



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
441 G STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20314-1000

CECW-CP

S: 10 August 2016

JUL 22 2016

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: 2017 Planning Associates

1. Purpose. To announce the call for nominations for the Fiscal Year 2017 Planning Associates Program (FY17 PA Program) to the Planning Community of Practice.
2. General. The PA Program is an advanced training opportunity in water resources planning offered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The goals of the PA Program are to broaden planners' competencies in solving complex water resources problems and challenges, and to strengthen their leadership talents. Continuing to enhance individuals' planning capability is critical for the organization in order to meet the Nation's water resource challenges of the present and future. PA Program candidates are competitively selected by Headquarters U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (HQUSACE) from a pool of candidates submitted by the Commanders of the eight Major Subordinate Commands (MSCs), Labs and Field Operating Agencies (FOAs).
3. Course Content. The PA Program provides quality, intensive training in USACE Civil Works Planning and leadership development. The curriculum is a rigorous, comprehensive program that covers team building, team leadership training, and experiential training in USACE Civil Works business programs. In addition to classroom experiences, a significant component of the PA Program will consist of an intensive individual assignment culminating in an end-of-year presentation to USACE senior leaders.
4. Timing and Duration. The FY17 PA Program will consist of approximately 20 courses delivered in 1-4 week TDY periods beginning in mid-October 2016 and extending approximately 11 months. A draft outline of the yearly activity can be seen in Exhibit 1.
5. Resourcing. Central funding resources will cover the majority of the costs for this program, including PA labor while the PA is on TDY for the program. Effective rate will be used for PA labor while on TDY (See Exhibit 2). Anticipate, at the maximum, 40 hours using the PA labor account at the home office for telephone conferences and course preparation work. The PA should be able to work most logistical and course/program work while on TDY and on own time and minimally (40 hours) at home office (for example, using home office overhead accounts).

6. Eligibility. Ideal PA applicants should be the highest potential GS-11 to GS-13 district employees with 5-15 years of current Civil Works planning experience. Successful applicants must demonstrate a passion for planning, a record of accomplishment in the planning function, and a desire to use what they will learn in future career challenges. The typical PA class is a demographically diverse, multi-disciplinary team of 6-10 planners.

7. Submission of Nominations. The MSC Commanders, Labs and FOAs will transmit an ADOBE pdf file version of their endorsed application packages by electronic mail to the PA Program Manager and principal point of contact, Ms. Joy Muncy, CEIWR-GW, joy.d.muncy@usace.army.mil, 703-428-6009, no later than 10 August 2016. The application package must consist of the following:

- a. A resume in the format required by the applicant's Civilian Personnel Office;
- b. Typed, dated and signed responses to the PA Program Nominee Application Questions (Exhibit 3);
- c. Respond to what and when Planning Core Curriculum (PCC) Courses were taken (Exhibit 4);
- d. The PA Program Participation Agreement (Exhibit 5), signed and dated by the nominee, supervisor, and home office commander; and
- e. Endorsement letters signed and dated by the MSC Commander and the home office commander attesting to the fitness of each nominee to participate in the program.

8. Selection of Participants. The nominations by MSC Commanders, Labs and FOAs and the final selection by this office, will be based in part on the criteria outline in Exhibit 6. At this point, final decisions on FY17 funding levels for PA Program activities have not been made. In the event sufficient funding has not been provided for this program as I have represented it, I will notify you immediately.

9. Benefits. There are substantial organizational benefits to having a planner participate in the PA Program. Examples include: meeting an extensive network of people and developing relationships with Corps employees as well as other federal agencies and outside agencies; meeting Corps and other senior leaders; meeting people who are experts in their field; learning about all of the Corps business programs which may or may not be a part of your home office; being involved at Corps HQ in Washington, D.C.; and bringing back information in regards to team building and team leadership. Using the PA's absence from the home office as a developmental assignment opportunity for less experienced employees could serve as another benefit.

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10. I personally request that you identify and nominate the best and brightest candidates for this important program.



STEVEN L. STOCKTON, P.E.
Director of Civil Works

6 Encls

1. Planning Associates Program
FY 17 Application, Exhibits, and
Course Schedule
2. Resource Responsibilities
3. Nominee Application Questions
4. Planning Core Curriculum Courses
Taken
5. Participation Agreements for the
Applicant, Supervisor, and Commander
6. Program Rating Criteria

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CEERD-HC - COASTAL AND HYDRAULICS LABORATORY
CECRL - COLD REGIONS RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING LABORATORY
CEERD-TV-Z - ERDC, TOPOGRAPHIC ENGINEERING CENTER
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CEWES - WATERWAYS EXPERIMENT STATION
(CONT)

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OASA(CW), POLICY AND LEGISLATION, PROJECT PLANNING AND REVIEW

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EXHIBIT 1

Planning Associates Program FY 17 Application, Exhibits, Course Schedule and More Information

More Program Information

The PA Program and its graduates have been at the forefront of Planning Modernization and will continue to be so in the future. The PA will be involved with case studies, individual and group projects, written and verbal communications and presentation techniques, as well as, critical thinking; and networking opportunities with leaders in districts, MSCs, HQUSACE, and other Army, administration, congressional, and public and private water resource interest groups. The PA TDY periods are long and rigorous; often going more than 12 hours a day (to include in-class and outside class work), and require weekend work during the multiple week sessions. In addition to the course workload, the PAs are also working on their required individual and team products.

During the conduct of the program, the Planning Training Committee under the direction of the Chief of Planning and Policy Division will continually assess the program to identify potential improvements to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the program. The PA Program requires stamina and flexibility by the participants, their families, and their home office staff, and these qualities will continue to be important to these individuals, as well as those involved in program delivery, as adjustments are made during the FY17 program.

PA Commitments. While in the PA Program, the PA will commit to attending each and every scheduled training session on time, fully participate in all exercises and experiential training, complete any homework and other assignments, contribute to development of team products and participate in post graduate activities. The PA work has priority over home office tasks and some PA work may need to be accomplished at the home office. The PA will conduct in a manner that will bring credit to oneself, the PA Program and the USACE.

Travel Requirements. Our goal is to schedule course sessions so as to minimize TDY sessions coinciding with holidays, but logistics and circumstances inevitably result in not being home for some holidays. There may be a small number of TDY days on non-federally recognized secular or religious holidays. We will provide reasonable accommodations for religious observances while the PAs are on TDY to attend services on non-PA class time.

Rating Criteria. Rating criteria will involve the applicants resume in which we will look at experience, performance, and technical and leadership excellence potential; rating criteria will involve the nominee's application questions which are found in the application package; it will also involve class membership and post-program contributions; and finally an interview with a team of HQ personnel and PA Management either in person or by teleconference.

Resourcing. See Exhibit 2.

A. COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

PA ORIENTATION

This session provides an opportunity for the newly selected PAs and the PA management team including course owners to introduce themselves. The class Charter will begin development with a facilitated session to review the PA's needs and expectations, and, with the program management team, develop the final list of needs and expectations that will be addressed during the program. There will also be time to discuss the required readings for this session, and the PAs will be asked to complete several instruments in preparation for the PA Team Building Session.

TEAM BUILDING, TEAM LEADERSHIP, EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

This session contains several modules:

- a. **Team building.** Basic training on how teams work, and the fundamental skills needed to work effectively in a team-oriented environment. The training examines how to apply basic team processes and tools to foster commitment, increase trust, empower people, and create synergy for accomplishing organizational goals.
- b. **Leadership.** This module focuses on critical competencies, including conflict management, influencing/negotiating, interpersonal skills, leveraging diversity, problem solving, vision, and creating a team identity, which fosters cooperation and commitment.
- c. **Facilitated Logistical Planning Session.** Using the skills learned in the Team Building module, the class will complete the Class charter and develop work team norms and logos.
- d. **Communication: Presentations and Briefings.** This training focuses on enhancing presentation and briefing skills. The goal of the training is to have the PAs master the skills to present information in a clear, concise manner that can be applied, when appropriate, at the work site.

PLANNING FOUNDATIONS

This course teaches all the basic Planning Foundations in order to keep the class at a common, minimum basis of understanding as well as using Planning Modernization and SMART Planning principles.

WASHINGTON, DC EXPERIENCE

The Washington, DC Experience provides an introduction to the Washington-level people and processes involved in the Corps water resources programs. The course includes formal training, individual discussions, shadowing activities, and lots of networking opportunities. Course training also covers current issues in the

Administration and Congress and perspectives on the authorization and appropriations processes. Office visits are scheduled to meet with staff and senior leaders in the Corps Headquarters, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), the Office of Management and Budget, the Congress (both House and Senate), and the Institute for Water Resources.

CULTURAL RESOURCES/ TRIBAL AFFAIRS

This series of sessions will provide the students with a general understanding of the statutory and regulatory responsibilities as well as the structure of the Corps cultural resources management program, and Native American program. It will also provide students a well-rounded understanding, awareness and sensitivity to the unique status of American Indians and the importance of maintaining effective tribal relationships. This series of sessions will discuss cultural resource laws, consultation requirements, government-to-government relations, and how to effectively implement the requirements within the Corps of Engineers.

BUSINESS PROGRAM TRAINING

Business program training is the heart of the PA program. Identifying measures and formulating solutions to water resources challenges drive the Corps of Engineers planning process, and therefore training experiences in these skills are key areas of learning. Business program training consists of 8 courses; one located in each MSC. Each session will focus on specific Civil Works business programs.

Formal training will cover history, policy, measures, and formulation and evaluation analyses and procedures. Experiential training will involve assignments in technical analyses, formulation, evaluation, report writing, and include study and project site visits. Opportunities will also be provided to visit or discuss other business program activities in the host MSC.

The eight business program courses are: Deep Draft Navigation; Inland Navigation; Coastal Storm Risk Management; Flood Risk Management; Ecosystem Restoration; Endangered Species Act, Recreation, Hydropower and Water Supply; Watersheds; and Small Boat Harbor/Intergovernmental Coordination.

Critical Think Piece Presentation Dry Run

The Critical Think Piece (CTP) Presentation Dry Run is a showcase preview of the PA's individual/class assigned project. During the session, each PA will receive feedback on style and content from their mentors, peers and PA Management. The purpose of the Dry Run is to rehearse and refine the assigned Individual/Class Project before the presentation during the Awards Activities.

AWARDS ACTIVITIES

Activities include final dry run of the CTPs, presentation of the CTPs, final test and Awards Ceremony.

C. PA TASKS & PRODUCTS (Subject to change) 2017 REQUIRED PRODUCTS:

- PA Handbook
- PA Vision Statement and Logo
- Reviews of required readings for class discussion, if any assigned
- A list of questions (one from each PA, depending on number of PAs in class) to the course owners before each course, that the PAs want answered during the course session
- Course Evaluation, due at the end of each course
- Essay questions answered from each course, due at the end of each course
- Situational Reports from each course to include hot topics sent to the PA Program Manager/Course Owner at the conclusion of each course for distribution
- Preparation of individual/class project(s) for presentation during the awards ceremony
- PA Annual
- Interim Program Review Meeting with PA Management (if necessary and schedule permits)
- Final Program Evaluation

2018 Required Activities:

- Continued service through 30 August 2018
- Serve as an instructor for a PROSPECT Planning course, PA module instructor, or participate in a project review team for a study or project not in the graduate PAs MSC
- 6-month Post-Program Evaluation

DRAFT FY17 PA Course Schedule

PLANNING ASSOCIATES PROGRAM OF THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

**Schedules/Locations Subject to Change
(Before and During Program)**

Start Travel Day	Finish Travel Day	Activity	Location
17 Oct 16	5 Nov 16	Orientation, Team Building, Team Leadership and Effective Communications	Washington DC/ Northern VA Area
22 Jan 17	28 Jan 17	Planning Foundations	TBD
5 Mar 17	1 Apr 17	DC Experience	Washington, DC/ Northern VA Area
9 Apr 17	15 Apr 17	Flood Risk Management	Sacramento, CA
23 Apr 17	29 Apr 17	Coastal Storm Risk Management	Philadelphia, PA
1 May 17	6 May 17	ERDC	Vicksburg, MS
7 May 17	13 May 17	Deep Draft Navigation	Mobile, AL
21 May 17	27 May 17	Inland Navigation	Huntington, WV
6 Jun 17	9 Jun 17	Dry Run CTPs	TBD
10 Jun 17	17 Jun 17	ESA, Hydropower, Recreation, and Water Supply	TBD
18 Jun 17	23 Jun 17	Cultural Resources/ Tribal Affairs	Lewiston, ID
9 Jul 17	15 Jul 17	Ecosystem Restoration	TBD
16 Jul 17	22 Jul 17	Watershed	TBD
30 Jul 17	5 Aug 17	Small Boat Harbor/ Intergovernmental Coordination	TBD
26 Aug 17	30 Aug 17	Project Presentations and Awards Activities	Washington, DC Metro Area

EXHIBIT 2
PLANNING ASSOCIATES PROGRAM
FY 2017
RESOURCE RESPONSIBILITIES

A. CENTRALLY FUNDED RESPONSIBILITIES

Labor. Funds will cover labor at the effective rate, which is the base labor to cover allocations for fringe benefits, which include Government contributions. PAs on official TDY will not burden labor with either G&A or Department Overhead.

Travel. Travel between home office and TDY locations. Using contract airlines or lower priced fares or other means is authorized when advantageous to the Government. Travel compensatory time is authorized for required travel outside normal duty hours. Travel costs to home or other locations not related to official TDY during intervening weekend periods will not be centrally funded.

Per Diem while on official TDY. Standard Per Diem rate will apply. Actual expense, unless specifically authorized in writing in advance by the PA Program Manager, will not be centrally funded.

Miscellaneous expenses (within reason). Items have to be approved by the Planning Associates Program Manager prior to purchase.

B. HOME OFFICE FUNDED

- Each PA will be provided with a laptop with the current MS OFFICE Suite; high speed and dial-in (wireless/air card, if possible) remote networking capability; a DVD/R drive; and 2.0 USB port.
- Digital camera (may be part of BB) to record PA activities that will be used for project presentations at the Awards Ceremony as well as other PA activities throughout the year.
- Provide the use of a BlackBerry in order for the PA to check on home office projects and activities due to, in some cases, a laptop unable to make an internet connection while on TDY.
- Labor (~40 hours) and supplies sufficient to permit the PA to complete homework assignments, virtual team requirements, logistical tasks such as making travel and lodging reservations, teleconferences, emails regarding the PA Program and preparing travel orders, and submitting vouchers. (The Program will also provide 40 hours for home office use by PA for PA Program activities.)
- Compensatory leave for weekend or other non-duty hours will be based on home office policy and at home office expense.

- The home office will provide for shipping bulky course materials (which should be minimal, if any) back to the office. This prevents added baggage handling for the PA as well as avoiding extra baggage charges.

EXHIBIT 3
PLANNING ASSOCIATES PROGRAM
NOMINEE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

a. Professionally, what is your most significant accomplishment and why is the world a better place for you having done it?

b. How would participating in the PA program impact your professional performance in 5 years?

c. What do you want your legacy to be as a result of your career in the Corps of Engineers?

d. Describe your passion for planning.

e. What two topics do you feel are the greatest challenges in planning, and why?

Print Name: _____

Office Symbol:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

**EXHIBIT 4 PLANNING ASSOCIATES PROGRAM
PLANNING CORE CURRICULUM COURSES TAKEN**

PCC Course	Date Course Taken
Plan Formulation	
Environmental Considerations in Planning	
Public Involvement and Team Planning	
Civil Works Orientation <i>or</i> USACE Civil Works Project Development Process	
H&H Considerations in Planning	
Economic Analysis for Water Resources Planning	
Planning Principles and Procedures <i>or</i> Planning Essentials	
Plan Formulation and Evaluation Capstone	

EXHIBIT 5

PLANNING ASSOCIATES PROGRAM

PARTICIPATION AGREEMENTS

NOMINEE AGREEMENT:

I agree to: attend each and every scheduled training session on time; fully participate in all exercises and experiential training; prepare myself for sessions by homework and other assignments; contribute to development of team products; and to participate in post graduate activities. I understand that Planning Associates work has priority over home office tasks, and that some Planning Associates Program work may need to be accomplished at the home office. I understand the program requires personal and family sacrifice, including rigorous training days, weekend and evening course-related activities, and weekends away from home. I also understand that some course assignments are not known at this time and will be scheduled as opportunities arise. I will conduct myself in a manner that will bring credit to me and the Corps of Engineers. I understand that unexcused absences or failure to comply with these requirements will be reported to my supervisor and Commander, recorded in my TAPES evaluation, and may result in my dismissal from the program.

Print Name: _____

Nominee Signature: _____ Date: _____

IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR AGREEMENT:

I agree to assure that the PA will be available to attend all sessions and to fulfill all assignments for the Planning Associates Program. I will include participation in the program in the PA's TAPES, and understand that I may solicit input from the PA Management team on the PA's program performance. I understand that Planning Associates work has priority over home office tasks, and that some Planning Associates Program work may need to be accomplished at the home office and the home office will cover the labor. This work will include such activities as read ahead and homework assignments, production of PA work products, preparation of travel orders and vouchers, participation in pre-session briefs and virtual team teleconferences, and related logistical tasks. I will assure sufficient resources are available for the PA to accomplish these tasks (such as laptop, BB/digital camera) and further assure that no undue influence or pressure is put on the PA if a conflict arises between the PA's responsibilities and other home office tasks. I also will assure that the terms of this participation agreement will be enforced.

Print Name: _____

Nominee Immediate
Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

COMMANDER AGREEMENT:

If selected, I fully support the commitments of my nominee and his/her supervisor, and assure that my Command will do everything possible to sustain a successful, rewarding assignment in the Planning Associates Program.

Commander's Signature: _____ Date: _____

EXHIBIT 6

PLANNING ASSOCIATES PROGRAM RATING CRITERIA

The following rating criteria will be considered by HQUSACE to assist in the selection of the participants in the 2017 PA Program.

1. Resume (0 – 40 points):

The applicants resume will be evaluated and rated on the candidate's experience, performance, and technical and leadership excellence potential.

0 = Very limited breadth of planning skills, little evidence of having produced planning products, little or no training in planning function activities, less than outstanding performance appraisals, few awards or special recognitions, no evidence of outside interests or activities.

40 = High level of achievement as a journeyman level employee, has a great interest in acquiring a breadth of planning skills; has produced or contributed to planning products of a quality indicative of the potential for future technical excellence or professional leadership; has achieved a knowledge level equivalent to having taken the 8-course Planner Core Curriculum; outstanding performance appraisals; evidence of awards, special recognitions, or outside interests or activities that signal leadership potential.

2. Nominee Application Questions (0 – 40 points):

A score of 0 – 10 will be given for each response. The ratings will be based on the candidate's vision of his or her current and future, and how this program ties into that vision. The ratings will reflect both the quality of the content as well as the quality of its articulation.

3. Target Class Membership and Immediate Post-Program Contributions (0 – 20 points):

0 = Less than 5 years of current Planning experience; GS10 or lower grade level; not a District employee; level of experience, knowledge and skills insufficient to absorb and integrate the advanced level of training in a manner that would be of immediate benefit to the home office.

20 = 5 – 10 years current Planning experience; GS11/12; District employee; level of experience, knowledge, and skills that would enable the nominee to absorb the advance training in a manner that would be of immediate significant benefit to the home office.

0 - 10 = More than 10 years current Planning experience; GS13 or higher grade level; not a District employee; level of experience, knowledge, and skills that are at a level equivalent to the program and therefore would not be of significant

benefit to the home office. If the applicant's past work was focused on producing excellent work in one business program at a single district, some points may be considered for that applicant.

4. Interview. Each candidate may undergo an interview by the HQ personnel, either in person or by phone.