

THE INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE PROGRAMS OFFICE (IGPO)

By

Gary Roser, Colonel, USMC (Ret)

Assistant Dean, School of International Graduate Studies
Naval Postgraduate School

The International Graduate Programs Office (IGPO) is responsible for the cultural, social and academic integration of our international military/civilian students and their families at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS).

What does this mean you might ask? It means that IGPO is a “service and support” organization answering to the various needs of our international students. We understand the confusion and frustration new international students have upon their arrival in the United States. Therefore, IGPO has built a set of unique programs to ease their transition into a new school, new culture and new living conditions, here in Monterey, California.

What does “IGPO” Do?

The IGPO is literally the first stop for an international student here at the NPS, even before they arrive. It is the “student admissions and approval” office for all international applicants. IGPO reviews each student’s application to ensure that it meets the necessary English proficiency requirements, academic grades, and subject requirements for enrollment into any one of our 40 academic curricula--from engineering, business administration, space systems, meteorology, oceanography to national security affairs. Courses are offered by the following graduate schools at NPS:

- Graduate School of Business and Public Policy
- Graduate School of Engineering and Applied Science

- Graduate School of Operational and Informational Sciences

- School of International Graduate Studies

For more information about the various academic programs here at NPS, please visit our website at: <http://www.nps.edu>

Provides Cradle-to-Grave Services

Before a student’s arrival to the U.S., we work hand-in-hand with the Security Assistance Office (SAO) or the Defense Attaché Office (DAO) in their home country to provide an extensive orientation package to prepare them for what to expect upon their arrival—from clothing to housing assistance. A week before the student’s first class begins, we provide an orientation session about the school, local information, and answer any questions that a student might have, such as what to do in the case of an emergency, whom to contact, etc.

Once a student arrives at NPS, he or she is given every form of support and assistance possible to make their stay here in Monterey, California as enjoyable as possible. We are the liaison and support office dedicated to assisting with whatever quality of life issues that might arise during our students’ stay at Naval Postgraduate School, such as helping a student get a driver’s license, whom to contact at the immigration office, and others. No question or problem is too big or too small.

IGPO Programs

Since our number one priority is servicing our international students, we have designed a number of programs to meet their unique needs and requirements. These programs include the following:

Support Programs and Services :

Military Sponsor Program – each international student is paired with a U.S. student

Seminar: U.S. Informational Program

Course: Communications Skills for Internationals

Course: Academic Writing for Internationals

International Executive Committee – Command Sponsor

Military Sponsor Program: Each international student is paired with a current U.S. student, a military officer from one of the four Services--Army, Air Force, Navy, or Marines. The pairing of a military sponsor is important in assisting each international student's initial adjustment during their first day, first week, first month, and first quarter stay at NPS. The U.S. student assigned to the sponsor duty is matched to the curriculum and interests of the international student. The sponsor is the first person to greet the international student upon their arrival at the airport and is there to assist with housing, food, transportation, academic, and other needs. Lifetime friendships are built as a result of this approach.

Seminar: U.S. Informational Program:

This fun-filled class enhances our international students' understanding of American society, institutions and way of life. Field trips are designed to expose as many facets of the American experience as possible, at the local, state and federal levels. This includes trips to local cultural events such as the Monterey County Fair, sight-seeing in San Francisco, visits to

California's State Capitol, NASA-Ames science labs, local agricultural industries and wineries, among others. Additionally, students will travel to Washington D.C. to attend briefings at the Pentagon, the U.S. State Department, Congress, the U.S. Naval Academy, among others. Course number is IT-1500.

English Communications Assistance:

Verbal communication in English can be difficult, even for the very best-skilled of our international students. Our English as a Second Language (ESL) program is coordinated and taught by an experienced instructor from the Defense Language Institute, English Language Center (DLIELC). As a result, we offer an English communications skills class for non-English students or those seeking to improve their English proficiency skills for class presentations or communications with other students. Students can practice at our English Lab or request tutoring assistance. Course number is IT-1600.

Academic Writing for Internationals:

For those students seeking to improve their English writing skills or requiring thesis writing assistance, this class will assist them in their goals. Course number is IT-1700.

International Executive Committee (IEC):

Our international students have a voice at NPS. They can join the International Executive Committee, a voluntary, representational organization, and have their committee representative address issues of concerns or items of interest with senior Naval Postgraduate School officials. The committee also provides a great way to meet other international students. The IEC also helps plan the annual international day in the Monterey area (an event attended by over 3,000 local residents), raising funds for various social events and having fun beyond the classroom. Additionally, the IEC

distributes used furniture to international students through the International Furniture Locker program, providing a tremendous service to all international students.

About the Author: Gary Roser, Colonel, USMC (Ret) was awarded Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service medal and many others while in the Marine Corps. He retired in 1991 following a successful tour as the commander of the Marine Aircraft Group 42. Roser joined the Naval Postgraduate School shortly after his retirement as Director, International Programs and was promoted to his current position in 2000. To contact IGPO, please call (831) 656-3062. Fax: (831) 656-3064 or e-mail: groser@nps.edu