



7th ARMY NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER ACADEMY



3rd Quarter

Quarterly Newsletter

Fiscal Year 2025



“Leaders Training Leaders”



Commandant's Corner

The 7th Army NCO Academy proudly presents its latest quarterly newsletter, showcasing the exemplary achievements of our students and cadre. In this edition we spotlight the Army's 250th birthday, SSG Albano's impact on the NCO Academy, our SGT York recipients, and our instructor's accomplishments. You will also hear from the NCO Academy's leaders on various topics on fitness and the implementation of FM 1-0. Happy reading!

As we rapidly approach June 14th, the U.S. Army is on the cusp of a truly historic milestone: its 250th birthday, 250 years of defending our nation, adapting to evolving threats, and building a tried-and-true fighting force. This incredible milestone is a testament to the enduring courage, sacrifice, and unwavering commitment of generations of Soldiers. As Noncommissioned Officers, it is our distinct privilege to reflect on this rich legacy, honor those who served before us, and recommit ourselves to upholding the core values and standards that have defined our Army for two and a half centuries as we lead into the future. Our S3 NCOIC, SFC McElfresh, did an outstanding job capturing the NCO's impact on the Army during its 250-year journey.



SSG Michael Albano served admirably as our S1 NCOIC, assistant to the Commandant, and Small Group Leader. He simultaneously oversaw the S1, managed the TDA, and updated the Commandant on the readiness of the NCOA. SSG Albano received recognition from AGCRA as the recipient of the FY23 Colonel Robert L. Manning Achievement Medal and FY24 Frederick E. Vollrath for HR excellence from USAREUR-AF. He will compete in the 2025 AG NCO of the Year competition at Fort Jackson, North Carolina. In addition to these accomplishments, SSG Albano earned his Basic Army Instructor Badge and won the Instructor of the Quarter competition for the 2nd Quarter of FY25, all while working towards his bachelor's degree in human resources. SSG Albano is a phenomenal non-commissioned officer and a standout at the 7th Army NCO Academy.

The SGT York recipients during the quarter are SPC Donica M. Mills of the 528th Special Operations Sustainment Brigade and SGT Johnathan M. Carhart of the 60th Geospatial Planning Cell. These students demonstrated academic excellence, exceptional leadership, a strong commitment to the profession, and engaged in community service. Their exemplary performance truly sets them apart as the future leaders of our Army.

Our instructors continue to set an incredibly high bar. With 4 months remaining in FY25, we've already awarded an unprecedented 29 instructor badges—20 Basic, 7 Senior, and 2 Master. What makes this truly exceptional is that the badging program is entirely voluntary. Having 10 RAF instructors among the 20 earning their Basic badges further highlights the dedication and excellence within our team. I am immensely proud of the professionalism and commitment our instructors demonstrate every day at the 7th Army NCO Academy.



Deputy's Discussion



The 7th Army NCO Academy cadre recently facilitated English Language Training for NCO candidates from the Bundeswehr. This extensive 8- to 10-week course, conducted at the German NCO Academy in Delitzsch, Germany, provides German soldiers with a foundational understanding of essential spoken and written English sentence structures. Additionally, our instructors and a Chief Instructor conducted the ACFT Grader certification course for the XII Inspection Command team, enhancing our training capacity.

The 7th Army NCO Academy color guard participated in the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the liberation of the Flossenbürg concentration camp. It was a significant honor to be involved in this meaningful milestone within our partner community; the color guard proudly represented the 7th Army Training Command, reaffirming our commitment to remembering and honoring this important chapter in history. Furthermore, the Academy hosted delegates for a Military Facility Visit, during which our distinguished guests received a comprehensive tour of the Academy. This visit included our traditional brief at the Patton Desk and a detailed overview of the curriculum and instructional plans for American and International Military Students. On June 28, 2025, the Academy will participate in the ceremony to reaffirm our commitment during "Tag der Bundeswehr." This occasion signifies the continuation of our valued partnership with the German NCO School in Delitzsch, which has spanned over 30+ years. The 7th Army Non-Commissioned Officer Academy remains committed to enhancing interoperability among partner nations and allies.



Alpha Co. 1SG

In May 2025, the Army released a new Field Manual. FM 1, titled The Army: A Primer to our Profession of Arms, which offers significant benefits for Sergeants by providing a clear guide to understanding their roles within the Army's professional framework. With this new approach the content of the manual is easily relatable, digestible, facilitating better understanding and retention of key concepts.

This manual serves as a foundational resource that outlines what it means to be a member of the profession of arms. It will help aid Sergeants understand their obligations to fellow Soldiers, civilians, and the nation by reinforcing their identity as leaders and professionals within the Army structure.

Designed with new leaders in mind, FM 1 is structured to support leader development through real life scenarios and reflections. It encourages new leaders to think critically about their role as a leader and how they can further develop and mentor their subordinates effectively. This new manual emphasizes the Army's core values and the importance of ethical conduct. The real-life scenarios and moral dilemmas posed in this manual will further refine and reinforce sound judgment and decision-making skills.

Unlike traditional doctrinal materials produced by the Army, FM 1 offers straight forward language and incorporates historical vignettes and illustrations. With this new approach the content of the manual is easily relatable, digestible, and facilitates better understanding and retention of key concepts.

Overall, FM 1 addresses the evolving nature of warfare and the complexities of the modern battlefield. It will help prepare Sergeants to adapt to various challenges by understanding the Army's mission and their role in achieving it. It is a valuable tool, offering insights into professional expectations, leadership development, and ethical conduct. The easily accessible format and focus on real-world application make it an essential resource for Noncommissioned Officers committed to excellence in their military career.

General Randy A. George, Chief of Staff of the Army, has placed significant emphasis on this manual, stating "FM 1 is relevant to every Soldier, for we share common responsibilities and a common commitment to each other. As we each move through our Army journey, we should all pick this text up from time to time to refresh our understanding of our priorities and our sense of purpose"





Bravo Co. 1SG



Fitness is a cornerstone of military effectiveness and resilience, playing a crucial role in the overall performance of Soldiers in the Army. The importance of fitness in the military can be understood through several key dimensions: operational readiness, mental toughness, teamwork, and health.

First and foremost, operational readiness hinges on the physical fitness of Soldiers. The military often requires personnel to perform demanding tasks, including carrying heavy equipment, navigating challenging terrains, and engaging in combat scenarios. A physically fit soldier can endure long hours of rigorous activities, respond swiftly to emergencies, and maintain peak performance during operations. This readiness not only increases individual capabilities but also enhances the overall effectiveness of military units in accomplishing missions. Moreover, physical fitness contributes significantly to mental toughness. The rigorous training involved in maintaining fitness levels instills discipline, resilience, and determination among Soldiers. The ability to push through physical

challenges translates into a stronger mental fortitude, enabling Soldiers to handle the psychological stresses of combat and high-pressure situations. This mental strength is essential for making quick decisions, maintaining focus under fire, and working effectively in unpredictable environments.

Teamwork is another critical aspect where fitness plays a vital role. The military operates on the principle of cohesion and cooperation among its members. A fit soldier can contribute more effectively to their unit, fostering a sense of camaraderie and mutual support. When all members of a team are physically prepared, it enhances the collective capability of the unit, ensuring that they can rely on one another during challenging missions. This interconnectedness is vital for maintaining morale and achieving success in operations. Finally, fitness is integral to the health and well-being of Soldiers. Regular physical activity reduces the risk of chronic diseases, improves mental health, and enhances overall quality of life. A fit Soldier is less likely to suffer from injuries and illnesses, which can impact readiness and effectiveness. Furthermore, promoting fitness within the Army encourages a culture of health and wellness, benefiting not only individual soldiers but also their families and communities.

In conclusion, fitness matters significantly in the Army for various reasons, including operational readiness, mental toughness, teamwork, and overall health. We hold fitness in the Army in high regard through several key dimensions: operational readiness, mental resilience, teamwork, and physical health.



Chief of Training

The 7th Army NCO Academy will continue to prioritize achieving a 100% graduation rate for Basic Leader Course (BLC) students in the 4th Quarter. To achieve this goal, NCO support at the unit level is required to ensure that Soldiers arrive prepared for immediate integration into the 169-hour curriculum. Units must validate that every Soldier has a current NIPR user account and has verified access to Army 365.

We are committed to implementing and adapting to all Army changes. The Academy will maintain alignment with current standards and training guidance published in AR 350-1, effective 1 June 2025, and the implementation of the Army Fitness Test (AFT), also effective 1 June 2025. We strongly encourage units to attend the BLC Town Hall on Teams. These meetings will remain the primary venue for disseminating any new information or requirements for BLC.



The Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) publication, “First 100 Days of NCO,” highlights key areas of focus: leading by example, accepting accountability, learning from mistakes, and continuous development. (Center for Army Lessons Learned, 2024). The Army bases effective leadership at all levels is based on these concepts, which call for constant self-evaluation and improvement. This Academy will educate your NCOs on the fundamental tools they need to navigate those crucial first 100 days. But we need all NCOs to continue fostering this mindset long after their Soldiers return from BLC.

“DEPART TO LEAD!”

3rd Quarter Dismissals

BLC Graduates

REASON	TOTAL
ACFT	1
HT&WT	13
ACADEMIC	2
DISCIPLINARY	0

FY25 TOTAL
1498



Honor Roll-Up

05-25

Distinguished Honor Graduate
Honor Graduate
Commandant's Writing Award
Iron Soldier Male
Iron Soldier Female

SPC Halverson, Logan
SPC Ybarra, Marcella
SGT Myers, Aleysha
SGT Magris, Pharaoh
SPC Mills, Donnica

2 CR
LRMC
LRMC
173RD ABCT
10TH SF

06-25

Distinguished Honor Graduate
Honor Graduate
Commandant's Writing Award
Iron Soldier Male
Iron Soldier Female

SPC Simmons, Jude
SGT Flynn, Kaitlin
SPC Liu, William
SPC Schanel, Hunter
SGT Flynn, Kaitlin

12TH CAB
173RD ABCT
173RD ABCT
2 CR
173RD ABCT

SGT York Award



Class 05-25

SPC Mills, Donnica

528th Special Operations Sustainment Bde



Class 06-25

SGT Carhart, Johnathan

HHBN 60th GPC



Class Stats

Class	Enrolled	Graduated	CMDT's list
05-25	215	198	47
06-25	218	202	43



Upcoming Dates

Class	Report Date	Graduation
08-25	30JUN25	25JUL25
09-25	01AUG25	27AUG25
10-25	03SEP25	26SEP25



Instructor of the Quarter

My desire to compete for Instructor of the Quarter (IOQ) began after earning my Basic Army Instructor Badge in March of 2025. As someone who never backs down from a challenge, I welcomed the opportunity to compete for Instructor of the Cycle (IOC). With guidance from my mentor, I approached the required assessments with a simple mindset: provide the same quality of instruction I do every other day. This mentality helped me win the IOC for Class 05-25 with an opportunity to compete for IOQ the following month.

The learning curve for IOQ was humbling. The topics for the board were more in-depth and led me to question how to improve as an instructor and how I could improve my skills as an instructor. My understanding of adult learning deepened, creating connections between the Experiential Learning Model, classroom techniques, and their effectiveness.

Overall, my journey to IOQ was not easy. It required introspection on what was truly important while providing a much-needed developmental moment. Participating in IOQ is essential for instructors who are committed to attaining excellence.



International Students



05-25

SWEDEN

SSG Gustav E. Gimteg

06-25

ALBANIA

SGT Eduart Barjami
SGT Enes Haka
SGT Fatjon Pirja
SGT Kamila Toslluku



250 Years of Legacy and Leadership

SFC Sonia J. McElfresh

Throughout its 250-year history, the US Army has established itself as a potent force on the international scene. Although technological improvements and strategic doctrine play important roles, the Army's permanent strength resides within its ranks, more notably in the unrivaled role that its noncommissioned officers (NCOs) play. NCOs are known as "the backbone" of the Army, serving as a bridge between enlisted Soldiers and commissioned officers. They have been teachers, disciplinarians, and leaders in battle. Their job has changed to keep up with changes in military doctrine, technology, and culture.

British and Prussian military traditions had a significant influence on the American NCO Corps from the Revolutionary War to the Civil War. During the Revolutionary War, NCOs trained Soldiers, maintained discipline, and boosted morale during difficult times. (Mages et. Al, n.d). NCOs in the U.S. Army are integral to mission success, serving as small-unit leaders. Their responsibilities include training Soldiers, maintaining discipline, and ensuring combat readiness. By the time of the Civil War, battles were getting bigger and more intense. Therefore, it was crucial to have competent NCOs to execute tactical directives and maintain unit cohesion.

NCOs played a crucial role in leading troops on the front lines, ensuring everything ran smoothly, and introducing new technologies. Therefore, the Army established structured training routes and NCO academies to integrate professional development into the organization. (Mages et al., n.d.). The U.S. Army invests heavily in the professional development of its NCOs. Programs such as the Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development (NCOPD) system provide NCOs with the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to lead effectively. These programs emphasize leadership, technical expertise, and adaptability, ensuring that NCOs are prepared to mentor Soldiers and manage complex missions (Army.mil, 2023).

One of the defining characteristics of the U.S. Army's NCO Corps is its emphasis on mission command. Emphasizing on mission command empowers NCOs to make tactical decisions on the ground, enabling them to respond quickly to unforeseen challenges. For instance, if a roadblock appears during a mission, NCOs have the authority and expertise to determine how to navigate around without waiting for direct orders from higher command (Defense One, 2022). Decentralized decision-making is key to the Army's operational flexibility, allowing seamless and efficient mission progress in even the most complex and shifting environments.



250 Years of Legacy and Leadership (continued)

Many other countries' militaries, such as those of Russia and China, have historically placed less emphasis on the development and utilization of NCOs, leading to significant differences in military effectiveness, adaptability, and operational efficiency. This report examines the distinct advantages of the U.S. Army's reliance on NCOs, compares them with the challenges faced by other nations that lack a robust NCO system, and highlights the broader implications for military readiness and effectiveness.

Within the Russian military, leadership roles are predominantly assigned to officers, resulting in limited decision-making power for enlisted personnel. Unlike some other military organizations, the Russian military does not have an equivalent NCO Corps. This top-down structure hampers operational flexibility and adaptability, particularly in combat situations (Task & Purpose, 2021). For instance, the ongoing conflicts involving Russia have highlighted the lack of experienced NCOs as a considerable vulnerability. Junior officers are responsible for managing both strategic and tactical decisions, which can sometimes lead to challenges due to their limited practical experience compared to NCOs. The Russian military's inability to delegate authority to NCOs has severely limited its effectiveness on the battlefield (Task & Purpose, 2021).

China has recognized the importance of NCOs and is actively working to develop its own NCO Corps as part of its efforts to modernize the People's Liberation Army (PLA) by 2049. However, the PLA faces significant challenges in building a professional NCO Corps, including cultural and institutional barriers. Historically, the PLA has relied on a rigid, hierarchical structure that limits the autonomy of junior leaders. Transitioning to a more decentralized system will require significant changes in training, doctrine, and leadership culture (Defense One, 2022).

Without NCOs, the Army would lose its primary leaders at the small-unit level. Commissioned officers, typically responsible for larger units and strategic decision-making, would be forced to assume direct control over squads and sections, a role for which they are neither trained nor structured. This would result in a severe leadership vacuum, leading to confusion, inefficiency, and a breakdown in command and control (Total Military Insight, 2025). NCOs play a crucial role in counseling and supporting Soldiers, addressing both professional and personal challenges. Without this support structure, Soldiers would be more vulnerable to stress, burnout, and mental health issues. The absence of NCOs would not only degrade the Army's internal effectiveness but also diminish its standing among the world's leading military powers. The ability to project power, respond to crises, and maintain deterrence relies heavily on the leadership and professionalism of the NCO corps. In an era of rapid technological change and complex threats, the loss of NCOs would leave the Army ill-prepared to meet future challenges (Military.com, 2025).

Based on the evidence, the hypothetical absence of NCOs in the United States Army would result in catastrophic consequences for leadership, training, morale, operational effectiveness, and innovation. We cannot deny the Army's accomplishments. NCOs serve as the guardians of standards, the guides of warriors, and the spearheads of the spear when it comes to combat. There is one thing that will continue to be certain even though the nature of combat is constantly changing: the NCOs of the U.S. Army will continue to form the backbone of its fighting force, leading the way with bravery, determination, and an unflinching commitment to success.



250 Years of Legacy and Leadership (continued)

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Become an Instructor

Join the 7th Army Noncommissioned Officer Academy team by submitting your completed packet to the Chief of Training and Deputy Commandant. Once your packet has been reviewed, the NCOA team will set up a date and time to conduct a follow-on interview to ensure that you would make a great member of the team.



Instructor Packet

- Current Soldier Talent Profile (STP)
- Recent ACFT Scorecard
- Recent 5500/01 (if req'd)
- Last 3 NCOERs
- 1-2 page essay on why you want to become an Instructor



Requirements

Possesses mature judgement, military bearing and initiative

Have 18 months remaining in Germany

Meets AR 600-9 Standards

Be able to pass the ACFT

Holds the ranks of SSG – SFC

Be able to pass a background check

Promotion and Schools

90% Promotion rate from Staff Sergeant to Sergeant First Class as a Small Group Leader

Common Faculty Development – Instructor Course (CFD-IC)

Receive SQI – 8

Instructor Observation Course

Instructor Writer Course

Three levels of Army Instructor Badges (Basic, Senior, and Master)



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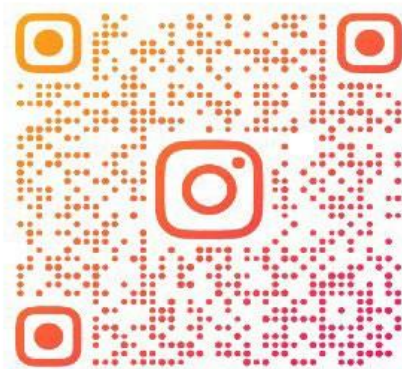
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