Master of Science in Acquisition - Program Management
Course Descriptions
MSA-PM: Cohort 836-264

MN3301 Acquisition of Defense Systems (3-2)
This course introduces the principles and concepts that underline successful defense acquisition management. The course focuses on management of the acquisition process for defense systems from the development of an initial desired capability or need through design, development, production, fielding, sustainment, and disposal. Students gain an understanding of successful acquisition as an interdisciplinary activity through contributions and applications of principles from business, management, and technical disciplines. The course also emphasizes the statutory, regulatory, and policy environment of acquisition. Numerous case studies illustrate the application of concepts and principles in actual acquisition programs. Prerequisites: None.

MN3303 Principles of Acquisition and Contract Management (4-0)
This course is an introduction to the principles of government acquisition and contracting. It presents the fundamentals of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and the DoD FAR Supplement; the federal acquisition and contracting processes, including requirements determination, acquisition strategies, government contract law, ethics, contract types, contracting methods, and acquisition/contract management techniques. Prerequisites: None.

MN3070 Fundamentals of Cost Benefit Analysis (4-0)
This course introduces you to economics as a social science and teaches you the tools of micro-economic analysis that are necessary to understand and conduct economic policy analyses. One of the key tools of economic analysis is Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA). You will learn the utility as well as the challenges of using CBA to study the role of the public sector in our market economy. After a brief introduction to CBA, which includes motivating the need for conducting CBA in the public sector, we study the fundamental tools of microeconomics, including supply and demand, elasticity, market equilibrium, social welfare, the effects of government interventions in the economy, and how firms make decisions in competitive and non-competitive markets. We then turn to the study of how to conduct CBA and how to be critical consumers of such. Prerequisites: College Algebra or equivalent.

MN3315 Acquisition Management and Contract Administration (4-0)
This course focuses on the management functions and decision-making techniques involved in the award and administration of Best Value competitively negotiated contracts. The first phase of the course concentrates on the source selection phase of the acquisition process; specific topics include acquisition planning, market research, source selection planning, proposal development, solicitation management, source selection evaluation, contract award, and contractor debriefings. The second phase of the course emphasizes the performance phase of the acquisition process; specific topic areas include organizing for contract administration, transitioning to performance, quality management, subcontract management, financial management, performance monitoring, change management, and contract closeout. Emphasis is on the use of legal case studies and practical exercises. Prerequisites: MN3303.

MN3302 Advanced Project Management (3-0)
This course builds on the students' experience in the acquisition workforce. Cases are used to examine each of the major disciplines in the acquisition process and bring each student to a current and common understanding of the acquisition environment, process, requirements and management approaches. Prerequisites: None.

MN3309 Software Acquisition Management for Defense Systems (3-2)
This course focuses on the key aspects of mission critical computer resources with particular emphasis on major weapon systems embedded software. The course analyzes software development, software risk management, software in the systems acquisition life cycle, software metrics, contracting methods for software, software test and evaluation, and software configuration management. Case studies, reports, software specifications and standards, and other similar documents/materials are used. The course addresses the underlying management principles involved in software acquisition. Significant software acquisition issues and problems are examined and solutions developed. Prerequisites: MN3331 or M3221 and MN3222 or MN3301 or consent of instructor.

MN3320 Contract Cost and Price Analysis (3-0)
This course involves the study and application of pricing theory and strategies, costing methods, cost and price analysis, cost principles, Cost Accounting Standards, and related genres in examining proposed and incurred costs in Federal contracts in both pre-award and post-award contexts. May not require this for MSCM students with extensive field experience and existing CON Level I DAU certification or higher. Prerequisites: MN3303 or similar introductory contracting principles course.

MN3321 Federal Contract Negotiations (3-0)
This course involves the study and application of the art and science of developing and conducting comprehensive government contract negotiations. Emphasis is placed on cost and price analytical techniques in the formulation and presentation of a pre-negotiation business clearance, strategy and actual conduct of negotiations in a simulated business environment. Prerequisites: MN3320.

MN4602 Acquisition Test and Evaluation Decision Science (3-2)
Designed to cover Developmental, Operational and Joint Test and Evaluation, including planning concepts and procedures frequently used in test and evaluation programs. Taught from the perspective of the Program Manager, Test Project Officer and Test Engineer. Actual military cases are used for example. Topics include the role of Test and Evaluation in Systems Engineering and Acquisition Management, DT and OT test planning, introduction to test design, conduct of tests, live fire testing, modeling and simulation, human systems integration (HSI), reporting of test results, range and resource issues, and lessons learned. Student teams will write a detailed test plan. Prerequisites: MN3331 or MN3221 and MN3222 or MN3301 or consent of instructor.

SE4011 Systems Engineering for Acquisition Managers (3-2)
Systems engineers flow requirements down to detailed elements, integrate elements, and verify system performance. This course concentrates on the structural and technical elements of system engineering necessary in the product development domain. Multidisciplinary activities leading to requirements analysis, design trades, and integrated product-process development are complemented by current best manufacturing practices and design for cost principles. Structured methods, decision

analysis, and quality engineering foundations are emphasized. Case studies from a variety of industrial contexts are presented and discussed. Prerequisites: None.

MN3384 Acquisition Production, Quality and Manufacturing Decision Science (3-2)
This course provides the student with an understanding of the principles and concepts of production and quality management in the DoD acquisition environment. Topics include production planning and control, "lean" production, and bottleneck analysis; quality management systems, statistical process control, and six sigma; cost estimating methods, activity based costing, and progress payments in support of production; productivity; environmental, safety and occupational health; warranties; specs & standards reform; and the Defense industrial base. Prerequisites: MN3331 or MN3221 and MN3222 or MN3301 or consent of instructor.

MN4045 Defense-Focused Managerial Inquiry (3-0)
Fundamentally, this is a course in thinking critically and analytically. It is also a unique, practical opportunity for students to develop a research question, methodology, and proposal for their MBA project or master's thesis. Indeed, many students can expect to complete the initial stages of their MBA project or thesis by fulfilling the course requirement for a team-based research report. As Cooper and Schindler write: "Research is any organized inquiry carried out to provide information for solving problems. Business research is a systematic inquiry that provides information to guide business decisions. This includes reporting, descriptive, explanatory, and predictive studies. The managers of tomorrow will need to know more than any managers in history. Research will be a major contributor to that knowledge. Managers will find knowledge of research methods to be of value in many situations. They may need to conduct research either for themselves or for others. As buyers of research services, they will need to be able to judge research quality. Finally, they may become research specialists themselves." Punch prefers to describe research as "organized common sense," since it "supports the idea that good research is within the grasp of many people." In this way, we can "simplify the more technical aspects of research methods, and enhance understanding, by showing the logic behind them." This course similarly seeks to examine the logic of research methods--recognizing that these methods may differ across disciplines and subspecialties--rather than focus on detailed models or procedures that may hold little meaning for the military's managers. It is not a course in rules or required steps; rather, it is a course in understanding the principles, concepts, and range of techniques that define the craft of research. Prerequisites: None.

MN4105 Strategic Management (3-0)
Strategic Management entails the establishment of an organization's direction and the implementation and evaluation of that direction given the organization's external environment and its internal capabilities. The principal aim of this course is the transfer and adaptation of the principles of business strategic management to the Department of Defense and other federal agencies. In previous courses, students concentrate on the functional elements of management (e.g., accounting, finance, acquisition, logistics, contracting, etc.). This course addresses the challenges of setting directions and implementing strategies for the total system or whole organization. Cases and approaches from the public and private sectors enable students to develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities to strategically think, plan, and manage. Prerequisite: None.

MN4470 Strategic Planning and Policy for the Acquisition Logistics Manager (3-2)
The course explores and analyzes the concepts, processes and methods of strategic logistics planning and execution, emphasizing proactive techniques to ensure maximum logistics influence on major weapon systems acquisition as well as optimum life cycle management of fielded systems. The course will examine and analyze key opportunities for maximum logistics influence in requirements development, contracting, test and evaluation, reliability and maintainability, as well as financial management and communications. The course will feature logistics management relevance to service roles and missions. The course will employ lectures, guided discussions, case studies, role-playing, panel discussions and lessons learned in the DoD acquisition environment. Prerequisites: MN3331 or MN3301 or MN3221 and MN3222 or consent of instructor.

MN4090 Capstone Applied Project (0-6)
This course reflects laboratory hours dedicated to presenting research techniques and independent/team efforts needed to conduct Joint Applied Project research and analysis and to produce the Professional Report. These laboratory hours will be used by students and student teams for interactions with their Joint Applied Project advisors, Academic Associate(s), editors, and thesis processors in producing high quality, disciplined research products for publication as appropriate. Prerequisites: None.

MN4307 Defense Acquisition Program Management Case Studies (3-2)
This course provides the student with knowledge and understanding of major systems management control processes and tools, application of program management control systems and the use of computer-based management information systems with strategic media choices to develop effective media campaigns, interact effectively with the print and broadcast news media, and handle press conferences and similar media events. Particular attention is focused on anticipating and handling crisis communication. Specifically, students will learn to organize crisis management teams, develop crisis management plans, and create communication plans to manage information and public perception. Case studies involving program management problem solving and decision making in the acquisition environment are used. Prerequisites: MN3331 or MN3221 and MN3222 or MN3301 or consent of Instructor.