

ILE a Casualty of War

**A Monograph
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Abstract

Intermediate Level Education a Casualty of War, By COL Thomas S. Hollis, U.S. Army, 60 pages.

The purpose of this research is to demonstrate how personnel policies in support of the operational force have affected the ability of majors to attend Intermediate Level Education (ILE), evident by the growing backlog of majors waiting to attend ILE. Critical to effectively changing this situation is the ability to maintain ILE of all junior field grade officers. For over a century, the U.S. Army has invested considerable time, energy and talent in the Professional Military Education (PME) of officers. Senior leaders insist that it takes education to build a quality force consisting of professional, well trained, and highly creative men and woman to harness new technologies and concepts in transforming an organization and adopting innovative doctrine. As the operational force continues to bear the strain of fighting a protracted war, some of the Army's institutional systems, specifically ILE, have had to continue operate at reduced manning, evident by the rising number of both unfilled school seats and mounting number of majors waiting to attend ILE. Without the intellectual knowledge gained from attending ILE, junior field grades of today will not be capable of culturally transforming and preparing the Army for the complex environment of future warfare

The study benefits from information collected from Unites States Command and General Staff College, Human Resource Command, as well as Army Regulations and recent publications and interviews of individuals responsible for monitoring and distributing officers to ILE to arrive at the recommendations. This monograph assessed the ability of ILE to ready majors for future challenges through teaching of relevant subjects for now and the near future. The monograph also pointed to some disturbing trends of an increasing number of unfilled seats at ILE. The policies are also affecting the timing of when a major attends ILE. Critical to a unit and a major's success is the relevant ILE before required to perform the duties as a field grade officer. The evaluation criteria used to validate the relevance of ILE curriculum were derived from written guidance by senior military leaders in determining what skills were necessary to prepare majors for the complexity of warfare.

The research concludes with recommended modifications to personnel policies to better accommodate the flow of majors between duties with the operational force and attending ILE. This flow would assist in reducing and eventually eliminating the backlog of officers waiting to attend ILE. The paper concludes by highlighting that the Army must modify personnel policies to address the institutional obligation to maintaining a ready and relevant force. As we enter into the seventh year of a protracted war, the Army must rebalance the organization by preserving the core competencies of the institutional educational based systems that made the Army the greatest force in the world.

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Introduction

“War is a thinking man's sport. It's past time to overhaul the way we produce the military thinkers on which future victory will depend.” – General George S. Patton Jr.¹

Background and Significance

The U.S. Army is facing the challenging task of transforming while maintaining the combat readiness of forces on a two-front war. For over a century, the U.S. Army has invested considerable time, energy and talent in the Professional Military Education (PME) of officers.² Senior leaders insist that it takes education to build a quality force consisting of professional, well trained, and highly creative men and woman to harness new technologies in transforming an organization and developing innovative doctrine.³ Critical to effectively changing the Army is the ability to maintain Intermediate Level Education (ILE) of junior field grade officers. However, as the operational force continues to bare the strain of fighting a protracted war, some of the Army's institutional systems, specifically ILE, have had to continue operating at reduced manning, evident by the rising number of both unfilled school seats and the mounting number of majors waiting to attend ILE.

Due to the increased operational tempo (OPTEMPO) through 2004 the Army created personnel policies to support the operational force. As a result of these policies an increasing number of majors are being deferred from attending ILE to the point of creating a backlog of

¹ Richard Hart Sinnreich, “Watching the Military Eat it's Seed Corn,” *Army Magazine*, May 2005, quote from General George S. Patton, *War as I Knew It*, Bantam Books, NY: May 1983. 14.

² Henry H Shelton, “Professional Education: ‘The Key to Transformation,’” *Parameters* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College), 31, no. 3 (Autumn 2001), 7.

³ *Ibid*, 16.

majors waiting to attend.⁴ These policies are affecting the majors' ability to gain the knowledge required to successfully contribute relevant skills to operational units. On February 23, 2005, the *Washington Times* reported that the Defense Department was seeking ways to curtail military officer education programs during "stress" periods to increase the pool of deployable officers.⁵ Policies that lead to curtailing only increase the backlog of officers wait to attend ILE. These policies also jeopardized the essential balance needed between the operational and the institutional forces to maintain the Army during a protracted war. According Doctor Neil Fulcher, Chief of Distribution and Development Branch, Human Resource Command this lack of balance has greatly affected the regular ebb and flow of officers to ILE and with each passing year the number of unfilled seats in ILE increases.⁶

Compounding the issue of the Army's inability to fill ILE seats is the lower manning priority of majors to the institutional force. With critical manning shortages, the institutional force can ill afford to release the few majors serving in their units. Within the distribution of manning fill for institutional force, schools are a lower prioritization and consequently are among the first to receive reduction in manning strength. With schools being a lower priority fill in the institutional force by the time majors are distributed to institutional "must fill" requirements such as recruiting command, there simply are fewer majors available for release to attend ILE. The reduced manning of the institutional force coupled with an increased number of majors serving in the operational force is directly contributing to the reduced enrollment in ILE.

⁴ Richard Hart Sinnreich, "Watching the Military Eat it's Seed Corn," *Army Magazine*, May 2005, 14.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Neil Fulcher, Chief of Distribution and Development Branch, Operations and Plans Division, Officer Personnel Management Directorate (OPMD), Human Resource Command (HRC), Room 6S67, January 2008. In confirming information contained in COL Brian Prosser statement in *ILE Concept, Reality and Recommendations* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, March 2006), 12.

As attendance in ILE decreases, the Army is considering a change in policy to allow captains with 9 years of service and lieutenant colonels with over 16 years of service to attend ILE in order to fill empty seats.⁷ This shift in policy will only increase the pool of officers waiting to attend ILE and is a direct result of the personnel policies in support of the operational force. As Army personnel policies continue to over prioritize operational requirements and add to the imbalance of manning between the manning operational and institutional force, the attendance numbers at ILE will continue to be jeopardized.

Methodology

In response to increased operational demands, the Army has created personnel policies that are affecting attendance at ILE, evident by the backlog of officers waiting to attend. This monograph will review Army personnel policies affecting the ability for majors to attend ILE. The research will illustrate how personnel policies in support of a protracted war contribute to the imbalance between the operational and institutional force. The imbalance in the force is affecting the Army's ability to fill all ILE class seats and contributing to an increasing number of majors waiting to attend school.

In demonstrating how personnel policies have affected the ability of majors to attend ILE, it is critical to establish the importance of ILE in preparing officers for the next ten years of service. This paper reviews the curriculum and examines how it matches what senior leaders have stipulated as necessary knowledge for field grade officers. The research reviews both the

⁷ ILE Administration, POC LTC David Gunn, Common Core Course Deputy Director comments during an interview in Lewis and Clark room 4206 on the attendance decrease and the CGSC is now proposing to the Army an increase to the scope of officer who can attend ILE, 23 January 2008. Currently, AR 600-3 indicates an officer can attend ILE between their 10 and 14 year of service.

historical significance and the current curriculum of ILE. Once this is accomplished, a comparison can then be drawn between what senior leadership requires versus what is taught at ILE. This comparison expounds that ILE is relevant in readying junior field grade officers for the complexities of warfare.

A closer review of the courses taught at resident ILE is necessary to provide a basis of understanding in the value of attending the school. The research also examines the results of graduate student survey data to determine if the education perceived by majors was relevant in readying them for the complexities of war. Additionally, the research must examine the ability of ILE administration to adapt the curriculum to maintain pace with a world of fluid change which is fueling the complexities and evolving changes in warfare.

The research data produces recommendations for the Army to regain balance between the operational and institutional force, as well as modifications to current personnel policies to accommodate an ebb and flow of officers into ILE. The recommendations focus specifically on the attendance at the institutional resident ILE course for the operational career of field majors. While satellite ILE programs are taught at four Army installations, this monograph focuses on the two 10-month ILE courses taught to operational career field officers in Command and General Staff School, at Fort Leavenworth.

According to a Strategic leader education symposium many senior military leaders consider ILE is the most important residential PME experience in an officer's career.⁸ The PME Army officers receive prior to attending ILE is beyond the scope of this paper and with few exceptions is institutionally provided to all company grade officers' prior to performing tactical

⁸ Jeffery D. McCausland and Gregg Martin, "Transforming Strategic Leadership Education for the 21st Century Army," *Parameters*, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: US. Army War College Quarterly, Vol., 31, No. 3, Autumn 2001), 25.

level duties. While education is paramount to transforming the Army, the paper does not analyze the potential impact of not attending ILE will have on the future of transformation. The personnel policies that do facilitate the transformational growth of operational forces and in that regard, directly support the operational build for deploying units. Consequently, decisions by the Army to accelerate transformation of units and headquarters are conducted for the purpose of supporting war efforts of the operational force.

Senior Leaders Guidance

Many senior leaders consider ILE the pinnacle in an officer's military education and the most critical professional development in an officer's career.⁹ These senior leaders believe the key to winning this war is the institutional Army's ability to produce officers with the knowledge relevant to the fight, who are intellectually ready for the complex challenges of the future. According to General Peter J. Schoomaker, the Army's start point for developing these skills and knowledge is ILE, where officers transition from tactical execution to operational and strategic planners and coordinators.¹⁰ Recent calls by political leaders for the Army to develop critical thinkers for planning operational and strategic objectives in this protracted war have increased the importance of educating our junior field grade officers.¹¹ At a September 2005 Congressional roundtable discussion on military education attended by a number of active and retired military

⁹ Jeffery D. McCausland and Gregg Martin, "Transforming Strategic Leader Education for the 21st Century Army," *Parmeters*, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Quarterly Vol., XXXI, no.3 Autumn 2001), 25.

¹⁰ Peter J. Schoomaker and Anthony W. Vassalo, "The Way Ahead," *Military Review*, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Command and General Staff College), May-June 2004, 2.

¹¹ BG James T. Hirai, USA and Colonel Kim L Summers, USA, retired, "Leader Development and Education: Growing Leaders Now for the Future," *Military Review*, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Command and General Staff College), May-June 2005, 86.

senior leaders, participants were nearly unanimous in their concern that military education is losing ground today despite its expanding importance.¹²

The shared vision of General George W. Casey, Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) and Secretary of the Army Pete Geren is for the Army to remain the preeminent landpower on Earth—the ultimate instrument of national resolve—that is both relevant to and ready for the complex security challenges of the 21st Century.¹³ Two of the principles elements to achieving the CSA involve providing relevant and ready land power and growing adaptive leaders to fulfill the Army’s strategic roles and missions.¹⁴

According to General Casey,

Whatever forces we build for the future must be versatile and must be led by agile, adaptive leaders. Now, while I risk undermining my own predictions, one thing we know is that we won't get the future exactly right. And so our forces -- any forces that we build have to be optimized to deal with uncertainty and a wide range of operations and engagements.¹⁵

To produce an officer corps that can meet the changes and complexities of future conflict to the CSA standards requires time for education of relevant professional development subjects that will ready officers for uncertainty and complexities.

¹² Congressional Round Table panel chaired by Congressman Ike Skelton, D-Missouri, October 2005

¹³ The Department of the Army, Army Strategic Planning Guidance (ASPG), 2006-2023, Leader Development and Education, 26

¹⁴ Army Campaign Plan, Change 5, April 5, 2007, Headquarters Department of Army, Pentagon, G-3/5/7, 8. The four principle way the Army plans on achieving this vision are: Providing relevant and ready land power; training and equipping soldiers to serve as warriors and growing adaptive leaders; Sustaining the All-Volunteer Force composed of highly motivated Soldiers that are provided an quality high quality of life; and providing the infrastructure and support to enable the force to fulfill its strategic roles and missions.

¹⁵ U.S. Department of the Army, Chief of Staff, Army General George Casey, Speech to the National Press Club, August, 14, 2007, printed in the Army Times September 2007

Senior leaders often use the terms “relevant and ready” in explaining the desired skills required for success in a complex environment. To be relevant and ready for the next conflict General Casey proposes the continued professional development of officers, exposing them to the latest trends and how to creatively think of what might unfold in the future.¹⁶ Today, Army senior leaders are entrusted with the responsibility to transform the Army and prepare the force against the potential threats of the 21st century. Senior leadership has determined that education is paramount to culturally changing the Army and necessary to improve on its ability to accomplish national military strategy. General Schoomaker compared the needed officer competency to that of a modern pentathlete – able to be proficient in five vastly different domains: Strategic and creative thinker, builder of leaders and teams, effective in managing, leading and changing the business side of the Army, skilled in governance, statesmanship and diplomacy, understanding cultural context and works effectively across them.¹⁷ While he was CSA, General Schoomaker identified these skill sets as critical for an officer to succeed in this evolving complex environment of war. He states that, “in an era of globalization and accelerated changes to our international security it is important now more than ever to have officers that are creative, innovative problem solvers and adaptive thinkers well versed on a variety of issues.”¹⁸

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Robert A Tipton, *Professional Military Education for the “Penathlete” of the Future*, Strategy Research Project, USAWC, February 13, 2006, 4.

¹⁸ Harvey and Schoomaker, ARMY Home page, reference to leaders as “Pentathletes,” who are innovative, adaptive, culturally astute professionals; demonstrating character and integrity in all they do; expert in the art and science of the profession of arms; confidently leading the Soldiers and civilians of our Army; leading change, building teams, boldly confronting uncertainty, and solving complex problems while engendering loyalty and trust”.

Criteria for Relevant and Ready

In establishing criteria for relevant education to prepare majors to perform duties as field grade officers in the contemporary operating environment, this study consulted command guidance from several senior leaders from both the Army and joint commands. Common core competencies required by senior leaders of officers in the 21st century was gathered from *FM 22-100 Strategic Leadership Skills*, *FM 22-103, Army War College Strategic Leadership Primer*, *Army Strategic Planning Guidance (ASPG) Annex B*, *Strategic Readiness System*, and the *U.S. Army Posture Statement*¹⁹. In these documents, the common core competencies agreed upon for development of junior field grade officers were: a leader who is expeditionary in mindset, able to work in joint, interagency, multinational (JIM) and service organizations, has interpersonal and communications skills, and is confident in his understanding of operational and strategic planning with the ability to apply various planning processes to solve problem and provide recommend solutions to complex issues.²⁰ Additionally, senior leaders directed ILE to instill in officers a warrior ethos, while at the same time creating self aware, innovative, adaptive officers able to lead JIM teams in full spectrum operations.²¹ These skills and competencies will assist in determining if the ILE curriculum is relevant in preparing majors for the complexities of warfare.

¹⁹ U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Strategic Planning Guidance (ASPG), 2006-2023*, “Leader Development and Education,” (Washington, DC: GPO, April 2006), 26.

²⁰ In review of *FM 22-100 Strategic Leadership Skills*, *FM 22-103, Army War College Strategic Leadership Primer*, and *The Army Strategic Planning Guidance (ASPG)* these competencies were common to all. Each of these references listed several other attribute and competencies needed in officers however, all agree on the following skills sets: a leader who is expeditionary in mindset, able to work in joint, interagency, multinational (JIM) and service organizations, has interpersonal and communications skills, and is confident in his understanding of operational and strategic planning with the ability to apply various planning processes to solve problem and provide recommend solutions to complex issues.

²¹ U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Strategic Planning Guidance (ASPG), 2006-2023*, “Leader Development and Education,” (Washington, DC: GPO, April 2006), 26.

Due to the complexities of the COE, strategic thinking is no longer reserved for general officers. The Army's plan is to begin strategic understanding earlier in an officer's career, rather than waiting until Senior Service College to develop this skill. Leaders must understand the interconnected links between tactical execution and strategic effect in war. Consequently, there is a move to produce strategic understanding at the junior field grade level in order to provide better understanding of the tactical and strategic link while working plans in a joint, interagency and coalition environment. To achieve this link, ILE must produce majors who are able to strategic problem solve while still honing their skills at the doctrinal application of the operational and tactical levels of war.

ILE has the challenge to educate majors from tactical level BCT's to the operational level of Corps and Army commands. This was validated by a 2001 Army Training and Leader Development Panel (ATLDP) study which recommended that for the Army to fight and win the Nation's wars it must improve and increase the scope of education at the junior field grade level. The panel findings led to the creation of ILE which increased the scope of the curriculum to ensure relevancy and the number of officers required to attend. After officer year group 1994, all operational career field majors attending ILE are supposed to be educated in the full spectrum of conflict using the COE to develop officers with the right skills, knowledge, and experience to meet potential challenges of the 21st century.²² The ATLDP report recommended that ILE establish learning objectives associated with skill sets necessary for future duties.

²² Department of the Army Command and General Staff College, Command and General Staff Master Evaluation Plan AY 2005, (Fort Monroe, VA: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, August 2005), 4-9.

The criteria established by senior leaders for junior field grade officers to receive professional military education that will prepare them for the next ten years of service. The critical skill sets junior field grade officers must achieve in order to be successful included JIM, critical thinking, warrior ethos, interpersonal skills, communication, technical skills, influencing staff actions, operational and strategic planning, developing and building teams. In order to determine if ILE curriculum is educating these skills sets and therefore confirming the relevance for majors to attend, it is important to examine the curriculum. To demonstrate current and potential effects the war is having on ILE attendance, it is crucial to first review some historical aspects and internal findings to evaluate past tendencies with current trends.

Historical Relevance of CGSS (ILE)

In 1875, the Commanding General of the Army, William T. Sherman, realized that in order to remain relevant in understanding the changes in the nature of warfare, the U.S. Army had to increase the PME of officers. With the approval of the Secretary of War William Belknap, General Sherman sent Brigadier General Emory Upton and Commodore Stephan B. Luce on a world tour to study the organization, tactics, and educational systems of foreign armies. Following his return in 1878, BG Upton published “*The Armies of Asia and Europe*,” in which he recommended a reform movement of the U.S. Army education to increase the professional skills of the officer corps. Upton recommended the need for “development of career officers [who are] prepared not only in the tactical and technical aspects of military affairs, but also in the higher arts of strategy and warfare.”²³ Based on these findings, the War department established in 1881 the Schools of Application for Cavalry and Infantry at Fort Leavenworth.

²³ Timothy K. Nenninger, *The Fort Leavenworth Schools: “Post Graduate Military Education and Professionalization in the U.S. Army, 1880-1920,”* (University of Wisconsin, 1974), iv.

Under General Order 42, the purpose of the school was to improve the fighting quality of the service.²⁴ Important to General Sherman, and still true today in General Casey's vision, is the need for broad military educational experience among the officer corps.²⁵ General John C. Pope, the department commander, developed a Command and Staff College curriculum which included American history, mathematics, chemistry, geology, and law. The curriculum encompassed instruction in military tactics, strategy, engineering, logistics, and foreign language.²⁶ The curriculum also placed special emphasis on war. "As in science, art, literature, for the higher branches we must look to books and the recorded knowledge of the past."²⁷ The goal of Colonel Elwell S. Otis, the first school commandant, was to produce junior field grade officers that were versed in a variety of theoretical study in preparation for high command and staff positions. From 1881-1917 Colonel Otis continued to evolve the curriculum to keep pace with the evolution of warfare and assembled academic boards to submit recommendations to ensure the standard for professional military education went beyond the practical, academy or college-based training. Although during these years the importance of the school promulgated, many senior leaders were still skeptical and not supportive of school trained officers. Not until World War I did senior

²⁴ Ibid, 22.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Timothy K. Nenninger, *The Fort Leavenworth Schools: "Post Graduate Military Education and Professionalization in the U.S. Army, 1880-1920,"* (University of Wisconsin, 1974), 21.

²⁷ Timothy K. Nenninger, *The Fort Leavenworth Schools: "Post Graduate Military Education and Professionalization in the U.S. Army, 1880-1920,"* (University of Wisconsin, 1974), 21. William T. Sherman, *Address to the School of Application*, Fort Leavenworth, 1882, 1-13.

leaders realize the significant contribution of these officers in planning and staff work and thus became convinced of the importance of CGSC in the professional development of officers.²⁸

Beginning in 1920 and lasting through 1939, officers at CGSC were educated on the fundamentals of problem solving and developing competency in handling large formations.²⁹ During this period the school's mission was "to train officers for higher command and general staff work in the division and the Corps."³⁰ The faculty maintained courses relevant to the times by modifying the curriculum to meet the changes in technologies of war in international and domestic situations.³¹ With many of the students and instructors being veterans of WWI, it was natural that the education centered on lessons learned from that war and applying these experiences by practical exercises.³²

Such was the importance of PME that the Army maintained CGSC throughout the interwar period even though the Army had only a small force to accomplish the missions of the Nation. Senior leaders recognized that CGSC was at the heart of reshaping the Army as an organization to remain relevant and ready as a profession after WWI and in anticipation of future conflict.³³ As the Army experienced a tremendous reduction in personnel and funding after WWI, many senior military leaders, such as Generals Pershing and Marshall, were avid supporters of professional education for officers and lobbied hard to maintain a balance between operational

²⁸ Ibid, introduction.

²⁹ Peter J. Schifferle, "Anticipating Armageddon: The Leavenworth Schools and United States Army Military Effectiveness, 1919-1945,"diss., University of Kansas, 2002 (UMI, Dissertation Services, Ann Arbor, Michigan 2004) 170.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., 172.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

requirements and institutional support for CGSC. These senior leaders wanted to “keep an intelligent evolution going on in the Army” and drew the support of the Secretary of War John W. Weeks when he requested Congress increase funding for military education to further the effectiveness and relevancy of the force.³⁴ These senior leaders were visionaries and clearly recognized the importance of staff officers and commanders armed with the knowledge of problem solving skills and the ability to critically think through issues.

In 1940, as senior military leaders were hearing the sounds of war drums from across the Atlantic, the Army pushed to increase attendance in CGSC to educate more officers in the event of war. In 1940, Fort Leavenworth reduced the duration of CGSC from two to one year and compressed the curriculum to provide officers more opportunity for studies that focused on general staff actions, as well as leadership and command issues at the battalion, regimental, and divisional levels.³⁵ As WWII began, a tremendous demand for officers forced the Army to mobilize officers for instructor duties at CGSC to ensure the school remained at full capacity. As a result, between 1940 and 1946 CGSC educated more than 16,000 officers, almost three times the total number of graduates produced in the previous 58 years.³⁶ By comparison today, nearly the complete opposite is occurring as the Army is delaying majors from attending ILE and

³⁴ Testimony of Secretary of War John W. Weeks before Congress, House, Subcommittee of House Committee on Appropriations, Army Appropriation Bill, 1923: (Hearing Before the subcommittee, 67th Cong., 2d session), February 20, 1922, 1471.

³⁵ Peter J Schifferle, “Anticipating Armageddon: The Leavenworth Schools and United States Military Effectiveness, 1919 to 1945,” diss., University of Kansas, 2002, (UMI Dissertation Services, Ann Arbor, Michigan 2004), 273.

³⁶ Ibid, 274.

deferring the education needed to be relevant in planning operations and readying officers' for the complex issues at the field grade level.

Converting CGSOC to ILE

In 2001, Chief of Staff of the Army General Shinseki ordered a study by The Army Training and Leader Development Panel (ATLDP) to assess the effectiveness of the Army's educational systems in readying officers for full spectrum operations. The findings led to the schools' conversion from the resident Command and General Staff Officers Course (CGSOC) which only educated 50% of the majors, to a universal ILE to educate all majors.³⁷ The primary difference between CGSOC and ILE was the redesign of the curriculum to prepare majors for their next ten years of service. The ATLDP recommended a commitment by the Army to provide all majors technical, tactical, operational, joint and leadership competencies and skills necessary to be relevant for the future staff or command positions.³⁸ The school enlarged the faculty and brought the administration in line with the standards at most universities, facilitating regular review of curriculum. The increases in administration enabled the faculty to regularly review the instruction to ensure relevancy of education to the requests of the operational force.

³⁷ U.S. Department of the Army, The Army Training and Leader Development Panel Officer Study: *Report to the Army*, (Washington, D.C. GPO, July 2001), 8.

³⁸ Neal Bralley, Jim Danley, Dan French, Chuck Soby and Paul Tiberi, Understanding ILE: "How is it different from CGSOC?" *Special Warfare*: (John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center & School February 2004), Vol. 16, no. 3, 32-34.

ILE Today

“You’ve got two missions, as I see it: to fight these wars and prepare for the next war,” said. “The golden age of professional military education was the period following World War I. It sustained the Army’s war fighting competency during those lean times and produced the commanders that led the nation to victory in World War II” - Rep. Ike Skelton, Missouri Democrat³⁹

ILE today is far different from the course designed in 2002. The course has expanded to cover full spectrum conflict in tactical, operational and strategic environments. The ILE curriculum continues to evolve through input received from the operational and joint forces and surveys of previous graduates of ILE. The ILE curriculum continues to adjust and professionalize the breadth of education through the hiring of civilian instructors who have expertise in specific fields of study. ILE has two 10-month classes - one 1200 seat capacity class begins in June and another 597-seat class starts in February. The staggered start, which began in 2006, accommodates the flow of officers into the course from the operational force or other institutional duties. To assess the ability of ILE to ready majors to plan and execute operations in the complex environment of war, a review of ILE curriculum is required to determine the relevancy of education.

ILE Curriculum

For over a century, the CGSC (now ILE) curriculum has had a profound impact on the education of future Army leaders. As stated previously, ILE serves as the transition point for majors’ moving from the tactical level of knowledge to an operational and strategic level. ILE produces officers able to critically think through ambiguous complex issues to plan and manage

³⁹ Representative Ike Skelton, Missouri Democrat, US Congress, from public record delivered on floor of 109th U.S. Congress, 23 February 2005.

military operations. The curriculum's rigor produces officers capable of determining solutions throughout the spectrum of conflict and is why the Army refers to these graduates as "Iron Majors."⁴⁰ The professional education at ILE is tailored to educate majors beyond their 10th year of service. The ILE curriculum is based on the mission statement to produce:

"Field grade officers with a warrior ethos and warfighting focus in Army, joint, multinational, and interagency organizations in the execution of full spectrum operations. To develop officers who are versed in critical reasoning, problem solving techniques and the ability to critical think and be adaptive in complex environments. The end state is centered on providing the field grade officers who have education knowledge that is relevant for the current and potential conflicts and contribute to the transformation of the Army."⁴¹

The faculty and administration adjust the curriculum based on guidance from the Department of Defense, the Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), and Joint Forces. The administration also receives input to address relevancy of curriculum from the Combined Arms Center (CAC) lessons learned, field commanders, and previous ILE graduates on the evolving findings to the contemporary operating environment (COE).⁴²

To further support the operational force with majors ready to contribute to military success in the contemporary operational environment, ILE administration designs curriculum which provokes creative and innovative solutions to problems, increases an officers' adaptive skills and assists in building confident leaders through application. The ILE classroom forums encourage discussion and discourse on a variety of military subjects which serve to refine the

⁴⁰ Common nickname used by senior Army officers' references to officers in the rank of major. The key and developmental duty for majors is quality staff work opposed to command position. Major is the only rank in the officer profession that relies on the performance of duty as a staff officer for demonstrated potential for promotion to the rank of lieutenant colonel.

⁴¹ Command And General Staff College, Intermediate Level Education mission statements, 2007 accessed by email <http://cgsc.leavenworth.army.mil/DAO/ile/mission.asp>.

⁴² U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, "ILE Self-Study, Resident Course Satellite Campus Course," January 8, 2008, Fort Leavenworth, Lewis and Clark Center, 1-1.

student officer's tactical, operational and strategic employment concepts for future operations.⁴³ The education is divided into two segments; a three month Common-Core Course (CCC) and a seven month Advance Operational Warfighting Course (AOWC).⁴⁴

Common-Core Course

The aim for Common Core Courses (CCC) is to prepare majors for duties as field grade officers for tactical and operational planning at the division and corps level commands. The goals of CCC are to produce majors who doctrinally understand full-spectrum operations and are able to critically think through and understand complex problems. The curriculum design concept is centered on developing staff officers with the ability to simultaneously balance current and future operations while applying doctrinal concepts and principles to plans and operations that synchronize battlefield effects.⁴⁵ The CCC immerses officers in a “how to think” course, vice “what to think.” Through the use of scenario- driven- education, officers achieve self-awareness and gain insight about their individual leadership skills and learning style.⁴⁶

To provide the operational force with relevant skills, CCC is divided into seven blocks of instruction: foundation of critical reasoning, Army operations, operational and strategic studies, changing the Army, leader assessment and development, and military history.⁴⁷ These modules

⁴³ Professional Education: The Key to Transformation, Henry H Shelton, Parameters, autumn, 2001, p. 7.

⁴⁴ USCGSC Course Catalog outlines the resident ILE course. Majors in the operations career field receive both CCC and AOWC courses for a total of 10 months of education.

⁴⁵ Jim Danley, Dan French, Chuck Soby, Paul Tiberi, “Understanding ILE: How is it Different from CGSOC?” *Special Warfare*, Fort Bragg: Feb 2004 Vol. 16, issue 3; page 32-35.

⁴⁶ U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, *ILE Self-Study, Resident Course, Satellite Campus Course*, 8 January 2008, p3-5.

⁴⁷ USCGSC, “ILE Resident and Satellite Course curriculum review design, 8 January 2008.” The CCC seven blocks of instruction: The Army operations block focuses majors on doctrine for generating forces

convey the spectrum of threats, challenges, and opportunities that leaders face in the contemporary operating environment and serve as a springboard for discussions and compel student officers to think broadly about full-dimension operations. The instruction emphasis is on the “application of knowledge” with the terminal learning objective of improving leader development outcomes. The ILE faculty ensures that the education provided to majors builds confident, competent leaders armed with the knowledge of creative problem solving and fully versed in doctrinal application at the tactical, operational, and strategic level. After the completing the three month CCC, officers then begin a seven month long Advanced Operations and Warfighting Course.

Advanced Operations and Warfighting Course (AOWC)

The Advanced Operational Warfighting Course (AOWC) places special educational emphasis on warfighting skills. This portion of the ILE is designed to develop majors adept at making repetitive discretionary judgments and skilled in problem-solving under simulated field operations environment while confronted with lethal, volatile, ambiguous, complex conditions

and employing forces through the entire spectrum of conflict. The Changing the Army block of instruction concentrates on synchronizing capabilities using joint and Army warfighting functions at the tactical and operational levels of war.⁴⁷ The CCC leadership courses develops majors by challenging them through a series of exercise scenarios in which officers lead Army, joint, interagency, multinational organizations in the full spectrum of conflict. In the joint studies courses majors receive a foundation in joint matters and an awareness of the joint environment and receive accredited Program for Joint Education (PJE) Phase I. It prepares officer for duty with joint commands and qualifies majors for PJE Phase II. CCC also educates officers on operational studies which familiarize majors on the capabilities and limitations of the forces agencies general staff officers employ in operational campaign designs. The course instructs majors on Army force management and how to better effect, implement, articulate, manage and lead organizational changes in the Army. The instruction builds a majors understanding of “people, products, and processes” involved in six major areas of organizational transformation: how requirements are generated; how solutions for these requirements are generated; how these solutions are prioritized; how equipment solutions are generated; how money is budgeted for these solutions; and how these changes are implemented in the operational force and sustained in the institutional force.

within the full spectrum of conflict.⁴⁸ AOWC is divided into three sections. The first section provides majors a foundation on land component activities within the framework of joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational operations at the strategic-theater and operational level.⁴⁹ The next section of AOWC is designed to enable majors to understand how the Army fights and executes operational themes at the division echelon of command as they operate within the joint, interagency, multinational operations across the spectrum of conflict.⁵⁰ Emphasis is given to planning and executing operations through the use of practicum that have students exercising as a divisional staff.⁵¹ The third section of AOWC instruction concentrates on brigade level tactical planning. The ILE curriculum provides officers instruction on adaptive problem solving and design processes to provide officers an understanding of their roles and responsibilities as field grade officers during the planning, preparation, and execution of full spectrum operations. Officers are provided lessons of staff and leadership roles in each of these problem-solving designs.⁵²

In addition to these skills AOWC also instructs majors on how to translate and refine broad national strategic objectives into clear, integrated, defined and synchronized operational tasks. Instruction focuses on analyzing and synthesizing the fundamentals of campaign planning and operational art concepts, as well applying planning processes in both deliberate and crisis

⁴⁸ U.S. Command and General Staff College, Master Evaluation Plan, ILE Program Evaluation Plan, Advanced Operational Warfighting Course, Academic Year 2007, 31.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ USCGSC, ILE Self-Study Resident Course, Satellite Campus Course, January 8, 2008, 3-8.

⁵¹ Ibid, 32.

⁵² U.S. Command and Staff College Master Evaluation Plan, Fort Leavenworth, KS: Academic Year 2007, 32.

action environments. While attending ILE, majors also become familiar with the latest changes in doctrine using the most current field manuals, to include the latest changes.

Intangible Benefits of ILE

ILE is often referred to as the cross roads in an officers career primarily as it is the juncture through which an officer moves from the tactical realm into the operational and strategic level of military operations. Besides the structured education established by the curriculum, an officer obtains intangible benefits, both professional and personal, which greatly contribute to their career. Officers gain professional knowledge from discussions and sharing of experiences with peers. Through these discussions majors form professional bonds with fellow officers from other branches of service, as well as from other nations and various civilian agencies. These relationships are indispensable as they assist in the development of networking with professional partners in future operations. These relationships serve to foster an understanding of policies and procedures both of other services and agencies. Through this gained knowledge majors are better prepared to plan operations which maximize the synchronization of capabilities other services and agencies bring to the fight.

In a June 2006 resident ILE graduate survey report, officers ranked the interaction with classmates and peers of various backgrounds and experiences from other branches, sister services, interagency, and international officers as being the most valuable aspect of ILE.⁵³ Often it is these shared experiences that an officer reflects on when faced with problem solving an issue outside of their personal experience. Intangible professional benefits include; networking, learning the significance of the cultural view of issues and developing broader appreciation on ways to problem solve in discussing military and diplomatic matters with international, sister service, and interagency officers. Education gained in this type of dialog provides majors relevant knowledge to better understand global and international issues.

ILE also provides leader assessment and development programs, which provide majors with tools for self-awareness and professional self-development plans. For many officers this is

⁵³ Command and General Officers Course Resident Graduate Survey Report, Leavenworth, KS., Quality Assurance Office, June 2006, 9.

the first time to build self-development skills and receive assessments and discuss in a forum of peers from a broad experiential background on their leadership skills. The discussions assist an officer in self reflection and forming a professional development plan.⁵⁴ This dialog establishes a foundation for refined majors reasoning and developing problem solving skills, vital to the success in an environment characterized by ambiguity and complexity.

ILE is also a start point for most officers in developing a CSA initiative of lifelong learning skills, including opportunities to earn advanced civil degree. Recently, *Kansas State University* (KSU) has teamed up with ILE administration in offering ILE students the opportunity to earn a graduate degree in Homeland Security while attending ILE.

ILE continuously develops the curriculum, assisting majors with directed and self learning practices to stimulate creative thought and problem solving skills pertinent to the current operational environment. ILE's promotion of lifelong learning skills through internet dialog with previous graduates and students, teaming with civilian universities and exchange program to various education institutions are some examples of how ILE continues to academically evolve.

Another often overlooked benefit of attending resident ILE is that the school provides a period of relatively stress-free down time, allowing officers to decompress from the rigors of combat. The ability to rest emotionally and mentally is most vital in an era of persistent conflict where an officer with a career of twenty years can expect to be deployed for over a third of that time away from family. Having a year with family and friends reinforces emotional healing from the 15 month separations, allowing families, who have made tremendous sacrifices, to rekindle

⁵⁴ Neal Bradley, Jim Danley, Dan French, Chuck Soby and Paul Tiberi, "Distant Learning: Understanding Intermediate Level Education," *Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin*, October-December 2003, 68-69.

relationships and reconnect with spouse and children. The time spent in ILE allows the officer to readjust in mindset to pace themselves through the years of protracted war.

ILE serves as an opportunity for majors to better prepare for combat through education and reflect on previous combat experiences in a stress reduced environment.⁵⁵ ILE offers majors a time to mend with family and cope with personal issues that will constantly be in competition with the officers' attention as they continue to rotate into theater. Finally majors' benefit both professionally and personally in the relationships developed with fellow students from various branches of service, international and interagency officers. These relationships form bonds which will assist in the team building of future coalition and interagency operations. To accommodate these requirements of an Army at war, Fort Leavenworth has built facilities to accommodate an increase the number of student officers and support systems requirements for their families needs.

ILE Backlog

To accommodate larger class sizes due to universal ILE, the Army built the Lewis and Clark Center, a facility at Fort Leavenworth, which accommodates 1536 students. With an additional 16 classrooms in Eisenhower Hall, ILE has a maximum class size of 1792 students. The seats at Fort Leavenworth, in combination with the 900 seats at satellite course locations, can accommodate all the active duty Army officers promoted to major and still include the seats dedicated to sister service, interagency, international and ARNG/ Reserve officers.⁵⁶ Yet, in the AY 2005, 228 seats went unfilled; For AY 2006, ILE had 403 unfilled seats for active duty majors. In AY 2007, ILE had 656 unfilled seats. Of the 1792 ILE seats available for active duty majors in AY 2008-01/02, only 1089 were filled, with 703 vacant seats. While sister services are filling their joint mandated 4:1 ratio seats, 91 seats filled by international officers, and the National/Reserve fulfilling 96 seats, the active duty Army was unable to fill a total of 1990 seats in the past three years.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ S.L.A. Marshall, *Men Against Fire*, Keegan, Norman: University of Oklahoma, September 2000, 335-336.

⁵⁶ "CGSC Extended Campus Changing Real Time," *AUSA News*, January 30, 2007, 9.

⁵⁷ USCGSC Demographics provided by Jim McCreight, Chief, Operations Command and General Staff School, January 29, 2008, Lewis and Clark Center, room 4504. The term Academic Year (AY) used include one year of school which overlaps into two calendar years.

To maintain pace with the increased promotion rate to produce 1,700 plus majors annually, the Army must maximize all 1792 seats available in ILE. However, prior to the building of the Lewis and Clark center and since the inception of ILE, the 1230 total student seats available were 562 per year less than the requirements. This inability to keep pace with demand, coupled with not filling all of these seats since 2001 has led to a backlog of over 4,600 majors waiting to attend ILE.⁵⁸ As the OPTEMPO continues to increase, the number of officers operationally deferred is equally increasing adding to what many refer to as the ILE backlog.⁵⁹

Although some senior leaders would argue that the Army is sending more majors to ILE now than in years past, these arguments are not accurate. In analyzing the true measure, the total required versus the number attending, the number of majors attending ILE is lower now than in any previous 4 years.⁶⁰ While aggregate numbers give the perception that ILE is maintaining the same support as in years previous; closer examining reveals that the number of majors required to attend ILE is at the lowest level since the inception of ILE.⁶¹

ILE Demographics

The ILE demographics have changed dramatically over the past several years as the war continues to impact the officers attending ILE. One of the most drastic drops is in the number of captain's promotable attending ILE. Gone are the days when the percentage of captains

⁵⁸ Brian D. Prosser, Universal ILE Policy: Concept, Reality and Recommendations, USAWC Strategy Research Project, 2006, p5. Confirmed data with Dr Neil Fulcher while assigned as Chief Operations Branch, OPMD, HRC, June 2007.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 5.

⁶⁰ USCGSC demographic interview with Jim McCreight, Chief, Operations Command & General Staff School, 29 January 2008, Lewis and Clark Center, room 4504.

⁶¹ This percentage includes the 2006 Army initiatives to promote two years groups worth of officers to major to make up for an end strength shortage of major which was 79.8% fill rate in FY04. The Army also reduced the time in service for in the zone promotion to major from 11.5 to 10 years of service. These two acts contributed to the swell of majors needing ILE and added to the backlog of majors to attend ILE.

promotable was in the double digits.⁶² Since 2005, fewer than nineteen CPT (P) officers have attended ILE and in the February 2008 class three officers maintained the rank of CPT (P), two of which were stationed at Fort Leavenworth. The days are gone when CPT (P) attend ILE such as General David Petraeus, when he was awarded the “White Briefcase” for academic excellence in his class.⁶³ Since 2005, the mean age of the class has increased by two years leading to the possibility that officers are attending ILE later in their careers and perhaps after performing key and developmental field grade duties.

Of the 1792 student seats available in Lewis and Clark Center and Eisenhower Hall for AY 2007, only 1078 were filled, leaving the remaining 714 seats unfilled. In AY 2006 of the 1230 maximum seats available in Bell Hall and Eisenhower Hall 1083 were filled leaving 147 seats unfilled.⁶⁴ In comparison, during AY 2005, of the 1230 seats available for ILE, only 1008 were filled with a delta of 228 seats left unfilled. Consequently, in a three year period, 1089 seats went empty which equates to 1089 more officers added to the backlog of majors waiting to attend ILE.⁶⁵

⁶² USCGSC demographic interview with Jim McCreight, Chief, Operations Command & General Staff School, 29 January 2008, Lewis and Clark Center, room 4504.

⁶³ Lewis and Clark Center hall of honor for previous honor graduates of CGSC classes, viewed 6 February, 2008.

⁶⁴ ILE moved to Lewis and Clark Center in July of 2007. Prior to this move ILE was conducted in Bell and Eisenhower Hall with a maximum student capacity of 1230 seats. Information provided by United States (Continued) Command and General Staff College, Intermediate Level Education Self-Study, January 8, 2008, 5-1. Interview with Mrs. Carol Sundberg, Chief, Accreditation Division, RM 3511; Administrations Operations, Kathryn Wills and Jim McCreight, Chief Operations provided statistical data of CGSS classes from AY 2005 – 2008, Room 4504, Lewis and Clark Center. In AY 2007 ILE moved from Bell Hall to Lewis and Clark Center and student seats increased from 1230 to 1536 with an additional 16 classrooms in Eisenhower Hall ILE has a maximum capacity of 1792 seats.

⁶⁵ United States Command and General Staff College, Intermediate Level Education Self-Study, 8 January 2008, 5-1. Interview with Mrs. Carol Sundberg, Chief, Accreditation Division, RM 3511; Administrations Operations, Kathryn Wills and Jim McCreight, Chief Operations provided statistical data of CGSS classes from AY 2005 – 2008, Room 4504, Lewis and Clark Center. In AY 2007 ILE moved from Bell Hall to

With a trend toward an increasing number of unfilled ILE seats, the Army can still reverse course and add seats to achieve universal ILE, but implementation of immediate measures are needed for this to occur. For example, when the decision was made for all captains to attend Combined Arms Services Staff School (CAS3), the Army built temporary classrooms with trailers in a parking lot to handle the student load. It will take similar drastic measures for the Army to attain the goal of educating all majors. To achieve ILE for all majors in the backlog, and maintain the education of annual promotion of officers, the Army will have to expand operations in the Lewis and Clark Center by converting administrative spaces to classrooms and increase the number of instructors in the next five years or establish modular classrooms in the parking lot to accommodate the backlog. The operational deferment and deletion of orders for majors to attend ILE continues to exacerbate the backlog issue. With thousands of majors waiting to attend ILE, achieving the Army goal of every major attending ILE is in serious jeopardy.⁶⁶ The Army must refrain from operationally deferring majors from attending ILE and fill all 1792 seats. To accommodate the education of all majors as the 2001 ATLDP recommended, the Army must reverse several policies to provide flexibility in the personnel assignment system to allow majors to rotate into ILE at the predetermined professional development career timeline.⁶⁷

Personnel Policies Affecting Backlog of ILE

To man the increasing number of forces deployed, the Army created personnel policies to support the operational force. The personnel policies of dwell, stop move/stop loss, lifecycle manning and manning prioritization in support of the operational force has affected attendance to ILE, resulting in a backlog of majors waiting for professional education. These personnel policies

Lewis and Clark Center and student seats increased from 1230 to 1536 with an additional 16 classrooms in Eisenhower Hall ILE has a maximum capacity of 1792 seats. A 14-week long satellite ILE Common-Core Courses is taught at four Army installations annually average 800-900 officers per year. The unfilled seats are primarily active duty major seats as the international, sister services and the ARNG and Reserves filled their quota of seats.

⁶⁶ Backlog of majors to attend ILE were obtained by Leader Development Division at Human Resources Command in Alexandria Virginia, Va., December 2007. This backlog number includes CPT (P). An approximate number of 4,612 are used as the number of officer needing to attend varies daily due to retirements, resignations, WIA and KIA. The numbers change near daily.

⁶⁷ The Army Training and Leader Development Panel Officer Study: Report to the Army Report downloaded from the Internet: June 30, 2003, Department of the Army, Pentagon Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

fall under the Force Stabilization plan and were designed to work in peace and war to develop more cohesive, combat ready units to fight and win our nation's wars. While these Army personnel policies are accomplishing the intent of extending the time an officer remains in the operational force, they also are impeding the ability of majors to depart a unit and attend ILE.

The goal of Force Stabilization was to reduce personnel turnover to assist in building cohesion and training unit readiness and assist in balancing the force. The concept of Force Stabilization was to slow the rate of turnover through Permanent Change of Station (PCS), creating a unit-focused stabilization period, enabling units to retain soldiers for longer than a normal two to four year tour length.⁶⁸ With the increase in the frequency and duration of deployments, the Force Stabilization system of retaining officers in units is having orders of effects not anticipated on officer education. The freezing of PCS movement, coupled with the reduced time in service for promotion to major, captains are now advanced into duty position of higher than their professional education has prepared them to accomplish. With limited education on how to perform their newly assigned duties, promotable captains are assigned to key and developmental job for junior field grade officers based on their performance as a captain. Although these captain promotable officers understand their unit operational specifics, they do not have the educational skills taught at ILE to prepare them for the duties as a field grade officer. As a result of the extended time in a unit, these new promoted majors are now slotted to perform duties they are educationally unprepared to perform.

To prevent this situation, the Army must allow promotable captains to attend ILE within a year of selection. Majors need to receive the benefits of ILE early enough in their career to impact their performance of duty in field grade positions. Officer career progression to the field

⁶⁸ Jamie Gayton, *Force Stabilization*, Soldiers Magazine, TRADOC, Fort Monroe, GPO, June 2004, 21.

grade ranks must remain interconnected to key and developmental duties officers must only serve in the positions once they have received ILE. The knowledge obtained at ILE is most beneficial to the Army if majors are able to attend prior to performing field grade duties in the operational force.

“We’re so good because of our professional education, and you can’t eliminate it postpone it or reduce it if you want a professional military,” said one senior military officer to the AOASF class on 24 July of 2007. Yet for many officers, attending ILE has become more difficult due to increased demands placed on an Army at war. In 2006, the Army’s 4th Infantry Division decided to pull 29 officers out of ILE early to fill subordinate units deploying to Iraq. This division also deferred 32 majors from attending the next ILE class to fill units deploying.⁶⁹ In 2006, 3d Infantry Division prevented 18 officers from PCSing to Fort Leavenworth to attend ILE because of the Division’s accelerated timeline to deploy. Simultaneously, this division requested 15 additional majors from ILE who had to graduate six weeks early to meet operational force deployment quotas prior to spring of 2007.⁷⁰ These deferments of officers to attend ILE by senior leaders are just a few examples of an appreciably reduced importance placed on the education of junior field grade officers. The moves are but one indicator of how the stress of the long war is affecting the educational pillar of the Army. Personnel policies in support of the war effort have affected the flow of majors into ILE and creating a backlog of 4,900 majors needing to attend

⁶⁹ Author’s personal knowledge as Chief of Operations, Operations and Plans Division, Officer Personnel Management Directorate, Human Resources Command (HRC), facts taken from Officer Personnel Quarterly Command briefing at OPMD, HRC, March 2007.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

school.⁷¹ The principal cause is operational commanders' failure to take operational risk in their execution of the war, which has created a personnel imbalance between the operational and institutional force. The source of this imbalance is due in large part to the Combatant Commander's unwillingness to take operational risk with personnel. Rather than managing the workload to actual personnel fill, field commanders are continuing to request forces above authorizations which is straining the Army's ability to maintain the institutional force.⁷² With this increasing demand for personnel by the operational force, there simply are not enough majors remaining to fill all ILE seats.⁷³ A February 23, 2005 *Washington Times* news article reported that the Defense Department is seeking ways to curtail military officer education programs during "stress" periods to increase the pool of deployable officers. In the Army, that is already happening. Over 125 ILE students departed in April 2006, three months prior to graduation and completion of their studies due to operational force requirements for majors to fill Transition Teams and OIF units.⁷⁴ The trend of increased operational demands continued in 2006 with over 250 officers' orders to ILE deleted or deferred in order to fill Transition Team requirements. Some of these requirements were for duties the Army National Guard (ARNG) was unable to fill Afghanistan National Army Training Teams due to lack of availability of officer with dwell time.

⁷¹ Deputy Chief of Staff Operations (DCSOP), Officer Personnel Management Division, HRC, July 2007.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Congressman Ike Skelton (D-MO), Ranking Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee: "Transition to the Information Age Demands Improvements To Professional Military Education System", September 28, 2005. Congressman Skelton delivered the closing address at the 2005 Dwight D. Eisenhower National Security Conference in Washington, DC. In a speech entitled "Beyond Iraq", Skelton discussed the challenges that face the United States in the future. In an effort to meet those challenges, the U.S. military is in a transition from the machine age to the information age. Technological advancements are important, but ultimately it is the quality of our men and women in uniform that gives us the warfighting edge

⁷⁴ Washington Times News paper, February 23, 2005, need title, author, 2.

Additional requirements such as this continue to have a significant impact on the number of majors available to attend ILE.⁷⁵ Without ILE, these officers will not be intellectually capable to assist in the cultural transformation of the Army. Additionally, these officers' will not have the requisite capabilities of future leaders to understand the complexity of warfare and apply principles of critical thinking to be adaptive and flexible in an ever-changing warfighting environment.

In 2005, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld asked the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to provide options for cutting back military education for officers during the "stress period" to allow greater number of officers to be available for deployment to OEF and OIF.⁷⁶ Chief of Staff of Army General Schoomaker resisted the push by the Department of Defense to close PME schools, believing they were essential to winning the war and transforming the Army. According to General Schoomaker, "It is necessary to keep PME schools open to produce future leader who are able to think strategically and move our forces forward to tackle the challenges of the 21st Century."⁷⁷ However, the Army has created personnel policies that are counter-productive to the flow of officers into ILE. The "over prioritization" of operational force requirements have come at the cost of majors being able to attend ILE.

⁷⁵ Operational Requirements in March 2006 as Chief of Operations Branch, Officer Personnel Management Directorate (OPMD), Human Resources Command (HRC), tasking from G-1 office when the National Guard Bureau determined after cut-off date that they were unable to fill requirements due to shortages in officers with less than two years dwell. The Army had to fill 89 field grade positions, 62 of these were for the rank of majors. Assignment Branches had to delete some officers of orders and not slate others to fill the personnel requirements for Afghanistan National Army (ANA) Training Brigade.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Chief of Staff, Army Initiative Group, BG Rock posted July 25, 2006 <http://www.army.mil/ciag-20060022>, (accessed November 15, 2007), 2-4.

Life-Cycle Manning (LM)

To assist units preparing for war, the Army has created Life-Cycle Manning (LM) personnel policy to ensure manning above authorizations prior to deploying. LM is a G-1 initiative to provide longer tour length for soldiers assigned to operational forces. This policy is intent to provide stability and promote unit cohesion to assist in the reduced time to train and prepare for a deployment. LM of Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) allows officers to remain in a unit from reset date (R-Date) which marks the beginning of the train-up period for deployment, through the duration of a deployment. While the intent of the LM policy is to lock officers in a BCT, the policy also eliminates flexibility within the personnel system and inhibits officers from rotating out of a unit to attend ILE until after return from a deployment.⁷⁸ Under LM if an officer's promotion causes them to be excess to the authorizations of the unit, he or she will remain in the unit until the conclusion of the unit's LM, which by original design is three years. However, depending when officers' arrives at a unit, they can potentially be locked-in six to eighteen months beyond their promotion to major and deferment from ILE up to three years after the being eligible to attend due to the misalignment of time of school starts and length of deployment.

Compounding the issue of LM lock-in is the accelerated promotion of officers to major. Officers are now promoted at the ninth year of service which is nearly two years earlier than in the previous 25 years of promotion selection. The Army moved the selection date earlier to take advantage of a large pool of officers available for selection coupled with increased promotion rates to assist in growing the force from 487,000 to 547,000 by 2012.⁷⁹ With these policies designed to accelerate and increase officers, limited consideration was given to the ability to educate all of them. Consequently, the Army is a staffing an initiative to deal with the backlog of officers waiting to attend ILE. One leading proposals is to provide officers constructive credit for

⁷⁸ Department of the Army, "The New Manning System Force Stabilization Playbook," October 5, 2005, Appendix C, 18.

⁷⁹ Dr. Neil Fulcher, Chief Distribution and Development Branch, Officer Personnel Management Directorate, Human Resource Command (telephone interview by author), March 25, 2007.

attending ILE if they have a graduate degrees. Another is to allow officers to complete ILE by distant learning if they have completed a key and developmental job as a major.⁸⁰

Manning Prioritization Policy

In continuing efforts to man the operational force, the Army released an update to the officer Manning Priority policy in March of 2007 which designated two categories for manning unit strength: “Deployed” and “The Needs of the Army.” If the unit is in the “Deployed” category, then officers are manning at or above personnel authorizations, not to exceed 105% of manning no later than 90 days prior to deployment Late Arrival Date (LAD). However, units in the category of “The Needs of the Army” have no floor to the officer manning level of authorizations. With the exception of recruiting retention and Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), all institutional forces and some non deploying operational forces fall within the “Needs of the Army” category. Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), which is responsible for institutional education, is in the “Needs of the Army” category. As a result, Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) is being manned at less than 70%. Northern Command (NORTHCOM), a non-deploying operational force, is being manned at less than 80% for the same reason – these units are not providing forces to the warfight.⁸¹ However, this is a misleading as units in the “Needs of the Army” category are daily being tasked to provide officers as Individual

⁸⁰ Dr. Neil Fulcher, Chief Distribution and Development Branch, Officer Personnel Management Directorate, Human Resource Command, (telephone interview by author), March 25, 2007.

⁸¹ The author, while serving as Operations Branch Chief, Operations and Plans Division, Officer Personnel Management Directorate, HRC in the Officer Professional Management Division at HRC from 2006 - 2007, was present with select senior leaders at they discussed the trend of increased inexperience of officers at the field grade level due to current manning levels of GWOT, while simultaneously modularizing the Army under Transformation. The most significant impact was in the attendance to ILE as a result of the increasing demand by the Army for officer at the grade of major. The issue is further compounded by the decrease of manning at TRADOC, specifically in the duty positions of ILE instructors.

Replacements (IR) for duty in operational units, including Army National Guard units unable to fill critical duty positions prior to deployment.

To increase support to the operational force, the Army has developed a new force manning document which fill “Deploying” units to a 105% of manning authorizations and reduces manning to non deploying units at an unspecified “Needs of the Army” category.⁸² Units in the “Needs of the Army” have a no floor (minimum) manning strength verses manning authorizations and essential receive a portion of what officers remain after filling Deploying units. This creates a significant officer manning challenge for units in the “Needs of the Army” to adequately maintain the work load for the institutional Army when manned is at such a reduced percentage. This challenge is considerably more difficult given the growth and changes in the institutional structure that has not been matched with correct size, skill, of trained personnel to fill deployed units. This condition is expected to persist through FY08 until the increase in military end-strength increase of 72,000.⁸³ With limited manning, in these units in the institutional force can ill afford to release there majors to attend ILE when they are critically short of personnel. Also since it is more than likely these officers they are filling positions that potentially will not be backfilled institutional units are reluctance to allow officers to PCS for school.

Stop Move/Stop Loss

Stop move and stop loss is a presidentially approved policy which was designed to assist the Army to lock forces for rapid deployment in responds to a Short-term crisis to the nation’s

⁸² Active Duty Military Stop Move/Stop Loss Program for Units Schedule to Deploy in Support of OIF/OEF, *Military Personnel Message, no. 06-232*, (U.S. Army Human Resource Command), August 22, 2006, 3.

⁸³ Ibid.

security.⁸⁴ Military personnel message 06-232, issued 22 August 2006 by Army Human Resource Command and approved by the Secretary of Defense, established a stabilization policy for the stop loss/stop movement program for units scheduled to deploy Outside Continental United States (OCONUS) in support of OIF and OEF.⁸⁵ The Stop Move/Stop Loss policy is designed to assist the manning of the units deploying in support of OIF or OEF. The policy was created not only to build units but to allow those units to build cohesion by retaining all soldiers throughout the duration of the deployment.⁸⁶ This policy also included officers assigned to rear detachment personnel that remain at unit's home station. The stop move/ stop loss policy also indirectly contributes to the imbalance between the operational and institutional forces and becomes an obstacle for officers attempting to attend ILE. The stop move/stop loss policy prevents officers who are otherwise able to attend an ILE class start from departing their unit six months prior to deployment until after the 90-day stabilization period upon return to home station. The regulation further states, "Soldiers will not leave the area of operation to attend any PME schools."⁸⁷ Personnel assignment officers at HRC are not permitted to contact deployed officers to advise them of career timeline issues and when the deployed officer should attend schooling or necessitate the soldier's return prior to the units' redeployment. As the policy is currently written,

⁸⁴ U.S. National Security Policy, (Washington, DC: GPO, April, 2005) 3.

⁸⁵, Active Duty Military Stop Move/Stop Loss Program for Units Schedule to Deploy in Support of OIF/OEF, Military Personnel Message no. 06-232, (U.S. Army Human Resource Command), August 22, 2006, 3.

⁸⁶ Ibid

⁸⁷ Ibid

an officer must request an exception to the policy from their Commander, at the three-star level to depart theater to attend school.⁸⁸

Modifying the Stop Move/ Stop Loss policy to allow majors to depart their unit to attend ILE is critical to rebalancing the force and ultimately providing knowledgeable majors to units. This would assist in alleviating the backlog of majors needing to attend ILE and fill all available school seats. A modification to the policy prohibiting a soldier's departure from a combat zone to attend PME would prevent a timing issue and accommodate majors receiving ILE prior to serving in key and developmental junior field grade positions at units. This would accommodate majors attending school in the appropriate career timeline and increase the readiness to serve in field grade duty positions.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Active Duty Military Stop Move/Stop Loss Program for Units Schedule to Deploy in Support of OIF/OEF, Military Personnel Message no. 06-232, (U.S. Army Human Resource Command), states approval authority for exception to policy to be Joint Task Force-76 (CJTF-76), Commander Multi-National Corps-Iraq (MNC-I), Commander Multi National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I), Commander, Coalition Forces Component Command-Forward (CFLCC/3A-FWD) prior to the officer submitting request to U.S. Army Human Resource Command), August 22, 2006, 9.

⁸⁹ Several publishing's and senior military leaders rational for adopting drawn a comparison of stop loss/stop move policy to that of lessons learned of forces in Vietnam. This comparison, although perhaps fair in a draft Army, is not representative of the soldiers of a volunteer Army at the tactical unit level. From surveys in 1 BDE, 1 ID and the author's first-hand experience as Battalion Commander, 1-16 IN, in 2004 soldiers were redeployed to attend PME. The consensus from the soldiers NCOs and officers return to home station was that their career was as important as the war. Enlisted soldiers viewed the release of NCO, officers and soldiers for school as a positive move. The shared sentiment was the Army was taking care of those who take care of the Army. It became a retention issue after stop loss/stop move, as soldiers felt they were a hostage to the war. In OIF 1 – 2 soldiers looked forward to the day when they are in positions of higher rank and they can redeploy to attend school. The release of soldiers to attend school was a retention motivator. Once NCO and officers were stop moved/stop loss many felt the Army did not care for their professional development and it became a negative feeling that became a leadership challenge to preventing this attitude from festering throughout the ranks. Furthermore, in FM 6-22 and other leadership document, which discuss the positive effect of integrating new members into a team. Furthermore, as we enter the 7th year of war, most soldiers have experiences from previous rotation with other units and can provide a perspective of different tactic technique or procedure to the new unit. Finally, integrating soldiers is going to occur due to combat losses. By units being allowed to decide rotation of soldiers back to school they will develop well practiced procedures to integrate rather than limited knowledge of the tasks that a soldier must conduct when integrating to a unit.

The ILE majors could directly contribute to the operational force by continued examination of the orders of effect of post-operations and assist in providing problem solving solution to commanders in theater. The example of institutional support of current operations occurred during Desert Storm when General Schwarzkopf, CENTCOM commander had several AMSP students deployed from school to Saudi Arabia to assist in the planning of what now is the famed “left Hook” of the ground attacks against Saddam Hussein’s Iraqi Republican Guard.⁹⁰ This example of evolving interdependency between the operational and institutional force would increase the relevancy of learning at ILE and further ready majors for future combat operations.

The Army controls the ebb and flow of forces required in combat operations. In building the force, the Army accelerated promotion as a quick fix to aggregate manning strength. In the long run accelerated promotions reduce the time an officer has for hands on practical experience. Extending tour lengths and decreasing dwell time at home station mentally and emotionally pushes the Army to a breaking point where it will become increasingly difficult to achieve balance between manning the operational force and managing the professional development of the Army as an institution. The current war will last for decades and the Army must take operational risk in the size of the deployed force until the endstrength is increased by 72,000. Flexible individual rotation of officers deployed will assist rebalancing the Army’s operational and institutional force. Allowing majors to rotate into theater straight out of ILE would provide the operational force majors with the most relevant academic knowledge. The regular rotational

⁹⁰ Henry H Shelton, “Professional Education: The Key to Transformation,” *Parameters*, (US Army War College Quarterly, Vol., 31, no. 3, Autumn 2001), 7.

flow of majors would also assist in rebalancing the force and enable the Army to fill all ILE seats, which is crucial to eliminating the backlog of majors waiting to attend.

The risks associated with rebalancing the force will culturally challenge many senior leaders who will perceive the reduced manning of the operational force as immoral and against what the Army is for. However, it only appears this way through culturally near-sided glasses. To maintain the force in a protracted war, the Army must continue to reinvent and create new efficiencies. Ideas, such as having resident ILE students work solutions to current operational plans, are not out of the realm of possible. The majors would continue to contribute to units in theater, in some case to units they just left, by critically analyzing operations and providing staff input from afar.

A possible solution to alleviate the rigid policy of no flow of forces into and out of theater is a change to the positioning a association of units in theater. A concept whereby unit colors remain in a specific region of theater and personnel rotate around the colors is more practical and better aligned to the concepts of fighting a counter insurgent force. Having a unit colors remain in theater and rotate personnel and subordinate units in and out of assigned area of theater allows personnel to attend school according to a professional development timeline. This would also benefit the Army's counter insurgency efforts by providing unit identity to regions in Iraq and Afghanistan allowing the local populace to build relations instead of constantly rotating different units in to a region every 15 months. This would prevent knowledge gaps on specific efforts within a region and be of tremendous assistance in preventing counter insurgent influence on the populace.

Continuing the education of majors during times of conflict will allow these officers to better prepare for the daunting command and staff task as future strategic leaders in a complex environment. As war continues to evolve, what is clear is that it will encompass a need to have an appreciable understanding in a variety of subjects.

Dwell

The Army established a policy in 2004 which required soldiers recently deployed to have a minimum of 12 months back at home station prior to redeploying to war. The policy was designed to allow soldiers to attend schools, as well as, seek any personal assistance they required stabilizing their life after a year at war. This amount of time was a reduction from the original Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) model of allowing two years at home station between Deployments, but was manageable as a year afforded time to attend professional and personal development.⁹¹ However, as the OPTEMPO reached current levels, the Army in 2006 had to defer 138 majors from attending ILE due to reduced home station time which for many units is less than 12 months.⁹² The matter of deferment and curtailing orders to ILE was exacerbated in March of 2006 when the CSA created a new personnel policy to strategically support the war by increasing the deployment time from twelve to fifteen months. The rationale behind this order was to afford units a 12 month window of time once the return from a deployment to ensure personnel could PCS to attend professional development schools and upon graduation, return to a unit in the “reset” pool of LM in the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) model.⁹³ The policy change was necessary as units were spending less than a year at home station which did not accommodate enough time to PCS for schools, or retraining of warfighting skills in preparation to

⁹¹ U.S. Department of the Army, Chief of Staff, Army, *Personnel Policy Guidance (PPG) for Contingency Operations in Support of Global War on Terror*, (Washington, DC: GPO, May 14, 2006), 73-77.

⁹² U.S. Department of Army, Army Human Resource Command, Distribution and Development Branch, statistical data obtained by telephone interview with Dr. Neil Fulcher, who stated assignment divisions had to delete or defer 218 officers from ILE to fill surge requirements and transition teams, July 23, 2007.

⁹³ U.S. Department of the Army, Chief of Staff, Army, *Life-Cycle Manning*, a personnel management system established by the Army G-1 to accommodate the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) model, (Washington, DC: GPO, March 2004).

return to the fight. However, there was an immediate impact in building the “Surge” force from January to June of 2007, with an additional 48 officers being deleted from orders to attend ILE, and 82 officers operationally deferred due to an accelerated deployment timeline, and 460 majors being extended in theater beyond the school start date.⁹⁴ Due to the late cancellation of orders, the ILE seats went unfilled and a total of 230 officers became another addition to the ever increasing backlog of officers waiting to attend ILE.

With an increase in the number of units committed to the war, the Army has reduced home station time to less than 12 months. For example, in 2006, units stationed at Fort Stewart were returning to OIF with less than 12 months dwell, and many of the soldiers went back for their third tour in the same unit. This shortened dwell period between deployments prevented officers from attending schools they were unable to move the window of time to PCS was reduced and they were stop lost. Consequently, several officers had been twice deferred to attend ILE with 32 of these officers involuntarily extended and PCS orders to ILE were deleted.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ The deletion from orders to attend school was isolated to the 5 Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) surge force which had an accelerate deployment from the units planned timeline by 3-4 months. To deploy ahead of planned timeline at greater than 100 percent of authorization, units had to delete officers from PCS to include PCS to school and separation from service. Units affected where assigned to 1 AD, 3 ID, 4ID and 82d ABN. To factor the number of in theater majors affected by the tour of duty extension was derived by using 7 of the 22 ground combat BCTs deployed to operations in support of OIF/OEF, which is just ground combat forces (IBCT, HBCT, SBCT), and 1x Sustainment, Aviation, and special Brigades/battalions serving in theater. When adding these units, the total BCT equivalent serving in theater is 32. A third of this total was used to determined number of majors affected by the personnel policies.

U.S. Department of the Army, U.S. Training and Doctrine Command, Comprehensive Guide to Modularity, vol. 1, ver. 1.0, (Fort Monroe, VA: October 8, 2004). The number of majors assigned to 7xHBCT, 1xSuSB, 1x Eng Group, 1x Aviation Brigade, 1x Separate corps units which include Air Defense Military Intelligence, Signal, and Military Police Battalions was used to derive this number.

⁹⁵ Author’s direct knowledge in working the manning strength for the surge force from December 2006 to March 2007 as Chief of Operations Branch, Operations and Plans Division, Officer Personnel Management Division, Human Resource Command.

In March 2007, as the Army was at the breaking point due to personnel resources being stretched beyond the ability to maintain rotational dwell of 12 months, the Army increased the deployment time of units in theater to buy more time for the next units rotation. The concept was to create the time necessary to complete schooling and PCS back to operational units. With the intent to restore dwell time of 12 months, the Army revised a deployment tour policy extending theater tours from 12 to 15 months. Coupled with a six month predeployment train-up, followed by the 90-day stop move and stop loss policies locking officers in both prior to and after a deployment, resulting in a net deployment time of 27 months through which an officer is unable to PCS for ILE. Depending on the deployment timing this could delay a major from attending ILE for up to three years. By modifying the policy of locking officers into a unit while deployed and allowing them to rotate back to attend ILE, the Army will be able to fill all ILE seats and reduce the backlog of officers waiting to attend. In easing the restriction to the flow of forces, the Army will provide the operational force majors with the most relevant knowledge with which to contribute to units in the fight. ⁹⁶

12:15 Deployment Policy

In March 2007, the CSA announced a personnel policy which increased combat tour extension for all active duty units deploying from 12 to 15 months. The extended tour length caused many majors to delay or defer attending ILE. The increased time for deployment has caused many majors already deployed to also defer attending ILE further adding to the backlog of officers waiting to attend. The concept behind the creation of this the policy will facilitate officer before units and forces already deployed in theater for an additional 3 months. This increase of

⁹⁶ Ibid.

deployment time from 12 to 15 months is affect on the ability for majors to attend ILE. The policy to increase the time of deployment was also created to stretch the total force and allow soldiers 12 month bask at home station before deploying back to theater. Consequently, promotable officer are not able to depart for ILE until the unit returns, 15 plus months later.⁹⁷

It is clear that what is being overlooked is the need for education as the forefront to bring about the direction of change to fight the current war and culturally change the Army. With the greatest organizational change ever taken on by the Army, the most critical aspect to successfully and culturally transform the organization is the professional educational of the Army's majors. However, in the midst of this radical change, while simultaneously engaged in a protracted war, the Army has gone in the opposite direction and reduced the support for sending majors to ILE. As the war continues, developing into what many military strategists are now calling a 'protracted war,' the Army personnel policies designed for short duration conflict are progressively chipping away at institutional systems which are paradoxically to winning the war. What is hypocritical is that many of the Army's senior leaders have identified an urgent need for officers with the qualities of creative thinking and problem solving ability to rapidly adapt to the complexity of warfare. Yet several Army personnel policies in support of the war are so rigid that they are indirectly and negatively impacting on majors' ability to attend ILE at an appropriate time to

⁹⁷ U.S. Department of the Army, *U.S. Army Campaign Plan, Change 4*, "Life-Cycle Manning (LM)" for units deploying. The design supports the Army Force Generation (ARFROGEN) model which locks officers into a unit for 3 or more years. The model has three pools: Reset/Train, Ready and Available Pool. The model was originally created to accommodate a 12 month deployment cycle. To accommodate the increase deployment of 15 months the Army reduced the Reset/Train pool to 9 months which is not enough time for an officer to attend a 10 month ILE course. CSA has recognized this and is instituted a mandatory 12 month dwell period for units returning which would accommodate officers PCS' to ILE. Once a unit returns from a deployment there is a mandatory 90 stop move stop loss window, which can be waived for assigned officers by their brigade commander.

assist them in their duties as majors. The proof of these personnel policies affects lies in the ever increasing backlog of officers waiting to attend ILE.

With more than half of the 22 BCT deploying in or out of OIF/OEF in March-April due to the inception of war, officers were able to rotate into the ILE stat in June.⁹⁸ However with the three-month tour extension ,totaling 15 months, officers assigned to these BCT are now arriving back after the start of the large summer ILE course start date. With approximately 28 majors assigned to a BCT and using a third of the BCT as the average rotation out of theater, the impact of an extension delays 196 majors from attending ILE.⁹⁹ If the number of majors serving in division and higher headquarters is included the number of majors affected by this tour extension conservatively exceeds 460.¹⁰⁰

Promotions Policies affecting ILE

According to the Distribution and Development Branch, OPMD, HRC statistical data base officers in the rank of senior captain and major are leaving the Army at an increasing rate due to OPTEMPO.¹⁰¹ As OPTEMPO increases, retention of officers has become a key issue. One

⁹⁸ 22 BCT deployed to operations in support of OIF/OEF is just ground combat forces (IBCT, HBCT, SBCT) and does not include the number Sustainment, Aviation, or special Brigades serving in theater. When totally those brigade equivalent units the total BCT serving in theater is 32.

⁹⁹ This number is derived from using the number of majors assigned to a modular structure for 7xHBCT, 1xSuSB, 1x Eng Group, 1x Aviation Brigade, 1x Separate corps units which include Air Defense Military Intelligence, Signal, and Military Police Battalions.

¹⁰⁰ Data from FORSCOM Worldwide Synchronization conference, head ever six months at FORSCOM HQ to determine number, type and timetable of deploying units. The author derived at the number of officers affected by using MTOE documents for BCT, division, and Corps to determine number of majors affected by the tour extension. The total is 467 majors: 7x HBCT, 1x Sustainment Brigade, 1x Aviation Brigade, 2x division, 1x corps.

¹⁰¹ Jeffery Corbett, Chief of Plans Branch, Plans and Operations Division, OPMD, HRC, *Balancing End Strength*, Briefing to senior military leaders and commander of HRC, which the author attended the unclassified briefing, May 2007.

of the personnel policies created by senior Army leaders in 2006 was the reduction in time and grade for promotion from captain to major. Because of the shortfall in end strength for the grade of major, senior leaders experimented in Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 by accelerating promotions to major for two year groups worth of officers for one fiscal year. The Army also increased promotion selection rates to major, from 96.9% in FY05 to 98.7% in FY06. With the increased selection rate, the Army is now promoting just over 1,700 officers to the rank of major, each year with over 1,300 being career field officers projected to attend ILE at Fort Leavenworth.¹⁰²

To further increase the population of majors, the Army reduced the time in service for promotion to major from 11.5 to 10 years of total service.¹⁰³ These changes to personnel policies directly contributed to an increase number of officers waiting to attend ILE. The increased number of officers promoted to major added to the already high number of officers waiting to attend ILE, making an already bad situation worse.¹⁰⁴ Senior leaders now realize this and did not repeat the promotion initiative in FY 2007 as the policy increased the number of majors to larger than the institutional system could handle. Instead the Army turned to retention initiatives to retain more of the officers in a cohort year group.

¹⁰² U.S. Department of the Army, Army Human Resource Command, Officer Personnel Management Directorate, Distribution and Development Branch, Dr Neil Fulcher, Branch Chief: Statistical data for promotion rates for majors was obtained from promotion board statistics from Systems analysis and DD Branch, September 2007. Promotion rates of FY 05-07 were used in the analysis. ILE Demographics obtained from Ms Katrina Wills and administration assistant and Jim McCreight, Chief of Operations CGSS from AY 2005-2007. Additionally, a comparison to ILE AY 08-01 was used to analyze continued trends.

¹⁰³ 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 board were held in FY06 – April and September 2007) averaged 97.5% with 96.9% the low in FY04 and 98.7% in SEP FY07 board.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 6.

As OPTEMPO continued to increase in FY 2005, the Army experienced an ever growing number of officers at the rank of major and captain departing the service.¹⁰⁵ According to Dr. Leonard Wong the loss of officers is profoundly the result of senior officers creating policies that reduce the latitude for the officers to achieve education, or flexibility to balance their career between the operational and institutional force.¹⁰⁶ To compensate for this decrease in aggregate end strength for majors, the Army created several retention policies to persuade captains to remain on active duty for five additional years, the amount of time to make promotion to major.¹⁰⁷

The Army's promotion waivers have further reinforced the decreased emphasis on education by promoting officer's to the grade of Lieutenant Colonel without graduating from ILE. In accordance with AR 600-3, a major must be a graduate of the ILE, MEL-4, and have an OER in a key and developmental job of twelve months or greater to be qualified for consideration for promotion to LTC.¹⁰⁸ Typically the Department of Army Secretariat board recorder confirms both of these criteria are met before an officer can be considered for promotion to LTC.¹⁰⁹ This information is then briefed to the president of the promotion board to make the determination on retention or consideration for promotion of those officers based on the total number of officers

¹⁰⁵ COL Jeffery Corbett, USA, Chief of Plans Branch, Plans and Operations Division, Officer Personnel Management Division, Army Human Resource Command, interview by author, June 12, 2007.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Jim Tice, "O-3 Extension Bonus Eligibility Ends Soon," *The Army Times*, December 8, 2007.30.

¹⁰⁸ U.S. Department of the Army, *DA Pamphlet 600-3, Commissioned Officers Development and Career Management*, August 6, 2007, "Armor officer qualification," Chapter 11-3, 42.

¹⁰⁹ Promotions and Records Branch, Officer Personnel Management Directorate, Human Resources Command, [http:// www.army.mil/hrc/promotions](http://www.army.mil/hrc/promotions) and record branch, (accessed October 19, 2007) 1-2.

needed to promote to meet Manning end strength requirements. The board president can waive MEL-4 for promotion if percentage numbers are less than the Army requires at the rank of LTC. With an increasing in Army end strength and in attempt to replace an increasing number of LTC retirements, there has been an increase in educational waivers for promotion to the rank of LTC. In comparison to the fiscal years prior to 2006, the number of officers promoted to LTC that were not MEL 4 averaged .3% across all zones of consideration.¹¹⁰ According to *DA PAM 600-3*, “to be eligible to attend a Command and Staff College (CSC), officers must be senior CPTs or higher with between 8 and 15 years of service, and have less than 16 years of Active Federal Commissioned Service (AFCS).”¹¹¹ Once promoted, these officer are not eligible to attend ILE and consequently will be without the benefit of this education. The Army as an institution will suffer by the increasing number of senior grade officers who do not have the knowledge to critically think or problem-solve issues relevant to warfare in the 21st century. Based on the lack of emphasis by the Army to send majors to ILE, the perception of many majors in the field is that ILE is not necessary for promotion or success in the profession of arms and therefore, in the mind of some officers, irrelevant for their careers.

¹¹⁰ Promotion statistics are analysis results obtained by from Distribution and Development Branch, OPMD, HRC. In consideration for promotion and officer competes in three zones: below the zone, primary zone and above zone. Usually greater than 90% of the officers competing for promotion are from within the primary zone for promotion. Officer considered year groups early for promotion make up roughly 5% of the selection. Approximately 5% of the selection for promotion are from the above zone which are officers being reconsidered for promotion from previous board views.

¹¹¹ U.S. Department of the Army, *AR 600-3* states there are exceptions of policy granted for officers that were not able to attend due to beak in service, deployment, medical or other reason approved by a review board of officers applying for an exception of policy to attend. POC is Promotions and Selection Branch, OPMD, HRC, (Washington DC: GPO, August 3, 2007).

Conclusion

“War requires sacrifices and it's neither surprising nor necessarily a mark of leadership indifference that military education is among them. After all, the ultimate objective is to produce leaders for war. But the deferred cost of curtailing military education is very high.” - General J. Lawton Collins¹¹²

For many officers the knowledge they gain at ILE may be their last formal education and will have to serve them for the rest of their careers. ILE is designed as preparatory learning for field grade officers' career with the potential for command and staff positions at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels. The knowledge received at ILE may also be the first point in many officers' career where they are taught how to think critically, and not what to think. Finally, ILE comes at a point in time where an officer has substantial background experiences from which to draw upon to build critical thought to assist in future problem solving.

The professional education gained from attending ILE enables junior field grade officers of today to transform and prepare the Army for the complex environment of future warfare.¹¹³ The Army's senior leaders are responsible for managing the force and accepting risk, balancing the needs of today and requirements of tomorrow's force. The amount of acceptable risk in the institutional force is questionable when the education of future generations of officers is at stake. The Army's leadership must reevaluate acceptable risk in maintaining the balance between the

¹¹² Quoted in Richard Swain, “Reflection on an Ethic of Officership,” *Parameters*, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Spring 2007), 8.

¹¹³ Major Robert T Ault, “Encouraging Risk and Embracing Uncertainty, the Need to Change U.S Army Culture,” USAMSP 2003, 26.

operational and institutional force to ensure fulfillment of national security objectives, while maintaining a relevant officer corps. These leaders must balance risk in these dynamic times to ensure the operational requirements do not break the Army as an institution effective producing a future force.¹¹⁴

Representative Ike Skelton (D-MS) frequently cites the historical statistic that “of thirty-four Corps commanders who led the American Army to victory in World War II, thirty-one had taught in the Army school system.”¹¹⁵ Ike Skelton and many other politicians are fully supportive of officer education as they have witnessed the positive effects of professionalized armed forces. These civilian leaders understand the importance of military education to not only enable an officer in his immediate tasks, but also in their knowledge of how the military as a national instrument of power is intertwined in the diplomatic and economic interests of the nation.¹¹⁶

The current CSA top priority is to rebalance the force with four imperatives: Sustain, Prepare, Reset, and Transform as we grow the Army.¹¹⁷ General Casey’s goal is to complete these imperatives by 2012 and restore balance with the force which will provide strategic flexibility.¹¹⁸ If the Army is to build strategic flexibility and ready forces to defend national interest then it must have officers that have PME relevant to future conflicts. To successfully transform the Army for the long-term requires reprioritizing critical education for officers at the

¹¹⁴Peter J. Schoomaker and Anthony W. Vassalo, “The Way Ahead an overview of The Army Strategic Planning Guidance (ASPG),” *Military Review*, (March- April 2004), 15.

¹¹⁵John S. Brown, “The Skelton Critique: Faculty Experience in Army Senior Leaders,” unpublished paper, January 2000.

¹¹⁶ Cecil T. Lewis, *Army Officer Professional Military Education System Reform to Produce Leader Competency for the Future*, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, March 2006), 8.

¹¹⁷ General George Casey, Chief of Staff, Army, Power Point Slide presentation at AUSA Convention, Washington, DC, obtained by Chief of Plans, G-3, FORSCOM, October 9, 2007, slides 18-20.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

MEL 4 level. The officers at the junior field grade level are the future leaders of the Objective Force and must receive the benefit of professional military education if the Army is to transform culturally.

This research illuminates some disturbing trends of unfilled seats at ILE. This can only indicate that the Army is out of balance between the operational and institutional force and has created personnel policies which continue to keep the Army from rebalancing. Clearly, the force is so stretched that the Army is not able to fill all the seats at ILE, where officers' knowledge set transition from tactical to operational and strategic. The ILE curriculum prepares majors for complex challenges in future field grade assignments through education which is relevant to the art and science of war. The knowledge gained while attending ILE clearly develops an officers' ability to solve complex problems which will be increasingly beneficial to the Army in future conflict. Additionally, the research indicates that personnel policies in support of the operational force are having a negative affect on the timing of majors' attendance at ILE. Critical to both a unit's and individual officer's success is professional development through relevant ILE before performing the duties as a field grade officer.

The evaluation criteria used to validate the relevance of ILE curriculum was derived from written guidance by senior military leaders in determining what skills were necessary to prepare majors for complexity of warfare. Senior leaders directed ILE to instill in officers a warrior ethos, while at the same time creating self aware, innovative, adaptive officers able to lead JIM teams in full spectrum operations.¹¹⁹ Center stage to PME is the resident ILE which produces majors with

¹¹⁹ U.S. Department of the Army, *Army Strategic Planning Guidance (ASPG), 2006-2023*, "Leader Development and Education," (Washington, DC: GPO, April 2006), 26.

warfighting knowledge skill sets beneficial to division, corps and joint operational planning. ILE increases a major's ability to adapt in an ambiguous environment possessing problem solving and critical thinking skills to contribute to staff planning. The school provides majors with relevant knowledge expected of them by senior leaders and ready's majors for duties as junior field grade officers. The ILE model is consistent with all the criteria established by senior commanders and leaders in both the Army and joint commands.

The research also suggest for the Army to reduce the professional development stress on the force, specifically in the rank of major by opening the window of time when an officer can attend ILE. The Army should eliminate promotion to O-4 as a requirement for attending ILE. Rather an officer should attend ILE he/she has completed certain professional development gates, such as successful completion of 12 months company command (or equivalent) and one year staff time at the tactical level. This would better serve the career progression of developing an officer to the operational and strategic level and accommodate the link of recent experience at the tactical level. Additionally, since 98.8% of the officers are selected for major, allowing minimal risk of sending an officer to ILE that may not be selected for promotion.

Also by enlarging the window of time to allow officers to attend ILE earlier in their careers, you reduce the backlog can be reduced by eliminating the time constraint to get through the school which creates the environment for a backlog. These modifications to Army personnel policies would provide much needed flexibility in our personnel system, reduce the stress on officers attempting to attend ILE and indirectly

The effect the operational force is having on major's attending ILE is correctable with immediate measures. The challenge is whether the senior leaders are willing to accept risk in the manning of the operational force in the near term to rebalance the Army and create for the long term, a more ready total force for the long run. The old cliché of, "you can pay me now [less] or pay me later [more]," holds true to the ILE situation confronting the Army now. ILE has enough seats to accommodate increases in promotion rates to major. Additional classrooms and

instructors for the next four years, in combination with filling all available seats, will slowly chip away at the backlog issues. The challenge is the ability of the Army to take risk in reduced manning of the operational force until the Army is rebalanced and returns to a steady state flow of majors between the operational and institutional force.

We are now only in the early stages of what many are calling a generational war. As combat operations continue to evolve, the Army must educate officers with relevant knowledge to develop capable leaders ready for the potential future conflicts. A key component to the Army's many historical successes was a well-educated force that could critically think and develop logical plans to meet security challenges. The complexity of today's battlefield is perhaps the greatest an officer in the Army has ever witnessed in its 229-year history. Although expectations of success for today's officer are no different from those of other generations, what is significantly different now is the rapidity of change.

To digest the myriad of influential challenges on military operations, officers need to increase study and education to maintain relevance and be ready competencies for problem solve solutions to the complexities of future conflict. What is more critical now than in years' past is the ability for the Army to expose officers to the various issues facing them in combat. Clearly the best way in obtaining a core competency in these various issues is through educational exposure provided by ILE. The knowledge gained at ILE is critical to the successful preparation of majors for the duties of warfighting. ILE is where officers can focus on growing intellectually through study, dialoging, and discourse with field experts, educators, superiors and peers. Majors who attend ILE develop critical problem solving skills to address the challenges of a fluid environment of combat in the 21st Century. These challenges will continue to increases in complexity due to the information age and the compression of time and virtual distance between nations brought about by globalization.

The strategic solution to the challenges of the 21st century lies in the balance between the operational and institutional force continuing to reinvent and refine the Army as an organization. To reverse this trend the Army must reexamine this balance by considering acceptance of minimal risk in manning of units deployed through easing of restriction created by rigid personnel policies. Adjusting the stop move and stop loss policies will allow the Army to flow officers between the operational and institutional force. By adhering to a two-year dwell policy, the Army can rebalance the force. These two adjustments to current personnel policies, in conjunction with a temporary increase to a surge, would assist in solving the majors can attend ILE while the operational force has the necessary field grades to accomplish mission requirements. The Army must establish a personnel management process that will maintain a steady flow of majors in and out of the operational force to ensure ILE does not become a casualty of the long war.

As we enter into the seventh year of a war with no termination in sight, the challenge for the Army to produce officers with the knowledge to remain ready for the complexities of war.

In Iraq and Afghanistan the irregular nature of the conflict places a premium on unit leaders who possess the resourcefulness, initiative and determination to succeed on a battlefield fraught with ambiguity. In the near future as is the case today, the nation's enemies will continue to employ asymmetric means to level the playing field, attacking the Army where it is least versed in fighting. Only through the complement of education will the Army be able to dominate throughout the spectrum of conflict for years to come.

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