



Department of Defense INSTRUCTION

NUMBER 5545.04

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USD(P&R)

SUBJECT: Policy on the Congressional Reporting Process for Military Educational Institutions Seeking to Establish, Modify, or Redesignate Degrees

- References:**
- (a) DoD Directive 5124.02, "Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R))," June 23, 2008
 - (b) Sections 2161, 2163, 4314, 4321, 7048, 7101, 7102, 9314, and 9317 of title 10, United States Code
 - (c) Letter from Director, Bureau of the Budget, to Secretary, Health, Education, and Welfare, "Federal Policy Governing the Granting of Academic Degrees by Federal Agencies and Institutions," December 23, 1954
 - (d) Section 1011c of title 20, United States Code

1. **PURPOSE.** In accordance with the authority in References (a) and (b), this Instruction establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and prescribes procedures for the Congressional reporting process for specified military educational institutions as they establish, modify, or redesignate degree(s). Throughout this Instruction, the use of the term "degree" shall refer to a graduate or undergraduate degree from these institutions.

2. **APPLICABILITY.** This Instruction applies to OSD, the Military Departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the DoD (hereinafter referred to collectively as the "DoD Components").

3. **DEFINITIONS.** See Glossary.

4. **POLICY.** It is DoD policy that the military educational institutions covered by this Instruction, and as defined in the Glossary, are encouraged to establish and revise curricula and disciplines as required to meet the needs of the Military Services and shall only establish, modify, or redesignate degrees after the Secretary of Education has recommended approval of the degree program, the institution is accredited by the appropriate civilian academic accrediting

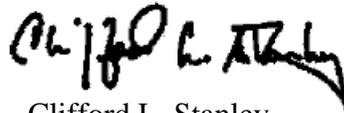
agency or organization to award the degree, and the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness formally informs the military educational institution that the appropriate documentation has been submitted to the Congress.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES. See Enclosure 1.

6. PROCEDURES. See Enclosure 2.

7. RELEASABILITY. UNLIMITED. This Instruction is approved for public release and is available on the Internet from the DoD Issuances Website at <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives>.

8. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Instruction is effective upon its publication to the DoD Issuances Website.



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Enclosures

1. Responsibilities
 2. Procedures
 3. Relationship of Non-Department of Defense Participating Entities
- Glossary

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ENCLOSURE 1: RESPONSIBILITIES.....4

 PRINCIPAL DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND
 READINESS (PDUSD(P&R)).....4

 HEADS OF THE DoD OR OSD COMPONENTS WITH OVERSIGHT OF MILITARY
 EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS4

ENCLOSURE 2: PROCEDURES.....5

 NEW DEGREES5

 MODIFICATION OR REDESIGNATION OF DEGREES5

 REFUSAL OF ACCREDITATION6

ENCLOSURE 3: RELATIONSHIPS OF NON-DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
PARTICIPATING ENTITIES.....7

GLOSSARY8

 PART I. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS8

 PART II. DEFINITIONS.....8

ENCLOSURE 1

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. PRINCIPAL DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS (PDUSD(P&R)). The PDUSD(P&R) under the authority, direction, and control of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness shall:

a. Oversee the notification of the Senate Armed Services Committee and House Armed Services Committee when military educational institutions seek to establish new, modified, or redesignated degree-granting authorities.

b. Oversee notification of the Senate Armed Services Committee and House Armed Services Committee of any action by an appropriate academic accrediting agency or organization not to accredit a military educational institution to award any new or existing degree. Notification to these Committees will include an explanation of the action by the appropriate academic accrediting agency or organization not to accredit.

c. Oversee the implementation of the procedures in this Instruction.

d. Notify the Secretary of the Military Department concerned, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, or the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, as applicable, when the letter notifying the Senate Armed Services Committee and House Armed Services Committee has been delivered to fulfill statutory notification requirements for new, modified, or redesignated degree-granting authorities, or for any action by an appropriate academic accrediting agency or organization not to accredit a military educational institution to award any new or existing degree.

2. HEADS OF DoD OR OSD COMPONENTS WITH OVERSIGHT OF MILITARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS. The Heads of DoD or OSD Components with oversight of military educational institutions shall:

a. Ensure that the documentation described in Enclosure 2 is submitted to the PDUSD(P&R) for military educational institutions under their purview to enable Congressional notification when a military educational institution is establishing, modifying, or redesignating degrees.

b. Ensure that military educational institutions under their purview do not grant new, modified, or redesignated degrees until the PDUSD(P&R) has informed the head of the relevant Component that appropriate notification has been made to the House and Senate Armed Services Committees. In turn the head of the relevant Component will notify the presidents of the affected military educational institution.

c. Ensure that, in the event that an academic accrediting agency or organization elects not to accredit a military educational institution under their purview to award a new or existing degree, the relevant component submits a memorandum summarizing the issue and recommending remedial actions to the PDUSD(P&R).

ENCLOSURE 2

PROCEDURES

1. NEW DEGREES

a. When seeking to establish a new degree-granting authority, the Secretary of the Military Department concerned, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, or the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, as applicable, shall:

(1) Submit to the Department of Education's (DoEd) National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) the self-assessment questionnaire required by the Federal Policy Governing the Granting of Academic Degrees by Federal Agencies and Institutions (Reference (c)). Submit to the appropriate accrediting agency the required substantive change or other documentation required for new degrees.

(2) New degrees must be approved by the U.S. DoEd as well as the appropriate accrediting agency for the institution in question. Within 60 days of receipt of the DoEd determination regarding the establishment of the new degree-granting authority, submit to the PDUSD(P&R) a memorandum requesting notification of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees along with the self-assessment questionnaire and subsequent recommendations and comments of the DoEd and the appropriate academic accrediting agency.

b. The PDUSD(P&R) will coordinate all documentation to be delivered to the House and Senate Armed Services Committees with the Joint Staff, and summarize coordination results in a letter notifying these Committees as required in accordance with Reference (b). Courtesy copies of the notification letter will be provided to the DoD or OSD Component Head and the affected institution as formal communication that the statutory requirement was completed.

c. Upon receipt of the copies of the notification letter by the DoD or OSD Component Head, the affected institution may award the new degree.

2. MODIFICATION OR REDESIGNATION OF DEGREES

a. When seeking to modify or redesignate an existing degree-granting authority, the Secretary of the Military Department concerned, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, or the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, as applicable, shall:

(1) Submit to the PDUSD(P&R) and DoEd a copy of the substantive change request, or equivalent documentation as required by the applicable accrediting agency, for modified or redesignated degrees within 60 days of its submission to the applicable accrediting agency.

(2) Submit to the PDUSD(P&R) any subsequent recommendation of the Secretary of Education on the proposed modification or redesignation within 60 days of receipt from the DoEd.

b. Military educational institutions shall not award modified or redesignated degrees until the PDUSD(P&R) informs the DoD or OSD Component Head that the notification has been delivered to House and Senate Armed Services Committees. Notification to these Committees will consist of a copy of the substantive change request and a copy of the subsequent recommendation from the Secretary of Education.

c. Military educational institutions are encouraged to communicate with the Office of the Executive Director of the NACIQI and the appropriate academic agency if there are concerns or questions with regard to what constitutes a substantive change to degree programs.

3. REFUSAL OF ACCREDITATION. In the event that the appropriate academic accrediting agency or organization opts not to accredit a military educational institution to award a new degree or accredit the modification or redesignation of an existing degree, the Secretary of the Military Department concerned, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, or the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, as applicable, shall submit a memorandum to the PDUSD(P&R) within 90 days containing a summary of the issue and corrective actions. The PDUSD(P&R) will send a notification to House and Senate Armed Services Committees consisting of an explanation of the action by the appropriate academic accrediting agency or organization not to accredit the degree.

ENCLOSURE 3

RELATIONSHIPS OF NON-DoD PARTICIPATING ENTITIES

1. The DoEd is an agency of the Federal Government that outlines the standards of higher education. It provides the criteria and certification for accrediting agencies or organizations.

2. NACIQI provides recommendations to the Secretary of Education regarding the recognition of accrediting agencies as reliable authorities concerning the quality of education and training offered by postsecondary educational institutions and programs. NACIQI was established by section 1011c of title 20, United States Code (Reference (d)), and is composed of 18 members, six appointed by the Secretary of Education, six appointed by Speaker of the House of Representatives, and six appointed by the President pro tempore of the Senate. This committee advises the Secretary of Education on matters concerning accreditation, and the eligibility and certification process for institutions of higher education.

GLOSSARY

PART I. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DoEd	Department of Education
NACIQI	National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity
PDUSD(P&R)	Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

PART II. DEFINITIONS

These terms and their definitions are for the purpose of this Instruction.

degree modification. Any change to a degree program that would initiate notification to an accrediting agency. This includes, but is not limited to, change in delivery method, addition of courses offered at a degree level above that which is included in the institution's current accreditation, change to location where degree is offered, change in credit hour calculation, and substantially increasing or decreasing the length of hours of a degree program. The basic trigger for determining a degree modification is whether the academic accrediting agency believes the changes require a new accreditation by the agency or organization. Altering the curriculum by substituting one course for a more current course that does not alter the degree itself, or minor changes in the curriculum to adjust the program to meet current needs of the Service that do not alter the type or requirements of the degree, are not considered degree modifications.

degree redesignation. A change in classification of a degree program. This includes name change of a degree program, change in type of degree (e.g. Master of Arts degree to Master of Science), and transition of a degree program from one school to another.

military educational institutions. National Defense Intelligence College, National Defense University, United States Army Command and General Staff College, United States Army War College, United States Naval Postgraduate School, Naval War College, Marine Corps University, United States Air Force Institute of Technology, and Air University.

self-assessment questionnaire. A document required by the NACIQI in accordance with Reference (c) when an educational institution seeks to establish a new degree-granting authority.

substantive change request. A concise analysis detailing a request to make changes to a degree program. A substantive change request typically consists of an executive summary, a statement regarding the need to make changes to the degree, analysis of the impact of the proposed change on the rest of the institution, any financial impacts of the proposed change, and legal authorization to conduct the program if required.