

Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES)

Have you heard of or used DANTES? It stands for the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support. Let's talk about this program and how it can benefit you.

DANTES has traditional and non-traditional education opportunities. They offer several different programs such as:

- Certification Programs
- Counselor Support Programs
- Distance Learning Programs
- Tuition Assistance Programs
- Examination Programs
- Higher Education Programs
- Reserve Component Programs
- Troops to Teachers
- Scholarships for Severely Injured Service Members

DANTES is the home of the College Level Examination Program, also known as CLEP and the Service Member Opportunity College or SOC.

CLEP provides students of any age with the opportunity to demonstrate college-level achievement through a program of exams in undergraduate college courses. There are 2,900 colleges that grant credit and/or advanced standing for CLEP exams.

By taking one or more CLEP exams, students can get college credit for what they already know, which saves tuition dollars and time. CLEP helps satisfy a proficiency requirement.

SOC was created in 1972 to provide educational opportunities to Service members, who, because they frequently moved from place to place, had trouble completing college degrees. Today SOC is a consortium of more than 1800 colleges and universities that provides educational opportunities for Service members and their families. The contract is managed for DoD by the DANTES program.

The process for this is interested military students first enroll into an associate, bachelor, or graduate-level degree program at a participating school campus, their military installation, or at armories within the United States and overseas. SOC coordinates associate and bachelor's degrees in a variety of curriculum areas for the Army (SOCAD), Navy (SOCNAV), Marine Corps (SOCMAR), and Coast Guard (SOCCOAST). These degree programs are offered by colleges and universities and are accessible to Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard installations worldwide. Within each curriculum or degree network, member colleges agree to accept each other's credits in transfer. If service members and their family members are in isolated locations, they won't be left out. They can take courses via "distance learning" methods using the Internet, correspondence, computer, or video.

The last item I want to discuss is the DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSSTs) program. This is an extensive series of examinations in college subjects that are comparable to the final or end-of-course examinations in undergraduate courses. The American Council on Education, or ACE, recommends 3 semester hours of credit per test. DANTES funds DSST testing for eligible Service members and personnel at DANTES military test centers.