

## Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC)

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### Summary

Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) provide educational opportunities to Servicemembers who, because they frequently moved from place to place, had trouble completing college degrees. SOC functions in cooperation with 15 higher education associations, the Department of Defense, and Active and Reserve Components of the Military Services to expand and improve voluntary postsecondary education opportunities for Servicemembers worldwide. SOC is funded by the Department of Defense (DoD) through a contract with the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU). The contract is managed for DoD by the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES). ARNG Soldiers, including their families and dependents if applicable, receive benefits through SOCGuard and SOC Army Degree (SOCAD) depending upon individual status.

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### Quick Guide: Identifying a SOC school

1. Go to [SOC Consortium additional information site](#).
2. Download the SOC Consortium Guides: [Volume One – Alabama-Montana](#) and [Volume Two – Nebraska-Wyoming](#). These documents provide specific information on each institutional member of the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) Consortium. The Institutional Information page for each college or university contains the names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of a SOC Representative and Counselor; a list of military installations served; policies on awarding of credit for national testing programs, military experience, and other non-traditional learning; and identifies the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps installations where institutions in the SOCAD, SOCMAR, and SOCNAV degree networks provide associate and Bachelor's degrees.
3. Contact appropriate SOC representative based on State or college.

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### Frequently Asked Questions

#### Q. Who is eligible?

- A. Military spouses and college-age children are eligible to pursue associate and bachelor's degrees through the SOC Degree Network System. ARNG Soldiers are

eligible through SOCAD and may receive additional guidance through SOCGuard specifically. Soldiers may begin this program as soon as they begin fulfilling the basic Guard duty commitment of one weekend drill per month and two weeks in the summer.

**Q. Does SOC work with other organizations?**

A. SOC functions in cooperation with 15 higher education associations, the Department of Defense, and Active and Reserve Components of the Military Services to expand and improve voluntary postsecondary education opportunities for Servicemembers worldwide.

**Q. What are the benefits of SOCs?**

A. Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) consortium colleges and universities are dedicated to helping Servicemembers and their Families earn college degrees. Military students can take courses in their off-duty hours at or near military installations in the United States and overseas. Additionally, if an ARNG Soldier is stationed away from home or training in a different location, classes may be taken at the nearest SOC participating institution. For more information regarding participating colleges and curriculum offerings, consult the SOC Web site.

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**Links**

- [ARNG Education Home Page](#)  
This comprehensive website serves as the premier source for education, incentives, and employment services information as it applies to Army National Guard Soldiers.
- [SOCAD Home Page](#)  
This site houses specific information regarding the SOCAD program including information regarding identifying a home college, reduced academic residency, credit for non-traditional learning, student agreements, and guaranteed course transfer.
- [SOCGuard Home Page](#)  
The SOCGuard site features SOC information specifically tailored to Guard Soldiers. Through this resource, Soldiers can find specific information regarding SOC benefits based on current drilling status.

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**References**

Documents and Forms

- [ARNG Education Benefits Brochure](#)
- [ARNG Education Benefits Handbook July 2010](#)
- [SOCGuard Brochure](#)

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### **Points of Contact**

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