

Noncommissioned Officer Education System Structure Redesign

By Command Sergeant Major Clinton J. Pearson

Today's Noncommissioned Officer Education System (NCOES) is a four-tiered, rigid, task-based system designed around a *Select-Train-Promote* model, instead of preparing NCOs for a wide range of assignments and missions that are encountered on today's battlefield. With recent modernization and transformation efforts, the need to redesign our NCOES is obvious. We must meet the requirements of leaders in full-spectrum operations, align the critical developmental transition points in a leader's career with the Army's assignment process, supplement force stability initiatives, and incorporate a system that operates in concert with a modular force. The NCOES must remain focused on core areas—including leading, training, maintaining standards, caring for Soldiers, technical competencies, and tactical warrior skills—while integrating additional training on conceptual and interpersonal skills.

Modernization efforts are being coordinated with the Center for Army Leadership (CAL), using a two-phased approach. Phase I consists of near-term changes affecting current Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course (BNCOC)/Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course (ANCOC) classes. Phase II consists of shifting from the current four-tiered system to the new three-tiered system. It focuses on leadership development and the Warrior Ethos, keeping the responsibility of teaching technical skills with proponent schools/centers, and is not an integral component of the common core.

Tier 1, the Warrior Leaders Course (WLC), is for all E-4s with promotion potential. This course trains specialists to be NCOs and focuses on leading, training, maintaining standards, caring for soldiers, and tactical warrior skills. The WLC prepares Soldiers for assignments in teams, crews, and squads. Potentially, graduating Soldiers will be laterally transferred to corporal upon graduation. Only corporals are eligible for recommendation to sergeant.

Tier 2, the Intermediate Leaders Course (ILC), is for E-6s with promotion potential. This course is non-military occupational specialty (MOS) specific and trains the staff sergeant in skills requisite for all MOSs. It prepares individuals to be the primary trainers, operating in a platoon and company environment. Course completion is a prerequisite for consideration for promotion selection to sergeant first class.

Tier 3, the Senior Leaders Course (SLC), is for promotable E-7s, E-8s, and sister service E-8 equivalents. This course replaces the Sergeants Major Course (SMC) in its present form and will prepare master sergeants to function within battalions, brigade combat teams, and unit of employment (UE) organizations. Completion of this course is a prerequisite for promotion to sergeant major.

