UC San Diego Extension Defense Tech Study Reveals Need for More Crash Course Training

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U.S. presence in Iraq, Afghanistan and other military pressures have created a need for accelerated crash course training for defense industry workers, reports a new voice-of-the-customer study of California's largest defense contractors and the Navy's Space and Warfare Systems Command (SPAWAR) leaders conducted by the University of California San Diego Extension.

UC San Diego Extension's Defense Technology program, which serves the nearly $18 billion annual San Diego defense industry, is responding by offering more short format classes that will take three days to complete as opposed to nine weeks.

Organizations participating in the defense tech study were BAE, Boeing, Booz-Allen & Hamilton, Cubic, General Atomics, Lockheed-Martin, Northrop-Gruman, Raytheon, and SAIC. Also participating were representatives from SPAWAR, the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) and the Naval Post Graduate School (NPS). In addition to in-depth interviews and focus groups, UC San Diego Extension also surveyed 348 engineers, IT specialists and technical workers in the defense industry.

The Defense Technology program, called the finest continuing education program for the defense industry West of the Mississippi, works with the university's globally renowned Jacobs School of Engineering to provide advanced technical training to the government, military and industry personnel who work in support of the men and women in the nation's high-tech armed forces. Courses are taught by engineers recruited for their real world expertise.

"Our focus is to help deliver technological advantage to our men and women in uniform," says Don Muehlbach, director of technology education at UC San Diego Extension and also a Captain in the US Navy. "As the defense industry continues to grow, there is a strong need for continuing education in this field. The key to improving the quality of the talent pool is integrating the collective knowledge of the university, defense industry leaders and engineering professionals."

Typically UC San Diego Extension Defense Technology courses are three hours per week for nine-weeks. New courses, like Electronic Warfare I, the fundamental electronic warfare analysis course, will meet from 8 am to 5 pm for three consecutive days, Sept. 27-29.

Four other new accelerated short courses starting in the fall are Shipboard Communication Systems, Test & Evaluation in the Department of Defense Acquisition Process, Space-Time Adaptive Processing for Radar, and Simulation and the Acquisition Process.

The defense tech study suggested many future course offerings. For instance, one future course area to be covered will be unmanned vehicles and robotics. With the U.S. presence in Iraq now in its fifth year, the number of robots has grown significantly to counter the rising use of improvised explosive devices by insurgents and other

local fighters. According to one defense contractor, personnel at robot hospitals in Iraq repair more than 400 robots a week.

UC San Diego -- one of the ten campuses in the world-renowned University of California system -- has rapidly achieved the status as one of the top 50 institutions in the world for higher education and research. As the continuing education and public program arm of the university, UC San Diego Extension is recognized nationally for linking the workforce to expert professionals and the knowledge resources of the University of California.

For more information on UCSD Extension Defense Technology programs visit www.extension.ucsd.edu/defensetech.

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