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Naval Chaplaincy School and Center completes RP Managers' Course pilot

COLUMBIA, S.C. -- The Naval Chaplaincy School and Center (NCSC) completed a pilot of the new Religious Program Specialist (RP) Managers' Course April 25 and celebrated the graduation of 10 students.

Previously available as a three-week in-residence course, the new course curriculum is a blending of distance and resident learning. The Religious Program Specialists and Logistics Specialists piloting the course began with five weeks of distance learning Feb. 17 followed by two weeks of schoolhouse training starting April 14.

According to Claire Olona, NCSC learning standards officer, the revised course enables accommodation of religious ministry requirements of various faith groups and supports the provision of religious ministry, with students training to occupational standards of E5 and E6 ranks. Areas covered include administration, religious advisement, ministry support and accommodation, pastoral care support, expeditionary ministry support and finance and accounting.

"The blended learning approach of learning includes Distributed Learning (DL) in the Collaborative Learning Environment (CLE) and resident Instructor Led Training (ILT), allowing flexibility for students to participate when commands cannot afford to have their staff away on Temporary Additional Duty (TAD) for three weeks,"

said Olona. "The students begin to build base knowledge and form relationships during DL that will continue during ILT and the resident portion of the course. The blended approach uses multiple delivery modes that reach a variety of learning styles; increasing retention and learning."

Logistics Specialist 1st Class Rashaad Essex, from Naval Station Great Lakes helped pilot the course, which he characterized as "extremely helpful."

"Once I return back to my chapel, I will have a wealth of knowledge to share with my shipmates and chaplain," said Essex. "Not being a Religious Program Specialist, this course has given me a solid understanding of my responsibilities."

Essex added that the revised course structure enabled his understanding of the course curriculum.

"The blended nature of the distance learning and resident portion was unique," he said. "I was able to gain a better scope of understanding during the distance learning portion and this helped me tremendously in the resident portion. Some of the curriculum, especially the budget and finance section, correlates with the Logistics Specialist Rating. I really enjoyed the entire course."

Capt. Kyle Fauntleroy, chaplain and NCSC's commanding officer, said the Chaplain Corps has been looking forward to the new RP Managers' Course offering.

"The Chaplain Corps is excited about the potential flexibility and extended reach distributed learning offers," he said. "The feedback from the pilot course participants has been universally positive and we look for even more input as they take what they've learned back to the fleet."

NCSC will offer the RP Managers' Course twice a year. For future course offerings, interested students can check the Chaplain Corps link on Navy Knowledge Online or the Catalog of Navy Training Courses (CANTRAC).

For information about the Naval Chaplaincy School and Center, visit

<https://www.netc.navy.mil/centers/chaplain/> .

Additional information on the Naval Education and Training Command can be found on the NETC website: <https://www.netc.navy.mil>.

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Story by Chaplain Cmdr. Carla Barry, Naval Chaplaincy School and Center Public Affairs