

## **Funded Graduate Education: FAQs**

### **What is it?**

Each year 11 chaplains are selected for a nine month program of graduate education at an approved seminary or graduate school. That number can vary, depending on the needs of the Navy and available funding.

### **What does the Navy pay?**

The Navy pays tuition, \$500 toward books, and the application fee for three schools. The student's BAH, plus full pay and allowances, takes care of personal and family costs. Basically, it is a sabbatical year of free schooling.

### **What is an "approved" school?**

Schools are selected based on tuition costs that are within the Navy's budget, full accreditation, and the ability to graduate the qualified chaplain in a nine month master's degree program. Approval is not based on faith group identity, geography or other external factors.

### **Who gets to go?**

The records of all 04's, including 04 selectees, are reviewed for consideration. Factors playing into selection include academic performance in college and seminary and active duty ministry reflected in fitness reports. PRDs do not eliminate any chaplain from consideration.

### **Can I choose my course of study?**

Yes, no and maybe. Selectees are asked to list their preferences for fields of study within the p-coded categories, such as homiletics, pastoral care, and ethics. Every effort is made to accommodate those preferences, consistent with the number of p-coded billets in each field that will require filling the following year.

### **Won't a 'Non-Observed' fitrep hurt my chances for promotion?**

No. The fact of selection is a vote of confidence in the chaplain's ability. Many selection board precepts now highlight graduate education as a plus in discerning those best qualified for promotion.

### **I want to go a seminary not on the list. Can I?**

Don't count on it. The approved schools have a track record of positive relationships with chaplains and an understanding of the unique demands placed on the chaplain's time, such as the absolute limit of 9 months to complete study.

### **Can I finish my D.Min. during the year?**

Only on your own time and nickel. The only degree authorized for selectees by the Navy program is a master's degree.

### **If I am selected and turn it down, will I go to Hell?**

If you go to hell, that won't be the reason. Declining acceptance into the program does not compromise your professional standing in any way.

### **Where is more information?**

The Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, is the site for the Navy's CIVINS program for graduate education in civilian settings. Follow the links for more general information. Also, feel free to contact the Chaplain's Office at NPS with questions or comments to talk details with Chaplain Phillips or Chaplain Mark Smith, at DSN 878-2241/2.