
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

ORAL PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNATIONAL MILITARY STUDENTS (IMS) ENROLLED IN U.S. ARMY OFFICER ADVANCED COURSES (OAC): [The following is a reprint of CDR TRADOC//ATTG message 111303Z Sep 98, subject as above.]

References:

- A. MSG, DIR SATFA, 211100Z Apr 98, Subject as above.
 - B. MSG, HQ TRADOC, ATTG-ILO, 181324Z Jun 97, Subject: International Military student (IMS) attendance at officer advanced courses (OAC).
1. Ref. A is rescinded. The effective date announced in Ref. B for establishing an oral English language proficiency standard for IMS attending OAC is revised to 1 Oct 99.
 2. We solicit your assistance in establishing appropriate prerequisites for IMS attending OAC. Request school/center and CINC feedback/suggestions on IMS participation/performance in OAC NLT 2 Nov 98.
 3. Following are facts for consideration:
 - a. OAC quotas for IMS are in demand. Both U.S. and foreign governments and armed forces benefit from U.S. and IMS training side by side.
 - b. IMS quotas in OAC are constrained to no more than two per seminar group in most cases. There is a significant standby list for IMS in OAC.
 - c. IMS must meet the same basic requirements as U.S. personnel for OAC enrollment. In addition, they must pass an English comprehension level (ECL) test with a minimum score from 70-80, depending on the school. This test measures only listening comprehension and reading ability. The average ECL was 87 for IMS enrolled in OAC during FY 97-98. Previous studies showed no correlation between ECL score and class performance.
 - d. Approximately 80 percent of OAC consist of small group instruction requiring active participation from attendees. Seventy-five percent of OAC small group instructors (SGI) surveyed in 1997 agreed that limited English skills hinder ability of IMS in OAC to interact with the rest of the group. Ninety percent of SGI agreed that an additional test of speaking ability would make IMS much better prepared for OAC. Attitude, motivation, and understanding of U.S. army functions, organization and tactics were also considered important.
 - e. A study of 71 IMS in OAC who were administered oral proficiency interviews (OPI) showed 58 percent scored 2/2 or higher, 18 percent scored 2/1+ and 24 percent scored under 2/1+. Approximately 50 percent of IMS scoring below 2/1+ experienced documented difficulties in the course, compared with only 20 percent of those scoring 2/1+ or above. Sixty-six percent of IMS requiring significant extra time from SGI and/or in-class sponsors had OPI scores below 2/2.
 4. HQ TRADOC personnel will work with ODUSA-IA as well as school and CINC training representatives to reach a consensus on this issue.
 5. POC is Dr. Judy Damewooj, DSN is 727-2056, Commercial (757) 680-2056, FAX 4142, DAMEWOJ@MONROE.ARMY.MIL.