

[Argument For] Constructive or Equivalent Credit for Warrant Officer Professional Military Education

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The U.S. Army modernizes the force by prioritizing the development and management of its People through strategies like the Army People Strategy, Army Talent Management Strategy, and Army University Strategy. The Army emphasizes lifelong learning, builds diverse expertise, and empowers Soldiers through flexible educational and career development pathways. The Warrant Officer Career College should extend constructive credit options to broaden learning, increase training flexibility, and diversify expertise, better preparing warrant officers for modern warfare's complex challenges.

Extending Professional Military Education (PME) constructive credit options for warrant officers aligns with the Army Innovation Strategy to offer creativity and innovation training to employees and management, which will broaden warrant officers' learning experiences (U.S. Army, 2017). As the Army continues modernizing processes and operating environment, innovative education is a way to modernize our People. The Army has consistently produced and developed high-quality commissioned officers through different credentialing programs and advanced civil schooling. The basic branch officers may receive partial Intermediate Level Education (ILE) credit through approved credentialing programs (HQDA, 2017). The Army could similarly develop warrant officers' common skills through credentialing programs and advanced civil schooling. For example, many credited advanced-level master's or higher programs, such as MBA or master's degree in organizational leadership, develop executive writing and communication skills that align with warrant officer ILE programs of instruction (POI) writing and communication modules.

Extending PME constructive credit options for warrant officers promotes training flexibility and shortens the training pipeline, a crucial need as the Army operates under resource constraints. All warrant officers must complete a five-week WOILE course, regardless of prior advanced education, except those who complete the ILE 10-month resident, nonresident, or common core satellite campus (HQDA, 2017). By offering an expedited WOILE version for those with advanced education, the Army can streamline the training process, focus on strategic-level doctrines, and reduce the demand for resources and staffing at the Warrant Officer Career College (WOCC). The Army Credentialing and Continuing Education Service offers flexible and relevant education programs and credentialing certifications (U.S. Army, 2023). Some warrant officers might already obtain the common skills through advanced education programs or certifications. Recognizing the constructive credits between military and civilian education programs aligns with the Army Innovation Strategy, which encourages efficient use of resources and innovative training approaches.

Extending PME constructive credit options for warrant officers motivates individuals to take on challenging operational/strategic assignments, ultimately diversifying expertise and supporting the Army's talent management objectives. Recognizing operational experience encourages continuous learning and creates a more dynamic career pathway for warrant officers. TRADOC, WOCC, G-3/5/7, G-1, and Branch Proponents could establish criteria for PME constructive credit based on operational experiences and achievements, enabling warrant officers to diversify their professional development and take on more complex roles across the force. The DA Pam 600-3 outlines the professional development of warrant officers (HQDA, 2023). However, the Army lacks sufficient policies to incentivize warrant officers to take on some assignments. Recognizing operational assignments as constructive credit could be a motivational strategy.

Expanding constructive credit options for warrant officers would enhance the Army's ability to manage

talent, modernize education, and prepare its leaders for the challenges of modern warfare. Lifelong learning should encompass a broad range of opportunities beyond military institutional training, fostering the development of knowledge, skills, and behaviors critical for Army leaders. As warfare evolves, the Army must ensure its leaders adapt quickly and apply diverse perspectives to emerging challenges. By recognizing the value of advanced civilian education and experience, the Army can create more flexible training pathways, streamline the PME system, and better equip warrant officers to serve as adaptable, strategic leaders.

References

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