



**AIR UNIVERSITY  
ONLINE MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM**



**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**15 Oct 2021**

**NOTE:** This handbook supersedes previous versions. Please review this handbook in its entirety.

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## **1. ABOUT THE PROGRAM**

### **1.1. INTRODUCTION**

The Air University (AU) Online Master's Program (OLMP) expands on the existing foundation of AU resident educational programs to provide an opportunity for a much broader audience while adhering to the same educational standards found in AU resident schools and graduate-level educational programs. Graduates of the OLMP earn a Master of Military Operational Art and Science degree. In addition to the award of the degree, graduates who successfully complete certain approved concentrations of study (see appendices) may be eligible for the award of additional benefits such as Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) Phase I or Intermediate Developmental Education (IDE) credit.

Although the learning outcomes and end products are similar to those found in AU graduate-level resident programs, the educational approach is somewhat different because the program is online. Asynchronous online discussions replace the seminar discussions that are a distinguishing characteristic of the resident courses. Like resident programs, however, exercises, individual written assignments, and a few group presentations serve to assess the degree to which learning objectives are met. Another commonality with AU resident graduate-level programs is instructor quality. In the OLMP, students are guided by credentialed instructors, hand-picked for their academic expertise and/or operational experience. Enrollment in the OLMP is strictly voluntary.

### **1.2. ACCREDITATION**

Air University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Thus, all OLMP graduates earn an accredited Master of Military Operational Art and Science degree and will receive a diploma. However, only one degree and diploma will be awarded regardless of the completion of courses in more than one concentration of study.

### **1.3. TUITION AND FEES**

There are no tuition costs associated with the OLMP and no Active Duty Service Commitments; however, students are responsible for all costs associated with their personal internet access and computer equipment. Additionally, while the majority of course materials are furnished online, students are expected to pay for any text books or equipment used in the program. This amount will vary by course.

NOTE: Since the OLMP incurs no tuition costs and students are not permitted to exceed 6 credit hours of study in any give term, waiver letters to approve deferment of student loans incurred from previous programs or institutions are not authorized.

### **1.4. PROGRAM**

#### **1.4.1. ELIGIBILITY**

Refer to AFI 36-2670, *Total Force Development*, 25 June 2020, Tables 3.1 and 3.2 for detailed eligibility requirements.

Civilians in the Department of the Air Force from grades GS-12 and GS-13 who have not already completed a master's degree may apply and could be competitively selected to enroll in the program. Air Force civilians should contact their local civilian personnel office if interested in consideration.

<https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/GCPME/OLMP/Eligibility/>

### **1.4.2. PROGRAM FLOW**

A student has up to 5 years from the start date of his or her first course to complete the program. Although the typical student can complete the program in 22 months, the program is rigorous and requires a significant time commitment to meet that goal. The program consists of Required core courses and Degree Program concentration courses.

### **1.4.3. REQUIRED CORE COURSES**

The following is a list of the required core courses and corresponding semester hours in the OLMP:

Orientation Program – (Noncredit)  
Leadership and Warfare – (3 Semester Hours)  
International Security Studies – (3 Semester Hours)  
Warfare Studies – (3 Semester Hours)  
Airpower Studies – (3 Semester Hours)  
Research/Elective 1 – (3 Semester Hours)  
Research/Elective 2 – (3 Semester Hours)

Note: The above listing is not a suggested sequence of courses.

A detailed description of the above courses can be found online at <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Academic-Affairs/> by clicking on Air University Catalog link in the lower right side menu on that page.

In the ASU learning environment, students may review course descriptions and access the syllabus via the student portal by clicking the “View details” link on the course card.

### **1.4.4. DEGREE PROGRAM CONCENTRATIONS**

Degree program concentrations consist of 12 semester hours of coursework in addition to the required core courses listed above in section 1.4.1. Descriptions of the available degree program concentrations, eligibility requirements and their associated courses can be found online at the following links:

<https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Academic-Affairs/> (click on the “Air University Catalog” link in the lower right side menu on that page).

### **1.4.5. PREREQUISITES COURSES**

There are three prerequisite courses within OLMP:

1. All newly admitted students must register for and successfully complete the Orientation Course (OC 5510) prior to registering for any other courses.
2. The Research Elective consists of two parts. Students must successfully complete Research Elective Part I (RE 5610) before registering and enrolling in Research Elective Part II (RE 5611).
3. Students enrolled in the Joint Warfare Concentration must successfully complete Joint Planning (JP 5510) prior to registering and enrolling in Joint Air Operations (JA 5510).

#### **1.4.6. RESEARCH**

The Research courses require students to develop a credible paper delving into an issue relevant to modern warfighters. These are challenging courses. Experience has shown that students should not take the time-intensive Research/Elective 1 as their first course in the OLMP but should allow themselves some time to become reacquainted with the rigors of academic writing, as well as some exposure to courseware that might stimulate pertinent research efforts. **Prior to beginning the Research/Elective 1 course students should have already selected a research topic of interest as there is insufficient time during the course to find a topic** (links to research topics for student consideration are provided on the Air University OLMP webpage at <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/eSchool/OLMP/> by clicking on the Research Topics icon). Conversely, students who wait too late in their program to begin their research effort will find there is insufficient time to conduct their research and develop their final project. Ideally, Research/Elective 1 should be taken as the third, fourth, or fifth course in the program, and Research/Elective 2 taken at least two courses later. In no instance should Research/Elective 1 immediately precede Research/Elective 2 as this back-to-back approach affords students little time for research and reflection. Experience has shown students pursuing this path have a difficult time creating an acceptable final project.

## **2. STUDENT EXPECTATIONS**

### **2.1. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS**

#### **2.1.1. COMPUTER SKILLS**

Participants must possess at least an intermediate level of computing skills, including the ability to: organize and manage files and folders in the operating system of choice; receive and submit electronic course materials; use a word-processing program effectively; send and receive e-mail (including attachments); download and execute files from the Internet; install and update software and browser plug-ins; and interact with new graphical user interfaces.

#### **2.1.2. HARDWARE/SOFTWARE**

A valid DoD-issued Common Access Card (CAC) and CAC reader are necessary to access AU Portal for initial enrollment in the program. After initial program enrollment, students can access course registration, all courseware, and student support via <https://au.asu.edu/portal/> on a personal computer (recommended) with your username and password.

Use of a personal computer is highly recommended for completing this program. Due to the nature of the .mil firewalls, accessing Canvas from a .mil computer/ domain is not always possible and/ or functionality can be lost.

A high-speed internet connection (for personal computer users).

## **2.2. ENROLLMENT/WITHDRAWAL**

Student OLMP Enrollment request is submitted on AU Portal:

<https://www.my.af.mil/aurepmprod/auportal/>.

Once enrolled and onboarded into the program, all activities (course registration, course access, and help ticket functions) will be accessed via single sign-on:

<https://au.asu.edu/portal/>

### **2.2.1. UTILIZATION AND TRANSFER OF COURSE CREDIT**

Because of its unique nature, the OLMP will not accept any transfer credits from the ACSC DL (non-master's) program or any other civilian or military program. Students who withdraw from the program and return may retain credit for previously completed OLMP courses so long as those completed courses are not outdated by the current AU course catalog. Students who want to withdraw and transfer to the non-master's program need to contact Student Services and their coursework completed in the OLMP will be evaluated for equivalency in the non-master's program. Students who desire to transfer credits to a civilian institution should consult with the registrar at that institution for guidance. It is up to the receiving institution to determine how much credit is allowed, and which courses are applicable in its own degree programs. For additional information on transfer credit rules and procedures, contact Student Services.

### **2.2.2. COURSE ENROLLMENT**

Registration for all courses is performed using the ASU Student Portal at <https://au.asu.edu/portal/>. After clicking the link, students will be prompted to login to the ASU Student portal. Once in the portal scroll to the desired class and select "Register". Students **MUST** register for one course at a time for the first **THREE** courses not counting Orientation. Students may register for **UP TO TWO** courses (dual-registration) in subsequent terms provided they have already successfully completed three courses, the pre-requisites are met, are in good academic standing, and there is sufficient course capacity to allow it. Based on academic standing or program capacity, AU may limit dual-registration, as appropriate.

#### **2.2.2.1. REGISTRATION WINDOW**

Registration for courses takes place during the published Registration Window for each term. Normally, the Registration Window closes three weeks prior to the start of the term. When that window closes, the registration for the following term opens immediately and runs until three weeks prior to the start of the following term. Refer to the OLMP Academic Calendar at <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/eschool/schedules> for the Registration Window for upcoming academic terms.

#### **2.2.2.2. LATE REGISTRATION**

Based on the number of students already registered for a particular course, in some cases it ***MAY*** be possible for students to enter a course after the registration window is closed. After the registration window has closed, students may submit a help ticket to Student Services on ASU systems by logging into the Student Portal and selecting Support on the left panel or by

going to <https://au.asu.edu/portal/support>. (No student administrative actions can occur on a weekend.) Because the courses are only 8 weeks long and are very demanding, students entering a course after the start of the term are at a severe disadvantage. Student Services ***MAY*** entertain exceptions to this policy when warranted by very unusual circumstances; however, students should factor personal and professional commitments into their decisions before registering for courses. Deployments, extended TDYs, personal leaves, etc., can undermine a student's ability to successfully complete a course.

### **2.2.3. COURSE CONTENT DELIVERY**

In the ASU learning environment, Canvas is used to host OLMP courseware and related information.

#### **2.2.3.1. COURSE MATERIALS**

All course materials listed in the course syllabi, with the exception of student purchased textbooks, are available in Canvas. Instructors use Canvas to guide seminar discussions, accept assignments, provide feedback, post grades, communicate course information, and answer questions. Direct any course content related questions, or the administration of course content, to the course instructor (CI). Some of the material in courses may be protected by copyright. AU has purchased rights to use this material in its courses in lieu of establishing a requirement for students to purchase a large number of textbooks. This material may be used only while a course is available online, and may not be used for any purposes outside of the OLMP. Many of these items are available for continued use through the Air University LIBRARY link within each Canvas course and from the AU Help tab on the left Canvas menu.

#### **2.2.3.2. COURSE AVAILABILITY**

Students typically receive access to their course on Canvas approximately 7 days prior to the course start date. (Note: programmatic updates sometimes require a reduced pre-course access period, although in all instances ACSC DL seeks to minimize the impact of technological upgrades and maintenance on its students and instructors.)

### **2.2.4. COURSE WITHDRAWAL**

#### **2.2.4.1. STUDENT-INITIATED WITHDRAWAL**

After the start of the academic term, students have until midnight (Central Standard Time) on the last day of the 3rd week to withdraw from a course with the grade of Withdrawal Passing (WP) or Withdrawal Failing (WF). The student will be awarded a WP or WF is based on the student's performance in the class up to the date of the course withdrawal. Starting on the first day of week 4 requests for withdrawal will be considered as a course termination, all unfinished/remaining assignments will be graded out with zeroes and the final course grade will be calculated accordingly. Exceptions to policy may be granted by the Chief of Academic Affairs on a Case by Case Basis. Receiving a grade of WP or WF will NOT affect the student's grade point average (GPA). However, students who receive more than three combined WP, WF or WN



grades or more than one WN grade will be academically suspended (see section 2.2.5.6) from the OLMP. To initiate a course withdrawal, please log onto <https://au.asu.edu/portal/support>. Once logged into the help ticket website you may call, initiate a chat or email to create and route the request.

Please include the following information:

1. Full Name/Rank: (Include middle initial)
2. Course/offering/term to drop: (e.g. NS-5510/offering 01-02/Fall B)
3. Service component: (Active Duty, Guard, Reserve and Service, if other than Air Force)
4. Reason for withdrawing
5. Do you intend to enroll in courses at a later date? (YES/NO)
6. Do you wish to disenroll completely from the program? (YES/NO)

#### **2.2.4.2. ADMINISTRATIVE WITHDRAWAL**

Students are administratively withdrawn from their courses when they are enrolled in a course but do not actively participate in course activities or fail to complete assignments (without prior coordination with the instructor). Inactivity is determined by lack of participation in all course deliverables during the first three weeks of the course. Inactivity will be determined by the instructor who will initiate administrative withdraw from class. Students who are administratively withdrawn from class will receive a grade of Withdraw No Progress (WN).

Students who receive more than one WN grade will be administratively suspended (see section 2.2.5.6) from the OLMP.

#### **2.2.5. PROGRAM WITHDRAWAL**

##### **2.2.5.1. STUDENT INITIATED WITHDRAWAL**

Students who choose not to continue in the program may formally withdraw by submitting the information outlined below to Student Services. Students who withdraw from the program and later return are subject to the OLMP requirements listed in the latest AU catalog. To withdraw from the program, please log onto <https://au.asu.edu/portal/support>. Once logged into the portal you may call, initiate a chat or email to create and route the request.

Please provide the following information:

1. Full Name/Rank: (Include middle initial)
2. Effective Term of Withdrawal (e.g. Fall B)
3. Course(s) Currently Enrolled (e.g. NS 5510-Fall A) and Section Number
4. Service component: (Active Duty, Guard, Reserve and Service, if other than Air Force)
5. Reason for withdrawing from the program
6. Do you currently possess a Master's degree or higher? (YES/NO)
7. Have you completed your IDE by any other method? (YES/NO)
8. Were you identified as an IDE select when promoted to O-4? (YES/NO)

##### **2.2.5.2. ADMINISTRATIVE WITHDRAWAL**

Students are expected to progress steadily through the OLMP once they are admitted to the program. However, Student Services will monitor student

enrollment to ensure there are no “major gaps” in registrations. Major gaps occur when a student has not successfully completed a course within the last academic year or has not successfully completed a course within 6 months of admission.

Students may be withdrawn from the program under these conditions.

Students requesting reinstatement must submit a help ticket through <https://au.asu.edu/portal/support> with a memorandum endorsed by the student’s commander (or civilian equivalent) requesting reinstatement to the program.

### **2.2.5.3. SUMMARY DISENROLLMENT**

This procedure, as described in Air University Instruction 36-2302, *AU Operations*, available at: <https://static.e-publishing.af.mil/production/1/au/publication/au36-2602/au36-2602.pdf> may be used to remove a student from the program when student misconduct is involved.

### **2.2.5.4. ADMINISTRATIVE HOLD**

Students are expected to uphold Air University standards of professional and academic conduct. Any student who is undergoing a review board or investigative proceedings related to unprofessional conduct or academic misconduct may be placed in an administrative hold status. While in this status, students will not be allowed to enroll in any courses until the proceeding is fully resolved and a course of action is determined. Additionally, students may be removed from any current course in which they are enrolled pending the investigation results.

### **2.2.5.5. ACADEMIC PROBATION**

Students whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 are placed on academic probation. Students have the next two 8-week terms, in which they have earned credit hours, to bring their cumulative GPA up to 3.0. Students who fail to meet the 3.0 GPA requirement after the end of the probationary period are placed on academic suspension (see section 2.2.5.6.). Students who successfully come off probation and whose cumulative GPA later again falls below 3.0 are immediately placed on academic suspension. When placed on academic probation, the Chief of Academic Affairs will notify the student in writing informing them of their academic standing.

### **2.2.5.6. ACADEMIC SUSPENSION**

Students are academically suspended from the program for any of the following:

- If placed on academic probation, failing to achieve a 3.0 GPA by the end of the probationary period
- Failing to maintain a 3.0 GPA after successful removal from probation
- Receiving more than one WN grade
- Receiving more than three of either WP or WF or WN grades or a combination thereof

Students suspended for failing to achieve a 3.0 GPA by the end of the probationary period, or failing to maintain a 3.0 GPA after removal from

probation, and desiring reentry into the program must petition to be reinstated by submitting a letter of request to the Dean, eSchool of Graduate PME. In addition to requesting re-admittance to the program, the student must provide two letters of recommendation from online instructors stating the student's work quality and level of effort are worthy of reinstatement. Students suspended for receiving more than one WN grade or more than three of either WP or WF or WN grades or a combination thereof must petition to be reinstated by submitting a letter of request, endorsed by their squadron commander (or equivalent), to the Dean, eSchool of Graduate PME, explaining any extraordinary circumstances that justified the withdrawal from the last course; the commander's endorsement must include a statement that he/she has counseled the individual on the importance of taking these courses seriously, to avoid wasting the money that the government spends for these courses.

If a readmitted student receives another WN, WP, or WF grade, the level of endorsement goes up to the first O-6 (or equivalent) in the student's chain of command and the Dean, eSchool of Graduate PME, may consider permanently dismissing the student from the program. Once re-admitted a second time, the student will be permanently dismissed from the program upon receiving another WN, WP, or WF grade.

Students who are suspended and are not reinstated within 3 terms will be administratively withdrawn from the program.

#### **2.2.5.7. ACADEMIC DISMISSAL**

Academic dismissal can occur at any time during the program. Students are dismissed from the program for receiving a third unsatisfactory grade (D or F) or violating ACSC's integrity policy which also includes cheating on an evaluation or acts of plagiarism.

## **2.2.6. PROGRAM COMPLETION**

### **2.2.6.1. GRADUATION**

To receive their diploma, students must submit a graduation application provided via email upon enrolling in their 9th course (next-to-last term). After successfully applying for graduation and upon completion of all program requirements, students will be processed for graduation and grades will be calculated for potential academic honors credit (see section 2.3.5).

Students fully admitted must complete the 30-semester hour OLMP and must achieve an overall grade point average of at least 3.00 on a 4.00 scale and successfully complete the Student Orientation to earn the Master of Military Operational Art and Science Degree. Students may have “C” grades on their transcript however, their final GPA must average a “B” grade or 3.00 on a 4.00 scale.

Any course resulting in a grade of “D” or “F” must be re-accomplished. Students who receive a second “D” or “F” in the same course will be ineligible for program completion as well as the Master of Military Operational Art and Science Degree.

### **2.2.6.2. DIPLOMAS**

Diplomas are mailed to the address listed on the graduation application. It is imperative students keep their graduation application information current to avoid any delays in processing diplomas.

### **2.2.6.3. TRANSCRIPTS**

Official transcripts may only be obtained through the AU Registrar’s Office via <https://auservicedesk.af.edu/education/>, first times users will have to create an account. Once logged into the help ticket website you must select “Transcript Request”. A mail-in transcript request form is available at attachment 2 to this handbook.

### **2.2.6.4. SPECIAL NOTE FOR LEADERSHIP, OPERATIONAL WARFARE, AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS CONCENTRATION GRADUATES**

Students who have completed the requirements for the Leadership, Operational Warfare or Nuclear Weapons Concentrations who later become eligible for IDE and Joint PME programs, upon promotion to the eligible grade, have two options from which to choose for completion. The first option is to reapply for the Joint Warfare Concentration and complete the IDE and Joint PME requirements (four additional courses) at the Masters level (students will NOT be awarded a second degree). These students will need to reapply with the AU Registrar and be accepted into this program. The second option is to request to become a Supplemental Student in the non-master’s program, which is a shortened version (three applied and eight self-paced courses) of the standard ACSC DL program. Students choosing this option will need to apply through the AU Portal for the ACSC DL program and select the Supplemental Program option.

## **2.3. GRADING**

### **2.3.1. CRITERIA**

Assessing student success in attaining learning objectives in the online environment is necessarily subjective; however, to assist CIs in the important task of grading,

ACSC DL has provided assignment rubrics in the OLMP. The grading criteria contained in these rubrics serve only as guidelines for instructors. CIs use their best judgment when determining the appropriate grade for assessments, threaded discussions, and other postings that may be evaluated. The CI may include other course-unique grading criteria when appropriate. For purposes of “letter grade” evaluation of student academic performance, CIs will assign one of the following: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C, D, or F. Any course resulting in a grade of “D” or “F” must be re-accomplished. If a student retakes a course in which they receive a D or F, the new passing grade does not replace the original grade. The new grade is averaged with the old grade to calculate their GPA for the course. For example: If a student receives an F (0 GPA) then retakes the course, and receives an A (4.0 GPA), the resulting GPA for the course would be a 2.0. The 2.0 GPA for the course is then factored into the student’s cumulative GPA. Courses resulting in the grade of “C” or better will not be re-accomplished. If a course is failed twice (D or F), the student will be disenrolled from the program.

### 2.3.2. SCALE

The following is the grading scale used for all OLMP courses:

Grade	Percentages (Bb Weighted)	Final Grade Conversion (AU Registrar)
A	93 – 100%	4.0
A-	90 – 92.9%	3.7
B+	87 – 89.9%	3.3
B	83 – 86.9%	3.0
B-	80 – 82.9%	2.7
C	70 – 79.9%	2.0
D	60 – 69.9%	1.0
F	59.9 and below%	0

### 2.3.3. GRADE APPEALS

CIs assign a grade to each assessment according to the student’s demonstrated mastery of the objectives being evaluated. CIs submit compiled grades for their courses(s) via Canvas during the grade-submission window. Students who wish to obtain further explanation or review of a grade may initiate an appeal through their CI (see Attachment 1 for Grade Appeal form). Students must wait at least 1 business day after grades are posted before initiating a grade appeal and have up to 3 business days to initiate an appeal. After 3 business days, no student may begin a grade appeal. In the event the CI is unavailable, students should initiate their grade appeal with the applicable Course Director (CD). Documented evidence must be submitted to support an appeal and must accompany the Grade Appeal Application Form (see Attachment 1). CIs/CDs will review appeals for grade changes and respond to students within 2 working days of receipt of the Grade Appeal Application Form and documented evidence. A second appeal is permitted with additional justification and is forwarded to the Curriculum Department Chair (or equivalent) for

review after being coordinated through the CI and CD. Appeals are only accepted for individual graded assignments. There are no appeals for final course grades.

Assignment grades are reviewed by the Dean and faculty to ensure objectivity and close adherence to program standards. The Dean is the final approval authority for final course grades.

#### **2.3.4. INCOMPLETE GRADES**

Due to the demands of the OLMP and students' professional and personal commitments, there may be instances when students are unable to complete their studies in the allotted 8-week term. The 8-week terms offer limited opportunity to re-schedule missed evaluations; therefore, students will need to contact their instructor and request an "Incomplete Contract." NOTE: Requests for an Incomplete Contract are NOT automatic.

It will be at the full discretion of the course instructor to determine the feasibility of making up any missed work. Therefore, the Incomplete Contract must be initiated by the instructor. This contract provides students the opportunity to make up work within a 4week period after the end of a particular term. Extensions to the incomplete contract may be approved with the instructor's consent, but extensions shall not exceed 8 weeks beyond the end of the term in which the incomplete was received. If the student does not make arrangements with the instructor prior to the end of the term by submitting the contract, the "Incomplete" grade converts to an "F" in the grade book. Students who encounter problems should contact their instructor(s) immediately. Students should mitigate potential conflicts before making the decision to register for classes and then fully commit to their studies once classes begin.

The following policies apply to "Incomplete" grades:

- An "Incomplete Grade Contract" must be completed by both the student and the CI
- All "Incompletes" must be resolved within 4 weeks – 28 days – from the last day of the posted term date unless an extension has been granted (not to exceed 8 weeks beyond the end of the posted term date)
- All unresolved "Incomplete" grades will automatically revert to an "F" 29 days after the last day of the posted term date
- "Incomplete" grades are resolved only when a CI notifies the Chief of Academic Affairs of a grade change before the 4-week/28-day deadline
- Exceptions to the above incomplete grade requirements maybe granted by the Chief of Academic Affairs on a case-by-case basis

#### **2.3.5. ACADEMIC HONORS**

Students graduate from the program "with Highest Academic Distinction" if they achieve a final GPA of 3.950 or higher. Example: A student completed 10 courses with 8 A's and 2 A-'s; the final GPA would be 3.940 and the student would not graduate with academic honors.

#### **2.3.6. RESEARCH AWARDS**

The "General William R. Looney III Award for Expeditionary Air, Space, and Cyberspace Power Studies" is the OLMP research award, recognizing each academic year's best research paper in the field of air, space, and cyberspace power.

Reflecting General Looney's distinguished accomplishments in all three of these areas and his contributions to the cross-domain dominance of today's military, the award is designed to both reward and encourage intellectual advances in the core mission of the US Air Force. Other research awards include the OLMP Dean, eSchool of Graduate PME Awards. Research categories are based on subject matter presented in the OLMP. Only one research product will be recognized for each of the DL awards in the following categories:

- International Security Studies
- Joint Warfighting (Joint Warfare concentration students only)
- Leadership and Command Studies
- Strategy and Warfare Studies
- Culture Studies
- Future Trends Studies
- Operational Art and Science

The winners of these awards are selected from the best "A" papers submitted from each Research Elective 2 course section throughout the year, as determined by a board of OLMP faculty members. The winners of these awards may also compete for externally sponsored awards that are administered by Air Command and Staff College.

## **2.4. PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR**

ACSC expects its students, as professionals, to be fully committed to their personal and professional development and to take full advantage of their admission to the OLMP.

Student conduct that disrupts the successful achievement of the AU mission is intolerable. Students whose unprofessional or inappropriate behavior disrupts class activities may be subject to disciplinary action, ranging from a reduction in the course grade to permanent dismissal from the program. ACSC online instructors and staff members determine what is and is not acceptable conduct. Instructors noting incidents of this type will notify the Chief of Academic Affairs for inquiry and action. Any student who is undergoing review board or investigative proceedings related to unprofessional conduct or academic misconduct may be placed in an administrative hold status. While in this status, the student will not be allowed to enroll in any courses until the proceeding is fully resolved and a course of action is determined.

### **2.4.1. ATTENDANCE**

The OLMP is conducted asynchronously, so while "attendance" is mandatory, students may "attend" at the time and place of their choosing. Students are expected to meet minimum participation requirements in all class activities and complete all class assignments by the assignment due date. Students failing to meet these expectations may be withdrawn from their particular class or from the program.

### **2.4.2. ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

The OLMP courseware includes candid lectures and articles from senior leaders across the Department of Defense as well as speakers from US Government agencies and from the civilian sector. These presenters consent to distribute their presentations because they are assured their comments will be shared only among

AU students, instructors, and staff. Students in the OLMP share an important responsibility with their resident colleagues at Maxwell – protecting the confidentiality of these speakers' presentations. To meet this responsibility, all students must adhere to academic freedom and non-attribution policies as described in AU Instruction 36-2602, *AU Operations*, available at: <https://static.e-publishing.af.mil/production/1/au/publication/au36-2602/au36-2602.pdf>. It is important to note that students are not allowed to attribute any materials contained in the courseware to persons or entities outside of ACSC without permission from AU. Similarly, students shall respect the contributions of classmates and guests who might participate in their online sessions. Explanatory notes on AU's academic freedom policy follow:

1. Academic freedom allows students, guest speakers, contributing authors, and participants in established classes to state opinions openly and to support or challenge ideas without concern their remarks will be attributed to them.
2. Non-attribution facilitates the free expression of opinions and ideas and allows for professional disagreements within the context of an academically stimulating environment. Essentially, non-attribution means not associating specific comments, ideas, opinions, or conversations with specific individuals.
3. Although individuals may debate relevant issues, academic freedom must be tempered by good judgment to refrain from making offensive remarks, unfounded opinions, or irresponsible statements either verbally or in writing. Offensive remarks or irresponsible statements include but are not limited to comments disparaging any person's race, color, national origin, ethnic group, religion, or sex. Offensive remarks or irresponsible statements – whether oral or written – simply will not be tolerated.

Individuals who violate the academic freedom policy are subject to adverse administrative and/or disciplinary actions as described in AUI 36-2602, *AU Operations*.

### **2.4.3. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Integrity is a cornerstone of the military profession and permeates every aspect of military service. Within this academic environment, integrity is important to ensure graduates are skilled in the areas prescribed by joint and Air Force directives and to preserve the validity of the OLMP assessment program. AU Instruction 36-2609, *Academic Integrity*, defines academic integrity as “uncompromising adherence to a code of ethics, morality, conduct, scholarship, and other values related to academic activity.” Every student enrolled in the OLMP is responsible for adhering to this standard. Students are warned that having knowledge of a violation and failing to report it is also a violation of academic integrity.

Students found guilty of academic integrity violations are subject to sanctions imposed by AU. These sanctions can affect student credit for completed work as well as a student's eligibility for future PME and academic opportunities.

Collaboration and discussion in the online environment among students in the same seminar are highly encouraged, but each student is expected to do his/her own work. It is a breach of integrity to use, receive, or give work to another student outside of a particular course.



### **2.4.3.1. ORIGINAL WORK**

Student work submitted for grade must be composed solely by the student (or identified group of students for a group assignment) except where clearly documented in accordance with citation requirements, and it must be composed specifically for the current assignment. No work previously submitted in any PME course, or elsewhere, will be resubmitted or reformatted, in whole or in part, for submission in a current assignment without prior written approval of the course instructor. Additionally, students are prohibited from using the work of other students (current or former) in any way, to include the formulation of ideas or outlines, to complete assignments.

The act of appropriating, or stealing, the literary composition of another, or parts or passages of another's writings, ideas or language, and passing them off as one's own work constitutes plagiarism. Every student must ensure quotations or paraphrased passages are properly cited within any written work submitted.

To assist students and instructors in identifying potential acts of plagiarism, the OLMP uses plagiarism checker. This commercial tool identifies areas of written work that require proper sourcing. In their orientations, students and instructors complete a short tutorial that explains how to use this valuable tool. ACSC/DL policy allows students to submit their work to plagiarism checker at least once prior to submitting it through plagiarism checker to their CIs for grading. All essay and paper assignments are required to be submitted through plagiarism checker.

### **2.4.3.2. CHEATING**

The act of giving or receiving improper assistance such as, but not limited to:

- Uploading and/or downloading study aids or notes (also known as "dirty purples," "gouge," or "the pony") to or from websites; or providing or receiving such notes via any other method
- Copying material from another's assessment (test/paper/etc.)
- Using notes and issued materials, or other references not authorized for use during an assessment, or other assigned work
- Knowingly permitting another to copy work or presentation materials, or excerpts/ideas/answers from an assessment
- Collaborating with other persons on individual assignments, except as permitted
- Sharing study materials or any assessment information after completing an assessment. This is to preserve the integrity of the assessment and ensure that all students have an equal opportunity at success in the program.

Cheating is a violation of academic integrity standards. Further, unauthorized discussion, disclosure, or possession of distance learning assessment materials constitutes a violation of Article 92 of the UCMJ. Unless instructed otherwise by an ACSC distance learning faculty or staff member, distance learning assessment materials may be discussed only with CIs and ACSC/DL personnel.

**Individuals who violate the academic integrity policy are subject to adverse administrative and or disciplinary actions as described in AUI 36-2602.**

**2.4.4. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND TREATMENT**

**2.4.4.1. SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

As a military institution, AU upholds the highest standards of professional and personal conduct at all times. Individuals must be treated with dignity and respect. Any form of sexual discrimination or mistreatment will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment is forbidden and beneath the dignity of military officers and civilians.

AU's goal is to maintain an environment free from sexual harassment. No one may make comments, remarks, or take actions of a sexual nature that might offend others. Such remarks are NOT protected by Academic Freedom. In addition to not engaging in this behavior themselves, students, CIs, and staff share an obligation to inform others if they are aware of comments, remarks, or actions that are offensive.

**2.4.4.2. TOLERANCE AND DIVERSITY**

Ethnic or racial jokes, slurs, or mistreatment are discriminatory, are not acceptable, and will not be tolerated at AU. This applies to all communications, spoken or written. As with sexual harassment, this behavior is NOT protected by Academic Freedom, and anyone aware of such behavior is responsible for reporting it to proper authorities.

**2.4.5. ELECTRONIC MAIL AND THREADED DISCUSSION DECORUM**

Students are expected to use common sense and good judgment when using Canvas' message system, discussion boards, forums, and Help Ticket programs.

*Note: for documentation purposes, messages (including any associated attachments/files) and all threaded discussion transmissions are automatically monitored, tracked, recorded, and archived.*

The Discussion boards, message system and Help Ticket programs ARE NOT the correct forum for venting grievances or complaints. Students have the ability to provide suggestions for improvements to administrative, programmatic, or curriculum-related policies, procedures, or other DL program-related issues using student surveys (see 4.5).

**2.4.5.1. CHAIN OF COMMAND**

In OLMP Courses, the CI is the primary focal point for all student matters. Students are instructed not to circumvent their chain of command by communicating directly with higher levels without first coordinating with their CI. If the CI is the problem, students should contact the Director of Student Services.

**2.4.5.2. OFFICIAL VERSUS PERSONAL COMMUNICATION**

Canvas' message system is for official communication only. OLMP instructors, staff, and students are restricted from using this system for personal gain (i.e., advertising for sale of goods or services, etc.) or for personal communications unrelated to the educational program for which it was purchased.

#### **2.4.6. FRATERNIZATION AND UNPROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Relationships are deemed unprofessional, whether pursued on- or off-duty, when they detract from the authority of superiors or result in, or reasonably create the appearance of, favoritism, misuse of office or position, or the abandonment of organizational goals for personal interests. Fraternization is an aggravated form of unprofessional relationship and is recognized as a violation of Article 134 of the UCMJ. AFI 36-2909, *Professional and Unprofessional Relationships*, provides specific guidance related to training and educational situations. Specific to the academic environment, AF policy advises against any personal relationships between CIs and students in a professional military education environment.

#### **2.4.7. INFORMATION PROTECTION**

##### **2.4.7.1. PRIVACY OF INFORMATION**

The Privacy Act imposes civil and criminal penalties for disclosing personal information from a “system of records” to someone not entitled to that information. “Systems of records” include personnel records, medical records, and other official records that are retrieved by an individual’s name, social security number, or other personal identifier. Therefore, the use of Canvas’ message system to distribute home addresses, home telephone numbers, number and sex of dependents, home of record, age, date of birth, and other personal information without first getting the consent of the subject is prohibited. If consent is requested and received, it is important to ensure any electronic correspondence reflects the fact that approval was received from the subject. Posting your own information implies your consent; this does not extend to family members – their consent must be documented and stated.

##### **2.4.7.2. FOREIGN DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION**

Air Force Policy Directive 16-2, *Disclosure of Military Information to Foreign Governments and International Organizations*, states that disclosure of information, documents, or training materials to foreign governments or international organizations is not allowed unless approved by the Secretary of the Air Force/International Affairs Disclosure (SAF/IAD) section. In accordance with this policy, ACSC educational materials (including syllabi, instructional narratives, multimedia presentations, and all interactive communications that are part of the OLMP) may not be distributed to foreign visitors without express approval coordinated through SAF/IAD via ACSC/DL and the AU Foreign Disclosure Office. Refer inquiries on such information or documents to your CI who will submit a request for approval through the Director of Student Services to AU and SAF/IAD.

##### **2.4.7.3. INFORMATION SECURITY IN PROFESSIONAL PAPERS**

Student papers and reports must be written at the unclassified level. In some cases, a compilation of unclassified sources could result in a classified report/paper. If a student has doubts as to whether information is classified or releasable, they are instructed to contact a USAF security manager prior to uploading the document onto the Canvas system. **In no instance** will students place information on the OLMP Canvas website or Help Desk system that has the potential to be classified or could be of possible intelligence value. This

includes sensitive or restricted types of information such as “For Official Use Only” information and proprietary information.

### **3. RESOURCES**

#### **3.1. INFORMATION AND LIBRARY SERVICES**

Air University’s Muir S. Fairchild Research Information Center (the “MSFRIC” – also known as the Air University Library) promotes the use of library technology and resources, teaches library research classes, and provides access to a variety of library resources. Students can access a variety of MSFRIC services online by selecting the library link in each Canvas course. Dedicated reference librarians are available to assist students with research needs. Also, reference assistance is obtained by contacting these librarians at the email address and/or phone number that appears on the ACSC Resources web page (<http://fairchild-mil.libguides.com/acsc>).

#### **3.2. WRITING RESOURCES**

There is a substantial amount of writing required in the OLMP. Writing assistance, self-paced writing guides and tutorials can be accessed by clicking on the “AU Help” tab on the left menu in ASU Canvas and selecting “eSchool Resource Center.”

### **4. STUDENT SUPPORT – INTERACTION WITH INSTRUCTORS AND STAFF**

#### **4.1. COURSE INSTRUCTORS**

CIs are the leaders in the online classroom environment. Credentialed experts in their fields of study, they are selected, trained, and assigned to:

- Provide clarification and assistance to students
- Help students achieve desired levels of learning
- Assess student performance
- Provide substantive, qualitative feedback to improve both student performance and the program itself
- Personally observe students’ online “classroom” interaction, helping them to meet course requirements while maintaining a supportive, professional online learning environment
- Be solely responsible for instruction and student evaluation, but consult with appointed academic advisors to assist students placed on academic probation
- Assist or refer students to Student Services for help with administrative matters

CIs provide specific guidance for their classes; however, the information in the OLMP Handbook applies to all courses and students in the program.

#### **4.2. ACADEMIC ADVISING**

From initial enrollment through program completion, ACSC DL faculty and staff are available to assist students with academic advisory support. Whether selecting and scheduling classes, mapping out a plan for program completion, or clarifying program policies, the primary mission of ACSC DL staff and faculty is to assist students in achieving their academic goals.

Students placed on academic probation will also have an academic advisor appointed to them to aid them in improving their performance. An advisor’s responsibilities while a student is on academic probation are to:

- Analyze students' weak areas and determine courses of action to return students to good academic standing
- Discuss strategies and provide resources for students to return to good academic standing in minimum time
- Provide support to students by reviewing study habits, assessing writing ability, and organization and logic skills, and referring students with demonstrated limitations to online writing resources

#### **4.3. STUDENT REGISTRATION SYSTEM**

Students are required to ensure their contact information (contained in the student registration system database) is kept current. Students can verify their email and phone number Student Portal (<https://au.asu.edu/portal>) by clicking on the left "Menu" and selecting "Profile." If adjustments are needed please submit a help request by clicking on the left "Menu" and selecting "Support."

#### **4.4. STUDENT SERVICES AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT**

Throughout this program you may require assistance on a variety of issues. As a general rule, your primary point of contact will be your CI for any course-specific information, and Student Services for all program information.

You can reach your CI via e-mail or through the Canvas Course Messaging system. Your instructor will establish clear expectations for communications early in the course.

If you experience technical issues, issues with course content, or any other problems your instructor cannot help you with, or if you have questions regarding enrollment, dis-enrollment, extensions, testing, program eligibility, grades, or withdrawing from a course, contact ACSC Student Services by opening a help ticket at: <https://au.asu.edu/portal/support>. Once logged into the help ticket website you may call, initiate a chat or email to create and route the request.

Problem Details: Provide as complete a description as possible of the problem/issue.

#### **4.5. SURVEYS**

Surveys come in three forms: End-of-Lesson, End-of-Course, and End-of-Program. At the end of each lesson, course, and upon completion of the entire program, students have an opportunity to provide feedback on the course content (including assessments), instructor, student services, and technical support. Candid and constructive comments are used to improve the OLMP.

#### **4.6. STUDENT RIGHTS**

Over and above any rights of appeal or filing of grievances and complaints as described in previous sections of this student handbook, any AU student has a right to appeal adverse actions taken against him/her by following the appropriate course of appeal as described in the Air University Catalog, available at [https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/AcademicAffairs/documents/2019-2020\\_AU\\_Catalog.pdf](https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/AcademicAffairs/documents/2019-2020_AU_Catalog.pdf)

#### **4.7. STUDENT GRIEVANCES**

eSchool Student complaints and grievances are handled by eSchool staff IAW AUI 36-2602. eSchool will attempt to resolve all formal grievances within 60 days of receipt/notification.

Students should, but are not required to, attempt to resolve complaints at the lowest level (appropriate for the circumstances) using eSchool supervisory channels before addressing them to higher level command channels. Students will provide formal complaint or grievance in writing on a Memorandum For Record, outlining all details of the grievance to their course instructor or next in the eSchool organization chain, if applicable. Upon receipt, the Chief of Academic Affairs will coordinate and schedule a Grievance Review Board (GRB). If the complaint cannot be resolved within the organizational chain, the eSchool will coordinate with the appropriate outside agency to resolve the complaint in the most efficient and timely manner. Once the complaint is resolved the eSchool will notify the student in writing of the decision of the GRB.

## ATTACHMENT 1 - GRADE APPEAL APPLICATION FORM

### AIR UNIVERSITY ONLINE MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM

Students wishing to appeal a grade issued by their instructor must first confer with the instructor by phone, email, or through LMS messages and attempt to resolve the dispute informally. This must be done after a 24-hour "cooling off" period after the instructor posts the grade. No appeal may be initiated after three working days and **only graded assignments may be appealed**. Following this conference, if the issue remains unresolved, the student may appeal the grade using the process described below.

Per the *AU Online Master's Degree Program Student Handbook*, documented evidence must be submitted to support an appeal. The documented evidence will be a concise written summary of the student's position, including relevant facts, desired resolution, arguments supporting the desired solution, and relevant supporting documentation. The evidence should be attached to the Grade Appeal Application Form, be no more than two pages, and emailed/faxed to the instructor. **Note: The burden of proof in a grade dispute lies with the student.**

The instructor will review the student's appeal, provide comments, and submit it to the Course Director for adjudication within 24 hours of receipt. The Course Director will respond to the student and instructor by email within three working days of receipt of the submission, providing a decision and brief justification.

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I, \_\_\_\_\_, (Last 4 of SSN #) , have informally discussed the disputed grade with my instructor and am not satisfied with the resolution. Therefore, I am submitting a formal appeal for review by my instructor and for final decision by the Department Chair (or equivalent). I understand the resulting grade may be lower, higher, or remain the same and that the Department Chair's (or equivalent) decision is final.

Course name and section: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor name: \_\_\_\_\_

When course was taken: \_\_\_\_\_ Assignment Grade received: \_\_\_\_\_ Assignment Grade

sought: Student \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Typed Name and attached request to ACSC DL from instructor's personal Email account is acceptable in lieu of signature)*

Date/Time Appeal Received by Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ Instructor initials: \_\_\_\_\_