July 2014| Edition 18

SECTION 1: Leadership

Welcome to Edition Eighteen of the DL STAR!

Teammates,

As we begin this month of July, I would like to wish everyone a safe and enjoyable summer season. It is an appropriate time to reflect on our Soldiers and Civilians and their tremendous contributions to our nation.

We at the TCM TADLP have been steadily moving to modernize and improve the accessibility and functionality of our DL products and services. As a result we look forward to sharing this effort with the DL community as it progresses. Some of the notable activities include: establishing a TCM for Mobile with appropriate governance processes; the development of a TRADOC mobile application portal; the establishment of a baseline wireless infrastructure, in coordination with other agencies,

to create wireless campuses at the TRADOC centers and schools; the fielding of ALMS 4.0 in the coming months; adaptation and implementation of an Adaptive Learning Strategy, which is learner-centric and accounts for the learners' experience and prior knowledge, tailoring learning content to what the learner actually requires; and finally, the improved TADLP website.

We will provide frequent updates on the progress and status of these events as they continue to evolve.

In this edition we will take a look at how Ordnance School is applying the learner-centered principles of the Army Learning Model (ALM).

We then ask if the Army is truly ready for adaptive learning. Adaptive learning tailors the content to the needs of the learner, which is also in alignment with the ALM.

The last article, titled "The Emergency Operations Center Development Tool" shows how this tool was created, and TCM TADLP's role in this process.

We end this edition with a Book Review that discusses the need to effectively engage the online learner and, using a rubric, shows what that actually "looks like."

As always, if you have any questions, opinions, or articles you would like to share with the community, please feel free to contact us at:

usarmy.jble.tradoc.mbx.atsc-tcm-tadlp@mail.mil.

We are proud to serve and support!

Helen A. Remily
TRADOC Capability Manager
The Army Distributed Learning Program

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SECTION 2: Training Development

Army Learning Model 2015 Takes Shape at Ordnance School

By T. Anthony Bell
Fort Lee, VA

This article shows the paradigm shift that is occurring as a result of the Army Learning Model's focus on learner-centric approaches.

FORT LEE, Va. (June 6, 2014) -- The Army's schoolhouse learning model is evolving.

Fading are images of instructors standing at podiums and distributing information via computer slideshows, practices that emphasize muscle memory as the chief means to learning, and classrooms bound by walls.

Emerging is a new learning environment that's dynamic and interactive. Called the Army Learning Model 2015, known as ALM 2015, it leverages technology, defines a learning continuum, and describes a shared responsibility for learning among the individual Soldier and the institutional and operational components.

Photo Credit: T. Anthony Bell
Pvt. Steven Chumney and Pvt. Johnny Deal work to adjust the video control circuit card on the Basic Sight Assembly of a Bradley Fighting Vehicle during a Land Combat and Electronics Missile Systems Repairer Course hands-on session. The course is one of thee military occupational courses taught by the Ordnance School's Land Combat Division at Fort Lee, Va.

ALM 2015 is scheduled to be in full effect by October, but has rapidly taken shape at the Ordnance School's Armament and Electronics Maintenance Training Department. Its Land Combat Division, or LCD, is one of several within the schoolhouse that has implemented changes to its curriculum and training processes to satisfy the requirements of ALM 2015.

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Benjamin Lugo, chief of LCD, said ALM is more suited to how Soldiers learn today, and is far removed from the times when instructor-centric lectures dominated the learning environment.

"I think the Army Learning Model 2015 addresses the need to modify the Army's outdated learning systems, which were instructor-centered and throughput-oriented, to one that focuses on the individual student and is relevant to this generation of learners," he said.

LCD is responsible for training Soldiers in the military occupational specialties of land combat and electronics missile systems repair (20 weeks); Avenger systems repair (17 weeks); and Multiple Launch Rocket System repair (24 weeks). The courses are measurably technical, involving electronics to a large degree, and the operation of various pieces of equipment. Lugo said ALM was the appropriate means to unlock LCD's potential in using scenario-based, hands-on training as a primary teaching tool.

"ALM is a learner-centric methodology requiring students to engage with the equipment," he said. "The learning is relevant and students learn through process of discovery. So much of our equipment in terms of diagnosis and fault isolation lends itself to ALM 2015 and skills-based training."

Skills-based training is a learning strategy that emphasizes critical thinking skills. It supports several ALM tenets.

From the beginning of the courses to the end, LCD students are exposed to the equipment they will use in the field, said Staff Sgt. John Truss, the LCD non-commissioned officer in charge. That exposure at some point moves to problem-solving scenarios that puts the learning impetus on students.

"We give them a piece of equipment and tell them it's broken; now go out there, figure out what wrong with it and fix it," said Truss, noting students were not previously provided a considerable level of access to equipment during the courses. He said he has seen their competency level increase within the past year due to the changes.

"The students have a more comprehensive understanding of the instruction," he said. "Before it was a picture -- here's the association; now it's hands-on. A Soldier can now operate, function and troubleshoot better as it relates to the equipment."

In addition to the use of scenario-based instructional methods that empower the students to learn, LCD also has tackled the ALM tenets of lifelong learning, technology integration and trade certification. Most notable are their efforts in technology. In that area, it has had a hand in developing the Interactive Multimedia Instruction system.

"We had our higher headquarters build an interactive system on the computers," said Truss. "The students use laptops equipped with software that breaks down the individual components using exploded views."

LCD also uses simulation systems and Blackboard, a computer-based student assessment.

In the credentialing arena, students undergoing training in LCD are offered trade certifications even though the military occupational specialties taught there have no civilian equivalents. The certifications, related to the basic electronics portion of the course, can be completed prior to graduation. They are administered by the Electronic Technicians Association.

While LCD has undergone many changes under ALM, Lugo said the implementation has been a varied experience.

“Change has come quickly in some areas and is more subtle in other areas," he said. "We eliminated all paper-based assessments and converted to computer-based assessments through the use of Blackboard (an online classroom portal). IMI conversion is a process, and we have been back and forth to the 'drawing board' more than once."

Are the changes producing better students? Truss said the training has come a long way since he was a young Soldier and ALM is a major enhancement that will improve how Soldiers learn.

"It's a really good thing because I think we're sending Soldiers out to the units better prepared, no matter what type of units to which they are assigned," he said, noting LCD Soldiers are often sent to units with varied pieces of equipment.

Looking to the future, Lugo said LCD will continue its efforts to implement ALM. They include YouTube videos that provide Soldiers the "opportunity to learn at their point of need and not be bound by a brick and mortar institution." ☙

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Adaptive Learning: Is the Army Ready?

By Dr. Peggy Kenyon
Office of the TCM TADLP
Content Acquisition and Management

Just ask for a definition of adaptive learning and you are likely to hear many different perspectives. These range from personalization of the learning experience, the use of technology to assist in the learning experience, and finally the use of customized programs that adjust to a student's demonstrated mastery of the material. One thing all agree on is that there is no one definition. Adam Newman of the firm Education Growth Advisors (EGA) defined personalized learning as a "pedagogical method or process that draws on observation to inform tailored student educational interventions designed to increase the likelihood of learner success." He noted that personalized learning has had a place in the classroom for decades without technology to support it. If extra attention was needed for a student struggling in a subject, the teacher would assign a mentor or extra chapters to read. He further described a continuum of instructional models and noted adaptive learning as just one of a myriad number that enabled personalization (Waters, 2014).

In their white paper "Learning to Adapt," the EGA researchers further defined adaptive learning as a personalized model that uses a data-driven, non-linear approach to instruction and remediation. This approach could adjust content and offer up resources based on the learner's performance or needs at a specific time.

One example to the adaptive learning model is assessment driven. In this model the student is presented with an assessment based on learning objectives from the course. The technology dynamically assigns content based on the student's performance in the assessment. If an objective is successfully passed then the student is credited against that objective, if failed then the student is forced to take the content associated with that objective.

A second example is facilitator driven in which the instructor can link content based on a student's profile usually through a dashboard. These examples can be used exclusively or in combination.

The Army Learning Model

The definition as outlined in the TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-2 (20 January 2011) clearly sets out the expectations of Army leadership. The continuous adaptive learning model

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The U.S. Army Learning Concept for 2015

(CALM) was to engage learners in a career-long continuum of learning which was sustained by adaptive support systems and was central to the Army's Learning Concept for 2015. The CALM has since become known as the Army Learning Model (ALM) with an emphasis on a learner centric environment that, 1) enables career long learning and sustained adaption and, 2) supports adaptive development and delivery systems.

Much has been written about the concept and much has been speculated about exactly what this new model for learning really is and how it can be implemented. One key component to implementation of the model is the concept of granular content. This concept isn't new and has been defined in terms of the building blocks of learning. The ALC 2015 used the term digitized learning content and described the COEs and schools as "Army factories" that could rapidly produce and maintain them. Other research speaks to reusable content objects or learning content objects, all describing small digital objects suitable for rapid development, ease of maintenance and delivery. The team at the TRADOC Capability Manager for The Army Distributed Learning Program (TCM TADLP) began briefing the concept as early as 2006 and referred to the small objects as "chunked."

Chunked Content and Adaptive Learning

It was clear to the TCM team that reuse of content would only be possible if the content was small enough to make reuse possible but there was more. Smaller chunks of content had some cognitive and technical benefits as well.

Miller (1956) defined chunking and the limited capacity of short term memory to retain learning new material. The more complex the material the more granular it should be. His theory became part of subsequent work on memory by other researchers. It also became part of theories on cognitive load. Sweller (1994) addressed schemas as an organization of content to facilitate learning and used the concept of chunks as a type of schema. He posited this type of organization as a method to reduce cognitive load.

Technical benefits of smaller chunks of content come from efficient delivery using our learning management systems. The presentation of smaller chunks of content provided the learner with more control but also provided the Army Learning Management System (ALMS) a chance to complete the training record and

offer up the rest of the material, a process known as “roll up.” It also allows the ALMS to do all the heavy lifting associated with course management.

Implementing this new strategy for building content was part of the Combined Arms Products for Distributed Learning (CAPDL). While the previous contract emphasized building courseware, this new contract provided for building reusable content objects. Some got it right away but others took a while. After two years into the five year contract, we are finally ready to begin implementation a more adaptive approach to learning.

Emphasize the Learner Centric Environment

Enable Career Long Learning and Sustained Adaption

Many adult learners (Knowles, 1984) come to the military with a myriad of life experiences and previous education. They have accumulated these skills through self direction and a sense of responsibility for their own fate. Career long learning recognizes the personal pursuit of knowledge for personal or professional reasons. Learning is not just something that happens in the classroom but is a culmination of life, work, and school. Nothing is more frustrating to the adult learner than a system that fails to acknowledge and ultimately value the results of career long learning.

With the assessment driven approach, the ALMS can assess and credit acquired knowledge, but what if the skill needs to be shown. Using the facilitator driven approach, the learner may be required to demonstrate mastery of a skill to receive credit for a topic. This is useful in the case of previously learned job or work experience. The learner can demonstrate the skill to the Unit Training Manager and be awarded credit in the ALMS by that same manager.

Inherent in the concept of career long learning is intrinsic motivation. The learner who can find value in the process of learning will be self directed and seek continued self improvement. But often even the intrinsically motivated learner needs outside forces to inspire or direct. For example, a student may be personally motivated to study art with or without an expectation of professional recognition or monetary gain but would be extrinsically motivated to study math with expectations of both. In this way both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation play an important part in the career long learning and the Army Learning Model.

Adaptive Development and Delivery

With content properly chunked at the topic level (i.e. lesson, terminal learning objective) course managers can use and reuse topics as needed to structure and create courses, support classroom teaching, or repurpose to support mobile learning. In the case of content structured as a course, the learner would still register but instead of lesson numbers and titles they would see a list of topics cataloged in the ALMS with appropriate numbers and titles (Figure 1):

OSDP 101: Army Leadership Doctrine
OSDP 102: Army Leadership Attributes
OSDP 103: Army Leadership Competencies
OSDP 104: Military Justice for Leaders
OSDP 105: Resiliency for Mid-Grade Leaders
OSDP 106: Operational Contract Support
OSDP 107: Property Management in the Contemporary Operating Environment
OSDP 108: Provide Support to Unit Maintenance Operations
LE 106: Commander's Programs
OSDP 109: Culture and Its Impact on Military Operations

Figure 1—List of topics that make up a course

Using the assessment driven approach, the topics can be aligned with test questions that provide an opportunity for the learner to test out of the content before taking the course. The assessment is the first offering after registering for a course. A diagram of the process would look something like one depicted in Figure 2.

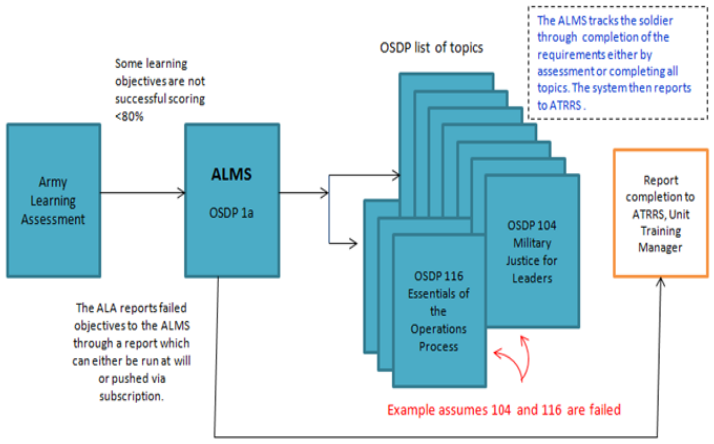

Figure 2 - Diagram of relationship of pre-assessment to topics

Credit is awarded for each topic in which the learner demonstrates mastery in the assessment while the ALMS manages credit for the whole course until all topics are successfully completed. If the course is ATRRS managed, it would report only when all topics are complete. It would look something like this in the ALMS record (Figure 3):

Required Topics (assigned)	Held Topics (acquired skills)	"Gap"
OSDP 101	OSDP 101	
OSDP 102	OSDP 102	
OSDP 103	OSDP 103	
OSDP 104		OSDP 104
OSDP 105	OSDP 105	
OSDP 106	OSDP 106	
OSDP 107	OSDP 107	
OSDP 116		OSDP 116

Figure 3—Example of a detailed training record

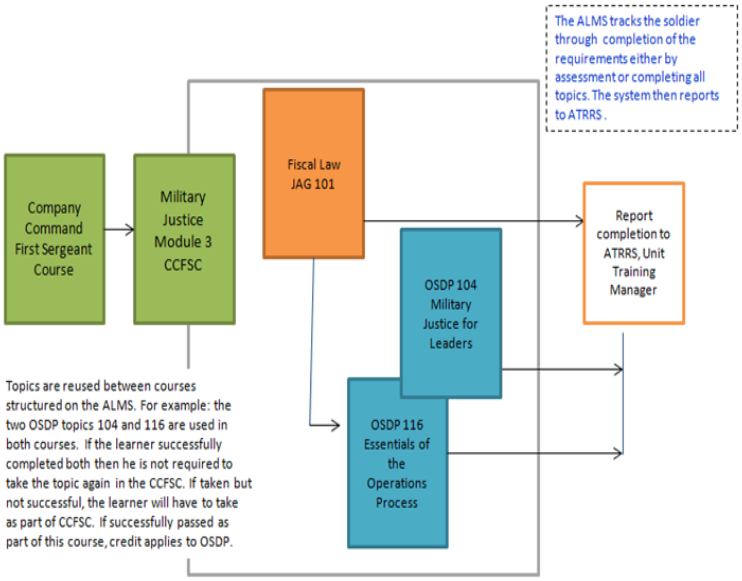

Figure 4—Topics reused in different course

The two topics that have not been completed are held in the learners' record. Because the topics can be reused in different courses, the learner may actually be presented with the same topics in another course (Figure 4).

In this example, the ALMS tracks content at this granular level and can recognize the same topic number in both courses. If the learner completes the topics in one course, credit is granted in both courses. In other words, the learner only has to take the content once. Another benefit to using the full capabilities of the ALMS and of building content at this level is the concept of equivalences. A course manager may determine one topic to be equivalent to another. These can be mapped together so the learner only has to complete

Ease of Maintenance and Updates

In addition to the benefits to the learner, this adaptive strategy offers benefits to the training and education developer. The topics can be easily updated as changes occur in doctrine or policy and using the ALMS, a Unit Training Manager can query the system to see who within their group needs to be updated with the new content. This can be done by assigning individuals or the whole group to the new training topics.

For topics that require sequence can be managed by the ALMS so important progression through content is enforced. This means the instructional designer or developer defines the appropriate level of content for each topic as well as the performance required to demonstrate mastery.

As content ages learning gaps will evolve. The ALMS can assist by tracking the date topics were completed and report that information in a by request report initiated by the training manager. For learning material mastered as an E4 but not required on the job for a few years, the training manager may assign the topic again to revalidate mastery.

While more thought and planning is required of the training developer up front in this process, there are many benefits long term.

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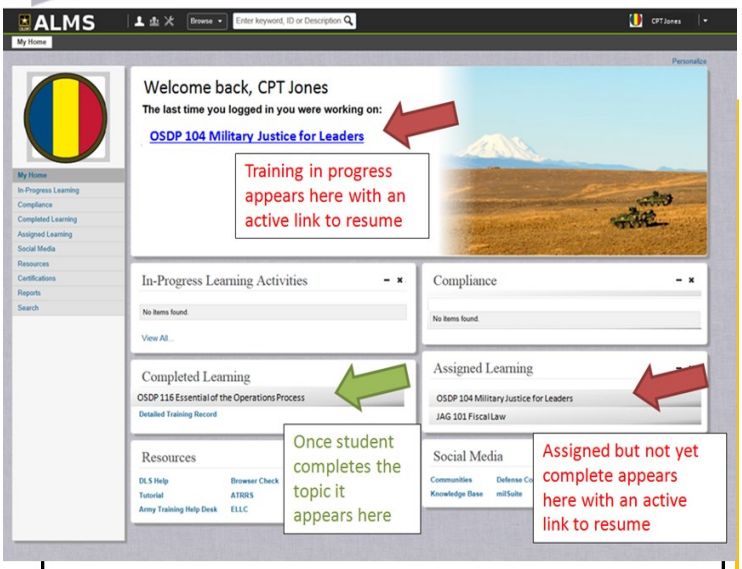

The New Army Learning Management System

Adaptive delivery requires a learning management system that can offer all the capabilities described in this article. The TCM team has been working to define requirements for these capabilities for the last year for an out of cycle improvement to the ALMS. This new ALMS is on track go live on October 1, 2014.

Is the Army Ready for Adaptive Learning

There has been much written and planned for the implementation of the Army Learning Model. At its foundation is this concept of adaptive development and delivery and support to career long learning. We have an opportunity to move closer to making this a reality but there are pros and cons to evaluate.

The Pros

- As more DL content is "chunked" by topic, the learner will receive credit at that level and not be required to repeat training if the topic appears in another course.
- Unit training managers will be assigned permission to mark a "topic" as mastered by demonstration of the skill and the student will receive credit.
- Training developers have greater flexibility because content is updated at the topic level saving costs and time.
- Each topic is developed by authentic proponent of the content and shared with others through TDC.

The Cons

- This strategy will require the use of the Training Development Capability for Distributed Learning (DL). While currently the capability used for all resident training, the system was not developed to handle requirements for DL or mobile learning.
- There is more planning required of course managers/training managers, no more "fire and forget" for DL. In the past DL was primarily asynchronous and did not require course managers.
- Training managers will need to be nominated or vetted as the ability to award credit has cheating implications.

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Summary

In 2011, General Martin Dempsey stated the Army Learning Concept 2015

"… seeks to improve our learning model by leveraging technology without sacrificing standards so we can provide credible, rigorous, and relevant training and education for our force of combat seasoned Soldiers and leaders. It argues that we must establish a continuum of learning from the time Soldiers are accessed until the time they retire. It makes clear that the responsibility for developing Soldiers in this learning continuum is a shared responsibility among the institutional schoolhouse, tactical units, and the individuals themselves."

I think we are ready for the challenge. ☙

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The Emergency Operations Center Development Tool

by James A. Banaski, Jr., MS, MEP, CEM, Lise Martel, PhD, M.Ed, MPH, CEM, Meredith A. Jansen
U.S. Army Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear School

Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs), by facilitating and coordinating rapid detection and response to public health emergencies, play an important role in protecting the public's health and ensuring global health security. An EOC Development Tool is being developed as a CD-ROM based repository of information for Ministries of Health interested in developing an EOC. The EOC Development Tool will contain a series of presentations, documents, references, and tools organized under eight guiding questions. Furthermore, the EOC Development Tool will be able to be easily augmented and adapted for use in different languages, countries, and contexts. The EOC Development Tool will be piloted with the Ministry of Health of Iraq and will be available in English and Arabic by the end of 2014.

Background

Traditionally, an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has been defined as the central location from which interagency coordination and

The U.S. government and the World Health Organization promote the development of public health EOCs to coordinate the flow of information and data within and between countries during emergencies. The recently launched Global Health Security Agenda of the United States aims to support thirty countries in the development of a public health EOC with "trained, functioning, multi-sectoral rapid response teams and 'real-time' bio-surveillance laboratory networks and information systems, and trained EOC staff capable of activating a coordinated emergency response within 120 minutes of the identification of a public health emergency" (US DHHS, 2014). The World Health Organization International Health Regulations proposes the development of an "interconnected global network of EOCs and multi-sectoral response to biological incidents." The Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention support works toward meeting the objectives of the Global Health Security Agenda and the goals of the World Health Organization International Health Regulations.

In 2013, the Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention provided technical assistance (e.g., assessments, trainings, plan development, tabletop exercises, functional exercises, consultations) for the development of EOCs in several countries including India, Guatemala, Jordan, China, Thailand, Bangladesh, South Africa, Vietnam, and Uganda. Much of this assistance has been provided in-country.

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As more countries are involved with the Global Health Security Agenda, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has increasingly been asked to provide technical assistance for partners on basic public health EOC concepts, evaluating their current public health emergency management systems capacity, and developing needs assessment for public health EOCs.

As the requests for technical assistance have grown, challenges in providing the requested assistance have emerged. For example, some countries' complex emergency status, security, travel restrictions for U.S. citizens, visa application timeline, foreign language proficiency, or Ministry of Health staff availability, make it difficult for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention staff to provide in-country assistance. Finally, technical assistance for EOC development usually requires overseas travel and extended in-country stays which are budget dependent.

As of yet, funds have not been specifically allocated for technical assistance for EOC development. Many of the challenges faced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in providing assistance for the development of public health EOCs internationally is exemplified by a request for assistance from the Ministry of Health of Iraq.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention was requested to repeatedly travel to Iraq to provide training and assist the Ministry of Health in the establishment of an EOC. Instead, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's International Emergency Preparedness Team proposed the development of a portable and user-friendly EOC assistance tool that could be used by the Ministry of Health to explore the possibility of developing its own public health EOC and to work towards meeting its International Health Regulations goals.

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The EOC Development Tool is being developed through a collaborative effort between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's International Emergency Preparedness Team in the Center for Global Health's Division of Global Health Protection, the U.S. Department of State's Biosecurity Engagement Program, the U.S. Army Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear School, The Army Distributed Learning Program, and the Ministry of Health of Iraq. The International Emergency Preparedness Team developed and organized the content. Biosecurity Engagement Program funded the project, and through its Iraq-based staff ensures adequate communication and coordination with the Ministry of Health. The U.S. Army Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear School and The Army Distributed Learning Program are providing instructional designers. The Army Distributed Learning Program's contract team for the Enterprise Content Development Capability, D2 TEAM-Sim, provided linguists who translated the resources into Arabic. The Ministry of Health of Iraq is vetting the appropriateness of materials for the country context and will pilot the final product.

Enterprise Content Development Capability, powered by Distributed Instruction Framework, or DIF, was selected as the development tool because of its ease of use, and the availability of a Web-based platform.

Figure 1.
Opening screen of the EOC Development Tool

The Enterprise Content Development Capability is a flexible tool that enables exporting of information in a variety of formats for potential use across multiple platforms such as CD-ROMs, web-based, flash drives, or DVDs. Open-source formats are selected for linked documents and presentations. This makes it possible for users to utilize the programs currently available on their computer (e.g., Microsoft Word®, Microsoft PowerPoint®, Adobe Acrobat®) to access files. Through an agreement with The Army Distributed Learning Program, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Army Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear School personnel received training on the Enterprise Content Development Capability and assistance in building a series of page

Development of EDT

The International Emergency Preparedness Team conducted an extensive literature review of the existing domestic and international EOC materials.

Some of the most useful sources of information were:

1) the Federal Emergency Management Agency EOC Management and Operations Course (FEMA, 2012)
2) the Federal Emergency Management Agency EOC Design Guide (FEMA, 2007)
3) the World Health Organization Emergency Response Framework (WHO, 2013)
4) the American Society for Testing and Material International Standard Guide for EOC Development (ASTM, 2010)
5) the United Nations Operational Guidance for Coordinated Assessments in Humanitarian Crisis (IASC, 20012)
6) and documents developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's subject matter experts. Documents were organized by topics and revised by the International Emergency Preparedness Team.

Materials that could be adapted to the international context were selected. Country-specific information and jargon was removed. In some cases, both U.S. domestic and international related programs and ideas were kept and contrasted. For example, both the U.S. based Incident Command System information and the United Nations Cluster System were included as example of management structures.

A conceptual architecture was developed to represent the many components of an EOC. The development of an EOC and, consequently, the organization of the EOC Development Tool was organized around eight guiding questions:

1) What is an EOC and why do we need one?
2) How do we structure and organize our EOC?
3) How do we equip our EOC?
4) How do we design our EOC?
5) How do we activate our EOC?
6) How do we operate our EOC?
7) How do we deactivate our EOC?
8) How do we keep our staff and the EOC prepared?

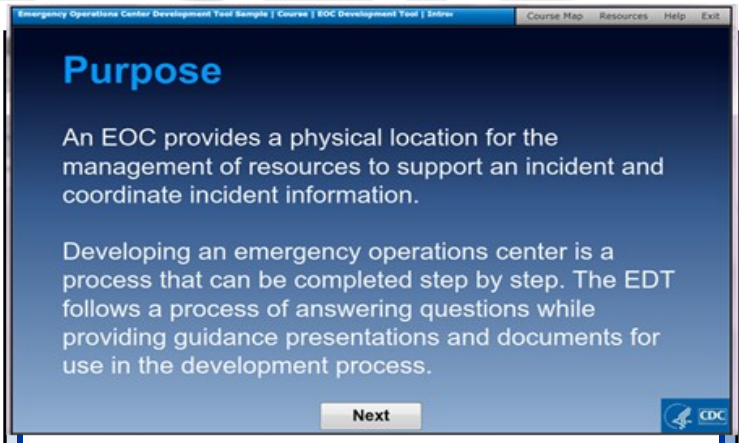

Figure 2. English language narration screen.

U.S. Army Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear School worked with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention personnel to input EOC Development Tool content into the Enterprise Content Development Capability. The information is presented according to the following product flow. Each page is narrated in the chosen language, i.e., English or Arabic (Figure 2.). The user can navigate from one page to the other using arrows at the bottom of each screen.

The EOC Development Tool first asks users to choose the country in which they are operating. Currently, the only two choices are the U.S. and Iraq. Once users have selected a country, they are presented with a series of presentations, documents, and interactive tools in either English or Arabic.

On the first interaction, the tool guides users sequentially through each of the eight questions. Each of the slides of the main eight questions displays icons for presentations, documents, and tools. Once the user has completed a rapid overview of all eight pages, they can freely access information in any order through the Table of Contents.

Discussion

The EOC Development Tool will be the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's newest tool for sharing EOC expertise more efficiently and with a broader group of international partners. The tool will assist countries in their exploration of the public health EOC concept and increase Center for Disease Control and Prevention's capacity to meet a growing demand for assistance. The EOC Development Tool provides an extensive repository of information especially tailored for Ministries of Health considering using EOCs as an emergency management tool. In the short term, EOC Development Tool will serve as a way to exchange information between emergency management subject matter experts of U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Ministry of Health of Iraq. In the longer term, the tool's flexible architecture will make it possible to expand to other countries and languages. Its CD-ROM with open source formats offer great flexibility for countries with unreliable or slow internet access.

The CD-ROM version will allow users to download the presentations, documents,

and tools on their computer and further tailor the content for specific country needs. The future adaptability of the tool is especially important since using EOCs for public health emergency management is a relatively new concept with limited documentation on its use. As new research emerges, it is anticipated that presentations, references, and other documents will be added and modified. The hope is that the EOC Development Tool will achieve its goal of helping the international community in attaining its Global Health Security Agenda and International Health Regulation goals to protect the health and lives of our global community.

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Book Review

by Linda Summerlin
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Title: *Continuing to Engage the Online Learner: More Activities and Resources for Creative Instruction,* 2012 by Rita-Marie Conrad and J. Ana Donaldson.

This review looks at Chapter 4 and how rubrics are used in online collaborative courses.

Rubrics are (in our case) scoring standards. Scoring rubrics are used to delineate consistent criteria for grading.

Rubrics are important to the U.S. Army (and should be used as an online collaborative assessment tool) because the Army Learning Model (ALM) wants critical thinkers.

EXAMPLE: A Threaded Discussion Rubric

Rubrics "force" users to think critically by taking something "subjective" (i.e. grading a peer's assignment), applying rubric criteria, and synthesizing a judgment/determination of grade, on a given assignment. Higher-order thinking skills (Bloom's) are used during this determination process.

Because its focus is to measure a stated objective (performance, behavior, or quality) detailed criteria are used (think of the Army checklists for "go" "no-go" criteria). The Army has been using rubrics for years – they may not have been called rubrics, but they are scoring standards that have been used for visual observations of a Soldier's ability. We need to take those scoring standards to the online learning environment, in line with today's academic best practices. Many people cringe at the thought of having students "grade" each other's work, however, using a strong rubric not only helps manage expectations and determine grades, the students can see what "right" looks like.

0	1	2	3	4	5
No post submitted.	Post does not address question or activity.	Post addresses question or activity but is too brief.	Post addresses question or activity but lacks substantive or supporting information.	Post addresses question or activity **and** gives substantive or supporting information.	Post addresses question or activity, gives substantive or supporting information and provides personal insight or reflection.

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