



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
SPACE AND NAVAL WARFARE SYSTEMS COMMAND  
4301 PACIFIC HIGHWAY  
SAN DIEGO, CA 92110-3127

SPAWARINST 12410.2  
SPAWAR 00A-HR  
17 Feb 2004

SPAWARINST 12410.2

From: Commander, Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command

Subj: PAYMENT OF EXPENSES FOR ACADEMIC DEGREES AND PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS

Ref: (a) OASN (M&RA) memo of 21 Mar 03  
(b) ASN(FM&C) memo of 9 May 2003  
(c) FSA memo ser 82/030174 dtd 10 Sep 03  
(d) SPAWARINST 12410.16B  
(e) CNETINST 1560.3D

Encl: (1) Civilian Academic Degree Training Program, Policy Requirements  
(2) Payment of Expenses to Obtain Professional Credentials, Policy Requirements

1. Purpose. This instruction establishes policy and procedures within SPAWAR Headquarters and SPAWAR field activities, and associated Program Executive Offices (PEOs) for the payment of expenses of civilian employees for obtaining academic degrees and obtaining and renewing professional credentials, to include professional accreditations, State-imposed and professional licenses, and professional certifications, that are necessary or beneficial for the employee in the performance of official duties. This instruction delegates approval authority for such costs within their organizations to commanders of SPAWAR field activities and Program Executive Officers, who may in turn redelegate to the lowest practicable level.

2. Background. Reference (a) authorizes Echelon I and II commands to pay the costs for civilian employees for academic degrees, licenses, and other professional credentials that benefit the organization, in accordance with the National Defense Authorization Acts for Fiscal Years 2001 and 2002. These authorities may be used, as appropriate, to recruit, develop, and retain a world-class workforce through planned, systemic, and structured programs for workforce development to meet organizational objectives. Enclosures (1) and (2), respectively, provide policy guidance relating to payments for civilian academic degrees and expenses to obtain and renew professional credentials.

3. Coverage. This instruction applies to all civilian employees at SPAWAR Headquarters, it's field activities, and associated PEOs. It covers the payment of costs associated with these employees obtaining an academic degree, as well as payment of

costs associated with obtaining and renewing professional licenses and other professional credentials that further organizational objectives. Individual courses that are mission essential for civilian or active duty military personnel are not within the scope of this instruction and are covered by reference (d). Likewise, college-level courses that are not a part of a structured and approved degree program designed to obtain an academic degree are not within the purview of this instruction, but fall under reference (d). Tuition assistance programs for active military personnel are not within the scope of this program and are covered in reference (e). For Fiscal Year 2003, reimbursements for professional credentials in the financial management professions set forth in the enclosure to reference (b) must be in accordance with reference (c) and are limited to the funding source identified therein. Director, Field Support Activity, will provide guidance for future fiscal years. Schedule C employees who are excepted from competitive selection are not eligible for these programs.

#### 4. Policy

a. Academic degrees and initial professional licensing or other professional credentials. In addition to the guidance set forth in reference (a), SPAWAR implementation of payments for civilian employees to obtain an academic degree and/or an initial professional license or other professional credential shall include:

(1) An annual Individual Development Plan (IDP) for employees desiring tuition assistance for academic degree programs or reimbursement for payments associated with obtaining initial licensing and/or other professional credentials.

(2) A complete educational plan for the degree being pursued, to include all coursework required for the degree, and approximate timetable.

(3) Payments for obtaining an academic degree will be limited to accredited institutions of higher learning. A listing of nationally recognized accrediting agencies and associations can be found on the Department of Education website (<http://www.ed.gov>). Funding may, at the approving official's discretion, include additional expenses necessary to ensure successful participation in an approved course, including supplies and equipment, application fees, registration fees, and parking.

(4) Degree/coursework must be related to career field or support command mission. Electives may be covered only if required for degree program.

(5) Employee will sign an agreement, such as that found on DD Form 1556 (Request, Authorization, Agreement, Certification of Training and Reimbursement form), to continue in service per the requirements of enclosure (1), to submit final grades within 30 days of course completion, and to reimburse the command in the event of a withdrawal, incomplete, or less than successful completion. No service agreement is necessary for credential reimbursement.

b. Renewal of professional licenses or other professional credentials. As reflected in reference (c), prior approval of reimbursement for expenses associated with professional licenses and other professional credentials is required, as an employee may not, by self-nomination, incur expenses under this authority and demand reimbursement.

c. Payments under these programs are discretionary by the command or activity and this instruction does not create an entitlement or benefit of employment. Participation in these programs may be limited by availability of funding.

5. Limitations on payments and source of funding

a. Limitations on costs associated with obtaining an academic degree and/or professional credential will be set, consistent with the guidance and policies set forth, respectively, in enclosures (1) and (2) to reference (a), by individual SPAWAR organizations including Headquarters, Field Activities, and PEOs.

b. Funding will be budgeted and managed by individual organizations, including Headquarters, Field Activities, and PEOs.

c. Payments for the 15 financial management professional credentials listed in the enclosure to reference (b) may only be made under the provisions of reference (b) and as outlined in reference (c).

6. Procedures

a. SPAWAR 00A-HR has staff cognizance over these programs.

b. Application procedures and selection processes will be developed by individual field activities, PEOs and Headquarters directorates, except in the case of the financial management professional credentials listed in the enclosure to reference (b), which must follow the procedures outlined in reference (c). Selection processes should be developed in accordance with Merit System Principles and with the organization's needs for particular skills or expertise in mind.

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7. Delegation of Authority. This instruction authorizes commanders of SPAWAR field activities to pay for academic degrees, licenses, and other professional credentials in accordance with references (a) and (c) and guidance provided herein.

/s/  
K. D. SLAGHT

Distribution:  
SPAWAR List 4  
SNDL Part II  
FKA1B1 (SPAWAR SYSTEMS CENTER, FACILITY AND ACTIVITY)

**Guidance for Civilian Academic Degree Training Programs**

a. Payment of cost associated with obtaining an academic degree to assist in recruiting or retaining employees is no longer restricted to occupations in which a shortage of qualified personnel is identified.

b. Funding is authorized only for individuals participating in planned, systemic, and coordinated professional development programs. Such programs must meet all of the following criteria:

(1) Financial support for the program is preplanned rather than ad hoc.

(2) The program consists of a sequenced set of instruction or assignments that clearly support organizational objectives.

(3) The program produces measurable improvement in either individual or organizational performance.

c. The Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), the Commandant of the Marine Corps, the Assistant for Administration, Office of the Under Secretary of the Navy, and the Commanders of Navy Echelon I and II commands reporting to the CNO are delegated the authority to implement this authority and determine the circumstances under which payment for academic degrees shall be made. The authority to approve planned, systemic and coordinated programs of professional development for academic degree payment may be delegated to the activity head at command discretion.

d. Programs of professional development administered under this policy must be consistent with Merit System Principles. Identification and selection of employees for training and development opportunities must be done fairly and equitably, without regard to political affiliation, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, status as a parent, age, or handicapping condition.

e. Funding is permitted for any course of post-secondary education delivered through classroom, electronic, or other means provided that it shall be administered or conducted by an institution that is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting body to provide a curriculum of post-secondary

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education. The Department of Education (DOE) publishes a listing of accredited bodies under section 1001(c) of title 20 U.S.C. This listing can also be found on the DOE website [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov).

f. Funding may include such additional expenses as may be necessary to ensure successful participation including but not limited to supplies and equipment, application fees, registration fees, and parking fees.

g. A continued service agreement shall be completed prior to degree payment. For full-time attendance, the continued service agreement obligated employees for whom academic degree training is paid to serve in a Government agency for a period at least three times the length of the time spent in academic degree training. The period of obligated service begins the day after the last training class. For part time training, the period of obligated service will be computed in accordance with DON guidance related to time and cost factor.

h. Academic degree payment is not authorized for any employee occupying or seeking to qualify for appointment to any position that is excepted from the competitive service because of its confidential policy-determining, policy-making, or policy-advocating character.

i. Academic degree payment is not authorized for any employee attending an institution that discriminates on the basis of political affiliation, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, status as a parent, age, or handicapping condition.

j. With the exception of a Federal grant of funds made available solely for student financial assistance or related administrative costs, funds may not be provided by contract or grant to an institution of higher education or any sub-element of that institution if either the parent institution or and sub-element of that institution has a policy or practice that prevents the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) units or student ROTC participation, or prevents military recruiting on campus, or access to student directory information.

k. Any bargaining obligations must be satisfied prior to implementation of this subchapter.

l. Offices with the authority to approve the establishment of programs of professional development that offer academic degree payment shall ensure that the programs are implemented in a manner that will result in better organizational or individual performance. The effective use of programs of professional development shall be considered as a part of the overall assessment of human resources management. The nature and extent of the use of programs of professional development shall be documented as a part of the review of organization health in the annual report required by DON policy.

m. This authority does not apply to Navy Student Loan Repayment Plan under 5 USC Section 5379 and 5 CFR 537.



**Guidance for Payment of Expenses to Obtain Professional  
Credentials**

a. Payment of costs associated with obtaining and renewing professional credentials including professional accreditation, State-imposed and professional licenses, and professional certifications; and examinations to obtain such credentials is authorized to support the Department of the Navy's human capital goals. Given the availability of funding, an activity may pay for professional credentials that are necessary or beneficial for the employee in the performance of official duties.

b. This authority will be implemented in a manner consistent with merit system principles and as described by the following criteria. The license or certification:

(1) Enhances productivity.

(2) Improves performance.

(3) Maximizes recruitment opportunities, especially for shortage category occupations and other labor market conditions.

(4) Increases retention, especially for "high turnover" career fields.

(5) Broadens and develops the skill base for a quality work force to accomplish the DON's mission and ensure readiness.

(6) Supports civilian leadership development initiatives and career path improvements to meet future requirements.

c. This authority is discretionary and is not an entitlement or benefit of employment.

d. Naval activities and Marine commands shall document the use of this authority. The Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS) will be modified to provide essential data for program evaluation. Specific data listed below must be retained by the activities until the DCPDS accommodates these new requirements. Each approving official is responsible for ensuring that the use of this authority is documented.

e. Funding is permitted for license and certification as defined in this document. This authority may not be used to obtain licenses or certification from organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, parental status, sexual orientation or disability.

f. This authority may not be exercised on behalf of employees occupying Schedule C and non-career (political) SES positions. This authority is not applicable to active duty military personnel, local national and non-appropriated fund employees.

g. Payment for licenses and certifications, and their subsequent renewals, may include, at the discretion of the activity and command, such additional expenses as dues or fees required by the licensing or certifying agency, fees for preparation for examinations, examinations, registration fees, and travel and per diem costs. Payment may not include employees' membership fees in societies or associations.

h. Payment shall be made on a reimbursable basis upon successful receipt of the credential. Reimbursement shall be through the completion of the SF 1164.

i. Any collective bargaining obligations must be satisfied prior to implementation of this instruction.

j. Unless permitted by law or regulation, minimum qualification requirements may not be established based upon the presence or absence of a license or certification.

k. The Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), the Commander of the Marine Corps, the Assistant for Administration, Office of the Under Secretary of the Navy, and the Commander of Navy Echelon 1 and 2 commands reporting to the CNO are delegated the authority to implement this authority and determine the circumstances under which payment for professional credentials will be made. This authority may be further delegated to the lowest practicable level. Echelon 1 and 2 commands retain responsibility for ensuring funding support, assessing the effectiveness of these programs, and reporting program data.

#### 1. Definitions

(1) Licensing is the process by which an agency of [Federal, state, or local] government grants permission to an individual to engage in a given occupation upon finding that the applicant has attained the minimal degree of competency required to engage in that occupation.

(2) Certification is recognition given to individuals who have met predetermined qualifications set by an agency of government, industry, or profession.

m. Data Elements

- (1) License/Certificate (license name as it appears on the certificate)
- (2) Date License/Certificate Obtained
- (3) Initial Annual/Renewal
- (4) License/Certificate Cost Cumulative Cost
- (5) Date Paid
- (6) Amount Paid
- (7) Training for Certificate/License