

27 July 2001

## **COURSE EQUIVALENCY**

### **1. PURPOSE:**

To state Defense Acquisition University (DAU) policy regarding roles, responsibilities, and application procedures used to determine DAU course equivalency. This directive supersedes and replaces DAU Policy Memorandum #5 of March 6, 2000, and Policy Memorandum #10 of February 7, 2000.

### **2. BACKGROUND:**

The DAU recognizes that courses offered by various training providers may include instructional objectives or learning outcomes that are similar to those in DAU courses. The DAU, therefore, permits the use of equivalent courses to substitute for the training and education it provides to the acquisition workforce. Granting equivalency status to courses efficiently uses resources without sacrificing the quality of training.

### **3. APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE:**

This directive applies to all DAU campuses, the Directors for Acquisition Career Management (DACM's), and training providers seeking equivalency.

### **4. POLICY:**

a. The DAU Provost may grant equivalency for certification and assignment-specific acquisition courses, but not for acquisition courses listed in the DAU catalog as "desired."

b. For a course to be certified as equivalent, the course content, learning objectives, instructor qualifications, and student assessments must ensure that students are able to achieve 90% of the learning objectives at the appropriate learning level of the DAU course.

c. Course equivalency status is granted for a two-year period. The date of certification (i.e., effective date) will be backdated to the date when the course was established by the training provider, unless there were major deficiencies to be worked out. Upon each anniversary date of certification for course equivalency, the training provider head representative must provide an update of any changes to their course and certify, in writing, that the course continues to meet the equivalency requirements specified in Paragraph 4.b. The appropriate Education Specialist will then review the equivalent course to determine whether there have been any changes that may affect their certification status. If the review is in conjunction with the expiration of the certificate of equivalency, the Education Specialist will recommend whether the course is to be re-certified or to undergo a re-evaluation.

d. A course must be re-evaluated for equivalency whenever (a) more than 25% of the course content of the DAU course is changed, (b) new learning objectives are added to the DAU course that may not be covered in the equivalent course based on the prior equivalency review, (c) the content of the equivalent course is changed such that a DAU learning objective may no longer be adequately covered, (d) student assessment is changed in either the DAU course or equivalent course, or (e) instructor qualifications change. Re-evaluation will be conducted using the same process as an initial equivalency review except that the review will be limited to those subject areas affected by the change. The course being re-evaluated remains an active equivalent, and the original certification anniversary date does not change.

e. Course Managers or Education Specialists may conduct pre-arranged site visits at any time to verify that the course continues to meet current DAU course learning objectives.

f. A course will remain equivalent unless the DAU or the training provider no longer offer the course, or the course content, learning objectives, instructor qualifications, or student assessments change.

## **5. RESPONSIBILITIES:**

### **a. DAU Provost:**

(1) Coordinates, tracks, and approves requests for course equivalency.

(2) Notifies the requesting training provider of the equivalency determination.

(3) Notifies the DAU President and Vice President, cognizant Functional Advisor, DACMs and DAU campuses of successful equivalency reviews.

(4) Forwards the equivalency application package to the appropriate Education Specialist and Course Manager.

(5) Publishes course equivalencies in the DAU Course Catalog (annually) and on the DAU Homepage (within two weeks of equivalency being granted).

(6) Performs an annual interim status check.

(7) Initiates the bi-annual re-certification process.

### **b. Training Providers:**

(1) Submit requests to the DAU Provost.

(2) Incorporate changes when notified.

(3) Notify the DAU Course Manager of significant changes in their course, student assessment, or instructor qualifications.

c. DAU Education Specialists:

(1) Evaluate proposed courses and recommend equivalency when all requirements have been met. A recommendation for non-equivalency should not be forwarded, until the training provider has been given a list of deficiencies in their application and has had a reasonable time to respond.

(2) Check equivalent course(s) annually to determine whether there are changes to the course status and, at the end of the second year, recommends re-certification of the course.

d. DAU Course Managers:

(1) Notify the DAU Program Director of course equivalency requests and recommendations.

(2) Ensure terminal and enabling learning objectives on DAU Homepage are current and accurate.

(3) Evaluate proposed courses and recommend equivalency when all requirements have been met. A recommendation for non-equivalency should not be forwarded, until the training provider has been given a list of deficiencies in their application and has had a reasonable time to respond.

(4) Provide any changes to the DAU course that may affect the status of the equivalent course to the equivalent training provider within 30 days of their implementation.

**6. PROCEDURES:**

a. Interested training providers should contact the DAU Provost. The Provost will then direct the proposed training provider to the DAU Homepage to obtain information (i.e., course objectives, learning outcomes, etc.) to answer the DAU Course Equivalency Questionnaire (Enclosure 1) and conduct the side-by-side analysis. A separate Equivalency Questionnaire must be completed for each course. The training provider should then submit the completed package to the DAU Provost. Steps for processing the request are shown in the DAU Course Equivalency Determination Process (Enclosure 2).

b. The Education Specialist and the Course Manager evaluate the course, using the DAU Checklist for Evaluating Course Equivalency Requests (Enclosure 3) and submit a recommendation in writing to the DAU Provost. Education Specialists and Course Managers will communicate directly with the proposed training providers to obtain clarification on deficiencies between the courses and to provide recommended solutions.

c. The DAU Provost will provide written notification to the training provider, the DAU President and Vice President, the cognizant Functional Advisor, the DACMs, and the DAU campuses. The DAU will list approved course equivalents in the DAU Course Catalog and on the DAU Homepage.

d. The DAU Course Manager will notify equivalent providers about changes to the DAU course within 30 days of implementation.

e. The DAU Education Specialist will check the equivalent course annually to determine whether there are changes to the course status and at the end of the second year, recommend re-certification of the course.

FOR THE PRESIDENT:

JAMES R. MORAN  
COL (P), USA  
Vice President

Enclosures:

1. DAU Course Equivalency Questionnaire
2. Course Equivalency Determination Process
3. DAU Checklist for Evaluating Course Equivalency

**ADDENDUM TO  
DIRECTIVE 708 COURSE EQUIVALENCY DATED 7 JULY 2001**

September 2002

In response to your request and the need to reduce equivalency review time and instill a perception of a fair and equitable review process the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) is instituting several policy changes within the DAU Course Equivalency Program. These changes are effective from the date of this letter and are provided for your information and adherence. This letter serves as an addendum to DAU Directive 708-1, Course Equivalency, dated July 27, 2001 (Attachment 1), until these policy changes can be incorporated into the next directive revision.

During the past several months, DAU and the American Council on Education (ACE) conducted several pilot equivalency reviews and found that the review time to conduct course equivalency reviews could be significantly reduced. To effect this goal, DAU will utilize ACE to provide an independent and quick response course equivalency review. Based on the information in the review, DAU will render an "equivalency" determination. ACE will follow the same procedures and checklists that DAU course managers and education specialists have used in the past when conducting course equivalency reviews (Attachment 1 Enclosures 2 and 3). All equivalency review requests will be forwarded to ACE through DAU for evaluation and recommendation. Future extension requests will require training providers to re-submit a complete equivalency request/package (i.e., questionnaire, course materials, textbooks, examinations, instructor resumes, etc.) Extension reviews will be required only if a 25% change has occurred in either the DAU course or the equivalent course. If a 25% change has not occurred, DAU will grant an extension. If necessary, DAU and ACE will work with training providers to align equivalency reviews with ACE credit recommendation reviews. New equivalencies and future extensions will be granted for three years versus two years. The cost for ACE reviews (initial and extensions) will be borne by the educational institution requesting equivalency. ACE will prepare a cost proposal upon receipt of each equivalency submission. On a trial basis, ACE is willing to accept review and/or extension materials on a searchable CD-ROM versus paper copy for reviews that are not complex. Accompanying materials not on a CD-ROM would need to be submitted in paper copy. The key to the success of an equivalency review is a well defined mapping of learning outcomes. Based on the outcome and success of this trial, it may be possible that the larger and more complex reviews may be submitted on a searchable CD-ROM versus paper copy and would potentially reduce the high printing costs that some providers are experiencing.

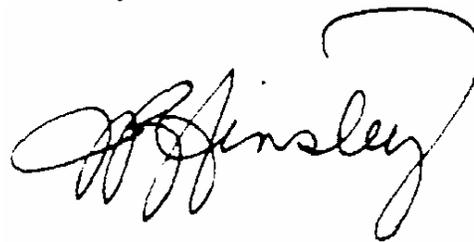
As a matter of policy, DAU conducts an End-of-Course (Kirkpatrick Level I) Survey for all students to gauge their reaction to the instruction and how they plan to use the knowledge and skills gained from the course. In order to track student reaction regarding equivalent courses, DAU requires that each Department of Defense (DoD) attendee of equivalent training answer the DAU End-of-Course Survey. A copy of the survey is

attached for your information (Attachment 2). Equivalent offerors will provide data on all DoD employees that attend equivalent training. The following attendee information is required: name (last, first, mi), SSN, agency, phone number, and e-mail address. The reporting template has been provided (Attachment 3). The equivalent course name and number along with DoD employee information will be submitted within five working days after completion of training to Mr. Michael Lambert at [michael.lambert@dau.mil](mailto:michael.lambert@dau.mil). DAU will furnish the results of the survey data for your offerings upon your request.

DAU student materials will be provided via the DAU Provost in hardcopy format. Student materials are defined as learning objectives, lesson assignments sheets, and textual materials (i.e., all instructional materials provided to the student on the first day of class). It is the responsibility of the equivalent training provider to develop and maintain currency of course materials. DAU will continue to inform equivalent training providers when more than 25% of the content is changed within a DAU course, new learning objectives are added to a DAU course that may not be covered in the equivalent course based on prior equivalency reviews, student assessments and/or instructor qualifications change.

Failure to abide by these new policy changes will result in revocation of equivalency status. These policy changes will improve upon the course equivalency process and the quality of the training that is received by acquisition workforce members. All questions should be directed to Mr. Michael Lambert at (703) 805-3343.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Robert Ainsley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

J. Robert Ainsley, Ed.D.  
Acting Provost

**Defense Acquisition University**  
**Course Equivalency Questionnaire**

Please complete a separate questionnaire for each course to be considered for equivalency. Send completed questionnaire and two copies of all materials to: Defense Acquisition University, 9820 Belvoir Road, Attn: Office of the Provost, Ft. Belvoir, VA 22060-5565

Name of Training Provider \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title of Contact Person

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Course Number and Title for Requested Equivalency

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Corresponding DAU Course Number and Title

\_\_\_\_\_

Course Length (please show by lesson in hourly increments)

Course Prerequisites

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Course Objectives

1. List major subject matter areas as they relate to the course objectives by completing the chart below.

Objectives	Main Training Content	Methods	Media	Instructional Materials

Enclosure 1

2. Attach side-by-side analysis to indicate equivalency of your objectives to the DAU course. [www.dau.mil/equivalency](http://www.dau.mil/equivalency) provides learning objectives and outcomes for each DAU course.

Content

3. Attach two copies of the course syllabus or plan of instruction that shows the course outline.

4. Explain how the course is kept current and accurate.

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5. Describe your institution's methods for course evaluation. Please provide examples.

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6. Include two copies of all course materials with your submission package (e.g., texts, lesson plans, reference materials, handouts, exams, etc.).

Faculty

7. List the faculty who teach the course and their qualifications. Attach two copies of their resumes showing relevant education, training and experience.

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8. Describe your institution's criteria for evaluating faculty.

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9. Describe your institution's means of assuring that faculty stay current in their subject area.

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**Defense Acquisition University**  
**Course Equivalency Determination Process**

All applications from requesting training providers will be processed by the Defense Acquisition University, Office of the Provost, in the order received. Course equivalency is granted for two years. The table below lists the steps to administer the program.

Step	Process	Expected Completion
1	Training Provider conducts side-by-side analysis of courses, comparing objectives of the DAU course to the proposed equivalent course, completes questionnaire, and forwards package with all course materials to DAU, Office of the Provost.	Training Provider's Discretion
2a	DAU, Office of the Provost, forwards package to appropriate Education Specialist to review for completeness and educational equivalency determination.	2 weeks (Concurrent w/2b)
2b	DAU, Office of the Provost, forwards package to Course Manager to review for technical accuracy and currency.	2 weeks (Concurrent w/2a)
3	DAU Education Specialist and DAU Course Manager review package and work out any deficiencies with the training provider.	3 weeks (From receipt of materials)
4	DAU Education Specialist and DAU Course Manager notify DAU Provost of equivalency recommendation.	1 week
5	DAU, Office of the Provost, notifies training provider of results. If equivalency is granted, DAU, Office of the Provost, concurrently notifies the DAU President and Vice President, cognizant Functional Advisor, DACMs, and the DAU campuses.	1 week
6	DAU, Office of the Provost, publishes equivalencies on DAU Homepage (within 2 weeks of equivalency being granted) and in DAU Course Catalog (annually).	2 weeks

Enclosure 2

**Defense Acquisition University**  
**Checklist for Evaluating Course Equivalency Requests**

<u>EDUCATION SPECIALIST</u>			
Evaluation Criteria	Yes	No	Comments
1. Learning objectives are stated in measurable and observable terms.			
2. At least 90% of the learning objectives match DAU course objectives in task and levels of learning.			
3. Lesson content, exercises and activities match the objectives.			
4. Adequate time is allowed to meet learning objectives.			
5. Instructional methods reflect the appropriate learning level.			
6. Handouts, films, slides and other media support learning objectives and course content.			
7. Test and/or assessment items are referenced to learning objectives.			
8. Measure of student performance has established criteria or standards.			
9. Lesson plans correspond to the skill and knowledge required for course.			
10. Methods are used to evaluate the course.			
11. Criteria exist for evaluating faculty performance.			
12. Faculty is required to stay current in the subject area.			

Additional Comments/Recommendations:

<u>COURSE MANAGER</u>			
Evaluation Criteria	Yes	No	Comments
1. Required prerequisites are similar to the DAU course.			
2. Targeted audience is similar to the DAU course.			
3. Text materials appropriately address course objectives.			
4. Text materials are a useful reference for lesson/course.			
5. Course content is organized and sequenced logically.			
6. Lesson plan cites current applicable doctrine (i.e., regulations, DoD directives, pamphlets, etc.)			
7. Course materials are in accordance with current doctrine.			
8. Qualified faculty teach the course.			

Additional Comments/Recommendations:

**Equivalency Status**

Education Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes  No   
 Course Manager Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes  No

Enclosure 3