



**US Army Corps  
Of Engineers  
Learning Center (ULC)**

## **Proponent-Sponsored Engineer Corps Training (PROSPECT)**

### **Student Handbook: Standards of Conduct**

30 May 2019

Welcome to the Proponent Sponsored Engineer Corps Training (PROSPECT) Program. PROSPECT is a job-related training program consisting of approximately 200 courses. All courses are developed or revised according to Corps of Engineers' Systems Approach to Training (COESAT) outlined in ER 690-1-414. The USACE Learning Center (ULC) is responsible for administrating and coordinating this program. This proponent-sponsored approach assures that all courses are job-related and subjects taught are those needed by the students in order to perform their duties. Courses are held throughout the United States and in foreign countries. Costs for virtually the entire program are financed on a reimbursable basis through collection of tuitions. All courses are sponsored by a proponent who is responsible for subject matter accuracy and currency.

The USACE Learning Center is here to support and assist you, the learner, in any way we can. To aid you, we have developed this guide that constitutes PROSPECT Student Standards of Conduct.

We appreciate your support of the PROSPECT program. We are dedicated to making your training experience useful and pleasant. It is my personal desire that you leave your training session with an increased level of job proficiency and self-confidence.

ROY M. ELAM  
Chief, USACE Learning Center  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

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## PROSPECT Student Standards of Conduct

### 1. Arrival and Departure

- a. Arrival. Students should plan ahead and take into consideration factors such as traffic, security checks, and parking, as may be required, depending on the location of the course. Specific information, such as course dates, hours, class location, and report time are provided in the Student Reporting Instructions (SRI). If you have not received the SRI for a course you are attending, contact your Training Coordinator (TC) in your Division/Organization.
- b. Departure. Traveling students must make their departure arrangements to ensure attendance through the scheduled class completion.

### 2. Attendance/Absenteeism

- a. Full-time attendance (start through completion) is required of all students. USACE Learning Center (ULC) recognizes full-time attendance may not always be possible. Accordingly the following guidance is provided:
  - (1) Absences. Whenever possible, the student shall request and obtain permission from the lead instructor in advance of the absence. Absences may be approved due to student illness or urgent family matters. The following ARE NOT considered valid excuses:
    - Work-related requirements
    - Travel arrangements that require departure before course graduation
    - Other appointments (commitments) of a personal or business nature
  - (2) Absences are not to exceed five (5) percent of instructional time. Absences that exceed five (5) percent of instructional time may require that student self-withdraw from the class and take it at a future time when personal/work commitments do not interfere with class attendance. Special circumstances that result in excused absences slightly beyond five (5) percent can be reviewed by the ULC Training Division Chief responsible for the course session, to determine if the student can remain in the class.
- b. An absence DOES NOT relieve the student of completing ALL course requirements. Absences will adversely impact a student's successful completion of learning events in courses where participation is integrated into the requirement. For excused absences, the student will coordinate with the lead instructor on how make-up assignments will be handled. Some courses have required activities that, if missed, lead to disenrollment. For these courses, the instructor will advise students in advance. Students will not be provided an opportunity to make up missed work for unexcused absences.

- c. When an absence is excused, students are responsible for reporting leave taken during a course offering to their employing organization.
  - d. When a weather-related absence affects significant segments of the course, the instructor, in coordination with the ULC Course Manager, and/or other appropriate ULC staff, will determine the appropriate course of action which can range from make-up work to rescheduling the offering.
3. **In-class Behavior.** Students are expected to behave in a professional manner at all times. This includes, but is not limited to:
- a. Being attentive and participating in all class activities. (Instructors will be sympathetic and supportive of students who use moderate methods to maintain alertness or relieve physical discomfort, such as non-alcoholic drinks, snacks, or standing at the rear of the room.)
  - b. Abiding by professional standards and courtesy when interacting with faculty, guests, and other students.
  - c. Arriving on time, returning promptly from breaks, and staying until the class day ends.
  - d. Being respectful of the facilities and leaving student areas in the same condition found upon arrival.
  - e. Ensuring cell phones and other communicative or electronic devices not used in support of the instruction or for note-taking are either turned off, set to silent, or set to vibrate only. During examinations, these devices must be turned off unless used as part of the examination process. The instructor will provide the “do’s” and “don’ts” regarding electronic device use during examinations.
4. **Student Attire.** Unless otherwise noted in the Student Reporting Instruction (SRI), students are authorized to wear business casual attire: dress slacks, collared shirts, and dress shoes/loafers for men and equivalent attire for women. Shorts, flip-flops, strapless, excessively short or sheer garments, exposed midriff, jeans, and athletic wear of any kind are examples of inappropriate attire. The responsible ULC Training Division Chief may specify exceptions to the above in support of a specific class event. Appropriate cleanliness and grooming is expected of all students. Additionally, students should be cognizant that heavy use of colognes and perfumes can be a distraction in class and cause allergic reactions in other students. In the case of onsite courses conducted at customer sites, alternative attire consistent with local command or organizational standards may prevail.
5. **Academic Integrity.** Absolute integrity is expected of every PROSPECT student in all academic undertakings. Integrity entails a firm adherence to a set of values, and the values most essential to an academic community are grounded on the concept of honesty with respect to the intellectual efforts of oneself and others. Academic integrity is expected not only in formal coursework situations, but in all learning center relationships and interactions connected to the educational process.

- a. A PROSPECT student's submission of work indicates that the work is the student's own. All outside assistance and citations should be acknowledged and the student's academic position truthfully reported at all times. In addition, PROSPECT students have a right to expect academic integrity from each of their peers. Students shall not:
- Misrepresent their work;
  - Fraudulently or unfairly advance their academic position;
  - Be party to another student's failure to maintain academic integrity; or
  - Violate the principle of academic integrity in any other manner.
- b. The following actions are examples of activities that violate the Student's Academic Integrity and subject the student to actions under this policy (not a comprehensive list):
- Knowingly representing the work of others (from any source) as one's own;
  - Using, obtaining, or providing unauthorized assistance on examinations, papers, or any other academic work;
  - Fabricating data in support of research or field work;
  - Forging a signature to certify completion of a course assignment or a recommendation;
  - Misrepresenting one's academic accomplishments;
  - Viewing, removing or copying any examination materials or any portions thereof by any means, including electronically; and
  - The inappropriate or unauthorized use of electronic devices to access information during examinations or assessments.
- c. Specific Guidelines for Courses. All submitted work shall be the result of a student's individual effort unless otherwise directed. Representing another's work as one's own is plagiarism and a violation of academic integrity. If materials are taken from published sources, the student must clearly and completely cite the source of such materials.
- 1) Examinations. No PROSPECT student may take an examination for another student or provide assistance to another student during an examination.
  - 2) Course Assignments. Students are encouraged to discuss the content of a course and to help each other to master it, but no student should receive help in completing a course assignment unless specifically provided guidance indicates the assignment is a group exercise.
- d. Principles for Computer Use and Network Systems. The use of computers and network systems does not exempt students from the normal requirements of ethical behavior. Use of a computer and network system shared by many users imposes certain additional obligations. While rules are built into computer and network systems, such restrictions cannot eliminate the opportunity for perusal of the work or resources of others. Students are responsible for their actions whether or not rules are built in, and whether or not they can circumvent them. Standards of behavior include, but are not limited to respect for the:

- Privacy of other users' information, even when that information is not securely protected;
- Ownership of proprietary software (i.e., making or using unauthorized copies of such software, even when that software is not protected against copying, is inappropriate and violates this policy);
- Finite capacity of the system and limitation of use so as not to interfere unreasonably with the activity of other users; and
- Procedures established to manage the use of the system.

6. **Academic Freedom and Non-Attribution.** In order to ensure academic freedom, PROSPECT maintains a non-attribution policy. The objective of this policy is to enable students, instructors, and guest speakers to express their views freely and without possible attribution or embarrassment.

- a. Guest speakers, faculty, and students are encouraged to state their opinions, support of, or criticism of any objective, policy, strategy, or tactic in the pursuit of knowledge, understanding, and improvement of the Corps' workforce. While the content of discussion is governed by the academic freedom policy, a professional and respectful manner is required at all times. Although policy issues may be debated, individuals must exercise judgment and self-control to avoid acrimonious discussion, to include that which could reasonably be construed to be of a derogatory nature toward personalities in the chain of command.
- b. PROSPECT media will be used only for instructional purposes unless specific, written permission for other use is obtained from speaker(s) or participants.
- c. In keeping with this policy, statements or remarks shall not be attributed to specific speakers (by name or other identifying comments) unless explicitly permitted by the speaker. Additionally, students creating audio or video recordings is not permitted except on a case-by-case basis as authorized by the responsible ULC Training Division Chief, such as when an audio or video recording may be necessary to provide a reasonable accommodation to a student with a verified disability or other legitimate purposes. An example of a "legitimate purpose" might be if a course has a class segment on media relations and the segment includes videotaping students doing mock interviews for subsequent in-class playback and critique. Whenever all or part of a class will be taped, the entire class will be informed of that fact.

**2 Encl:**

1. Violations of the Standards of Conduct
2. Student Inquiries, Complaint/Grievance Procedures

## Enclosure 1

### Violations of the Conduct Standards

1. **Decision Authorities and Penalties.** The decision authority to determine whether a specific action shall be treated as a violation of the Standards of Conduct lies with the responsible ULC Training Division. Students who violate these policies may be subject to penalties outlined herein and may be subject to adverse administrative or punitive penalties under federal laws.
2. **Responsibility for Reporting.** Students and staff members discovering an apparent violation should report the matter to the course lead instructor, responsible ULC course manager, or the responsible ULC Training Division Chief as soon as possible.
3. **Procedure for Reported Violations.** Upon learning of a violation, the responsible ULC Training Division Chief may direct, if necessary, an initial investigation of the circumstances and inform the ULC Chief and/or Deputy Chief. The responsible ULC Training Division will coordinate alleged violations with the student's parent organization. The HNC Office of Council will act as an advisor to the ULC in this process.
  - a. If, upon review of an allegation, including discussion with the student, the responsible ULC Training Division Chief believes Student Standards of Conduct have been violated, the responsible ULC Training Division Chief will present the student with the charge.
  - b. If the student admits the violation, the responsible ULC Training Division Chief has the authority to:
    - Direct remedial course work (normally reserved for inadvertent violations of standards);
    - Impose a failing grade (for more serious violations), and/or
    - Drop the student from the course for violations associated with Academic Integrity, disruptive classroom behavior or excessive absences. If the course is still in session, the student's parent organization will be notified and the student directed to return to their normal place of duty.
  - c. If the student asserts innocence, the responsible ULC Training Division Chief may dismiss the allegation or conduct further investigations as required in order to substantiate the facts, resolve inconsistent issues, or document why the issue(s) cannot be resolved.
  - d. If, upon further investigation, the responsible ULC Training Division Chief determines there is sufficient information to substantiate the allegation, the responsible ULC Training Division Chief will provide the student a Letter of Allegation of Violation of the Standards of Conduct containing:
    - A description of the allegation and a summary of the facts known to the responsible ULC Training Division Chief;

- The action being proposed;
  - Provide the student three (3) business days to respond; and
  - Procedures to follow to request an extension of response time.
- e. If a student fails to respond, the responsible ULC Training Division Chief may exercise the proposed action without further inquiry.
- f. If the action proposed by the responsible ULC Training Division Chief imposes a failing grade for the course or dropping the student for violating the Standards of Conduct associated with Academic Integrity, disruptive classroom behavior or excessive absences, a copy of the decision letter will be provided to:
- The student;
  - The student's supervisor of record;
  - Chief, USACE Learning Center;
  - The HNC Office of Counsel.
- g. These students shall not be eligible to take PROSPECT courses for a period of one year from the date the student was dropped. The student, with the written concurrence of the student's supervisor, may initiate a request for a variance within that time, subject to the approval of his/her parent organization.
- h. If the student's course grade must be submitted before a decision is rendered, the student shall receive a grade of incomplete. Once a final decision is rendered, the student's record will be updated.
4. **Review/Appeal.** The student may appeal the decision of the responsible ULC Training Division Chief by appealing to the Deputy Chief, USACE Learning Center.
5. **Investigations.**
- a. Investigations conducted by ULC are for the sole purpose of substantiating or vacating allegations of violations of the Standards of Conduct. They are not for the purpose of imposing adverse administrative or disciplinary action. Reports and associated documentation will be maintained/secured in course session folders in the ULC Registrar Office.
- b. ULC will not conduct investigations for, or on behalf of a student's parent organization. ULC will cooperate as required in an investigation into alleged student misconduct conducted by the student's parent organization. Under appropriate circumstances, this may include providing a copy of any ULC investigation and supporting documents upon request of appropriate authorities from the parent agency.

## Enclosure 2

### Student Inquiries, Complaint/Grievance Procedures

1. **Student Inquiries.** Students can contact the ULC Registrar via email DLL-CEHNC-Registrar@usace.army.mil for assistance or questions regarding any aspect of student academic policies as well as general questions regarding information published on the ULC Web site.
  - a. The ULC Registrar may answer the question or resolve the issue directly, or seek appropriate assistance within the ULC. If the inquiry involves a course exam issue the ULC Registrar will refer the student to the assigned ULC Course Manager.
  - b. Under normal circumstances, when a student makes an inquiry to the ULC Registrar or to their assigned ULC Course Manager, the student's inquiry will be acknowledged with a response back to the student within two (2) business days.
2. **Student Complaints and Grievances.** Most student complaints or grievances can be resolved informally simply by discussing the matter with the course lead instructor. However, students do have the right to file a formal written complaint/grievance with the ULC if they believe an inequity exists or there is a problem they believe needs to be addressed by the ULC and/or its staff and faculty.
3. **Resolution Authority.** While it is desirable that complaints are handled at the lowest level possible (i.e., the assigned lead instructor for a course), that is not always possible. Accordingly, complaints typically will be handled in the following order:
  - Lead Instructor for a course;
  - ULC Course Manager;
  - ULC Training Division Chief (of assigned course);
  - ULC Deputy Chief;
  - ULC Chief.
4. **Process for Formal Student Complaints/Grievances**
  - a. When a student has a complaint that cannot be resolved by or through the course lead instructor, the instructor will provide the student with the contact information for the ULC Course Manager so the student can file a formal complaint.
  - b. In responding to a student complaint, the respondent will include a copy of the student's complaint, provide an appropriate response and include the contact information of the next higher authority if the response is not satisfactory.
  - c. The decision of the responsible ULC Training Division Chief is final except when a student is dropped for a violation of the Standards of Conduct due to an Academic Integrity violation, disruptive classroom behavior or excessive unexcused absence. In these cases, the student may appeal the decision of the responsible ULC Training

Division Chief by petitioning the Deputy Chief, ULC. The student will be provided three (3) business days to notify the Deputy Chief, ULC of their intention to elevate or appeal a decision. After the (3) business days, the decision is considered final and the complaint is resolved.

- d. When a complaint or grievance is resolved, a copy of the complaint or grievance and a copy of the resolution must be forwarded to the ULC Registrar Office and filed in PROSPECT course session folder.

## 5. **Making an Appeal to Deputy Chief, ULC**

- a. In making an appeal to the Deputy Chief, ULC, the student may:
  - Address reasons why the student believes the procedures followed were improper or unfair;
  - Assert that additional, relevant evidence has become available; or
  - Contest the facts (evidence) on which findings were made.
- b. The student must provide supporting evidence.
- c. In all cases, the petition must be made within 14 calendar days of the decision of the responsible ULC Training Division Chief.
- d. The decision of the Deputy Chief, ULC will be provided, in writing, to the student, the student's supervisor, and the Chief, ULC. Any student who has exhausted the PROSPECT appeal process and feels their issue is not satisfactorily resolved may contact the Chief, ULC.
- e. Upon hearing the appeal of the student, and in consideration of the findings and recommendations of the Deputy Chief, ULC; the Chief, ULC may overturn, amend, or affirm the decision.

6. **Complaints Involving Allegations of Discrimination/Sexual Harassment.** Complaints involving discrimination and/or sexual harassment may be reported directly to the appropriate Equal Employment Opportunity/Equal Opportunity (EEO/EO) official servicing the ULC.

7. **Maintenance of Student Complaint/Grievance Records.** A file copy of all Student Complaints/Grievances and the accompanying resolution will be maintained in the ULC Registrar Office and filed in the PROSPECT course session folder.