SOCCOAST AFLOAT
INSTITUTIONAL
PARTNERSHIP
Memorandum of Understanding

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is between the United States Coast Guard and
The University of West Florida (UWF), located at 11000 University Parkway, Pensacola
Florida 32514-5750.

UWF is considered an additional contract entity to the original agreement and shall be
referred to as a Partnership Institution for the purposes of this MOU. The reference herein to
Partnership Institutions does not imply nor shall it confer a legal partnership relationship
among any of the educational institutions hereto. UWF will provide to the Coast Guard
Institute (hereafter referred to as the CGI) the educational services and programs as outlined
in this MOU independent of any other institution that is part of the original or subsequent
agreement.

This MOU is issued to provide specific guidelines for the delivery of educational support to
USCG personnel at afloat units.

Support as agreed upon in this MOU shall begin on or about the date signed and shall remain
in effect until terminated by either party.

This MOU complies with the Department of Defense Directive on Voluntary Education for
Military Personnel 1322.8, and .25 as well as internal directives, and is designed to serve the
best interest of the USCG member.

Signing for the University of West Florida

Dr. Wesley Little
Vice Provost, Educational Outreach
University of West Florida

1/4/04
Date

Signing for the U.S. Coast Guard:

James C. Van Sice
Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard
Director, Reserve and Training

2/4/05
Date
1. PURPOSE/OVERVIEW

The purpose of this MOU is to establish support with Partnership Institutions to provide college courses and degree programs at the undergraduate level to USCG personnel at afloat units. This program is hereby known as the SOCCOAST Afloat Program. The institutions identified in this MOU have an established record of providing excellent programs and services to the Navy College Program for Afloat College Education. The exportability of the degree programs from the Partnership Institutions will provide for maximum accessibility of USCG personnel assigned to afloat units. Institutional participation in the SOCCOAST Afloat program is not limited to the institutions specified in this MOU. Other institutions meeting the requirements in paragraph 5 may join the network if there is a recognized need for additional degree programs or courses. Additionally, this MOU does not negate the authority of the USCG Educational Service Officer (ESO) to bring other educational programs or institutions aboard the ship as deemed necessary to meet the educational needs of the personnel.

2. VISION

Establish and nurture long-term relationships to gain partnership support for the continuous flow of prospective, new, and matriculated students from the USCG community who are thereby assured the most expedient and direct pathway to degree completion. The CGI uses a database linking the American Council on Education (ACE) Guides and electronic personnel records to allow automated degree planning with post-merge edit capability by the counselors to assure the highest quality guidance is provided to the students. All appropriate degree plans from the Partnership Institutions shall be included in the automated degree-planning database.

3. BACKGROUND

Each USCG unit has an ESO who is responsible for providing academic advisement and counseling, tuition assistance information, and other support to members assigned to their units who desire to earn a college degree. These ESOs are collateral duty and have limited time to devote to the education duties and responsibilities. Therefore, the CGI has centralized, standardized, and optimized many of these efforts, providing the most efficient and effective mechanism of educational support to all USCG personnel, regardless of their geographic location.

The CGI seeks to provide timely, concise, comprehensive, expert yet understandable advice and guidance to members of the USCG and their spouses so as to facilitate degree completion and/or accomplishment of their personal academic goals. Provide complete advisory support to the USCG community in all matters regarding higher education, including but not limited to financial assistance programs, tuition assistance and G.I. Bills, ACE evaluation of military training and experiences, independent study and external degree programs, college-level testing programs, traditional college systems, Defense Activity for Non Traditional Education Support (DANTES) and Servicemembers Opportunity College’s (SOC) support of the military, and professional or vocational certification. Marketing and promotion of the services available through the CGI to the members is instrumental in reaching those in need of support.

CGIVolEd ( ), UWF ( ) agree to the proposal reflected on this page of this Memorandum of Understanding.
4. SCOPE OF THE MOU

An alliance is hereby formed with the Partnership Institutions and the USCG to ensure collaboration and support to meet the needs of personnel seeking an undergraduate degree while assigned to USCG afloat units. The programs shall be part of the SOCCOAST program to ensure transferability as members are reassigned to ashore units. The purpose of this MOU is to provide guidelines for the delivery of educational courses and programs from these institutions to members of the USCG community in pursuit of academic degrees offered by the Partnership Institutions.

The CGI shall review all requests to expand the network and determine if additional institutional support is required. Partnership Institutions will review course offerings and notify the CGI of any duplication. Due to the investment made by the Partnership Institutions, the partnership institutional directors may veto courses that duplicate those already in the program. This MOU may be amended only by mutual consent of the Partnership Institutions unless any party is required to change the MOU by statutes, executive orders, directives or other government mandates. This MOU will be reviewed on a yearly basis during the month of October or as needed on the occasion of a substantive change by either party to the provisions of this MOU.

This MOU may be terminated by any party by giving written notice to the other party of intent to do so. Such notice of intention to terminate shall be given in writing to the other party no less than 45 days prior to the termination date, unless both parties mutually agree on a lesser period in writing, not to interfere with the support provided to the students enrolled in the semester in progress. Termination shall not be the basis for any claim by any party.

5. SUPPORT FROM SOCCOAST AFLOAT PARTNERSHIP INSTITUTIONS

By virtue of this MOU, Partnership Institutions agree to:

A. Provide informational material describing their distance degree programs to the CGI and shipboard ESOs.

B. Develop and provide a registration packet for shipboard ESOs to use to facilitate easy enrollment in courses. As a minimum the packet will include:

1. A matrix of degree requirements that is simple and easy to read.
2. A list of courses available and the starting and ending date of the school term.
3. The cost of tuition and how to apply for tuition assistance clearly stated.
4. The timeframe by which the registration packets must be received for enrollment in each subsequent term.
5. All exams required for course completion provided to the ESO prior to deployment.
6. The procedure for ordering texts through an on-line bookstore and other course materials.

C. Conduct official evaluations of prior learning and issue student agreements as stipulated in the SOCCOAST Institutional Agreement. A copy of all initial SOCCOAST
Student Agreements will be provided to SOC with a clear indicator under "location" that this student is a SOCCOAST Afloat student. This location shall be the name of the USCG cutter on which the student is assigned at the time of the initial student agreement.

D. Provide marketing materials for display on the ship as requested by the ESO or the CGI.

E. Provide technology required to deliver the course if needed by the student or the command. Most exportable courses shall be delivered on CDROM, in which case the institution will loan one laptop for every five enrollments per ship, if needed, and as agreed upon by command and institution. A standard library loan card will be provided with the laptop to enable the ESO to track the computer while onboard the ship. Other delivery media may be considered at the institution’s discretion if requested by the ship’s ESO.

   (1) In the event that a laptop is lost, the shipboard ESO will conduct an investigation to determine the disposition of the computer. If it was stolen or intentionally destroyed by someone on board the ship, the ship’s Commanding Officer will take appropriate action. In this case, the institution will write off the loss. Should a ship develop a pattern of losing laptops, the institution in consultation with the CGI may opt not to provide laptops to the ship in question.

F. Ensure all required course materials are available for purchase from an on-line bookstore and pertinent information on the acquisition of required materials is communicated in the Shipboard Registration Packet. The Registration Packet shall be provided to all shipboard Commanding Officers or the designated ESO.

G. Provide grade reports for members using tuition assistance to the Naval Education and Training Professional Development and Technology Center (Code N6) within 30 days of course completion.

H. Work with the SOCCOAST Director to ensure all undergraduate programs offered afloat are fully integrated in the SOCCOAST system. As outlined in the SOCCOAST contract the integration of all coursework is the responsibility of SOC.

I. Work with the CGI in ensuring information on applicable degree programs is contained in the Automated Degree Planning program and that the embedded academic codes are as accurate as possible. (See paragraph 7, section D, E, and F for additional information.) The institutional representatives will provide the CGI with information concerning changes to degree plans at least 90 days prior to the effective date of the change to allow time to change the computer program.

6. SUPPORT FROM THE CGI

The CGI Voluntary Education Department (CGI/VE) shall provide services to the USCG members' educational support including, but not limited to, advisement and counseling, academic evaluation and degree plan formulation, tuition assistance, and college video/audio course enrollment. Specific to this program the CGI will provide ESOs with policy and procedures for implementing the program. Forms necessary to support the program will be provided to include:

[Signature]

CGI/VE/Ed ( ), UWF ( ) agree to the proposal reflected on this page of this Memorandum of Understanding.
A. **SOCCOAST Afloat Unit Enrollment Form** (CGI Form 1560/11). The form will contain all information required for class registration and serve as a transmittal to the Partnership Institution.

7. **ADMINISTRATION**

A. **Accreditation**

All institutions included in this MOU agree to maintain regional accreditation and to notify the CGI within three working days of any changes to accreditation status. Loss of accreditation will result in termination of support, as outlined in this MOU, so as to preserve the transferability and recognition of credit earned by students from the USCG community.

B. **Degree Requirements**

Specific requirements for degrees selected for partnership are described in the institution’s catalog, and, for undergraduate programs, listed in the SOCCOAST Handbooks. Students shall be allowed to complete their programs under the requirements listed in the institution’s catalog in effect at the time the student received his/her initial SOCCOAST Student Agreement. If a time limit is imposed for completion of the degree program using that catalog, the institution shall ensure that limitation is listed on its College Information Page in Section 4 of the SOCCOAST Handbook. Curriculum changes have a direct impact on students’ efforts to complete their programs and the degree planning service provided by the CGI. Should a curriculum change be required, SOCCOAST Afloat institutional partners agree to provide the CGI all pertinent information 90-days prior to effective date to provide for database updates and to allow dissemination of the information to students seeking to complete the current curriculum requirements specified in the SOCCOAST Student Agreement.

According to each institution’s policies, completion of the general education component of the degree(s) may be met by using the college-level testing program sponsored by DANTES and available through USCG DANTES Test Control Officers at USCG units free-of-charge.

C. **Education Assessment**

CGI has direct access to the electronic personnel data for USCG personnel. This enables instant access to the information to facilitate the formation of electronic education records. Historical information and documentation provided by members who served in other branches of the service prior to entering the USCG enables CGI counselors to update this record to depict the ACE recommendations for the complete multi-service background. Counselors at the CGI will also enter into the system the credits listed on transcripts from regionally accredited college and universities submitted for consideration. Receipt of official transcripts from all accredited institutions is required by the Partnership Institution prior to issuing SOCCOAST student agreements.

D. **Embedded Codes**

Speed in processing electronic education assessments and automated degree planning is very important. Embedded codes are the key to seamless merging of the electronic education record into degree plans. Every credit recommendation from every military exhibit in the

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ACE Guides has a string of codes added by the CGI to identify the proper placement of the credit relative to the various degree requirements. Similarly, the historical record of all college-level examinations is also encoded in the resident database. CGI and the institutional partners identified in this MOU will work together on his effort.

E. Identification of Appropriate Embedded Code

It is the responsibility of the institutional partner to define the embedded code that is appropriate for each credit line in the ACE Guides. The CGI shall provide a listing of credit lines that may be considered a designation other than FE (non-Liberal Arts free elective). The institutional representative or their designee shall determine the primary and secondary codes for these credit lines and shall forward this information to the CGI. As periodic updates to the ACE Guides are released, new credit lines, which are in question, shall be forwarded to the institutional POC for determination.

F. Automated Degree Planning via Computer-Facilitated Data Merging

When an electronic education record is formulated, the exhibits and college level examinations listed on the individual’s record are activated for merging. College courses taken through regionally accredited colleges, as indicated on transcripts provided to CGI will be entered into the record and manually encoded by the CGI counseling staff. Upon completion, depressing the appropriate degree plan selection icon and the merge icon will then copy the encoded credit lines from the electronic education record to the degree plans effortlessly. At that point, the counselor has the ability to edit the degree plans, as necessary to facilitate optimal placement.

G. Record Keeping and Long-Term Counseling Support

The electronic records of the students shall remain active with counseling services provided for as long as the member continues to serve in good standing with the USCG. Although the records and transcripts will still be provided to the members after they retire or separate, counseling support from the CGI will no longer be available. The institutional partners will continue to work with members who were enrolled in their degree program prior to retirement or separation.

H. Fees

Administrative fees to the USCG community will not exceed fees charged to the Department of Defense or the general public. No additional administrative fees will be incurred by the USCG or the member as a result of this MOU.

I. Admissions Requirements

The non-discriminatory statement found in institutional catalogs applies to all degree programs offered by the institutional partners.

J. Acceptance of Military Credit and College Testing

Military credits and DANTES examination program credits will be applied toward degree requirements, as specified in the SOCCOAST criterion.

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K. Course Transfer and Matriculation Policy

In compliance with the SOCCOAST criterion, students are allowed to transfer courses from other regionally accredited colleges.

L. Administrative Support

Quarterly, institutional partners will provide CGI/VE with a complete listing of currently enrolled students and graduates from the USCG community for information and reporting purposes.

M. Program Outreach

All costs for production of brochures, posters, information packets, marketing CDs, and other similar material will be the responsibility of each Partnership Institution. CGI shall disseminate information about the Partnership Institutions and the SOCCOAST Afloat program to ESOs at afloat units. The CGI will also provide the Partnership Institutions addresses or mailing labels of USCG afloat units for dissemination of ESO Registration Packets and other appropriate materials.

CGI may present information on the SOCCOAST Afloat program in publications such as the “Campus News” as a statement of fact so as to inform members of the USCG community of this educational partnership. These articles may only be placed in regularly scheduled periodicals.

Annually, the CGI provides training and indoctrination on educational programs, benefits, and support services to some 590 collateral duty ESOs. This workshop is usually held in Oklahoma City, OK but the location may vary and be combined with other training. SOCCOAST Afloat Partnership Institutions may request permission to have a representative attend select events so as to disseminate information on the programs offered. CGI/VE may provide dates of such events to the points of contact identified in this MOU.

N. Use of Logos / Trademark Permission

SOCCOAST Afloat Partnership Institutions agree to allow the CGI use of their institution’s logos and names bearing the name on internally created publications, periodicals, posters, website pages, and degree plans when disseminating information regarding the partnership. Logos will be used in accordance with specification of the partnership institution or the CGI. Incorrect use of the logo will require immediate removal of said logo.

Similarly, CGI agrees to allow the SOCCOAST Afloat Partnership Institutions to mention the partnership in their publications in a statement-of-fact manner, not allowing any insinuation or inference that the institution was qualitatively selected from a pool of competing institutions.

O. Indemnification

Partnership Institutions expressly each agree to hold harmless, and defend at their own cost to the extent permitted by law, the U.S. Government, the CGI and its employees, USCG service members, dependents, and civil service employees against any and all claims or actions arising out of damage or injury (including death) to persons or property caused by or sustained in connection with educational support activities and services provided under the
provisions of this MOU by each said individual indemnifying institution, provided such claims or actions are not attributable to the actions of the USCG, or its agents.

The CGI expressly agrees to hold harmless and defend at its own cost to the extent permitted by law each of the Partnership Institutions, their respective Governing Boards, officers, agents, employees, and representatives, against any and all claims or actions arising out of damage or injury (including death) to persons or property caused or sustained in connection with the educational support activities and services provided under the provisions as outlined in this MOU, arising from the breach of this MOU or by any other actions of CGI, the U.S. Government, or their employees, USCG service members, dependents and civil services employees.

P. Responsible Parties:

On behalf of the Coast Guard, the Director of the USCG Voluntary Education Services at the CGI shall administer this MOU.

On behalf of the University of West Florida, Dr Pamela Northrup, shall administer this MOU, as designated by the institution’s president.

On behalf of Coastline Community College, Mr. Edward McKenney shall administer this MOU, as designated by the institution’s president.

On behalf of Florida Community College at Jacksonville, Mr. Mike Sowards shall administer this MOU, as designated by the institution’s president.

On behalf of Fort Hays State University, Ms. Cindy Elliott shall administer this MOU, as designated by the institution’s president.

On behalf of Excelsior College, Ms. Susan Dewan shall administer this MOU, as designated by the institution’s president.

On behalf of Governors State University, Ms. Judith Gustawson shall administer this MOU, as designated by the institution’s president.

On behalf of the University of Oklahoma, Mr. Don Toney shall administer this MOU, as designated by the institution’s president.

On behalf of the Old Dominion University, Mr. David Chase, shall administer this MOU, as designated by the institution’s president.

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