeting Marine fitness and weight standards.

Candidates must also satisfy the additional prerequisite of completing the appropriate nonresident MCI correspondence course as shown below:

Course	Specific Prerequisite
Sergeants Course	NCO Basic Nonresident Program (MCI 8000)
Career Course	SNCO Nonresident Program (MCI 7100)
Advanced Course	SNCO Advanced Nonresident Program (MCI 7200)

- c. **Staff Noncommissioned Officer Senior Program.** This program provides professional forums for the discussion of contemporary issues and dissemination of information to the senior enlisted leadership of the Marine Corps. It has two components: First Sergeant/Master Sergeant Regional Seminars and Sergeants Major/Master Gunnery Sergeant Symposiums.
- d. **Officer Courses.** These courses provide exposure to joint service operations or strategic thought and discussion. Each year the Commandant solicits reserve officers to submit applications for selection to attend these PME courses. Information is available from HQMC Reserve Affairs at DSN 278-9125 OR COMMERCIAL (703) 784-9125. Information is also available from your Reserve Site, RSU, or MCRSC. A listing of the primary courses available is as follows:

Primary PME Officer Courses	
Schools and Courses	
Top Level	Eligible Officers
Joint Service Introductory EW	LtCol/Col
NATO Joint Service Advanced EW	LtCol/Col
Joint Warfare	LtCol/Col
NATO Air Ground Operations	LtCol/Col
NATO Reserve Officer	LtCol/Col
Reserve Components National Security	LtCol/Col
Reserve Officer Naval Operations	LtCol/Col/Maj
Reserve Officer National Security Decision Making	LtCol/Col/Maj
Reserve Officer Strategy and Policy	LtCol/Col
U.S. Army War College Corresponding Studies	LtCol/Col

Primary PME Officer Courses	
Schools and Courses	
Intermediate Level	Eligible Officers
Canadian Militia Command and Staff	Maj
Command and Staff Reserve Phase I	Maj
Command and Staff Reserve Capstone	Maj
Naval-Marine Corps Lawyer Refresher	WO-Col
Career Level	
Reserve Communications Officer Phase I	WO-Maj
Reserve Communications Officer Phase II	WO-Maj
Reserve AWS Phase I	WO-Capt
Reserve AWS Phase II	WO-Capt
Staff Planning Courses	
Landing Force Staff Planning	WO-Col
Landing Force Ground Combat Element Communications	WO-Maj
Landing Force Ground Combat Operations	WO-Maj
Fire Support Coordination	WO-Maj
AWS Indoctrination Course and Expeditionary Warfare Staff Planning (MAGTF)	WO-Maj
Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF) Staff Planning Course	WO-Maj
Command and Control Warfare	WO-Maj
Military Operations Other Than War	WO-Maj
Anti-Terrorism/Force Protection Officer	SNCO-Maj

3. Distance Learning PME Courses.

- a. **Reserve Regional Coordinator Office.** The Reserve Regional Coordinator Office of Continuing Education, Marine Corps University, Quantico, VA is tasked with assisting Marines enrolled in the Warfighting, AWS, and C&SC Distance Learning Courses. The office can assist with content and administrative questions concerning PME courses. They can be reached at (703) 784-1076; Appendix I contains additional contact information for MCU Regional Coordinators.

Although MCI still handles the enrollment and mailing of course materials, the Regional Coordinator at Quantico is authorized to grade PME

examinations for Marines within the Reserve Force structure. Completed examinations should be mailed to:

Reserve Regional Coordinator
CCE, Marine Corps University
MCCDC
2076 South Street
Quantico, VA 22314-9801

Regional Coordinators are civilians contracted by the College of Continuing Education to assist Marines with the MCI Distance Learning PME Programs. Reserve Marines can always contact the Reserve Regional Coordinator; however, Marines in geographic proximity to other PME Regional Coordinators should feel free to contact them directly for assistance. Regional coordinators offer a variety of PME classes, seminars, videos, and video-conferencing sessions. The locations and contact information for the regional coordinators can be found in Appendix I.

- b. **Marine Corps Institute (MCI).** Distance Learning, or “nonresident” PME courses, offers Marines an excellent opportunity to develop their professional knowledge, leadership, and skills while at home. These courses are available from MCI at the Washington Navy Yard, Washington D.C., and from other DoD services. Marines wishing to obtain information on available MCI courses or seeking to enroll in an MCI course may call the Student Operations Department at 1-800-MCI-USMC or consult the MCI web page at **www.mci.usmc.mil**.

Many MCI correspondence courses offer college credit upon completion. The American Council on Education continually evaluates MCI courses for recommended credits, which may be applied toward either a baccalaureate degree or a vocational/ technical certificate. Additionally, Marines may receive reserve retirement credits for completion of MCI courses. A Marine may earn any number of reserve retirement credits per anniversary year through MCI course completions.

The courses offered through the MCI are far too numerous to list here in their entirety. However, the nonresident PME courses required by all Marines for promotion are listed and briefly summarized.

(1) **Sergeants Distant Education Program (MCI 8010).** This program develops the skills, knowledge, and military judgment necessary to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of Corporals and Sergeants. Completion of this course is required for selection to Staff Sergeant. The curriculum is divided into six primary areas of study: battle skills, weapons, and leadership, written communications, military studies, and training management. Corporals and above are eligible to enroll. There are no prerequisite courses required. The course provides 33 reserve retirement points upon completion. Sub-courses are:

- MCI 8011 Written Communication
- MCI 8012 Leadership
- MCI 8013 Military Studies
- MCI 8014 Intro to Warfighting
- MCI 8015 Warfighting Tactics
- MCI 8016 Warfighting Techniques
- MCI 8017 Weapons

(2) **Staff Noncommissioned Officers Career Nonresident Program (MCI 7100).** This program specifically develops effective Marine SNCOs. It emphasizes leadership and the basic mechanics of training management. Sergeants are required to enroll in this program once they have completed the NCO Basic program. Completion is required for promotion to Gunnery Sergeant and prior to attending the SNCO Career resident course. Sergeants and above are eligible to enroll. The NCO Basic Course is a prerequisite. The course consists of three primary areas: general subjects (28 hours of student effort); leadership and training (48 hours of student effort); and administration (13 hours of student effort). The course offers 30 reserve retirement points upon completion. Sub-courses are:

- MCI 7103 Tactical Communications
- MCI 7104 Personnel Administration
- MCI 7105 Military Justice
- MCI 7106 Leadership
- MCI 7107 Military Training
- MCI 7108 Drills, Ceremonies, Uniform Regulations and Inspections
- MCI 7109 Marine Corps History and Traditions
- MCI 7110 Operations

(3) **Staff Noncommissioned Officers Advanced Nonresident Program (MCI 7200)**. This program specifically develops the senior Marine SNCO's ability to manage company-level unit training responsibilities. Its scope is broader than the Career Course and provides a more advanced level of professional military education. Course completion is one of the PME requirements for selection to Master Sergeant or First Sergeant and is also required for attendance at the SNCO Advanced Resident PME Course. Staff Sergeants and above are eligible to enroll. The course requires 31.5 hours of student effort and offers 11 reserve retirement credits. Sub-courses are:

- MCI 7201 Physical Training Management
- MCI 7202 Drills, Ceremonies, Inspections and Awards
- MCI 7203 Military Justice
- MCI 7205 Administration

(4) **Warfighting Skills Program (MCI 7400)**. This program teaches warfighting doctrine and its application at the small-unit level. It focuses on infantry tactics and techniques and their application in problem-solving exercises. The course includes instruction in tactical fundamentals, combat techniques, fire support, combined arms, and combat leadership. Staff Sergeants and above are eligible to enroll. The SNCO Advanced Nonresident Course is a prerequisite for Staff Sergeants through Sergeants Major to enroll in the course. Warfighting completion is one of the PME requirements for selection to First Sergeant and, effective 1 January 1998, for selection to Master Sergeant. Warfighting is also a prerequisite for officers prior to enrolling in the Amphibious Warfare Nonresident Course. The course requires 54 hours of student effort and offers 18 reserve retirement credits. Sub-courses are:

- MCI 7401A Introduction to Warfare
- MCI 7402A Small Unit Tactical Problems
- MCI 7403B Combat Techniques
- MCI 7404A Marine Corps Leadership
- MCI 7405A Combined Arms

(5) **Amphibious Warfare School Nonresident Program (AWSNP)(MCI 8510/8600)**. AWSNP is designed to be the keystone of PME for preparing

company grade officers to lead the Marine Corps in the 21st century. Its main focus is to develop MAGTF officers who thoroughly understand the unique capabilities of MAGTFs and who can plan for their use at the tactical level of war. AWSNP provides career level PME with an emphasis on warfighting skills, tactical decision making, combined arms operations, and MAGTFs in expeditionary operations and operations other than war. The Warfighting Course is a prerequisite for this course.

AWSNP is divided into two distinct phases. Phase One (8500 Series) is required for all Captains who have not previously completed the resident or nonresident career level PME and is a prerequisite for Phase Two. This phase provides the foundation of the Marine Corps' warfighting doctrine as outlined in FMFM 1 "War fighting".

Phase Two is required for all Captains who have not previously attended the resident AWS program, the Command and Control Systems Course, or any of the career level resident programs of our sister services or international nations. Phase Two emphasizes fundamentals of the offense, defense, expeditionary operations, and operations other than war.

Completion of AWSNP is required for selection to Major. Chief Warrant Officers and above are eligible to enroll in the AWSNP. SNCOs may enroll with their commanding officer's approval. Completion of AWSNP takes three years. The course requires a minimum of 288.5 hours of student effort and offers 96 reserve retirement credits. Sub-courses are:

- MCI 8511 Warfighting
- MCI 8512 Command and Control
- MCI 8513 Marine Corps Planning Process
- MCI 8601 MAGTF Offense
- MCI 8602 MAGTF Defense
- MCI 8603 Expeditionary Operations
- MCI 8604 Operations Other Than War

- (6) **Command and Staff College Nonresident Program (C&SCNP/MCI 8800).** C&SCNP introduces officers to the study of the art of war. The course develops the relationships between the strategic, operational, and

tactical levels of war within a joint/combined environment. C&SCNP further develops the student's ability to communicate strategies and decisions in the Fleet Marine Force. The course has been certified as meeting the Program for Joint Education Phase I requirements. Major selectees and above are eligible to enroll. Completion of a career level school is a prerequisite for enrollment. Completion of C&SCNP is required for selection to Lieutenant Colonel. The course requires 431 hours of student effort and offers 142 reserve retirement credits. The sub-courses are listed in Appendix I.

- c. **Other.** Nonresident PME courses are also available from sources other than the MCI. However, Marines enrolling in non-MCI-produced PME courses are encouraged to call the MCI Student Operations Department at 1-800-MCI-USMC (1-800-624-8762) to establish the course's equivalency for PME within the Marine Corps.

Command and Staff Nonresident Courses are available from the Air Command and Staff College Associate Studies Program, the Army Command and General Staff Corresponding Studies Program, and the Naval War College Program.

Senior level nonresident PME courses are available from the Air War College Associate Studies Program and the Army War College Corresponding Studies Program. The Air Command and Staff College may be reached at (205) 953-7031; the Army Command and General Staff Corresponding Studies Program may be reached at (913) 758-3361, and courses are available from the Naval War College at (401) 841-3898.

- E. **The Commandant's Professional Reading List.** The Commandant's reading list is an assemblage of exceptional books that Marines of indicated ranks are **expected** to read. While the length of the list may at first seem daunting, Marines should recognize that time spent reading is not only educational but also enjoyable, since most of the books provide insight into all aspects of life (not just the Corps); mastery of the list takes many, many years. The list is contained in Appendix E.