

OPERATIONS SPECIALIST A SCHOOL PILOTS NEW PROGRAM

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VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. - The Operations Specialist (OS) A school took a new approach to training June 21, 2004, with the introduction of a blended learning curriculum. The pilot program, currently being tested by 50 non rated Sailors, is designed to allow students to progress through the course at their own pace, and reduce the costs associated with training by reducing the overall time to train.

With the new curriculum design, students complete interactive, computer based modules at their own pace, with facilitator interaction, and then take self assessment tests to identify areas requiring further study or review. The program incorporates streaming video, photos, graphs, and questions and answers in combination with a hands on lab projects.

“This style of learning helps us a great deal, allowing us to work at our own pace. The best parts are the self assessment tests. They highlight our strong points and weak points and allow us to go back and study longer on the weak ones,” said OS A school pilot student Demetrius Thomas. “It allows you to build your confidence in what you have learned before moving on to the post test.”

Traditionally, the course was delivered over 10 weeks, but with the new curriculum, school leaders expect to reduce that time to train by at least a couple weeks because self learners can progress through the material without being tied into the rest of the class. This gives instructors more time to focus on those students who learn best through instructor interaction.

“This is an excellent opportunity to incorporate the science of learning and use state of the art training technology and learning methodologies to better prepare apprentice level OSs for their duties in the Combat Information Centers and Combat Direction Centers in the Fleet,” said OS A school Training Department Head Cmdr. Gerald Roxbury. “This is all about giving our Sailors the tools and opportunities to excel; to put the right Sailors in the right jobs, with the right training.”

To learn more about the new Operation Specialist A school, log onto the Center for Surface Combat Systems page on Navy Knowledge Online at www.nko.navy.mil