

Military Installation Voluntary Education Review

(MIVER)



MIVER SITE VISIT TO
Army
Fort Riley, Kansas

13–15 December 2010

MIVER Final Report Fort Riley Kansas

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FORT RILEY KANSAS

A Military Installation Voluntary Education Review (MIVER) team visited Fort Riley, Kansas, 13-15 December 2010 to review the postsecondary education programs offered to 18,020 active duty military, 23,000 family members, and 3,570 Department of Defense (DoD) civilians assigned to Fort Riley and 100 retirees and other service members from other branches. The team of 11, plus the MIVER administrator, was made up of seasoned educators.

The postsecondary education programs at Fort Riley are housed in a number of buildings on the post. The Education Center and the institutions have office space, classrooms, and computer labs. While there are some issues with location and quality of some of the space, the basic needs of the programs are being met.

Seven accredited institutions - Barton Community College, Central Michigan University, Central Texas College, Kansas State University, Southwestern College, University of Mary, and Upper Iowa University - are housed in the Education Center. Certificate, associate degree, baccalaureate degree and master's degree programs are offered with instructor-led courses on the post. Due to deployments, one institution with offices on post, Kansas State University, welcomes Fort Riley personnel to its campus in Manhattan, but has no students enrolled in courses at the Education Center. In addition to the face-to-face courses offered in the Education Center, all of these institutions offer online courses to Soldiers and other Fort Riley affiliates.

There is a very amiable and productive relationship among the Garrison Command, the Education Center, which is a division of the Directorate of Human Resources, and the institutions that offer programs at Fort Riley. The Consortium of Colleges and Universities, the full-color brochure that features programs offered by all institutions, the basic skills programs offered by Barton Community College without charge to the Army or the Soldiers and family members, and the semi-annual installation-wide graduation ceremonies are worthy of note.

Supplemental resources - libraries, technology and instruction - available at Fort Riley are of high quality. Most of the library resources, however, are available through virtual access to libraries at the main campuses and interlibrary loans since the post library is basically a recreational facility. The institutions and the Education Center offer counseling, much of which utilizes the GoArmyEd computer software.

Overall, the students were very enthusiastic about the quality of the programs offered through the Education Center and the Education Center and the institutions were pleased with Command support for the postsecondary education programs.

Basically, the MIVER team had three concerns about the programs at Fort Riley. One was the inaccessibility of facilities as outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act, another was the Education Center's lack of ease in accessing data on enrollments, etc. that would be useful in planning, and a third, various aspects of the strategic planning process.

The Education Center and individual programs at Fort Riley offer quality programs and serve their customers well. The MIVER team did, however, identify ways that they can improve.

INTRODUCTION

Background Information

The visit to Fort Riley, Kansas was scheduled as part of the planned responsibilities of the Military Installation Voluntary Education Review (MIVER) project. The purpose of the MIVER project, funded by the Department of Defense (DoD) through a contract with the American Council on Education's (ACE) Center for Lifelong Learning, is to examine "the collegiate educational programs conducted on military bases and to assist in the improvement of these programs through recommendations to the installation, the providing institutions, and the military services." MIVER conducts evaluations on military installations within and outside the United States.

The MIVER process involves three steps to complete the visit:

- The Education Services Office and each institution providing programs at the installation prepare written evaluations and assessments of their programs based on the format stipulated in the MIVER *Principles of Good Practice for Voluntary Education Programs on Military Installations* and the MIVER *Principles of Good Practice for Institutions Providing Education Programs on Military Installations*.
- A team of professional educators drawn from accredited institutions of higher education (or persons of similar educational qualifications and experience) visits the installation, interviews staff from the installation and institutions providing programs, reviews supporting materials that are provided or requested, and examines the resources used for the programs.
- A written report containing sections on the installation and each provider institution is prepared in draft form, reviewed by the installation personnel for factual accuracy, and revised into a final report that is provided to the installation, the institutions, and the Department of Defense.

Voluntary education programs on all military installations follow policies enunciated in DoD Directive 1322.8 and DoD Instruction 1322.25. These directives include, among other requirements, that each military installation provide the following:

- Opportunities for service members to achieve educational, vocational, and career goals

- Access for service members, subject to the requirements of military duties, to educational opportunities available to other citizens
- Equal access to, and support of, educational opportunities for all service members.

Site Description

Fort Riley, founded in 1853 to protect the movement of people and trade over the Oregon-California and Santa Fe Trail, is located in northeast Kansas, on the Kansas River, between Junction City and Manhattan. The post, located in Geary and Riley counties, covers 100,656 acres. Since World War II, a number of different infantry divisions have been assigned to Fort Riley, most notably, The Big Red One, which was there from 1955 to 1996. Between 1999 and 2006, Fort Riley was headquarters to the 24th Infantry Division. In August 2006, The Big Red One returned its headquarters to Fort Riley from Leighton Barracks, Germany. In October 2006, the 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, assumed command and control of the Military Transition Team training mission whose primary mission is to advise the security forces of Iraq and Afghanistan in the areas of intelligence, communications, fire support, logistics, and infantry tactics. Fort Riley is home to the U.S. Cavalry Museum, the 1st Infantry Division Museum, the Custer Home, the First Territorial Capitol of Kansas and The Atomic Cannon.

Fort Riley is home to 18,020 active duty Soldiers, 23,000 family members, 3,570 DoD civilians and 100 members of other services. A significant number of the Soldiers are deployed.

Postsecondary education programs on Fort Riley are housed in the Education Center, where basic skills training, certificates, associate degrees, bachelor's degrees and master's degrees are offered by seven colleges and universities. Each school has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Fort Riley Education Center that is revised bi-annually. The MOU specifies the responsibilities of the institutions and the installation in providing educational services to the Soldiers, their family members, DoD civilians, people in the surrounding community and others with military affiliations.

Use of Self-Study Guidelines and Documentation

The installation and institutions at Fort Riley followed the self-study guidelines provided by the MIVER program to assist them in reporting on the status of their programs. They also provided evidence to support the information presented. Where documentation was not provided in the self-study report, it was readily made available to the MIVER team during the visit.

Site Visit Schedule

The MIVER team for Fort Riley arrived at the Kansas City, Missouri and Manhattan, Kansas airports on Sunday, 12 December 2010, and traveled by automobile to lodging in Junction City, Kansas since adequate housing was not available on post. At an after-dinner meeting, the MIVER team reviewed the MIVER process, overall plans for the three-day visit, individual work assignments, questions or concerns about information presented in the installation and/or institution self-study reports, the schedule for travel to the installation the following morning, and plans for day one.

Following breakfast on 13 December, the team travelled by automobile to the installation, where they were greeted by the education services officer (ESO) and his staff. As scheduled, the team moved to Room 210 of the Education Center at 0800 to meet with the representatives of the institutions. The MIVER director explained the MIVER process, its history and goals, and introduced the team chair, who explained the general schedule for the three-day visit, and the process for developing and producing the MIVER report. The team members introduced themselves and began their interactions with the institution representatives.

The ESO accompanied the MIVER director and team chair for the opening briefing with the deputy garrison commander, the Human Resources director, the Garrison Command sergeant major, and the two official observers from Headquarters, Army Continuing Education System.

Following this meeting and a car tour of Fort Riley, the team chair and the MIVER director joined the other MIVER team members as they continued their investigation of postsecondary education at Fort Riley. They raised questions about facts presented in the self-study and issues not included, inspected physical facilities and library resources, and interviewed faculty and students. Before leaving the installation, they set appointments for the following day. As done the previous evening, the MIVER team met following dinner and shared their experiences of the day and discussed problems areas. Plans were made for the following day.

The team continued its investigation until about 1500 on 14 December, when they returned to the hotel to discuss their findings and agree on commendations and recommendations to be presented the following morning.

The final day of the Fort Riley MIVER visit, 15 December, began with an 0800 outbrief with the Garrison commander, the Human Resources director, the Army official observers, and the ESO. The MIVER director and the MIVER team chair expressed the team's appreciation for the hospitality the team received at Fort Riley before presenting the installation commendations and recommendations. The commander sought clarification and asked about ways that the

postsecondary program at Fort Riley could be improved. A similar outbrief was given to the institutional representatives and Education Center staff before the individual team members met with representatives of the specific institutions to present the commendations and recommendations that applied to their particular institutions.

All members of the MIVER team departed the installation by noon and prepared for departure from the Kansas City or Manhattan airport.

Acknowledgements

The MIVER team is most appreciative of the hospitality and cooperation they received from the Fort Riley Command, the Education Center staff, and the representatives of the institutions. All were forthcoming and made every effort to provide the team with an accurate assessment of postsecondary programs offered at Fort Riley.

Installation Report Fort Riley

MISSION STATEMENT AND COMMAND SUPPORT

Principle One

The installation's voluntary education program evolves from an educational mission statement that is compatible with the installation's mission, reflects sound adult education principles and practices, and includes clear and measurable voluntary education program objectives. The mission statement and the program have the support of the appropriate military commander.

The mission statement of the Fort Riley Education Center, in conjunction with the mission of the Army Continuing Education System (ACES), meets the requirements described in Principle One. The mission and corollary objectives described in the self-study identify critical characteristics of an effective educational resource center including customer service, professional development, safety, staff morale, dedicated partnerships with campus directors, quality assurance, marketing, and counseling. (SP 1.1-1.3) This mission and these objectives will serve as the cornerstone for the recommendations found in Principle Five concerning the construction of a comprehensive Voluntary Education Program Plan.

Given the importance of forming dedicated partnerships, the accuracy of data used in decision making needs to be timely and accurate. Discussion of data with the Fort Riley education services officer (ESO), the Education Center's chief of Academic Programs (CAP), and the education services specialist from Installation Management Command (IMCOM), who acted as an observer for this review, confirmed that data retrieval to include usable summaries, analysis, and disposition need additional attention and better coordination across various levels of the Command. The weekly, monthly, and quarterly meetings of various constituent groups, on the other hand, seem sufficient to keep appropriate stakeholders apprised of relevant information. (SP 1.4, 1.5)

It should be noted that commanders have actively supported the Education Center through representation at advisory board meetings, graduation exercises, attendance at briefings, and through the provision funding to enhance the staff beyond what IMCOM provides. Facility enhancements have been facilitated by commander knowledge of and participation in programs

offered by the center. In fact, command support of all major education events operates at a notable level. (SP 1.6, 1.7) Thus, the MIVER team offers the following:

COMMENDATION: The military command at Fort Riley is commended for its outstanding support for the voluntary education effort in a variety of ways including regular participation in the Fort Riley Executive Steering Committee and in the semi-annual graduation ceremonies.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Principle Two

Managers of the voluntary education program are professional educators who effectively administer the human, fiscal, and learning resources required to meet the educational needs of the installation.

The ESO, who receives close assistance from the Education Center's chief of academic programs, provides immediate leadership for the Education Center. The Education Center is a division of the Directorate of Human Resources (DHR), and the ESO meets weekly with the director and appropriate staff. The garrison commander attends the DHR meeting on a quarterly basis for division briefings. It appears that communications between the Education Center and DHR are beneficial. (SP 2.2) Further, interviewed parties reported that communication among Education Center staff members, and between the Education Center staff and institutional representatives, is positive. (SP 2.3, 2.4)

In keeping with the broad-based mission of the Education Center, educational programs are provided to a large customer base, including not only Soldiers but also family members, DoD civilians, members of other services (Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Active Guard/Reserve and National Guard Soldiers in a four-state area), retirees, and area civilians. In addition to the evening and weekend postsecondary programs offered on post, the Education Center also offers classes for basic skills, language training with labs, GT (General Technical) improvement, Leader Skill Enhancement Courses, and tutoring sessions. (SP 2.3, 2.5) Thus, the MIVER team offers the following:

COMMENDATION: The ESO and installation and institution staff members associated with the Education Center have worked diligently to create a customer-focused learning environment that integrates a variety of education and training

programs to serve a wide customer base in keeping with the broad vision of the Army Family Covenant.

To keep education customers informed about these educational opportunities, the Education Center has an active public information system. For example, the monthly Army Education Newsletter is distributed through the GoArmyEd electronic venue. A single “Fort Riley Education Services” color brochure identifies the participating institutions of the on-post Consortium of Colleges and Universities, their contact information, and their programs of instruction. Articles and schedule information are published in the post newspaper, as appropriate. (SP 2.3) Thus, the MIVER team offers the following:

COMMENDATION: The Education Center is commended for providing and effectively distributing an array of electronic and print information about educational opportunities at Fort Riley.

A current challenge with staffing levels has occurred with a recent reduction from 12 to three and a half contractors serving as administrative assistants, test examiners, and technology operators. This reduction makes it difficult for the Education Center to serve its extensive customer base, and it has had to reduce some of its services. The problem is expected to be solved by IMCOM, and all concerned hope for the increase to occur in the near future. (SP 2.6, 2.7)

Technology issues and web-based instruments to facilitate the functions of the Education Center will be discussed under Principles Four and Five of this report. (SP 2.9) The process for evaluating services (SP 2.10) and the process for assuring the quality of academic programs on the installation, as well as for identifying the need for new programs (SP 2.11, 2.12) also will be discussed under Principle Five.

STUDENT SERVICES

Principle Three

The policies, procedures, and practices of the voluntary education program take into account the conditions and circumstances of service members as adult learners and promote the success of those learners through appropriate counseling, testing, financial aid, and other services.

In order to properly take into account the circumstances and needs of service members as voluntary education (VOLED) learners (SP 3.1, 3.3, 3.4), certain basic information needs to be available to decision makers. The MIVER team, after requesting summary enrollment data,

received conflicting information as to the ease of recovering such data in a single document, as opposed to a combination of several different queries. The Education Center staff did not believe a single summary document was available to them in the data warehouse. Rather, they believe a number of different queries are required to obtain the data. The official Army observers for the visit called Headquarters ACES and were told that the desired summary sheet could not be produced at the installation level, but was available only at Headquarters IMCOM. A call to IMCOM information technology personnel, however, produced a different response; that is, MIVER was told that such a one-page summary could be produced at Fort Riley. With such conflicting information, the MIVER team was unable to determine what could be or what could not be retrieved locally, and, therefore offers the following:

RECOMMENDATION: The ESO should communicate directly with Headquarters IMCOM to resolve the issue of either establishing/confirming the capability to produce locally required summary enrollment data or having IMCOM provide the required summary data on a regular basis.

Education Center counselors are key players in connecting service members with educational opportunities. The MIVER team found an appropriate number of counselors with suitable training for their tasks and computers with Internet access. (SP 3.1, 3.2) Adequate opportunities for professional development appear to exist, as confirmed by the counselors. Students, overall, reported satisfaction with counseling experiences. The web-based Army-wide GoArmyEd system allows education records to be maintained and updated electronically. (SP 3.6-3.8)

The ESO is responsible for the Education Center testing program. Test control officers usually are appointed for their respective testing programs. These programs administer a variety of exams: Army Personnel Testing (including many different areas from firefighting and typing to languages and math) and Academic Testing (including DANTES exams such as SAT and GED, CLEP exams, iBT dSST exams, certification exams managed by Pearson VUE, and classroom and distance-learning exams proctored by the test center). (SP 3.7) The testing programs appear to be operating well, although the reduction of contract staff (which includes test examiners) has been an issue.

Graduation ceremonies are held semi-annually. Even students graduating from distance learning schools are invited to participate in the ceremony. Both installation and institution staff members regularly attend these events in appropriate numbers. (SP 3.9)

RESOURCES

Principle Four

A sufficient reservoir of relevant instructional resources is available to the instructor for teaching support and to the student for reference, research, and lifelong learning. Facilities and technology infrastructure are appropriate to support voluntary education program objectives and services offered. Financial resources are adequate and appropriately used to accomplish the mission and achieve the objectives of the program.

Instructional Resources

The installation library at Fort Riley is located in Building 5306, approximately eight miles from the Education Center on the main post (Buildings 215 and 217). The installation library operates under the Directorate of Family Morale, Welfare and Recreation. The installation library operates under a contract manager, two flex-time professional librarians, and three staff members providing services. The focus of the library is primarily on meeting the recreational needs of Soldiers and their families. The library is open 40 hours per week, from 1100-1800 Tuesday-Saturday and 1200-1700 on Sunday. (SP 4.3) Other local libraries that military students can access include the major research library at Kansas State University and the public libraries in Junction City and Manhattan, Kansas.

The installation library's facility is less than 2,800 square feet, with limited space for seating or quiet study. There are three Internet-accessible computers, along with an additional computer for searching the library catalog. Currently, the installation library's web presence is very limited (<http://www.rileymwr.com/web-content/pages/library.html>). The library does not provide wireless Internet access. (SP 4.5) The bulk of the collection supports recreational needs, including materials for children and young adults, audio books, videos, Braille, Jane's defense titles, and Spanish language materials. Updated review materials for tests including the ASVAB, GED, ACT, etc. are included in the collection along with titles that make up the Combined Army Research Library. Army Knowledge Online and Military OneSource can be accessed through the library's computers.

The majority of the library's programming is designed to support families, although the contract manager expressed an interest in having a closer working relationship with the Education Center during an interview conducted during the MIVER visit. The potential to develop this closer working relationship is hampered by both the size of the installation library and the distance between the library and any of the Education Center facilities. Installation library personnel have

had little contact with representatives or librarians from the institutions providing postsecondary education at Fort Riley, although Central Texas College personnel had inquired about test-proctoring. Library personnel do not participate in meetings of the Consortium schools. (SP 4.1, 4.4)

The Multi-Use Learning Facility (MLF) is located in Building 7604, with a coordinator onsite, study materials to be used in the MLF or checked out, and 12 computers for Soldier and family member use. (SP 4.2)

Classrooms at Fort Riley (Buildings 215, 217, 7604, 7656, 8044, and 240) are equipped with appropriate technologies, including wireless Internet (currently provided by Barton Community College), projectors, televisions, and VHS/DVD players. Some classrooms have instructor-teaching stations but all allow an instructor to use a personal laptop with the projection system. (SP 4.6)

Technology Infrastructure and Physical Resources

The installation self-study clearly indicated a variety of significant issues with the facilities that compose the Education Center. The MIVER team concurs with the seriousness of those issues as well as those raised in the 2010 Army Corps of Engineers' document titled "Area Development Guide for Fort Riley, Kansas Historic Main Post Facilities" and the 2010 Installation Status Report. (SP 4.15)

The primary Education Center offices are located on the historic main post in Buildings 215 and 217. Building 240, which houses classrooms for auto mechanics, welding, and other special purposes, is relatively close to Buildings 215 and 217, while the remainder of the classroom buildings (7604, 7656, and 8044) are approximately eight miles from the main post area. (SP 4.7, 4.11) Parking is problematic at certain times of the day for all of these buildings.

This education facility is too often inaccessible to Soldiers, their families, Education Center and institutional staff, and civilians. The lack of accessibility results in serious barriers to those seeking to participate in VOLED activities as well as to those who are serving those individuals. It would be impossible to hire an individual with a physical disability to work for the Education Center or one of the institutions housed in the Education Center since the buildings lack any kind of handicapped access. (SP 4.17) It is ironic that while the restrooms located in the basements of Buildings 215 and 217 meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards, there is no way that a disabled individual could get to these basement facilities. There are steep steps into each building and very steep, shallow steps with inadequate handrails inside the buildings to go up to the second floor or down to the basement. The only restroom facilities are located in the

basement, which is extremely inconvenient for students and employees. (SP 4.17) The arrangement of classrooms and offices within each building is serpentine and convoluted and the MIVER team found the limited signage on the exterior of the building to be of little use in finding various offices or facilities. In several cases, one must walk through a classroom or office to get to another classroom or office or exit the building and go in through another door to access offices or classrooms. (SP 4.7) While the existing testing center is small, it is adequate, although it is also inaccessible since it is located in a basement. (SP 4.14)

The MIVER team experienced a variety of climate-control issues during the site visit. Some classrooms and offices were frigid, while others were extremely warm. (SP 4.8) The lack of fire alarms and sprinkler systems in Buildings 215 and 217 is an additional concern. (SP 4.7, 4.8) The MIVER team believes that these facilities issues go far beyond the standard facilities issues frequently encountered on military installations. (SP 4.7, 4.8, 4.15) They lead the MIVER team to offer the following:

RECOMMENDATION: Concurring with the recommendations and findings made in the 2010 Installation Status Report (ISR) and the Army Corps of Engineers review, the ESO should work with appropriate individuals in the Command at Fort Riley to address the long-term facilities needs of the VOLED programs at Fort Riley.

RECOMMENDATION: Although the educational facilities on the main post are housed in historic structures, this circumstance does not negate the expectation that, based on the principles of the Americans with Disabilities Act, facilities should be accessible to everyone. Immediate action should be taken to improve this situation.

RECOMMENDATION: The ESO should continue to work with appropriate personnel at Fort Riley to improve the climate-control and safety issues to ensure that VOLED participants can take classes in a safe environment that does not detract from the learning experience.

RECOMMENDATION: The ESO, in collaboration with appropriate institutional representatives, should develop a series of strategies to provide more prominent signage on the exteriors of the education center buildings, as well as within the buildings themselves.

The current wireless system is frequently problematic when many users attempt to log on. During this visit, the Education Center’s instructional technology director informed the MIVER team that the Education Center was transitioning to its own Internet and wireless system by

securing a commercial Internet Service Provider. This process has already begun in the testing centers. (SP 4.9, 4.16) Budget limitations have prevented some technologies from being replaced on the standard three-year cycle, but the Education Center does employ its own technology staff and the equipment is adequately maintained and updated. (SP 4.16)

Financial Resources

The Fort Riley Education Services budget for fiscal year 2010 (civilian pay) was close to \$1 million. Ordinary operating expenses appear to be sufficient. Overall, the budget was adequate for the programs offered. (SP 4.18-4.20)

Although each school determines its own tuition and fees, most of the institutions offer their courses at or somewhat below the \$250 per semester hour, so the Soldiers have their courses paid for by the Army tuition assistance program. (SP 4.22)

Funds are needed for capital projects, a subject addressed in the previous sub-section of this principle. The ESO reports that this issue is a regular topic of conversation at various levels of education-oriented meetings.

One particularly noteworthy arrangement concerns the Education Center and Barton Community College. They have partnered to produce several educational benefits to VOLED participants that are paid for by the State of Kansas rather than by the Army or the students. (SP 4.21) Thus, the MIVER team offers the following:

COMMENDATION: Fort Riley Education Center and Barton Community College are commended for their collaboration to provide several unique programs (to include LSEC, BSEP, language labs, and tutor center) that are available at no cost to the Army, Soldiers, or military dependents.

THE VOLUNTARY EDUCATION PROGRAM PLAN

Principle Five

The installation has a comprehensive Voluntary Education Program Plan (VEPP) designed to fulfill the mission, attain the objectives, and meet the needs of the voluntary education program.

Education program planning is comprehensive and continuous and ensures the effective application of resources in achieving program mission and objectives. Results of the program evaluation help modify and improve the program as well as provide the basis for planning.

Data collection, analysis and interpretation are used to identify and prioritize the installation's educational needs so that they may be addressed in a systematic, data-driven fashion.

The ambitious mission of Fort Riley Education Services is: “to create a customer-focused learning environment that integrates current education, training, and transition programs to provide broad learning opportunities, facilitate access to services, and enhance the visibility of all installation student programs.” Its remarkably broad customer service base has been previously noted. As described in the self-study, objectives include the need to develop an “action plan” that will be comprehensive, to develop a “marketing strategy” that reaches all levels of the Command in a timely manner, to develop an “extensive marketing outreach program” that targets all current and potential educational customers of the broadly defined base, and to develop a “strategy that allows continuity and carry over” across the years as new commands take over from their predecessors.

None of these plans, however, was included in the self-study. In addition, during interviews with Education Center staff, it appeared that these plans were “not quite finalized” in the minds of anyone and that an overall organizational structure to house these plans, as well as data sufficient to inform them, were sorely needed.

The issue of appropriate data enrollment collection, retrieval, and summary was discussed under Principle Three. The importance of this issue cannot be overstated.

There are additional information issues of equal importance to sound decision making. One concerns a useful needs analysis. Although the Army has revised its old needs analysis instrument, the new tool, known as the “Ultimate Survey,” appears to be largely the same as the old tool and insufficient for the ambitious objectives of the Fort Riley Education Center. Fort Riley staff can create supplementary questions that address issues and employ the methodology

needed to plan for achieving the objectives identified in the VEPP. This locally-produced tool can be delivered through the “SurveyMonkey” mechanism once a private Internet Service Provider is obtained for the testing center; a goal soon to be realized. The Fort Riley staff should also take into account current and future command needs and analysis of programmatic trends at other installations, and consider holding focus groups among the various constituent groups.

Also, there is no ongoing and regular sharing of summarized, and thus usable, assessment information between the institutions and the installation. For example, some institutions provide binders of end-of-course evaluations of instructors; however, the data are not processed into a user-friendly summary and are not “evaluated” by the institution as to their meaning. No institution appears to provide summarized grading information to the Education Center so that installation oversight regarded such things as grade inflation can be maintained.

The MIVER *Principles of Good Practice for Voluntary Education Programs on Military Installations* spells out, in detail, the essential elements of an effective Voluntary Education Program Plan (VEPP). (SP 5.11-5.15) These include a clear and current mission statement, ongoing data collection, analyses, and interpretation, evaluation of programs and services, and an annual action plan that includes specific actions to be taken to realize the objectives stated in the VEPP. MIVER principles call for an installation to have a comprehensive plan covering program administration and leadership, student services, instructional resources, physical resources, financial resources, and other critical areas. Effective VOLED programs have goals and objectives derived from a thorough needs assessment, reasonable and detailed action plans, programs developed and executed to achieve these goals and objectives, and a systematic analysis of programs, along with recommendations for program improvement. Planning, as derived from this process, is a key part of translating educational needs into intentional and appropriate educational outcomes. Moreover, the VEPP should be a living document.

The current “Business Plan” of Fort Riley’s Education Center includes some elements of a comprehensive VEPP, but needs considerable refinement and expansion. In particular, the specific shortcomings addressed at the start of this section need attention and correction. Thus, the MIVER team offers the following:

RECOMMENDATION: The ESO, in cooperation with the Consortium of Colleges and Universities, should include an action plan, overall marketing strategy, extensive marketing outreach program, and strategy to facilitate continuity across change-of-commands, and situate their objectives into a comprehensive VEPP that addresses each of the points covered in the MIVER *Principles of Good Practice*.

OBSERVATION: The Army should consider reviewing its “Ultimate Survey” needs assessment instrument with the goal of making it more comprehensive.

RECOMMENDATION: The ESO, in cooperation with the Consortium of Colleges and Universities, should develop a supplemental needs assessment for Fort Riley that incorporates all areas of the self-defined customer base. Appropriate steps should be taken to ensure adequate responses to and assessment of those responses.

RECOMMENDATION: The ESO, in cooperation with the Consortium of Colleges and Universities, should establish and monitor a regular flow of information between the institutions and the Education Center that provides for an assessment of the quality of the educational offerings at Fort Riley.

RECOMMENDATION: The ESO, in cooperation with the Consortium of Colleges and Universities, should establish procedures and standards for determining “success” in meeting annual objectives set in the VEPP.

Summary of Installation Commendations, Observations and Recommendations

COMMENDATIONS

- **The military command at Fort Riley is commended for its outstanding support for the voluntary education effort in a variety of ways including regular participation in the Fort Riley Executive Steering Committee and in the semi-annual graduation ceremonies.**
- **The ESO and installation and institution staff members associated with the Education Center have worked diligently to create a customer-focused learning environment that integrates a variety of education and training programs to serve a wide customer base in keeping with the broad vision of the Army Family Covenant.**
- **The Education Center is commended for providing and effectively distributing an array of electronic and print information about educational opportunities at Fort Riley.**
- **Fort Riley Education Center and Barton Community College are commended for their collaboration to provide several unique programs (to include LSEC, BSEP, language labs, and tutor center) that are available at no cost to the Army, Soldiers, or military dependents.**

OBSERVATION

- **The Army should consider reviewing its “Ultimate Survey” needs assessment instrument with the goal of making it more comprehensive.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **The ESO should communicate directly with Headquarters IMCOM to resolve the issue of either establishing/confirming the capability to produce locally required summary enrollment data or having IMCOM provide the required summary data on a regular basis.**
- **Concurring with the recommendations and findings made in the 2010 Installation Status Report (ISR) and the Army Corps of Engineers review, the ESO should work with appropriate individuals in the Command at Fort Riley to address the long-term facilities needs of the VOLED programs at Fort Riley.**

- **Although the educational facilities on the main post are housed in historic structures, this circumstance does not negate the expectation that, based on the principles of the Americans with Disabilities Act, facilities should be accessible to everyone. Immediate action should be taken to improve this situation.**
- **The ESO should continue to work with appropriate personnel at Fort Riley to improve the climate-control and safety issues to ensure that VOLED participants can take classes in a safe environment that does not detract from the learning experience.**
- **The ESO, in collaboration with appropriate institutional representatives, should develop a series of strategies to provide more prominent signage on the exteriors of the education center buildings, as well as within the buildings themselves.**
- **The ESO, in cooperation with the Consortium of Colleges and Universities, should include an action plan, overall marketing strategy, extensive marketing outreach program, and strategy to facilitate continuity across change-of-commands, and situate their objectives into a comprehensive VEPP that addresses each of the points covered in the *MIVER Principles of Good Practice*.**
- **The ESO, in cooperation with the Consortium of Colleges and Universities, should develop a supplemental needs assessment for Fort Riley that incorporates all areas of the self-defined customer base. Appropriate steps should be taken to ensure adequate responses to and assessment of those responses.**
- **The ESO, in cooperation with the Consortium of Colleges and Universities, should establish and monitor a regular flow of information between the institutions and the Education Center that provides for an assessment of the quality of the educational offerings at Fort Riley.**
- **The ESO, in cooperation with the Consortium of Colleges and Universities, should establish procedures and standards for determining “success” in meeting annual objectives set in the VEPP.**

Institution Report Barton Community College

INTRODUCTION

A comprehensive public open admissions community college founded in 1969, Barton Community College (BCC) has its main campus in Great Bend, Kansas. In addition to its main campus, the college has significant online offerings and other off-campus sites including a sizeable presence at Fort Riley. BCC offers associate degrees and certificate programs in academic, professional and vocational/technical fields.

At Fort Riley, Barton offers the associate of arts, associate of science, associate of arts with elementary education emphasis, associate of science with elementary education emphasis, associate of science with secondary education emphasis, associate of general studies, associate of general studies with military studies emphasis, associate of applied science in small business/management, associate of applied science in emergency management, associate of applied science in hazardous material management, associate of applied science in business technology, certificate in office technology, and certificate in hazardous material handling.

During the 2009-2010 academic year, BCC served 5,587 full-time equivalent students, 2,014 on the main campus and 3,573 off campus. In 2009-2010, the duplicated headcount for Fort Riley was 5,337 for both classroom and distance learning, with 2,022 of these students enrolled in classroom only. During fall 2010, the duplicated headcount for BCC's offerings at Fort Riley was 3,494 for both classroom and distance learning, and the duplicated headcount was 3,909 for BARTONline, which originates at Fort Riley and includes all of Barton's online students.

From its initial association with Fort Riley and the U.S. Army in 1984 with a single training contract, the college has provided increasingly more programs and services for Fort Riley. In 1985, Barton began providing classroom instruction in the Functional Academic Skills Training (FAST) program, the current Basic Skills Education Program (BSEP), in a regular education classroom or in a unit classroom when requested. Barton began offering college level courses in the evening in 1993 and began the Leader Skills Enhancement Courses (LSEC) offering college courses to the Soldiers in 1996. Currently, Barton offers services in the BSEP and Leader Skills Enhancement Courses (including the Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees) and also offers the Associate of General Studies and Associate of Applied Science-Applied Management degrees via traditional delivery.

Through the years, Barton has expanded and enhanced its on and off-duty military education at Fort Riley until it has become a key and substantial part of Barton College. BCC now provides lunchtime, evening, and weekend classes, conducts requested unit classes for BSEP and LSEC, and has established computer labs, a computerized CLEP/DSST Test Center open to all personnel at Fort Riley, a tutorial center for all college and university students assigned to Fort Riley, and a distance education learning program.

BCC's site at Fort Riley is staffed Mondays through Thursdays from 0730 to 1700 and on Fridays from 0730 to 1600.

Although complete, the self-study from Barton Community College might have been more thorough in its explanation of how it uses the results of its evaluations to make changes to continuously improve programs.

MISSION

Principle One

The institution providing voluntary education programs on a military installation has an educational mission statement that reflects sound adult education philosophy and goals and is clearly compatible with the installation voluntary education program mission statement and objectives.

Barton Community College's mission statement follows:

The Mission of Barton Community College is to provide quality educational opportunities that are accessible, affordable, continuously improving and student focused. Barton is driven to provide an educational system that is learning-centered, innovative, meets workforce needs, that strengthens communities and our country.

The mission appears in the Barton Community College (BCC) catalog and on the web site. (SP 1.4)

Barton seeks to achieve its mission through five interrelated themes that define its "commitment to excellence in education":

Empowerment

We strive to empower all students to formulate and realize educational goals that will promote their personal growth and facilitate their full participation in a rapidly changing world.

Learning

We invite and assist all students to master a core of knowledge and skills needed for advanced learning, employment, personal growth, and responsible citizenship.

Evaluation

We evaluate the relevant skills and knowledge acquired by all students so as to enhance their meaningful and productive educational experiences. Similarly, Barton evaluates its performance in terms of its contribution to student learning and success.

Discovery

Because we are a force for innovation, we continually strive to discover better ways to empower all students to learn and grow. Barton is a learning institution in both its means and its ends; we facilitate our students' discovery of what they need and want to know with critical thinking.

Growth

We strive to grow each year in our ability to accomplish our mission through purposeful enrollment and a commitment to quality.

The Barton Community College vision is to “contribute to being a leading educational institution, recognized for being innovative and having outstanding people, programs and services.” The College believes that its motto, “We serve those who serve” summarizes its ideology.

In keeping with the College's mission, purpose, and commitment to excellence in education, BCC provides services and classes at Fort Riley consistent with those offered at the main campus. The College provides these classes and services for Soldiers, family members, and students from the community.

Each year, Barton's Board of Trustees and president review its mission statement. (SP 1.5) BCC's planning, goal setting, decision-making, and policies at Fort Riley and college-wide flow from the mission statement. (SP 1.1, 1.3) The MIVER team reviewed documentation and interviewed eight faculty teaching at Fort Riley in fall 2010 and 53 students. The MIVER team

found that BCC's activities at Fort Riley are congruent with the educational mission of Fort Riley and consistent with BCC's mission of delivering educational opportunities that improve the lives of students, meet the workforce needs of the region and strengthen its communities. (SP 1.2)

EDUCATION PROGRAM

Principle Two

Education programs and services provided on military installations maintain the high quality required by regionally accredited institutions, using qualified and dedicated faculty supported by professional development programs and appropriate infrastructure. Assessment of student learning is based on the achievement of comprehensive and specific learning outcomes.

Instruction

By various means, BCC ensures that its instructional programs offered at Fort Riley support the college's mission. In addition, BCC offers military students the opportunity to enroll in online programs in various areas.

The degrees offered at Fort Riley are accurately named, include majors consistent with BCC's mission, and contain appropriate requirements, including a core of general education and prerequisites. (SP 2.1, 2.3, 2.6)

Barton offers developmental courses to assist students in addressing areas of weakness in reading, writing, and math and provides students the opportunity to complete an assessment of basic skills in mathematics, reading and writing through a variety of diagnostic tools including COMPASS, ACT, SAT, TABE, or BSEP. (SP 2.2) Prior to enrolling in math or English classes required for degrees or certificates, students are required to complete a COMPASS placement test to determine their English, math and reading levels.

Tutorial assistance is available at the Barton Fort Riley Tutor Center where math and English instructors have daily office hours to assist the students. The Barton Fort Riley web site, <http://www.bartonccc.edu/military/> also includes links to a number of useful tutorials for students who desire additional assistance whether as a refresher or as an additional resource if they are struggling to successfully grasp the concepts in class.

Two Barton Community College advisors at Fort Riley are readily available for students who are assigned to them. Students meet with these advisors initially to develop their degree plans.

BCC ensures that academic programs reflect the current body of knowledge in the subject area and that instructional methods are up-to-date through curriculum review, program review, and accreditation activities. (SP 2.7)

BCC facilitates transfer of credit and has a liberal academic residency requirement. (SP 2.9, 2.10, 2.11) BCC awards credits for extra-institutional learning on the basis of the American Council on Education's credit recommendations. (SP 2.8) The programs offered by BCC are consistent with the existing MOU and the needs assessment conducted by the installation. (SP 2.4, 2.14)

The college ensures that all students are competent in the use of appropriate computer applications through a number of opportunities, including three college computer labs on post and formal computer coursework. (SP 2.12)

Barton ensures that all students, including those at Fort Riley, are competent in the use of current library technologies. Students at Fort Riley have library resources available through secure access to the main campus library online databases along with a link to a web-based interactive library skills tutorial. Students also have the opportunity to develop familiarity with the local area libraries, including the post library at Fort Riley. (SP 2.13) Whether traditional or e-learning, all courses have standard learning outcomes, and appropriate interaction occurs between instructor and students. (SP 2.15, 2.16) All of Barton's e-learning courses use the Pearson learning management system and the standard Pearson communication tools. Barton's Title III Project, titled "Strengthening Academic and Student Services to Improve Distance Learner Retention," focuses on improving student success and retention through the implementation of intensive distance learning services and quality improvement measures.

Barton Community College's programs and services at Fort Riley are significant and include the BSEP, the LSEC, evening courses, serving as the base for BARTONline offerings, staffing the Fort Riley Tutor Center for all institutions, providing three well-equipped computer labs, and serving as the backup for Internet delivery for the installation and other colleges. In addition, Barton has more than 30 full-time faculty and staff at Fort Riley. Therefore, the MIVER team offers the following:

COMMENDATION: Barton Community College is commended for its investment in full-time personnel, its delivery of a broad array of programs and services, and its strong commitment to the overall education at Fort Riley.

COMMENDATION: Barton Community College and the Fort Riley Education Center are commended for their outstanding collaboration which provides several unique programs (to include LSEC, BSEP, language labs, and the tutor center) that are provided by Barton Community College at no cost to the Army, Soldiers, or military dependents.

Faculty

At Fort Riley, BCC employs 14 full-time and 34 adjunct faculty who have earned degrees from accredited institutions. These faculty assist students in the use of computer technologies, including library technologies. At BCC, BSTC 1036, Computer Concepts and Applications, is required to complete an associate of applied science degree. (SP 2.17-2.19, 2.24) Resumes of academic professionals are up-to-date and accurately reflect their experiences and education; official records are kept on the Great Bend campus; however, copies of some resumes are also available at BCC's office at Fort Riley. (SP 2.22) Appropriate professional development activities are available for all faculty, and for faculty using the Learning Management System (LMS) in working with students in e-learning programs, appropriate online training and strategies are available. (SP 2.23, 2.25) Comments from students were highly complimentary of the BCC faculty at Fort Riley. An impressive number of full-time and adjunct instructors and staff have been nominated and awarded the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development Excellence Award, a national recognition of excellence in education. Therefore, the MIVER team offers the following:

COMMENDATION: The faculty and staff at Barton Community College are commended for their dedication to excellence and the resulting recognition of their efforts by the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development Excellence Award.

Assessment

As part of its regional accreditation, Barton Community College elected to adopt an ongoing process of evaluation for improvement, the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP). This process identifies areas of focus for development, requires the preparation of a plan to enhance that area to improve educational opportunities, and creates and refines educational quality on a yearly basis. Unlike the traditional process for accreditation, the AQIP uses the organizational development process to allow greater achievement, offering opportunity for constant evaluation and improvement. The MIVER team found that student assessment is an integral part of formal learning. (SP 2.28)

BCC's course syllabi list expected outcomes. (SP 2.26) Barton uses a variety of appropriate assessment methods - group projects, tests, quizzes, written papers, presentations, use of technology, guided practice, special projects, and other means - to assess the extent to which these outcomes are achieved. (SP 2.29) BCC publishes its grading policy and periodically conducts a review of the grading patterns to ensure that student grades reflect the quality of work performed. (SP 2.27)

State processes guide Barton's established planning and evaluation efforts. Indicators of performance are established through the legislature, assessing performance of public community colleges in the critical areas of access, retention, course completion, graduation, licensure pass rate, and follow-up. Barton uses the data and analyses on an ongoing basis to make program changes.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Principle Three

Administration of the program includes academic and student services and demonstrates effective and reliable management of human, fiscal, technological, and learning resources.

Management

Program administration for BCC at Fort Riley is consistent with Barton's organization and mission. Institutional employment policies as outlined in BCC's human resource manual are administered uniformly, regardless of an employee's location. Policies, including compensation, teaching load, orientation, supervision, and professional development, apply to faculty teaching at Fort Riley. (SP 3.1) Unlike that for faculty on the main campus, the full-time teaching load for faculty at Fort Riley is 45 credit hours per year since the summer term is included in their contracts. In addition, up-to-date resumes of academic professionals accurately reflecting their past experience and education are filed in accordance with personnel policies and practice. (SP 3.2) The MIVER team found that BCC staff, other colleges' staff, and the education services professionals at the installation communicate well.

BCC's site director at Fort Riley, who handles the day-to-day operations, is a competent professional with appropriate credentials and skills. BCC delegates to him the administrative functions needed to accomplish the program mission that cannot be performed at a distance by main campus administrators. (SP 3.3-3.5, 3.8) The site director, dean of Fort Riley, Learning

and Military Schools for the Barton-Fort Riley location, reports to the vice president of Instructional Learning, at the Barton main campus in Great Bend, Kansas.

BCC staff at Fort Riley have availed themselves of professional development activities to keep professionally current. Faculty and staff meetings, held on post every six weeks, address concerns and or suggestions that the staff/faculty have and provide in-service training for faculty, and cross-training for staff members. Faculty members participate in professional development activities at least quarterly, and staff and faculty complete the required professional development training online annually. Other special training opportunities throughout the year meet such staff needs as Excel training. The Title III grant also provides Barton employees the opportunity to enroll in Lynda.com to learn new computer programs/systems at no cost to the employee. (SP 3.6)

The GoArmyEd project places the delivery of educational services to the Soldier online. As a result of this approach, more responsibility is placed on the Soldier regarding tuition assistance, programs available, course completion, and management of the tuition assistance funding. To enroll in online and traditional courses, BCC Fort Riley students use the GoArmyEd portal and Barton's student information system.

Because BCC pays attention to the management of institutional functions, the staff has created an environment conducive to learning and a cooperative working relationship with the other colleges at Fort Riley. (SP 3.9, 3.10)

BCC employs a comprehensive planning and institutional effectiveness process that guides its efforts to achieve its educational goals. In this process, BCC collects and maintains institution-wide data on enrollments, course completions, academic performance, student retention, and costs that are used in program assessment, institutional effectiveness analysis, and for the institution's AQIP. (SP 3.11) Institutional policies regarding e-learning are clearly stated, appropriate and adhered to, and the policies, management practices, learning processes, and operational procedures for e-learning are regularly evaluated to ensure that they are effective and current. (SP 3.12, 3.13) Program review is part of the strategic planning process.

Principle Three underscores the need for a strong focus on student services and participation in a collegial manner with the installation Education Center personnel to better serve the needs of students. The evidence suggests that Principle Three is supported and that effective and reliable management, in an atmosphere predicated on serving students, prevails at BCC. BCC works collaboratively with other institutions and the Education Center personnel at Fort Riley to create a common installation academic calendar. In establishing this calendar, a major priority is to establish term dates that revolve around the training and deployment schedules. (SP 3.16) BCC

and the other colleges truly complement, rather than duplicate, each other's offerings. The MOU states the responsibilities and obligations of the representatives of BCC and Fort Riley. (SP 3.17)

Student Services

The admissions, testing, and registration policies and practices for service members are consistent with BCC's mission, nationally-recognized standards, and Servicemembers Opportunity College (SOC) principles and practices. (SP 3.18) While the admissions policies are the same at the main campus and at Fort Riley, the registration procedures differ for the electronic registration for online classes. Barton has a clearly articulated policy for using CLEP and DAN TES. (SP 3.19)

Advising and financial aid services for students are readily available. Registration is convenient and textbooks are available for use without charge or they can be purchased. (SP 3.20, 3.21, 3.22) In the on-duty daytime LSEC (Leader Skills Enhancement Courses) which is offered free, textbooks are provided free of charge and are returned on the last day of the class. Evening and weekend college programs courses also provide students most of their textbooks. There is no cost for these books unless the books are lost or damaged. Books for online courses (Bartonline.org) can be purchased through www.mbsdirect.net.

Advising is delivered at Fort Riley by two professional advisors.

Barton holds an annual commencement ceremony on the main campus each May, with students at Fort Riley invited and encouraged to participate. Graduates from Fort Riley can also participate in semi-annual post-wide graduation ceremonies sponsored by the Army Education Center. These ceremonies are for all the students located in the surrounding area of Fort Riley. Students receive their degrees from the colleges and universities offering programs at Fort Riley. Following the ceremony, the Consortium sponsors a joint reception to honor the graduates and their guests.

Prior to the Fort Riley graduation ceremony, Barton has a ceremony to honor students in Phi Theta Kappa and Alpha Sigma Lambda, the honor society for nontraditional students. Qualifying graduates are inducted into the organizations and BCC graduates are recognized. Members of the Board of Trustees, the president of the College, and Great Bend faculty members attend the ceremony. (SP 3.23)

RESOURCES

Principle Four

There is a sufficient reservoir of relevant instructional resources available to the instructor for teaching support and to the student for reference, research, and independent learning. Facilities and equipment are appropriate to support the programs and services offered. Financial resources are adequate and appropriately used to accomplish the institutional mission and to achieve program goals and objectives.

Instructional Resources

Fort Riley students attending Barton Community College have access to the Barton Community College Library via the Internet, telephone, fax, and email. In addition to the BCC Library, there are several local public and university libraries in close proximity to the post. Due the recreational nature of the post library, students seldom use those limited resources. Students may also sign up online for the Kansas Library Card which will allow them to access additional books and databases. (SP 4.1, 4.3, 4.4)

Students learn about the library and its resources through the E-College Information portal and the library web site. The online catalog and databases for full-text articles can be accessed in the BCC Library or off-campus. Using the online catalog, students may search for books, journal titles, government documents and other resources. Books may be sent to Fort Riley directly. If resources are not available, students may request books through interlibrary loan services. Passwords to log into databases may be obtained through the library. However, these passwords are limited to 30 simultaneous users. The addition of a proxy server will increase remote access for all BCC Library users. (SP 4.5-4.7) Therefore, the MIVER team offers the following:

RECOMMENDATION: BCC should improve its remote access to online databases for off-campus students and faculty.

A variety of locally produced online tutorials is available to instruct students in using the online catalog, databases, and effective searching. The BCC Library provides “Ask-a-Librarian” services including telephone, email, and live chat. These services are available every hour the library is open. The library is staffed with one professional librarian and three staff members. With more staffing, however, additional services and instruction, such as embedding a librarian in online courses, could provide more research support to all BCC students and faculty. (SP 4.2, 4.11) Therefore, the MIVER team offers the following:

RECOMMENDATION: Another professional librarian should be added to the staff to increase services for off-campus/on-installation students.

The Barton Computer Lab and Language Lab, located in Building 7604, has 31 computers available for student use. The Barton Testing Center, in Building 7656, has three computers. The computer labs in Building 215 have 32 computers for student use. Printing is available at all three sites. These computer labs are open during the week from 0800 to 2030 and on Saturday from 0900 to 1500. BCC provides wireless connections in the Education Center for all Fort Riley students and faculty to access. (SP 4.8, 4.9, 4.11)

Classrooms at Fort Riley have access to overhead video projectors, television, and VCR capabilities. Faculty are provided with laptops for class development and presentations. (SP 4.10)

Physical Resources

Space is adequate in the 14 classrooms assigned to BCC, the computer labs, and the testing center. Although classrooms and computer labs in Buildings 215 and 217 are not accessible for students or faculty with disabilities, Barton ensures classes are available in other buildings where accessibility is not an issue. There is no science lab for experiments requiring safety equipment; instead, faculty use online simulation programs to give students the knowledge and the experience required. Some hands-on experiments are safely conducted in the classrooms. Generally, adequate technology infrastructure exists to support the instructional programs. (SP 4.12, 4.13) Adequate administrative office space is available to Barton and used appropriately. Although full-time faculty do not have assigned office space, desk space is available on an “as needed” basis in Building 215, Room 35 where five desks are provided. In spite of this lack of assigned space, the team found that the faculty readily make themselves available to students. Math and English faculty hold office hours in the Tutor Center. Physical resources are appropriately addressed in the applicable MOU. (SP 4.14)

Financial Resources

BCC’s financial documents demonstrate the appropriate allocation and use of resources to support its educational programs and services. Because the size of its Fort Riley offerings compares very favorably to the size of the offerings at the main campus in Great Bend, Barton is clearly committed to its presence and offerings at Fort Riley. (SP 4.15, 4.16)

BCC charges in-state tuition for active duty personnel and their adult family members, as permitted by Kansas law. (SP 4.19) The on-duty education program (LSEC) is provided at no

cost to the students, with books included. Barton's tuition rates are based on the student's status as a Kansas resident (\$84 per semester hour), or nonresident (\$115) and international (\$167 per semester hour). The current tuition rate for online courses is \$130 per semester hour of credit. Most of the evening/weekend college courses at Fort Riley provide books to the students at no cost.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Principle Five

Continuous and systematic program evaluation stimulates program improvement, enhances quality and increases the likelihood of the achievement of program mission and objectives.

The evaluation program at Barton Community College is continuous, systematic, and multifaceted and includes the Fort Riley-based programs. Instructors, students and staff all participate in the assessment process; Barton assesses student learning at multiple levels, using a variety of assessment tools. (SP 5.5)

BCC was last evaluated by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools in 2008, and the Fort Riley site was visited during the reaffirmation of accreditation process. (SP 5.1)

Barton faculty incorporate Classroom Assessment Techniques into their instructional delivery in the classroom to obtain immediate feedback on a particular topic or unit. The Outcomes Assessment Committee has offered numerous training opportunities for learning about Classroom Assessment Techniques, with new faculty receiving training in orientation activities and other training resources available 24/7 online. While Classroom Assessment Techniques are considered formative assessment measures for use only by the instructor to improve learning, faculty are encouraged to share assessment results with colleagues, both informally and during structured meetings. Beginning in the summer of 2010, each faculty member (adjunct and full-time) is to conduct and document at least one classroom assessment activity in each class they teach.

The student course evaluation, regarded as a tool for the instructor to improve or modify the course, is delivered to the students through the eCompanion, eCourse, or hybrid course approximately eight days before the end of the course. The students must complete the survey before they have access to course materials. Data collected from the surveys are available after the conclusion of the course and provided to the course instructor. The Fort Riley dean receives

a summary of the results and focuses on addressing any problem areas. (SP 5.7) The Education Center receives a copy of the student course evaluation for each course and discusses any issue with the Fort Riley Barton dean. (SP 5.3)

The Course Assessment Program is used to assess student learning for the duration of the course. The purpose of the Course Assessment Program is to ensure that the student outcomes and competencies for each course are the same regardless of the various teaching methods and delivery systems employed. (SP 5.6) Barton’s Course Assessment Program mirrors efforts at the state level to effect consistent delivery of general education courses offered at the state’s postsecondary institutions through the Kansas Core Outcomes Project. (SP 5.4)

Degree level assessment is accomplished using a mix of direct and indirect measures of student learning. The direct measure of student learning at the degree level involves embedded assessments/questions from courses involved with the Course Assessment Program. Building on the existing class and course level assessment projects, faculty engage in degree level assessment directly correlated to the general education outcomes set forth by the college. (SP 5.2) At Fort Riley, program evaluation also includes student end-of-term survey evaluations, grade distributions, and drop rates which are reviewed by the site director. (SP 5.5)

As part of its continuous and systematic program evaluation, Barton also employs the Community College Survey of Student Engagement. (SP 5.4)

Faculty teaching courses in a traditional delivery format, whether at main campus or at Fort Riley, follow the same evaluation process at the end of term. The separate student evaluation used for e-learning courses is available for students to use at any point during a term. (SP 5.2, 5.7) There is evidence that BCC uses the results of its evaluations to modify and improve the programs. (SP 5.3)

Summary of Barton Community College Commendations and Recommendations

COMMENDATIONS

- **Barton Community College is commended for its investment in full-time personnel, its delivery of a broad array of programs and services, and its strong commitment to the overall education at Fort Riley.**
- **Barton Community College and the Fort Riley Education Center are commended for their outstanding collaboration which provides several unique programs (to include LSEC, BSEP, language labs, and the tutor center) that are provided by Barton Community College at no cost to the Army, Soldiers, or military dependents.**
- **The faculty and staff at Barton Community College are commended for their dedication to excellence and the resulting recognition of their efforts by the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development Excellence Award.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **BCC should improve its remote access to online databases for off-campus students and faculty.**
- **Another professional librarian should be added to the staff to increase services for off-campus/on-installation students.**

Institution Report Central Michigan University

INTRODUCTION

Central Michigan University (CMU) is a doctoral-granting institution, located in Mount Pleasant, Michigan. CMU, accredited by North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, has been offering degree programs at military installations since 1972. CMU has 23 centers on military installations and other off-campus educational sites.

The CMU program at Fort Riley was established in 1988. It currently offers the Master of Science in Administration (MSA) degree with certificates or concentrations in general administration, human resources administration, information resource management, international administration, leadership, and public administration at Fort Riley. The Fort Riley program is part of CMU's off-campus programs (ProfEd). The MSA program is housed in the College of Graduate Studies working with ProfEd.

MISSION

Principle One

The institution providing voluntary education programs on a military installation has an educational mission statement that reflects sound adult education philosophy and goals and is clearly compatible with the installation voluntary education program mission statement and objectives.

The mission of CMU is clearly stated and widely published in various sites. (SP 1.1, 1.3, 1.4) The mission statement was reviewed and modified in December 2010. (SP 1.5) This most recent version was not available to the MIVER team; however, discussions with the associate vice president of Academic Programs suggested that the changes were reflective of current practices and focus. The existing mission statement states that "its programs encourage intellectual and moral growth, prepare students for meaningful careers and professions, instill the values of lifelong learning, and encourage civic responsibility, public service and understanding among social groups in a global society."

Although there is no separate mission statement for its off-campus programs, the mission statement clearly confirms the institution’s commitment to such activities. “Through its off-campus programs, the university provides access to higher education programs and lifelong learning opportunities both nationally and internationally through a variety of innovative instructional methods and schedules designed to meet the demands of adult populations.”

CMU’s activities at Fort Riley are consistent with this mission philosophy of this principle. It adheres to the *Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges Principles and Criteria*. (SP 1.2) CMU’s educational objectives include delivering quality educational programs to adult learners. The same degree programs, academic standards, and procedures are in place for Fort Riley as on the main campus.

EDUCATION PROGRAM

Principle Two

Education programs and services provided on military installations maintain the high quality required by regionally accredited institutions, using qualified and dedicated faculty supported by professional development programs and appropriate infrastructure. Assessment of student learning is based on the achievement of comprehensive and specific learning outcomes.

Instruction

The Master of Science in Administration (MSA) program at Fort Riley had an annual enrollment of 80 students in face-to-face courses offered on base, and 38 students enrolled in online courses in 2009-2010. Enrollment has been steady for the last several years with much of the Division deployed. As Soldiers begin returning in late 2011, CMU anticipates enrollments and program demand will increase substantially.

The MSA at Fort Riley is the same degree program offered on the home campus, where it is the largest graduate program. It is a 36-hour interdisciplinary degree, administered by the College of Graduate Studies. The program offered at Fort Riley allows students to select from six areas of concentration: general administration, human resources administration, information resource management, international administration, leadership, and public administration. There is a core of six courses, with students taking another six courses as electives in their concentration. There are 21 academic departments involved in the course offerings included as part of the MSA and its various concentrations. (SP 2.1)

CMU offers both face-to-face courses and online courses at the installation. There are six eight-week terms with onsite classes being offered on a Friday-Saturday format. Course offerings are planned on a published one-year rotation, supported by a three-year tentative schedule that is available to advisors. The average class size is 12, with classes having an enrollment below six being cancelled. When a course is cancelled, students are given the option of taking the course online, deferring to the next term the class is offered, or, if needed for graduation, taking the course as an individual tutorial.

The program administrator who manages the MSA program has a positive working relationship with the education services officer (ESO). Other CMU staff also report that their relations with the counselors and the installation's Education Center are effective. (SP 2.14) There are monthly meetings with Center staff and representatives of other institutions on Post. The institutions have a professional working relationship with one another, and CMU has no conflicts with the other schools. The CMU program is consistent with the needs of the installation. (SP 2.4)

As CMU offers only a graduate program at Fort Riley, there is no need for a developmental education program. However, students who have not completed an undergraduate course in accounting or statistics will need this course as a prerequisite to the program. Students can take these courses online from CMU or through one of the local community colleges. They can also waive the requirement by passing a competency exam. (SP 2.2, 2.6)

CMU offers online tutoring services for a variety of subjects and operates the Writing Center Online and Mathematics Assistance Center. The MIVER team found the online writing center to be highly responsive to students at Fort Riley. Students were able to submit drafts of their papers to the center and receive feedback quickly. They received assistance with grammar, citations, bibliographies, American Psychological Association (APA) Style, and editing. The writing center was linked to the library page; however, a majority of the students interviewed were unaware of this service. Those who did use it had only praise for the center and the assistance provided. The MIVER team considers the writing center to be a real asset for the Fort Riley students and encourages CMU to ensure that students are aware of its services.

CMU makes significant efforts to ensure that its program reflects the current body of knowledge in the discipline. (SP 2.7) Graduate faculty at the main campus are responsible for the program offered at Fort Riley. To ensure consistent quality in the courses offered, master course syllabi are provided to all faculty approved to teach CMU courses.

A review of course syllabi showed the methodology and assignments to be appropriate for graduate work. (SP 2.5) The use of the master course syllabi helps ensure this. The adjunct faculty use a syllabus template builder that is based on the master course syllabi, which includes

the course description, course goals and objectives, recommended textbooks and evaluation methods, a sample assignment schedule, and a bibliography. The syllabi were detailed and complete, averaging eight pages in length. All include clear statements of course policies and contact information for the reference library, document delivery service, and instructor. The assignments were appropriate for graduate-level coursework, including exams, term papers, presentation, annotated bibliographies, case studies, one-on-one meetings with faculty, and essays. One interesting addition to a traditional syllabus was an academic biography of the instructor. Most of the onsite courses had a pre-class assignment; this was work students need to complete before the first weekend assignment. This is a good way to ensure quality classroom sessions from the initial meeting.

Upon acceptance into the program, students work with an academic advisor to develop a degree plan. (SP 2.9) The advisor also works with the student on transfer credit, course duplication, and prior learning credit. (SP 2.8, 2.10) Students' academic progress is monitored by the program administrator at the installation. The program is designed so that Soldiers can complete the program in 12-18 months, with 18 months being the normal time period. Course availability does not appear to be an issue at Fort Riley. The core courses are on a one-year rotation, based on a three-year tentative schedule. Electives are chosen based on the academic degree program, recommendations from the program administrator, and need. In addition, all courses are offered online and there are two other military bases in the vicinity. The MIVER team appreciates CMU's efforts to coordinate course offerings with other bases.

Courses in both the core and concentrations have a computer element. (SP 2.12) There is sufficient support for students who may need computer assistance. CMU offers online Help Desk Services and Blackboard tutorials.

The Off-Campus Library Services (OCLS) librarian is responsible for all library services to CMU students at Fort Riley. (SP 2.13) Students receive emails informing them of the resources and services available. Upon faculty request, a librarian will come from the home campus to Fort Riley to meet with students for in-class orientation. Students interviewed during the MIVER visit report this does happen and is quite helpful.

The review process for online classes is effective at CMU. (SP 2.15, 2.16, 3.12) Courses are reviewed using the campus-based curricular process, driven by the faculty. Course evaluations are conducted for all courses, including online. The response rate for online classes is approximately 35 percent, which is high for an online class. Within the next year, all course evaluations will be online. The distance education program is a pilot for the main campus. Ultimately, a 70 percent response rate is targeted. This will be achieved through a grade report incentive. Students will be able to get early access to their grade reports if they complete (or opt

out of completing) the instructor evaluation process. This is an issue that numerous campuses across the country are struggling with and the MIVER team supports CMU's efforts.

Interviews with students by the MIVER team found the students to be highly satisfied with their educational experiences at CMU. They reported that instructors are well qualified and the academic support services are more than adequate. All said they had used the library and found it convenient and complete for their needs. Those who used the online writing center said it was "most valuable." Students also said the staff was "good at getting things done on time" and "responsive." There were no significant concerns raised.

Faculty

The adjunct teaching cadre is a major strength of the program offered at Fort Riley. Classes are taught both by main campus faculty and adjuncts. (SP 2.19) All of the faculty who teach at Fort Riley have terminal degrees and appropriate experience, scholarship and service. (SP 2.17, 2.18) Of those resumes reviewed in detail, all were tenured faculty at other institutions, including University of Nebraska, St. Cloud University, Southern Illinois University, and others. (SP 2.22) Based on the review, it was impossible to determine the diversity of the adjunct faculty at Fort Riley. This data has not been previously collected by CMU, but they are beginning to capture it and it will be available in the future. (SP 2.21) The faculty are capable of helping students with current computer and instructional technology. (SP 2.24)

The procedures and standards for hiring adjunct faculty are the same as for home campus faculty. All faculty must be approved by the campus department that houses the course the adjunct faculty member is seeking approval to teach. If the course is graduate level, as are the courses taught at Fort Riley, the dean of the College of Graduate Studies also reviews the applicants for membership in the graduate faculty. Adjunct faculty are initially approved for only one term. After teaching a course, the department reviews the course evaluations and, if acceptable, grants regular approval to the instructor. Once regular approval is granted, the adjunct faculty member is reviewed every three years. New adjunct faculty members are assigned a mentor. CMU has seven long-term adjunct faculty members, who serve as mentors, contacting the new hire before, during, and after the course is offered to provide any needed assistance. Faculty are contracted on a course-by-course basis. There are 41 courses in the Fort Riley database, and at least 11 different faculty have taught at Fort Riley. This ensures that students are exposed to a breadth of expertise and philosophy. The MIVER team recognizes this as a strength of the Fort Riley program.

Adjunct faculty teaching for CMU have the opportunity to interact with the home campus faculty and participate in the development and evaluation of the education program in a variety of ways.

(SP 2.20) These include focus groups, faculty development workshops, and email and phone contact. Recently the MSA program was revised and adjunct faculty were given the opportunity to review the proposed changes.

There are also opportunities for professional development. (SP 2.23) During the past year, CMU has offered four faculty events. One session was held on the main campus in Mount Pleasant, Michigan and the others were at regional sites in Atlanta, Detroit, and Washington, DC. The largest had 80 faculty participating in a three-day professional workshop. There are various online resources available as well. Training for e-learning includes online training, email newsletters, and other outreach efforts. All instructors must complete CMU's Online Teaching Workshop. (SP 2.25) Assistance for new faculty is also available through their assigned mentors.

Three faculty members were interviewed during the MIVER visit to Fort Riley. All were very satisfied with their experiences with CMU and the support they received. They confirmed that CMU follows its policies on faculty hiring and evaluation, syllabus building, mentoring, and faculty development. They confirmed the faculty hiring and evaluation, syllabus building, mentoring, and faculty development processes. All of them confirmed they included writing and research components in their courses, and all praised the library services and the writing center. One said that the campus faculty and administration do a superior job of monitoring off-campus courses and faculty. All reported that their courses were evaluated each time they were taught, and that they received the results in a timely manner. The MIVER team reviewed course evaluations from several classes offered at Fort Riley, which showed positive reviews for the instructors, with a mean of 3.82 on a four-point scale for "overall instructor effectiveness." (SP 3.11) Thus, the MIVER team offers the following:

COMMENDATION: Central Michigan University is commended for its highly qualified adjunct faculty cadre, and faculty development and support services.

Assessment

The MSA program recently underwent a rigorous review and revision process. (SP 3.13) This review was part of the seven-year cycle of program review at CMU. Six learning objectives for the MSA program were developed by the tenured faculty involved in offering courses for the program. Each MSA concentration also has its own learning objectives and assessment plans. These were approved by the university's Assessment Council. Each learning objective has at least one direct measurement and at least one supporting measurement instrument. (SP 2.26, 2.28, 2.29)

The grading policy at CMU is clear and the faculty interviewed were aware of it. (SP 2.27) Grades for Fort Riley courses are entered in a database that provides a variety of reports for analysis, including the instructor's grades for the course, how this course compared to the grade distribution for all sections of this course taught at this location, and how this section's grades compare to the grade distribution for all sections of this course taught at all the off-campus locations. A review of four courses showed the grade distribution to be appropriate for adult learners at a graduate level. For the four courses, the average percentage of As and Bs was 60.9 percent and 32.3 percent, respectively. There is no evidence of grade inflation.

The MSA program has a capstone course, requiring a final project. The project is a culmination of all prior work. Two faculty members evaluate the student's project using a common rubric. The Annual Assessment Report for all MSA students completing the capstone project gave an overall score of 3.31 on a four-point scale.

CMU is well-established in its off-campus programs and has a clear dedication to serving service members. The onsite courses are offered in a convenient Friday-Saturday format in eight-week terms. Students can proceed at their own pace, enrolling in classes for each term as fits their schedule. Although the program is designed for students who choose to complete their degrees within 12-18 months, students can take up to seven years to complete their programs. Course schedules are developed well in advance and are made available to all students. Faculty work closely with Soldiers who are deployed. They are given an incomplete and the option of completing the course online, the next term offered, or, in some cases if needed for graduation, they may complete the course via individual tutorials, or direct study.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Principle Three

Administration of the program includes academic and student services and demonstrates effective and reliable management of human, fiscal, technological, and learning resources.

Management

The hiring policies are the same on the home campus as at Fort Riley. (SP 3.1) Adjunct faculty are contracted on a course-by-course basis and all are paid the same amount for a three-credit course. The courses are part of the regular curriculum offered by CMU at its home campus. These are approved and monitored by the appropriate offices on campus.

The MSA is a graduate program for adult learners who are interested in administration and management. It does not have the heavy quantitative emphasis of an MBA, but is an applied degree for those wanting to be or in leadership positions in the military and business. CMU staff say the degree is a means of demonstrating military experiences to employers. Most of the military students enrolled in the MSA are mid-level career officers.

CMU's policies regarding e-learning and off-campus instruction do not differ from the policies on the home campus. The program offered at Fort Riley meets all the academic and administrative policies required on the main campus. Admissions, testing, and registration policies and procedures are the same.

Courses are taught by both campus and adjunct faculty, but this will change as CMU brings on more full-time faculty to support its off-campus programs. The MSA program currently has two full-time faculty members who teach just for that degree; CMU is in the process of hiring three more. These will be full-time campus faculty whose contracts will require that they teach two on-campus courses, one online course, and one off-campus course a semester. The MIVER team supports this commitment to the off-campus program.

The onsite coordinator at Fort Riley is the program administrator, who has a bachelor's degree and appropriate experience for this position. (SP 3.2, 3.4, 3.7) The current program administrator is relatively new to the position; she has held the job for only six months. Her predecessor was at Fort Riley for 18 years. She is supervised by the assistant director of Military Enrollment Management. There is clearly a close working relationship between the two, with frequent communication and consultation. (SP 3.3, 3.5, 3.10) In addition, both of them have contact with the ESO and positive interactions with the Education Center staff. The Fort Riley program is part of the Off-Campus Programs unit (ProfEd), administered by a vice president. The CMU chain of command is knowledgeable and supportive of the Fort Riley center. (SP 3.9)

The program administrator has access to the main campus computer system for advising and other tasks at Fort Riley. CMU has a contract with an Internet provider to meet all information management needs. (SP 3.8) The program administrator participates in staff meetings and takes part in training programs online. In addition, there are face-to-face training and administrative meetings held at CMU's regional office. (SP 3.6) In September, the program administrator attended one such meeting in Atlanta, sponsored by the CMU Off-Campus Programs unit.

Various types of data are routinely collected on off-campus programs. (SP 3.11) Institutional data includes course syllabi, course evaluations, grade reports, enrollment figures, trends data, student surveys, etc. (SP 3.12, 3.14) It is apparent that CMU has a sophisticated data collection system to monitor effectiveness; unfortunately, that data is in aggregate form and administrators

are unable to analyze information only for Fort Riley. Thus, the MIVER team offers the following:

RECOMMENDATION: Central Michigan University should analyze its off-campus data by site.

A needs assessment was conducted by the ESO, but the data has not been made available to CMU. (SP 3.15) It is anticipated that with the return of the various battalions to Fort Riley there will be an increased need for educational services. CMU administrators mentioned that they would like to see a needs assessment once the majority of the Soldiers return to determine what, if any, additional programs might be required. Specifically, CMU would be interested in offering a master of arts in education, if there is a need. The MIVER team concurs with the need for further, detailed needs assessment by the ESO. In addition, the MIVER team suggests CMU prepare a proposal to offer a master's degree in education.

Interactions with the Education Center and other institutions at Fort Riley are collegial and effective. (SP 3.16) The program administrator attends monthly meetings and meets with the ESO on an as needed basis. Most day-to-day contact is with his assistant. The assistant director for Military Enrollment Management also had contact with the ESO and has found those interactions to be helpful. CMU and its students participate in the semi-annual graduation ceremonies. The graduation is post-wide and is well attended. CMU, along with the other institutions at the installation, fund the reception. CMU graduates are also invited to attend commencement at the main campus. (SP 3.23)

The memorandum of agreement between CMU and Fort Riley was last renewed in 2009 for a period of three years. It appears to be in order and is satisfactory to CMU. (SP 3.17)

Advertising and promotion by CMU for the Fort Riley program is done by the program administrator and the Marketing, Public Relations & Communication Office of CMU/ProfEd. There are print ads in the Kansas Yellow Pages Directory and the post newspaper. A CMU representative attends various career, job and education fairs. There are a variety of brochures, flyers, and promotional materials available. Email, online newsletters, and electronic brochures are widely used.

Student Services

Soldiers have access to both onsite and main campus advising. (SP 3.20) In addition to the program administrator, students are advised by a graduate advisor, located on the home campus. This individual develops the Soldiers' program (degree) plan, considers transfer credits, and helps ensure students are fulfilling their degree requirements. There is also a campus-based faculty advisor for students on an as needed basis. Official student records are maintained on the home campus; however, the program administrator has electronic access to all student records.

The program administrator at Fort Riley is required to refer Soldiers to the Education Center for help with tuition assistance and other financial matters. (SP 3.22) CMU offers several scholarships specifically for military members and their dependents. Two individuals from Fort Riley have received the U.S. Armed Forces Textbook Award. The MIVER team appreciates these efforts to assist military students and their families.

Student progress is monitored by the program administrator. Center Services on the home campus also monitors students' academic progress. CMU has minimal need for the installation's testing services, but they are adequate. The counseling to active duty personnel, family members, and civilians is also appropriate.

CMU allows students to transfer up to 50 percent of the credit hours required into the MSA program. This includes the 10 hours that may be granted for prior learning. (SP 3.9, 3.18) Students may apply for credit for work experience and training they acquired within the past seven years and after earning an undergraduate degree. (SP 2.8) A team of campus graduate faculty assesses the prior learning experiences. There is no residency requirement for students enrolled in off-campus programs. (SP 2.11)

Textbooks are available through the Missouri Book Service (MBS) and students do not report any difficulties getting texts. (SP 3.21) Syllabi are available early so students have ample opportunity to get their instructional materials in a timely manner.

RESOURCES

Principle Four

There is a sufficient reservoir of relevant instructional resources available to the instructor for teaching support and to the student for reference, research, and independent learning. Facilities and equipment are appropriate to support the programs and services offered. Financial resources are adequate and appropriately used to accomplish the institutional mission and to achieve program goals and objectives.

Instructional Resources

Fort Riley students attending CMU receive library support through the Off-Campus Library Services (OCLS) program. These resources are more than adequate to support CMU students and faculty. However, in addition to the OCLS, there are several local public and university libraries in close proximity to the post. Due to the recreational nature of the post library, students seldom use those limited resources. (SP 4.1, 4.3, 4.4)

Once registered at CMU, students receive information about the OCLS via an email from the OCLS director. Faculty receive information about library resources and services at the New Faculty Orientation and from the OCLS director. Through the online catalog, students can access print and electronic books, videos, government documents, and journal titles. Students use their Global IDs and passwords, which are sent to them from the main campus, to access more than 125 databases, most of which include full-text articles. If items are not available, students and faculty may use the Document Delivery Office. To access this service, they may use an online form, toll-free telephone number, a toll-free fax number, and email available from the OCLS web site. Copies of journal articles, when not available full-text, are available free of charge and sent to the requestor either electronically or by mail. Books are also sent free of charge, but charges may be incurred when returning books to the OCLS.

The OCLS provides an “Ask-a-Librarian” service including a toll-free telephone number, online form, email, and live chat. The services hours are posted. In addition, there are online tutorials available for searching the catalog and databases, style manuals, and other library-related topics. Students may access research guides, LibGuides, for a wide variety of subjects and specific courses.

The OCLS is staffed with six professional librarians, staff members, and student workers. One of the two Atlanta-based librarians is designated to support the program at Fort Riley. This

librarian visits the Fort Riley campus to provide library instruction and one-on-one assistance to students and faculty upon request. (SP 4.2, 4.5-4.7, 4.11)

COMMENDATION: Central Michigan University’s Off-Campus Library Services program is commended for the library services and support it provides.

While most graduate students have their own computers and printing capabilities, these services are available at several locations around the post. The Multi-Use Learning Facility has 12 computers with printing capabilities for students to use for word processing and online courses. This facility has weekday hours to meet the needs of all students. The facility is staffed by a contractor and is currently closed due to funding issues. Laptop computers and printers can be sent from the CMU main campus to Fort Riley when requested by instructors. (SP 4.8, 4.9, 4.11)

Classrooms at Fort Riley are equipped with a projection screen, television with VCR/DVD capabilities, whiteboard, and Internet access. Overhead video projectors are available when requested. (SP 4.10)

Physical Resources

The classroom space is adequate for the course offerings of CMU. The location is centralized and there is ample parking. The Education Center assigns classroom space and there are no problems reported by CMU with classroom allocations. (SP 4.12) Civilian students have no difficulty accessing the post. There are problems, however, with climate control in the classrooms and Internet connectivity. (SP 4.13) The post is aware of these issues.

The administrative space is also adequate. CMU has two rooms and they are close to the front door. Advisement can be done in private in the program administrator’s office. Privacy is not a concern. There is ample storage space. (SP 4.14)

Financial Resources

The financial statement shows there is a negative gross margin for Fort Riley, but this is not an issue for CMU. Since indirect costs are not applied to each location, but by program, those costs are shared. (SP 4.15-4.17) Face-to-face enrollments, along with online enrollments, contribute to the overall solvency of the program. CMU is responsive to any request for financial information. (SP 4.18) The institution is clearly committed to the Fort Riley program.

Tuition rates at Fort Riley are less than those for on-campus students. The military graduate tuition rate, regardless of off-campus location, is \$280 per credit hour. (SP 4.19)

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Principle Five

Continuous and systematic program evaluation stimulates program improvement, enhances quality, and increases the likelihood of the achievement of program mission and objectives.

CMU is involved in a thorough ongoing evaluation of its off-campus programs. (SP 5.1, 5.2) Program evaluation includes surveys of current students and alumni. The most recent survey of students was conducted in 2008-09, and a survey of alumni was done in 2010. Results of these surveys showed both students and alumni to be satisfied with their educational experiences. It is interesting to note that there was no significant difference between the online and face-to-face evaluation of learning outcomes. There are also a variety of quality control mechanisms used by Off-Campus Programs to evaluate its programs. These include faculty hiring and evaluation, the mentor program, master course syllabi, syllabus building tool, faculty handbook, off-campus student handbook, course evaluations, and assessment of student learning. (SP 5.5, 5.6)

Based on data from program evaluation and input from faculty, the MSA was revised. (SP 5.3, 5.4, 5.7) This is the first complete overhaul of the degree in 25 years and took nearly three years to complete. It was based on data gathered through various program assessments, focus groups, and a review of more than 100 similar degree programs at competing colleges and universities. Twenty-four faculty were involved in developing the outcomes and then redesigning the curriculum to meet those outcomes. Effective with the 2010-11 academic year, six new or revised core courses were added to the curriculum. These six courses constitute the required administrative core of the program taken by all students. Five of the six have a customized textbook developed by the graduate faculty in association with McGraw-Hill.

The final project is in the new capstone class, MSA 699, Applied Research Project in Administration. It is designed to integrate the core and concentration courses in one learning activity. A different teacher will teach MSA 600, the foundation course, than the one who will teach the capstone course to make a more “holistic learning experience for students.” This project will become an important part of the assessment process.

COMMENDATION: Central Michigan University is commended for its comprehensive program evaluation and for using the assessment data in the redesign of the Master of Science in Administration program offered at Fort Riley.

Summary of Central Michigan University Commendations and Recommendations

COMMENDATIONS

- **Central Michigan University is commended for its highly qualified adjunct faculty cadre, and faculty development and support services.**
- **Central Michigan University’s Off-Campus Library Services program is commended for the library services and support it provides.**
- **Central Michigan University is commended for its comprehensive program evaluation and for using the assessment data in the redesign of the Master of Science in Administration program offered at Fort Riley.**

RECOMMENDATION

- **Central Michigan University should analyze its off-campus data by site.**

Institution Report Central Texas College

INTRODUCTION

Central Texas College (CTC) is an open admission public community college based in Killeen, Texas offering programs at military bases, correctional facilities, and ships at sea around the world. Located at Fort Riley since November 1979, CTC offers an associate of general studies and an associate of applied science in the following concentrations: welding, early childhood professions, criminal justice, computer electronics, automotive mechanic/technician, applied management, applied management with computer applications, and business administration. While students can complete a degree program entirely onsite, they are able to enroll in the online programs as well.

Central Texas College serves Soldiers and their families, as well as anyone in the community who has access to the post. Classes are offered five terms a year for eight weeks. Tuition rates are comparable to other institutions on the base and are similar to those at the home campus. Classes have an average of 10 students with a minimum of five, unless extenuating circumstances occur.

The site administrator at Fort Riley is responsible for the academic programs, hiring and supervising faculty, and course delivery. The site administrator reports to the dean of the Continental Campus, who is responsible for CTC's military programs. At the time of the MIVER visit, CTC had an unduplicated headcount of 619 for 2009-2010, with the largest program being the associate of general studies, followed by the program in criminal justice.

MISSION

Principle One

The institution providing voluntary education programs on a military installation has an educational mission statement that reflects sound adult education philosophy and goals and is clearly compatible with the installation voluntary education program mission statement and objectives.

CTC's mission is to provide "education for a global community through responsive, innovative instruction and educational services for diverse student populations."

Examination of course syllabi, offerings, and activities indicate that CTC's institutional and program mission statements are in line with the installation mission and are reflected in programming, goal setting, and policies at the installation. The programs offered by CTC focus on technical and vocational disciplines, workforce development, and basic skill. These programs fit well within the education mission of Fort Riley and are well received by Soldiers. (SP 1.1-1.4)

CTC holds state (Texas) and regional accreditation and reviews its strategic plan every five years. The Central Texas College Board of Trustees approved the current mission statement in January 2010. The next Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council (SACS) re-affirmation visit will be in 2015 and the institution has begun to develop plans for program evaluation, quality control, and institution evaluation in anticipation of that event. (SP 1.5)

EDUCATION PROGRAM

Principle Two

Education programs and services provided on military installations maintain the high quality required by regionally accredited institutions, using qualified and dedicated faculty supported by professional development programs and appropriate infrastructure. Assessment of student learning is based on the achievement of comprehensive and specific learning outcomes.

Instruction

CTC offers two-year associate degrees that are appropriately named with standards common to other community colleges. (SP 2.1) New students who have not taken the coursework prior to transfer or admission must take placement tests before they can enroll in English or mathematics courses. Students whose scores are below an acceptable level are enrolled in remedial

coursework. CTC offers the remedial tutorials free via the web site and they are available to any student who chooses to use them. (SP 2.2)

The general education academic courses required for the degree are identified in the CTC Course Catalog and include the necessary depth and breadth. The core is 42 semester hours and is approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, which is charged with the oversight of curricula in Texas. (SP 2.3) Prerequisites are checked during registration by the site administrator to ensure that students enrolled in courses are prepared for the course. (SP 2.6) The CTC site administration uses the appropriate principles and standards to evaluate extra-institutional learning and each student is provided a free evaluation to determine course credit for experiences after six credit hours with CTC. CTC clearly discloses to the students all information pertinent to the learning opportunity via advisement and the web site. (SP 2.8-2.11)

CTC participated in the Fort Riley Education Center’s needs assessment survey, the “Ultimate Survey.” The data from the needs assessment, however, was not comprehensive nor was the participation high. CTC personnel were interested and available to be a resource or partner in the process. (SP 2.4) The CTC administrator meets regularly with post educational personnel and other institutional representatives as a council and the group works well together to identify and improve ways of serving Soldiers and their dependents. (SP 2.14)

CTC’s main campus holds the primary responsibility for the content in each course. Standardized syllabi are provided by the main campus to the faculty at Fort Riley and are available to site faculty via the web site. These syllabi have been shown to meet the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board’s standards. A review of the syllabi onsite support that faculty use the standardized syllabi in courses; however, in interviews with faculty, it became apparent that while faculty use the syllabi as templates, they do not adhere to the syllabi nor do they teach or measure all of the learning objectives. (SP 2.7) Several faculty admitted that they might “get to” some of the content but that they did not “need to” get to all of it. Faculty also admitted to using personal job experiences instead of the content and resources provided by the syllabi and textbooks. While personal experiences can be excellent resources, they do not replace current research and knowledge of the field.

The semester of the visit, site administration began to evaluate faculty, but did not have in place any evaluation or measurement of instructional effectiveness nor student attainment of learning objectives. Nor was there an assessment of the use of computers or library resources. (SP 2.12-2.13) While the main campus has begun the process of developing a comprehensive evaluation system whose design is intended to both require the evaluation of faculty, instruction, and student learning outcomes there was, at the time of the visit, no system in place to assess, collect data, or analyze data to provide evidence of a quality program. Other than course evaluations

and the single semester of faculty evaluations, there was no data. This lack of a comprehensive evaluation system extends to the evaluation of faculty, instruction, and learning objectives for both classroom-based programs and those delivered online. (SP 2.15, 2.16) Therefore, the MIVER team provides the following:

RECOMMENDATION: Central Texas College should ensure high quality instruction through the use of a comprehensive evaluation system, faculty development, the use of library technologies, computer technologies and mechanisms to ensure communication, and accountability between the main campus academic departments and Fort Riley instructors.

Faculty

CTC employed 14 part-time faculty at Fort Riley at the time of the visit, but no full-time faculty. (SP 2.19) During the MIVER visit, faculty resumes were reviewed and faculty interviewed. Faculty held the appropriate degrees for the level of instruction and were approved by the main campus. Faculty had a genuine interest in the learning outcomes of their students and had job and personal experiences in their fields of instruction. (SP 2.21, 2.22) However, as noted above, faculty had not historically been evaluated other than with student evaluations at the end of the course. (SP 2.17, 2.19) Faculty at Fort Riley were not involved in the development of institutional programs, did not have any input into curricula, and were not involved in the evaluation of programs or student learning outcomes. In sum, they did not have any contact with the main campus other than retrieving their syllabi via the web site and entering grades. (SP 2.20) They received their course evaluations from the site administrator, but evaluations were not shared with the main campus, nor were longitudinal or trend data provided to them.

Faculty were not required to demonstrate that they were current in their fields, nor were they required to participate in professional development other than remedial training on library resources. Unless a faculty member taught online, there was no required training or support for staying current on computers, technology, or library resources. (SP 2.23-2.25) Therefore, the MIVER team offers the following:

RECOMMENDATION: Central Texas College should develop a comprehensive, systemic approach to the selection, retention, evaluation, and professional development of faculty to ensure quality instruction delivered by faculty with the resources and support to provide current, relevant instruction to students. CTC should also develop a mechanism to ensure communication and accountability between the main campus academic departments and Fort Riley instructors.

Assessment

As described above, Central Texas College has limited assessment tools, (other than grades and course evaluations) that provide inadequate data on faculty, instruction, and student achievement of learning objectives. The limited assessments are collected by Fort Riley staff and sent to the main campus. Data, however, is not processed such that it can be used by either the main campus or Fort Riley to evaluate or improve the programs. (SP 2.26-2.29) Therefore, the MIVER team offers the following:

RECOMMENDATION: The Central Texas College main campus should develop a comprehensive assessment system that links Fort Riley to the main campus so that relevant data is used collaboratively to improve the program. The system should integrate the assessment of faculty, instruction, and student learning objectives.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Principle Three

Administration of the program includes academic and student services and demonstrates effective and reliable management of human, fiscal, technological, and learning resources.

Management

CTC's Fort Riley on-installation administrator and other staff are professional and competent, and hold appropriate degrees. The CTC main campus delegates and leaves to the administrator essentially all responsibility for the program at Fort Riley. (SP 3.3-3.6) She provides administrative support of the programs including scheduling, advisement, record keeping, and course credit for Soldiers. (SP 3.8-3.10) She also works with other institutions at Fort Riley to ensure that Soldiers have available courses without duplication. (SP 3.16) The memorandum of understanding (MOU) is current with regard to the degree programs offered. (SP 3.17)

The CTC main campus regulates faculty compensation, teaching load, orientation, and supervision and these policies are available to everyone via the web. While compensation for CTC faculty is significantly lower than other institutions located at Fort Riley, the policies are applied equitably at all CTC locations. (SP 3.1) As noted above, faculty have resumes on file but are not required to stay current in their field through professional development activities. CTC

has available professional development through its web site, but faculty at Fort Riley were not aware of it nor were they required to provide evidence of any professional growth. (SP 3.2, 3.6) At the time of the visit, the CTC main campus has begun developing institutional evaluations to determine the effectiveness of its programs, as well as organizational effectiveness. Reviewers were provided a document that outlines the Quality Enhancement Plan with goals for CTC; however, at the time of the visit there was little to no collaboration, communication, or interaction between Fort Riley and the main campus other than with the dean of the Continental Campus. Some data was collected by the site administrator, mostly with regard to courses offered, and shared with the main campus, but there was no significant interaction over institutional programs or policies. The institution was able to provide institutional effectiveness plans for Fort Riley with the predominant means of assessment being tracking enrollment and the use of a satisfaction survey. (SP 3.7-3.15) Therefore, the MIVER team offers the following:

RECOMMENDATION: The Central Texas College main campus should develop a comprehensive system that links Fort Riley to the main campus to ensure communication and accountability between the main campus and Fort Riley. The system should include oversight of Fort Riley programs and ensure that faculty and staff at Fort Riley have input in the administration of resources, curricula and programs.

Student Services

CTC's policies for admission, assessment and awarding of credit for prior life experiences, and transfer of credit are in line with the institution's mission and SOC principles and practices, as well as national standards. The policies and procedures can be found online and are consistently applied at all CTC locations. CTC uses the Individualized Career Evaluation Process Manual (ICEP) and the American Council on Education guidelines to determine credit and minimal test scores. CTC accepts the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) general and subject examinations, American College Testing Proficiency Examination Program (ACT/PEP), and DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSSTs) to satisfy a variety of degree requirements. (SP 3.18, 3.19, 3.22)

The academic advisor for CTC Fort Riley is well qualified and is highly regarded by students and faculty. Students were able to cite several instances of support and services above and beyond standard practices for all the staff at Fort Riley. The staff also helps in the delivery of textbooks to students, a service that CTC includes in tuition. (SP 3.20, 3.21) Financial aid is mostly tuition assistance (TA) due the full-time active duty military Soldiers at Fort Riley. Tuition at CTC is covered by TA and the site administrator is the Veterans Certifying Official and has the training to advise Soldiers on the GI Bill and post 9/11 VA benefits. (SP 3.22)

Graduation ceremonies at Fort Riley are organized collectively by the Consortium of Colleges and Universities and the Education Center, with the cooperation and support of the post Command. They are held in May and December. The ceremonies are formal and well organized as a tribute to the success of the Soldiers and their families. (SP 3.23)

RESOURCES

Principle Four

There is a sufficient reservoir of relevant instructional resources available to the instructor for teaching support and to the student for reference, research, and independent learning. Facilities and equipment are appropriate to support the programs and services offered. Financial resources are adequate and appropriately used to accomplish the institutional mission and to achieve program goals and objectives.

Instructional Resources

The Oveta Culp Hobby Memorial Library on the CTC home campus in Killeen, TX provides learning resources in all formats for postsecondary education students at Fort Riley. The library is open and staffed with professional librarians 82 hours per week. The virtual library home page (<http://www.ctcd.edu/library/pg-lib.htm>) has recently been updated to improve navigation and use. The online library catalog is not password-protected and is easy to search. (SP 4.1, 4.4, 4.6) Materials can be requested using the Books-by-Mail link (http://www.ctcd.edu/library/books_by_mail_request.cfm). (SP 4.7) A user name and password are required to access the 70+ online databases but instructions are clearly presented on the library home page. (SP 4.5, 4.6) Contact information is required for students who have problems logging in to the databases. A limited “Helpful Tips and Research Guides” page (http://www.ctcd.edu/library/help_tips_research_guides.htm) can be accessed from the library home page and a form is also provided for “Ask an Online Reference Librarian.” (SP 4.2, 4.6, 4.7) Links to the Online Books Page (<http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/>); freely available books) and ipl2 (<http://www.ipl.org/>); topical web sites that have been reviewed by librarians) are also clearly linked from the home page.

At Fort Riley, students enrolled in CTC courses have access to a wide range of additional information sources. (SP 4.8) There is one library on the installation in Building 5306. There are several college and university libraries in the area, including the research library at Kansas State University. Junction City and Manhattan, Kansas have public libraries accessible to

postsecondary education students. All of these libraries provide access to a range of online databases and computers. Military students can use Army Knowledge Online, which provides access to additional databases. At the time of the MIVER visit, a contract dispute had led to closure of the Multi-Use Learning Facility so it was not possible to evaluate the services provided. (SP 4.8-4.11)

Integration of learning resources into CTC classes is not specifically required, although some classes, such as speech, government, and history, do provide instruction in the use of information resources. (SP 4.2) As these resources become more complex, students need to receive systematic instruction in their use, along with guidance in the ethical use of information. CTC home campus librarians have developed a live information literacy tutorial that can be delivered to individual students or classes using the Wimba system. (SP 4.3) The MIVER team was able to participate in an abbreviated version of this instruction. The information presented is useful and relevant to postsecondary students, but since it is not required students could complete a degree at CTC without this knowledge. This leads the MIVER team to offer the following:

RECOMMENDATION: Central Texas College should require information literacy instruction for all students taking courses in any format.

Physical Resources

As noted in the installation report, the physical infrastructure at Fort Riley is very difficult to maneuver and does not meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards. The buildings are old and climate control is an issue. CTC has a building on the post in which they offer auto mechanics classes, as well as other classroom space. The site administrator has a good working relationship with the post and is able to have the building well maintained. Faculty communicated their ability to obtain any resources they felt necessary for instruction. For example, the auto mechanic instructor had recently received a new computer system for the shop. (SP 4.12)

Classrooms shared with the other institutions have technological resources available. However, the faculty at CTC were not aware of or not comfortable with the resources available and did not use them. There is no faculty development regarding technology, other than what is available online. (SP 4.13, 4.14)

Financial Resources

CTC applies uniform budgeting policies and procedures to all campuses and makes the budget information available to the site administrator. A review of financial documents comparing CTC

Fort Riley to similarly sized campuses at other military bases indicated that there is a similar allocation of financial resources among sites. Texas state law mandates that no state funds may be used to support out of state operations; therefore, Fort Riley CTC is self-sufficient and a fiscally sound institution. (SP 4.15-4.19)

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Principle Five

Continuous and systematic program evaluation stimulates program improvement, enhances quality and increases the likelihood of the achievement of program mission and objectives.

As previously stated, CTC will be going through a SACS reaffirmation visit in 2015. The current accreditation covers all CTC locations worldwide. (SP 5.1, 5.2) In preparation for the visit, the main campus has developed a Quality Enhancement Plan that will include programmatic and organizational evaluation. However, at the time of the MIVER visit there was no indication that the Fort Riley faculty or staff were involved in that process. Communication and collaboration between the main campus and Fort Riley did not occur on a regular basis. Data on the effectiveness of the program is collected via student evaluations every term and the data is sent to the main campus. There is no communication from the main campus to CTC Fort Riley regarding the meaning of the data including immediate, intermediate, or long-range results. (SP 5.3, 5.4)

Faculty were evaluated for the first time this semester. At the time of the visit there were no institutional measures to determine student attainment of learning objectives, faculty instructional effectiveness or qualifications, or the effectiveness of diverse learning formats including elearning. (SP 5.5-5.7) Therefore, the MIVER team recommends the following:

RECOMMENDATION: The Central Texas College main campus should develop a comprehensive assessment system that links Fort Riley to the main campus. The assessment system should continuously and systemically provide relevant data that can be used collaboratively to improve the Fort Riley program. The system should integrate the assessment of faculty, instruction, and student learning with program evaluation.

Summary of Central Texas College Recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Central Texas College should ensure high quality instruction through the use of a comprehensive evaluation system, faculty development, the use of library technologies, computer technologies and mechanisms to ensure communication, and accountability between the main campus academic departments and Fort Riley instructors.**
- **Central Texas College should develop a comprehensive, systemic approach to the selection, retention, evaluation, and professional development of faculty to ensure quality instruction delivered by faculty with the resources and support to provide current, relevant instruction to students. CTC should also develop a mechanism to ensure communication and accountability between the main campus academic departments and Fort Riley instructors.**
- **The Central Texas College main campus should develop a comprehensive assessment system that links Fort Riley to the main campus so that relevant data is used collaboratively to improve the program. The system should integrate the assessment of faculty, instruction, and student learning objectives.**
- **The Central Texas College main campus should develop a comprehensive system that links Fort Riley to the main campus to ensure communication and accountability between the main campus and Fort Riley. The system should include oversight of Fort Riley programs and ensure that faculty and staff at Fort Riley have input in the administration of resources, curricula and programs.**
- **Central Texas College should require information literacy instruction for all students taking courses in any format.**
- **The Central Texas College main campus should develop a comprehensive assessment system that links Fort Riley to the main campus. The assessment system should continuously and systemically provide relevant data that can be used collaboratively to improve the Fort Riley program. The system should integrate the assessment of faculty, instruction, and student learning with program evaluation.**

Institution Report Kansas State University

INTRODUCTION

Kansas State University (K-State), located in Manhattan, Kansas, is a public, research university offering more than 200 undergraduate and graduate degree programs. It offers more than 20 undergraduate and graduate degree programs, more than 16 certificate programs, and one doctoral program through its Division of Continuing Education at off-campus sites and through distance education.

Kansas State University first began offering courses leading to undergraduate and graduate degrees at Fort Riley in the 1950s. After 9/11, tightened security made it difficult for instructors to gain access to Fort Riley. For this reason, K-State moved its program and course offerings to the main campus, which is located 12 miles from Fort Riley, and to the Salina campus, which is 16 miles from Fort Riley. Currently, the Aviation Maintenance Certificate and the Airframe and Power Plant Certification programs are being offered at Fort Riley in the evenings in eight-week terms. At the time of the visit, no students were enrolled in either program. The lack of enrollment in 2010 was attributed to the deployment of the combat aviation brigade in fall 2009. K-State continues to support an operation at Fort Riley to provide student support functions for prospective students and family members.

MISSION

Principle One

The institution providing voluntary education programs on a military installation has an educational mission statement that reflects sound adult education philosophy and goals and is clearly compatible with the installation voluntary education program mission statement and objectives.

Founded in 1863, Kansas State University (K-State) is a comprehensive, research, land-grant institution established to meet the educational needs of residents and students of Kansas. K-State offers a broad range of undergraduate and graduate degree programs to a local, national, and international student body. It offers outreach and public service programs and prepares students for successful employment and advanced study. K-State is committed to providing quality programs and being responsive to a rapidly changing world and an increasingly diverse society.

K-State's mission statement is on its web site (<http://www.k-state.edu/provost/planning/mission.html>) and reads as follows:

. . . to foster excellent teaching, research, and service that develop a highly skilled and educated citizenry necessary to advancing the well-being of Kansas, the nation, and the international community. The university embraces diversity, encourages engagement and is committed to the discovery of knowledge, the education of undergraduate and graduate students, and improvement in the quality of life and standard of living of those we serve.

K-State's mission reflects a commitment to academic quality and adult education. The educational programs and services offered at Fort Riley are consistent with the University's mission, the installation's mission, and K-State's policies and program planning at Fort Riley. K-State's mission statement and goals are published in university catalogs, brochures, and program materials. (SP 1.1-1.4)

The K-State mission statement is reviewed periodically when the university's strategic plan is reviewed and updated. The most recent review of the mission statement occurred in March 2008. (SP 1.5) No revision, however, was made at that time.

EDUCATION PROGRAM

Principle Two

Education programs and services provided on military installations maintain the high quality required by regionally accredited institutions, using qualified and dedicated faculty supported by professional development programs and appropriate infrastructure. Assessment of student learning is based on the achievement of comprehensive and specific learning outcomes.

Instruction

Kansas State University (K-State) offers outreach, public service, and extension programs throughout the region and prepares students for successful employment and advanced study. The educational programs and services that are available to service members at Fort Riley are offered through K-State's Division of Continuing Education. The programs and services are responsive to the needs of service members and family members and are consistent with the needs assessments conducted by the installation.

Currently, the Aviation Maintenance Certificate and the Airframe and Power Plant Certification programs are the only programs offered at Fort Riley by K-State. Warrant officers and enlisted Soldiers working with aviation equipment (helicopters, airplanes, etc.) are the primary audience for the program. Admission processes are designed to identify qualified students from the combat aviation brigade. In this way, K-State ensures that students enrolled in the Aviation Maintenance Certificate program can achieve the expected learning outcomes of the program. (SP 2.1-2.6)

Credit for extra-institutional learning is evaluated and awarded based on principles and standards from AARTS, CLEP, and DANTES. Course requirements, prerequisites, evaluation criteria, and program expectations are communicated to students in publications, advising sessions, and program plans. Transfer credit policies and practices are designed to minimize loss of credit and duplication of coursework. (SP 2.8-2.10) Residency requirements are not applicable to certification programs. (SP 2.11)

Most students in the aviation maintenance certification program from the combat aviation brigade are able to transfer or receive credit for prior training or coursework for up to half of the program's requirements. Courses in the aviation certification programs are offered face-to-face only and are designed to assist students in preparing for aviation licensure examinations. K-State provides opportunities for students to access advising, computer applications, and library assistance through online and other resources that are available to all K-State students. (SP 2.12-2.16)

Faculty

K-State faculty members in the aviation program are full-time, active professionals in the field who are committed to adult education. All faculty members have earned graduate degrees from accredited institutions and maintain industry certifications and licensure. Resumes of the faculty members are current and maintained in K-State files at Fort Riley. (SP 2.17-2.22) In an interview with a faculty member, the MIVER team learned that web-based faculty development handbooks, orientation, and related resources are available to Fort Riley faculty. Faculty routinely assist students in class and outside of class in the use of aviation equipment, examination preparation, and in strengthening basic and background skills in mathematics and physics. Professional development opportunities have not been provided consistently. If the aviation programs at Fort Riley continue to be supported and offered at Fort Riley, K-State should ensure that appropriate professional development opportunities are available and that participation in faculty development activities is expected of all Fort Riley faculty. (SP 2.23-2.25)

Assessment

K-State clearly articulates learning outcomes in aviation program brochures, university catalogs, and course syllabi. Knowledge, skills, and competencies needed for success in courses and programs are specified. Student assessments are designed to evaluate the extent to which students have achieved the learning objectives and outcomes. Grading policies and processes are stated clearly in K-State catalogs and course syllabi. Course syllabi and student assessments are developed by Fort Riley faculty in collaboration with the program leader and K-State faculty on the main campus. (SP 2.26-2.29)

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Principle Three

Administration of the program includes academic and student services and demonstrates effective and reliable management of human, fiscal, technological, and learning resources.

Management

The Division of Continuing Education, which reports to the provost's office, provides leadership and oversight for the programs offered at Fort Riley by Kansas State University. A site coordinator and an onsite advisor provide day-to-day services to students, prospective students, faculty, and family members at Fort Riley in a shared, two-person office. The site coordinator is responsible for program administration, including coordination of course offerings and course schedules, in collaboration with academic units and the Division of Continuing Education at the main campus. The onsite advisor serves as the GoArmyEd advisor, coordinator of Centralized Tuition Assistance Management, and academic advisor. (SP 3.5) The site coordinator and onsite academic advisor report to the assistant dean, Division of Continuing Education. The onsite staff members are trained education professionals who demonstrate a strong commitment to student service and effective cooperation, communication and coordination with the Fort Riley Education Center staff and site administrators, staff and faculty of the consortium institutions offering programs at Fort Riley. (SP 3.3, 3.10)

Greater administrative and management attention needs to be paid to institutional functions such as course planning, scheduling, and sequencing. For example, due to the deployment of the aviation brigade in 2010, courses have not been offered at Fort Riley since spring 2010. In light of the lack of enrollment in the aviation program in 2010, a comprehensive review of K-State's role in academic program and course offerings at Fort Riley should be conducted if K-State plans

to maintain an operation on post and remain in the Consortium of Colleges and Universities. (SP 3.9) Thus, the MIVER team offers the following:

RECOMMENDATION: Kansas State University should regularly schedule courses at Fort Riley if it plans to remain in the Consortium of Colleges and Universities.

Both onsite staff members have earned master's degrees and are trained education professionals. They are offered opportunities for professional development. (SP 3.4, 3.6) For example, the onsite staff members regularly attend professional development workshops sponsored by the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce, the Council of College and Military Educators conferences, the Department of Defense (DoD) workshops, FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) training sessions, and life success coaching sessions provided by K-State.

Technology support and administrative support from the main campus for onsite staff is responsive. (SP 3.8). For example, until a few weeks before the MIVER site visit, K-State sponsored and supported a computer lab that provided teleconferencing, TELNET, a range of computer applications, and other computing services open for use by all Fort Riley students and programs. The computer lab was removed upon a request from the Fort Riley Education Center staff to respond to increased demand for additional instructional space.

K-State policies governing employment, compensation, teaching load, orientation, and supervision apply to Fort Riley faculty and staff. (SP 3.1) Fort Riley faculty members are paid at the same rate as all K-State adjunct faculty. The resumes of faculty and onsite personnel are current and kept on file at Fort Riley and on the main campus. (SP 3.2)

K-State collects data quarterly to analyze program effectiveness, including the content, processes, and support systems for learning activities. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Knowledge Test data is collected for all K-State aviation programs. K-State results are compared to national norms. In addition, enrollment, course completion, retention, academic performance, passing rates, and cost analyses data are collected and monitored by the Division of Continuing Education on the main campus. The results are not disaggregated by site. Based on an interview with a Fort Riley instructor, course evaluation data is not provided consistently to Fort Riley instructors. K-State, however, should provide program and course evaluation data by site to determine the effectiveness of content, learning processes, policies, operational procedures, and the program at Fort Riley. (SP 3.11, 3.13-3.15)

Student Services

The educational programs and services offered at Fort Riley are consistent with K-State's mission, the installation's mission, K-State's policies and practices for service members, and nationally-recognized standards and practices, including Servicemembers Opportunity College (SOC) principles and practices, regarding admission, assessment and awarding of credit for prior learning and credit by examination. (SP 3.18 -3.19) Policies and procedures governing college credit for prior experience, prior learning, and credit by examination are published in brochures, the university catalogs, and on the university's web site. Academic advising is provided by a qualified onsite academic advisor. A web-based student information system also is available to Fort Riley students for the purpose of monitoring grades and academic performance, posting of academic credit, and progression towards completion of program requirements. (SP 3.20) Registration and textbook purchases are available online and also are conveniently located two blocks from the main campus where courses are offered, 16 miles from Fort Riley. Information for ordering textbooks from any book retailer is readily available for students in a timely manner. Textbooks and course materials also are available for delivery by mail for Fort Riley students. (SP 3.21) Financial aid assistance is readily available for Fort Riley students including GI Bill, tuition assistance, and grants and scholarships. (SP 3.22). Onsite K-State staff members at Fort Riley assist students, if needed, in navigating K-State processes for obtaining financial assistance.

Formal, well organized graduation ceremonies at Fort Riley are conducted twice each year. The ceremonies include institutional officials, military leaders, and family and friends of the graduates. K-State students may participate in Fort Riley graduation ceremonies and also may participate in graduation ceremonies on campus. (SP 3.32)

RESOURCES

Principle Four

There is a sufficient reservoir of relevant instructional resources available to the instructor for teaching support and to the student for reference, research, and independent learning. Facilities and equipment are appropriate to support the programs and services offered. Financial resources are adequate and appropriately used to accomplish the institutional mission and to achieve program goals and objectives.

Instructional Resources

Students attending Kansas State University classes at Fort Riley have access to the Kansas State University Libraries. In addition to the K-State Libraries, there are several local public libraries in close proximity to the post. Due to the recreational nature of the post library, students seldom use those limited resources. (SP 4.1, 4.3, 4.4)

Library resources are not used to their fullest extent because of the limited research required by the K-State certificate program offered at Fort Riley. In the future, should more programs become available on post, the K-State Libraries have resources and services available for students and faculty members. Students are not given library information. However, the libraries' web site is fairly easy to access and to navigate. From the web site, students can access the online catalog and a wide variety of databases for articles. Books and articles not available through the K-State Libraries can be requested through the interlibrary loan service. From the "Ask-a-Librarian" link, students can instant message, call, email, or text their questions to the help desk. Subject guides and tutorials are also available to assist students. The K-State Libraries are open 24 hours per day and services are typically available between 0800 to 2200 weekdays, 0900 to 1700 on Saturday, and 1300 to 2200 on Sunday. (SP 4.2, 4.5-4.7, 4.11)

In an interview with a faculty member at Fort Riley, the MIVER team learned that this instructor provides materials needed for instruction. The materials provided by the instructor include chemicals, fabric, aluminum, rivets, hardware, and other consumables. The instructor reported spending as much as \$3,000 for course materials and indicated that he has not been reimbursed for the materials. (SP 4.2)

RECOMMENDATION: Kansas State University should ensure that faculty members have the instructional resources required for its course offerings at Fort Riley.

Only four computers are available in Building 215. However, at the K-State Libraries, there are more than 200 computers for students to use. Classrooms at Fort Riley have access to overhead video projectors, television, and VCR capabilities. Until recently, a Polycom system was available for instructional use to include students and faculty at other locations. This system was removed at the request of the Education Center. (SP 4.8-4.10)

Physical Resources

K-State occupies one office at Fort Riley that houses the site coordinator, the onsite academic advisor, records and program materials, storage, filing cabinets, and computer equipment. As a shared space, confidential conversations with students and prospective students are challenging. The office and the women's restrooms are described as uncomfortably cold during the winter months. At the time of the MIVER visit, K-State's office was not included among the offices to be cleaned and maintained by contract custodial services personnel even though the offices of other Consortium institutions and the Education Center are cleaned. K-State is working with the Education Center to address concerns related to cleaning and maintenance of the office. (SP 4.12-4.14)

At the time of the MIVER visit, K-State did not have any students enrolled in the programs offered at Fort Riley due to the deployment of the combat aviation brigade. Thus, K-State had not been assigned a classroom or instructional space. K-State anticipates a need for instructional space when the combat aviation brigade returns to Fort Riley in 2011.

Financial Resources

K-State maintains appropriate financial records related to operations, revenue generated and direct costs expended at Fort Riley. Tuition and fees for Fort Riley Soldiers and family members are commensurate with in-state tuition in compliance with state law and policies. Revenue was not generated from tuition and fees in 2010 since there were no enrollments. K-State, however, continued to support its operation at Fort Riley in anticipation of the return of the aviation brigade and the expectation that the staff will provide support services to prospective students and family members. (SP 4.15-4.19)

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Principle Five

Continuous and systematic program evaluation stimulates program improvement, enhances quality and increases the likelihood of the achievement of program mission and objectives.

Periodic evaluation of the aviation program at Kansas State University (K-State) is conducted by Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) evaluators in surveillance visits of the program. (SP 5.1, 5.2) Internal program reviews are conducted on an annual basis for all K-State programs. University program review guidelines are provided online. Enrollment, retention, graduation, academic performance, student learning outcomes, program outcomes, and course evaluation data are collected and analyzed annually at the main campus. Data are not available by instructional site; thus, it is impossible to assess the quality of program offerings at Fort Riley. Individual site data could be used for short-term and long-range program planning, program improvement, and program needs assessment. (SP 5.3, 5.4, 5.6) Faculty and staff performance evaluations are conducted annually at K-State. Fort Riley faculty and staff are included in the annual performance review process. (SP 5.5)

Summary of Kansas State University Recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Kansas State University should regularly schedule courses at Fort Riley if it plans to remain in the Consortium of Colleges and Universities.**
- **Kansas State University should ensure that faculty members have the instructional resources required for its course offerings at Fort Riley.**

Institution Report Southwestern College

INTRODUCTION

Southwestern College, a private, not-for-profit institution whose main campus is located in Winfield, Kansas, has approximately 600 traditional-age undergraduate students on the main campus. The college describes itself as “a learning community dedicated to intellectual growth and career preparation, individual development and Christian values, lifetime learning and responsible citizenship, and leadership through service in a world without boundaries.”

Southwestern College provides a values-based learning experience that emphasizes intellectual, personal, and spiritual growth. Founded in 1885 by Kansas Methodists and now related to the Kansas West Conference of the United Methodist Church, Southwestern offers both bachelor’s and master’s degrees on-grounds and online.

The Professional Studies unit, which serves off-campus students, was created in the early 1990s. The Fort Riley “center” was established in 2006, one of six such centers located in Kansas and Oklahoma. Southwestern College offers three undergraduate degree programs (two in education and one in security management), a master of arts in teaching degree, a licensure program in secondary education, and a certificate in homeland security at Fort Riley. Southwestern College is regionally accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Full- and part-time enrollment at Fort Riley for the 2009-2010 academic year totaled 83 students. A single site administrator oversees Southwestern University’s operations at Fort Riley.

MISSION

Principle One

The institution providing voluntary education programs on a military installation has an educational mission statement that reflects sound adult education philosophy and goals and is clearly compatible with the installation voluntary education program mission statement and objectives.

The mission of Southwestern College (SC) is to prepare “students for careers and for graduate studies with courses that foster critical thinking and effective communication and are characterized by meaningful professor-student interaction.”

To carry out its mission, Southwestern College:

- “Employs emerging technologies that promote learning.
- Strives to live by and teach a sustainable way of life.
- Provides preparation for a wide range of church-related vocations and involvement.
- Offers programs that embrace prior learning and facilitate career progression for working adults, members of the armed services, and persons in transition.
- Affords a residential learning experience abundant with co-curricular activities that build social awareness and interpersonal skills and cultivate an ethos of service and leadership.” (SP 1.1)

Southwestern’s vision and mission may be viewed at <http://www.sckans.edu/about/mission/>. As indicated previously in the MIVER self-study, Professional Studies builds on the institutional mission and is strongly committed to being “learner-focused.” (SP 1.4)

The mission statement is consistent with the principles for institutions stated in the *Principles and Criteria of Servicemembers Opportunity College (SOC)*, emphasizing lifelong learning, flexibility and innovation. (SP 1.2) Southwestern College has been named a top “Military Friendly” school by *Military Advanced Education* and by *GI Jobs*. Southwestern College Professional Studies was recently ranked 37th on the list of the top 50 military enrolling colleges and universities by *Military Edge Times*. (SP 1.1) Review of the College’s MIVER self-study report and interviews during the MIVER team site visit confirm that the mission statement is carried out in Southwestern College’s goals and practices at Fort Riley. (SP 1.3) It is clear from comments by the college president and other administrators that Southwestern is committed to supporting military education and that extra efforts are being made to provide service and to increase “market share.”

The institutional mission is reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees. Every three years, institutional goals and directions are updated by a presidentially-appointed task force on the future of the college. The current institutional mission was ratified by the College Board of Trustees in October 2009. (SP 1.5)

EDUCATION PROGRAM

Principle Two

Education programs and services provided on military installations maintain the high quality required by regionally accredited institutions, using qualified and dedicated faculty supported by professional development programs and appropriate infrastructure. Assessment of student learning is based on the achievement of comprehensive and specific learning outcomes.

Instruction

The degree programs offered by Southwestern College carry designations that are named appropriately and in a manner consistent with those common to institutions of higher education. (SP 2.1) Southwestern College Professional Studies is a “degree completion” program requiring all entering learners to have completed at least 30 semester hours of prior college coursework, ACE-evaluated military training and/or CLEP/DSST test scores. Operating on the assumption that entering learners will have completed all needed developmental coursework prior to enrolling, Southwestern does not presently offer a developmental education program. Through partnerships with area community colleges, Southwestern personnel are able to refer those students in need of core area remediation to them. In addition to several transfer/articulation agreements with on-post institutions, the college has developed agreements with two community-based colleges that also offer transfer opportunities. (SP 2.2)

The programs offered at Fort Riley include general education courses in science and mathematics, humanities and cultures, social science and personal growth, and communication and technology. The general education requirements apply to all baccalaureate programs offered by SC and are designed to ensure breadth and depth of knowledge and to stimulate intellectual inquiry. The college requires all learners to complete one or more core learning outcomes courses addressing critical thinking, ethics, decision sciences, communication or future responsibility. (SP 2.3, 2.7)

Courses and programs offered at Fort Riley carry identical credit values, include the same content and academic experiences, and use evaluative procedures identical to those employed in other Professional Studies locations or online. However, there are questions concerning whether traditional, face-to-face courses of six weeks duration offered by Southwestern College presently meet the minimum of 15 contact hours per course semester hour, which is the standard for undergraduate and graduate courses. (SP 2.7)

Through an Academic Quality Improvement Project, the College redesigned its core learning outcomes courses during summer 2010 and launched them in the fall of 2010. Professional standards administration maintains syllabus control through the use of a standard preparation template. All syllabi and delivery modalities are required to adhere to stated guidelines and to include a standard set of components. Syllabi are reviewed during each session. (SP 2.6, 2.7)

Trained SC evaluators review nontraditional academic credits using the standards of the American Council on Education (ACE) to determine the awarding of credit for extra-institutional coursework or experience, including military service. Tests such as the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), Defense Activities Nontraditional Education Support (DANTES), and ACE recommended credits from AARTS, SMART, or USCGI transcripts are considered. SC also works with third party organizations and companies to award credit for organization or company sponsored training courses. Standardized guidelines exist to ensure that non-classroom based education is consistently valued as either elective credit or credit meeting specific course requirements. (SP 2.8) Southwestern requires that learners provide official transcripts of traditional courses taken at other institutions. Hours successfully completed and/or degrees earned at institutions recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) may be considered for degree inclusion. Every effort is made to ensure that students receive all appropriate credit for prior academic work completed. (SP 2.10) SC Professional Studies does not require a “physical residency” for students at Fort Riley. (SP 2.11)

SC is clearly committed to assisting learners in reaching their academic goals. The academic success coach (ASC) provides coaching/counseling services on both a face-to-face and electronic basis. The ASC works with students to update their individual degree plans twice a year as part of the outreach program, conducts personalized orientation sessions to provide learners with course enrollment suggestions, examines and explains degree requirements and institutional policies, and discusses such topics as course evaluation criteria and ways of “navigating the system.” (SP 2.9)

In addition to self-administered tests designed to determine students’ potential and current technical skill levels associated with those computer applications required for online study, Southwestern College offers courses designed to provide students with enhanced computer skills. Students seeking degrees in computer operations technology or computer programming technology have access to 26 courses designed to enhance their computer skills. (SP 2.12)

For each learner entering as a degree seeker, Professional Studies requires enrollment in a one credit hour course, “Building Academic Success.” It includes tools and support resources available via the main campus Deets Library. Personnel from the library are, on occasion, embedded in online courses in education, business and nursing. The library web site provides

tutorials and “how-to” guides on using the library. These include searching for information, identifying research topics, citing sources and avoiding plagiarism, among others. Available databases are provided by EBSCO, Gale, LexisNexis, ProQuest and NetLibrary. (SP 2.13)

Since more than 80 percent of the courses offered at Fort Riley are delivered online, Southwestern College is very sensitive to the matter of rigor and standards comparability between online and face-to-face course offerings. Professional Studies maintains syllabus control through use of a standard syllabus template. All syllabi are reviewed during each session under direction of the director of Academic Affairs. The College employs an end of course evaluation form for learner use. The director of Academic Affairs works with adjunct faculty to ameliorate any concerns identified following session end. Further, the director of Academic Affairs conducts a “quality check” three times during the session for each online course. The standard set of criteria employed focuses on learner engagement, learner retention, and learner persistence. (SP 2.15)

The Blackboard Learn course management system offers opportunities for a great deal of faculty member-learner interaction, both synchronously and asynchronously. Faculty members can employ discussion boards, email messaging, group projects, chat room discussions, and can create and monitor blogs and journals. Learners are required to interact with other learners and the instructor on a weekly basis. Through the use of an interaction matrix, faculty members are able to evaluate the level and the quality of interaction designed into their courses as often as weekly. Faculty members are required to conduct online office hours for each course taught. (SP 2.16)

Faculty

Ten adjunct faculty members taught at Fort Riley during the 2009-2010 school year. All possessed comparable qualifications to those of full-time permanent faculty members on the main SC campus. The average length of employment for adjunct faculty members is five years. All adjunct faculty members hold at least a master’s degree and more than 30 percent hold terminal degrees in their area of specialty and teach 95 percent of all graduate courses. A majority of adjunct faculty work full-time in their fields of expertise. (SP 2.17, 2.18) While resumes of academic professionals are up-to-date and reflect their experience and education, these files are maintained at the Wichita East Branch Campus and are not available at Fort Riley. (SP 2.22) Available files do not provide information on the diversity in background of adjunct faculty. (SP 2.21) All instructors teaching in the Fort Riley program are adjunct faculty members. (SP 2.19) The level of diversity within the faculty and staff is minimal; only one professional assigned full-time is a member of a minority group. (SP 3.7)

Adjunct faculty members are invited to participate in the curriculum development process. Beginning in fall 2010, “lead” instructors were identified to work with the director of Academic Affairs and other adjunct faculty members in evaluating course offerings, textbooks, course sequences, and learning outcomes on a regular basis. The lead instructors will have additional responsibility as faculty mentors and will play a role in the design and implementation of adjunct faculty development workshops.

Professional development activities for adjunct faculty are designed to promote collaboration between traditional and online adjunct faculty members, including those assigned to Fort Riley. Most sessions are offered at the Wichita East branch campus and are combined with the Eluminate Live! web conferencing system. The system allows for real-time discussions and collaboration among participants. Eluminate Live! sessions are recorded and archived and can be reviewed by adjunct faculty members at any time. Fifteen professional development topics are being covered during the 2009-2010 academic year. (SP 2.23)

Adjunct faculty are introduced to online and face-to-face training prior to their first teaching assignments. They then participate in “Introduction to Online Teaching” and “Working with Adult Learners” instructional sequences. Part-time adjunct faculty participate in a series of instructional development workshops, which include Blackboard Learn tools. These experiences help instructors with the course management system and increase the capacity of faculty members to assist students in the use of current computer technologies. (SP 2.24, 2.25)

Assessment

Southwestern College’s institutional learning outcomes set, made up of five criteria, are closely aligned with a set of particular knowledge and skills criteria. Adjunct faculty are required to demonstrate how course requirements align with the institutional learning outcomes. Students participate in a senior capstone experience made up of course projects, papers, and activities through which the learner articulates in narrative form his/her understanding and application of the institutional learning outcomes. Teacher education students participate in an outcomes assessment experience through student teaching, a graduate portfolio, or completion of a practicum activity. Each year, aggregated learner performances are evaluated via standards-based criteria and reviewed by program faculty and others associated with the Teacher Education Committee. This activity is part of an ongoing process improvement program initiative. (SP 2.26, 2.28, 2.29)

The college grading system is comprehensive, applied at all locations, levels of learning, and learning modes. The director of Academic Affairs continually monitors grade distribution reports to ensure that grades reflect actual learner work. If an adjunct faculty member’s grades appear

inflated, one-on-one discussions, mentoring and rubric development training are routinely employed to address the matter. (SP 2.27)

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Principle Three

Administration of the program includes academic and student services and demonstrates effective and reliable management of human, fiscal, technological, and learning resources.

Management

At Fort Riley, Southwestern’s adjunct faculty are held to the same policies and standards of conduct as those enforced with on campus faculty members. Teaching load, orientation, compensation, supervision and professional development are governed by annual contracts issued to adjunct faculty members. The base rates for campus and off-campus instruction vary somewhat, a reflection of “the challenges confronted to find appropriately qualified adjunct faculty with doctoral degrees in rural south central Kansas.” (SP 3.1) While resumes of academic professionals reportedly are up-to-date and reflect their experience and education, these files are maintained at the Wichita East Branch Campus and are not available at Fort Riley. (SP 3.2)

Southwestern College personnel, along with representatives of six other educational institutions serving the Fort Riley consortium, actively participate in monthly meetings with the ESO to discuss the voluntary education needs of the installation, along with any issues that might have an impact on the education of soldiers and their family members. The relationship between the college and the Fort Riley educational services staff is reported to be collaborative, cooperative, and mutually respectful. Communication is open and ongoing. (SP 3.3)

The associate vice president, headquartered at the Wichita site, has overall responsibility for program administration, supported by the director of Academic Success Coaching, who supervises the onsite academic success coach (ASC) at Fort Riley. The academic success coach, a recent hire, holds a baccalaureate degree in sociology. Direct oversight is provided by members of the Professional Studies leadership team, as well as the director of Teacher Education, who is housed on the main campus. (SP 3.4, 3.5)

The college provides Internet connectivity at Fort Riley comparable to that at other Professional Studies locations. The ASC connects to the main campus internal network via a college-issued laptop computer. Remote access is provided to the Laptop Support Center on the main campus

should issues arise. Troubleshooting occurs remotely. On occasion, intermittent down-time of the local Internet service provider causes operational challenges for the ASC, but learners can continue to be served through remote servers. (SP 3.8)

All Professional Studies personnel, including the ASC at Fort Riley, are engaged in regular professional development activities. An electronic weekly “PS Update” keeps the staff informed of issues and opportunities, along with the “Coffee with the VP” conference call series. Monthly all-staff meetings as well as “content meetings” are held to facilitate information exchange and discussion. All-day professional studies summits are held three times a year in Wichita, involving all personnel. The director of Academic Success Coaching meets on a bi-monthly basis with the Fort Riley ASC. In addition, the ASC is involved in the SMART Goal annual evaluation process whereby she identifies individual organizational and developmental goals. (SP 3.6)

The college, as a member of the Fort Riley Consortium, participates with the ESO and representatives of all institutions offering education programs at Fort Riley in discussions of the academic calendar, course scheduling, training and deployment schedule accommodations, and degree planning. The ASC is well versed in the integration of military experience and testing into degree programs. She is also knowledgeable about veterans’ benefits, federal financial aid, and Fort Riley tuition discounts for active duty soldiers, spouses, National Guard and Reserve members, and DoD civilians and contractors. (SP 3.9, 3.15)

The locally based ASC serves as the first stop for building and maintaining an environment of communication, coordination and collaboration among adjunct faculty members and administrators. The associate vice president, headquartered at the Wichita site, has overall responsibility for program administration, supported by the director of Academic Success Coaching. These administrators take the lead in identifying and developing opportunities for joint planning, collaboration, and coordination with the installation ESO staff and other on-post institutions. (SP 3.10)

Southwestern College maintains a series of metrics on enrollments, course completions, academic performance/grade distributions and financial indicators. These indicators are updated following each six-week session. Web site traffic is analyzed each month, and overall student retention figures are compiled annually. (SP 3.11, 3.14)

Institutional policies regarding e-learning are clearly stated and consistently implemented. Fort Riley learners who choose to take online courses receive identical services available to traditional learners. These include admissions counseling, academic success coaching, enrollment guidance, learner accounts/billing, financial aid assistance, technology support, and Veterans Affairs/tuition assistance (TA) benefits administration. Soldiers utilize the GoArmyEd

portal and obtain personalized services through the ASC. Policies, management practices, learning design processes and operational procedures for e-learning are regularly evaluated (SP 3.12, 3.13)

The schedule of classes is developed by the director of Academic Affairs in collaboration with the onsite academic success coach. Courses are offered in established rotations, which ensure consistency across locations and provide for timely availability to meet students' career plans. The ASC provides class schedules to the ESO and to representatives of other Consortium members. (SP 3.16) There is concern, however, with the practice of classes being held fewer than the standard 15 clock-hours for each credit hour awarded. Thus, the MIVER team offers the following:

RECOMMENDATION: Southwestern College should review its practice of limiting face-to-face class time to less than half that typically provided in postsecondary education settings.

SC operates under a negotiated and accepted memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the installation and the institution. The document clearly sets forth the responsibilities and obligations of institutional and installation representatives. (SP 3.17)

Student Services

College policies and practices for service members regarding admission, assessment and awarding and transcribing of prior learning credit are consistent with the SC mission, national standards and practices and SOC principles and practices. (SP 3.18)

Based on its standard policy, the college accepts the recommended scores on CLEP and DSST exams for elective and/or general education credits. Since learners joining either associate or bachelor's programs have completed at least 30 semester hours of earned or ACE-evaluated military credit, the ACT college entrance exams are not utilized. (SP 3.19)

The SC academic success coach (ASC) serves as the "front-line" representative at Fort Riley, offering generalist services and connecting learners with more specialized personnel housed at the Wichita East site or the main campus in Winfield. The ASC assists learners with admissions, degree plans, course selection and other program issues as part of the college's commitment to helping learners reach their individual educational goals. (SP 3.20)

Textbooks and other course materials are available through the college’s textbook vendor, MBS Direct, and may be acquired via a direct link during the institutional enrollment process. All textbook information is loaded into the GoArmyEd portal for easy student access. (SP 3.21)

The ASC provides general support services regarding tuition assistance, the GI Bill and GI Bill Kicker, Pell Grants and other forms of available aid. For more specialized questions, she refers students to specialists located at the Wichita East Branch Campus or the main campus. (SP 3.22)

Installation graduation ceremonies are held twice a year at Fort Riley. Graduates from each of the colleges and universities with programs at Fort Riley are recognized. The ASC collaborates with the Education Center staff and institution representatives to plan and execute the ceremony. “Hot wash ups” (after action reviews) are held to identify successful practices and those in need of revision in order to ensure a tasteful and meaningfully executed ceremony. (SP 3.23)

RESOURCES

Principle Four

There is a sufficient reservoir of relevant instructional resources available to the instructor for teaching support and to the student for reference, research, and independent learning. Facilities and equipment are appropriate to support the programs and services offered. Financial resources are adequate and appropriately used to accomplish the institutional mission and to achieve program goals and objectives.

Instructional Resources

Fort Riley students attending Southwestern College have access to the Deets Library via the Internet, telephone, email, instant messaging, and texting. In addition to the Deets Library, there are several local public and university libraries in close proximity to the post. Due to the recreational nature of the post library, students seldom use those limited resources. (SP 4.1, 4.3, 4.4)

Students learn about the Deets Library and its resources through a detailed introductory manual available from the Library’s web site. The 25-page manual provides information about the Library’s services, web site, searching skills, online catalog, databases, evaluating information, and plagiarism. Using the online catalog, students may search for print and electronic books, DVDs and other resources. Electronic books may also be directly accessed from links to NetLibrary and Ebrary. Passwords to log into databases may be obtained through a student’s

advisor and the Library. Resources not available through the Deets Library may be requested through the Interlibrary Loan online request form. A variety of locally produced online tutorials are available to instruct students in using the online catalog, databases, and effective searching to name a few. The Deets Library provides an “Ask-a-Librarian” service including telephone, email, instant messaging, and texting. These services are available while librarians are on duty. The Deets Library is staffed with two professional librarians and two staff members. (SP 4.2, 4.5-4.7, 4.11)

The Multi-Use Learning Facility, located in Building 7604, has 12 computers with printing capabilities for students to use for word processing and online courses. This facility offers weekday hours to meet the needs of all students. The facility is staffed by a contractor and is currently closed due to funding issues. The Army Community Service, located in Building 7264, has eight computers. (SP 4.8, 4.9, 4.11) The current MOU between the college and Fort Riley does not address computer or Internet support responsibilities. (SP 4.8)

Classrooms at Fort Riley have access to computerized overhead projectors, television, and VCR capabilities. Southwestern College tries to meet the needs of faculty with additional equipment when necessary. (SP 4.10)

Physical Resources

Classroom space is not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines. Accommodations can be made to shift classes to ADA-compliant facilities as required. Classroom space is otherwise adequate and parking is convenient. (SP 4.12) The matter of provision of adequate physical resources is addressed in the MOU. (SP 4.14)

The technology infrastructure for e-learning courses is adequate. Learner access is provided through the Blackboard Learn course management system, a common platform supporting instruction at all centers and on the main campus. The Eluminate! Web conferencing system augments online classes. Blackboard hosting services provides 24/7 support to the Blackboard Learn system. (SP 4.13)

Financial Resources

Southwestern’s financial documents indicate appropriate allocation and utilization of resources in support of the various academic programs offered at Fort Riley, both on-post and via e-learning delivery. (SP 4.15) SC’s financial reports, records and practices suggest an appropriate level of fiscal viability. (SP 4.16) It is clear that, given the limited numbers of programs presently offered, careful stewardship of available funds is required. This stewardship is reflected

in Southwestern’s records. (SP 4.17) SC suggests that its “market share” will increase in the near term as a result of troop redeployment from field to post.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Principle Five

Continuous and systematic program evaluation stimulates program improvement, enhances quality, and increases the likelihood of the achievement of program mission and objectives.

The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Kansas State Department of Education visited Fort Riley in 2008 as part of their evaluation of Southwestern College. An additional external evaluation was conducted by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Commission on Colleges and Schools during spring 2010. The latter report indicated that the Professional Studies unit carries out its duties in delivering off-campus academic services in a satisfactory manner, employing operational practices appropriate for an academic environment. (SP 5.1) The Professional Studies unit deploys a broad array of evaluative strategies and feedback mechanisms. The college actively participates in the Academic Quality Improvement Program, the College Choices for Adults-Transparency by Design initiative, the “Are We Making Progress” survey, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), the ACT Alumni Outcomes Survey, the Noel-Levitz Priorities Survey of Online Learners (PSOL), and the “Quality Matters” rubric, which specifically targets the quality of online instruction. (SP 5.2, 5.7) SC uses these metrics to identify areas for improvement and to develop standards for addressing programmatic shortcomings. (SP 5.3-5.5) Southwestern has developed a formalized evaluation program for comparing the effectiveness of its instructional delivery systems in a military environment. (SP 5.6) Thus, the MIVER team offers the following:

COMMENDATION: Southwestern College is commended for its high-level commitment to assessment of its programs and administrative structure. In addition to the usual accreditation sequence associated with institutions of higher education, the college participates in the Academic Quality Improvement Programs and employs a number of other assessment measures at the local level.

Summary of Southwestern College Commendations and Recommendations

COMMENDATION

- **Southwestern College is commended for its high-level commitment to assessment of its programs and administrative structure. In addition to the usual accreditation sequence associated with institutions of higher education, the college participates in the Academic Quality Improvement Programs and employs a number of other assessment measures at the local level.**

RECOMMENDATION

- **Southwestern College should review its practice of limiting face-to-face class time to less than half that typically provided in postsecondary education settings.**

Institution Report University of Mary

INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1955 as a private, not-for-profit, two-year college by the Benedictine Sisters of Annunciation Monastery, the University of Mary became a four-year, degree-granting college in 1959 and gained university status in 1986. The University of Mary has been accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools since 1969. From its main campus in Bismarck, North Dakota, the university offers 44 majors in undergraduate degree programs, seven master's degree programs and one doctoral program. Enrollment is now at more than 3,000 students.

The University of Mary offers accelerated degree programs at 17 sites in Montana, North Dakota, Wyoming, Missouri, and Kansas through its Center for Accelerated and Distance Education. The university has offered graduate coursework leading to the Master of Business Administration (MBA) at Fort Riley, Kansas since 2006. Courses at Fort Riley are offered in five-week terms. At the time of the MIVER visit, 18 students were enrolled in the MBA program at Fort Riley.

MISSION

Principle One

The institution providing voluntary education programs on a military installation has an educational mission statement that reflects sound adult education philosophy and goals and is clearly compatible with the installation voluntary education program mission statement and objectives.

As a Christian, Catholic, Benedictine institution, the University of Mary was founded to prepare leaders with moral courage, global understanding, and commitment to the common good. The mission of the University of Mary is to respond to the academic, religious and cultural needs of the people of the region and beyond. The mission statement of the Center for Accelerated and Distance Education (CADE) is:

to provide a quality, accelerated, contemporary education to adult learners seeking careers in enterprises requiring skills attained through competency based education. The University of Mary's Benedictine education philosophy was fundamental in the development of our curriculum in concert with the efforts of the community, students, scholars and other professionals.

The University of Mary's mission statement and the mission statement of the Center for Accelerated and Distance Education are compatible with the mission statement of the Fort Riley Education Center, and adhere to the *Principles and Criteria of Servicemembers Opportunity College* (SOC). (SP 1.2) The university's mission statement is published in university catalogs and program materials and is reflected in program planning, decision making, and policies implemented at Fort Riley. (SP 1.3, 1.4) The university's mission statement is reviewed every three years. The mission statement was not revised during the most recent review; however, definitions were added to more clearly articulate the Benedictine values and how the university meets the religious, academic, and cultural needs of its students, community, and stakeholders. (SP 1.5)

EDUCATION PROGRAM

Principle Two

Education programs and services provided on military installations maintain the high quality required by regionally accredited institutions, using qualified and dedicated faculty supported by professional development programs and appropriate infrastructure. Assessment of student learning is based on the achievement of comprehensive and specific learning outcomes.

Instruction

The Master of Business Administration (MBA) program is offered in a five-week accelerated format and responds to the needs of Soldiers at Fort Riley. The MBA program is accredited by the International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education and is consistent with the needs assessment conducted by the Fort Riley Education Center. (SP 2.1-2.4) The program requires students to use research skills, apply theoretical knowledge, and meet rigorous academic standards in the coursework. (SP 2.5) Learner guides and extensive course syllabi are provided to students to ensure that they can achieve the expected learning outcomes. The learner guides also document the currency of the knowledge for the subject area, diversity of instructional methods, and currency of bibliographic references. (SP 2.6, 2.7)

The University of Mary publishes its policies and practices regarding credit for prior learning, transfer credit, course prerequisites, evaluation criteria, modes of study, student orientation, and academic residency requirements in the university catalogs and program brochures. The university provides computer support and library services to students, faculty and staff 24 hours per day and seven days per week. These services include instruction in the use of computer application and library technologies. (SP 2.12-2.14) All courses in the MBA program at Fort Riley are offered face-to-face. A curriculum coordinator in the Center for Accelerated and Distance Education monitors student learning outcomes and program outcomes, such as overall grading patterns, attrition, and course completion rates at distance education sites to ensure that they are comparable to results on the main campus. (SP 2.15, 2.16) The data are not examined by distance education sites such as Fort Riley.

Faculty

The University of Mary employs faculty at Fort Riley, primarily part-time, who have earned advanced degrees (generally terminal degrees) from accredited institutions and who have the experience, knowledge, and attitudes required to teach, advise and assist nontraditional students with course content and in the use of computer and library technologies. (SP 2.17-2.21, 2.24)

The Fort Riley faculty members have limited opportunities to play a significant role in developing and evaluating the MBA program. Fort Riley faculty members may modify course syllabi as appropriate to align their courses with course and program outcomes and instructional strategies developed by the instructor. At the end of each term, faculty members have an opportunity to provide feedback about course content and suggest curricular or programmatic changes for consideration by the faculty at the main campus. (SP 2.20) Also a course evaluation form is provided for students to provide feedback at the end of the term. All course and program revisions must be made in collaboration with the department, dean and curriculum review and approval processes on the main campus.

The resumes of faculty are current, accurately reflect experiences and education, and are kept on file at Fort Riley and at the main campus. (SP 2.22) The faculty reported receiving excellent support from the Fort Riley staff member, the main campus staff, and academic department personnel at the main campus. A Facilitator Handbook presents information to instructors about the university mission and history, policies and procedures, and the learning management system. The Facilitator Handbook is available to Fort Riley faculty members through the university's web site.

Professional development activities are available for all faculty members; however, logistical challenges make it difficult for Fort Riley faculty members to take advantage of professional

development opportunities sponsored by the main campus. (SP 2.23) The University of Mary is planning to offer training and faculty development activities at distance education sites in the future, including Kansas City.

RECOMMENDATION: The University of Mary should provide regular faculty development opportunities to Fort Riley faculty equivalent to the opportunities provided to the faculty on the main campus.

Assessment

Student learning outcomes are clearly articulated in university catalogs and course syllabi. Student assignments, examinations and other assessments are described in course syllabi and learner guides. Student assessments are designed to be an integral part of learning and an opportunity for students to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes. Grading policies are published in university catalogs and course syllabi. (SP 2.26-2.29)

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Principle Three

Administration of the program includes academic and student services and demonstrates effective and reliable management of human, fiscal, technological, and learning resources.

Management

The University of Mary's policies and procedures governing faculty hiring, compensation, teaching workload, and orientation include faculty members at Fort Riley. Also, Fort Riley faculty members are paid the standard per course rate for adjunct faculty. Faculty resumes are current, accurately reflect experiences and background, and are kept on file at Fort Riley and at the main campus. (SP 3.1, 3.2) University of Mary staff and the Fort Riley Education Center staff communicate and collaborate on a regular basis. During the MIVER visit, Fort Riley faculty and a student indicated receiving excellent support from the Fort Riley and main campus staff members, as well as Education Center staff when needed. (SP 3.3, 3.4) The onsite coordinator is competent and performs administrative functions needed to accomplish the program mission and objectives. (SP 3.5, 3.6) Professional development activities are available for staff members.

The faculty members reflect diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, gender and disciplinary interest. (SP 3.7) The University of Mary provides administrative support for the MBA program offered at Fort Riley and ensures an environment of collaboration, coordination, and communication among the onsite staff, faculty members, faculty and staff of other institutions offering education programs at Fort Riley, and the Education Center staff. (SP 3.8-3.10)

In general, appropriate administrative and management attention is paid to institutional functions and details such as course scheduling and sequencing, student registration, degree completion, academic advisement, financial aid, and record keeping at Fort Riley. (SP 3.9) During the MIVER visit, students and faculty commented on the excellent level of support received from onsite staff and the main campus.

A student commented that the five-week session was too compressed for the work that needed to be completed for the MBA courses. The University of Mary's program materials, catalogs, and web site state that classes meet one evening per week in the accelerated format. Most MBA courses at Fort Riley are offered in five-week terms. The class schedule for the MBA program states that all courses meet one evening per week from 1800 to 2200. The MIVER team was concerned about the accelerated schedule each term and how generally-accepted standards for instructional time, typically 15 instructional hours per credit hour, are being met each term. In the accelerated term, students receive 20 hours of instruction for three graduate credit hours in a five-week term versus approximately 45 hours of instructional time typically expected for three credit hour courses.

RECOMMENDATION: The University Mary should review its course scheduling practices to ensure that students receive sufficient contact hours in all course offerings at Fort Riley and to ensure consistency with accreditation standards and best practices in graduate education.

Data are collected annually at the course, program and division levels to evaluate overall student academic achievement, student leadership development, student satisfaction, teaching effectiveness, and the learning environment. Results are analyzed at the university level, division and program levels, but not by site. (SP 3.11-3.14)

The University of Mary is an active partner with the Fort Riley Education Center and the Consortium of Colleges and Universities in conducting needs assessments, program planning, evaluation of programs and services, and developing and maintaining a common installation academic calendar and schedule of classes. (SP 3.15-3.17)

Student Services

The University of Mary adheres to nationally-recognized standards and practices and Servicemembers Opportunity College (SOC) principles and practices for admission, assessment and awarding of credit for prior learning, and transcribing of credit. (SP 3.18) The university's policies regarding credit by examination is published in university catalogs, the university's web site, and program brochures. (SP 3.19) Students and faculty gave a positive assessment of support from the onsite staff member related to all processes that affect instruction and learning. Other student services receiving excellent comments included the readily accessible academic advising, tutorials and related academic support services, student-friendly registration and financial assistance processes, receipt of information about textbook and course materials in a timely manner, the ease of purchasing textbooks, and the comfortable and collegial environment created and maintained by the onsite staff member. (SP 3.20-3.22)

COMMENDATION: The Fort Riley site coordinator is commended for exemplary services and for maintaining a customer-focused and collegial environment for Fort Riley Soldiers and their families.

Formal, well organized graduation ceremonies at Fort Riley are conducted twice each year. The ceremonies include institutional officials, military leaders, and family and friends of the graduates. University of Mary students may participate in Fort Riley graduation ceremonies. (SP 3.32)

RESOURCES

Principle Four

There is a sufficient reservoir of relevant instructional resources available to the instructor for teaching support and to the student for reference, research, and independent learning. Facilities and equipment are appropriate to support the programs and services offered. Financial resources are adequate and appropriately used to accomplish the institutional mission and to achieve program goals and objectives.

Instructional Resources

Students enrolled in University of Mary classes at Fort Riley have access to the Welder Library (http://www.umary.edu/umlife/student_life/library/) using the "The 411" link on the college's web site or through a link on the student my.umary.edu information portal page. (SP 4.1, 4.6)

The University of Mary is a member of the Central Dakota Library Network. Participation in the library network allows University of Mary students to have access to additional resources and facilitates sharing of resources between member libraries. (SP 4.5, 4.6) The home campus library in Bismarck, North Dakota is open seven days per week, including evening hours. Requests for assistance can be made by telephone, email, or the web-based “Ask-a-Librarian” form. (SP 4.1, 4.2, 4.7)

University of Mary students also have access to a small library at Fort Riley. The library is located in Building 5306. Other area libraries include the Kansas State University Library and the public libraries in Manhattan and Junction City, Kansas. University of Mary students can obtain check-out privileges at the Kansas State Library for a yearly fee of \$10. Active duty military students also have access to Army Knowledge Online, which provides additional databases and specialized electronic resources. No cooperative agreements (formal or informal) about providing access to library services exist between the institutions providing courses at Fort Riley nor is this a part of the institution’s MOU. (SP 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.11)

The link to the Welder Library Catalog and Journal Resources (<http://ipac.infolynx.org/ipac20/ipac.jsp?profile=uml>) takes students to a search interface that allows them to search for print materials using the search tab, a my account tab, an electronic resources tab, and an interlibrary loan tab. Searching the library catalog is open, while searching for journal resources requires a user login and PIN. The print collection includes more than 70,000 print resources, plus other resources in multiple formats. The University subscribes to more than 600 periodicals and newspapers and provides access to a set of EBSCO online databases including databases appropriate to students enrolled in the MBA program. (SP 4.5, 4.6)

Home campus librarians have provided a document (available in Word or pdf format) that demonstrates searching for resources in the online library. This guide is provided to students and faculty during orientation. Students and faculty also receive their PINs during orientation. (SP 4.2) Searching for materials and requesting those items not available in the Welder Library’s collection or in full-text format is simple and straightforward. Course syllabi require the use of refereed resources for class assignments. The standard course evaluation questionnaire also includes questions about the adequacy of instructional resources to support course content.

Classrooms used to deliver University of Mary classes at Fort Riley are adequately equipped with appropriate technologies, including digital projectors, TVs, VHS/DVD players, and instructor teaching stations. (SP 4.9, 4.10) These resources, with the exception of the wireless network maintained by Barton Community College, are kept updated and in working order by Education Center personnel. (SP 4.8)

Physical Resources

The University of Mary, in collaboration with the Fort Riley Education Center and the Consortium for Colleges and Universities, identifies needed physical facilities and communicates the needs to the Education Center staff. The classroom assigned to the University of Mary is an appropriate size and the equipment is appropriate for instruction and learning. (SP 4.12-4.14) Students and faculty report that the room is uncomfortably hot in the summer. The air conditioner is positioned such that the air blows on the backs of two students instead of moving air around the room. The heat runs constantly in the winter. The heating and air conditioning unit is loud, which sometimes presents challenges when classes are in session.

Financial Resources

The University of Mary allocates financial resources appropriate to support the MBA program and educational services at Fort Riley. (SP 4.15) Financial documents indicate fiscal viability and cost effectiveness for the program and services. (SP 4.16-4.18)

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Principle Five

Continuous and systematic program evaluation stimulates program improvement, enhances quality and increases the likelihood of the achievement of program mission and objectives.

Periodic evaluation of academic programs at the University of Mary had occurred on a three-year cycle. The university temporarily suspended the three-year program reviews in order to reconsider program evaluation processes and the frequency of comprehensive program reviews. The University of Mary continues its annual program assessment processes. The assessment processes are grounded in the mission of the University. Data are collected about student academic achievement, student leadership development, student satisfaction, employer and alumni satisfaction, teaching effectiveness and course evaluations by students and faculty, feedback regarding the learning environment, and program needs assessment. (SP 5.1-5.4) Data are analyzed on a program and university level. Analyses are not conducted by instructional site and results are not provided by instructional site. Thus, no specific information about Fort Riley that could be used to inform decision making, program improvement and program planning is available. The University of Mary should analyze program evaluation and program outcome data by site to provide the information needed to guide program planning and decision making at

Fort Riley. The following recommendation related to data analysis and reporting by site is presented in Principle Three and applies to Principles Three and Five. (SP 3.11, 3.14, 5.2-5.4)

RECOMMENDATION: The University of Mary should disaggregate evaluation data by site to better provide insights into the performance of programs at Fort Riley.

Faculty and staff performance evaluations are conducted annually at the University of Mary. Fort Riley faculty and staff are included in the annual performance review process. (SP 5.5)

Summary of University of Mary Commendations and Recommendations

COMMENDATION

- **The Fort Riley site coordinator is commended for exemplary services and for maintaining a customer-focused and collegial environment for Fort Riley Soldiers and their families.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **The University of Mary should provide regular faculty development opportunities to Fort Riley faculty equivalent to the opportunities provided to the faculty on the main campus.**
- **The University Mary should review its course scheduling practices to ensure that students receive sufficient contact hours in all course offerings at Fort Riley and to ensure consistency with accreditation standards and best practices in graduate education.**
- **The University of Mary should disaggregate evaluation data by site to better provide insights into the performance of programs at Fort Riley.**

Institution Report Upper Iowa University

INTRODUCTION

Upper Iowa University (UIU) was founded in Fayette, Iowa, in 1855 by a wealthy local family with an affiliation to the Methodist Church. Today, it is a small liberal arts college without religious affiliation, and with on-campus enrollment of more than 900 men and women. In 1920, Upper Iowa began an extension program throughout Northern Iowa designed to provide teachers with enrichment and degree programs. In 1972, the institution launched an external degree program, one of the first in the nation. In 1984, UIU opened Learning Centers in Des Moines and Madison, Wisconsin, swiftly followed by new centers in Waterloo and Manchester, Iowa and Prairie du Chien, Milwaukee, and Wausau, Wisconsin. Enrollments in those Learning Centers soon overtook on-campus enrollments. In 1999, it began offering courses at Learning Centers in Hong Kong, Singapore, and Vancouver and launched online courses available from anywhere in the world. In 1992, a Learning Center was established at Fort Riley, Kansas, launching the university's expansion onto military bases. Today, Upper Iowa operates Learning Centers on five bases in the United States.

UIU divides itself into the Residential University (i.e., the Fayette campus), International Programs, and Academic Extension, each with its own senior vice president. All military programs and domestic Learning Centers fall under Academic Extension. Academic Extension and International Programs raise UIU's total student population to approximately 7,000.

MISSION

Principle One

The institution providing voluntary education programs on a military installation has an educational mission statement that reflects sound adult education philosophy and goals and is clearly compatible with the installation voluntary education program mission statement and objectives.

Upper Iowa University's catalog states the university's mission and vision as follows:

MISSION: Upper Iowa University provides student-centered undergraduate and graduate educational programs through flexible, multiple delivery systems in an environment in which diversity is respected, encouraged and nurtured.

VISION: Upper Iowa University will be recognized and respected as an exceptional and ascending institution of higher learning, developing global citizens who become lifelong learners prepared for leadership within society.

This mission statement was adopted in 2007 and is reviewed regularly by the Board of Trustees. (SP 1.1, 1.5)

The Fort Riley UIU Learning Center has adopted a more focused mission. The institution's self-study presents the Fort Riley mission as:

to create a customer focused learning environment that integrates current education, training, and transition programs to provide broad learning opportunities, facilitate access to services, and enhance the visibility of all installation student programs.

Upper Iowa at Fort Riley employs three methods of course delivery to achieve this mission: face-to-face, online, and independent study courses. All three are implemented in a manner consistent with the mission statements of UIU and the Fort Riley UIU Learning Center. (SP 1.2-1.4)

EDUCATION PROGRAM

Principle Two

Education programs and services provided on military installations maintain the high quality required by regionally accredited institutions, using qualified and dedicated faculty supported by professional development programs and appropriate infrastructure. Assessment of student learning is based on the achievement of comprehensive and specific learning outcomes.

Instruction

Upper Iowa University awards associate, bachelor's, and master's degrees in a wide range of academic disciplines. The Fort Riley UIU Learning Center offers upper division courses only, leading to bachelor's degrees in 10 programs: business administration, criminal justice, emergency and disaster management, human resources management, human services, management, management information systems, psychology, public administration, and social science. Students can also earn certificates in emergency and disaster management, and human resources management. Each of these programs meets a need identified by the Education Center (SP 2.4), and each requires the same prerequisites and courses as their parent programs on the Fayette campus. (SP 2.1)

Lower division courses at Fort Riley are provided by Central Texas College and Barton Community College, which also provide assessment and remediation to ensure that students possess appropriate college-level skills. (SP 2.2) Upper Iowa requires all students to complete a core general education curriculum, either with UIU courses or courses from other universities. (SP 2.3) Upon application to Upper Iowa, students' previous work is assessed, transfer credit is granted, and a comprehensive degree plan is prescribed. (SP 2.6-2.11)

Each academic program requires students to use computer technology in a variety of ways; students who lack technical skills take a UIU course to help them develop the required skills. (SP 2.12) An online library orientation briefing introduces all Upper Iowa students to the Henderson-Wilder Library at Fayette and explains how to access its resources. (SP 2.13) UIU online courses are well-designed and closely monitored to ensure that their breadth, depth, and rigor match face-to-face courses. (SP 2.15, 2.16)

All of the colleges and universities offering courses at Fort Riley have joined in the Fort Riley Consortium of Colleges and Universities to plan jointly for program adoption, class schedules, needs assessments, graduations, and other items of common interest. The consortium is

extremely effective in collaborating with the Education Center to provide integrated, seamless service to service members and their families. (SP 2.14)

Faculty

Upper Iowa draws upon a cadre of experienced faculty at Fort Riley, most of whom have been teaching at UIU for many years. Several teach at other institutions, both off-base (Kansas State, Wichita State) and on-base (Central Michigan, Central Texas). All are appropriately qualified for their positions and hold at least master's degrees; three hold terminal degrees. (SP 2.17, 2.18, 2.23) Current faculty are appropriately diverse. (SP 2.21) Resumes of faculty are current and on file in the UIU Fort Riley offices. (SP 2.22)

All current faculty at Fort Riley are adjuncts. However, Upper Iowa's president has established a university goal to make sure that students completing their degrees at UIU Learning Centers will have full-time faculty teach at least 51 percent of their upper division core courses. The Fort Riley UIU Learning Center goal is to meet this requirement within the next two years. This presidential mandate is an example of Upper Iowa's determination to break down the barriers between the home campus at Fayette and off-campus Learning Centers to ensure that degrees earned at all university sites are equivalent, no matter where or how instruction was delivered. (SP 2.19, 2.20)

Upper Iowa offers Learning Center faculty at least two faculty development workshops per year; they must participate in at least one. These workshops include sessions on university policies, assistance programs for students, technology, library resources, and teaching methods. Upper Iowa sometimes provides additional online faculty development opportunities and adjunct faculty may apply for funds to attend conferences. (SP 2.23-2.25)

Assessment

All Upper Iowa courses, whether online, face-to-face, or independent study, offered at Fayette or in a Learning Center, are carefully structured by the academic department at the home campus. Each course has clear learning outcomes that are stated on the syllabus. Each course builds upon the skills and knowledge gained in general education and prerequisite courses. Course syllabi list the grades students can earn and the standards they must meet to earn them. Each instructor designs and administers assessment tools (examinations, papers, presentations) appropriate to the specific course. (SP 2.26-2.29)

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Principle Three

Administration of the program includes academic and student services and demonstrates effective and reliable management of human, fiscal, technological, and learning resources.

Management

Upper Iowa has two full-time staff at the Fort Riley Learning Center, the center director and the administrative assistant. The regional director, responsible for five Learning Centers in the Southwest, occupies an office adjacent to Upper Iowa's Fort Riley suite. He is the former center director, and consults regularly with local staff. The regional director reports to the senior vice president for Academic Extension in Fayette and consults the associate vice president for Academic Extension, located at a Learning Center in Milwaukee, on all academic matters. The associate vice president for Academic Extension also reports to the senior vice president for Academic Extension in Fayette. The MIVER team interviewed both the associate and senior vice presidents at length.

The center director recruits and interviews local faculty to serve as adjuncts (though hiring decisions are made by academic departments in Fayette), visits each class at least once per term and evaluates each faculty member's work twice per term, and maintains accurate records for each course and faculty member. (SP 3.1-3.3, 3.5, 3.7)

The center director holds a master's degree (earned through the Army's Voluntary Education program) and is well-qualified for the position. He is a former command sergeant major at Fort Riley, and understands the cultures of the Army and Fort Riley. (SP 3.4) The administrative assistant is well-trained, competent, and friendly; students and faculty told the MIVER team that she always provides cheerful and timely support to their endeavors. Students, especially, appreciate her efforts.

UIU Fort Riley staff participate in a variety of professional development activities: new employee orientation and the annual Staff Professional Development Day, both held in Fayette, academic adviser meetings, and regional meetings. The Fort Riley UIU Learning Center's budget includes a line for staff professional development, e.g. conferences focusing on military education or accreditation. (SP 3.6)

Local staff work closely with academic and support staff at Fayette via computer-mediated communication using a T1 line, telephone, and occasional face-to-face meetings. Faculty and

students report that those regular communications provide a seamless teaching/learning environment. (SP 3.8-3.10) The center director, regional director, and associate vice president for Academic Extension review syllabi, student and staff evaluations of the faculty's teaching, and grade distributions to monitor the quality of both face-to-face and online instruction. (SP 3.11-3.13)

While Upper Iowa analyzes quantitative data thoroughly to determine comparative levels of success for the Fayette campus (e.g., it reports a first-to-second-year retention rate of 70 percent, and a six-year graduation rate of 34.4 percent), those measures are inappropriate for Learning Centers, especially centers on military bases. Fort Riley students transfer into and out of the on-base program regularly as they are re-assigned or deployed. Without such analyses, Upper Iowa cannot compare the success of different military centers. Therefore, the MIVER team encourages Upper Iowa to devise quantitative measures of success, similar to retention/graduation rates, for its Academic Extension Learning Centers on military bases. (SP 3.14)

As noted above, Upper Iowa participates in the Fort Riley Consortium for Colleges and Universities, which collaborates on needs assessments, common language in memoranda of understanding (MOUs), the academic calendar, and other matters of common interest. (SP 3.15-3.17)

UIU is currently implementing a uniform academic schedule throughout Academic Extension. The new schedule will include six eight-week terms per year, and beginning and ending dates for each term will be uniform for all Upper Iowa Learning Centers. This uniform schedule brings considerable advantages to the institution, e.g., coordinated application and registration deadlines, class schedules, etc. There are also advantages to Upper Iowa students who are transitioning to Fort Riley from other bases and expecting uniform start dates. However, the uniform schedule may conflict with the on-base scheduling of classes at Fort Riley by forcing Upper Iowa classes to begin at different times than classes offered by other institutions on base. Therefore, the MIVER team offers the following:

RECOMMENDATION: Upper Iowa University's center director should work closely and collaboratively with the Fort Riley Education Center to ensure that Upper Iowa's uniform scheduling policy does not cause unnecessary difficulties for Fort Riley's service members and dependents.

Student Services

Upper Iowa University's Academic Extension Program admits students, assesses prior learning, and transcribes credits in accordance with university and SOC policies, using the American

Council on Education standards to award credit for prior learning and standardized examinations, e.g. CLEP and DANES. (SP 3.18, 3.19) The center director is the academic advisor for all Fort Riley Upper Iowa students. Indeed, the university has recognized his advising skills by naming him senior advisor for the other four military Learning Centers. The regional director and associate vice president for Academic Extension, both former center directors, provide backup advising when necessary. (SP 3.20)

UIU and advisers are well aware of the financial constraints facing military students and their dependents, and advise students early and often about the financial aid opportunities available to them. (SP 3.22) Students report that textbooks are available online (though not inexpensively), and that the University facilitates textbook buy-backs and student-to-student sales. (SP 3.21)

The Fort Riley Education Center holds installation-wide graduation ceremonies each December and May. Upper Iowa always sends university administrators to attend the event; an admirable signal to students that the university honors their achievement. The Fort Riley Consortium of Colleges and Universities plans the ceremony jointly with the Education Center; the base commander attends and speaks. All agree that it is a wonderful event. (SP 3.23)

RESOURCES

Principle Four

There is a sufficient reservoir of relevant instructional resources available to the instructor for teaching support and to the student for reference, research, and independent learning. Facilities and equipment are appropriate to support the programs and services offered. Financial resources are adequate and appropriately used to accomplish the institutional mission and to achieve program goals and objectives.

Instructional Resources

Fort Riley students attending Upper Iowa University have access to the Henderson-Wilder Library via Internet, telephone, and email. In addition to the Henderson-Wilder Library, there are several local public and university libraries in close proximity to the post. Due to the recreational nature of the post library, students seldom use those limited resources. (SP 4.1, 4.3, 4.4)

Students learn about the Henderson-Wilder Library and its resources through their advisors, the UIU eCollege portal, and the Library web site. The online catalog, electronic books, and

databases can be accessed through the Library web site. Students are encouraged to use resources in the Fort Riley area, but if resources are not available, students may request that Upper Iowa books be sent to them. Passwords to log into databases may be obtained by calling or emailing the Library. However, the Lexis-Nexis database, a full-text database used for current newspaper and journal articles and legal resources, is not available to off-campus students. The addition of a proxy server will increase access for all remote users. (SP 4.5, 4.6) Therefore, the MIVER team makes this:

RECOMMENDATION: Upper Iowa University should improve remote access to online databases for off-campus students and faculty.

There are no online tutorials or subject guides to assist students with their research. (SP 4.2) Therefore, the MIVER team makes this:

RECOMMENDATION: The Henderson-Wilder Library should provide online instructional tutorials and training aids to assist students and faculty in using the resources offered.

Students may contact the Henderson-Wilder Library via telephone or email but no formal “Ask-a-Librarian” service exists. (SP 4.7) Therefore, the MIVER team makes this:

RECOMMENDATION: The Henderson-Wilder Library web site should highlight contact information to ensure that students know where to go for assistance.

The Henderson-Wilder Library is staffed with two professional librarians and two staff members. However, increased staff, such as embedding a librarian in online courses, will provide more research support to all UIU students and faculty. (SP 4.11) Therefore, the MIVER team makes this:

RECOMMENDATION: Upper Iowa University should add another professional librarian to the staff to increase services for off-campus/on-installation students.

The UIU classrooms at Fort Riley are adequately equipped with overhead projectors, monitors, and VCR/DVD players. Faculty must bring their own laptops if they wish to make PowerPoint presentations or access the Internet; they report that they are very willing to do so. The Multi-Use Learning Facility has 12 computers with printing capabilities for students to use for word processing and online courses. This facility usually offers weekday hours to meet the needs of all students. However, the facility is staffed by a contractor and is currently closed due to funding issues. (SP 4.8-4.11)

Physical Resources

Upper Iowa's center director works closely with the Education Center and the Consortium to identify and rectify shortcomings in the physical facilities used by the center staff and faculty. (SP 4.12) While faculty and students complained of the shortcomings of the aged buildings that comprise the Education Center, all agreed that office space and classrooms are in accord with the MOU and are at least adequate. The center director has a private office and can hold confidential conversations with students. Barton Community College provides wireless access to the Internet for the entire Education Center, a gracious gesture. Access has been intermittent in the past, but an upgrade is scheduled. Upper Iowa's center director is considering installing a wireless network to ensure that his faculty and students have reliable access. (SP 4.13)

Financial Resources

Upper Iowa's center director and upper administration keep a close eye on the Learning Center's finances to ensure that it is fiscally sound. Budgets are carefully constructed and reviewed, and expenditures are reviewed even more closely. The Fort Riley UIU Learning Center has always produced at least a small surplus and is therefore financially viable. Upper Iowa's schedule of tuition and fees demonstrates charges to military students and dependents considerably lower than those charged students at Fayette. (SP 4.14-4.19)

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Principle Five

Continuous and systematic program evaluation stimulates program improvement, enhances quality and increases the likelihood of the achievement of program mission and objectives.

Upper Iowa has developed and implemented an effective system for program evaluation that includes constant assessment and improvement. The institution is a member of the North Central Association and is therefore accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. It opted for the Academic Quality Improvement Project (AQIP) procedure in 2005. In preparing AQIP materials, the institution realized that its program evaluation procedures did not provide a systematic method for measuring the degree to which academic programs, taken as a sequence of courses and activities, helped students meet the programs' learning objectives. (SP 5.1, 5.2)

Some years earlier, UIU mandated some sort of capstone experience for all programs on campus and in distant locations. Capstone experiences must allow students to demonstrate that they have integrated the knowledge and skills gained in their general education courses and the courses in their majors into a coherent whole. Capstone experiences can provide an excellent vehicle for program evaluation. Academic Extension had decided to use the Senior Project, an independent study course, as their capstone experience. In order to begin a Senior Project, students must be within 15 credits of graduation. The *Senior Project Learner Guidelines* specify that each project should address “a new initiative, need, situation, issue or problem identified by the learner by contacting an organization (business, community organization, agency, school, learner’s employer, etc.) or by searching the literature in your major.”

To complete a Senior Project, the student must identify a contact person in the organization, perform a literature search for related problems and solutions, interview personnel involved, and analyze the causes and impacts of the organization’s problem. In the final paper, the student must propose at least two solutions that address the problem, and recommend one of them with a thorough rationale. The center director (as the students’ academic advisor) helps the student identify a problem and assigns a faculty mentor to the project. Upon completion, the student makes presentations of his/her findings to the faculty mentor and to the organization that provided the problem. The student thereby earns three credits and is qualified to graduate.

As it administered AQIP procedures, Upper Iowa discovered that the Senior Project papers students were submitting included good to excellent literature reviews and analyses of the problem under question, but that the solutions suggested and recommendations made were poor. Students seemed to lack the critical thinking skills that would enable them to devise alternative solutions and recommend the best one. Consequently, Upper Iowa created and implemented a critical thinking course for students to take at the beginning of the junior year. The course begins with an assignment that poses a difficult hypothetical situation; students must analyze it, devise a solution, and provide a rationale. This assignment serves as a baseline of critical thinking skills. At various points in the students’ subsequent careers at Upper Iowa, the university administers other measures of critical thinking. The Senior Project is the final test. After implementing the critical thinking course and subsequent measures, Upper Iowa found that its students’ critical thinking scores had improved by 17 percent and the Senior Projects were much improved.

The MIVER team examined two Senior Project papers and found them impressive. Students had thoroughly analyzed problems facing local businesses, proposed reasonable solutions, and recommended a course of action that was well thought out and defended. Furthermore, students who had completed the project reported that it had helped them bring together and use the skills and knowledge gained in all of the courses they had taken, including general education courses, courses in their majors, and face-to-face and online courses. Thus, the Senior Projects have not

only enabled the institution to measure the degree to which students have integrated their coursework into a coherent body of knowledge and skill and provided an effective feedback loop to improve the academic program, students understand and appreciate the process. (SP 5.3-5.7) Therefore, the MIVER team makes this:

COMMENDATION: Upper Iowa University is commended for implementing a program evaluation that measures students' completion of the program's learning objectives and integration of skills and knowledge gained throughout the curriculum and for using the information gained through that program evaluation to make changes in its curriculum.

Summary of Upper Iowa University Commendations and Recommendations

COMMENDATION

- **Upper Iowa University is commended for implementing a program evaluation that measures students' completion of the program's learning objectives and integration of skills and knowledge gained throughout the curriculum and for using the information gained through that program evaluation to make changes in its curriculum.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Upper Iowa University's center director should work closely and collaboratively with the Fort Riley Education Center to ensure that Upper Iowa's uniform scheduling policy does not cause unnecessary difficulties for Fort Riley's service members and dependents.**
- **Upper Iowa University should improve remote access to online databases for off-campus students and faculty.**
- **The Henderson-Wilder Library should provide online instructional tutorials and training aids to assist students and faculty in using the resources offered.**
- **The Henderson-Wilder Library web site should highlight contact information to ensure that students know where to go for assistance.**
- **Upper Iowa University should add another professional librarian to the staff to increase services for off-campus/on-installation students.**



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