



CASE STUDY: Algonquin College and Canadian Forces collaborate to expand organizational capacity

The need

The Canadian Forces (CF) identified an increasing demand for specialized geomatics technicians within its operations. More resources were needed to perform spatial analysis and produce the specialized maps that assist the planners and commanders who run military operations. The CF was seeking to nearly triple the annual intake of geomatics technicians. The Canadian Forces Support Training Group (CFSTG) and the School of Military Mapping (SMM) were looking to partner with a leader GIS systems and training that could accommodate the CF's unique training needs.

The solution

Algonquin College is a recognized leader in geospatial and geographic information systems (GIS) and GIS training. It had been actively teaching geomatics for many years, including surveying, photogrammetry, remote sensing and GIS. The College recently offered two- and three-year undergraduate diploma programs in GIS, and currently offers a one-year graduate program in Geographic Information Systems.

CFSTG turned to Algonquin College for assistance. Collaboratively, the organizations worked to leverage the College's GIS programs and subject matter experts and develop a two-year program exclusively for CF personnel. The program was designed to meet the Qualification Standard requirements and provide successful students with a provincially approved post-secondary community college level certificate in geomatics, leading to a provincially approved diploma in geomatics or geospatial studies.

The implementation

In the spring of 2007, the CF entered into a multi-year agreement with Algonquin College to deliver the

specialized two-year geomatics training program in partnership with SMM. The collaborative partnership combines content, expertise and delivery, and ongoing training continues to this day. Algonquin College would deliver the academic training, while the CF provided military-specific instruction unique to the CF geomatics occupation.

Algonquin College provided classrooms and an access-controlled geomatics computer laboratory with peripheral geomatics hardware and an information support network configuration that could remotely access the Department of National Defence (DND) network.

Instructors were able to incorporate practical work sessions that developed student skills for the commonly used geomatics software applications in the public/private sectors, and that were also common to CF geomatics technicians. The college's onsite accommodations were also offered to personnel who required them.

The outcome

Students in the Geomatics Technician program earn a college-approved certificate in geomatics. Algonquin College also grants a provincially approved Geomatics Technician Diplomas to students who successfully graduate from the geomatics technician training and have completed a small number of approved additional courses.

The training provided students with core geomatics skills and knowledge foundations, including geodesy, remote sensing, photogrammetry, geographic information systems, and related database manipulation. Performance-oriented training and student evaluation procedures focused on the knowledge and skills required to achieve the performance objectives detailed in the CF Qualification Standard.

ALGONQUIN COLLEGE CORPORATE TRAINING CENTRE specializes in industry-focused training solutions that equip employees with the knowledge, skills and expertise needed to succeed in their day-to-day work, to advance in their careers and to build organizational capacity.

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