



Inside SWCS

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Too cool for school

As the temperature drops, training remains safe and on-schedule at Special Forces Assessment and Selection

By Dave Chace
SWCS Public Affairs Office

Rain, shine, sleet or snow, the Special Forces Assessment and Selection cadre at Camp Mackall in Hoffman, N.C. are hosting Soldiers year-round to see if they're eligible to enter the Special Forces Qualification Course.

For three weeks, SFAS students trade away their name and rank for a chance to prove they're compatible with the characteristics of a Special Forces Soldier. They train at all hours of the day, mostly outdoors, conducting physical training exercises like ruck marches, land navigation and obstacle courses.

Needless to say, there's no time for snow days at Camp Mackall. So while the SFAS cadre ensure safety is the top priority in even the chilliest conditions, those Special Forces candidates looking for a cocoa break will have to head home.

"Severe weather has a direct impact on a candidate's motivation and commitment, especially when he is not mentally prepared for the challenges that he will face," said Maj. Don King, the commander at Special Forces Assessment and Selection.

SFAS is held several times each year. The early December 2010 iteration saw 42 candidates volun-

tarily withdraw from the course. Of the 241 candidates who reported for the ongoing iteration Jan. 10, 37 candidates have voluntarily withdrawn to date.

Despite a high withdrawal rate, no candidates fell victim to cold-weather injuries upon the close of the December 2010 SFAS iteration.

"Weather was clearly one of the primary reasons," King said. "The [Jan. 10] snow storm has had some impact on our course."

King said SFAS cadre may adjust the date or time of physical events in order to avoid snow or severe ice conditions, but it's rare for an event to get cancelled entirely over the three-week course.

"We will always err on the side of safety when making a call on whether a specific event should be executed," he said. "I believe we do this very well."

The goal of SFAS is to assess each individual's potential to perform as a Special Forces Soldier, but injury prevention is a top priority for all cadre members, each of whom King says is a first-line safety officer ensuring candidates' well-being.

"Those that are selected, we want them to be healthy and physically prepared to attend the Special Forces Qualification Course as soon as possible," he said. "We also want those candidates not selected to return to their assigned units as fully capable, opera-

tionally deployable Soldiers."

King said the land navigation exercises, which require candidates to move alone through the wilderness for hours at a time, present the highest risk for cold-weather injuries.

"During the land navigation portion, candidates will be exposed to freezing temperatures, severe winds and possible rain and snow," he said.

When conducting land navigation events, students wear tracking systems allowing cadre to monitor their location and movement trends, and also identify potential emergencies.

"Cadre also rove the course, placing themselves in high-risk areas to prevent candidates from exposing themselves to severe cold-weather injuries," King said.

For example, candidates are prevented from crossing major water obstacles during the course to avoid the possibility of catching hypothermia or frostbite.

To mitigate candidates' risk, cadre members teach classes on the prevention and treatment of cold-weather injuries during the first week of SFAS. The cadre will also conduct medical spot checks and provide on-site medical care throughout the course.

"To us, an unsafe training environment is unacceptable," King said. "Without the dedicated members of the SFAS cadre, this would be impossible."

DRSE prepares ARSOF Soldiers for global presence

By Col. Paul Burton

Director, Directorate of Regional Studies and Education

As the United States and the world prosecute the current campaigns in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa and the Philippines, the U.S. military along with our interagency counterparts must also prepare for uncertain security situations beyond the present theaters of conflict.



Burton

These areas of friction and conflict existed before Sept. 11, 2001, and will continue to exist. Our adversaries will attempt to exploit the above named campaigns all around the world; we must fight our enemy with our minds as well as our weapons.

Army special-operations Soldiers' most versatile and lethal weapon is their mind.

Army special-operations forces are regionally aligned units that have a global presence. These regionally savvy Soldiers are educated to develop and sustain long-term relationships with indigenous personnel and then create a cadre of language and culturally attuned Soldiers who provide geographic combatant commanders, ambassadors and fellow forces with critical capabilities and knowledge, should contingencies develop.

From its inception, ARSOF have focused on developing regional, cultural and language skills through consistent regional alignment of USASOC components. ARSOF investment in our Soldiers is envisioned as maturing to a career-long commitment of specifically selected members maintaining the proficiency to optimally contribute to our country's foreign policy, specifically in the areas of selected partner nation-specific and regional strategies.

Several of the tools that enable ARSOF operators to be successful and prevail in the ambiguous environments demanded by our country are their understanding of their focus region and the ability to communicate in the native languages of these regions. These two areas can be considered the underpinnings or foundation of many of our successes in history.

The Directorate of Regional Studies educates U.S. Army Civil Affairs, Military Information Support Operations and Special Forces Soldiers and staff throughout their careers by providing relevant instruction, professional development and a superior learning environment, in order to possess the capability to succeed in any global region.

At the Directorate of Regional Studies and Education, educating soldiers on the development of relationships with host nation counterparts to operate with socio-linguistic and cultural competency is paramount.



Derric Fuller, the audio-visual technician for the Colonel Aaron Bank Hall, is presented a plaque by Col. Curtis Boyd, SWCS Chief of Staff, recognizing his award as the SWCS Civilian of the Year in the GS 7-10 category. The SWCS Civilian of the Year award also went to Evelyn Robbins, an administrative operations coordinator in the Directorate of Regional Studies and Education, in the GS 1-6 category; and Doris Jo Carson, a visual information specialist now working in the SWCS Public Affairs Office.

“Re-Up? You’re crazy!”

By Sgt. 1st Class Ricky Harris

SWCS Senior Career Counselor

The above headline is a cadence that has been sung for years on many Army installations. But many things change with time, and this is true with re-enlistment.

Soldiers these days are finding more and more reasons to re-enlist, such as U.S. operations overseas, the economy or that Soldiers' desire to serve their country.



Harris

I am the new senior career counselor here at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, and it's my pleasure to assist our staff and students with their re-enlistment needs.

One of the programs that make it easier decision to re-enlist is the change from the Montgomery G.I. Bill to the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill. This allows Soldiers to transfer their educational benefits to their dependents.

There have been many changes with the retention program for the current fiscal year.

First, the re-enlistment window which was a sliding 24-month window is now static window. So for a Soldier to be in the re-enlistment window, they will

have to have an ETS date prior to Sept. 30, 2012.

In addition to that, there's also been a change to the minimum amount of time for which you can re-enlist. If you only want to re-enlist for a short term, the new ETS date must be more than 12 months past the old ETS date.

The options that are available to Soldiers have also changed. One big change is for Soldiers whose ETS date is beyond the 10-year mark but have not gone over 10 years of active federal service. Those Soldier are now limited to the needs of the Army.

Soldiers that want to change their MOS are limited to under-strength MOSs; Soldiers already in an over-strength MOS will have to change MOSs.

There have also been many changes to the bonuses that are out there, one being the change to the Critical Skills Retention Bonus; as of Dec. 1, 2010, 18-series specialties are the only MOSs that can currently receive this bonus.

So as more Soldiers decide to remain “crazy” and “re-up,” the Army will be looking for the best to remain Army Strong!

For more information on these programs and others, you can stop on by the retention office located on the first floor of Bryant Hall or check out the retention website on the Portal at <https://arsocportal.soc.mil/swcs/dir/ret/default.aspx>

Upcoming Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
23	24	25	26	CA and MISO Senior Leaders Course Graduation Ceremony 1 p.m., JFK Auditorium	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12