

# Career Courses' Cognitive Assessment Battery Administered at the Captains Career Course

From the Editor

The Army Talent Management Task Force (ATMTF) was created to develop ways to better manage soldier talent and ensure that the right person is selected for the right position at the right time. As part of the ATMTF's Officer Career Assessment Structure (OCAS), the Career Courses' Cognitive Assessment Battery (C3AB) was designed to measure skills and characteristics needed for students of the Captains Career Course (CCC) to succeed in future positions. C3AB development began in 2015 by Army University and the former Center for Army Leadership (now the Center for Army Profession and Leadership). The battery was further developed by Army University and the Army Research Institute in 2019-2020. In its current form, C3AB scores are only intended to help students gain insight regarding their personal strengths and areas for self-development related to successful performance in Army careers. C3AB scores will not be used for promotion decisions and will not be listed in the officers' personnel files. However, because the Army is making dramatic changes to its talent management systems, CCC students are urged to consider their scores and determine what actions they may want to take to improve in areas with lower-than-desired scores from a self-development perspective.

Eventually, after extensive testing, the C3AB may be used to predict future performance-related outcomes of field grade officers. For example, the C3AB may be used as one measure among others to distinguish between average and superior performers. The C3AB may be used to predict which captains are most competitive for the Command and General Staff Officer Course (CGSOC), who would have longer careers in the Army, and who would perform most effectively in Army advanced educational opportunities.

C3AB is currently undergoing testing with two types of assessments that include cognitive skills and noncognitive tendencies, as listed in the table (on page 89).

In the table, there are five cognitive skill areas and eight noncognitive tendencies. Cognitive skills involve assessments with right/wrong answers that identify how individuals think about a problem. The noncognitive tendency measures identify influencing factors that students already possess that either positively or

**Table.**  
*Areas of the Career Courses' Cognitive Assessment Battery*

Cognitive areas	Noncognitive tendencies areas
➤ Inferential reasoning	➤ Achievement orientation
➤ Quantitative analysis	➤ Self-efficacy
➤ Pattern recognition	➤ Peer leadership
➤ Integrative complex thinking	➤ Tolerance for ambiguity
➤ Creative thinking	➤ Cognitive flexibility
	➤ Stress tolerance
	➤ Written communication
	➤ Oral communication

Table by Dr. Lisa Babin, Institutional Research and Assessment Division (IRAD) of Directorate of Academic Affairs, Army University.

negatively affect how they think about problems. Although there are no right or wrong answers on the noncognitive questions, higher scores in these areas have been positively correlated with higher performance of Army captains and majors.

The Army University, on behalf of the Combined Arms Center (CAC), is implementing the C3AB for CCC students and providing self-development feedback to all students who volunteer to participate in the research effort. The C3AB is free to all students

and is owned and managed by the U.S. Army. Students at Fort Benning, Fort Lee, Fort Leonard Wood, Fort Rucker, and Fort Sill have already participated in the research. Fort Benning, Fort Huachuca, and Fort Gordon will have the opportunity to participate by the summer of 2020.

As the Army moves into the information age for soldier talent management, the ability to develop better assessments and processes to identify soldier strengths and weaknesses will be essential to future Army readiness. When news of research to improve Army assessments gets out, we hope that many volunteers join the fight and help improve the way the Army manages talent. 