

WOSC and WOSSC redesign

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There has been a great deal of discussion concerning the Warrant Officer Staff Course (WOSC) and Warrant Officer Senior Staff Course (WOSSC) redesign. In fact, on numerous occasions I have heard how it is the most significant change in Warrant Officer Professional Military Education (PME) in the last two decades. If you are like me, you are probably wondering what that really means and how it affects the WO cohort. Allow me to take a moment of your time and provide you with a quick overview of the course redesign.

Let me start by addressing the two courses prior to redesign. Many of you will remember when the WOSC and WOSSC were nothing more than a series of update briefings. These briefings although informative at times truly failed to adequately promote the level of critical and creative thinking required of today's Warrant Officers. In actuality, this style of course did nothing more than qualify as a training event rather than an educational opportunity. Generally speaking I think we can agree that relying solely on briefing style instruction falls short in many aspects and is consumed by inadequacies. Now, let that sink in for a moment...are you beginning to see how important and absolutely necessary the course redesign really was?

The redesigned WOSC has evolved toward a multi-phase course that includes a mandatory distributed learning (dL) nonresident phase that mirrors many college dL courses and a five-week resident phase (an increase of one week). Additionally, selected branch proponent schools will provide a subsequent phase addressing branch specific education and technical training requirements. The WOSC provides CW3s and CW4s intermediate level PME to prepare them to function as staff officers, trainers, systems integrators-managers, influential leaders and advisors at the tactical and operational levels of the Army and joint, interagency, intergovernmental, multinational (JIIM) organizations executing full spectrum operations (FSO).

The redesigned WOSSC will also become a multi-phase course with a dL component and a resident phase that increases in length from two to four weeks. The WOSSC's educational goal is to equip Warrant Officers nearing promotion to CW5 with the knowledge and influential leadership skills necessary to apply their technical expertise to more effectively support senior leaders on strategic or upper operational level staffs in a JIIM environment in support of FSO. The increased length of the resident phase will provide students a better comprehension of the considerations that are part of strategic level operations, to include providing them an understanding of the basis for many decisions made at that level.

As part of the redesign process the Warrant Officer Career College (WOCC) conducted pilot courses to validate the course material and method of instruction. One of the most significant changes (other than course material) was in the method of instruction where the organization has progressed towards more of an adult learning model that relies heavily on student participation. The paradigm shift enables the students to share experiences through open dialogue, case studies, and practical exercise, which ultimately enhance every student's professional growth.

As you absorb the information above please keep in mind that the execution of the pilot courses is only one of several steps necessary to fully institute the new courses. Currently, the WOCC leadership, academic advisors, training developers, instructors, and course writers are fully engaged in refining the course material to ensure that the information provided is on point, applicable, and ready for public consumption come 1st QTR FY 11, which is when the transformation process is complete and the new courses are fully functioning.

To close, if you are looking for a foot stomping training experience then the newly redesigned WOSC and WOSSC are not for you. I can honestly say that WOCC has put forth a tremendous effort in redefining both of these courses to ensure that today's Warrant Officers are better prepared for their ever-changing roles. It should go without saying that the overall intent of the course redesign is maintaining a relevant, continuous and progressive education program for warrant officers.

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