U.S. Army Research Institute
for the Behavioral and Social Sciences

Research Report 1959

Impact of the Phase II Infantry Advanced Leader Course (ALC)

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July 2012

U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences

Department of the Army Deputy Chief of Staff, G1

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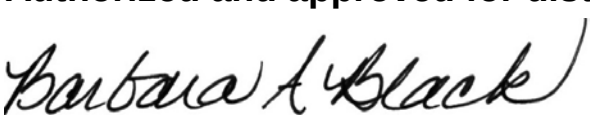

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Research accomplished under contract
for the Department of the Army

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

1. REPORT DATE (dd-mm-yy)	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED (from. . . to)
July 2012	Final	January 2010 - December 2010

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE	5a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NUMBER
Impact of the Phase II Infantry Advanced Leader Course (ALC)	W74V8H-04-D-0045 DO 0042
	5b. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER 0633007

6. AUTHOR(S)	5c. PROJECT NUMBER
Robert J. Pleban, Marisa L. Miller (U.S. Army Research Institute), E. Daly Vaughn (Auburn University Consortium Research Fellows Program), David R. James, Richard L. Wampler, Paul N. Blankenbeckler (Northrop Grumman Corporation)	A792
	5d. TASK NUMBER 360
	5e. WORK UNIT NUMBER

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
US Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences 6000 6th Street Bldg. 1464 / Mail Stop: 5610 Fort Belvoir, VA 22060 Northrop Grumman Corporation 3565 Macon Road Columbus, GA 31907	Research Report 1959

9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRES(ES)	10. MONITOR ACRONYM
US Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences 6000 6th Street (Bldg. 1464 / Mail Stop: 5610) Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5610	ARI
	11. MONITOR REPORT NUMBER Research Report 1959

12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES
Contracting Officer's Representative and POC: Robert J. Pleban

14. ABSTRACT *(Maximum 200 words)*:
A longitudinal research effort assessed the training value of the revised Infantry Phase II ALC on Soldier job performance (near transfer) and determined the impact of relevant training inputs (i.e., trainee characteristics, training design, and work environment factors) on the transfer process. Data from questionnaires, interviews and performance ratings were collected pre- and post-ALC and 3-5 months later at the students' unit from ALC students, supervisors, and peers. The research findings suggest that ALC positively impacted students' confidence to employ both NCO competencies and ALC tasks. Moreover, this confidence did not decline substantially when reassessed three to five months later at the unit. Nevertheless, additional findings indicated that ALC could be improved. Areas addressed included modifying the structure and format of the ALC to take advantage of the more experienced students knowledge and background, ensuring comparability between the resident and MTT versions of ALC, providing more hands-on experiences, deleting modules with minimal training value/opportunities for professional growth, selecting and training qualified cadre, setting and enforcing achievable course standards, and selecting qualified students to attend ALC. Issues related to various training input variables affecting transfer of ALC knowledge and skills to job performance were also addressed. Finally, suggestions for enhancing learning and transfer in ALC were provided.

15. SUBJECT TERMS
Transfer of Learning, Infantry, Noncommissioned Officer Job Performance, Infantry Advanced Leader Course – Phase II, Noncommissioned Officer Education System

16. REPORT	17. ABSTRACT	18. THIS PAGE	19. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	20. NUMBER OF PAGES	21. RESPONSIBLE PERSON
Unclassified	Unclassified	Unclassified	Unlimited	166	Peggy Maloney 703.545-2325

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July 2012

Army Project Number
633007A792

Personnel Performance and Training

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors would like to thank Command Sergeant Major Mark Horsley of the Noncommissioned Officer Academy (NCOA), Fort Benning, Georgia for his support of this project. We are also deeply appreciative of the time provided by the staffs at the four units we visited to help coordinate the follow-on data collection activities. Without their cooperation and support, this research effort would not be possible. Finally, we would like to thank the Advanced Leader Course (ALC) students, their supervisors and peers for their participation in this research. Their feedback enabled us to successfully address a number of issues affecting the training value of the Infantry ALC which we hope will prove useful to the NCOA and the Army.

IMPACT OF THE PHASE II INFANTRY ADVANCED LEADER COURSE (ALC)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research Requirement:

The Infantry squad or section leader in today's operational environment (OE) must be prepared to effectively deal with a variety of challenges. Despite the increased leadership and operational requirements from the OE, Advanced Leader Course (ALC) training time has been cut from slightly over six weeks to four weeks (less than four weeks for the mobile training team [MTT] version). Noncommissioned Officer Academy (NCOA) leaders must now make difficult curriculum decisions concerning what topic areas to include, level of detail, method of presentation, and how to enhance course relevance within the reduced time available. In addition, unlike its predecessor, the Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course (BNCOC), ALC now includes different (but comparable) versions (i.e., resident versus MTT), and a more heterogeneous student population, from an experience standpoint, since many Soldiers enter ALC have already served in combat as squad and section leaders while others enter the course without recent troop leading experience.

As the new program of instruction (POI) is implemented for the ALC, information is required that will allow course designers to determine the impact of these factors and how they affect the training value of the ALC. Under the sponsorship of the NCOA, the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI) initiated a longitudinal research effort designed to evaluate the impact of the Infantry ALC Phase II POI on Soldier job performance in operational units. At the heart of this issue, is whether ALC course graduates were able to transfer their knowledge and skills acquired in the course to their unit. This research also attempted to document the challenges associated with conducting longitudinal investigations of transfer of learning, particularly in military operational settings.

Procedure:

Participants included 406 male noncommissioned officers (Sergeants-SGTs [E-5] to Staff Sergeants-SSGs [E-6]) attending Phase II of the Infantry ALC (two resident and two MTT classes) along with 71 peers and 44 supervisors and a 64 student subset of the 406 student original sample. Participants represented both Light (e.g., Airborne) and Heavy (e.g., Mechanized) Infantry units. Questionnaires were administered to students at three time periods, pre- and post-ALC and three to five months after graduation at the student's original (pre-ALC) unit of assignment (follow-on). Peers and supervisors also completed questionnaires at follow-on. In addition, separate focus group interviews were conducted with each group at the follow-on.

A modified version of Baldwin and Ford's (1988) training transfer model was used to identify key variables (training inputs - *trainee characteristics, training design, and work environment*, learning retention, individual performance, and organizational results) in the

transfer process and guide the development of selected questionnaire items. Pre/post ALC questionnaires assessed specific trainee characteristics (demographics, intelligence [general technical: GT scores], personality [approach to work: general self-efficacy], and motivation (to learn and transfer) as well as confidence in Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) core competencies and Infantry squad leader tasks. Follow-on assessments included work environment (organizational climate, unit support, supervisor support), confidence in NCO competencies and tasks, and organizational results. NCOs (students), peers and supervisors also provided assessments of the NCOs' performance at follow-on.

Findings:

The findings from this research indicated that NCOs' performance, as measured by their confidence in their ability to employ the more general NCO competencies and the specific ALC tasks increased significantly over the length of the course. For the competencies, no significant drop-off in confidence was noted at follow-on (transfer), three to five months later at the unit. This pattern held for the ALC tasks as well with two exceptions (Call for Fire and Combat Operations - significant decline at follow-on but still higher than start-of-course ratings).

Compared to other Army courses, the students rated the overall training value of the ALC as slightly better than average, indicating that there are areas where ALC can be improved. Factors impacting the overall training value of ALC included unit background (NCOs with a primarily mechanized background viewed the course as more valuable than did NCOs with either a wheeled or light Infantry background), experience (SGTs rated the ALC higher than did the more senior NCOs-SSGs), and course versions (resident rated higher than MTT).

Other factors that were identified as impacting the training value of the ALC included: the design and structure of course modules (e.g., need increased focus on applied situational/ leadership exercises – "learn by doing), proper selection and training of cadre, setting and enforcing achievable standards, and selection and admission of only those individuals who meet the necessary selection criteria for attending the course.

With regard to the transfer model, the overall pattern of findings from this research did not strongly support the model. The student characteristics that were examined as identified by the model, i.e., ability (intelligence), measured by GT scores, personality (general self-efficacy), and motivation (to learn and transfer), with one exception, correlated significantly (positively) with end of course (Time 2) confidence self-ratings which correspond to the learning/retention step in the model. Thus, there was some support for the model that trainee characteristics are positively related to learning as assessed through confidence self-ratings.

However, with the exception of general self-efficacy, the remaining trainee characteristics were unrelated to self, peer and supervisor ratings of performance at follow-on (Time 3), the transfer step of the model. General self-efficacy was positively correlated with self-ratings of performance for both NCO competency and task performance, but with one exception was unrelated to peer and supervisor performance ratings. Similarly, perceived utility (training design component of the model) was generally unrelated to confidence ratings and self, peer, and supervisor ratings of performance. Finally, work environment variables

(organizational: Army climate, unit climate, and supervisor support) specified by the transfer model were, for the most part, unrelated to self, peer, and confidence ratings of NCO competency and ALC task performance at follow-on. The failure of the present research to fully support the transfer model was discussed in terms of design characteristics (longitudinal focus), the relatively long lag time between training and transfer performance, and rating source.

Utilization and Dissemination of Findings:

Suggestions for enhancing both learning and transfer were presented. These suggestions included: 1) adopt a more proactive selection strategy for trainees to ensure they have the prerequisite skill sets to reap the maximum benefits from the training; 2) structure course content and presentation to increase trainee motivation; 3) create a supportive work environment that encourages trainees to apply their new skills on the job; 4) leverage and/or incorporate training strategies that maximize learning and; 5) increase the duration and impact of the of training interventions, e.g., applied training/leadership exercises. Key findings from this research were briefed to the Commandant of the NCOA, Fort Benning, Georgia, on 3 June 2011.

IMPACT OF THE PHASE II INFANTRY ADVANCED LEADER COURSE (ALC)

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IMPACT OF THE PHASE II INFANTRY ADVANCED LEADER COURSE (ALC)

Introduction

There is little question as to why the Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) has long been referred to as the "backbone of the Army." It is the Sergeant who has nearly constant contact with the Soldier, leads or supervises the daily garrison duties and details, maintains the established standards, and leads, often by example, in combat or danger. It is the NCOs of the Army who:

- Train and evaluate individuals, teams, and small units to establish and maintain proficiency in common and specialized tasks and skills.
- Inspect and see to the immediate health, welfare, and cleanliness of the Soldiers in their charge and assure individual and collective readiness.
- Inspect and supervise the maintenance and readiness of the equipment, vehicles, and weapons assigned to their Soldiers and their unit.
- Attend to and enforce good order and discipline of their Soldiers by guiding, counseling, correcting, and retraining them and handling, informally, minor infractions of discipline and standards.
- Lead and supervise combat missions and tasks assigned to their units, assuring that the higher headquarters is informed of status, location, and situations and conditions that may impact the mission, and keep their subordinates informed.

All this and more is asked of the NCO and nowhere is the impact more focused than on the Infantry squad or section leader in today's operational environment (OE). These Infantry NCOs may find themselves nearly simultaneously supervising the dispensing of food to refugees, negotiating a peace between neighbors from opposing tribes, and leading their unit in the elimination of an insurgent sniper—directing their personal version of full-spectrum operations. This NCO, potentially with little more than four years time-in-service, may be operating outside of the immediate supporting range of his parent unit. By situation, he often becomes the senior leader present and sometimes the senior representative of the United States of America on a contentious piece of ground in a highly fluid environment.

Since the U.S. Army implemented the Noncommissioned Officer Education System (NCOES) in 1971, which included Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course (BNCOC), now Advanced Leader Course (ALC), this progressive educational system has been closely aligned with the professional development of the NCO Corps. In the mid-1980s this alignment was initially formalized when graduation from the Primary Leadership Development Course, now Warrior Leader Course (WLC), became a mandatory prerequisite for promotion to Staff Sergeant (SSG), and the trend continued as other NCOES courses became prerequisites for promotion,

competitive assignment, or course selection. However, increased operational tempo (OPTEMPO) and Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) requirements have resulted in the Army granting policy waivers. Commanders have been empowered to delay or defer course attendance. Promotion boards have been instructed to disregard or discount non-attendance at NCOES courses as a selection criterion for promotions. Suspending the requirement for Soldiers to complete selected NCOES courses allows Soldiers to advance with the stipulation that training will be completed later, after returning from a deployment. (It should be noted that while ALC is intended to prepare NCOs for the responsibilities of a SSG, it is not a strict requirement for promotion to SSG, but WLC is. WLC may be waived by the Deputy Chief of Staff, G1 for 270 days after redeployment [see Table 3-4 AR 600-8-19]. For SSGs who are eligible for promotion to Sergeant First Class (SFC), ALC completion is required prior to promotion to SFC, "…promotion will be held in abeyance until the Soldier completes the eligibility-level of NCOES as described…" in paragraph 4-2b.3, AR 600-8-19, *Enlisted Promotions and Reductions* (Department of the Army, RAR 27 December 2011).

The merit of an NCOES is acknowledged as necessary for the maintenance of a professional NCO Corps. However, the Army recognizes the need, when necessary, to modify the NCOES to meet the requirements of the operational Army and ensure relevance to present and future operations. The recent NCOES transformation has adapted the NCOES to the needs of an expeditionary Army at war by refining program of instructions (POIs) and embedding combat leaders' tasks into all NCOES programs (U.S. Army Posture Statement, 2010). POI refinements were driven by the following factors emanating from the OE: increased duties and responsibilities, new requirements for proficiency on unfamiliar tasks, and the forecast of a continued high OPTEMPO for the Army. Despite the increased requirements, ALC training time has been cut from slightly over six weeks to four weeks [less than four weeks for the mobile training team (MTT) version]. Existing course content focuses on Infantry war-fighting skills, combat leadership, and the planning and conducting of squad level operations training. However, NCOA leaders must make difficult curriculum decisions concerning what topic areas to include, level of detail, method of presentation, and how to enhance course relevance. Due to the increased responsibility of these squad leaders, the Infantry ALC has incorporated topics from the higher-level Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course (now Senior Leader Course), such as composite risk assessment, mission planning and staff skills of the military decision making process, combat orders preparation and presentation.

ALC and BNCOC differ in several other important ways. While BNCOC was primarily a resident course trained at Fort Benning, ALC is now routinely taken to the students at their home stations (stateside and overseas) by way of MTTs. This greatly increases the availability of the ALC to Soldiers, both 11B (Infantry) and 11C (Mortar). For example, in Fiscal Year 2010, plans called for seven resident 11B ALC Phase II classes and six resident 11C ALC Phase II sessions. The plan also indicates 16 MTTs for 11B ALC and 11 MTTs will be conducted for 11C ALC.[1]

The demographic characteristics of ALC attendees also differ from the traditional composition of BNCOC. BNCOC attendees were primarily early tenure SSGs or promotable

[1] By comparison, the number of Infantry ALC MTTs conducted in FY 10 has approximately doubled since FY 08 based on (average MTT class size estimates) and course attendance data presented by Francis (2008).

SGTs, and the training was early preparation for their new roles as squad and section leaders. However, due to the OE and deferred attendance, many Soldiers enter ALC having already served in combat as squad and section leaders. This shift results in a greater diversity in rank and experience of attendees, ranging from SGT (E5) to SFC (E7). Although most Infantry ALC attendees have combat experience, a number have not had recent troop leading experience due to previous assignments such as serving as a drill sergeant, recruiter, or other duties away from operational units. Still others have served as Platoon Sergeants in combat prior to ALC attendance.

As the new POI is implemented, a methodology is required that will allow course designers to obtain the necessary information and feedback to ensure program goals are being met.[2] This information must focus both on defining the graduate's competence and performance as an individual and also his impact on the readiness and capabilities of his unit in the context of the OE for current and future missions. This information is necessary to validate and refine the Infantry ALC POI and enhance the program's contributions to the Soldiers, their units, and the Army. Once validated and proven successful, this methodology can be applied to a broader Family of courses across the Infantry School, the Maneuver Center of Excellence, and the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) system of schools.

Under the sponsorship of the NCOA, the U.S. Army Research Institute (ARI) initiated a longitudinal research effort designed to evaluate the impact of the Infantry ALC Phase II[3] POI on Soldier job performance in operational units. At the heart of this issue, is whether ALC course graduates were able to transfer their knowledge and skills acquired in the course to their unit of assignment. The following sections provide a brief overview of factors impacting transfer of learning from the training environment to the job context.

Transfer of Training: Background and Definition

Effective training has the potential to increase knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) and to enable individuals to leverage their KSAs to enhance organizational performance (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010). Training costs across organizations (e.g., businesses, military, and education) have been estimated to be anywhere from $125 - $200 billion annually (Paradise, 2007; Facteau, Dobbins, Russell, Ladd, & Kurdisch, 1995). Despite the large investments in and potential benefits of training, the impact of this training is not clear or very impressive. Saks (2002), for example, reports survey findings indicating about 40% of trainees fail to transfer learned skills onto the job immediately after training, 70% falter in transferring skills one year after the program, and ultimately only 50% of training investments result in organizational or individual improvements. In organizational contexts, both civilian and military, original learning in a training experience is an insufficient measure of effective training. As Blume et al. (2010) argue, it is the positive transfer of training - the extent to which the learning from a training

[2] See Leibrecht, Wampler, Pleban, (2009), Appendixes E-I, for a detailed description of the assessment methodology and data collection plan adopted for the present research.

[3] There are two phases to the Infantry ALC. Phase I is common leader training (same for all military occupational specialties and is completed online using interactive multimedia instruction.

experience transfers to the job and leads to meaningful changes in work performance - that is the primary concern and goal of organizational training programs.

Skill transfer can be examined in many different ways (e.g., Gagne, 1965; Barnett & Ceci, 2002). For this research we distinguish between near and far transfer. Burke and Hutchins (2007) defined training transfer as the application of specific trained knowledge and skills back to the job. This is typically referred to as near transfer (see Spitzer, 1984). The objective, in this instance, is to improve the trainee's technical performance (e.g., engine repair skills, lathe operation, weapon skills) in their current job. In contrast, the objective of far transfer is to provide the trainee with more general knowledge that can be abstracted to new or unfamiliar problems. The training focus is on improving performance in ill-defined content domains (i.e., no clear right or wrong solution to the problem) to include leadership and adaptive performance (Yamnill & McLean, 2001). To optimize transfer of learning in these situations requires the application of different learning models and design strategies. For examples of each approach, i.e., near and far transfer training strategies, see Yamnill & McLean, (2001). The focus for this research effort was on near transfer, i.e., improvement of Soldier job performance/readiness in the unit.

Training Transfer Model

Baldwin and Ford's (1988) frequently cited model of training transfer was adapted for the present research (see Figure 1). Two additions were made to the model to include individual behavior/performance and organizational performance. The adjusted model consists of ***training inputs*** (trainee characteristics, training design, and work environment), ***learning retention*** (acquisition of knowledge and skills acquired in training), ***individual performance*** (near and far transfer, i.e., changes in behavior attributable to course completion), and ***organizational results*** (quality of unit work, overall levels of productivity, unit-level job satisfaction, unit-morale/cohesion).

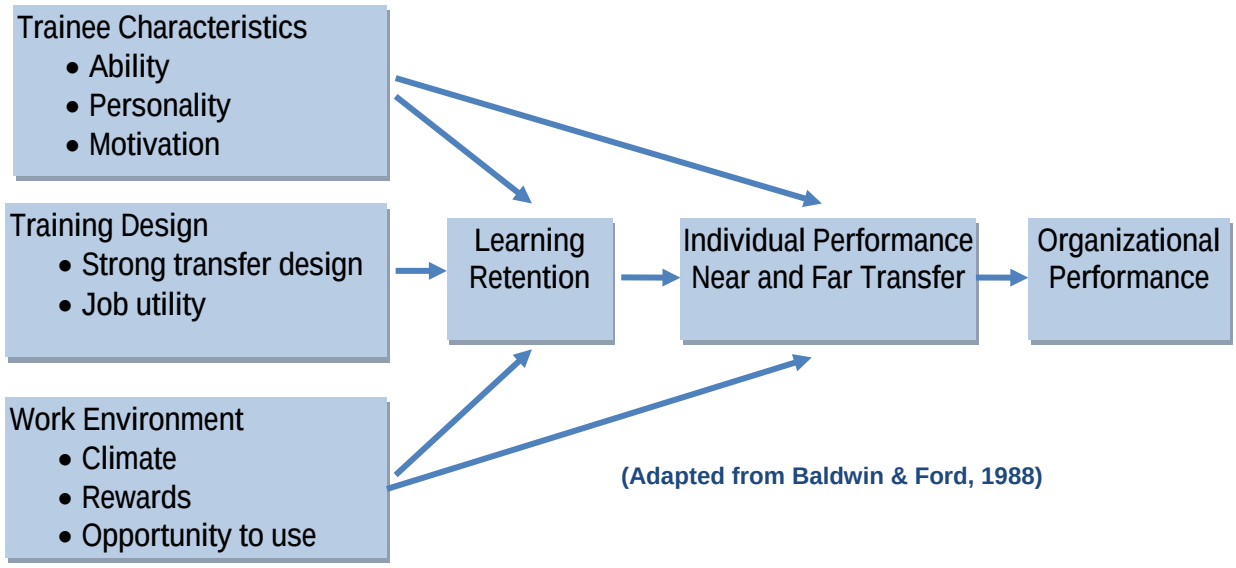

Figure 1. Transfer of training model.

As the model indicates, learning retention, transfer, and organizational performance are strongly impacted by training inputs. Key input factors and their impact on trainee learning and performance are briefly described in the following sections.

Trainee Characteristics

Cognitive ability. General mental ability has been extensively studied and shown to be a consistently reliable predictor of job training performance. An extensive meta-analysis conducted by Blume et al. (2010) on the impact of trainee characteristics on transfer showed that across various training contexts and samples, cognitive ability was the strongest single predictor of transfer of learning. Moreover, far transfer (the application of learning to situations dissimilar to those of the original learning events [Yamnill & McLean, 2001]) is generally achieved by students with higher general learning ability scores (Clark, 2002; Clark & Voogel, 1985). While the findings reported in this area have been impressive, cognitive ability is fairly resistant to training intervention strategies and its value may be limited primarily as a covariate for examining the impact of training interventions in groups of differing ability levels (see Burke & Hutchins, 2007 for an extensive review of the impact of cognitive ability on training transfer).

Self-confidence. Self-confidence [4] (competency based judgments by trainees to perform specific tasks; see Bandura, 1982; 1997) has been found to be positively related to transfer generalization and transfer maintenance across multiple studies (e.g., Chiaburu & Marinova, 2005; Gaudine & Saks, in Burke & Hutchins, 2007). Meta-analytic evidence showed that both pre- and post-training self-confidence ratings were moderately related to transfer (Blume et al., 2010).

Some interventions designed to increase learner self- confidence have produced increases in training performance. For example, including mastery experiences and supportive feedback (Gist, 1989) or goal setting and self-regulation meta-cognitive strategies (Gist, Stevens, & Bavetta, 1991) as part of post training interventions resulted in enhanced transfer. The findings suggest that unlike cognitive ability, self- confidence is a malleable learner quality that should be considered in developing transfer intervention strategies.

Motivation. Motivation, or more specifically, training motivation, as defined by Tannenbaum and Yukl (1992), refers to the intensity and persistence of efforts that trainees apply in learning-oriented improvement activities before, during, and after training. As noted by Noe (1986) and the present authors, trainee/Soldier motivation is critical if the new training interventions are to have any impact. Recent empirical findings from Blume et al. (2010) showed that motivation to learn was moderately related to transfer. Key factors impacting motivation will be described under design issues.

[4] Bandura posits that confidence and self-efficacy are related but distinct. Bandura conceptualized confidence as a general sense of ability, but self-efficacy was confidence to accomplish a specific task. These may relate to each other, but not necessarily. In this effort because of scoring self-efficacy across multiple subdomains within a domain (e.g., forming a composite score of specific NCO competencies), the distinction is less clear; we are assessing confidence regarding ability to perform certain Infantry squad leader competencies and tasks which is neither as general as assessing general confidence without any context nor as specific as self-efficacy to perform night land navigation. To avoid confusion in a non-academic audience, the term self-confidence is used in this report.

Personality. Increased focus of the role played by motivational factors in training transfer has advanced researchers' and practitioners' understanding of how motivation impacts the learning process. In contrast, other trainee characteristics such as personality factors have received relatively less attention even though they can affect the direction, level, and persistence components of trainee motivation (see Burke & Hutchins, 2007). Ford and Weissbein (1997) hypothesize that personality factors might not only be predictive of future job performance and the individual's motivation to learn, but also impact learning strategies used during training, skill acquisition rates, and training transfer.

Personality variables that have been studied in relation to their impact on various components of trainee motivation include, for example, the Big Five (Costa & McRae, 1987) personality dimensions: openness to experience, conscientiousness, agreeableness, extraversion and emotional stability (see Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Blume et al., 2010). Of the "Big Five" personality dimensions, conscientiousness has shown the strongest and most consistent (moderate) relationship with training transfer (Blume et al., 2010).[5]

Anxiety. One of the most extensively researched individual characteristics within the training literature is anxiety. This characteristic has been found to impact both training reactions (see Burke and Hutchins, 2007) and training transfer (Colquitt, Le Pine, & Noe, 2000). In a meta-analysis conducted by Colquitt et al. (2000), the authors found that anxiety produced negative correlations with every training outcome in their research (e.g., motivation to learn, post-training self- confidence, declarative knowledge) including transfer. Anxiety has been linked to reduced training motivation, which results in less transfer (or lower intentions to transfer) possibly because less anxious individuals are less distracted and may be able to focus on the training tasks, while highly anxious individuals' attention is drawn away from the training tasks. Anxiety has been shown to be more malleable (relative to other personal characteristics) to intervention efforts (e.g., Martocchio, 1992). Interventions designed to mitigate anxiety in trainees by enhancing confidence and improving individual levels of self- confidence through some of the strategies mentioned earlier may warrant further consideration by trainers.

Perceived utility. Listed as a learner characteristic by Burke and Hutchins (2007), perceived utility is closely linked to motivation and the design factor content relevance. To achieve maximal transfer, learners must perceive that the new knowledge and skills will improve a relevant aspect of their work performance (Baldwin & Ford, 1988), i.e., that the learning has

[5] Due to time constraints, with one exception, relevant personality variables (e.g., "Big Five") were not assessed in this research. The measures used in this research focused on selected training design and work/environment factors impacting the transfer process. These measures addressed factors which course developers would have much more control over with regard to modifying course content and structure. While personality factors may moderate the transfer process, they are relatively immutable and are of limited value from the perspective of the trainer/course developer. The one exception was individual adaptability. Conceptualized by Ployhart and Bliese (2006), as a personality variable, we decided to examine this variable more closely in the present research because it had not been addressed (from this perspective) in the earlier reviews on personality and transfer. We were also interested in expanding the earlier research in this area by addressing the longitudinal impact of individual adaptability on NCO readiness and performance (training transfer) at the unit of assignment. The results, while not presented in the report, are described in Vaughn, Tucker, and Pleban (2011).

perceived utility. Increased perceived utility will impact motivation to learn which should impact both learning and transfer. Training (perceived) utility reactions have shown small to moderate correlations with training transfer (Blume et al., 2010).

Training Design: Initial Considerations

Needs analysis. Effective training design/intervention addresses KSA deficits (Burke & Hutchins, 2007). These deficits can be effectively addressed through established, formalized procedures such as instructional system design and formative/summative evaluations that funnel information from the user to course developers to ensure that the training provided to Soldiers/trainees is timely and relevant and addresses the most critical training needs. Inappropriate content, poor or nonexistent organizational support, and inadequate resources all impact Soldier/trainee perceptions of the relevance of the training received and the importance of demonstrating newly acquired behaviors and skills on the job or in operational units.

Transfer climate. In addition to conducting needs analyses, trainers must also look at work environment factors such as transfer climate (Holton, Bates, & Ruona, 2000). Transfer climate is the degree to which the work environment is conducive to transferring skills, versus hindering the transfer of training. Transfer climate is seen by Holton et al. (2000) as a mediating variable in the relationship between organization/unit environment and individual's job attitudes and work behavior. Thus, even when learning occurs in training, the transfer climate can either support or inhibit application of learning on the job. These factors must also be assessed to provide the trainer with a complete picture of the transfer environment and whether other issues in the work environment must be addressed before embarking on a new training intervention. Specific factors are discussed in the section on work environment influences.

Learning goals. Assuming the needs analysis indicates that a training/learning intervention is needed and that the work climate is supportive of the intervention, providing advance organizers in the form of clearly communicated performance objectives, conditions under which the performance will be expected to occur on the job, and criteria for acceptable performance can enhance transfer outcomes (Kraiger, Salas, & Cannon-Bowers, 1995). This suggests that trainees are more likely to transfer when they have a clear understanding of what knowledge and behaviors are required and when they are expected to demonstrate these actions.

Content relevance. For near transfer to occur (improved performance on well-defined skills and knowledge needed for one's current job), the more the training content and program reflect the actual work setting, the more successful the near transfer (Baldwin & Ford, 1988). Burke and Hutchens (2007) report empirical studies showing that the content validity of the training module was significantly correlated to transfer immediately after and one month following training. These findings indicated that trainees must see a close relationship between training content and work tasks to optimize transfer (immediate and sustained) in the work setting. A key implication from this research is that a thorough needs analysis and assessment of work environment factors must be performed to ensure that the new training is needed and will be viewed as relevant (by the trainee) for improving job performance.

Training Design: Instructional Strategies and Methods

Key instructional strategies for improving transfer include practice, feedback, overlearning, structure of the learning environment, training frames, and behavioral modeling. These areas are discussed in the following sections.

Practice. The effectiveness of a course is heavily influenced by the nature of the practice activities that the course designer incorporates into the training. This will be partly determined by the course objectives. If the training objective is improvement of current job performance, practice should focus on tasks and behaviors that reflect the work place (Baldwin & Ford, 1988). The more specific the training with regard to where and how the training is to be applied, the more successful the training transfer is likely to be (Clark & Voogel, 1985).

If, however, the training focus is to improve higher level cognitive skills such as leader decision making or creative problem solving (adaptability) then practice might involve exposing the trainees to a variety of situations or scenarios which requires them to identify or invent solutions to the problems presented. Incorporated in this process would be timely **feedback** designed to provide explanations, e.g., explaining the "why" that underlies what the trainee is being taught (Bransford & Schwartz, 1999; Schwartz & Martin, 2004). Continuous, formative feedback provided throughout training is critical for enhancing deep understanding of learning materials (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000) and subsequent far transfer.

Overlearning. As noted by Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (2000), without an adequate level of initial learning, transfer cannot be expected despite the relevance of the training to the individual. The work reported by Bransford et al. highlights the importance of establishing acceptable performance criteria that must be met by trainees to successfully meet course requirements to maximize transfer effects. Learning complex tasks, in particular, requires extensive practice (Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Roemer, 1993). Overlearning (practice even after correct performance has been demonstrated), can improve transfer, especially for skills not required on a regular basis (e.g., Fisk, Hertzog, Lee, Rogers, & Anderson, 1994). Trainees must be given sufficient time (to practice) and varied experiences as well as time to process information to enhance transfer.

Structuring the learning environment. Depending on course/learning objectives, the course designer will have to decide on how much of a role the trainee will have in controlling the learning environment. Again, if the goal is developing routine expertise for a current job (near transfer), then structuring an environment which limits trainee's control by providing step-by-step instruction on the complete task, its concepts, rules, and strategies may be optimal (Bell & Kozlowski, 2008). However, if the goal is to enhance problem-solving/adaptive thinking skills (far transfer), a less structured environment may be more desirable. Adopting a more active-learner centered approach involving guided experiential activities (e.g., inventing general solutions derived from multiple problems followed by feedback) supports **self-regulated learning** (monitoring/managing learning strategies/goals and resources). This active approach also promotes an inductive learning process in which individuals must explore and experiment with a task to infer the rules, principles, and strategies for effective performance. These last

points are critical, since research has shown that this learner-centered approach enhances adaptive transfer, i. e., the ability to use one's existing knowledge base to change a learned procedure or to solve a completely new problem (Bell & Kozlowski, 2008).

Training frames. Another design element that may warrant consideration by trainers/course instructors are training frames (Bell & Kozlowski, 2008). One example of training frames is error framing in which training instructions encourage trainees to make errors. Errors can provide useful feedback when individuals are engaged in learning complex, novel, and ill-defined tasks. How individuals interpret their errors can significantly impact the motivational orientation they take to solve these types of problems. When, for example, errors are framed as a natural, instructive part of the learning process and performance evaluation is deemphasized, individuals are more likely to adopt a mastery orientation which has a positive impact on self- confidence, effort expended (during training), persistence, training performance (e.g., Kozlowski, Gully et al., 2001; Payne, Youngcourt, & Beaubien, 2007) and transfer Smith-Jentsch, Jentsch, Payne, & Salas, 1996).

Behavioral modeling. Behavioral modeling provides another potential transfer strategy by enhancing trainee self- confidence (Bandura, 1997). Inclusion of different situations and/or levels of model effectiveness have been found to improve trainee retention and generalization of learned skills for higher level cognitive functions such as concept formation and problem solving as well as interpersonal skills (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Baldwin cited in Baldwin & Ford, 1988). In a meta-analysis of 117 studies, Taylor, Russ-Eft, and Chan (2005) found that the use of mixed (positive and negative exemplars) models produced greater transfer of training (changes in job behavior) than did only positive models.

Work and Environmental Influences

Increased interest in this research area has been fairly recent (last 20 years). Much of the previous research performed has focused on design factors. Relatively little work has been done to understand how work environment factors influence transfer of training. Organizations interested in increasing their return on investment from training interventions must develop a clearer understanding of all the factors (training design and work environment) affecting transfer and then intervene to improve those factors inhibiting transfer (Holton, Bates, & Ruona, 2000). Key factors impacting the overall transfer climate of the work environment are briefly summarized in the following sections.

Supervisor support. The role that supervisors play in influencing and supporting trainee transfer has been acknowledged and supported in both empirical and qualitative studies (e.g., Clarke, 2002). Key behaviors by which managers may enhance transfer include: discussing new learning with trainees; participating in training; and providing encouragement, positive feedback, and coaching to trainees about the use of new knowledge and skills on the job. These factors were most identified by trainees as positively influencing transfer of learning (see Burke and Hutchins [2007] for a thorough review). Blume et al. (2010) found meta-analytic support (i.e., meaningful nonzero correlations) between support and transfer with supervisor support showing a stronger relationship with transfer than peer support. Despite the general acceptance within the

training literature that supervisor support has a positive influence on transfer of training, this environmental characteristic is not always demonstrated to be a robust predictor of transfer (e.g., Chiaburu & Marinova, 2005; see Nijman, Nijhof, Wognum, & Veldkamp, 2006, for a discussion).

Peer support. Peer support has been shown to be a more consistent influence on trainee transfer than supervisor support (Facteau, Dobbins, Russell, Ladd, & Kudisch, 1995). Hawley and Barnard (2005) found that the most influential peer support behaviors on transfer were peer networking and sharing ideas about course content. These authors found that these peer support factors helped promote skill transfer six months after training.

Opportunity to use/perform. Limited opportunities to perform new skills back on the job were found to be the biggest training impediment to successful training transfer (Clarke, 2002). To ensure long term transfer of training to the job, trainees must be provided the opportunity to use their learned skills. Supervisors/leaders play a key role in creating this opportunity (Axtel, Maitlis, & Yearta, 1997). If possible, leaders should relook their subordinates' increased breadth of responsibilities to allow them to practice new skills on the job (e.g., Clarke, 2002).

Research Objectives

The specific objectives of this research were to: 1) assess the training value of the revised Infantry Phase II ALC on Soldier job performance (near transfer); 2) determine the impact of relevant training inputs (i.e., trainee characteristics, training design, and work environment factors) on the transfer process as depicted in the modified Baldwin and Ford model and; 3) document the challenges associated with conducting longitudinal investigations of transfer of learning in military operational settings.

Method

Researchers collected data from four Infantry ALC classes (two resident and two MTT classes) in spring/summer 2010 using questionnaires, structured interviews, and performance rating forms. Data were collected from three groups of participants: students, supervisors, and peers, at three United States Army installations. Participants represented both Light (e.g., Airborne) and Heavy (e.g., Mechanized) Infantry units.

Participants

At the start of the course (Time 1), data were collected from 424 students participating across the four ALC classes. At the end of the course (Time 2), data from 412 students were collected. Pre- and post-training data was available for 97.2 percent of the students.[6]

Upon closer inspection of the remaining 412 individuals' data, six participants showed careless or inattentive responding by showing zero variation across pages of items and obvious lack of attentiveness to the items. These six participants' data were removed from the final sample.

Following these screening decisions, a total of 406 ALC students' responses composed the final sample of pre-training (start-of-course – Time 1) and post-training (end-of-course – Time 2) data. These students ranged in rank from Sergeant (SGT/E-5) to Staff Sergeant (SSG/E-6). Sixty four of the 406 ALC students completed the follow-on (Time 3)[7] questionnaires and participated in the focus group interview sessions. Table 1 lists the number of students by class and session.

Table 1
Summary of ALC Students by Class and Session

ALC Class	Time 1 Start-of-Course	Time 2 End-of-Course	Time 3 Follow-on
Resident Course 1	123	123	2
MTT Course 1	95	95	24
MTT Course 2	78	78	37
Resident Course 2	110	110	1
Total	406	406	64

There was a significant difference in resident course numbers between the start and end-of-course sessions and the follow-on sessions due to the elimination process that lowered the numbers based on pre-determined selection criteria. Selected NCOs were squad or section leaders that would be returning or remaining with the same Continental United States unit and who were 2-6 months from deploying. The resident class list was further culled to identify the NCOs that would return to the same installations that hosted the MTT classes allowing for a

[6] The 12 person reduction at the end of the courses was attributable to one of three explanations. First, primary participants may have academically dropped the ALC. Second, three end-of-course surveys associated with new codenames were not provided at the start of the course. Thus, assuming that one or more of these individuals participated in the first survey, a plausible explanation is that the original codename was misreported at the second survey. A third explanation is absence from the course on the last day of training. Although no cases of refusal to participate were explicitly observed by the research investigators, it is possible that one or more participants discreetly opted out of research participation at Time 2 survey administration. Three Time 1 participants were verified to be academic drops; however, the researchers were unable to obtain information regarding the academic drop status of other cases with unlinkable data at Time 2.

[7] Follow-on refers to a point in time 3-5 months after completion of the ALC.

larger target population and a consolidated follow-on data collection session while minimizing the number of installations where data were to be collected. The three NCOs that completed the resident course and participated at follow-on were assessed with the follow-on participants from the 1st MTT. None of the other resident course graduates could be tracked to either of the two MTT sites.

Table 2 summarizes the demographic information of the ALC students who participated in both the start-of-course (Pre ALC) and end-of-course (Post ALC) data collection sessions.

Table 2
Summary Demographic Information for the Infantry ALC Students

Students		
	SGT (n = 108)	SSG (n = 298)
Mean Time in Service (years)	6.6	7.6
Mean Time in Grade (months)	26.7	18.8
Primary Infantry experience:		
Light	64.8%	58.1%
Wheeled (Stryker)	10.2%	8.4%
Mechanized	25.0%	33.4%
Mean no. of months as a Team Leader	20.2	20.7
Mean no. of months as a Squad Leader	7.7	16.8
Mean no. of months as a Section Leader	4.4	8.1
Combat deployments		
Operation Iraqi Freedom		
None	7.4%	6.7%
1-3 deployments	92.6%	89.9%
4 or more deployments	0.0%	3.4%
Operation Enduring Freedom		
None	75.0%	67.1%
1-3 deployments	25.0%	32.6%
4 or more deployments	0.0%	0.3%

Supervisors and peers ranging in rank from SSG (E-6) to CPT (O-3) participated in the follow-on focus group interview and performance assessment sessions. Table 3 lists the number of supervisors and peers by installation.

Table 3
Summary of Supervisors and Peers by Installation

Installation	**Supervisors**	**Peers**
1	16	28[8]

[8] Some peers and some supervisors provided ratings for more than one primary participant. Some participants had multiple peer and supervisor ratings.

2	28	43
Total	44	71

Table 4 summarizes the demographic information provided by the supervisors and peers who participated in the follow-on sessions.

Table 4
Summary Demographic Information for the Supervisors and Peers

Rank	Supervisors	Peers[9]
CPL	0	4
SGT	1	16
SSG	12	48
SFC	19	0
2LT	4	0
1LT	6	0
Mean Time in Grade (months)	29.5	26.1
Mean Time in Service (years)	9.3	7.8

Instruments

This section describes the refinement, development, and modification of the data collection instruments (DCIs) and data collection and management plan presented by Leibrecht, Wampler, and Pleban (2009) and applied throughout this effort. Refinement of the DCIs began with a comparison of the 2010 ALC POI to the 2008 ALC POI which was used to develop the original DCIs. POI changes resulted in minor refinements to the ALC Student Start- and End-of-Course questionnaires, the ALC Student Follow-on questionnaire, and the ALC Student Focus Group Interview Protocol. Format changes were made to each document to improve readability and eliminate redundancies, while additional metrics were added to measure the student's general approach toward work. Revised DCIs were reviewed by the Fort Benning NCOA ALC cadre to ensure relevance to the new ALC POI.

Development of additional assessment metrics was limited and only included supervisor and peer focus group interview protocols and supervisor and peer performance assessment forms. The focus group interview protocols were the same as the student protocols with the questions worded to reflect the supervisor/peer point of view versus the students. The performance assessment forms were designed to elicit performance ratings based on the supervisor/peer observations of the student performing duties as a squad/section leader. These instruments are briefly described below.

ALC Start-of-Course Questionnaire. The ALC Start-of-course Questionnaire consisted of 140 items presented in Likert-type or short answer formats. The survey consisted of five sections: **Demographics** (30 items), e.g., *prior Infantry experience, Army Training courses completed, combat deployments*; **General Approach Toward Work (Personality, with a**

[9] Four peer raters did not report their rank, time in grade or time in service.

specific focus on general self-efficacy [work confidence]) and **motivation** – 38 items), e.g., general self-efficacy – *When facing certain tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them*; motivation, – *I am continually learning new skills for my job,* **Employment of NCO Competencies** (39 items)[10], e.g., *Critical/Creative Thinking – Anticipate and plan for the unexpected by thinking ahead*; **Employment of ALC Tasks /Activities** (15 items)[11], e.g., *Land Navigation – Navigate on foot over terrain using map and lensatic compass-day;* and **Expectations of ALC** (18 items), e.g., *The training I receive from ALC will be useful*. See Appendix A for the survey.

ALC End-of-Course Questionnaire. The ALC End-of-Course Questionnaire consisted of 116 items presented in Likert-type or short answer formats. The survey consisted of four sections: **ALC Training Received on NCO Competencies** (38 items)[12], e.g., *Military Leadership - Convey mission orders to Soldiers clearly, correctly, completely*; **Employment of NCO Competencies** (38 items), e.g., *Warrior Competencies – Properly employ all assigned and available equipment*; **Employment of ALC Tasks/Activities** (14 items, e.g., *Combat Orders – Write a Warning Order, Operations Order, Fragmentary Order;* **Assessment of ALC Outcomes** (26 items), e.g., *I expect that what I learned in Phase II will be relevant to my job*. See Appendix B for the survey.

Follow-on Questionnaire. The Follow-on Questionnaire consisted of 194 items presented in Likert-type or short answer formats. The survey consisted of seven sections: **Post-ALC Activities** (8 items), e.g., *What did you do after you graduated from ALC?;* **General Work Beliefs** assessing four areas – organizational climate, unit support, supervisor support, and general self-efficacy (22 items), e.g., *I feel free to put my ALC knowledge and skills to use in my unit;* **General Reactions to ALC Training** – Perceived Transfer (9 Items); e.g., *The effectiveness of my squad has improved due to the skills that I learned in ALC;* **Employment of NCO Competencies** (38 items), e.g., *Training Subordinates – Develop, prepare, and employ realistic training plans*; **Employment of ALC Tasks/Activities** (14 items), e.g., *Combat Operations – Plan and employ squad/platoon operations;* **Relevance, Performance, Sufficiency, and Application of Competencies/Skills** (85 items), e.g., *Performing leadership duties (issuing orders, building teamwork, etc.*); **Global Impact of ALC Training** (18 items), e.g., *ALC helped me improve my squad's overall productivity*. See Appendix C for the survey.

Peer Ratings of ALC Student(s) Form. The Peer Ratings of ALC Student(s) Form consisted of 27 items in Likert-type or short answer format. The form consisted of three sections: **Peer Demographic Inventory** (6 items), e.g., *When did you join your current unit?*; **General Reactions to ALC Training** (5 items), e.g., *ALC attendance is good for a squad leader's unit*; **Primary Participants' Performance Ratings** (peer indicates level of performance observed of the squad leader over the 3-5 months since completing ALC – 11

[10] SMEs identified nine NCO competencies. These competencies were verified in interviews with ALC cadre.

[11] Seven ALC task categories were identified which corresponded to the ALC class modules.

[12] There was one extra item in the Pre-ALC survey (Being an Ambassador, Item 3 - "Establishing and maintaining contacts outside the Army"). The focus of this section was on both the local community as well as the mission area of interest. In contrast, the focus of the Post-ALC survey was on Being an Overseas Ambassador within the mission area. In situations like Afghanistan, for example, some could argue that establishing and maintaining contacts outside the Army, i.e., the local/civilian community, is part of the mission. Thus, adding a specific item to address this point was seen as redundant.

items), e.g., *Thinking critically and creatively (adjusting TTP, anticipating the unexpected, etc.*). The performance ratings portion of the form could be used as many times as necessary for as many relevant primary participants the peers could rate. See Appendix D for the form.

Supervisor Ratings of ALC Student(s) Form. The Supervisor Ratings of ALC Student(s) Form was essentially identical in content and format to the Peer Ratings of ALC Student(s) Form. See Appendix E for the form.

Participants Focus Group Protocol-Follow-on. The Participants Focus Group Protocol consisted of 56 questions divided into seven sections. Due to time constraints (two hours), questions were reviewed by both the SMEs and ARI researchers and prioritized. These highest priority (28) questions drove the focus group interview sessions. Topic areas included: **Job Relevance of ALC Training**, e.g., *What important topics or tasks were missing in the Phase II training?*; **On-the-Job Application of ALC Learning,** e.g., *What conditions in your unit made it difficult for you to apply what you learned in ALC?*; **Impact on Your Own Job Performance**, e.g., *Overall, how much did your ALC learning improve your performance as a squad leader?*; **Impact on Your Squad's Performance,** e.g., *Which squad performance aspects benefited most because of what you learned in ALC?*; **Impact at Platoon Level and Above**, e.g., *How have your ALC-related accomplishments (and/or your squad's) impacted the combat readiness of your platoon/company?*; **Benefits to the NCO and His Unit**, e.g., *What personal benefits have you realized because of your ALC training?*; **Ideas for Improving the ALC Program**, e.g., *How would you strengthen the ALC program?* See Appendix F for the protocol.

Leader/Peer Focus Group Protocol-Follow-on. The Leader/Peer Focus Group Protocol consisted of 32 questions divided into five sections. As with the Participants Focus Group, time constraints (two hours) required that all questions be reviewed and prioritized for inclusion in the focus group sessions (20 questions). Topic areas were similar/identical to those in the Participants Focus Group Protocol, i.e., **Job Relevance of ALC Training**, i.e., *Which blocks of training or lessons should receive more time in Phase II?*; **Impact on Your Squad Leader's/Peer's Job Performance**, e.g., *How did his ALC training impact the overall quality of his job performance?*; **Impact on the Squad's Performance**, e.g., *How did his ALC training impact the overall quality of his squad's performance?*; **Impact at Platoon Level and Above**, e.g., *What are the 3 greatest ALC-related benefits to your platoon/company?*; **Ideas for Improving the ALC Program**, e.g., *If you were king for a day, what 3 things would you do to improve the ALC program of instruction?* See Appendix G for the protocol. For the seven instruments described above, a matrix was developed which identified the specific variables that were measured and the items that composed each variable. The matrix is presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Variable	Time Assessed

ALC Variables and Assessment Periods

	Start-of-Course	End-of-Course	Follow-on
Student Demographics	Section I-Items1-28		
Personality Characteristics			
General Self-Efficacy	Section II-Items 1-8		Section II- Items 15-22
Work Environment			
Organizational Climate			Section II- Items 1-3
Unit Support			Section II- Items 4-8
Supervisor Support			Section II- Items 9-14
Employment of NCO Competencies			
Critical/Creative Thinking	Section III	Section III	Section IV
Military Leadership	Section III	Section III	Section IV
Warrior Competencies	Section III	Section III	Section IV
Counsel/Coach/Mentor	Section III	Section III	Section IV
Training Subordinates	Section III	Section III	Section IV
Shaping Unit Performance	Section III	Section III	Section IV
Managing Resources	Section III	Section III	Section IV
Expanding Own Competencies	Section III	Section III	Section IV
Being an Ambassador	Section III	Section III	Section IV
Employment of ALC Tasks			
Land Navigation	Section IV	Section IV	Section V
Small Arms Proficiency	Section IV	Section IV	Section V
Call for Fire	Section IV	Section IV	Section V
Combatives	Section IV	Section IV	Section V
FBCB2	Section IV	Section IV	Section V
Demolitions	Section IV	Section IV	Section V
Combat Operations	Section IV	Section IV	Section V
Expectations of ALC			
Readiness/Preparedness	Section V- Items 1-3	Section I- Item 1	
Pre-Training Motivation	Section V- Items 4-11	Section I- Items 2-3	
Expectancy/Perceived Utility	Section V- Items 12-15	Section I- Items 11-14	
Amount of Training Received on NCO Competencies (Training Design - Practice)			
Critical/Creative Thinking		Section II	
Military Leadership		Section II	
Warrior Competencies		Section II	
Counsel/Coach/Mentor		Section II	
Training Subordinates		Section II	
Shaping Unit Performance		Section II	
Managing Resources		Section II	
Expanding Own Competencies		Section II	
Being an Ambassador		Section II	

Table 5 (continued)
ALC Variables and Assessment Periods

Variable		Time Assessed	
	Start-of-Course	End-of-Course	Follow-on
Assessment of ALC Outcomes			
NCO Competencies		Section I-Items 4-8	
Overall Confidence due to ALC		Item 9	
Commitment		Item 10	
Motivation to Transfer		Items 15-20/18R-19R	
Overall Job Utility		Item 21	
Post-ALC Activities			
Activities/Training Exercises			Section I- Items 1-8
General Reactions to Training			
Perceived Transfer			Section III- Items 1-9
Relevance, Performance, Improvement due to ALC, Sufficiency, and Application of Competencies/Skills			
Critical/Creative Thinking			Section VI
Military Leadership			Section VI
Warrior Competencies			Section VI
Counsel/Mentor/Coach			Section VI
Training Subordinates			Section VI
Shaping Unit Performance			Section VI
Managing Resources			Section VI
Expanding Own Competencies			Section VI
Being an Ambassador			Section VI
Land Navigation			Section VI
Small Arms Proficiency			Section VI
Call for Fire			Section VI
Combatives			Section VI
FBCB2			Section VI
Demolitions			Section VI
Warrior Battle Drills			Section VI
Combat Operations			Section VI
Global Impact of ALC Training			
People Skills, Motivation, Attitude, Unit Perceptions, unit/squad			Section VII- Items 1-18
Peer Items			
Peer Demographics			Section I
General Reactions to ALC			Section II
Peer Ratings of Squad or Section Leader Performance			Section III

Table 5 (continued)
ALC Variables and Assessment Periods

Variable		Time Assessed	
	Start-of-Course	End-of-Course	Follow-on
Supervisor Items			
Supervisor Demographics			Section I
General Reactions to ALC			Section II
Supervisor Ratings of Squad or Section Leader Performance			Section III
Participants Focus Group Items			
Job Relevance of ALC			Items 1-8
On-the-Job Application of ALC			Items 9-15
Impact on Own Job Performance			Items 16-25
Impact on Squad's Performance			Items 26-35
Impact at Platoon & Above			Items 36-43
Benefits to the NCO & His Unit			Items 44-51
Ideas for Improving ALC			Items 52-56
Leader/Peer Focus Group Items			
Job Relevance of ALC Training			Items 57-61
Impact on Squad Leader's Job Performance			Items 62-69
Impact on Squad's Performance			Items 70-77
Impact at Platoon & Above			Items 78-83
Ideas for Improving ALC			Items 84-88

Note. FBCB2-Force XXI Battle Command Brigade and Below

Procedure

Data collection sessions were structured using the data collection and management plan developed by Liebrecht et al. (2009). Modifications to the plan were based on project timeline, resource constraints, and troop support limitations.

The data collection and management plan roadmap defined the procedures to employ the project. Procedures involved selection of resident and MTT classes that fit within the project timeline, coordination with the Fort Benning NCOA for access to the classes, coordination with the selected student's units-of-assignment for follow-on session access, and administration of the DCIs.

Two resident and two MTT classes were selected from the Army Training Requirements and Resource System course list that allowed for the data collection window to be completed prior to the project deadline. The data collection window was a 7-month period in which the initial data collection was followed by a three to five month incubation period prior to follow-on data collection. See Figure 2.

Training and Transfer Collection Times

Class	Pre (T1) Post (T2)	T3 *n*	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8

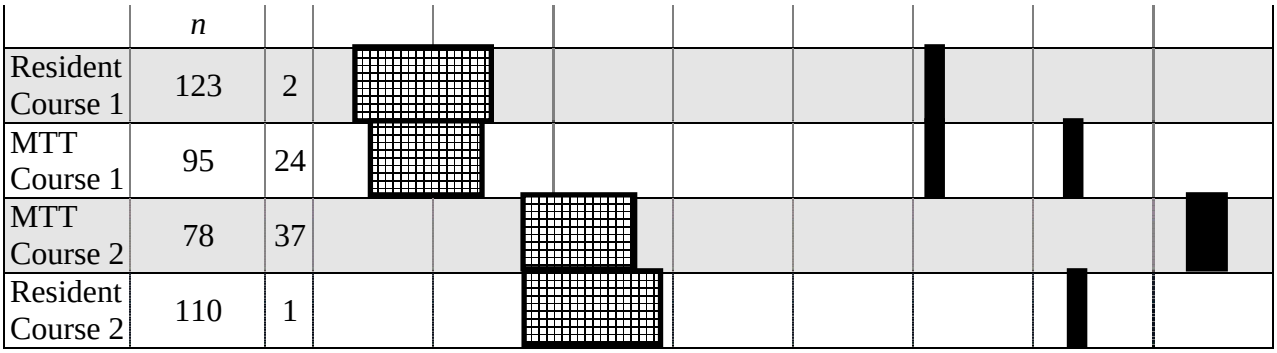

Figure 2. ALC data collection time line.

Note. pre-post *n* = number of primary participants surveyed at time 1 and time 2 from each class. T3 *n* = number of primary participants surveyed at time 3 (transfer/follow-on). Patterned boxes indicate relative time at which ALC Phase II training was conducted (T1 at start and T2 at end) across the four class administrations. Solid boxes indicate times (T3) at which transfer data were collected from selected primary participants, peers, and supervisors at home installation.

Coordination procedures with the NCOA identified optimal times for both the start and end-of-course data collection without impacting the ALC class curriculum. Data collection sessions were woven into the student in-processing and out-processing requirements and typically lasted one hour.

Coordination with the students' units-of-assignment posed a greater challenge in scheduling the follow-on data collection sessions into the units' existing training schedules. Students who attended the resident course in a temporary-duty-and-return status or attended the MTT course typically completed the course during the reset phase of the ARFORGEN cycle; however, the follow-on data collection session (3-5 months later) typically fell into the training phase of the ARFORGEN cycle and became a competing demand. Close communication with each unit's point of contact and research team flexibility became imperative to successful completion of the data collection effort.

DCI administration procedures were mirrored for each of the resident and MTT classes. All students completed an informed consent form and start and end-of-course questionnaires. A selection/elimination process was then performed to identify those students, supervisors, and peers who would participate in the follow-on sessions.

Participants (students) were asked at the start-of-course session to list three peers in their platoon who had known them for a minimum of two months. Students were also asked to list both the officer and NCO that directly supervised them. To be selected for inclusion in the follow-on data sessions, students must have returned to their original unit and have at least one of their listed supervisors still assigned to the unit. When possible, the student provided the NCO supervisor rather than the officer. If neither the officer or NCO supervisor were still stationed at the unit, the student was excluded from the targeted follow-on participant list.

Several students who were included on the follow-on list and their related peers and supervisors did not arrive for their scheduled sessions. In these cases, the associated student was still included as a participant (in the larger data base) despite their peer and/or leader being unavailable. Many students listed other students as their peers. Whenever possible, non-student peers were included as the peer rater. These lists were used in the coordination/verification process to schedule the follow-on sessions.

Follow-on data collection session procedures were again mirrored at each installation. ALC students completed the follow-on questionnaire followed by a focus group interview session while supervisors and peers completed a performance assessment rating also followed by a focus group interview session. Each follow-on session typically lasted from 1-1 ½ hours.

Results

Intercorrelations Among NCO Competency Categories Across ALC and Follow-on

Competency categories were created by calculating the average response to the specific items tapping each of the nine competencies. Correlations were computed among the competencies at the start-/end-of-course and follow-on. These correlations are shown in Tables 6-8. Inspection of Tables 6-8 showed that the NCO competencies were highly correlated (positively) with each other at both the start- and end-of-course as well as at follow-on. All correlations were statistically significant ($p < .001$).

Table 6
Intercorrelations Among Nine NCO Competency Categories at Start-of-Course

Category	1.CT	2.ML	3.WC	4.Co	5.Tr	6.Sh	7.Ex	8.MR	9.BA
1. Critical Creative Thinking	(.86)								
2. Military Leadership	.60	(.90)							
3. Warrior Competencies	.72	.67	(.87)						
4. Counseling, Coaching, Mentoring	.53	.78	.64	(.88)					
5. Training Subordinates	.73	.70	.76	.67	(.89)				
6. Shaping Unit Performance	.64	.71	.74	.65	.80	(.92)			
7. Expanding Own Competencies	.64	.58	.66	.58	.69	.65	(.85)		
8. Managing Resources	.49	.64	.61	.63	.65	.72	.55	(.90)	
9. Being an Ambassador	.57	.59	.56	.59	.64	.58	.62	.58	(.91)

Note. Cronbach's alpha listed upon the diagonal. CT = Critical/Creative Thinking; ML = Military Leadership; WC = Warrior Competencies; Cou = Counseling, Coaching and Mentoring; Tr = Training Subordinates; Sh = Shaping Unit Performance; Ex = Expanding Own Competencies; MR = Managing Resources; BA = Being an (Overseas) Ambassador. All correlations are statistically significant, $p < .001$. The above correlations were based on the final larger sample, $n = 406$.

Table 7
Intercorrelations Among Nine NCO Competency Categories at End-of-Course

Category	1.CT	2.ML	3.WC	4.Co	5.Tr	6.Sh	7.Ex	8.MR	9.BA
1. Critical Creative Thinking	(.94)								
2. Military Leadership	.75	(.95)							
3. Warrior Competencies	.77	.80	(.91)						
4. Counseling, Coaching, Mentoring	.65	.75	.73	(.91)					
5. Training Subordinates	.75	.73	.76	.79	(.93)				
6. Shaping Unit Performance	.68	.76	.77	.77	.85	(.95)			
7. Expanding Own Competencies	.68	.67	.67	.69	.75	.73	(.90)		
8. Managing Resources	.65	.73	.73	.72	.76	.83	.70	(.95)	
9. Being an Ambassador	.61	.65	.61	.68	.71	.70	.78	.67	(.95)

Note. Cronbach's alpha listed upon the diagonal. CT = Critical/Creative Thinking; ML = Military Leadership; WC = Warrior Competencies; Cou = Counseling, Coaching and Mentoring; Tr = Training Subordinates; Sh = Shaping Unit Performance; Ex = Expanding Own Competencies; MR = Managing Resources; BA = Being an (Overseas) Ambassador. All correlations are statistically significant, $p < .001$. The above correlations were based on the final larger sample, $n = 406$.

Table 8
Intercorrelations Among Nine NCO Competency Categories at Follow-on

Category	1.CT	2.ML	3.WC	4.Co	5.Tr	6.Sh	7.Ex	8.MR	9.BA
1. Critical Creative Thinking	(.90)								
2. Military Leadership	.74	(.92)							
3. Warrior Competencies	.84	.77	(.88)						
4. Counseling, Coaching, Mentoring	.75	.82	.88	(.82)					
5. Training Subordinates	.73	.75	.76	.77	(.91)				
6. Shaping Unit Performance	.71	.82	.78	.77	.86	(.93)			
7. Expanding Own Competencies	.51	.61	.59	.62	.68	.64	(.80)		
8. Managing Resources	.74	.75	.77	.75	.75	.85	.61	(.92)	
9. Being an Ambassador	.44	.64	.50	.59	.46	.47	.61	.55	(.92)

Note. Cronbach's alpha listed upon the diagonal. CT = Critical/Creative Thinking; ML = Military Leadership; WC = Warrior Competencies; Cou = Counseling, Coaching and Mentoring; Tr = Training Subordinates; Sh = Shaping Unit Performance; Ex = Expanding Own Competencies; MR = Managing Resources; BA = Being an (Overseas) Ambassador. All correlations are statistically significant, $p < .001$. The above correlations were based on the final smaller sample, $n = 64$.

Intercorrelations Among ALC Tasks Across ALC and Follow-on

Task categories were created by calculating the average response to the specific items tapping each of the seven tasks. Intercorrelations among ALC task categories were also calculated at both the start and end of the course as well as at follow-on. These correlations are shown in Tables 9-11. Inspection of Tables 9 and 10 showed that all the task intercorrelations were positive and statistically significant at both the start and end of the course. However, the

magnitude of the correlations was noticeably smaller when compared to the competency intercorrelations across time. ALC task intercorrelations at follow-on were all positive but in some instances lower in magnitude when compared to those (intercorrelations) calculated at both the start-of-course and end-of-course. In some instances, the correlations failed to reach statistical significance. See Table 11. The smaller intercorrelations for ALC tasks versus those obtained for the NCO competencies could be due to several factors, including unreliable task categories (e.g., single item categories), and the 3-5 month follow-on time period in the unit which may have affected the ratings by providing the participants with a more realistic context to assess their task proficiencies.

Table 9
Intercorrelations Among Seven Infantry ALC Task Categories at Start-of-Course

Category	**1.LN**	**2.SA**	**3.CF**	**4.Cb**	**5.FB**	**6.De**	**7.CO**
1. Land Navigation	(.91)						
2. Small Arms Proficiency	.57	(.83)					
3. Call for Fire	.52	.55	(--)				
4. Combatives	.32	.37	.42	(--)			
5. FBCB2	.36	.35	.34	.36	(--)		
6. Demolitions	.34	.40	.36	.42	.27	(--)	
7. Combat Operations	.57	.61	.58	.47	.47	.45	(.80)

Note. Cronbach's alpha listed upon the diagonal. LN = Land Navigation, SA = Small Arms Proficiency, CF = Call for Fire, Cb = Combatives, FB = FBCB2, De = Demolitions, and CO = Combat Operations. All correlations are statistically significant, p <.001. Tasks without an alpha (--) reflect tasks assessed via a single item. The above correlations were based on the final larger sample, n = 406.

Table 10
Intercorrelations Among Seven Infantry ALC Task Categories at End-of-Course

Category	**1.LN**	**2.SA**	**3.CF**	**4.Cb**	**5.FB**	**6.De**	**7.CO**
1. Land Navigation	(.94)						
2. Small Arms Proficiency	.59	(.87)					
3. Call for Fire	.46	.56	(--)				
4. Combatives	.25	.37	.35	(--)			
5. FBCB2	.38	.49	.45	.32	(--)		
6. Demolitions	.21	.36	.38	.51	.35	(--)	
7. Combat Operations	.52	.68	.57	.37	.59	.39	(.85)

Note. Cronbach's alpha listed upon the diagonal. LN = Land Navigation, SA = Small Arms Proficiency, CF = Call for Fire, Cb = Combatives, FB = FBCB2, De = Demolitions, and CO = Combat Operations. All correlations are significant, p <.001. Tasks without an alpha (--) reflect tasks assessed via a single item. The above correlations were based on the larger sample, n = 406.

Table 11
Intercorrelations Among Seven Infantry ALC Task Categories at Follow-on

Category	1.LN	2.SA	3.CF	4.Cb	5.FB	6.De	7.CO
1. Land Navigation	(.88)						
2. Small Arms Proficiency	.51	(.87)					
3. Call for Fire	.47	.36	(--)				
4. Combatives	.39	.38	.29	(--)			
5. FBCB2	.29	.45	.29	.43	(--)		
6. Demolitions	$.17_{ns}$	$.23_{ns}$	$.07_{ns}$	.50	.29	(--)	
7. Combat Operations	.37	.44	.43	.42	.64	$.22_{ns}$	(.81)

Note. Cronbach's alpha listed upon the diagonal. LN = Land Navigation, SA = Small Arms Proficiency, CF = Call for Fire, Cb = Combatives, FB = FBCB2, De = Demolitions, and CO = Combat Operations. All correlations without $_{ns}$ subscript are significant, $p \leq .05$. Tasks without an alpha (--) reflect tasks assessed via a single item. The above correlations were based on the final smaller sample, $n = 64$.

Examining Change in Confidence Pre to Post ALC to Follow-on for NCO Competencies and ALC Tasks

Due to sample size constraints and difficulty obtaining a large sample at the Time 3 follow-on data collection, the original intention of modeling the longitudinal transfer of training process, controlling for trainee characteristics, training design and work environment was not statistically feasible. Instead, repeated measures analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted to determine if significant changes in NCO competency and ALC task confidence occurred over time. If significant changes over time were found, follow-up post-hoc tests were conducted to determine the nature of these changes.

For participants with data from all three time points, confidence ratings for the nine NCO competencies increased significantly from the start of the course (Time 1) to the end of the course (Time 2) with no significant decline at follow-on. The lone exception was that while the general pattern remained true for confidence ratings on resource management, the three time points did not significantly differ from one another. As a separate analysis, response patterns were analyzed for participants who completed the start-of-course and end-of-course but did not complete the follow-on data collection. The results from the analysis showed there were significant increases in confidence ratings on all nine NCO competencies.

The same general pattern was also true regarding participant confidence ratings over time on the seven ALC Infantry tasks. For follow-on participants, confidence ratings on the ALC tasks increased significantly from start of course to end-of-course and leveled off with no significant decline at follow-on. Exceptions include a significant decline at follow-on for Call for Fire and Combat Operations (with follow-on levels/ratings still exceeding start-of-course SSE levels/ratings. For the non-follow-on participants, the start to end-of-course confidence ratings increase was significant across all tasks. See Tables 12 and 13.

In longitudinal research with a significant sample size decline, it is important to attempt to establish that the participants who completed the entire research are not significantly/meaningfully different from the participants who failed to complete the entire research. Traditionally, this concern is present when participants self-select out of the final time point indicating that perhaps participants with specific, possibly meaningful and important, characteristics were more inclined to participate than participants who do not possess the same characteristics. If such differences occur, then conclusions are limited in scope and open to multiple interpretations. The drop in sample size at the final time point for the current research was primarily based on research selection rather than participants systematically opting out. Additional analyses were performed to assess differences between the participants who did and those who did not participate at the follow-on data collection. Generally speaking, there were no significant differences between the two subsamples, but the specifics are detailed below.

On the NCO competencies, there were generally no significant differences between participants who participated in all three time points and those who participated in only the start and end-of-course data collections. One exception to this general trend is that at the start of the course, non-follow-on participants indicated a greater confidence at Training Subordinates than follow-on participants. For the most part, the changes in confidence ratings did not differ between the two subgroups. Exceptions to this general pattern included (statistically) significant differences in improvements in confidence ratings on Training Subordinates with follow-on participants reporting greater growth in confidence on this dimension than non-follow-on participants.

On the ALC tasks, follow-on participants and non-follow-on participants did not differ on their NCO task specific confidence ratings at the start of the course, but they did differ on some tasks at the end of the course. Specifically, they differed on confidence to perform Land Navigation, Call for Fire, and Demolitions ($p < .05$). Follow-on participants had higher end-of-course confidence ratings on Land Navigation and Call for Fire, but were lower than the non-follow-on participants on Demolitions. There were also significant differences in confidence growth rates between the follow-on participants' and non follow-on participants' on Small Arms Proficiency, Call for Fire, and Demolitions. Follow-on participants reported greater gains in confidence on Small Arms Proficiency and Call for Fire than non-follow-on participants, but less gain on Demolitions.

Table 12
NCO Competency and ALC Task Confidence Ratings for Participants Completing Follow-on Data Collection

NCO Competencies	**Start-of-Course**	**End-of-Course**	**Follow-on**	***F***	***df***	***p***	η_p^2
Critical/Creative Thinker	3.69	4.14	4.13	29.08	(2, 122)	<.001	.32
Military Leadership	4.18	4.39	4.36	6.11	(2, 124)	.003	.09
Warrior Competencies	3.88	4.25	4.28	17.90	(2, 124)	<.001	.22
Counseling	4.07	4.36	4.32	7.46	(2, 126)	<.001	.11
Training Subordinates	3.80	4.35	4.28	27.28	(2, 124)	<.001	.31
Shaping Unit Performance	4.19	4.40	4.40	5.27	(2, 120)	.006	.08
Expanding Own Comp.	3.78	4.19	4.03	11.82	(2, 122)	<.001	.16
Resource Manager	4.25	4.47	4.38	3.35	(2, 120)	.039	.05
Ambassador	3.77	4.18	4.09	7.56	(2, 114)	.001	.11
Infantry ALC Tasks	**Start-of Course**	**End-of-Course**	**Follow-on**	***F***	***df***	***p***	η_p^2
Land Navigation	4.07	4.56	4.58	17.7	(2, 124)	<.001	.22
Small Arms Proficiency	4.02	4.58	4.48	28.2	(2, 124)	<.001	.31
Call for Fire	2.94	4.23	3.92	56.9	(2, 122)	<.001	.48
Combatives	3.48	4.02	3.98	10.9	(2, 102)	<.001	.18
FBCB2	3.74	4.27	4.06	11.2	(2, 120)	<.001	.16
Demolitions	2.75	3.20	3.15	3.72	(2, 100)	.028	.07
Combat Operations	3.63	4.27	4.08	24.1	(2, 124)	<.001	.28

Note. N=64.

Table 13
NCO Competency and ALC Task Confidence Ratings for Participants not Completing Follow-on Data Collection

NCO Competencies	**Start-of-Course**	**End-of-Course**	**Follow-on**	**F**	**df**	**p**	**η_p^2**
Critical/Creative Thinker	3.69	4.08	--	92.	(1, 340)	<.001	.21
Military Leadership	4.19	4.34	--	16.	(1, 340)	<.001	.05
Warrior Competencies	3.97	4.25	--	47.	(1, 340)	<.001	.12
Counseling	4.17	4.27	--	7.2	(1, 340)	.008	.02
Training Subordinates	3.99	4.27	--	51.	(1, 340)	<.001	.13
Shaping Unit Performance	4.23	4.39	--	18.	(1, 340)	<.001	.05
Expanding Own Comp.	3.91	4.19	--	53.	(1, 338)	<.001	.14
Resource Manager	4.28	4.39	--	8.7	(1, 339)	.003	.03
Ambassador	3.92	4.18	--	41.	(1, 338)	<.001	.11
Infantry ALC Tasks	**Start-of Course**	**End-of-Course**	**Follow-on**	**F**	**df**	**p**	**η_p^2**
Land Navigation	4.08	4.33	--	21.	(1, 336)	<.001	.06
Small Arms Proficiency	4.12	4.45	--	69.	(1, 341)	<.001	.17
Call for Fire	3.06	3.93	--	210	(1, 333)	<.001	.39
Combatives	3.23	3.87	--	69.	(1, 302)	<.001	.19
FBCB2	3.62	4.02	--	42.	(1, 334)	<.001	.11
Demolitions	2.74	3.58	--	125	(1, 309)	<.001	.29
Combat Operations	3.68	4.18	--	135	(1, 341)	<.001	.28

Note. N=406.

NCO Experience as a Moderator of Confidence Change

The modified Baldwin and Ford (1988) transfer model proposes several trainee characteristics (i.e., personality, motivation and ability) which can moderate transfer. In this research, we measured several additional trainee characteristics which might also moderate transfer including rank, previous combat deployments, and previous squad leader experience.

The purpose of the Infantry ALC is to train NCOs to be an Infantry squad leader, a position normally held by SSGs, and provide a basic familiarization with some Platoon Sergeant duties, a position normally held by SFCs. Under ideal training schedules, students would attend ALC prior to performing any squad leader duties and prior to, or soon after, being promoted to SSG. In practice, at the present time due to the current Army operational requirements, many students have already been serving as a squad leader and may have been in an SSG position for awhile. Differences in performance and knowledge gained from the course could reasonably be expected between SSG and SGT students, and between those students with prior squad leader experience and those without. Surprisingly, however, there were minimal differences found. Only 13 of the final 64 follow-on participants did not have prior squad leader experience, so

these results should be interpreted with caution. No significant main effects or interactions were found when examining the specific confidence ratings for the nine NCO competencies or seven ALC tasks across the three time points.

By expanding the sample to all NCOs available at the start-of-course and end-of-course and only looking at changes from start and end-of-course (neglecting Time 3 changes), students with prior squad leader experience demonstrated a significantly higher level (main effect for squad leader experience) of confidence across a number of NCO competencies and tasks. The specific competencies included: Critical Thinking, Being an Ambassador, Military Leadership, Warrior Competencies, Counseling/Coaching/Mentoring, Training Subordinates, Shaping Unit Performance, and Expanding Own Competencies. A significant interaction between time and squad leader experience on NCO Warrior Competencies was also found. Confidence ratings for students without prior squad leader experience were initially lower on these NCO competencies than their counterparts with squad leader experience (prior to ALC), but this gap narrowed by the end of ALC. Similarly, the same (significant interaction) pattern was found for two ALC tasks, Combatives and Combat Operations.

In summary, regarding NCO competencies, with one exception (Warrior Competencies) students with prior squad leader experience entered ALC with a higher level of confidence in their ability to perform NCO competencies than students without prior squad leader experience. This difference remained at the end of ALC. For ALC tasks, attending ALC closed the gap between the groups for two tasks with the confidence ratings of the students without prior squad leader experience approaching that of the students with prior squad leader experience. But, in general, students, not surprisingly, with prior squad leader experience reported higher levels of ALC task specific confidence across the course.

Differences in rank (SGTs versus SSGs) had no effect on changes in confidence over time (learning at Time 2 or transfer at Time 3) on any of the NCO competencies or ALC tasks. Confidence ratings for both SSGs and SGTs showed the same general pattern over the course. Moreover, on average (across all time points together), SSGs and SGTs did not differ significantly in their reported confidence ratings.

Deployments as a form of experience/trainee characteristic should also relate to confidence over time. In general, having experienced more deployments related to greater confidence, but there were no consistent interpretable patterns as a function of deployments over time.

Serving as a Recruiter/Instructor Versus Serving in a Table of Organization and Equipment (TO&E) Position

Although most of the students who attended the MTT version of ALC were serving in a TO&E unit[13], a number of the students attending the resident course were not coming from a TO&E unit. Instead, many were serving as drill sergeants, instructors, recruiters, etc. We did not collect follow-on data from students coming from and returning to a non-TO&E unit to determine if the last prior assignment before attending ALC was related to differences in the effectiveness of ALC to confidence changes in NCO competencies and tasks after the full 4-6 month duration (follow-on). However, based on a comparison of those students serving in TO&E units and those not serving in TO&E units at the start of ALC, no significant main effects or interactions with TO&E position status were found for the nine NCO competencies.

In contrast to competencies, significant differences in confidence ratings were obtained for several ALC tasks. A significant time by TO&E position interaction was observed for Combatives confidence ratings (F (1, 353) = 4.86, p =.03, η_p^2 [14]= .014) indicating that NCOs serving in non-TO&E positions showed greater improvement in confidence (starting lower and finishing higher) than NCOs serving in TO&E units. A similar interaction pattern was also observed for Demolitions confidence ratings (F (1, 360) = 22.38, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .059$) where NCOs serving in non-TO&E positions showed greater improvement in confidence (starting at about the same confidence level but finishing with higher confidence) than NCOs serving in TO&E units. Significant main effects of serving in a TO&E position were found for Land Navigation ($p = .048$), and FBCB2 ($p = .001$) with TO&E position NCOs reporting greater improvement in confidence.

Supervisor and Peer Ratings of NCO Performance

In addition to self-ratings of confidence to perform an NCO competency or ALC task, assessments were made on supervisor and peer ratings of NCO performance to serve as a validity check on the self ratings made by NCOs. When self-ratings were compared simultaneously with peer and supervisor ratings, although frequently in general agreement of ability level, NCOs tended to rate their performance higher than supervisors rated their performance, specifically on Being an Ambassador (F (2, 22) = 3.98, p = .03, η_p^2= .266), and Managing Resources (F (2, 72) = 3.33, p = .04, η_p^2=.085). Peer ratings did not significantly differ from self or supervisor ratings.

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[13] TO&E units are primarily deployable units, as opposed to table of distribution and allowance (TDA) units which are primarily non-combatant/non-deployable units (drill sergeant, recruiter, etc.). TO&E units are doctrinally defined operational Army field units. TDA units are non-tactical, non-doctrinal units such as fixed facilities, command and control headquarters, and other Army/Joint organizations, both in the Continental United States and overseas. TDA units form the infrastructure of the Army. They are generally workload based units. (Modification) TO&E units are the "go to war" units of the Army, whether those units are direct combat (infantry, armor, artillery), combat service - CS (engineer. signal, military police) or combat service support - CSS (quartermaster, maintenance, medical) units.

[14] η_p^2 = (*Partial eta-squared*): Partial eta-squared is an effect size statistic that describes the "proportion of total variation attributable to the factor, partialling out (excluding) other factors from the total nonerror variation". Partial eta-squared is often higher than eta-squared.

Overall Training Value of ALC

At the end of the course, students were asked to rate the course on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the worst training they had ever received and 10 being the best training they had ever received. This question was included to gauge the overall perceived value of the course. The average rating of the ALC was 6.32 indicating that the students perceived the course to be better than the midpoint rating. SGTs rated the class higher than SSGs did ($M_{SGT} = 6.75$, $M_{SSG} = 6.17$, $t\ (402) = 2.58$, $p = .01$). The students' rating of the class was unrelated to previous number of deployments to either Iraq ($r\ (402) = -.02$, $p = .69$) or Afghanistan ($r\ (402) = -.07$, $p = .15$).

NCOs with a mechanized Infantry background rated the class highest ($F\ (2, 399) = 3.53$, $p = .03$). Post-hoc comparisons with Bonferroni adjustment revealed that the strongest and only significant contrast stemmed from NCOs with a primarily mechanized Infantry background rating the course higher ($M_{mechanized} = 6.71$) than NCOs with a light Infantry background ($M_{light} = 6.15$). NCOs with a primarily wheeled Infantry background did not significantly differ in their course rating ($M_{wheeled} = 6.09$) from NCOs with either mechanized or light Infantry backgrounds.

Previous experience serving as a squad leader was unrelated to overall rating of the course, both in terms of having any experience at all ($F\ (1, 401) = .44$, $p = .51$) and in duration of the experience ($r\ (369) = -.07$, $p = .17$). However, ratings of the course differed considerably as a result of whether the NCOs attended the resident or MTT version of the ALC. Resident course attendees rated the course significantly lower than the MTT attendees ($M_{Resident} = 5.71$; $M_{MTT} = 7.16$, $F\ (1, 402) = 58.89$, $p < .001$).

Transfer Model Predictions and Findings

The revised Baldwin and Ford (1988) transfer model identified specific training inputs that impact learning and retention. Learning and retention, in turn, impacts transfer. Transfer directly impacts the final step or stage of the model, organizational results. The specific relationships are detailed and numbered in Figure 3. Table 14 provides the correlation matrix with all model variable relationships boxed and numbered.

Trainee characteristics. The transfer model predicted that certain trainee characteristics would moderate performance. Rather than assess each NCO competency/ALC task relationship separately, a composite competency score and a composite task score were created that combined the self-ratings of the nine competencies and seven tasks, respectively, into composite measures reflecting a single general competency performance score and a single general task performance score. This technique was also applied separately for peer ratings of performance, and supervisor ratings of performance across the nine competencies and seven tasks

As can be seen from Table 14, self-ratings for specific trainee characteristics identified by the transfer model (ability-intelligence, measured by GT scores, personality-specific focus on general self-efficacy and motivation to learn/transfer) correlated significantly (positively) with

specific confidence ratings of NCO competency and ALC task proficiency at Time 2 (end-of-course) which corresponds to the learning/retention step in the model. The lone exception was motivation to transfer and ALC task performance. While the correlation was positive, the finding was not statistically significant.

With the exception of general self-efficacy (personality), ability and motivation were unrelated to self, peer, and supervisor ratings of performance for NCO competency and ALC task proficiency at Time 3 (follow-on), the third step in the model. General self-efficacy was significantly (positively) correlated to self-ratings of NCO competency and ALC task proficiency at Time 3. General self-efficacy was also correlated with peer ratings of NCO competency at Time 3 (Table 14). Learning retention, both competency and task specific confidence ratings, were significantly (positively) correlated with self-ratings of performance for NCO competency and ALC task proficiency at Time 3. However, these learning retention confidence self-ratings were unrelated to either peers' or supervisors' ratings of NCOs' performance (NCO competency and ALC task proficiency) at Time 3 (Table 14).

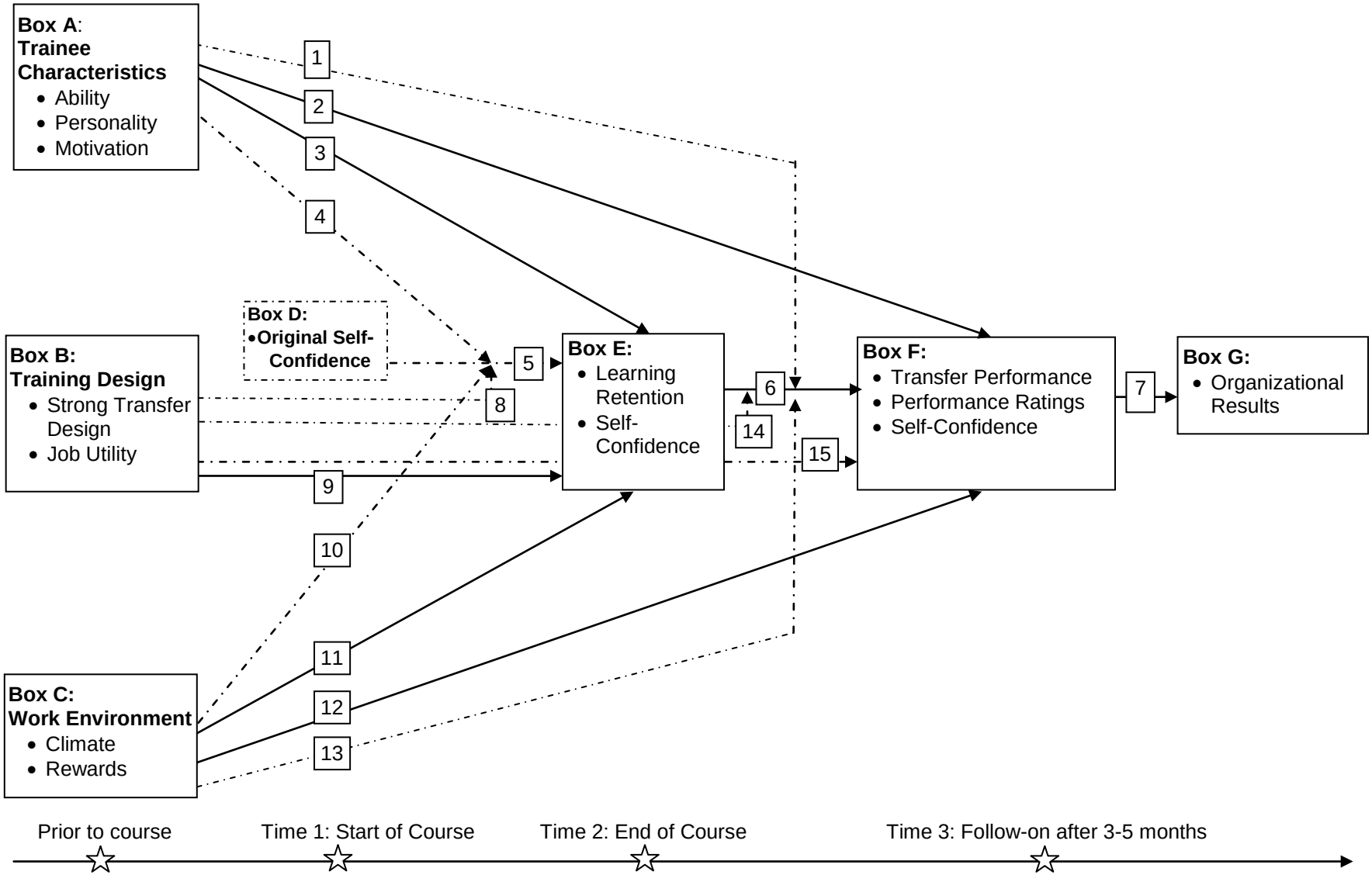

Figure 3. Implied transfer model[15].

[15] Dashed lines indicate implied paths in the model, not specified in the official model.

Table 14
Intercorrelations Among Transfer Model Variables and Learning/Transfer Performance

Model Variable	α	Time 2: Learning Retention — Self-Confidence: Compt.	Time 2: Learning Retention — Self-Confidence: Tasks	Time 3: Transfer Performance — Self-Rating Performance: Compt.	Time 3: Transfer Performance — Self-Rating Performance: Tasks	Time 3: Transfer Performance — Peers' Rating of Performance: Compt.	Time 3: Transfer Performance — Peers' Rating of Performance: Tasks	Time 3: Transfer Performance — Supervisor's Rating of Performance: Compt.	Time 3: Transfer Performance — Supervisor's Rating of Performance: Tasks
Trainee Characteristics		**Path 3**				**Path 2**			
GT Score	--	.15**	.11*	-.14	.07	-.18	-.04	.06	-.06
General Self Efficacy	.94	.50**	.31**	.37**	.28*	.29*	.19	.03	-.09
Motivation to Learn	.90	.26**	.15**	.09	.16	-.04	-.13	.01	-.03
Motivation to Transfer	.60	.21**	.10	.04	.04	.02	-.09	.02	-.07
Training Design		**Path 9**				**Path 15**			
Time 1: Perceived Utility	.91	.13*	.06	.20	.21	-.05	-.01	-.06	-.07
Time 2: Perceived Utility	.91	.23**	.07	.12	.11	.12	.04	.02	-.10
Work Environment		**Path 11**				**Path 12**			
Organizational Climate	.82	.03	.06	.21	.14	.11	.10	.00	.13
Unit Climate	.52	.12	.11	.14	.10	.09	.14	.08	.09
Supervisory Support	.80	.22	.15	.22	.26*	-.06	-.01	.07	.13
Learning Retention				**Path 6**					
Time 2: Competency Confidence	.96			.40**	.40**	.10	.12	.10	.04
Time 2: Task Confidence	.82			.28*	.49**	.05	.15	.13	.08
Organizational Results				**Path 7**					
Global Impact in Organization	.97			-.04	.06	-.02	-.15	-.16	-.14
Transfer Performance									
Self-Rating	.92								
Peer Rating	.95								
Supervisor Rating	.94								

Note. Variations in values achieving statistical significance reflect variations in sample size. Paths 3 and 9 (n = 403 – 406) drawing from larger sample. Paths 2,

11, 12, 7, 8, n = 32 – 75 drawing from restricted sample at follow-on. Compt. = composite competency score; tasks = composite task score.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Training design. One key design variable examined was perceived utility. Prior to and at the conclusion of the course, students reported how useful they believed the ALC training would be for their performance as Infantry squad leaders. In order to assess this question, we conducted a mixed-factor repeated-measures ANOVA for pre- to post- perceived utility reactions with class format as a between-subjects factor. The results indicated a significant effect of time, F (1,402) = 138.06, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .256$. Furthermore, as shown in Figure 4, the results indicated a significant interaction effect of class format and time (pre-post perceived utility reactions), F (1,402) = 10.01, $p = .002$, $\eta_p^2 = .024$. Both resident and MTT course student ratings were very positive and did not differ significantly ($p = .27$) in their ratings of the utility of the ALC prior to the start of the course. However, the ratings for both groups dropped noticeably at the end of course with the resident students' ratings significantly ($p = .03$) less positive than the ratings provided by the MTT students. It should be noted, though, that the end-of-course difference between the two groups' ratings, while statistically significant, was quite small in absolute terms. Further, ratings were based on a five-point scale with 5 representing high perceived utility. Viewed from a larger perspective, both group ratings indicated moderately high to high course utility.

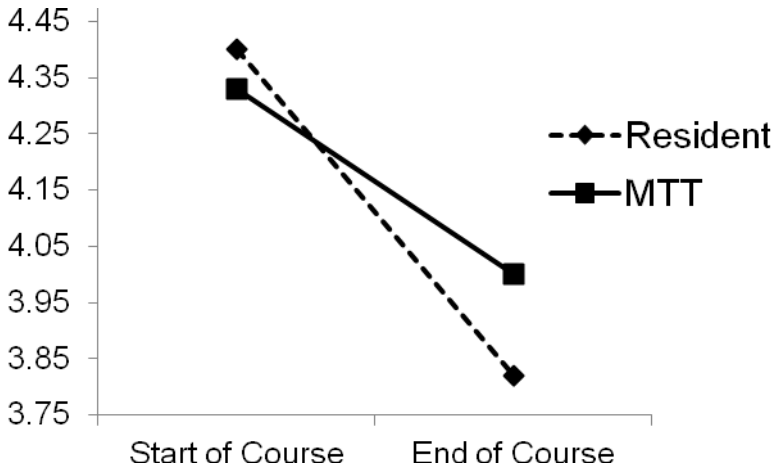

Figure 4. Perceived utility of ALC as a function of class format over time.

A second repeated measures ANOVA was also performed on perceived utility ratings, but with rank (SGT versus SSG) as the between subjects factor. The results from the analysis showed significant main effects for time, F (1,402) = 112.71, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .219$, and rank, F (1, 402) = 5.25, $p = .02$, $\eta_p^2 = .013$. Figure 5 shows that both groups rated the (perceived) utility of the ALC as very high prior to the start of the course. However, end-of-course ratings dropped significantly over time. Although the decline in ratings for both groups was similar, the SGTs were, overall, significantly more positive in their perceived utility ratings of ALC than were the SSGs across time.

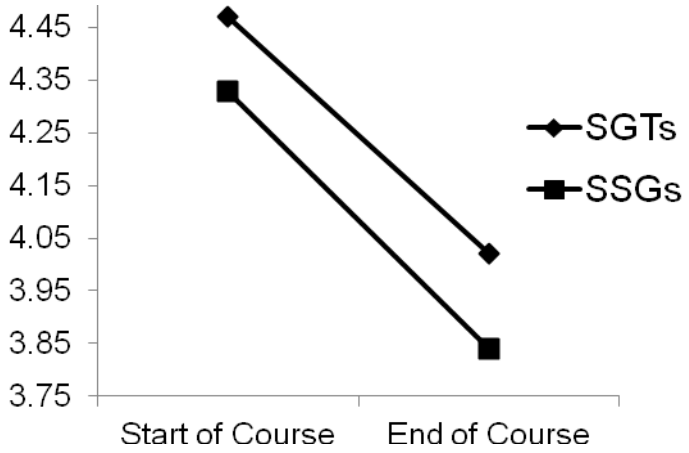

Figure 5. Perceived utility of ALC as a function of rank over time.

In summary, prior to completing the course, students felt that the potential utility of what they would learn in the course was greater than what they believed was the utility of the course upon completion. In other words, they saw less value in the course after completing it than they did prior to starting the course. These findings were moderated by both course format and rank.

To gain an overall sense of how perceived utility of the ALC at course onset and conclusion related to performance ratings at the follow-on Time 3 data collection, correlations between perceived utility and self, peer and supervisor ratings were examined. These correlations indicate non-significant near-zero correlations between perceived utility of the course and self, peer and supervisor ratings at Time 3 (transfer). In short, students' perceptions of training utility were unrelated to not only their self-ratings of performance but also to how their peers and supervisors perceived their performance. See Table 14.

In contrast to performance ratings, however, perceived utility at the start and end of the course were both significantly (positively) related to the composite NCO competency confidence ratings at all three time points, with the exception that end-of-course perceived utility was unrelated to start of course NCO competency confidence ratings. In contrast, however, perceived utility of the course was generally unrelated to the composite task specific confidence ratings at each of the three time points, with the sole exception that start-of-course perceived utility predicted follow-on composite task specific confidence. See Table 15. The pattern of correlations indicate that perceived utility of the course was most related to confidence in the broader more general NCO competencies, rather than the specific ALC Infantry squad leader tasks. This may stem from the fact that many of the students are already very familiar and well practiced on these tasks, so improvement (from a confidence perspective) across time can be expected to be modest at best. The pattern of correlations suggests that the perceived value of the course for these students appears to be primarily in learning more about general NCO development rather than specific Infantry skills.

Table 15
Intercorrelations Between Self-Ratings of Perceived Utility and Self-Ratings of NCO Competency/ALC Task Proficiency Over Time

	Composite NCO Competency Self-Confidence			Composite Infantry Squad Leader Tasks Self-Confidence		
	Start-of-Course	**End-of-Course**	**Follow-On**	**Start-of-Course**	**End-of-Course**	**Follow-On**
Perceived Utility						
Start-of-course	.19**	.13*	.41**	.03	.06	.25*
End-of-course	.05	.23**	.29*	-.06	.07	.12

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

One additional training design variable that was examined was the instructors' pedagogical focus/learning approach. Although the research design did not allow for tracking of individual students as a function of their instructor's instructional tendencies, we were able to provide a litmus test of the instructional environment. Instructors reported whether they were MTT or resident course instructors and responded to a series of questions regarding their use of various instructional techniques including scheduling skill practice for learning, providing additional skill practice for mastery after meeting a standard, fostering self-monitoring and evaluation of skills, etc. For a complete overview, see Table 16. Instructors responded on a 5-point Likert scale anchored by *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5) and a *neutral* midpoint (3). Sample size was too small to conduct significance tests, but inspection of Table 16 indicates that the instructors, as a whole (collapsing across resident and MTT), slightly agreed with all items concerning the instructional techniques that have been recommended for promoting deep understanding and transfer, e.g., providing students with general principles to help students better understand key topic areas such as ballistics; providing guidance on how to monitor and evaluate performance while practicing new tasks or skills; providing time to try out alternative methods for solving problems; including both negative and positive examples of how to correctly and incorrectly perform specific tasks. While it is not possible to determine if there are meaningful or statistically significant differences between the course, there did not appear to be dramatic differences between instructional approaches of the residential and MTT courses; although MTT instructors reported greater use of field exercises and use of audiovisual equipment, while resident instructors relied more on lecture.[16]

[16] In theory, one might expect that emphasizing more applied (field exercises) could enhance transfer by having the students actually practice (learn by doing) their skills in the field. It might also be more effective than a lecture in terms of highlighting what the student does not know. Using audio visual equipment to show realistic battles or to point out how to or not to interact with subordinates may be more immersive and motivating by showing the implications of their actions compared to simply providing a lecture listing a number of dos and don'ts. Since we did not observe the training, it is difficult to say what impact these actions had or why. However, it appears that the dynamics of the MTT training environment were altered in such a way that the MTTs were seen as more useful than the resident course.

Table 16
Summary of Instructional Techniques Used in the Resident and MTT ALC

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below:	**Resident**		**MTT**		**Combined**	
	M	***SD***	***M***	***SD***	***M***	***SD***
The skills/tasks addressed in ALC can be directly applied by students to their job as squad leaders	3.7	.5	4.0	.6	3.8	.6
ALC provided students with general principles to help students better understand key topic areas, e.g., ballistics, emplacement of weapons	3.3	.9	4.0	.6	3.6	.8
Time was allotted in ALC to allow students to practice new skills or knowledge under varying conditions	3.0	.9	3.2	1.2	3.1	1.0
Ample time was allocated in ALC for students to practice new skills or tasks *after* meeting a set standard	2.9	.8	3.2	1.2	3.0	.9
ALC provided students with guidance on how to monitor and evaluate their performance while practicing new tasks or skills	3.1	.8	3.7	.5	3.3	.7
ALC allowed students to try out alternative methods for solving problems	3.6	.7	3.8	.8	3.7	.7
ALC modules included both positive and negative examples of how to correctly and incorrectly perform specific tasks	3.4	.7	3.3	.8	3.4	.7
In ALC, trainee errors are viewed as a natural, instructive part of the learning process	3.4	.7	3.5	.6	3.5	.6
Overall, what percentage of time (of 100%) during ALC training were the following methods of content delivery utilized:	**Resident**		**MTT**		**Combined**	
	***M* (%)**	***SD***	***M* (%)**	***SD***	***M* (%)**	***SD***
Instructor Lecture	42.5	11.7	21.7	18.4	32.1	18.3
Classroom Discussion	34.2	6.7	31.7	19.4	32.9	13.9
Demonstrations	10.3	11.0	12.5	14.1	11.4	12.1
Field Exercise	2.8	4.9	15.0	5.5	8.9	8.1
Audiovisual	1.8	2.5	10.8	4.9	6.3	6.0
Individual Task/Reading Assignments	8.3	4.1	8.3	4.1	8.3	3.9

Work environment. To determine the extent to which students felt that transferring their ALC knowledge to their job performance was acceptable and encouraged, we assessed organizational/unit climate and supervisory support using a modified set of items adapted from Holton, Bates and Ruona (2000). While the organizational climate and supervisory support scales demonstrated sufficient internal reliability ($\alpha = .82$, 3 items and $\alpha = .80$, 6 items, respectively), the assessment of unit climate failed to meet traditional standards of internal

consistency (α = .52, 5 items). Therefore, interpretations of students' reports of unit climate for transfer should be viewed with caution. On a scale of *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5) with *neutral* as a midpoint, on average students reported that they felt somewhere between neutral and agreement with the idea that their organizational climate, unit climate, and supervisor supported the transfer of their ALC training to their job, (*M*s = 3.18 $_{\text{organization climate}}$, 3.21 $_{\text{unit climate}}$, 3.61 $_{\text{supervisory support}}$).

Table 14 shows that confidence self-ratings of NCO competence and ALC task proficiency were unrelated to student ratings of organizational climate, unit climate, and supervisory support at Time 2. With one exception, work environment variables were unrelated to self, peer, and supervisor ratings of NCO competency and ALC task performance at Time 3.

The need for practice is an important component in the process of training transfer, providing a foundation on which to further perfect and solidify knowledge and skills learned during the training course. Participants were asked at the follow-on data collection how many of the NCO competencies and ALC tasks they had the opportunity to perform/practice since completing ALC. The vast majority of the participants reported that they had had the opportunity to perform most of the competencies/tasks since completing the course. Rates of having performed the competencies/tasks were generally over 90% (indicating that 90% or more of responding NCOs had performed the competency/task since completing ALC). Some competencies/tasks were not performed that often. For example, there was a marked lower performance rate for Being an Ambassador (54.8% - 67.7% across various ambassador behaviors), Employing a MK19 (56.5%), Conducting Combatives Level 1 (56.5%), using FBCB2 (64.5%), Conducting Demolitions (30.6%), and Writing Combat Orders, i.e., warning order (WARNO), operation order (OPORD), and fragmentary order (FRAGO) (58.1%).

For these skills, given the lower opportunity to practice them, one would expect that these skills would be the ones particularly subject to impaired transfer performance ratings and self-confidence ratings. This was generally the case. For the least performed tasks, declines in specific self-confidence ratings from the end-of-course to follow-on corresponded with lower transfer performance ratings from peers and supervisors.

Organizational results. The final step in the model, organizational results, was assessed by having students rate the global impact of ALC on their performance. In this instance, organization refers to the squad. Table 14 shows that self, peer and supervisor performance ratings of NCO competency and ALC task proficiency were unrelated to organizational results (i.e., squad performance).

Intercorrelations Among Transfer Model Variables and Learning/Transfer Improvement

To determine the relative impact of the training input variables identified by the transfer model on the amount of learning/transfer displayed by the students, change scores were computed for both the composite NCO competency confidence self-ratings and composite ALC task confidence self-ratings. Learning was assessed by calculating the change in self-ratings from the start to the end of ALC. Transfer was assessed by calculating the change in self-ratings

from the end of ALC to follow-on. These change scores were then correlated with the specific training input variables specified by the transfer model. See Table 17.

Trainee characteristics. Table 17 shows that of the three trainee characteristics specified by the model (ability: GT score, personality: general self-efficacy, and motivation: to learn/transfer), only motivation correlated significantly with learning improvements/changes in NCO competency and ALC task proficiency. Surprisingly, a significant negative correlation was obtained between motivation to learn and changes in learning improvement for NCO competency, suggesting that lower levels of learning motivation were associated with greater improvements (changes) in learning. Significant positive correlations were obtained between motivation to transfer and learning improvements for both NCO (composite) competency and (composite) ALC task performance.

Training design. The key training design variable specified by the model, perceived utility (of ALC), was significantly related to both learning and transfer improvement. Specifically, perceived utility ratings provided at the start of ALC were significantly (positively) correlated with transfer improvements for composite NCO competency. Perceived utility ratings at the end of ALC were related to greater improvements in learning for both composite NCO competency and ALC task proficiency as assessed by student self-ratings. See Table 17.

Work environment. The work environment variables, organization/unit climate and supervisory support were unrelated to improvements in learning/transfer for both NCO competency and ALC task proficiency. See Table 17.

Organizational results. Organizational results were significantly (positively) correlated with learning improvement for ALC tasks. The analyses showed that students indicating greater improvement on ALC tasks also rated ALC as having a greater global impact on organizational performance. See Table 17.

Finally, for the many indicators of transfer performance listed in Table 17, the correlations between transfer performance and learning/transfer improvements (changes) were most reliable for ALC squad leader tasks. Specifically, self-ratings of NCO competencies were significantly related to learning (negatively) and transfer (positively) improvements (on ALC tasks). Surprisingly, lower NCO competency self-ratings were associated with greater improvements in task learning. Self-ratings on tasks were positively correlated with greater improvements in task transfer. Peer ratings on tasks were significantly (positively) correlated with learning improvements on ALC tasks. General self-efficacy ratings at follow-on showed the strongest and most reliable relationship with improvements in transfer for composite NCO competency and ALC task performance (learning and transfer improvement).

Table 17
Intercorrelations Among Transfer Model Variables and Learning/Transfer Improvement

	Composite NCO Competency Self-Confidence		Composite Squad Leader Tasks Self-Confidence	
	Course Start to Course End	**Course End to Follow-on**	**Course Start to Course End**	**Course End to Follow-on**
Trainee Characteristics	**Path 4**	**Path 1**	**Path 4**	**Path 1**
GT Score	.05	-.21	.01	-.11
General Self Efficacy Course Start	-.02	-.13	-.09	-.05
Motivation to Learn	-.15**	.22	-.07	-.00
Motivation to Transfer	.14**	.25	.12*	.11
Training Design	**Path 8**	**Path 14**	**Path 8**	**Path 14**
Time 1: Perceived Utility	-.07	.33**	.03	.14
Time 2: Perceived Utility	.18**	.11	.15**	.03
Work Environment	**Path 10**	**Path 13**	**Path 10**	**Path 13**
Organizational Climate	-.08	.06	-.02	.09
Unit Climate	-.08	-.03	-.08	.06
Supervisory Support	.04	-.08	.02	-.01
Organizational Results				
Global Impact in Organization	.19	.12	.29*	-.04
Transfer Performance				
Self-Rating Competencies	-.19	.14	-.27*	.46**
Self-Rating Tasks	.02	.05	-.10	.31*
Peer Rating Competencies	-.04	-.03	.18	-.20
Peer Rating Tasks	.08	-.15	.28*	-.26
Supervisor Rating Competencies	-.06	.01	.02	.21
Supervisor Rating Competencies	.02	-.06	.13	.17
General Self Efficacy Follow-on	.08	.27*	.26*	.29*

Note. Variations in values achieving statistical significance reflect variations in sample size. Positive correlations indicate a positive relationship between the measured transfer model variables and growth over time (increase in confidence over time). Negative correlations indicate a negative association between the measured transfer model variables and growth over time (e.g., a decrease in confidence over time).
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Summary Findings Regarding the Transfer Model

First, the links between the trainee characteristics and learning retention were examined. The model predicts a direct link from trainee characteristics to learning retention/confidence (Time 2) and also to transfer performance (Time 3). Pearson correlations indicate that learning retention at the end of the course was slightly but significantly (positively) related to intelligence (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery: General Technical score), somewhat more strongly with motivation to learn and motivation to transfer, and even more strongly with general self-efficacy. See Table 14. From this table, it can be seen that the primary relationship between trainee characteristics and the dependent measures was for self-ratings of confidence/learning

retention at Time 2. Although participants generally reported engaging in activities that allowed them to practice their tasks and competencies, transfer performance was not generally related to learning retention. ALC task confidence and transfer performance were generally more poorly predicted (from trainee characteristics) than NCO competency confidence and transfer performance.

Very few of the trainee characteristics assessed related to transfer performance directly, with the exception that general feelings of confidence (as a general personality trait not tied to specific NCO competencies or ALC tasks or other specific domains) positively related to self-ratings of transfer performance (NCO competencies and ALC tasks) and peers' ratings of NCO competency transfer performance. In short, few trainee characteristics related to transfer performance, and generally were unrelated to third-person observations of transfer performance. The model also proposes a direct link between learning retention at Time 2, and transfer performance. The learning retention rows of Table 14 show that while confidence/learning retention at Time 2 related positively to self-ratings of transfer performance (for both NCO competencies and ALC tasks), learning retention was unrelated to transfer performance ratings made by peers and supervisors.

Job utility is a key training design characteristic purported to directly relate to learning retention. Participants' perceived utility in the course was assessed at both Time 1 and Time 2. As shown in Table 14, perceived utility at Time 1 and Time 2 were positively related to learning retention (confidence) for NCO competencies at Time 2. However, perceived utility was largely unrelated to learning retention (confidence) for ALC squad leader tasks. These findings suggest that the students perceived ALC as better at increasing NCO competency in regards to broader NCO professional development, but less related to development of specific proficiency on Infantry ALC tasks.

The third category of variables proposed to predict learning retention and transfer performance was the work environment. We assessed broad organizational (Army) climate, immediate unit climate, and supervisory support and found that generally none of these predicted learning retention or transfer performance. Frequency data collected regarding opportunities to practice or use newly acquired skills indicated that for the majority of competencies and tasks, participants had ample opportunities for practice once they completed ALC. As such, one of the necessary conditions for transfer (opportunity to practice) was met.

The model further predicts that transfer performance will improve the organization broadly. We assessed this by measuring changes in the NCOs' immediate work group, their Infantry squad. Per the model, these global impacts should be positively associated with transfer performance. However, this relationship was not found in either self, peers' or supervisors' ratings of transfer performance.

NCOA Feedback

Amount of training. In an effort to provide feedback to the NCOA regarding more practical considerations of the course, the current research effort included questions regarding whether students felt that they received an adequate amount of training on the NCO

competencies and ALC Infantry tasks. Table 18 below presents the mean ratings for amount of training assessed at both the end-of-course and follow-on data collection sessions.

Table 18
Mean Ratings for Amount of Training Received on NCO Competencies and ALC Tasks at End-of-Course and Follow-On

Domain	End-of-Course			Follow-On		
	N	**Mean Rating of Amount of Training**	***SD***	***N***	**Mean Rating of Amount of Training**	***SD***
Competency						
Expanding Own Competencies	401	2.68	.61	61	2.82	.59
Military Leadership	401	2.84	.47	63	2.76	.64
Critical/Creative Thinking	398	2.67	.55	61	2.72	.64
Counseling Soldiers	382	2.68	.64	64	2.70	.63
Training Subordinates	392	2.64	.59	63	2.70	.53
Warrior Competencies	395	2.77	.57	64	2.69	.59
Shaping Unit Performance	390	2.69	.60	61	2.67	.60
Being an Ambassador	392	2.69	.66	54	2.67	.80
Managing Resources	389	2.71	.60	62	2.60	.73
Task						
Land Navigation	--	--	--	64	2.89	.89
Small Arms Proficiency	--	--	--	64	2.78	.84
FBCB2	--	--	--	60	2.72	.72
Combat Operations	--	--	--	64	2.66	.72
Call for Fire	--	--	--	64	2.64	.70
Combatives	--	--	--	35	2.26	1.01
Demolitions	--	--	--	34	2.00	.92

Note. Participants did not report amount of training for ALC squad leader tasks at the end of the course. The Combatives and Demolitions portions of the POI were not taught in the MTT version of the course, so this question was less applicable as the participants did not receive any training whatsoever on these tasks. 1 = way too little training, 5 = way too much training.

As indicated above in Table 18, participants generally thought that they were slightly under-trained, as indicated by an average response below the scale midpoint of 3 indicating "about the right amount of training." Additionally, independent samples *t*-tests (with corrected degrees of freedom) were conducted on the end-of-course reports of amount of training comparing participant ratings by course format (i.e., MTT versus resident). The results indicated significant differences in amount of training for every competency by course format. Upon closer inspection, although both groups on average rated too little training for all nine competencies, the resident group reported too little training to a greater degree (as indicated by the lower mean amount of training ratings). This comparison could not be made for follow-on ratings as too few resident students participated at the follow-on.

Comparisons between the SGTs and SSGs ratings of amount of training were also conducted for the end-of-course ratings for the amount of training on the nine competencies. The nine *t*-tests indicated significant differences by rank for six of the nine competencies: Critical/Creative Thinking, Training Subordinates, Shaping Unit Performance, Managing Resources, Expanding Own Competencies, and Being an Ambassador. Although both groups on average rated too little training for all nine competencies (i.e., mean < 3), the SSGs reported too little training to a greater degree for the competencies found to be significant (as indicated by the lower mean on the amount of training ratings). However, class format and rank are not independent with an overrepresentation of SGTs in MTT courses and an overrepresentation of SSGs in the resident course (Pearson $X^2 = 16.68$, $p < .001$, $\varphi = .203$). The more robust finding was that across all nine competencies, participants in the resident format of ALC reported more extreme ratings of too little training on competencies than did participants enrolled in the MTT format.

Relevance. Participants were further asked how relevant they believed these nine NCO competencies and seven ALC tasks were to their position as an Infantry squad leader. Relevance rankings of competencies/tasks were only provided at follow-on using one item per each of the 16 competencies/tasks. These ratings are displayed in Table 19. Overall, the analyses indicated that the NCO competencies and ALC tasks were perceived by the participants as relevant to their position as an Infantry squad leader.

Table 19
Mean Ratings of Relevance of NCO Competencies and ALC Tasks at Follow-On

Domain	*M* Relevance	*SD*
Competency		
Warrior Competencies	4.30	.68
Shaping Unit Performance	4.27	.74
Managing Resources	4.27	.86
Military Leadership	4.25	.84
Training Subordinates	4.23	.79
Critical/Creative Thinking	4.08	.64
Counseling Soldiers	4.03	.76
Expanding Own Competencies	4.02	.77
Being an Ambassador	3.74	.97
Task		
Small Arms Proficiency	4.47	.73
Land Navigation	4.44	.66
Combat Operations	4.34	.72
FBCB2	3.81	.87
Call for Fire	3.63	.88
Combatives	3.60	1.04
Demolitions	3.29	1.13

Note. The Combatives and Demolitions portions of the POI were not taught in the MTT version of the course, so this question was less applicable as the participants did not receive any training whatsoever on these tasks. 1 = not at all relevant, 5 = extremely relevant. N = 62-64.

As an additional means of providing the NCOA feedback regarding the perceived value of ALC and which components of the course were showing the greatest improvement in the ALC graduates, supervisors and peers were asked to select the four domains (from the sixteen tasks and competencies) that demonstrated the highest level of improvement as a result of ALC. Supervisors most frequently selected *counseling/coaching/mentoring, military leadership, critical and creative thinking,* and *training subordinates* as the tasks/competencies showing the greatest improvement in ALC graduates. Peers also selected *counseling/coaching/mentoring* and *military leadership* as the most improved skills but also indicated *FBCB2* and *expanding one's own competencies* as improved since ALC.

Peers and supervisors were also asked to report the degree to which they perceived value in ALC and improvement in ALC graduates. Table 20 summarizes the item responses. In general, both peers and supervisors felt the ALC had value (all ratings greater than 3.4). More specifically, they felt that ALC was good for the unit, provided valuable information and improved both squad and platoon performance.

Table 20
Mean Peer and Supervisor Ratings of the Perceived Value of the ALC

	Supervisors Mean Rating	**Peers Mean Rating**
ALC attendance is good for a squad leader's unit	3.86	3.75
Young NCOs will learn valuable information in ALC	3.88	3.85
ALC training improves squad performance	3.40	3.43
ALC training improves platoon performance	3.42	3.53

Note. 1 = strongly disagree, 3 = neutral, and 5 = strongly agree. N supervisors = 43, N peers = 68.

Focus Groups

At the final data collection session (follow-on), participants, their peers and supervisors participated in structured focus group interviews, separately by role in groups of 1-6. The interviews provided some insight into the structure of the course that may shed light on the transfer process. Overall, responses indicate that the training provided in ALC was not conducive to transfer due to time constraints which did not allow much time for practice and feedback. Also, much of the knowledge, particularly with regard to the more specific ALC Infantry tasks, was already attained prior to ALC; that fact made it difficult to clearly demonstrate any transfer effect for these tasks. Specific issues are addressed in the following sections.

Blocks of training (lessons) to delete or reduce. Participants reported the blocks of training that they found least valuable for continued inclusion in ALC. Participants identified Combatives Level I certification as one option because units/installations can provide combatives certification when/if desired. NCOES time would be better spent covering knowledge, skills, and information more important to the NCO. However, participants did feel that it was acceptable to include combatives training in regular physical training sessions. Participants also suggested deleting FBCB2 training from the course because units/installations have facilities and courses that provide better training for those who need it. Also, squad-level NCOs primarily use selected digital system capabilities that are easily learned in the unit just prior to deployment, reducing the need to formally address this topic in the institutional training environment.

Blocks of training (lessons) to add, expand, or revise. Participants suggested increased use of practical exercises and hands-on training for every subject. Examples included: (1) for each administrative topic, provide actual situations to students and have them properly complete forms/papers, then allow class discussion to refine, (2) have students develop and present a squad OPORD based on a platoon OPORD.

Participants requested greater opportunity to "learn by doing" such as coordinating and running ranges, serve in evaluated leadership roles, conduct field tactical exercises, etc.[17]

Participants also suggested the inclusion of situational leadership challenges into multiple classes. This would provide students with opportunities to respond to various situations and then discuss options/potential repercussions/consequences. This time would also allow students to interject their own personal experiences into the discussion so the entire class might benefit. Participants also saw the benefit in including a block of training that would teach the NCOs, themselves, better marksmanship as well as how to train marksmanship (e.g., similar to the Combat Applications Training Course or "designated squad marksman" program).

Participants requested further focus on OPORDs and tactical operations at platoon and squad level and for expansion of training to include Full Spectrum Operations (offensive and defensive operations) at the squad level enhanced with practical application (either situational training exercise [STX] lanes or at a minimum, a large terrain board).

Broadly speaking, participants requested that all training incorporate STX lanes that require the NCO to perform the task rather than simply repeat information in a written test. They indicated a preference for such STX lanes to include patrol base procedures OPORD/FRAGO, pre-combat checks/inspections etc.), navigation to objective rally point, actions on the objective, 9-line medical evacuation, call for fire, etc., and an after action review for each STX lane. STX lanes should be followed by an evaluation of NCOs in leadership positions.

Other suggestions to enhance ALC training value. Broader suggestions to improve ALC included selecting qualified personnel to serve as facilitators and trainers who can be role models for students to emulate. These personnel should be certified to perform their duties and train to standard rather than train to time. Instructional/training personnel should have their instructional performance checked. Participants also believed that tougher (but achievable) standards should be strictly enforced with the recognition that some students will fail. Failure should come with consequences such as removing the NCO rank or not promoting the individual. Participants felt that there was no fear of failure and indicated that there were no AR 600-9 or Army Physical Fitness Training requirements. The prevalent attitude was that sub-standard NCOs would pass the course and receive a Department of the Army (DA) Form 1059 (Academic Evaluation Report) as easily as a stellar NCO. They felt that completing ALC no longer carries a mark of distinction.

Similarly, students should not be sent to ALC merely to fill seats and meet course quotas. Rather, participants felt that unit leadership needs to screen and select for ALC attendance only those NCOs who are qualified and likely to succeed.

[17] While interview findings stressed the importance of including more applied (learn by doing) experiences, imposing an active learning approach in a training environment can be quite stressful for some individuals. If uncontrolled, poor performance can increase anxiety and worry, lower individual motivation and feelings of self-efficacy as well as divert attentional resources from on-task activities. Strategies adopted to specifically address emotional control (see Bell & Kozlowski, 2008) in active learning environments have been shown to be effective at curbing negative emotions which in turn resulted in greater adaptive transfer (Keith & Frese, 2005).

Participants felt that MTTs should be conducted identically to the resident course. For example, many participants learned during the focus group interviews that the resident course included both combatives and demolitions classes. Some of the MTT participants felt these classes should have been included in the MTT ALC.

Participants further preferred that if ALC Phase I (common core) continues to be conducted via distance learning, then it is important that students complete Phase I prior to attending Phase II, either resident or MTT. Many participants who had attended ALC Phase II had not yet completed Phase I by the final follow-on data collection. Participants felt that it would be very beneficial to have leadership emphasis on earmarking time for an NCO to complete Phase I away from unit duties so it can be completed efficiently and be supported by a tutor/mentor. Participants expressed interest in conducting Phase I in a video teleconference mode.

Finally, participants requested some train-ahead opportunities that would prepare them for their next position as platoon sergeants (PSG). Specifically, participants expressed interest in learning about administrative procedures that a squad leader should perform that relate to the PSG position (e.g., chapter actions, DA Form 6 [duty roster], etc.).

Discussion

Impact of ALC on Learning and Transfer

The findings from this research indicated that NCOs' performance, as measured by their confidence in their ability to employ the more general NCO competencies and specific ALC tasks increased significantly over the length of the course. For the competencies, no significant drop off in confidence was noted at follow-on (transfer), three to five months later at their unit. This pattern held for the ALC tasks as well with two exceptions (Call for Fire and Combat Operations – significant decline at follow-on but still higher than start-of-course ratings). While NCO self-ratings tended to be inflated relative to those provided by peers and supervisors, overall, the ratings from all sources tended to be in agreement of ability level.

Ideally, it would have been preferable to obtain actual measures of performance, however, due to time and cost constraints, this was not possible. While self-report measures of learning and transfer were used extensively, we attempted to mitigate limitations associated with this approach, i.e., method variance, inflated transfer relationships, by including items addressing specific competencies and tasks, increasing instrument confidentiality, using multiple rating sources (peers and supervisors), and including additional measures supporting the transfer process, i.e., learning and organizational results. Finally, transfer data were collected three to five months following completion of the ALC at the NCOs' unit of assignment to provide a more realistic assessment of the impact of the training (see Facteau et al. 1995, for a discussion on how to increase the accuracy of self-report measures). Self-report measures can, in many instances, provide an inexpensive first look at the impact of training design and work environment factors on learning and transfer (Holton, 1996).

Factors Impacting the Overall Training Value of ALC

Unit background. The overall training value of ALC was rated by the students as slightly better than average, indicating that there are areas where ALC can be improved. Some of these areas are discussed in the following sections. Perhaps not surprisingly, unit background significantly impacted the students' overall ratings of the value of ALC. NCOs with a primarily mechanized background viewed the course as more valuable than did NCOs with either a wheeled or light Infantry background (significant difference between mechanized and light Infantry). These findings suggest that to improve the overall training value of ALC may require the course be modified slightly to ensure that topic areas are more relevant or challenging for everyone, regardless of unit background. (See suggestions provided below to address differences in NCO experience.)

NCO experience. Another key finding was the relative importance of experience. The more junior NCOs (SGTs) rated ALC training higher than did the more senior NCOs (SSGs). Ideally, NCOs should attend ALC prior to being a squad leader so they can benefit from the training. If this is not possible, then one suggestion (from the authors) might be to give some consideration to modifying the structure and format of the ALC to better address the training needs of the students. This could be accomplished, in part, by having the instructors identify the more senior NCOs and assigning at least one of these students per work group during class exercises. This would ensure that each of these work groups would have the experience of the more senior NCOs to draw on during classroom exercises. The contributions of the more senior NCOs can be further enhanced by the instructors encouraging these students to share relevant experiences and knowledge to the class as a whole during small group discussion periods.

This experience finding is confounded somewhat by the fact that more SGTs attended the MTT version of ALC while the resident version of ALC contained more SSGs. In addition, NCOs attending the resident course rated it significantly lower in training value than did NCOs attending the MTT version of ALC. The MTT and resident courses must be conducted the same (in terms of content, execution, standards, etc.) This point was emphasized from both the survey responses and the focus group interviews.

There may be several reasons for the decreasing utility ratings from start- to end-of-course and the lower overall end-of-course training ratings for the resident course. With regard to course utility, the data showed that the students (both MTT and resident) saw ALC as significantly less useful at the end of the course than before the course started. Course format (resident versus MTT) interacted with utility ratings with the resident ALC rated as significantly lower than the MTT ALC at end-of course. Although, from a practical standpoint, the difference may be negligible (.25 point difference). SGTs saw significantly more utility in the ALC than the SSGs, however both groups' ratings dropped significantly from start- to end-of-course. The pattern of findings suggests that the course did not meet the initial expectations of the students. This could be due to several factors. For some students, their perceptions of the value of the course may have dropped once they were able to clearly see that course content for specific ALC tasks did not provide the additional knowledge needed to improve their existing skill sets. This finding could have been exacerbated if course instruction was unable to

adequately address these shortcomings to enhance or salvage the training value of some of these classes. One way course instructors may be able to enhance the training value of these classes is by leveraging the experiences of the more senior NCOs by actively engaging them in class discussions to add different perspectives to the subject areas and provide students "what if" type dilemmas to reflect on and discuss during the class.

As already noted, global end-of-course ratings showed that the MTT course was perceived as providing more training value than the resident course. Focus group interviews suggested that the MTT students liked the MTT course format because they could go home at night as opposed to being on temporary duty at another location and away from their Families. In addition, the course was shorter in duration. On the other hand, the students felt cheated by not receiving the exact same course that the resident students received, e.g., demolition training and (for some) combatives. (Overall end-of-course satisfaction ratings were obtained before many students became aware in the differences in class offerings between the resident and MTT courses. Thus, it is unlikely that this factor substantially affected the ratings.) Another possible disadvantage of the MTT was class composition. MTT classes were much more homogeneous in makeup in terms of unit background and experience. In contrast, the resident classes were larger and composed of students coming from a diversity of backgrounds, e.g., recruiters, drill sergeants, mechanized/light units. The relative lack of diversity in backgrounds of the MTT classes limits, from a professional development standpoint, the value of informal peer interactions. Despite the apparent negative aspects of the MTT, these shortcomings seemed to have been mitigated by the positive side benefits of the course.

The lower ratings of the resident course could probably be attributed to several reasons. First, the students were on temporary duty assignment away from home for approximately one month. Second, from some students' perspectives, time was not always managed well and students were required to stay in the class after training was complete, with instructors revisiting material without additional value-added to fill time; training to time and not to standard. At the MTT, students indicated that the instructors let them depart early on days when training was "complete." The pattern of findings suggests that the structure and format of ALC may require modifications to ensure that the course content both meets the future needs of the students and is presented in a fashion that actively involves all students and fosters deeper understanding of course materials.

Course duration and structure. The current resident Phase II Infantry ALC is approximately four weeks in duration. Maximizing training value requires careful attention to not only what topic areas are included (to ensure job relevance and utility), but also to how the instruction is designed and employed. Some of the factors discussed in the following sections were also addressed earlier under the section on focus groups. Course developers may find it useful to review the Army Learning Concept 2015 instructional guidelines as described in TRADOC Pamphlet 30-70-4 – *Guide to Army Training and Education Development: Process, Frameworks, Models and Efficiencies*, (2009). The document provides an effective framework for addressing the issues discussed in this section.

Turning first to course duration, one way to maximize time is to reexamine the current class modules and delete or reduce the time allotted to those modules that provide minimal

training value and/or opportunities for professional growth. Based on the focus group interviews, the one class module that participants indicated could be deleted was Combatives Level I certification. This class accounts for twenty five percent of ALC training, which many believe can be completed at the students' installations and not as part of a professional development course. Similarly, FBCB2 training was viewed (to a lesser extent) as another class module that could be selectively modified and conducted at the unit level, when needed. The time saved from eliminating these class modules could be used to provide more practice on existing task areas or introduce more relevant tasks/topic areas into the training. Additional time could be saved by conducting assessments to allow Soldiers to test out of portions of the course, although previous research suggests this should not be done.[18]

In addition to reallocating time to more appropriate tasks/topic areas, the training value of ALC could be enhanced by examining the design and execution of the class modules. Survey findings from the students indicated that while the NCO competencies and tasks addressed in ALC were relevant to their jobs as squad leaders, the training, as currently employed, could benefit from instructional design modifications.

For example, one way to improve the quality of training, suggested by the participants, was to increase the use of practical exercises and hands-on training for every subject, e.g., providing NCOER packets with relevant background information and have the student complete an actual NCOER form followed by class discussion and feedback. In general, more emphasis was requested by participants on "learn by doing."

Similarly, participant feedback emphasized additional course restructuring to include situational leadership challenges that allow students to respond to a situation, discuss options/potential consequences and provide (the students) opportunities to interject their personal experiences and allow discussion so other students might also benefit from these experiences. Consistent with the "learn by doing" approach was the notion of restructuring the classroom training to incorporate STX lanes that require the NCO to perform the task rather than just memorize a set of facts and repeat the information on a written test.

Some of these suggestions, e.g., incorporating situational leadership challenges into classes are currently being addressed in the ALC POI. The other changes are familiar strategies for the students and instructors and could be incorporated into the training in varying degrees depending on the time constraints with little or no cost. Time is a key factor and could add to the cost since classes may need to be extended to provide adequate hands-on/leadership experiences for all students. However, interview findings indicated that the actual length of the ALC is sufficient. The important issue is how to use the available time more efficiently. The down times noted in some classes could be easily filled with applied exercises and discussion periods noted earlier, without having to add to the length of the course.

[18] Earlier research (Wampler & Blankenbeckler, 2008) suggests that while this option could save time, it diminishes the learning experience provided by ALC. Probably the most valuable aspect of an NCOES class like ALC is the professional development that occurs through peer interaction. Allowing some students to test out would eliminate those more experienced NCOs from participating in classes. The resident students would not gain the benefit of the knowledge and experiences from the students who tested out. Indeed, Kraiger (2008) notes that peer interaction can be a valuable resource for technical knowledge for which there is no other readily available source.

Whether some or all of these changes are adopted will ultimately hinge on the NCOA. More specifically, the structure and format of ALC will depend on their (NCOA) vision of what ALC should be, and how to best realize this vision within time and resource constraints. Additional recommendations provided from the focus group interviews for improving the training value of ALC (mentioned on page 47) are summarized below.

Cadre selection. As was true with other courses, e.g., Basic Officer Leader Course II (Pleban, Tucker, Centric, Dlubac, & Wampler, 2006), proper selection and training of the cadre is critical to the success of the training. Cadre must have a thorough understanding of the course content and be prepared to serve as both facilitators and trainers. This is particularly important if some of the hands-on/applied experience recommendations previously addressed are adopted. Instructors must, for example, be adaptable and flexible enough to allow students the freedom to pursue and elaborate on their positions and be capable of bringing the discussion back to the key teaching points in a timely fashion. In sum, the instructors must be properly trained to ensure they conduct the training in the prescribed fashion.

Setting and enforcing standards. To optimize learning, students must be sufficiently challenged. This entails setting tough, but achievable standards and enforcing these standards. As noted earlier, there is little apprehension among the students that they could fail the course. Passing ALC means very little to the students in terms of providing a sense of accomplishment. Instead, ALC has become for many students, a "check-the-block" course. Clearly, this perception must change for the students to be sufficiently challenged (and motivated) to fully benefit from the course.

Student selection. To enhance the training value of ALC for students, unit leadership must send only those individuals who meet the necessary selection criteria to attend the course. Sending the NCO who only weeks earlier completed WLC to ALC, for example, would not allow the individual to reap the full benefits of the course because he lacks the necessary experience.

Transfer Model Findings and Implications

The modified Baldwin and Ford (1988) transfer model (page 4) identifies a number of training input factors that moderate learning/retention (and general self-efficacy), individual performance (transfer) and organizational results. Overall, the findings from this research did not strongly support the model. Key findings and implications are discussed in the following sections.

Trainee characteristics. The trainee characteristics that were examined included ability (intelligence), measured by GT scores, personality (self- confidence), and motivation (to learn and transfer). With one exception, all trainee characteristics correlated significantly (positively) with specific self-confidence ratings at Time 2 (end-of-course), which correspond to the learning/retention step in the model. Thus, there is some support for the model that trainee characteristics are positively related to learning as assessed through specific self-confidence ratings.

However, with the exception of general self-efficacy, the remaining trainee characteristics were unrelated to self, peer and supervisor ratings of performance at Time 3, the transfer step of the model. General self-efficacy was positively correlated with self-ratings of performance for both NCO competency and task performance, but with one exception was unrelated to peer and supervisor performance ratings.

The pattern of results observed from the current research suggests that the majority of significant (inflated) correlations obtained could be due, in large part, to method variance from ratings obtained from the same source/and or same measurement context. This is a serious, but common problem often reported in the transfer research (Blume et al. 2010). By obtaining performance ratings from multiple sources (self, peer, and supervisors), we were able to gauge the impact of this bias on model predictions. These findings underscore the importance of obtaining multi-source ratings (if at all possible) to provide a more accurate picture of the impact of training on learning and transfer.

It is also possible that inherent differences between the Army NCO student population and civilian academic students may have impacted the findings to some degree. The relationships specified in the modified transfer model were based largely on a population of college students or individuals currently working in civilian jobs. The Army ALC students may have differed in important ways that mitigated the relationships between model variables and transfer reported in earlier research. In addition, the relatively long lag time (discussed below) used in this research compared to the lag times used in most of the transfer research may have further impacted the findings.

Training design. In Baldwin and Ford's (1988) original transfer model, training content was listed as a key aspect of training design. For this research, training design was defined more narrowly to address the utility of course content. Good training design involves not only selecting the appropriate (i.e., relevant) content for the course, but this content must also be perceived by the trainees as useful to their jobs. To the extent that participants perceived the ALC as providing potentially useful knowledge and skills that could be applied to their jobs as squad leaders, then it was expected that high perceived utility (of ALC) should be positively correlated with confidence ratings and self, peer and supervisor ratings of performance. There was little support for this hypothesis. Perceived utility was unrelated to self, peer and supervisor ratings of performance at Time 3 (transfer). However, additional analyses indicated that perceived utility seemed to relate primarily to *composite* self-confidence ratings of NCO competency across time (Time 1-3) versus the more *specific* composite task competency.

The pattern of findings described above and shown in Table 15, suggest that the participants saw the value of ALC to be more in providing information about general NCO development rather than specific MOS skills, i.e., ALC Infantry squad leader tasks. Figures 4 and 5 both indicate that course utility ratings at the start of the course were very high but dropped significantly at the end of the course, suggesting that course expectations were not being met. Focus group interviews provided some insight into possible reasons why ALC utility ratings dropped over time, e.g., structure and design of the training. Course developers may need to examine this issue (utility) in more depth and follow up on the focus group findings with course instructors, unit leaders and students. Again, course developers may find it useful to review

ALC 2015 (now Army Learning Model 2015) instructional guidelines (TRADOC Pam 350-70-4, 2009) to help in the restructure and design of the training.

A second key variable listed under training design identified by Ford and Baldwin (1988) is learning principles. We addressed this factor under the heading strong transfer design. We focused primarily on the learning principles or strategies applied by the instructors. The survey data (see Table 16) suggested that the instructors incorporated, to some degree, selected instructional techniques from prior research for increasing understanding and transfer. However, since there were no researchers present to actually observe the training approaches used by the instructors, it is difficult to gauge how well these techniques were, in fact, implemented in the classes.

Table 16 also revealed that the instructors from the resident and MTT courses differed somewhat in their reliance on how they delivered the instruction. Resident instructors relied much more on lecture (by almost 2 to 1) than MTT instructors. MTT instructors relied more on field exercises and audio visual platforms for presenting course material when compared to the resident instructors. Based on previous observations of ALC training and feedback from the interviews, it appears that the MTT instructors operate with more flexibility. This allowed them for example, to release the students from classes earlier once training was completed and to use/explore different presentation methods. Course developers might consider providing resident instructors with the same level of flexibility in running their classes to minimize perceived differences between the two course formats.

Work environment. The work environment can significantly impact transfer. For this research, work environment was broken into three areas, organizational (Army) climate, unit climate and supervisor support. Overall, the participants indicated slight agreement that their organizational climate, unit climate and supervisor climate supported the transfer of their ALC training to their job. This (mild) support, however, was unrelated to the participants' confidence ratings of NCO competence and ALC task performance at Time 2, and for the most part (one exception) was unrelated to self, peer, and supervisor ratings of NCO competency and ALC task performance at Time 3.

The failure to find a significant correlation between work environment variables, confidence, and performance ratings could be due to several factors. Unlike many private sector organizations, where, for some positions, the employees and supervisors have known each other for many years, the work environment/job climate in Army units is much more turbulent. High operational tempo and relatively short times on the job (no more than two to three years before the Soldiers are reassigned to another position or unit) all contribute to his turbulence. For the present research, supervisors and peers did not know the NCOs for very long (less than six months in this research) and may not have had the opportunity to form clear judgments of the NCOs' proficiency across all NCO competencies and tasks. High personnel turbulence may have also exposed supervisors (and peers) to differing performance standards from other units, contributing to increased variability in defining quality performance, and making it more difficult for supervisors to establish a single consistent objective standard of performance. Together these factors may have acted to attenuate the relationships between work environment variables and transfer.

A second aspect of the work environment identified by the model is the extent to which the individuals are provided opportunities to actually perform/use their new skills on the job. As noted earlier, participants indicated that they had ample opportunity to perform most of the competencies and tasks since completing ALC. Ninety percent or more of the responding NCOs indicated that they had performed most of the tasks/competencies. Ideally, it would have been useful to have observed a sample of the participants actually performing the competency/task to better gauge the participants' performance and the conditions under which the practice occurred. As Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (2000) note, having time/opportunities to perform competencies/tasks is important. But, what is more important to realize is that different ways of using one's time have different effects on learning and transfer. For example, did the opportunities to practice on the job involve "deliberate practice" emphasizing active monitoring of one's learning experiences, i.e., were there attempts to seek and use feedback about one's progress? This type of information could be helpful in determining how practice time is managed in units and what, if any, changes are needed to utilize this time more efficiently to improve the transfer process.

Organizational results – Squad Performance. The final step of the transfer model shows that organizational results, defined here as collective (squad) performance should be directly impacted by transfer performance at Time 3. This was not the case. Performance, measured by self, peer, and supervisor ratings of NCO competency and ALC task proficiency, was unrelated to organizational results. However, as Holton (1996) notes, organizational results are not only directly impacted by individual performance but are also indirectly affected/ mediated by trainee characteristics (ability, motivation, personality) and environmental influences (work environment and training design). These more indirect relationships implied by the transfer model were weak or nonexistent, which, in turn, may have acted in combination to weaken the relationships reported between transfer performance and organizational results.

Transfer Model Revisited

Interestingly, when the focus was shifted to the amount of improvement or change seen in ratings from course start to course end and from course end to follow-on (versus absolute scores/performance ratings), the evidence is more supportive of the model (see Table 17). For example, motivation to transfer was positively correlated with improvements in composite self-confidence ratings for NCO competency and ALC tasks from start- to end-of-course (learning). Similarly, higher levels of perceived utility at Time 2 (end-of-course) were positively related to greater improvements in composite self-confidence ratings for NCO competency and ALC tasks from start- to end-of-course. Ratings of overall squad performance (organizational results) were positively correlated with greater change in composite self-confidence ratings for ALC tasks from start- to end-of-course. Finally, higher levels of general efficacy (personality) at follow-on were positively correlated with greater improvements in composite specific self-confidence ratings of NCO competency from end-of-course to follow-on (transfer) and greater improvements in composite self-confidence ratings of ALC tasks from start-of-course to end-of-course and from end-of-course to follow-on.

Additional factors impacting transfer model linkages. The modified Baldwin and Ford (1988) transfer model is based on a fairly extensive body of research (see pages 4-11 for an

overview of the major findings). However, there may be several reasons why the model was not fully supported from this research. First, the research design was longitudinal in focus with a relatively long lag time between training (specific NCO competency/task proficiency) and assessment of transfer performance (specific NCO competency/task proficiency and actual performance ratings in the unit). In some instances, the time lag was as much as five months. This is in contrast to other transfer research reported by Ford and Weissbein (1997) which looked at learning and short term retention shortly after course completion to assess transfer. The median lag times reported in Blume et al.'s (2010) extensive meta-analytic review of the transfer literature ranged from one day for laboratory studies to seven and a half weeks for field studies. The long lag time in the present research may have partially attenuated the relationships reported between some of the training input factors and transfer performance. Blume at al. found that lag time significantly impacted the size of the relationships obtained between the training and the transfer measure. For example, when transfer was measured immediately after training, the correlation between posttraining confidence ratings and the transfer measure was nearly four times larger (ρ =.38 versus ρ =.11) than when there was at least some time between the training and the transfer measure. It may be instructive (though difficult, practically) to measure transfer at different lag times to develop a clearer understanding of how various training input factors (trainee characteristics, training design and work environment) impact transfer outcomes over time.

While this research indicates the need to conduct additional work in this area to confirm earlier linkages between training input variables and transfer based on much shorter time lags, the costs of conducting longitudinal investigations of transfer of learning in military operational settings are substantial. These costs include not only financial considerations, but more specifically, the manpower (number of individuals), expertise (both military and scientific) and time (planning and coordinating data collection activities) to successfully employ this type of research. Finally, perhaps the most important issue in considering this type of endeavor, is the time and skill required to obtain institutional-school and unit "buy-in" to ensure that units are willing to commit both their time and their Soldiers to participate in all scheduled research activities (surveys, focus group interviews).

The findings from this research and the research summarized in other reviews (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Blume et al. 2010) show that transfer outcomes can vary dramatically across studies. Much of this variability can be attributed to not only who rates performance, i.e., self, peers, or supervisors (discussed earlier), and when transfer is assessed, but also how it (transfer) is conceptualized. As an example, we conceptualized transfer as near (versus far) since our interest was in determining the impact of the ALC in improving the job performance of squad leaders. However, from a temporal perspective, some individuals might also view this as far transfer, since the time lag was so long. Transfer can also be conceptualized from the standpoint of use versus effectiveness, i.e., did the trainee use the training on the job versus how effective was the trainee in applying the skills acquired in training back on the job. Depending on how these issues are addressed (raters, time lag, conceptualization of transfer) can lead to very different outcomes and conclusions about the effectiveness of the training intervention.

Disentangling some of the conflicting/weak findings noted in recent reviews of the transfer literature will require that researchers in the future exercise more precision in the design of their research. As noted by Blume et al. (2010), "how transfer is conceptualized, and how and when it is measured *really does matter*" (p. 30).

Conclusions

ALC Impact on Learning and Transfer

The findings from this research, suggest that the ALC had a positive impact on the NCOs' confidence in their ability to employ both NCO competencies and ALC tasks. Moreover, this confidence did not decline substantially after three to five months when confidence levels were assessed at the unit (transfer). Nevertheless, additional findings did indicate that the ALC could be improved.

For example, given the differences in background and experience of the ALC students, it is critical that course instructors develop ways of leveraging the experience and knowledge of the more senior NCOs into the classroom environment. This would certainly enhance the educational value of any particular class for the more junior NCOs. But, it would also be valuable to the senior NCOs as well since they would be able to discuss, compare and reflect on the experiences of their senior counterparts. This process would help to further refine their knowledge in specific areas.

A second area of focus is to ensure comparability (e.g., content, execution, standards) of the resident and MTT versions of ALC. Survey findings indicated that the NCOs perceived the MTT version of ALC as having greater perceived utility than the resident version of ALC. However, the drop in perceived utility ratings for both the resident and MTT versions from the start-of-course to the end-of-course indicates, that overall, course expectations were not being completely met.

While NCOs saw the NCO competencies and ALC tasks as relevant to their jobs as squad leaders, the drop in course utility ratings over time suggest that the ALC as currently employed may require additional refinements. A number of suggestions emerged for how to improve the quality of training. The most important suggestion was to provide more hands-on/leadership training experiences where the student is forced to demonstrate competence in performing a task or activity as well as the ability to work through applied leadership problems and then discuss his insights with both peers and instructors. While this would increase the number of applied experiences encountered by students, the majority opinion was that the time already allotted was adequate. The bigger issue was using time more efficiently. The suggestions provided during the focus group interview sessions indicated that enhancing the applied nature of the course could be accomplished without increasing the length of ALC.

Finally, in addition to examining the structure and design of the course, other suggestions for improving ALC included: ensuring proper selection and training of cadre, setting achievable

course standards and enforcing them, and selecting only those individuals (students) for ALC who meet necessary selection criteria to attend the course and have promotion potential

Revised Transfer Model: Validity and Implications for Future Research and Training

The modified Baldwin and Ford (1988) transfer model was used to identify relevant training input variables that might moderate the impact of the ALC on learning and transfer. The results from this research did not strongly support the model. However, a number of factors were identified that may have attenuated the relationships between these variables and learning and transfer. These included the long lag time between training and transfer, and the (relatively more) turbulent military work environment. Other factors addressed included how transfer is measured (who rates performance) and how transfer is conceptualized (e.g., near versus far). To get a better understanding of how specific training inputs impact learning, performance (transfer) and organizational results will require researchers to carefully articulate not only their conceptualization of transfer but also how and when transfer is measured. More long term investigations (e.g., three to six month time lag [and longer] between training and transfer performance) are needed to confirm the applicability of conventionally accepted transfer findings based on shorter time lags.

Finally, in providing their blueprint for how to enhance both learning and transfer, Blume et al. (2010), highlighted several key findings from their meta-analysis of this area that may be particularly applicable in the present context. First, Blume at al. recommend more proactive selection of trainees to ensure that they have the prerequisite knowledge and skill sets to enable them to reap the maximum benefits from the training. Second, trainees must also be sufficiently motivated to learn. As discussed earlier, NCOs must see the utility/relevance of the training to their job as squad leaders to make them want to learn and apply the new knowledge to their jobs. Third, the work environment must be supportive of the trainees in applying their new skills on the job. Support could include direct encouragement to applying new skills, providing the opportunity to perform/practice these skills on the job, and rewards. Fourth, course developers must strive to leverage and/or incorporate training strategies that maximize learning (e.g., including more applied exercises/leadership experiences, group discussion) to build both the trainees' knowledge base and confidence. Fifth, if possible, consideration should be given to increasing both the duration and impact of interventions. For some areas like leadership, decision making, and adaptability, where clear right and wrong answers are usually not possible, training may require weeks or months, versus days, for the trainee to grasp underlying principles and to be able to effectively apply these principles across different situations. (Significantly increasing the length of ALC may not be feasible, but increasing the impact/intensity of the training is clearly possible.) The final point is that the most significant gains in transfer will come when learning is more tightly integrated into the process and reward systems that already matter to the organization. The key challenge for course developers and, more broadly, for the NCOA, is how to make transfer a more integral part of the existing organizational climate. The findings from this, and other research that was presented, provides some viable options for how to enhance the learning and transfer process in ALC.

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ACRONYMS

ALC - Advanced Leader Course
ANOVA - Analysis of Variance
ARFORGEN - Army Force Generation
ARI - U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences

BNCOC - Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course

DA - Department of the Army

FBCB2 - Force XXI Battle Command Brigade and Below
FRAGO - Fragmentary Order

GT - General Technical

MTT - Mobile Training Team

NCO - Noncommissioned Officer
NCOA - Noncommissioned Officer Academy
NCOES - Noncommissioned Officer Education System

OE - Operational Environment
OPORD - Operation Order
OPTEMPO - Operational Tempo

POI - Program of Instruction

SFC - Sergeant First Class
SGT - Sergeant
SSG - Staff Sergeant
STX - Situational Training Exercise

TRADOC - Training and Doctrine Command

WARNO - Warning Order

ALC Student Questionnaire

Start-of-Course Version

Administrator use:

Class: _____ Group: _____ Date: _____

Create a USER ID

We will use your USER ID to match your responses now with your responses following the training. After this link is made, random number IDs will be assigned to your data and all personal identification information will be shredded. You are encouraged to respond to all questions, but there will be no effect on you for not providing any part of the requested information.

STEP 1

To create a USER ID, use the following guideline:

Use the first two letters of the <u>City</u> in which you were <u>Born</u>	**Use the last four digits of your phone number**	USER ID
Cleveland = CL	XXX-6789	CL6789

Enter your USER ID here:_____(6 characters, e.g., CL6789)

STEP 2

Write your code on the card provided – You will need to enter this code on papers following the training.

General Instructions:

This survey uses a circle the correct response system and write-in. Please do the following:

- **Read** each question carefully
- **Write-in** your answers when asked
- **Circle** the appropriate response when requested

CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE

Section I: *Student Demographic Inventory*

Directions: Please fill in the blank [print] or mark the appropriate response(s) for each question.

1. Rank

2. Number of continuous years and months of active military service _____

3. Time in current grade (*months*) _____

4. MOS (e.g., 11B, 11C) _____

5. Do you have National Guard or Reserve time? _____No _____Yes
   If *Yes*, please specify and explain _____

6. Primary Infantry experience: (Check one)
   Light _____ Wheeled (Stryker) _____ Mechanized _____

7. What Army training courses have you completed? (Check all that apply)

Javelin _____	Air Assault _____	Anti-Armor Leaders Course _____
Ranger _____	Airborne _____	Master Gunner _____
Bradley Transition Course _____		Stryker Transition Course _____
Combat Life Saver _____		Other _____

8. Which of the following positions have you held? (Check all that apply)

Unit	Special Assignment
Team Leader _____	Drill Sergeant _____
Squad Leader _____	Recruiter _____
Section Leader _____	Other _____

9. How many months have you served as a *Team Leader*? _____

10. How many months have you served as a *Squad Leader*? _____

11. How many months have you served as a *Section* Leader? _____

12. Are you currently on PCS orders? No Yes

If so, what date are you leaving? _____

13. Your current unit (include parent Bn and Bde) _____

14. When did you join this unit? (*month* and *year*) _____

15. Location of current unit (Installation) _____

16. Current duty position _____

17. When is your unit scheduled to deploy? (month and year) _____

18. Combat deployments since 9/11/01. Please check all operations that apply and note your duty position for each operation.

Operation	**Check all that apply**	**Duty Position**
Iraqi Freedom (May 03 – present)		
1st deployment	□	
2nd deployment	□	
3rd deployment	□	
4th Deployment	□	
5th Deployment	□	
Enduring Freedom (Oct 01 – present)		
1st deployment	□	
2nd deployment	□	
3rd deployment	□	
4th Deployment	□	
5th Deployment	□	
Other:	□	
Other:	□	

19. Do you have prior experience as an instructor in a training environment? (e.g., Master Gunner instructor, tactics instructor) _____No _____Yes

If *Yes*, please give details (school/course, location, when) _____

_____

20. What level of civilian education have you completed? (Check highest level)

No HS Diploma _____	GED _____	HS Diploma _____
Some College (no degree) _____	Assoc Degree _____	Bachelors Degree _____
Graduate Work (no degree) _____	Masters Degree _____	

21. What was your GT (General Technical) score from the ASVAB? _____

22. Your current Platoon Sgt _____ # months known _____
Full Name

23. Your current Platoon Ldr _____ # months known _____
Full Name

24. Your current First Sgt _____ # months known _____
Full Name

25. Fellow Squad Leaders in your company who know you:

25a. _____ # months known _____
Full Name

25b. _____ # months known _____
Full Name

25c. _____ # months known _____
Full Name

26. If resident class, home station _____

27. If MTT Course, sponsoring headquarters _____

28. If MTT Course, unit of assignment _____

CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE

Section II: *General Approach Toward Work*

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements in the table?

Select ONE response for each statement.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I will be able to achieve most of the goals I have set for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
2. When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them.	1	2	3	4	5
3. In general, I think that I can obtain outcomes that are important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I believe I can succeed at most any endeavor to which I set my mind.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I will be able to successfully overcome many challenges.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Compared to other people, I can do most tasks very well.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Even when things are tough, I can perform quite well.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I believe it is important to be flexible in dealing with others.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I take responsibility for acquiring new skills.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I tend to be able to read others and understand how they are feeling at any particular moment.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I see connections between seemingly unrelated information.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I enjoy learning new approaches for conducting work.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I am good at developing unique analyses for complex problems.	1	2	3	4	5

Circle the appropriate response.

Select ONE response for each statement.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
15. My insight helps me to work effectively with others.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I need for things to be “black and white”.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I am an innovative person.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I become frustrated when things are unpredictable.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I am able to make effective decisions without all relevant information.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I am an open-minded person in dealing with others.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I take action to improve work performance deficiencies.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I am perceptive of others and use that knowledge in interactions.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I often learn new information and skills to stay at the forefront of my profession.	1	2	3	4	5
24. When resources are insufficient, I thrive on developing innovative solutions.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I am able to look at problems from a multitude of angles.	1	2	3	4	5
26. I quickly learn new methods to solve problems.	1	2	3	4	5
27. I tend to perform best in stable situations and environments.	1	2	3	4	5
28. When something unexpected happens, I readily change gears in response.	1	2	3	4	5

Circle the appropriate response.

Select ONE response for each statement.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
29. I try to be flexible when dealing with others.	1	2	3	4	5
30. I can adapt to changing situations.	1	2	3	4	5
31. I train to keep my work skills and knowledge current.	1	2	3	4	5
32. I am continually learning new skills for my job.	1	2	3	4	5
33. I perform well in uncertain situations.	1	2	3	4	5
34. I take responsibility for staying current in my profession.	1	2	3	4	5
35. I adapt my behavior to get along with others.	1	2	3	4	5
36. I easily respond to changing conditions.	1	2	3	4	5
37. I try to learn new skills for my job before they are needed.	1	2	3	4	5
38. I can adjust my plans to changing conditions.	1	2	3	4	5

Section II: *Execution of NCO Competencies*

Using the scale below, please **circle the appropriate response** to indicate **both** if you have performed the task associated with the NCO competency prior to ALC training and how confident you are in your ability to perform each task.

A completed example item is provided below:

For each item, indicate if you have (1) previously performed this task and (2) confidence in your own ability to perform the task.	Previously Performed		Confidence				
	No	Yes	Not at All Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Very Confident	Completely Confident — Could Teach This to Others
A. Example competency A							
1. Example task 1	(No)	Yes	(1)	2	3	4	5

For each item, indicate if you have (1) previously performed this task and (2) confidence in your own ability to perform the task.	Previously Performed		Confidence				
	No	Yes	Not at All Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Very Confident	Completely Confident — Could Teach This to Others
A. Critical/Creative Thinking							
1. Adjust TTP execution to fit current METT-TC	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Manage time to meet mission milestones	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Anticipate and plan for the unexpected by thinking ahead	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Formulate lessons learned based on own/unit experiences	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
5. Realistically work new TTP and equipment into unit operations	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5

Circle the appropriate responses.

For each item, indicate if you have (1) previously performed this task and (2) confidence in your own ability to perform the task.	Previously Performed		Confidence				
	No	Yes	Not at All Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Very Confident	Completely Confident — Could Teach This to Others
B. Military Leadership							
1. Foster teamwork and positive climate within the squad	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Explain everyday duties and responsibilities to subordinates	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Give clear guidance to subordinates regarding task performance	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Convey mission orders to Soldiers clearly, correctly, completely	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
5. Ensure subordinates treat others with respect	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
C. Warrior Competencies							
1. Apply proper TTP in executing collective tasks	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Properly employ all assigned and available equipment	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Achieve acceptable proficiency for individual tasks/skills	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
D. Counseling, Coaching and Mentoring							
1. Answer Soldiers' questions and share knowledge and experiences	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Guide and develop subordinates by coaching, counseling, etc.	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Reinforce ethical standards of behavior among subordinates	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5

Circle the appropriate responses.

For each item, indicate if you have (1) previously performed this task and (2) confidence in your own ability to perform the task.	Previously Performed		Confidence				
	No	Yes	Not at All Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Very Confident	Completely Confident — Could Teach This to Others
E. Training Subordinates							
1. Develop, prepare, and execute realistic training plans	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Manage training events to optimize participation and safety	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Explain and demonstrate Soldier tasks	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Properly evaluate performance of Soldiers and provide feedback	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
5. Utilize TADSS appropriately for training	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
F. Shaping Unit Performance							
1. Ensure Soldiers perform individual and common tasks to standard	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Ensure squad executes collective tasks to standard	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Ensure subordinates pass APFT and weapons qualification tests	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Ensure subordinates properly employ assigned equipment	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
G. Managing Resources							
1. Properly account for all personnel, equipment, and supplies	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Act to fix problems with personnel, equipment, and supplies	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Ensure all assigned equipment is maintained properly	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Ensure subordinates execute and document proper maintenance	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5

Using the scale below, please **circle the appropriate response** to indicate **both** if you have performed the task associated with each NCO competency prior to ALC training and how confident you are in your **ability to model** the task.

For each item, indicate if you have (1) previously performed this task and (2) confidence in your own ability to model each task.	Previously Performed		Confidence				
	No	Yes	Not at All Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Very Confident	Completely Confident — Could Model This to Others
H. Expanding Own Competencies							
1. Seeking to improve technical, tactical, and leadership skills	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Seeking mentoring from your Platoon Sergeant and other leaders	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Leading and/or participating in professional development sessions	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Assisting or standing in for your Platoon Sergeant	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
I. Being an (Overseas) Ambassador							
1. Showing respect for the standards of the community within the mission area	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Ensuring subordinates favorably represent both the unit and the Army	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Broadening your understanding of joint and unified activities	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Developing and applying cultural awareness in combat operations	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
5. Considering the impact of planning and leading combat ops in the community within the mission area	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5

CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE

Section III: *Execution of ALC Tasks/Activities*

Using the scale below, please **circle the appropriate response** to indicate **both** if you have performed the tasks or activities prior to ALC training and how confident you are in your ability to execute the following tasks or activities.

For each item, indicate if you have (1) previously performed this task and (2) confidence in your ability to execute each task.	Previously Performed		Confidence				
	No	Yes	Not at All Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Very Confident	Completely Confident — Could Teach This to Others
Land Navigation							
Navigate on foot over terrain using map and lensatic compass – day	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Navigate on foot over terrain using map and lensatic compass – night	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Small Arms Proficiency							
Operate and employ the M249	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Operate and employ the M240B	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Operate and employ the .50 cal machine gun	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Operate and employ the MK19 grenade machine gun	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Execute reflexive fire techniques	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Call for Fire							
Execute forward observer procedures	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Combatives							
Conduct level-1 combatives	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
FBCB2							
Communicate using the FBCB2	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5

Circle the appropriate responses.

For each item, indicate if you have (1) previously performed this task and (2) confidence in your ability to execute each task.	Previously Performed		Confidence				
	No	Yes	Not at All Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Very Confident	Completely Confident — Could Teach This to Others
Demolitions							
Employ military explosives	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Combat Operations							
Write a WARNO, OPORD, FRAGO	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Maneuver a squad under hostile conditions	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Plan and execute squad/platoon operations	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5

CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE

Section IV: *Expectations of ALC*

Using the scale below, please **circle the appropriate response** to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below.

Select ONE response for each statement.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I am ready for this next part of ALC (Phase II).	1	2	3	4	5
2. I feel prepared for Phase II.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I wish I was better prepared for ALC (Phase II).	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am motivated to do well as an ALC student.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I expect to work hard in Phase II.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I try to learn as much as I can from training programs.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I believe I tend to learn more from training programs than most people.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I would like to improve my skills.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I am willing to exert considerable effort in training programs in order to improve my skills.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I believe I can improve my skills by participating in training programs.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I believe I can learn the material presented in most training programs.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I expect that what I learn in Phase II will be relevant to my job.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I expect that my ALC training will make me a better NCO.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I expect that completing ALC will be good for my Army career.	1	2	3	4	5
15. The training I will receive from ALC will be useful.	1	2	3	4	5

16. What is your primary reason for attending ALC at this time?

17. From a professional development standpoint, what do you expect to get out of ALC?

18. What are your biggest concerns about the course (e.g., task redundancy, course length, training value, time away from Family)?

THANK YOU!

Please give your completed survey to one of the investigators.

ALC Student Questionnaire

End-of-Course Version

Administrator use:

Class: _____ Group: _____ Date: _____

Record USER ID

We will use the same USER ID as created at the start of training to match your responses. As a reminder the instructions for creating a USER ID are listed below. After this link is made, random number IDs will be assigned to your data and all personal identification information will be shredded. You are encouraged to respond to all questions, but there will be no effect on you for not providing any part of the requested information.

STEP 1

You used the following guidelines prior to training to create a USER ID:

Use the first two letters of the City in which you were Born	**Use the last four digits of your phone number**	USER ID
Cleveland = CL	XXX-6789	CL6789

Enter your USER ID here:_____(6 characters, e.g., CL6789)

General Instructions:

This survey uses a circle the correct response system and write-in. Please do the following:

- **Read** each question carefully
- **Write-in** your answers when asked
- **Circle** the appropriate response when requested

CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE

Section I: *General Assessment of ALC Outcomes*

USER ID: _____

Using the scale below, please **circle the corresponding number** to indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statements in the table.

Select ONE response for each statement.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I was well prepared for Phase II	1	2	3	4	5
2. I was well motivated as an ALC student	1	2	3	4	5
3. I worked hard in Phase II	1	2	3	4	5
4. ALC improved my Warrior competencies	1	2	3	4	5
5. ALC improved my leadership skills	1	2	3	4	5
6. ALC improved my critical thinking skills	1	2	3	4	5
7. ALC improved my training abilities	1	2	3	4	5
8. ALC improved my resource management skills	1	2	3	4	5
9. ALC increased my confidence as an NCO	1	2	3	4	5
10. ALC increased my commitment to the Army	1	2	3	4	5
11. I expect that what I learned in Phase II will be relevant to my job	1	2	3	4	5
12. I expect that my ALC training will make me a better NCO	1	2	3	4	5
13. I expect that completing ALC will be good for my Army career	1	2	3	4	5
14. The training I received from ALC will be useful	1	2	3	4	5
15. The skills and knowledge I have obtained by attending ALC will be helpful in solving work related problems	1	2	3	4	5
16. Before I attended ALC I considered how I would use the content of the program	1	2	3	4	5

Circle the appropriate response.

Select ONE response for each statement.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
17. I believe my performance will likely improve if I use the knowledge and skills acquired in ALC	1	2	3	4	5
18. It is unrealistic to believe that mastering the content of ALC can improve my work performance	1	2	3	4	5
19. There are more problems than the trainers realize in using ALC content in my daily work activities	1	2	3	4	5
20. Before I attended ALC I identified particular problems or projects that I would like the training to help me with	1	2	3	4	5

CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE

Section II: *ALC Training Received on NCO Competencies*

Using the scale below, please **circle the appropriate response** to indicate **both** if you received training in ALC and how you feel about the amount of training you received on the following tasks associated with the following competencies during Phase II.

A completed example item is provided below:

	Received Training in ALC		Amount of Training in ALC				
	No	Yes	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
A. Example competency A							
1. Example task 1	No	(Yes)	1	(2)	3	4	5

For each item, indicate (1) if you received training on this task and (2) the amount of training received for this task.	Received Training in ALC		Amount of Training in ALC				
	No	Yes	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
A. Critical/Creative Thinking							
1. Adjust TTP execution to fit current METT-TC	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Manage time to meet mission milestones	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Anticipate and plan for the unexpected by thinking ahead	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Formulate lessons learned based on own/unit experiences	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
5. Realistically work new TTP and equipment into unit operations	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5

Circle the appropriate responses.

For each item, indicate (1) if you received training on this task and (2) the amount of training received for this task.	Received Training in ALC		Amount of Training in ALC				
	No	Yes	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
B. Military Leadership							
1. Foster teamwork and positive climate within the squad	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Explain everyday duties and responsibilities to subordinates	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Give clear guidance to subordinates regarding task performance	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Convey mission orders to Soldiers clearly, correctly, completely	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
5. Ensure subordinates treat others with respect	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
C. Warrior Competencies							
1. Apply proper TTP in executing collective tasks	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Properly employ all assigned and available equipment	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Achieve acceptable proficiency for individual tasks/skills	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
D. Counseling, Coaching and Mentoring							
1. Answer Soldiers' questions and share knowledge and experiences	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Guide and develop subordinates by coaching, counseling, etc.	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Reinforce ethical standards of behavior among subordinates	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5

Circle the appropriate responses.

For each item, indicate (1) if you received training on this task and (2) the amount of training received for this task.	Received Training in ALC		Amount of Training in ALC				
	No	Yes	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
E. Training Subordinates							
1. Develop, prepare, and execute realistic training plans	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Manage training events to optimize participation and safety	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Explain and demonstrate Soldier tasks	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Properly evaluate performance of Soldiers and provide feedback	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
5. Utilize TADSS appropriately for training	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
F. Shaping Unit Performance							
1. Ensure Soldiers perform individual and common tasks to standard	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Ensure squad executes collective tasks to standard	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Ensure subordinates pass APFT and weapons qualification tests	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Ensure subordinates properly employ assigned equipment	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5

Circle the appropriate responses.

For each item, indicate (1) if you received training on this task and (2) the amount of training received for this task.	Received Training in ALC		Amount of Training in ALC				
	No	Yes	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
G. Managing Resources							
1. Properly account for all personnel, equipment, and supplies	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Act to fix problems with personnel, equipment, and supplies	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Ensure all assigned equipment is maintained properly	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Ensure subordinates execute and document proper maintenance	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
H. Expanding Own Competencies							
1. Seeking to improve technical, tactical, and leadership skills	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Seeking mentoring from your Platoon Sergeant and other leaders	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Leading and/or participating in professional development sessions	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Assisting or standing in for your Platoon Sergeant	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5

Circle the appropriate responses.

For each item, indicate (1) if you received training on this task and (2) the amount of training received for this task.	Received Training in ALC		Amount of Training in ALC				
	No	Yes	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
I. Being an (Overseas) Ambassador							
1. Showing respect for the standards of the community within the mission area	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Ensuring subordinates favorably represent both the unit and the Army	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Broadening your understanding of joint and unified activities	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Developing and applying cultural awareness in combat operations	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
5. Considering the impact of planning and leading combat ops in the community within the mission area	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5

CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE

Section III: *Execution of NCO Competencies*

Using the scale below, please **circle the corresponding number** to indicate how confident you are in your ability to perform each task.

For each item, indicate confidence in your own ability to perform the task.	Not at All Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Very Confident	Completely Confident — Could Teach This to Others
A. Critical/Creative Thinking					
1. Adjust TTP execution to fit current METT-TC	1	2	3	4	5
2. Manage time to meet mission milestones	1	2	3	4	5
3. Anticipate and plan for the unexpected by thinking ahead	1	2	3	4	5
4. Formulate lessons learned based on own/unit experiences	1	2	3	4	5
5. Realistically work new TTP and equipment into unit operations	1	2	3	4	5
B. Military Leadership					
1. Foster teamwork and positive climate within the squad	1	2	3	4	5
2. Explain everyday duties and responsibilities to subordinates	1	2	3	4	5
3. Give clear guidance to subordinates regarding task performance	1	2	3	4	5
4. Convey mission orders to Soldiers clearly, correctly, completely	1	2	3	4	5
5. Ensure subordinates treat others with respect	1	2	3	4	5
C. Warrior Competencies					
1. Apply proper TTP in executing collective tasks	1	2	3	4	5
2. Properly employ all assigned and available equipment	1	2	3	4	5
3. Achieve acceptable proficiency for individual tasks/skills	1	2	3	4	5

Circle the appropriate response.

For each item, indicate confidence in your own ability to perform the task.	Not at All Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Very Confident	Completely Confident — Could Teach This to Others
D. Counseling, Coaching and Mentoring					
1. Answer Soldiers' questions and share knowledge and experiences	1	2	3	4	5
2. Guide and develop subordinates by coaching, counseling, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Reinforce ethical standards of behavior among subordinates	1	2	3	4	5
E. Training Subordinates					
1. Develop, prepare, and execute realistic training plans	1	2	3	4	5
2. Manage training events to optimize participation and safety	1	2	3	4	5
3. Explain and demonstrate Soldier tasks	1	2	3	4	5
4. Properly evaluate performance of Soldiers and provide feedback	1	2	3	4	5
5. Utilize TADSS appropriately for training	1	2	3	4	5
F. Shaping Unit Performance					
1. Ensure Soldiers perform individual and common tasks to standard	1	2	3	4	5
2. Ensure squad executes collective tasks to standard	1	2	3	4	5
3. Ensure subordinates pass APFT and weapons qualification tests	1	2	3	4	5
4. Ensure subordinates properly employ assigned equipment	1	2	3	4	5

Circle the appropriate response.

For each item, indicate confidence in your own ability to perform the task.	Not at All Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Very Confident	Completely Confident — Could Teach This to Others
G. Managing Resources					
1. Properly account for all personnel, equipment, and supplies	1	2	3	4	5
2. Act to fix problems with personnel, equipment, and supplies	1	2	3	4	5
3. Ensure all assigned equipment is maintained properly	1	2	3	4	5
4. Ensure subordinates execute and document proper maintenance	1	2	3	4	5

Using the scale below, please **circle the corresponding number** to indicate how confident you are in your **ability to model** the tasks associated with the following NCO competencies.

For each item, indicate confidence in your own ability to model the task.	Not at All Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Very Confident	Completely Confident — Could Teach This to Others
H. Expanding Own Competencies					
1. Seeking to improve technical, tactical, and leadership skills	1	2	3	4	5
2. Seeking mentoring from your Platoon Sergeant and other leaders	1	2	3	4	5
3. Leading and/or participating in professional development sessions	1	2	3	4	5
4. Assisting or standing in for your Platoon Sergeant	1	2	3	4	5
I. Being an (Overseas) Ambassador					
1. Showing respect for the standards of the community within the mission area	1	2	3	4	5
2. Ensuring subordinates favorably represent both the unit and the Army	1	2	3	4	5
3. Broadening your understanding of joint and unified activities	1	2	3	4	5
4. Developing and applying cultural awareness in combat operations	1	2	3	4	5
5. Considering the impact of planning and leading combat ops in the community within the mission area	1	2	3	4	5

CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE

Section IV: *Execution of ALC Tasks/Activities*

Using the scale below, please **circle the appropriate response** to indicate **both** if you executed the following tasks or activities during ALC training and how confident you are in your ability to execute the following tasks and activities after the completion of ALC.

For each item, indicate if you have (1) received training during ALC on this task and (2) confidence in your ability to execute each task.	Received Training in ALC		Confidence				
	No	Yes	Not at All Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Very Confident	Completely Confident — Could Teach This to Others
Land Navigation							
Navigate on foot over terrain using map and lensatic compass – day	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Navigate on foot over terrain using map and lensatic compass – night	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Small Arms Proficiency							
Operate and employ the M249	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Operate and employ the M240B	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Operate and employ the .50 cal machine gun	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Operate and employ the MK19 grenade machine gun	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Execute reflexive fire techniques	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Call for Fire							
Execute forward observer procedures	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Combatives							
Conduct level-1 combatives	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
FBCB2							
Communicate using the FBCB2	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5

Circle the appropriate responses.

For each item, indicate if you have (1) received training during ALC on this task and (2) confidence in your ability to execute each task.	Received Training in ALC		Confidence				
	No	Yes	Not at All Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Very Confident	Completely Confident — Could Teach This to Others
<u>Demolitions</u>							
Employ military explosives	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Combat Operations</u>							
Write a WARNO, OPORD, FRAGO	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Maneuver a squad under hostile conditions	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
Plan and execute squad/platoon operations	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5

CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE

Section V: *General Written Assessment of ALC Outcomes*

1. How would you rate ALC in developing you as a competent and confident non-commissioned officer who is grounded in the NCO competencies and able to lead Soldiers in the contemporary operating environment? Please provide a rating from 1 to 10 where 1 is the worst training you have ever received and 10 is the best training you have ever received.

   1_____ 2_____ 3_____ 4_____ 5_____ 6_____ 7_____ 8_____ 9_____ 10_____

2. If you thought that too little or too much time was allocated to any of the ALC activities, please explain why you feel this way.

3. Did you accomplish your ALC goals? Explain.

4. From a professional development standpoint, what do you expect to get out of ALC?

5. What were the biggest drawbacks of the course (e.g., task redundancy, course length, training value, time away from Family)?

6. Other thoughts or comments?

THANK YOU!

Please give your completed survey to one of the investigators.

Appendix C

ALC Far Transfer Evaluation

PARTICIPANTS QUESTIONNAIRE, FOLLOW-ON

Record Your USER ID

We will use the same USER ID as used prior and following ALC Phase II training to match your responses. As a reminder the instructions for creating a USER ID are listed below.

STEP 1

You used the following guidelines prior to training to create a USER ID:

Use the first two letters of the City in which you were Born	**Use the last four digits of your phone number**	USER ID
Cleveland = CL	XXX-6789	CL6789

Enter your USER ID here:_____(6 characters, e.g., CL6789)

Today's Date: _____

This questionnaire asks for your opinions on the residential phase (Phase II) of ALC that you completed awhile ago. Please focus on the time since you graduated from ALC. How has Phase II affected your job performance, unit contributions, career thinking, etc.?

It should take you about 60 minutes to complete all questions. Your candid responses are very important – they will help the Infantry School improve the ALC POI. You are encouraged to write in your thoughts wherever possible.

SECTION I: *Post-ALC Activities*

USER ID: _____

1. What did you do after you graduated from ALC? (Circle all that apply)

   Reported to my original unit Reported to new unit Took Leave Went to other schooling

   Other (please specify) _____

2. After you graduated, how much time did it take for you to arrive in your unit? (Circle one)

   Less than 7 days 7-14 days 15-30 days 31-45 days Other (specify)_____

3. When you arrived at your unit, what was your duty position? (Circle one)

   Team Leader Squad Leader Other (specify)_____

4. How many times has your duty position changed since ALC graduation? (Circle one)

   None Once Twice Three times Four times More than 4 times

5. What is your current duty position? _____

6. How long have you been in your current duty position? _____ months _____ weeks

7. Please indicate the type and amount of training exercises you have participated in since graduating ALC.

a. Situational Training Exercise _____	Number of times	_____
b. Field Training Exercise _____	Number of times	_____
c. Squad Live Fire Exercise _____	Number of times	_____
d. Platoon Live Fire Exercise _____	Number of times	_____
e. Bradley Crew Gunnery _____	Number of times	_____
f. Bradley Platoon Gunnery _____	Number of times	_____
g. CCTT _____	Number of times	_____
h. Other_____	Number of times	_____

8. If you have not participated in any of the above events, please indicate what you have done since graduating ALC.

_____

_____

_____

Section II: *General Work Beliefs*

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements in the table?

Select ONE response for each statement.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The Army values my contribution to its well-being.**The Army values my contribution to its well-being.The Army values my contribution to its well-being.**	1	2	3	4	5
2. The Army strongly considers my goals and values.	1	2	3	4	5
3. The Army really cares about my well-being.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I feel free to put my ALC knowledge and skills to use in my unit.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I've had opportunities to use my ALC knowledge and skills.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Other requirements take priority over applying my ALC learning.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Some techniques/procedures taught in ALC differ from my unit's SOP.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The unit climate allows for me to use my new skills to change the way things are done.	1	2	3	4	5
9. My supervisor is willing to extend himself to help me perform my job to the best of my ability.	1	2	3	4	5
10. My supervisor takes pride in my accomplishments at work.	1	2	3	4	5
11. My supervisor tries to make my job as interesting as possible.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I have been told *not* to use certain knowledge or skills I learned in ALC by my supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
13. My supervisor thinks using my ALC skills is good for the unit.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I get positive recognition for using my ALC knowledge and skills from my supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5

Circle the appropriate responses.

Select ONE response for each statement.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
15. I will be able to achieve most of the goals I have set for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
16. When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them.	1	2	3	4	5
17. In general, I think that I can obtain outcomes that are important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I believe I can succeed at most any endeavor to which I set my mind.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I will be able to successfully overcome many challenges.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Compared to other people, I can do most tasks very well.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Even when things are tough, I can perform quite well.	1	2	3	4	5

CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE

SECTION III: *General Reactions to ALC Training*

Use the following scale to indicate your level of agreement with the statements:

Select ONE response for each statement.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My superiors, peers, or subordinates have told me that my behavior has improved following the training I received during ALC.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The effectiveness of my squad has improved due to the skills that I learned in ALC.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Absenteeism in my squad has decreased due to the skills that I developed in ALC.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Turnover in my squad has decreased due to the skills that I developed in ALC.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Morale in my squad is higher due to skills that I developed in ALC.	1	2	3	4	5
6. My squad is more committed to achieving mission objectives due to the skills I developed in ALC.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I am able to transfer the skills learned in ALC back to my job as a squad leader.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I have changed my behavior in order to be consistent with the material taught in ALC.	1	2	3	4	5
9. My actual performance has improved due to the skills that I learned in ALC.	1	2	3	4	5

Section IV: *Execution of NCO Competencies*

Using the scale below, please **circle the appropriate response** to indicate **both** if you have performed the task associated with each NCO competency *since* receiving ALC training and how confident you are in your **ability to perform** each task.

For each item, indicate if you have (1) performed this task since graduating from ALC and (2) confidence in your ability to execute each task.	Performed ***Since Graduating from ALC***		Confidence				
	No	Yes	Not at All Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Very Confident	Completely Confident — Could Teach This to Others
A. Critical/Creative Thinking							
1. Adjust TTP execution to fit current METT-TC	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Manage time to meet mission milestones	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Anticipate and plan for the unexpected by thinking ahead	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Formulate lessons learned based on own/unit experiences	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
5. Realistically work new TTP and equipment into unit operations	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
B. Military Leadership							
1. Foster teamwork and positive climate within the squad	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Explain everyday duties and responsibilities to subordinates	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Give clear guidance to subordinates regarding task performance	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Convey mission orders to Soldiers clearly, correctly, & completely	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
5. Ensure subordinates treat others with respect	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5

Circle the appropriate responses.

For each item, indicate if you have (1) performed this task since graduating from ALC and (2) confidence in your ability to execute each task.	Performed ***Since Graduating from ALC***		Confidence				
	No	Yes	Not at All Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Very Confident	Completely Confident — Could Teach This to Others
C. Warrior Competencies							
1. Apply proper TTP in executing collective tasks	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Properly employ all assigned and available equipment	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Achieve acceptable proficiency for individual tasks/skills	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
D. Counseling, Coaching & Mentoring							
1. Answer Soldiers' questions and share knowledge and experiences	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Guide and develop subordinates by coaching, counseling, etc.	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Reinforce ethical standards of behavior among subordinates	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
E. Training Subordinates							
1. Develop, prepare, and execute realistic training plans	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Manage training events to optimize participation and safety	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Explain & demonstrate Soldier tasks	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Properly evaluate performance of Soldiers and provide feedback	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
5. Utilize TADSS appropriately for training	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5

Circle the appropriate responses.

For each item, indicate if you have (1) performed this task since graduating from ALC and (2) confidence in your ability to execute each task.	Performed ***Since Graduating from ALC***		Confidence				
	No	Yes	Not at All Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Very Confident	Completely Confident — Could Teach This to Others
F. Shaping Unit Performance							
1. Ensure Soldiers perform individual and common tasks to standard	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Ensure squad executes collective tasks to standard	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Ensure subordinates pass APFT and weapons qualification tests	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Ensure subordinates properly employ assigned equipment	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
G. Managing Resources							
1. Properly account for all personnel, equipment, and supplies	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Act to fix problems with personnel, equipment, and supplies	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Ensure all assigned equipment is maintained properly	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Ensure subordinates execute and document proper maintenance	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5

Using the scale below, please **circle the appropriate response** to indicate **both** if you have performed the tasks associated with each NCO competency *since* receiving ALC training and how confident you are in your **ability to model** the following tasks.

For each item, indicate if you have (1) performed this task since graduating from ALC and (2) confidence in your ability to execute each task.	Performed ***Since Graduating from ALC***		Confidence				
	No	Yes	Not at All Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Very Confident	Completely Confident — Could Model This to Others
H. Expanding Own Competencies							
1. Seeking to improve technical, tactical, and leadership skills	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Seeking mentoring from your Platoon Sergeant and other leaders	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Leading and/or participating in professional development sessions	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Assisting or standing in for your Platoon Sergeant	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
I. Being an (Overseas) Ambassador							
1. Showing respect for the standards of the community within the mission area	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Ensuring subordinates favorably represent both the unit and Army	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Broadening your understanding of joint and unified activities	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Developing and applying cultural awareness in combat operations	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
5. Considering the impact of planning and leading combat ops in the community within the mission area	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5

Section V: *Execution of ALC Tasks/Activities*

Using the scale below, please **circle the appropriate response** to indicate **both** if you have executed the following tasks or activities since graduating ALC training and how confident you are in your **ability to execute** the following tasks and activities.

For each item, indicate if you have (1) performed this task since graduating from ALC and (2) confidence in your ability to execute each task.	Performed ***Since Graduating from ALC***		Confidence				
	No	Yes	Not at All Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Very Confident	Completely Confident — Could Teach This to Others
J. Land Navigation							
1. Navigate on foot over terrain using map and lensatic compass – day	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Navigate on foot over terrain using map and lensatic compass – night	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
K. Small Arms Proficiency							
1. Operate and employ the M249	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Operate and employ the M240B	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Operate and employ the .50 cal machine gun	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
4. Operate and employ the MK19 grenade machine gun	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
5. Execute reflexive fire techniques	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
L. Call for Fire							
1. Execute forward observer procedures	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
M. Combatives							
1. Conduct level-1 combatives	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
N. FBCB2							

1. Communicate using FBCB2	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5

Circle the appropriate responses.

For each item, indicate if you have (1) performed this task since graduating from ALC and (2) confidence in your ability to execute each task.	Performed ***Since Graduating from ALC***		Confidence				
	No	Yes	Not at All Confident	Slightly Confident	Moderately Confident	Very Confident	Completely Confident — Could Teach This to Others
O. Demolitions							
1. Employ military explosives	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
P. Combat Operations							
1. Write a WARNO, OPORD, FRAGO	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Maneuver a squad under hostile conditions	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Plan and execute squad/platoon operations	No	Yes	1	2	3	4	5

CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE

Section VI: *Relevance, Performance, Sufficiency, and Application of Competencies/Skills*

For each competency/skill listed below, circle the response that best reflects **each (1)** the ***relevance*** of the listed competency/skill to **your specific job since ALC training**, **(2) how well you have performed each competency/skill, (3)** the **amount of training** you received at ALC on this competency, and **(4)** the degree to which you have **applied ALC learning** to that competency/skill since you graduated.

EXAMPLE:

Ex.) Thinking critically and creatively (adjust TTP, anticipating unexpected, etc.)

RELEVANCE of this competency to current job		**1** Not at all relevant	**2** Slightly relevant	**3** Moderately relevant	**4** Very relevant	**5** Extremely relevant
MY PERFORMANCE on this competency	N/A; have not performed this since graduating ALC	Below average	Average	Slightly Above Average	Well Above Average	Excellent
ALC IMPROVED MY PERFORMANCE on this competency		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
AMOUNT OF ALC TRAINING	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
APPLYING ALC Training on this comp. to current job	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Never applied	Rarely applied	Occasionally applied	Frequently applied	Extensively applied

1) Thinking critically and creatively (adjusting TTP, anticipating unexpected, etc.)

RELEVANCE of this competency to current job		**1** Not at all relevant	**2** Slightly relevant	**3** Moderately relevant	**4** Very relevant	**5** Extremely relevant
MY PERFORMANCE on this competency	N/A; have not performed this since graduating ALC	Below average	Average	Slightly Above Average	Well Above Average	Excellent
ALC IMPROVED MY PERFORMANCE on this competency		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
AMOUNT OF ALC TRAINING	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
APPLYING ALC Training on this comp. to current job	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Never applied	Rarely applied	Occasionally applied	Frequently applied	Extensively applied

2) Performing leadership duties (issuing orders, building teamwork, etc.)

RELEVANCE of this competency to current job		**1** Not at all relevant	**2** Slightly relevant	**3** Moderately relevant	**4** Very relevant	**5** Extremely relevant
MY PERFORMANCE on this competency	N/A; have not performed this since graduating ALC	Below average	Average	Slightly Above Average	Well Above Average	Excellent
ALC IMPROVED MY PERFORMANCE on this competency		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
AMOUNT OF ALC TRAINING	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
APPLYING ALC Training on this comp. to current job	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Never applied	Rarely applied	Occasionally applied	Frequently applied	Extensively applied

3) Executing Warrior competencies (properly employ equipment, achieve proficiency at individual tasks, etc.)

RELEVANCE of this competency to current job		**1** Not at all relevant	**2** Slightly relevant	**3** Moderately relevant	**4** Very relevant	**5** Extremely relevant
MY PERFORMANCE on this competency	N/A; have not performed this since graduating ALC	Below average	Average	Slightly Above Average	Well Above Average	Excellent
ALC IMPROVED MY PERFORMANCE on this competency		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
AMOUNT OF ALC TRAINING	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
APPLYING ALC Training on this comp. to current job	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Never applied	Rarely applied	Occasionally applied	Frequently applied	Extensively applied

4) Counseling/coaching/ mentoring Soldiers (share knowledge and experience with subordinates, reinforce ethical behavior, etc.)

RELEVANCE of this competency to current job		**1** Not at all relevant	**2** Slightly relevant	**3** Moderately relevant	**4** Very relevant	**5** Extremely relevant
MY PERFORMANCE on this competency	N/A; have not performed this since graduating ALC	Below average	Average	Slightly Above Average	Well Above Average	Excellent
ALC IMPROVED MY PERFORMANCE on this competency		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
AMOUNT OF ALC TRAINING	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
APPLYING ALC Training on this comp. to current job	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Never applied	Rarely applied	Occasionally applied	Frequently applied	Extensively applied

5) Training subordinates (preparing/managing training plans, demonstrating, explaining, evaluating, etc.)

RELEVANCE of this competency to current job		**1** Not at all relevant	**2** Slightly relevant	**3** Moderately relevant	**4** Very relevant	**5** Extremely relevant
MY PERFORMANCE on this competency	N/A; have not performed this since graduating ALC	Below average	Average	Slightly Above Average	Well Above Average	Excellent
ALC IMPROVED MY PERFORMANCE on this competency		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
AMOUNT OF ALC TRAINING	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
APPLYING ALC Training on this comp. to current job	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Never applied	Rarely applied	Occasionally applied	Frequently applied	Extensively applied

6) Shaping unit performance (ensure squad executes collective tasks to standard, subordinates pass APFT, etc.)

RELEVANCE of this competency to current job		**1** Not at all relevant	**2** Slightly relevant	**3** Moderately relevant	**4** Very relevant	**5** Extremely relevant
MY PERFORMANCE on this competency	N/A; have not performed this since graduating ALC	Below average	Average	Slightly Above Average	Well Above Average	Excellent
ALC IMPROVED MY PERFORMANCE on this competency		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
AMOUNT OF ALC TRAINING	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
APPLYING ALC Training on this comp. to current job	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Never applied	Rarely applied	Occasionally applied	Frequently applied	Extensively applied

7) Managing unit resources (maintaining and accounting for personnel, equipment, and supplies, etc.)

RELEVANCE of this competency to current job		**1** Not at all relevant	**2** Slightly relevant	**3** Moderately relevant	**4** Very relevant	**5** Extremely relevant
MY PERFORMANCE on this competency	N/A; have not performed this since graduating ALC	Below average	Average	Slightly Above Average	Well Above Average	Excellent
ALC IMPROVED MY PERFORMANCE on this competency		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
AMOUNT OF ALC TRAINING	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
APPLYING ALC Training on this comp. to current job	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Never applied	Rarely applied	Occasionally applied	Frequently applied	Extensively applied

8) Expanding own competencies (improving skills, seeking mentoring, professional development, etc.)

RELEVANCE of this competency to current job		**1** Not at all relevant	**2** Slightly relevant	**3** Moderately relevant	**4** Very relevant	**5** Extremely relevant
MY PERFORMANCE on this competency	N/A; have not performed this since graduating ALC	Below average	Average	Slightly Above Average	Well Above Average	Excellent
ALC IMPROVED MY PERFORMANCE on this competency		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
AMOUNT OF ALC TRAINING	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
APPLYING ALC Training on this comp. to current job	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Never applied	Rarely applied	Occasionally applied	Frequently applied	Extensively applied

9) Being an (overseas) ambassador (working with the community within the mission area, cultural awareness, etc.)

RELEVANCE of this competency to current job		**1** Not at all relevant	**2** Slightly relevant	**3** Moderately relevant	**4** Very relevant	**5** Extremely relevant
MY PERFORMANCE on this competency	N/A; have not performed this since graduating ALC	Below average	Average	Slightly Above Average	Well Above Average	Excellent
ALC IMPROVED MY PERFORMANCE on this competency		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
AMOUNT OF ALC TRAINING	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
APPLYING ALC Training on this comp. to current job	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Never applied	Rarely applied	Occasionally applied	Frequently applied	Extensively applied

10) Performing land navigation (with map and compass, day and night)

RELEVANCE of this competency to current job		**1** Not at all relevant	**2** Slightly relevant	**3** Moderately relevant	**4** Very relevant	**5** Extremely relevant
MY PERFORMANCE on this competency	N/A; have not performed this since graduating ALC	Below average	Average	Slightly Above Average	Well Above Average	Excellent
ALC IMPROVED MY PERFORMANCE on this competency		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
AMOUNT OF ALC TRAINING	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
APPLYING ALC Training on this comp. to current job	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Never applied	Rarely applied	Occasionally applied	Frequently applied	Extensively applied

11) Maintaining small arms proficiency (M240B, M249, .50 cal MG, etc.)

RELEVANCE of this competency to current job		**1** Not at all relevant	**2** Slightly relevant	**3** Moderately relevant	**4** Very relevant	**5** Extremely relevant
MY PERFORMANCE on this competency	N/A; have not performed this since graduating ALC	Below average	Average	Slightly Above Average	Well Above Average	Excellent
ALC IMPROVED MY PERFORMANCE on this competency		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
AMOUNT OF ALC TRAINING	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
APPLYING ALC Training on this comp. to current job	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Never applied	Rarely applied	Occasionally applied	Frequently applied	Extensively applied

12) Executing forward observer procedures (calling for fire)

RELEVANCE of this competency to current job		**1** Not at all relevant	**2** Slightly relevant	**3** Moderately relevant	**4** Very relevant	**5** Extremely relevant
MY PERFORMANCE on this competency	N/A; have not performed this since graduating ALC	Below average	Average	Slightly Above Average	Well Above Average	Excellent
ALC IMPROVED MY PERFORMANCE on this competency		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
AMOUNT OF ALC TRAINING	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
APPLYING ALC Training on this comp. to current job	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Never applied	Rarely applied	Occasionally applied	Frequently applied	Extensively applied

13) Executing combative procedures (hand-to-hand fighting)

RELEVANCE of this competency to current job		**1** Not at all relevant	**2** Slightly relevant	**3** Moderately relevant	**4** Very relevant	**5** Extremely relevant
MY PERFORMANCE on this competency	N/A; have not performed this since graduating ALC	Below average	Average	Slightly Above Average	Well Above Average	Excellent
ALC IMPROVED MY PERFORMANCE on this competency		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
AMOUNT OF ALC TRAINING	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
APPLYING ALC Training on this comp. to current job	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Never applied	Rarely applied	Occasionally applied	Frequently applied	Extensively applied

14) Communicating via FBCB2 equipment (reporting digitally)

RELEVANCE of this competency to current job		**1** Not at all relevant	**2** Slightly relevant	**3** Moderately relevant	**4** Very relevant	**5** Extremely relevant
MY PERFORMANCE on this competency	N/A; have not performed this since graduating ALC	Below average	Average	Slightly Above Average	Well Above Average	Excellent
ALC IMPROVED MY PERFORMANCE on this competency		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
AMOUNT OF ALC TRAINING	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
APPLYING ALC Training on this comp. to current job	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Never applied	Rarely applied	Occasionally applied	Frequently applied	Extensively applied

15) Executing demolition procedures (employing military explosives)

RELEVANCE of this competency to current job		**1** Not at all relevant	**2** Slightly relevant	**3** Moderately relevant	**4** Very relevant	**5** Extremely relevant
MY PERFORMANCE on this competency	N/A; have not performed this since graduating ALC	Below average	Average	Slightly Above Average	Well Above Average	Excellent
ALC IMPROVED MY PERFORMANCE on this competency		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
AMOUNT OF ALC TRAINING	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
APPLYING ALC Training on this comp. to current job	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Never applied	Rarely applied	Occasionally applied	Frequently applied	Extensively applied

16) Combat Operations (writing orders, maneuver squad under hostile conditions)

RELEVANCE of this competency to current job		**1** Not at all relevant	**2** Slightly relevant	**3** Moderately relevant	**4** Very relevant	**5** Extremely relevant
MY PERFORMANCE on this competency	N/A; have not performed this since graduating ALC	Below average	Average	Slightly Above Average	Well Above Average	Excellent
ALC IMPROVED MY PERFORMANCE on this competency		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
AMOUNT OF ALC TRAINING	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Way Too Little Training	Too Little Training	About the Right Amount	Too Much Training	Way Too Much Training
APPLYING ALC Training on this comp. to current job	N/A; did not receive ALC training on this	Never applied	Rarely applied	Occasionally applied	Frequently applied	Extensively applied

17) Comments on ALC's relevance to the tasks/activities just rated:

18) How would you change ALC Phase II to improve its relevance to your job?

19) Comments regarding amount of ALC training you received on the above tasks/activities:

20) How would you change ALC Phase II to improve the allocation of training efforts?

21) Comments and examples explaining how ALC training impacted my capabilities and performance:

Section VI: *Global Impact of ALC Training*

For each statement below, circle the number that best reflects how much you agree or disagree with the statement:

For each task/activity, circle the number that best reflects how much you agree or disagree with the statement.	Global Impact of ALC Training					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. ALC improved my *people* skills and understanding.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. ALC improved my attitude toward being a Soldier and NCO.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. ALC improved my motivation to be a good Soldier and NCO.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. ALC improved my dedication and work habits.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. ALC enabled me to work smarter and more efficiently.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. ALC improved my contributions to my unit.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. ALC improved my standing in the eyes of my subordinates.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. ALC helped me improve my unit's training and operations.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. ALC helped me increase my squad's desire for excellence.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. ALC helped me improve my squad's overall productivity.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. ALC improved my squad's standing in the eyes of unit leaders.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. ALC improved my squad's contributions to the platoon/company.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Circle the appropriate response.

For each task/activity, circle the number that best reflects how much you agree or disagree with the statement.	Global Impact of ALC Training					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
13. ALC enabled me to become a more effective agent of change.	1	2	3	4	5	6

14) Comments and examples explaining or illustrating ALC's global impact:

15) What are three key benefits to *you* from completing ALC Phase II?

16) What are three key benefits to *your squad* from you completing ALC Phase II?

17) How did ALC Phase II affect your thinking about being a Soldier and NCO?

18) Other thoughts about the way ALC Phase II affected you and your job performance?

Peer Ratings of ALC Student(s)
Follow-on Version

Create a USER ID

We will use your USER ID to help ensure confidentiality of your ratings following collection and entry. After ratings are linked to student participants, random number IDs will be assigned to your data and all personal identification information will be shredded. You are encouraged to respond to all questions, but there will be no effect on you for not providing any part of the requested information.

STEP 1

To create a USER ID, use the following guideline:

Use the first two letters of the City in which you were Born	**Use the last four digits of your phone number**	USER ID
Cleveland = CL	XXX-6789	CL6789

Enter your USER ID here:_____(6 characters, e.g., CL6789)

STEP 2

General Instructions:

After completing the next demographic page, you will be asked to rate a squad or section leader named on the top right-hand portion of the following sheet(s) on the 16 competencies of a squad or section leader listed. All responses are completely confidential and will be used solely for research and group-level evaluation purposes. That is, individual ratings will not be shared with anyone outside of the research team. In addition, these ratings will not be shared with the Soldiers being rated and will not impact in any way an individual Soldier's career outcomes. Your honest and thoughtful ratings on each competency assessed will be essential in accomplishing the objectives of the current investigation.

CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE

SECTION I: *Peer Demographic Inventory*

Directions: Please fill in the blank [print] or mark the appropriate response(s) for each question.

1. Your Current Rank _____
2. Number of continuous years and months of active military service _____
3. Time in current grade (*months*) _____
4. Your current duty position _____
5. When did you join your current unit? (*month* and *year*) _____
6. Have you completed ALC Phase II training? (circle one) Yes No

If so, what was the course format? (circle one) Resident MTT

SECTION II: *General Reactions to ALC Training*

For each statement below, circle the number that best reflects how much you agree or disagree with the statement:

For each task/activity in the table, circle the number that best reflects how much you agree or disagree with the statement:	General Feedback Regarding ALC Training				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. ALC attendance is good for a squad leader's unit.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Young NCOs will learn valuable information in ALC.	1	2	3	4	5
3. ALC training improves squad performance.	1	2	3	4	5
4. ALC training improves platoon performance.	1	2	3	4	5

CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE

5. Circle **up to four** of the following 16 skills/competencies that completing ALC training has most improved in squad or section leaders' performance.

Critical and Creative Thinking	Performing Leadership Duties	Executing Warrior Competencies	Counseling/ Coaching/Mentoring Soldiers
Training Subordinates	Shaping Unit Performance	Managing Unit Resources	Expanding Own Competencies
Being an Overseas Ambassador	Performing Land Navigation	Maintaining Small Arms Proficiency	Executing Forward Observer Procedures
Executing Combative Procedures	Communicating via FBCB2	Executing Demolition Procedures	Combat Operations

SECTION III: *Primary Participant(s) Performance Ratings*

Important: General Instructions for the Sheets that Follow

Please rate the squad or section leader named on the top right-hand portion of the following sheet(s) on the 16 competencies of a squad or section leader listed. *Please consider the Soldier's performance on each dimension separately.* All responses are completely confidential and will be used solely for research and group-level evaluation purposes. That is, individual ratings will not be shared with anyone outside of the research team. In addition, these ratings will not be shared with the Soldiers being rated and will not impact in any way an individual Soldier's career outcomes. Your honest and thoughtful ratings on each competency assessed will be essential in accomplishing the objectives of the current investigation.

Soldier to be Rated: _____

Peer Ratings of Squad or Section Leader Performance

Please rate the performance of the named Soldier on the following competencies of a Squad/Section Leader over the course of the past 4-5 months (since completing ALC, Phase II Training).

For each item, indicate the level of performance you have observed of the listed squad/section leader over the past 4-5 months (since completing ALC Phase II Training).	Level of Performance					
	N/A; Have not observed in prior 4-6 months	Below Average	Average	Slightly Above Average	Well Above Average	Excellent
1. Thinking critically and creatively (adjusting TTP, anticipating unexpected, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
2. Performing leadership duties (issuing orders, building teamwork, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
3. Executing Warrior competencies (properly employ equipment, achieve proficiency at individual tasks, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
4. Counseling/coaching/ mentoring Soldiers (share knowledge and experience with subordinates, reinforce ethical behavior, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
5. Training subordinates (preparing/managing training plans, demonstrating, explaining, evaluating, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
6. Shaping unit performance (ensure squad executes collective tasks to standard, subordinates pass APFT, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
7. Managing unit resources (maintaining and accounting for personnel, equipment, and supplies, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
8. Expanding own competencies (improving skills, seeking mentoring, professional development, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
9. Being an (overseas) ambassador (working with the community within the mission area, cultural awareness, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
10. Performing land navigation (with map and compass, day and night)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
11. Maintaining small arms proficiency (M240B, M249, .50 cal MG, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
12. Executing forward observer procedures (calling for fire)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
13. Executing combative procedures (hand-to-hand fighting)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
14. Communicating via FBCB2 equipment (reporting digitally)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
15. Executing demolition procedures (employing military explosives)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
16. Combat Operations (writing orders, maneuver squad under hostile conditions)	NA	1	2	3	4	5

THANK YOU!

Supervisor Ratings of ALC Student(s)
Follow-on Version

Create a USER ID

We will use your USER ID to help ensure confidentiality of your ratings following collection and entry. After ratings are linked to student participants, random number IDs will be assigned to your data and all personal identification information will be shredded. You are encouraged to respond to all questions, but there will be no effect on you for not providing any part of the requested information.

STEP 1

To create a USER ID, use the following guideline:

Use the first two letters of the City in which you were Born	**Use the last four digits of your phone number**	USER ID
Cleveland = CL	XXX-6789	CL6789

Enter your USER ID here:_____(6 characters, e.g., CL6789)

STEP 2

General Instructions:

After completing the next demographic page, you will be asked to rate a squad or section leader named on the top right-hand portion of the following sheet(s) on the 16 competencies of a squad or section leader listed. All responses are completely confidential and will be used solely for research and group-level evaluation purposes. That is, individual ratings will not be shared with anyone outside of the research team. In addition, these ratings will not be shared with the Soldiers being rated and will not impact in any way an individual Soldier's career outcomes. Your honest and thoughtful ratings on each competency assessed will be essential in accomplishing the objectives of the current investigation.

CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE

SECTION I: *Supervisor Demographic Inventory*

Directions: Please fill in the blank [print] or mark the appropriate response(s) for each question.

1. Your Current Rank _____
2. Number of continuous years and months of active military service _____
3. Time in current grade (*months*) _____
4. Your current duty position _____
5. When did you join your current unit? (*month* and *year*) _____

SECTION II: *General Reactions to ALC Training*

For each statement below, circle the number that best reflects how much you agree or disagree with the statement:

For each task/activity in the table, circle the number that best reflects how much you agree or disagree with the statement:	General Feedback Regarding ALC Training				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. ALC attendance is good for a squad leader's unit.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Young NCOs will learn valuable information in ALC.	1	2	3	4	5
3. ALC training improves squad performance.	1	2	3	4	5
4. ALC training improves platoon performance.	1	2	3	4	5

CONTINUE TO NEXT PAGE

5. Circle **up to four** of the following 16 skills/competencies that completing ALC training has most improved in squad or section leaders' performance.

Critical and Creative Thinking	Performing Leadership Duties	Executing Warrior Competencies	Counseling/ Coaching/Mentoring Soldiers
Training Subordinates	Shaping Unit Performance	Managing Unit Resources	Expanding Own Competencies
Being an Overseas Ambassador	Performing Land Navigation	Maintaining Small Arms Proficiency	Executing Forward Observer Procedures
Executing Combative Procedures	Communicating via FBCB2	Executing Demolition Procedures	Combat Operations

SECTION III: *Primary Participant(s) Performance Ratings*

Important: General Instructions for the Sheets that Follow

Please rate the squad or section leader named on the top right-hand portion of the following sheet(s) on the 16 competencies of a squad or section leader listed. *Please consider the Soldier's performance on each dimension separately.* All responses are completely confidential and will be used solely for research and group-level evaluation purposes. That is, individual ratings will not be shared with anyone outside of the research team. In addition, these ratings will not be shared with the Soldiers being rated and will not impact in any way an individual Soldier's career outcomes. Your honest and thoughtful ratings on each competency assessed will be essential in accomplishing the objectives of the current investigation.

Soldier to be Rated: _____

Supervisor Ratings of Squad or Section Leader Performance

Please rate the performance of the named subordinate on the following competencies of a Squad/Section Leader over the course of the past 4-5 months (since completing ALC, Phase II Training).

For each item, indicate the level of performance you have observed of the listed squad/section leader over the past 4-5 months (since completing ALC Phase II Training).	Level of Performance					
	N/A; Have not observed in prior 4-6 months	Below Average	Average	Slightly Above Average	Well Above Average	Excellent
1. Thinking critically and creatively (adjusting TTP, anticipating unexpected, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
2. Performing leadership duties (issuing orders, building teamwork, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
3. Executing Warrior competencies (properly employ equipment, achieve proficiency at individual tasks, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
4. Counseling/coaching/ mentoring Soldiers (share knowledge and experience with subordinates, reinforce ethical behavior, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
5. Training subordinates (preparing/managing training plans, demonstrating, explaining, evaluating, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
6. Shaping unit performance (ensure squad executes collective tasks to standard, subordinates pass APFT, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
7. Managing unit resources (maintaining and accounting for personnel, equipment, and supplies, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
8. Expanding own competencies (improving skills, seeking mentoring, professional development, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
9. Being an (overseas) ambassador (working with the community within the mission area, cultural awareness, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
10. Performing land navigation (with map and compass, day and night)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
11. Maintaining small arms proficiency (M240B, M249, .50 cal MG, etc.)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
12. Executing forward observer procedures (calling for fire)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
13. Executing combative procedures (hand-to-hand fighting)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
14. Communicating via FBCB2 equipment (reporting digitally)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
15. Executing demolition procedures (employing military explosives)	NA	1	2	3	4	5
16. Combat Operations (writing orders, maneuver squad under hostile conditions)	NA	1	2	3	4	5

THANK YOU!

ALC Far Transfer Evaluation

PARTICIPANTS FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL – FOLLOW-ON

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATOR

- In advance, complete "Before the Session" steps in the *Data Collector's Guide*. Select about half of the questions in this protocol for targeted discussion (2 hours worth).
- At the start of the session, verify that arriving NCOs match the list by name. All group members must be graduates of the new ALC program of instruction.
- Introduce the session (see below) including its role in ARI's evaluation.
- Have a team member take careful notes and operate the voice recorder. Be sure to state the date, time, installation, group and facilitator at the start of recording.
- Dialogue with the participants using the questions that begin on the next page as a guide. Work through as many questions as time allows.
- Adjust to the group's interests and strengths: follow up their comments, pursue detail if something's especially important to a participant.
- Keep an eye on the clock so you can stay on schedule.
- Upon releasing the NCOs, complete "After the Session" steps in the *Data Collector's Guide*. Support note taker's compiling of session notes.
- Put your own insights and thoughts in a separate Word file as soon as possible.

INTRODUCTION OUTLINE

- This focus group = part of ARI research examining transfer of ALC learning. The research aims to help the Infantry School improve the ALC training program.
- Focus group goal = clarify ALC's operational impact by following up on survey questions.
- Time limit = 2 hours (approximate). Anybody required to leave early?
- Focus group method = collaborative brainstorming + story telling. Everyone contributes.
- Scheduled topics = flexible. Your issues/concerns are important, too.
- Your comments = confidential. We will protect your anonymity and privacy.
- Any objections to voice recording?
- Any questions before we start?

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

NOTE: Questions are organized by category. The order is flexible, and skipping around is OK.

Job Relevance of ALC Training

1. **On the whole, how well did ALC training address knowledge, skills, and attributes important to your job as a squad leader? Consider:**
   - **Knowledge – doctrine and TTP, latest policies, Infantry initiatives, etc.**
   - **Skills – using weapons, communicating, troop leading, training Soldiers, etc.**
   - **Attributes – confidence, physical fitness, initiative, accountability, etc.**

2. **Which blocks of training or lessons should receive more time in Phase II? Guide the group to produce a list with recommendations for amount of increase.**

3. **Which blocks of training or lessons should receive less time in Phase II? Guide the group to produce a list with recommendations for amount of decrease.**

4. **What important topics or tasks were missing in the Phase II training? Guide the group to produce a prioritized list with reasons.**

5. **What were the most useful blocks of training or lessons in Phase II? Ask the group to produce a top 5 list of high-value topics. Consider:**
   - **Common tasks (land nav, forward obs duties, vehicle maintenance, FBCB2)**
   - **Weapons use (small arms proficiency, demolitions)**
   - **Combatives (level-1 techniques, fighting strategy, basic drills)**
   - **Combat operations (orders writing, Warrior Battle Drills, squad maneuver/ops)**

6. **What blocks of training or lessons in Phase II did not relate to working as a squad leader? Ask the group to produce a list of expendable topics. Consider:**
   - **Common tasks (land nav, forward obs duties, vehicle maintenance, FBCB2)**
   - **Weapons use (small arms proficiency, demolitions)**
   - **Combatives (level-1 techniques, fighting strategy, basic drills)**

- **Combat operations (orders writing, Warrior Battle Drills, squad maneuver/ops)**

7. **Did Phase II training include enough opportunities for the students to practice or apply new knowledge and skills? Where are more (or fewer) practice opportunities needed?**

8. **Did the instructional support provided in Phase II help develop the competencies important to your job as a squad leader? Consider the counseling, coaching, mentoring, testing and feedback you received.**

On-the-Job Application of ALC Learning

9. **What things that you learned in ALC were you able to use frequently as a squad leader? Consider:**
   - **Tactical skills (employing weapons, executing Warrior Battle Drills, etc.)**
   - **Leadership skills (communicating, troop leading, training Soldiers, etc.)**
   - **Cognitive skills (deliberate thinking, problem solving, thinking ahead, etc.)**
   - **Technical skills (employing FBCB2, maintaining vehicles, keeping records, etc.)**
   - **People skills (motivating, listening, caring, mentoring, respecting, etc.)**
   - **Attitudes about being a leader (pride, commitment, professionalism, etc.)**
   - **Attributes (confidence, motivation, initiative, accountability, etc.)**

10. As you performed your job duties, when were you able to apply your ALC learning? Consider these kinds of activities:
    - Planning and preparing for training missions
    - Conducting and evaluating training events
    - Managing Soldiers, equipment, and supplies
    - Representing your unit in the military and civilian communities
    - Improving your own tactical, leadership, and technical skills

11. What conditions in your unit encouraged you to apply what you learned in ALC? Guide the group to produce a list of positive factors. Consider:
    - Your own awareness that ALC knowledge and skills were useful
    - Directives from your supervisory chain to use what you learned in ALC
    - Peer-to-peer sharing opportunities in professional development sessions
    - Encouragement and recognition from superiors and peers
    - Acknowledgment and feedback from subordinates

12. **What conditions in your unit made it difficult for you to apply what you learned in ALC? Guide the group to produce a list of negative factors. Consider:**
    - **Heavy workload, fatigue, stress, etc.**
    - **Lack of time to think about applying ALC learning**
    - **Pre-deployment requirements**
    - **Negative guidance or feedback from superiors**
    - **Resistance to changing the way things are done**

13. What are good examples where you applied your ALC learning to your job activities? Guide the group to produce a list of prime examples and the conditions that gave rise to the opportunities.

14. **Overall, how often did you have the opportunity to apply your ALC learning to your job as a squad leader? Consider:**
    - **Knowledge (doctrine and TTP, latest policies, Infantry initiatives, etc.)**
    - **Skills (communication, troop leading, training Soldiers, etc.)**
    - **Attributes (confidence, physical fitness, initiative, accountability, etc.)**
15. Did any of the procedures you learned in ALC differ from your unit's SOP? Guide the group to produce a list of procedures where discrepancies exist.

Impact on Your Own Job Performance

16. **Overall, how much did your ALC learning improve your job performance as a squad leader? Consider:**
    - **Garrison duties**
    - **Field training exercises (local or regional)**
    - **Combat training center rotation**

17. **Which job duties benefited most by applying what you learned in ALC? Guide the group to produce a top 10 list. Consider these kinds of duties:**
    - **Soldiering (performing skills/tasks, applying TTP, employing equipment, etc.)**
    - **Leading (communicating, motivating, building teamwork, troop leading, etc.)**
    - **Training (planning and executing events, demonstrating tasks, evaluating, etc.)**
    - **Developing Soldiers (inspiring, counseling, coaching, mentoring, etc.)**
    - **Thinking critically (adjusting TTP, managing time, thinking ahead, etc.)**
    - **Serving as ambassador (interacting with community, instilling respect among subordinates, applying cultural awareness, etc.)**
    - **Managing resources (maintaining vehicles/equipment, accounting for property, documenting maintenance activities, etc.)**

- **Improving own competencies (tactical, leadership, and technical skills)**

18. What are good examples where your job performance improved noticeably as a result of ALC training? Guide the group to produce a list of prime examples.

19. How did your interpersonal skills improve as a result of your ALC training? Consider:
    - Listening to subordinates, peers, and superiors
    - Taking an interest in others
    - Respecting others' opinions and values
    - Staying calm when irritated, angry, or frustrated
    - Resolving conflict or hostility between others
    - Appreciating cultural diversity

20. How did your leadership attributes improve as a result of your ALC training? Consider:
    - Confidence
    - Initiative
    - Maturity
    - Commitment
    - Accountability
    - Adaptability
    - Motivation
    - Decisiveness

21. How did your attitudes about being an NCO change as a result of your ALC training? Consider:
    - **Identification with Army values**
    - **Pride in being a Soldier**
    - **Belief in your importance as an NCO**
    - **Concern about Soldiers' welfare**
    - **Importance of professional behavior**
    - **Emphasis on ethical standards**
    - **Commitment to an Army career**

22. How did your ALC training impact the overall quality of your job performance? Consider the following performance aspects:
    - **Effort**
    - **Effectiveness**
    - **Efficiency**
    - **Timeliness**
    - **Productivity**

23. What are good examples of positive feedback received about the job performance impact of your ALC training? Guide the group to produce a list of noteworthy examples.

24. How do you think your application of ALC learning has influenced your standing as a member of the unit's leadership team? Consider the following perspectives:
    - What your chain of command thinks
    - What your fellow squad leaders think
    - What your subordinates think

25. Which areas of your job performance benefited substantially from what you learned in ALC? Consider these areas:
    - Planning and preparing for training missions
    - Conducting and evaluating training events
    - Managing Soldiers, equipment, and supplies
    - Representing your unit in the military and civilian communities
    - Improving your own tactical, leadership, and technical skills

Impact on Your Squad's Performance

26. Overall, how much did your ALC learning improve your squad's performance? Consider:
    - **Individual and common core tasks**
    - **Individual testing (APFT, weapons qualification, etc.)**
    - **Collective tasks and Warrior Battle Drills**

27. Which squad performance aspects benefited most because of what you learned in ALC? Guide the group to produce a top 10 list. Consider these kinds of aspects:
    - **Soldiering (performing skills/tasks, executing TTP, employing equipment, etc.)**
    - **Teaming (executing teamwork, collaborating, helping others, etc.)**
    - **Training (participating fully, performing to standard, peer teaching, etc.)**
    - **Citizenship (respecting others, becoming culturally aware, etc.)**
    - **Protecting assets (maintaining vehicles/equipment, safeguarding property, etc.)**

28. What are good examples where your squad's performance improved noticeably as a result of your ALC training? Guide the group to produce a list of prime examples.

29. How did your ALC training impact the overall quality of your squad's performance? Consider:

- **Effort**
- **Effectiveness**
- **Efficiency**
- **Timeliness**
- **Productivity**

30. How did the climate in your squad improve as a result of your ALC training? Consider:
    - Respect for Army rules and regulations
    - Evidence of Warrior Ethos among your Soldiers
    - Morale of your squad members
    - Cohesion among the Soldiers in your squad
    - Drive for excellence, competitiveness
    - Respect for differences of opinion
    - Interpersonal friction
    - Disciplinary problems

31. What are good examples of feedback received on improvement of your squad's performance as related to your ALC training? Guide the group to produce a list of noteworthy examples.

32. How did Soldier attributes improve within your squad as a result of your ALC training? Consider:
    - Confidence
    - Responsibility
    - Commitment
    - Accountability
    - Adaptability
    - Motivation

33. How did your subordinates' attitudes about being a Soldier change as a result of your ALC training? Consider:
    - Pride in being a Soldier
    - Belief in the importance of the military profession
    - Acceptance of Army values
    - Importance of professional behavior
    - Caring about each other's welfare
    - Emphasis on ethical standards

34. Which areas of your squad's performance benefited substantially from what you learned in ALC? Consider these areas:

- **Performing garrison tasks**
- **Preparing for and executing training missions**
- **Maintaining vehicles and equipment**
- **Representing the unit in civilian and military communities**
- **Maintaining safety conditions**

35. How do you think your application of ALC learning has influenced your squad's standing within your company? Consider the following perspectives:
    - What your chain of command thinks
    - What your fellow squad leaders think
    - What your subordinates think

Impact at Platoon Level and Above

36. In what ways did your ALC learning contribute to training and operations at the platoon and company levels? Consider:
- **Completion of home station training requirements**
- **Completion of CTC rotation training requirements**
- **Completion of unit certification requirements**
- **Improvement of unit training methods**
- **Updating of unit SOPs**

37. How have your ALC-related accomplishments (and/or your squad's) impacted the combat readiness of your platoon/company? Consider:
- **Training status**
- **Personnel status**
- **Equipment status**
- **Unit certification**

38. What are good examples where your ALC training directly or indirectly led to improvements in unit readiness? Guide the group to produce a list of prime examples.

39. How did the climate in your platoon or parent company improve as a result of your ALC training? Consider:
- **Collective pride**
- **Morale and esprit**
- **Cohesion**
- **Drive for excellence, competitiveness**
- **Reenlistment rate**

40. If you were king for a day, how would you change things to improve the impact of ALC training at platoon level and above? Guide the group to produce a prioritized list of noteworthy ideas.

41. Overall, how much did the application of your ALC learning enhance training and operations at the platoon and company levels?

42. What are the 3 greatest ALC-related contributions of your squad to platoon operations and success? Guide the group to produce a top 10 list of notable contributions.

43. What are good examples of feedback received on your ALC-related contributions to the platoon/company's training, operations, and readiness? Guide the group to produce a list of significant examples.

Benefits to the NCO and His Unit

44. What personal benefits have you realized because of your ALC training? Consider:
- **Informal reinforcement from your superiors and peers**
- **Formal recognition (via NCOER or awards)**
- **Selection for additional training**
- **Valuable credit toward promotion**
- **Improved career prospects**
- **Other benefits**

45. What benefits have your subordinates realized because of your ALC training? Consider:
- **Stronger warrior competencies**
- **More positive work environment**
- **Informal reinforcement from superiors and peers**
- **Formal recognition (e.g., awards)**
- **Enhanced survivability in combat**

46. How did your ALC training produce benefits for your platoon/company? Consider:
- **More efficient use of training resources**
- **Improved procedures for training and operations**
- **Better unit spirit and esprit**
- **Fewer personnel and equipment problems**
- **Fewer disciplinary problems**
- **Unit recognition from the chain of command**
- **Stronger combat readiness**

- **Other benefits**

47. How has your ALC training produced professional benefits for you?

48. What are the 3 greatest personal benefits from your ALC training? Guide the group to produce a top 10 list of significant benefits.

49. What are the 3 greatest ALC-related benefits to your subordinates? Guide the group to produce a top 7 list of significant benefits.

50. What are the 3 greatest ALC-related benefits to your platoon/company? Guide the group to produce a top 5 list of significant benefits.

51. If you were king for a day, how would you change things to improve the benefits from ALC training? Guide the group to produce a prioritized list of noteworthy ideas. Consider:
- **Benefits to individual squad leaders**
- **Benefits to squad members**
- **Benefits at echelons above squad**

Ideas for Improving the ALC Program

52. How would you strengthen the ALC program? Consider:
- **Organization and duration**
- **Student ownership**
- **Sufficiency of the contents**
- **Currency of the contents**
- **Relevance to squad leader job performance**
- **Diagnostics and remediation (before or during the course)**
- **Training methods (e.g., distributed learning, outcomes-based training)**
- **Practice opportunities (such as practical exercises)**
- **Instructional support mechanisms (e.g., mentoring, tutoring)**
- **Assessment and feedback, to include counseling**

53. How would you reduce the negative aspects of the ALC program? Consider:
- **Time away from Family**
- **Under-qualified students**
- **Irrelevant or marginal contents**
- **Ineffective training/teaching methods**
- **Shortage of practice opportunities**
- **Ineffective mentoring, coaching or counseling**
- **Insufficient feedback**
- **Other aspects**

54. How would you change the process for selecting and qualifying ALC students? Guide the group to produce a list of substantive ideas.

55. How would you change the process for revising and validating the program of instruction? Guide the group to produce a list of substantive ideas.

56. If you were king for a day, what 3 things would you do to improve the ALC program of instruction? Guide the group to produce a prioritized list of notable ideas.

End of Questions

ALC Far Transfer Evaluation

LEADER/PEER FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL – FOLLOW-ON

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATOR

- In advance, complete "Before the Session" steps in the *Data Collector's Guide*. Select about half of the questions in this protocol for targeted discussion (2 hours worth).
- At the start of the session, verify that arriving Leaders/Peers match the list by name. All group members must be supervisors or peers of graduates of the new ALC program of instruction.
- Introduce the session (see below) including its role in ARI's evaluation.
- Handout copies of the ALC POI for reference during the interview.
- Have a team member take careful notes and operate the voice recorder. Be sure to state the date, time, installation, group and facilitator at the start of recording.
- Dialogue with the participants using the questions that begin on the next page as a guide. Work through as many questions as time allows.
- Adjust to the group's interests and strengths: follow up their comments, pursue detail if something's especially important to a participant.
- Keep an eye on the clock so you can stay on schedule.
- Upon releasing the Leaders/Peers, complete "After the Session" steps in the *Data Collector's Guide*. Support note taker's compiling of session notes.
- Put your own insights and thoughts in a separate Word file as soon as possible.

INTRODUCTION OUTLINE

- This focus group = part of ARI research examining transfer of ALC learning. The research aims to help the Infantry School improve the ALC training program.
- Focus group goal = clarify ALC's operational impact.
- Time limit = 2 hours (approximate). Anybody required to leave early?
- Focus group method = collaborative brainstorming + story telling. Everyone contributes.
- Scheduled topics = flexible. Your issues/concerns are important, too.
- Your comments = confidential. We will protect your anonymity and privacy.
- Any objections to voice recording?
- Any questions before we start?

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

NOTE: Questions are organized by category. The order is flexible, and skipping around is OK.

Job Relevance of ALC Training

57. On the whole, how well does ALC training address knowledge, skills, and attributes important to the job performance of a Squad Leader? Consider:
    - Knowledge – doctrine and TTP, latest policies, Infantry initiatives, etc.
    - Skills – using weapons, communicating, troop leading, training Soldiers, etc.
    - Attributes – confidence, physical fitness, initiative, accountability, etc.

58. Which blocks of training or lessons should receive more time in Phase II? Guide the group to produce a list with recommendations for amount of increase.

59. Which blocks of training or lessons should receive less time in Phase II? Guide the group to produce a list with recommendations for amount of decrease.

60. What important topics or tasks were missing in the Phase II training? Guide the group to produce a prioritized list with reasons.

61. Which blocks of training or lessons should change their current focus?

Impact on Your Squad Leader's/Peer's Job Performance

62. Overall, how much did ALC training improve his job performance as a squad leader? Consider:
    - **Garrison duties**
    - **Field training exercises (local or regional)**
    - **Combat training center rotation**

63. Which job duties benefited him most by what he learned in ALC? Guide the group to produce a top 10 list. Consider these kinds of duties:
    - **Soldiering (performing skills/tasks, applying TTP, employing equipment, etc.)**

- **Leading (communicating, motivating, building teamwork, troop leading, etc.)**
- **Training (planning and executing events, demonstrating tasks, evaluating, etc.)**
- **Developing Soldiers (inspiring, counseling, coaching, mentoring, etc.)**
- **Thinking critically (adjusting TTP, managing time, thinking ahead, etc.)**
- **Serving as ambassador (interacting with community, instilling respect among subordinates, applying cultural awareness, etc.)**
- **Managing resources (maintaining vehicles/equipment, accounting for property, documenting maintenance activities, etc.)**
- **Improving his competencies (tactical, leadership, and technical skills)**

64. What are good examples of his job performance improving noticeably as a result of his ALC training? Guide the group to produce a list of prime examples.

65. How did his interpersonal skills improve as a result of his ALC training? Consider:
    - Listening to subordinates, peers, and superiors
    - Taking an interest in others
    - Respecting others' opinions and values
    - Staying calm when irritated, angry, or frustrated
    - Resolving conflict or hostility between others
    - Appreciating cultural diversity

66. How did his leadership attributes improve as a result of his ALC training? Consider:
    - Confidence
    - Initiative
    - Maturity
    - Commitment
    - Accountability
    - Adaptability
    - Motivation
    - Decisiveness

67. How did his attitude about being an NCO change as a result of his ALC training? Consider:
    - **Identification with Army values**
    - **Pride in being a Soldier**
    - **Belief in his importance as an NCO**
    - **Concern about Soldiers' welfare**
    - **Importance of professional behavior**
    - **Emphasis on ethical standards**
    - **Commitment to an Army career**

68. How did his ALC training impact the overall quality of his job performance? Consider the following performance aspects:

- **Effort**
- **Effectiveness**
- **Efficiency**
- **Timeliness**
- **Productivity**

69. Which areas of his job performance benefited substantially from what he learned in ALC? Consider these areas:

- **Planning and preparing for training missions**
- **Conducting and evaluating training events**
- **Managing Soldiers, equipment, and supplies**
- **Representing your unit in the military and civilian communities**
- **Improving his tactical, leadership, and technical skills**

Impact on the Squad's Performance

70. Overall, how much did his ALC training improve his squad's performance? Consider:

- **Individual and common core tasks**
- **Individual testing (APFT, weapons qualification, etc.)**
- **Collective tasks and Warrior Battle Drills**

71. Which squad performance aspects benefited most because of what he learned in ALC? Guide the group to produce a top 10 list. Consider these kinds of aspects:

- Soldiering (performing skills/tasks, executing TTP, employing equipment, etc.)
- Teaming (executing teamwork, collaborating, helping others, etc.)
- Training (participating fully, performing to standard, peer teaching, etc.)
- Citizenship (respecting others, becoming culturally aware, etc.)
- Protecting assets (maintaining vehicles/equipment, safeguarding property, etc.)

72. What are good examples where his squad's performance improved noticeably as a result of his ALC training? Guide the group to produce a list of prime examples.

73. How did his ALC training impact the overall quality of his squad's performance? Consider:

- **Effort**
- **Effectiveness**
- **Efficiency**
- **Timeliness**
- **Productivity**

74. How did the climate in his squad change as a result of his ALC training? Consider:
    - Respect for Army rules and regulations
    - Evidence of Warrior Ethos among his Soldiers
    - Morale of his squad members
    - Cohesion among the Soldiers in his squad
    - Drive for excellence, competitiveness
    - Respect for differences of opinion
    - Interpersonal friction
    - Disciplinary problems

75. How did his Soldier's attributes improve within his squad as a result of his ALC training? Consider:
    - Confidence
    - Responsibility
    - Commitment
    - Accountability
    - Adaptability
    - Motivation

76. How did his subordinates' attitudes about being a Soldier change as a result of his ALC training? Consider:
    - **Pride in being a Soldier**
    - **Belief in the importance of the military profession**
    - **Acceptance of Army values**
    - **Importance of professional behavior**
    - **Caring about each other's welfare**
    - **Emphasis on ethical standards**

77. Which areas of his squad's performance benefited substantially from what he learned in ALC? Consider these areas:
    - **Performing garrison tasks**
    - **Preparing for and executing training missions**
    - **Maintaining vehicles and equipment**
    - **Representing the unit in civilian and military communities**
    - **Maintaining safety conditions**

Impact at Platoon Level and Above

78. In what ways did his attendance at ALC contribute to training and operations at the platoon and company levels? Consider:
    - **Completion of home station training requirements**

- **Completion of CTC rotation training requirements**
- **Completion of unit certification requirements**
- **Improvement of unit training methods**
- **Updating of unit SOPs**

79. How did the climate in your platoon or company improve as a result of his ALC training? Consider:
    - Collective pride
    - Morale and esprit
    - Cohesion
    - Drive for excellence, competitiveness
    - Reenlistment rate

80. How did his ALC training produce benefits for your platoon/company? Consider:
    - More efficient use of training resources
    - Improved procedures for training and operations
    - Better unit spirit and esprit
    - Fewer personnel and equipment problems
    - Fewer disciplinary problems
    - Unit recognition from the chain of command
    - Stronger combat readiness
    - Other benefits

81. What are the 3 greatest ALC-related benefits to your platoon/company? Guide the group to produce a top 5 list of significant benefits.

82. If you were king for a day, how would you change things to improve the impact of ALC training at platoon level and above? Guide the group to produce a prioritized list of noteworthy ideas.

83. Overall, how much did his attendance at ALC enhance training and operations at the platoon and company levels?

Ideas for Improving the ALC Program

84. How would you strengthen the ALC program? Consider:
- **Organization and duration**
- **Student ownership**
- **Sufficiency of the contents**
- **Currency of the contents**
- **Relevance to squad leader job performance**
- **Diagnostics and remediation (before or during the course)**
- **Training methods (e.g., distributed learning, outcomes-based training)**

- **Practice opportunities (such as practical exercises)**
- **Instructional support mechanisms (e.g., mentoring, tutoring)**
- **Assessment and feedback, to include counseling**

85. How would you reduce the negative aspects of the ALC program? Consider:
- **Time away from Family**
- **Under-qualified students**
- **Irrelevant or marginal contents**
- **Ineffective training/teaching methods**
- **Shortage of practice opportunities**
- **Ineffective mentoring, coaching or counseling**
- **Insufficient feedback**
- **Other aspects**

86. How would you change the process for selecting and qualifying ALC students? Guide the group to produce a list of substantive ideas.

87. How would you change the process for revising and validating the program of instruction? Guide the group to produce a list of substantive ideas.

88. If you were king for a day, what 3 things would you do to improve the ALC program of instruction? Guide the group to produce a prioritized list of notable ideas.

End of Questions