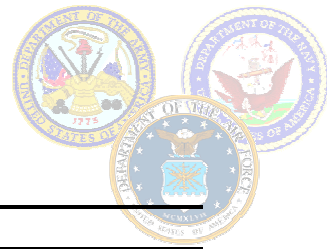


Soldiers, Sailors, & Airmen



First Edition

• Volume 1

• 4 July 2006

From the Military Medicine Interest Group of the American Medical Student Association

Message from the Editor

*Justin Fox, 2LT, USAFR
(USUHS)*

It is my pleasure to introduce the first edition of *Soldiers, Sailors, & Airmen*, the quarterly publication of the Military Medicine Interest Group (MMIG) within the American Medical Student Association. The aim of this publication is to provide pertinent information to the current military medical student, as well as those interested in the Uniformed Services University or the Health Professions Scholarship Program.

Currently, the plan is to produce this publication quarterly. The articles during this initial year will focus on a sequence from becoming a military medical student on scholarship to entering your respective service and what to expect along the way. This issue will highlight the beginning of one's military career in the respective officer training courses. This training is accomplished over the summer before the MSI year for USUHS and the summer before MSII year for HPSP. Subsequent publications will deal with unique aspects of military medicine (dive medical officers, flight surgeons, general medical officers), and ultimately how the physician fits into each service's medical corps from the front lines to the unique health care facilities here in the US.

This is definitely a work in progress and every effort will be made to produce a quarterly journal. If you would like to submit comments or have ideas for future issues, or if you would like to contribute brief articles concerning your experiences with military medicine, please email them to me at s7jfox@usuhs.mil.

This is your publication. Through sharing our experiences, we can help each other get the most out of our military training.

The New Website

The MMIG website has been updated and is accessible at the following link: www.amsa.org/military/. Please take a moment to explore the website. A wide range of pertinent information for the military medical student can be found there to include web links to HPSP/USUHS sites, military rank and pay charts, and officer basic courses.

In the Works

□ *Looking for your experience.* Please take a moment to write a brief paragraph about your experience at your service's officer basic course. Focus on what to expect and how to prepare. Email them to s7jfox@usuhs.mil, subject line: Soldiers, Sailors, and Airmen.

□ *MMIG message board.* We are attempting to start a message board through the MMIG website as a place for everyone to share their experiences/offer advice about rotating through the various military hospitals during the 3d and 4th year of school.

United States Army HPSP

First Edition

Volume 1

4 July 2006

From the Military Medicine Interest Group of the American Medical Student Association

An OBC Primer

Charles Magee
2LT, USAR

When I arrived at Fort Sam Houston for my Officer Basic Course (OBC), I thought I had prepared well for what I was about to begin – my career in the Army. I secured my Common Access Card (CAC) and a majority of the items on the packing list prior to traveling to Texas and this made life a little bit easier in the first few days of OBC. You are authorized to obtain a military CAC card at any military installation with official orders no greater than 3 months prior to your orders start date. If you have access to an Army installation, I recommend finding the military clothing and sales store and securing as many of the uniform items and other items on the packing list before arriving at Fort Sam Houston. This was a real time saver and stress reliever.

At Ft Sam Houston you will stay in the Army Lodging, commonly referred to as the “BOQ” (Bachelor Officer Quarters). The accommodations are pleasant with amenities such as internet access, TV, minifridge/freezer, and microwaves in each room. There will be

over 300 2nd Lieutenants trying to in-process on the first day including the USUHS, HPSP, and dental students. Patience is a virtue as the cadre work hard to iron out the scheduling conflicts that inevitably arise. The entire 6 week course consists of classroom lectures, a week-long field training exercise (FTX), an Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) and graduation ceremonies. Another “must have” is an up-to-date shot record as it will help prevent getting stuck with quite so many needles on immunization day; although most everybody receives at least one! The FTX at Camp Bullis is an invaluable experience. It is your first taste of Army training and certainly won't be your last as you learn to use basic land navigation skills, medical



evacuation techniques, and experience a deployment-like environment!

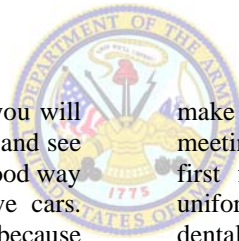
For many medical students, OBC is the first taste of Army culture. The most valuable asset during this 6 week basic course will be the other students with prior experience wearing the uniform. Those with prior service are extremely knowledgeable about the day-to-day nuances that will keep you safe and “squared-away” throughout OBC. OBC is training for when you enter the Army after medical school and mistakes are better made at OBC than when you're a physician in the Medical Corps! The sage advice and war stories shared will keep with you for years to come. These stories become commonplace in the military during medical school (for USUHS students) and after school for every person serving in the Army. These stories are part of the Army culture, building camaraderie and *esprit de corps*. In summary, OBC has potential to be a fun and rewarding time where you learn how to be an officer, establish relationships with fellow medical and dental students, and enjoy the exciting nightlife and rich history of San Antonio! HOOAH!

Justin Needham
2LT, USAR

Chapter 1: Before you leave

There are several things to consider once you receive notification that you are going to OBC. The first thing to do is get your paper work in order including your oath of office, your orders, and any other important documents. If you are missing documents or having a problem with them, don't wait until the last minute because it takes a long time for the army to fix whatever is wrong. Make several copies of these as you will need to hand them out at various stages of in-processing. For those of you who are married, copies of marriage certificates and kid's birth certificates will also be helpful for the in-processing paperwork. I would also leave one copy of each item at home incase something happens to your files en route.

The second thing to consider is transportation. Unless you receive very specific instructions one way or the other, the military will reimburse you whether you drive or fly. I would recommend driving down because things are very spread out at Ft. Sam Houston and walking 10-15 minutes in



100°F gets old really quickly. In addition, you will have time during the course to drive off post and see the sights of San Antonio. Driving is also a good way to make friends with those who don't have cars. However, if you can't drive, don't despair, because you can often get a ride from a classmate and taxis are available by phone.

Regardless of how you get there, I would recommend arriving early on your report date. The VOQ (visiting officers quarters) have been known to fill and sometimes students end up staying off post. You may get better amenities at a hotel but the hassle of trying to get on and off post is not worth the tradeoff. It would be a good idea to call the lodging facility a few days before your arrival to confirm your room reservation. If the course directors don't give you a specific point of contact you can find the number at the army lodging website.

Finally, I would recommend getting your boots before you leave. The more you can break in your boots before you take them to the field the better. Once you have your orders, you can get on any military base and shop at their military clothing store. They should have a reasonable selection of boots that are Army approved. If you have no military base near you, you can try online or at a surplus store but be aware that sizes vary and it is important to have a good fit. Don't buy anything that does not specifically state "Army approved." Good brands include: Wellco, Belleville, Corcoran, and Bates. Verify whether you are going to need the brown boots for the new ACU uniform (grey army combat uniform), or the black boots for the old uniform (currently being phased out). I recommend hot weather boots, such as jungle boots, because most of your training will be in warm climates. You will get a checklist that has all the other uniform items you need. If you are eager, you can purchase in advance, otherwise Ft. Sam has a large store. Finally, do a few pushups before you go, so you are not "that one guy" who can't do any. By the end of OBC you will be expected to pass the fitness test.

Chapter 2: Arrival

There will be around three hundred people arriving at Ft. Sam on the same day for your OBC class. They will all be dressed in civilian clothes like you and the atmosphere is akin to your first day of college. Make sure you have your orders ready to present to get on post and to check in at Army Lodging. The lodging at Ft. Sam is fairly nice, everyone gets their own room and it is equipped like a modest single hotel room with a TV, microwave/fridge and kitchen sink. They even have a cleaning service like a regular hotel. Once you get settled,



make sure you are on-time to the orientation meeting. Again, have your paperwork ready. The first few days are spent entirely on paperwork, uniform/ID acquisition, and setting up medical, dental, and optometry records.

OBC is not the "in your face" basic training that is typically associated with entering the military. No one yells at you, PT is divided into ability groups, you are allowed to call home, and you have time off. You have the evenings free to eat dinner wherever you like and most weekends are your own. You have to pay for meals and lodging with your own funds, but you will receive an allowance for these items at a later date. Dining facilities are available on post for really cheap meals.

Chapter 3: A typical day

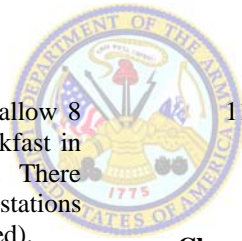
A typical day at OBC starts between 5 and 6 AM with early morning formation and PT. They make a big deal about punctuality so get used to showing up on-time/early. PT lasts about an hour and then you get time to shower/eat and get to class. Classes are all day long and mostly consist of PowerPoint presentations. Topics covered include:

- Army customs: rank, saluting, wear of the uniform;
- Officer skills: managing and evaluating soldiers (OER/AER);
- The Army medical system: how we organize, evacuate, and care for soldiers
- Field skills: basic first aid, land navigation, radio communications, CBRNE (chemical, biologic, nuclear) survival.

They do have written tests and practical tests, however these tests, unlike medical school, are designed for everyone to pass without too many problems. Classes last until 4-5PM and you are then free to do whatever you want.

Chapter 4: The field training experience (FTX)

The FTX lasts about 5 days and is much like any typical summer camp. You are issued a duffle bag, sleeping bag, Kevlar helmet, sleeping pad, canteens, load bearing equipment, and gas mask. Everyone takes a bus up to camp Bullis, where they have a specific OBC area. Upon arrival you are given an M-16 – obviously do NOT lose your weapon or even leave it alone (they will make the whole camp search for it and when it's found they will literally tie the weapon to you). Everyone stays in GP medium tents with cots and A/C (variable quality). Your days are filled practicing the same stuff you learned back in the classroom including: day/night land navigation, NBC survival, weapon assemble/disassemble, radio communications, and



basic first aid. The days are long but they allow 8 hrs for sleep. Generally, you get a hot breakfast in the morning, MRE for lunch, and hot dinner. There are no showers, but there are hand washing stations and basins for shaving in the morning (required).

Highly recommended items (in order of importance):

1. Camelback: You will be in the desert in the peak of the summer. I was drinking 6-9 liters of water per day and not producing urine. Only camouflage and sometimes black camelbacks are allowed (sold at a reasonable price on post).
2. Helmet pad: a small grey donut that will decrease the helmet straps from giving you a headache.
3. Sunscreen/bug repellent: This should be obvious.
4. Baby wipes: It is amazing how clean and refreshed you can feel after using a few of these things at the end of the day.
5. Foot powder: Your feet will be glad to be dry and you neighbor will appreciate the odor control.
6. Duct tape (small amount): Repairs anything.
7. 550 cord or other rope/string to hang stuff in the tent. Also, 1 or 2 hangers to dry wet items.
8. Multi-tool/pocket knife: comes in handy for the darndest things.
9. Headlamp with red/blue lens: I think a flashlight is required but headlamp is convenient.
10. Poncho Liner: Not an absolute requirement but the sleeping bags are too hot and the air is too cold. A nice thin layer like the poncho liner allows you to use the sleeping bag as a mattress. (USUHS students will use this more than once).

11. Gatorade packets: Good for adding flavor and electrolytes to the water. Don't contaminate your camelback, mix it in your canteens.

Chapter 5: Going home

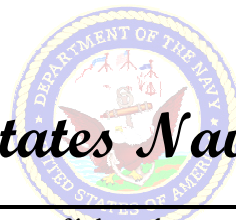


By now you will be familiar with waiting in line to get things done. Just make sure your gear is in good condition before you turn it in so you don't have to go through twice. They will explain in painful detail what paperwork needs to be done before you go. Just make sure you understand the system for reimbursement so you can get paid. The final day is graduation day. About half of the students have family members in attendance. Once the ceremony ends, everyone heads home so make sure you have any loose ends taken care of beforehand.

Overall OBC is an interesting experience and a pleasant break compared to the rigors of medical school. Don't be afraid to try new things. Finally, if you get bored or frustrated, remember that your instructors are there because they want to see you succeed as an officer and survive on the battlefield, so cut them some slack. Good luck.

For comments or questions the authors may be reached at s7cmagee@usuhs.mil and s7jneedham@usuhs.mil.

United States Navy HPSA



First Edition

Volume 1

4 July 2006

From the Military Medicine Interest Group of the American Medical Student Association

How to Survive OIS

Lisa Rose
ENS, USNR

Recently, a friend, classmate and fellow graduate of Officer Indoctrination School (OIS) asked me to write a brief piece on how to make it through OIS. Things may have changed slightly since she and I went through three years ago, but there are a few basic ground rules that will get anyone through the rough four weeks preceding the one-week leadership course.

1) Find out who in your platoon is prior service. Make friends with these people. Not only will they help you with details like how to put your ribbons on straight, they'll teach you how to deal with the general mind games your Navy drill instructors, or "Red Ropers" (so named for the red braid around their left shoulders), have in store for you.

2) Don't make eye contact with the Red-Ropers.

They're looking for people to single out for what I was told was "leadership training." It's like locking eyes with a strange person on a dangerous street. Just don't do it.



3) Don't call attention to yourself. This is much like rule #2. If your Red-Roper wants to know who knows CPR, who speaks English, who wants a candy bar—keep your eyes forward and your mouth shut. I was put in charge of 51 people because I raised my hand when my chief asked who took choir in high school.

4) Remember, this can't go on forever. Sometimes, it seemed like the yelling, the synchronized eating, the marching in formation to get from place to place would never end. It does. Keep that in mind when you're doing push-ups and answering hollered questions at the same time.

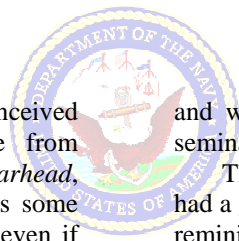
There are a number of other things I could say about what to bring and what to do in Newport when you're finally allowed to leave the base. Otherwise, I think these few simple rules should get you out of the hardest part of OIS.

Nicole Cassler
ENS, USNR

Welcome to the Navy! This letter is an attempt to prepare you for what to expect at OIS, but be forewarned – OIS has been fluctuating from year to year, but many of the basic guidelines here should still be valid.

Most of us arrived on Sunday afternoon, and things were pretty normal. We checked in and got our room assignments – just like summer camp! The next day is when the fun began. At 4 am, the friendly person who had handed out our coveralls the night before appeared in the hallway screaming and storming up and down, pounding on our doors to bring us into the hallway. Fortunately, some of us were prepared and had woken up by our own alarms at 3am. A good idea is to sleep in your coveralls with your hair ready. After being dragged out into the hallway, we were given about 5 minutes to get ready for the day. And that was the beginning of OIS.

For the first couple of weeks it was really intense. We were rarely allowed to speak to each other, *never* allowed to look an instructor in the eye (especially your company officer or non-commissioned officer [NCO]), and pretty much kept under very strict control. We had a full schedule from first thing in the morning until usually 10 or 11 at night (sometimes later depending on the prerogative of your company officer). Push-ups were frequent, though there are *very* tight controls on punishments so as to prevent hazing. Though you can plan on doing a lot of pushups, they are usually no more than 10 per set, and you do them as a company. Besides the frequent pushups, there was much less physical training (PT) than most of us had expected. We only ran about once or twice a week, and it was usually a group run when we did. There was a lot of walking, but nothing too intense. One caveat to that statement is that each company officer has a specialty. Our company spent more time practicing for the drill competition, another company officer preferred to PT, so that company's experience may have been a little more physically demanding than ours.



While some people may have preconceived notions of what “basic training” is like from watching movies like *Full Metal Jacket* or *Jarhead*, the reality is much less malignant. There is some yelling, but people are generally respectful, even if they are doing it a bit loudly. Another thing to keep in mind is that nearly everyone graduates, so whatever happens, know that it will be over in a few short (or excruciatingly long) weeks!

Something to be prepared for is the limitation of family contact. For the first few weeks there was perhaps one or two 30-minute phone calls allowed per week, after we had earned it. Some exceptions may be made if extenuating circumstances exist, but don't plan on having your nightly conversations with your significant other. Also don't plan on any visits within the first few weeks. Liberty has to be earned, and may not be granted until 3 weeks into the course. Once out, however, Newport is beautiful so enjoy! Boston is also a short car ride away. On-base liberty is a little easier to get, but still must be earned. We found that having some cash in small bills really came in handy because in the beginning we were only allowed to send a representative to the Navy Exchange to go shopping for us.

A question many of us had before going to OIS was what were they going to do to our hair? For the men, the regulation requires a close hair cut within 3 days (doesn't have to be a crew cut or “high and tight”). For women, the regulation is that it has to be off of your collar if it's cut short, or pulled back (no pony tails and it must be neat – for more information see the link at the end). Ultimately, be comfortable with your hair. Be careful about getting anything too layered, especially right before you go. The goal is to be fast when getting ready – the more comfortable you are the faster it will go.

Another question was how much time we would have to get ready in the mornings. On average, we were given about 15 minutes for the entire company to get ready. Ladies, when you only have 5 showers between 15 women, you learn to master the fast shower. Shower shoes were a must, but the bathrobe was more of a luxury. When we were given an official list of what to bring, it included a “knee-length” bathrobe. First of all, we weren't allowed to use it until the 4th week, and second of all, knee-length turned out to be a little short for the women when walking down a co-ed hallway. The few of us who had brought something a little longer turned out to be a little more comfortable.

Though the first 4 weeks were pretty grueling, they gradually got a little better as we earned more and more freedoms. During the Division Officer Capstone (DOC), which was a leadership course in the last week, it was like we had already graduated,

and we were just some Navy officers attending a seminar, instead of fresh recruits.

The take home story is that most of us who went had a great time, and remember the good times as we reminisce together. Most of us started out knowing absolutely nothing, but by the end we could recite the Sailor's Creed among many other things. It may sound like a scene out of *Full Metal Jacket*, but it's

not that bad when you go through it, and it certainly brings you closer to your classmates! It probably won't even be that bad for you. As



we attend USUHS, there are many times that the Navy students are more well-versed on rules, regulation, and tradition than the other services.

A short list of useful items at OIS: a Swiffer, fan, sharpie marker, foot cream/baby powder, 2 weeks of underwear and white crew-length socks, lint roller, workout clothes for a week, iron, black and white shoe polish and brushes, lighter (helps with polishing – you'll learn), combination lock, ruler, black pens, a few changes of civilian clothes, small blanket, alarm clock, flashlight, 2 towels, sunblock, **SHOT RECORDS** (otherwise you get everything again), floppy disk, non-reflective black sunglasses, extra prescription meds, hair spray and bobby pins, several pairs of skin-tone pantyhose, sports bras. Optional items: starch, small ironing board optional, a *Bluejackets* manual.

Some links to check out

- Rank Insignias – http://www.chinfo.navy.mil/navpalib/ranks/rank_rate.html (you will eventually need to know all, but E-7, E-8, E-9 fouled anchor insignias, and all the officer insignias will come in handy the most)
- Uniform Regulations – <http://www-nmcp.med.navy.mil/HMTraining/Uniregs/chapter1.pdf> or http://buperscd.technology.navy.mil/bup_updt/508/unireg/uregMenu.html
- OIS Website - <https://otcn.netc.navy.mil/ois/index.cfm>
- Navy Flags (each company had a flag, and at some point we had to find out what ours meant) http://www.themeter.net/nautical_e.htm?Submit=international+code+of+signal

HOORAH NAVY!

For comments or questions the authors may be reached at s7rose@usuhs.mil and s7ncassler@usuhs.mil.

United States Air Force HPS P

First Edition

Volume 1

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From the Military Medicine Interest Group of the American Medical Student Association

Commissioned Officer Training

Catherine McHugh
2LT, USAFR

I landed in Alabama on my first day of COT with luggage in hand and clueless. The duffle bags acted as a good identification marker for all naïve lieutenants to be herded to the right area of the tiny airport. While still within the protective walls of the airport, the COT staff was very friendly and helpful in answering our questions. Once we were loaded on the school buses, however, the smiles ceased and the “game” began. From that point you were expected to be silent unless spoken to and to start and/or finish all sentences with a sir or ma’am. Placed in an environment so foreign to most of us, we all reacted with our usual defense mechanisms – fear, nervous chuckles, eye rolls, etc... I remember the whirlwind of checking in, walking the assembly line for canteens and ponchos, and navigating the dormitory while concentrating hard on ensuring that I forced out an awkward sir/ma’am appropriately. Then finally, I made it to my room where I dropped my bags with a sigh of relief, wondering what I got myself into.

The first piece of advice I have for COT attendees is to just relax. The instructors and staff make it a point to be much more serious and intense than most people you will meet while in the Air Force. You are expected to mess up and get a stern “talking to” – we all did. Let those times roll off your shoulders because those incidences will be quickly forgotten by the instructors after a few beers at the O-club. Just keep in mind that COT is an artificial environment that you will most likely never experience again after you complete your 4 weeks in Alabama.

Despite the shock of the military environment that some of you may face, rest assured that you will still experience many of the perks that come with being in the Air Force. The famous Air Force lifestyle will become quickly apparent after discovering the wide screen TV’s on each dormitory

floor, seeing the plasma screen monitors in each classroom, and hearing that you will have maids come clean up your mess daily. You might not realize how good you have it until you hear about the Army staying in un-air-conditioned tents and the Navy cleaning their showers with a toothbrush.

The most important logistical advice I can give is to buy your uniforms before you go to COT. You are allocated time during the first few days of COT to purchase your uniforms, but the experience is pretty horrendous. The tiny uniform store will be packed with hundreds of other COT students all

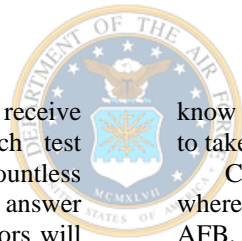


fighting for the few pairs of BDU pants in your size. Then there are the lines and the waiting. There is a line for the dressing room, for the tailor to measure your inseam, for your shoe size to be found in the stockroom, and for the register to ring up your \$1000 purchase. Then after the 5 hours of shopping you still only have half of what you need. I suggest that

you try to find an Air Force person to take you to the clothing store before COT to help purchase uniforms. They will be a great reference to advise you on such things as not to purchase the suggested 3 sets of BDU’s and prevent you from accidentally buying the winter weight BDUs for Alabama’s 95° weather.

I also want to crush the misconception that you don’t need civilian clothes during COT. Many people cannot wait to get off base on the weekends and even during the weekday evenings for dinner. There are even a couple of over 18 dance clubs that you can attend when you are feeling especially adventurous. If this sounds like you, then I would also recommend a car. If you are lucky, a few people in your flight will have cars and end up being the taxi service for the others in the flight. When they are not around, you will have to resort to the free base taxi to get you to the gate, and then a city taxi to take you to civilization. Cars are not essential but are very nice.

Laptops are also useful to have. There is one classroom computer shared by the 14 members of your flight to use for reports and presentations. Our year, we were not allowed to connect our personal laptops to the internet even though we had the capability in our dorm rooms. Hopefully, they have changed that rule.



Academically speaking, you will receive objectives with every lecture from which test questions are written. In order to save countless hours of reading and writing at night, I would answer the objectives while in lecture. The instructors will usually address the objectives directly in their presentations.

The last piece of advice that I have is to start thinking about whether or not you want to participate in the GI Bill, the Thrift Savings Plan, Servicemember's Group Life Insurance, and which state of residency you would like to declare. You will be quickly briefed on some of these items and expected to sign paperwork as soon as possible without really understanding what each option entails. For instance, it will be helpful to determine if your home state exempts you from state taxes if you are a military member living out-of-state.

In the end, COT was a great time. You probably will not remember any details from the classroom lectures but you will always remember the amazing people you shared 4 weeks with in Alabama and the wonderful experiences you shared together.

Amy Beykirch
2LT, USAFR

COT was the beginning of a new adventure for me given that I had no prior military experience whatsoever. I was intimidated at first with all the "yes sirs" and "ma'ams" that I had never said before, not to mention learning to recognize all of the ranks. After the initial shock and feelings of wanting to go home I began to adjust to this new environment.

I was paired with a wonderful roommate as most COT students were, and we used each other for support. Everyone is part of a flight consisting of future medical students, dentists, doctors, nurses, and chaplains, each with a variable amount of military experience. I soon realized that most of us did not

know what to expect on a daily basis, and we learned to take it as it comes.

COT took place in Montgomery, AL – a place where there is just about nothing except Maxwell AFB. The base was very nice, clean, and safe, though it was *hot*. The heat was not a problem, however, because everyone did PT together in the morning before the sun came up, and we spent most of our days in air conditioned classrooms learning the past, present, and future workings of the USAF. Although most of the lectures were boring, we had to do our best to pay attention because there were two tests, which required knowing what happened in lecture in addition to reading the assigned materials.

There was a 1-2 night semi-field experience where we stayed in air conditioned tents and simulated a working field hospital. It wasn't too bad, and we even had some F-15s doing take-offs on the runway right next to our camp. The cafeteria was nice (a typical cafeteria) and very cheap.



On arrival, everyone, well mostly everyone, had to get fitted for uniforms, so if possible I would suggest getting all your uniforms and name tags before COT as it will save you a lot of time and frustration. I think the best advice I would give someone going to COT is to make the most of it and get to know your flight. After all, you will be colleagues someday.

For comments or questions the authors may be reached at s7cmchugh@usuhs.mil and s7abeykirch@usuhs.mil.

Uniformed Services University

First Edition

Volume 1

4 July 2006

From the Military Medicine Interest Group of the American Medical Student Association

Medical Officer Survival Training (MOST)

*Angela Fagiana, 2LT, USAFR
Michelle Pham, ENS, USNR*

Hello, and welcome to USUHS! We were asked to give you advice on what to expect and how to survive MOST. MOST is a 2 week course held shortly before school begins designed to teach you the basics of the military, and how to be a good officer.

For us, this was the most overwhelming experience because we felt incredibly rushed and uninformed. Don't worry – your respective NCO's (non-commissioned officers) will walk you through everything and will make things more bearable. Ask as many questions as you can. This is the time for you to learn as much as possible about your service.

The first day was really difficult because we weren't prepared for what to expect. You will be attending lectures and bonding with other students from each of the services. Students who haven't been sworn in will do so that first day. Students will then be broken up by service and accompanied by their NCO's to get their military IDs, USUHS IDs, and various uniforms. You will also get your car registered to park on base.

The rest of the week is filled with physical training, lectures on officer development, legal issues, and financial issues. You will also set up your medical and dental records. You will have some time off to get your living situation in order. If you need any help with finding an apartment or have problems with your finances, speak to your NCO or MILPO (Military Personnel Office).

Things to Bring:

- Your orders to USUHS—Don't travel before getting your orders or you won't get reimbursed for your travel.
- copies of all your immunizations and medical records
- Bring a copy of your Oath of Office if you were commissioned before coming to USUHS
- Copies of marriage certificates and birth certificates for your children for financial issues
- Be prepared to be overwhelmed. This is a very stressful time because of how much your life changes in such a short period of time. It will take time to adjust to becoming a medical student and a military officer.

When you start orientation with all the other medical students, you might feel like everyone else knows so much more about the military because they attended the 4-6 week officer training programs. Don't worry – this feeling goes away once everyone gets immersed into classes. No one will be able to tell who went to MOST and who didn't.

The nice thing about MOST is that all the services are integrated. When all the other students arrived, we felt like students segregated themselves by service, which is understandable since these were the people they spent the last month with during officer training. This is also something that quickly passes.

Unfortunately, many of the lectures that you will receive during MOST get repeated during orientation with all of the other students. Be patient as this won't be the last time you hear a lecture twice, but you certainly pick up more that way.

Again, welcome to USUHS!

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