FAI NEWSLETTER

FEDERAL ACQUISITION INSTITUTE

From the Acting Director

**Jeff Birch,
Acting Director, FAI**

I hope everyone is enjoying the warm weather and has plans to enjoy the summer with family and friends.

I'd like to begin by thanking Melissa Starinsky, former FAI Director, for her very strong advocacy for the acquisition workforce, building new relationships, and adding several incredibly talented acquisition professionals to the great FAI team. We wish Melissa continued success in her new position with the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services within HHS, as the Head of the Contracting Activity.

I also want to thank each of you, members of the acquisition community, for your continued commitment and support in developing a capable and qualified civilian acquisition workforce.

In the next couple of months, the FAI team will be finalizing the FAI 2021 Strategic Plan. We've begun by refining FAI's Vision and Mission statements, as shown in the figure to the right.

FAI continues to make great strides in providing tools and resources to our workforce professionals out on the front lines. One of our upcoming focus areas is to expand the availability of on-demand training, which will broaden the choices of training offerings and

modalities available to the acquisition workforce.

I look forward to the opportunity of leading the FAI team in being responsive to the needs of the acquisition workforce while also supporting senior leaders in executing government-wide acquisition workforce initiatives.

Vision
The premier institution of acquisition workforce excellence

FAI 2021

Mission
Foster an agile and qualified civilian acquisition workforce

Priorities
➢ Expand the choice in training available to the acquisition workforce
➢ Promote greater alignment of acquisition policy and practice
➢ Move from certification to qualification
➢ Pursue efficiencies in mission execution

In This Issue:

PREPARING TODAY'S WORKFORCE FOR TOMORROW'S OPPORTUNITIES

2016 CAOC Acquisition Excellence Award Winners

Team Award for Agile

The Air Force Distributed Common Ground System (DCGS) Open Architecture Risk Reduction Team

The Air Force DCGS is a worldwide, network-centric enterprise for real-time intelligence sharing. Lt. Col. Joshua Williams and his team, comprising members from the Air Force's Life Cycle Management Center, Air Force Research Laboratory, and Air Combat Command, transformed Air Force DCGS from a closed waterfall approach to an open, agile architecture in less than 44 weeks. With releases occurring on two-to four-week cycles, analysts saw a 90% increase in the time allotted to evaluate time sensitive target data and a drastic increase in the collaboration across mission sets. The agile approach aligned over 10 disjointed efforts, added 8 new IT services, and reduced costs by 67%.

Team Members: Lt. Col. Joshua Williams (center) and Wes Haga (right)
Presenter: Anne Rung, Administrator, OFPP (left)

Individual Award for Innovation

Jermaine Hector, Department of the Navy

Award Winner: Jermaine Hector (left)
Presenter: Anne Rung (right)

Jermaine Hector is a contract specialist within the Department of the Navy's Renewable Energy Program Office, and he has modernized the way the Navy procures renewable energy. He led the team that developed an innovative new procurement framework for power purchase agreements, and utilized his expertise to apply 10 USC 2922a authority to wholesale market purchases. Jermaine performed at an exemplary level while under extreme time constraints and saved the Navy at least $90 million over the life of the electricity contract.

Thank you to all who submitted nominations for this year's awards! Visit the **Acquisition Award Program Award Winners** page on FAI.gov to learn more about the CAOC Awards and previous winners.

Small Business Excellence Award for Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization

Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology

The Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization at the National Institute of Standards and Technology laid the foundation to improve the organization's culture to a partnership between procurement and program personnel. They envisioned and created an environment that will yield quality processes, superior contracts, cost savings, and satisfied customers while exceeding small business award goals.

Team Members: Jo-Lynn Davis (left) and Cecilia Royster (center)
Presenter: Anne Rung (right)

Candid Conversations with Acquisition Leaders

What does it take to be a leader, an executive in the Federal AWF? FAI collaborated with a group of Federal employees participating in the Partnership for Public Service's Leadership Excellence in Acquisition Program (LEAP) to produce "Candid Conversations with Acquisition Leaders," a documentary video revealing what it takes to be a leader and an executive in the Federal AWF and which career paths and traits are conducive to reaching those ranks.

Members of the LEAP team chose top-notch executives in the Federal AWF and asked them a series of questions to gather their thoughts on the AWF and solicit their advice on how to advance through the ranks, including:

- How would you guide those looking to follow your acquisition career path?
- What are some of the major challenges you see preventing people, specifically 1102's, from moving into leadership roles?
- What are the top three leadership traits you believe are critical for a senior executive leading and overseeing the acquisition function?
- How would you like your legacy to be described?

Watch "Candid Conversations with Acquisition Leaders" in the FAI Media Library now to hear the sage wisdom of those "who've been there."

Executives Featured in "Candid Conversations with Acquisition Leaders"

Laura Auletta
Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
Executive Director for Procurement And Acquisition Workforce, Office of the Chief Procurement Officer

Cordell DeLaPena
Department of the Air Force (USAF)
Director of Program Integration, Space and Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles Air Force Base

David Gragan
Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB)
Senior Procurement Executive

Virginia Huth
General Services Administration (GSA)
Director, Office of General Services Acquisition Policy, Integrity, and Workforce

Craig Robinson
Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Associate Deputy Assistant Secretary for National Health Care Acquisitions

Melissa Starinsky (Former FAI Director)
Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
Head of the Contracting Activity (HCA) for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

Joy White
Department of the Air Force (USAF)
Executive Director, Space and Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles Air Force Base

CANDID CONVERSATIONS WITH ACQUISITION LEADERS
Check out the sage wisdom from Senior Leaders across the Federal Government!
WATCH THE VIDEO TODAY! 🐦 FAIgov

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Open Opportunities Is Expanding to Federal Acquisition!

In January 2016, FAI chartered a small group of individuals representing various agencies to explore and develop a project and implementation plan for expanding the Open Opportunities platform for the Federal acquisition workforce. The team was tasked to provide an avenue for acquisition workforce members to gain valuable career development experience that they might not otherwise obtain in their current roles.

Open Opportunities is a Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) platform, administered by GSA, that implements workforce agility through a network of skill building opportunities. The platform is available to any Federal employee, government-wide, and includes a variety of tasks and projects that allow individuals to gain more experience, contribute expertise, and connect with other innovators across government. Open Opportunities allows staff to dedicate a predetermined portion of their time, up to 20%, to a project that serves as a career development opportunity without ever having to leave their own agencies!

The FAI-charted team is piloting a program that will expand the current Open Opportunities platform to include "acquisition" opportunities. Opportunities could include things such as assisting in GSA buys, oral proposals, industry days, sole source justifications, and cost realism analysis. The idea is to provide opportunities that could benefit both the hosting organization and the individual participants. The implementation of Acquisition Open Opportunities will provide a positive impact on employee engagement, career development, and workforce agility.

On May 24, 2016, the team presented the Acquisition Open Opportunities pilot to the Chief Acquisition Officers Council (CAOC). The purpose of the presentation was to provide awareness of the new approach to training for the acquisition workforce (i.e., experiential learning opportunities).

The team requested that the CAOC help support and encourage participation by asking staff to create user accounts, empowering employees to use Open Opportunities, and setting aside acquisition projects for posting on Open Opportunities. The team has also offered their services to provide briefings to any interested agencies/offices.

What Can You Do Now?

What can you, as a member of the acquisition workforce, do to support the Acquisition Open Opportunities pilot? Here are some quick actions the FAI Open Opportunities team is encouraging you to take:

- Go to the Open Opportunities home page and create an account with your official government email address.
- Contact an FAI Open Opportunities team member if you have an opportunity that you would like to post.
- Stay tuned for new acquisition-related opportunities.

For more information about how FAI envisions this working specifically in the acquisition community, please feel free to contact any member of the FAI Open Opportunities team!

FAI Open Opportunities Team Members		
Name	Agency	Email Address
Anne Reinhold	FAI	Anne.Reinhold@gsa.gov
Rob Robinson	NRC	Richard.Robinsonii@nrc.gov
Ali Pourghassemi	HHS	Ali.Pourghassemi@hhs.gov
Stacy Greber	VA	Stacy.Greber@va.gov
James Morris	NSF	Jhmorris@nsf.gov

For more info regarding the Open Opportunities portal, such as how it is currently being used or how to post a project, contact Lisa Nelson (lisa.nelson@gsa.gov).

The Seminars Are Coming! The Seminars Are Coming!

The FAI Acquisition Seminar team was busy this spring with broadcasting two new seminars in April and June, preparing for the next one that is on tap for August, and improving the process for how Federal acquisition workforce (AWF) members register and earn Continuous Learning Points (CLPs) for viewing previous seminars.

Recent Acquisition Seminar Broadcasts

If you didn't catch our most recent broadcasts in April and June, check out these videos in the FAI Media Library to earn CLPs.

April 13, 2016: "Suspension & Debarment: What Makes a Successful Meeting?" – During an informative discussion between Suspension & Debarment Officials (SDOs) from the General Services Administration (GSA) and U.S. Air Force, viewers caught a sneak peek of what SDOs look for when they are determining a contractor's present responsibility. Then, a role play meeting between a contractor and an SDO gave participants the opportunity to learn what goes on behind the scenes of these necessarily private meetings. Last, viewers submitted questions that were answered by the GSA SDO during a live Q&A session.

"Suspension & Debarment: What Makes a Successful Meeting?" Acquisition Seminar

Want to learn more about Suspension & Debarment? Check out Bite-Sized Videos on Hot Questions in Suspension & Debarment in the FAI Media Library. Here you can view four short interviews with SDOs and professionals from across the Federal government in order to gain an advanced understanding of some of the nuances of suspension and debarment!

June 22, 2016: "Category Management and the Acquisition Gateway: The Future of Federal Acquisitions" *(Video and materials will soon be posted in the FAI Media Library, so be sure to check back often!)* – During this seminar, audience members heard how Category Management and the Acquisition Gateway are changing the way the Federal government does business and how they are better meeting the evolving needs of the acquisition community while decreasing the prices paid for goods and services.

Subject matter experts from the GSA Federal Acquisition Service (FAS) provided a wealth of information on a range of topics, addressing the current state of Category Management and the Acquisition Gateway, noting how these initiatives are supporting better acquisition solutions through data and information-based procurements, and discussing what's next for Category Management.

Viewers also had the privilege of viewing a live demonstration on how to use the Acquisition Gateway, followed by a live Q&A session with members of the GSA FAS team.

In case you missed these or any of the other previously recorded Acquisition Seminars, you can check them all out, including all related materials and resources, in the FAI Media Library.

See the next page to learn about the new, simpler process for registering in FAITAS and earning CLPs for viewing previously recorded Acquisition Seminars!

The Seminars Are Coming! (Cont'd)

Upcoming Acquisition Seminar (August 10, 2016)

On August 10, 2016, FAI will present another installment of the "Lifting the Curtain" Acquisition Seminar Series. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the American Council for Technology and Industry Advisory Council (ACT-IAC) have been presenting a series of acquisition-based discussions on select topics called "Lifting the Curtain." The purpose of these sessions is to educate both government and industry on how each "side" responds to the other during the acquisition life cycle.

The August seminar on Past Performance will offer valuable and applicable information for both government and industry acquisition professionals on the purpose, selection, and evaluation of Past Performance. A panel of subject matter experts from government and industry will unveil best practices, techniques, and "tips of the trade" about Past Performance and address questions that you have probably asked yourself at one time or another, including:

- What is the government's objective in soliciting Past Performance?
- How does industry choose the projects it wishes to present?
- Is there an issue in presenting the same Past Performance across multiple projects?
- What other sources does government use or should it use in assessing Past Performance? Is there a better way to assess Past Performance?
- Do Past Performance examples in the management and/or technical volumes have a positive effect on the evaluation?

Don't delay! Register for FCL-A-0032, class 16A, in FAITAS today, and join us on **August 10, 2016** as we lift the curtain on Past Performance!

Improved Process to Register for Previous Acquisitions Seminars and Earn CLPs

FAI is also making improvements to how you get CLP credit for watching previous seminars. The process for earning CLPs by watching previous Acquisition Seminars has, historically, been a bit cumbersome—after watching a seminar, you were required to complete a CLP Request Form through FAITAS and then submit that form to your supervisor and Acquisition Career Manager (ACM) for approval.

What if FAI made watching and earning CLPs for a previously recorded Acquisition Seminar like signing up for other online learning? That's exactly what's happening. FAI is creating online learning modules with eleven of its recorded Acquisition Seminars, and you can register for them just as you do other online learning. The new process for registering and earning CLPs is as follows:

- Every two weeks, two Acquisition Seminars will be released as courses in FAITAS;
- Course numbers will be similar to the live Acquisition Seminars, adding a "(CL)" to the end [i.e., FCL-A-0021 will appear as FCL-A-0021 (CL)];
- The same number of CLPs awarded for the live broadcast will be earned for the recorded course; and
- CLPs will be awarded following successful completion of a short quiz for each recorded Acquisition Seminar.

FCL-A-0021	LIFTNG THE CURTN: INDSTRY BID/NO-BID DECISION
FCL-A-0021 (CL)	TO BID OR NOT TO BID: INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE
FCL-A-0022 (CL)	FSSI OS3: OFFICE SUPPLIES SOLUTION
FCL-A-0023 (CL)	EEO RESPONSIBILITIES IN PROCUREMENT

Example of Course Numbers in FAITAS Course Catalog

Keep your eye out in the FAITAS course catalog for these Acquisition Seminar CLP offerings because they will be available in July 2016!
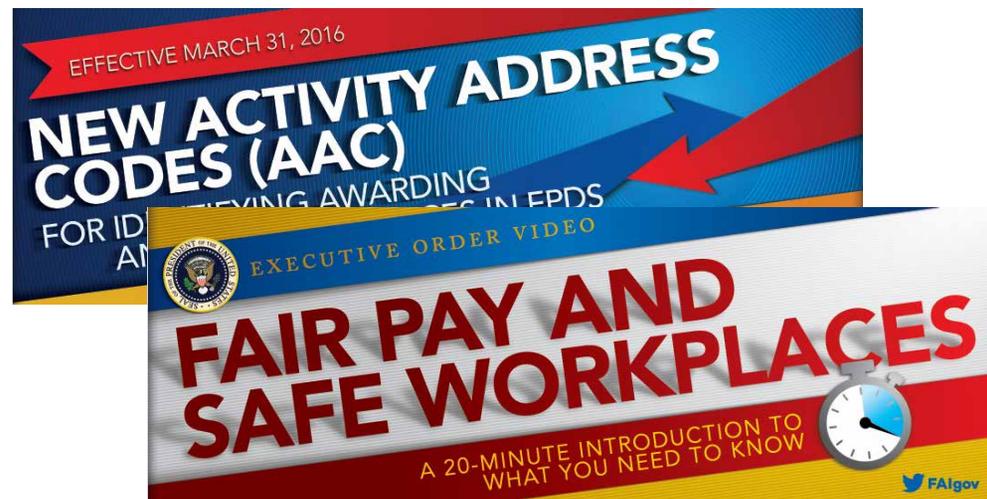
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Two NEW Videos on Emerging Acquisition Policy Issues

FAI worked at breakneck speed to produce two informational videos on emerging acquisition policy issues: (1) Activity Address Codes for Identifying Awarding and Funding Offices and (2) Executive Order 13673, Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces.

Both FAI-produced videos are available on Acquisition.gov.

New Activity Address Codes for Use in Identifying Awarding and Funding Offices

This FAI-produced video announced that effective March 31, 2016, the FAR required the use of new Activity Address Codes (AACs) to identify both awarding and funding offices for procurement awards captured in the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS). The changes seen in FPDS were to the format of these codes, per FAR 4.605, and the names of the offices, depending on an agency's implementation.

Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces E.O.: An Introduction

FAI produced this video to introduce the Federal AWF to Executive Order (E.O.) 13673, Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces, and new procedural requirements that will be phased in after regulatory changes to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) are finalized and published later in 2016.

The E.O. requires that prospective and existing Federal contractors and subcontractors disclose labor law violations and establishes how Federal agencies—namely, contracting officers working with agency labor compliance advisors—should consider labor law violations when awarding contracts or extending contracts.

In May 2015, to address the E.O.'s requirements, the Department of Labor (DOL) issued proposed guidance and the FAR Council published a proposed rule to implement the E.O.'s requirements in the FAR. The FAR Council staff is continuing to review public comments and will publish a final rule later this year.
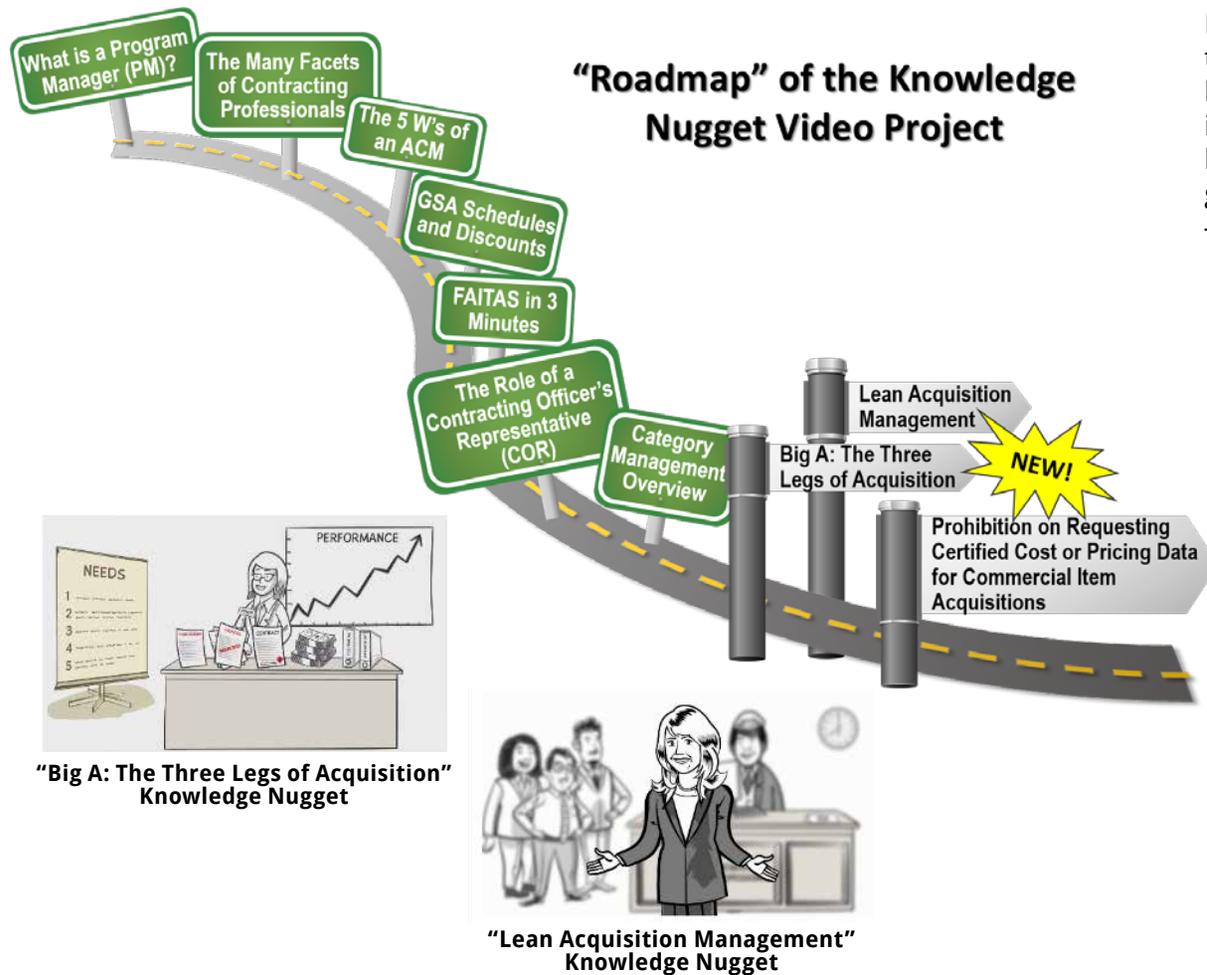
The FAR rule, when it is finalized, will address how contracting officers are to obtain disclosures from contractors on their labor violations, how to make responsibility determinations that take into account disclosed labor violations, and how to work with Agency Labor Compliance Advisors (ALCAs). The DOL guidance will work hand-in-hand with the FAR rule by addressing how ALCAs should evaluate violations, identify those that may warrant heightened attention, and provide analysis that contracting officers can use to inform their actions.

FAI, in close consultation with OMB and DOL, developed this short introductory video to explain the E.O.'s goals and requirements, including the respective roles and responsibilities of government and industry. The Federal AWF is encouraged to view this video to become acclimated to the E.O. and its provisions.

Please note that this video is not meant to take the place of training on the FAR rule and DOL guidance, which is being developed to support the needs of the workforce.

The Knowledge Nugget Project Is Complete!

"Roadmap" of the Knowledge Nugget Video Project

"Big A: The Three Legs of Acquisition" Knowledge Nugget

"Lean Acquisition Management" Knowledge Nugget

FAI is pleased to announce that it has completed all 10 videos of the Knowledge Nuggets project! As a reminder, Nuggets are quick bursts of information—less than ten minutes in length—presented in an entertaining format as a way to introduce new concepts or hot topics, answer fundamental questions, provide just-in-time guidance, or serve as a refresher on acquisition-related topics.

The latest Knowledge Nuggets that are now available include:

- "Big A: The Three Legs of Acquisition" – Learn how elements of the overall acquisition process in the Federal government encompass much more than just procuring goods and services. This larger acquisition context, referred to as "Big A," accounts for how new capabilities and their requirements are generated and vetted; how the agency contributes to their portion of the President's annual budget and allocates resources; and how projects, programs, and contracts are governed and executed.

- "Lean Acquisition Management" – Not all commonly used acquisition processes are required or rooted in law or regulation. Learn how, oftentimes, these "undocumented processes" may negatively affect acquisition processing times, contract costs, and the acquisition life cycle.

- "Prohibition on Requesting Certified Cost or Pricing Data for Commercial Item Acquisitions" – Learn how to determine the reasonableness of commercial item prices without obtaining certified cost and pricing data, and recognize the prohibition from obtaining certified cost and pricing data for commercial items.

All of the Knowledge Nugget videos can be accessed via the FAI Media Library. Be sure to check them all out today!

FAI FAC-P/PM Training Update – Classes Will Soon Be Available!

Hear Ye, Hear Ye, Read All About It!
FAI FAC-P/PM Training Goes Modular!

The FAI Program and Project Manager (P/PM) training delivery contract was recently awarded and classes will soon be available for registration in FAITAS!

FAI has been working to add clarity and simplify the process of earning the Federal Acquisition Certification for P/PM (FAC-P/PM) training requirements by developing a new "modular" approach for students to complete their training courses. Not only does this reduce confusion for students in mapping out their training plans, it also establishes a standard to ensure our P/PM training providers design their courses in alignment with the P/PM competency model. With adoption of the modular approach, agencies now have the ability to award various contracts to multiple vendors without locking students into a single vendor to complete their training classes at each level.

While the modular approach standardizes and simplifies training requirements, students still have the option of taking courses through the existing FAC-P/PM competency models (FAC-P/PM Core Competency Model and FAC-P/PM-IT Core-Plus Competency Model), per the current FAC-P/PM certification training policy, which includes a range of 80 to 120 training hours per certification level as opposed to a set number of hours.

As skilled, competent, and professional P/PMs are essential to the success of critical agency missions, it is vital that acquisition workforce members easily understand the training requirements for FAC-P/PM.

The table to the right provides a list of all the FY2016–2017 FAI P/PM classes.

Be sure to register for classes through FAITAS before seats are taken!

To-Do List
☑ Read the FAI Summer Newsletter
☑ Register in FAITAS for the FY2016–2017 FAC-P/PM training classes before they're all taken!

FAC-P/PM
Entry Level
FPM 121: Acquisition Fundamentals of Project and Program Management II   *Competencies 1-7 (min 5 days)*
Mid-Level
FPM 231: Applications in Project and Program Management   *Competencies 1-4 (min 3 days)*
FPM 232: Applications in Contracting   *Competency 5 (min 2 days)*
FPM 233: Applications in Business, Cost, and Financial Management   *Competency 6 (min 2 days)*
FPM 234: Applied Leadership in Projects and Programs   *Competency 7 (min 2 days)*
Senior Level
FPM 331: Progressive Concepts in Program Management   *Competencies 1-4 (min 3 days)*
FPM 332: Progressive Contracting Strategies for Programs   *Competency 5 (min 2 days)*
FPM 333: Progressive Business, Cost, and Financial Management   *Competency 6 (min 2 days)*
FPM 334: Progressive Leadership in Program Management   *Competency 7 (min 2 days)*
IT Core-Plus Specialization
FPM 511: IT Project Management   *Core Plus 1-18 (min 4 days)*
FPM 512: IT Management and Resources   *(min 3 days)*
FPM 513: IT Operations and Security   *(min 3 days)*

Goodbye FPM 120...
Hello FPM 120A and 120B!

We heard you loud and clear—*FPM 120, Acquisition Fundamentals of Program and Project Management I, is a monster of a course and takes too long to complete!* Well, good news is on the horizon! FAI is splitting the class into two separate courses and will be launching the new modules in mid-July! The courses will give students more time to learn and absorb smaller chunks of information and material, and will prepare entry-level project managers with the fundamental knowledge, skills, and understanding required to fulfill their responsibilities as program and project managers.

Module	Time to Complete the Course	Topics Covered
FPM 120A	• Course takes approximately 20 hours • Students given 60 days to complete	• Identification of project management and contracting basics, project foundations, key elements for successful project management • Includes systems engineering and software management techniques required for effective acquisition management
FPM 120B *Follow-on course to FPM 120A*	• Course takes approximately 22 hours • Students given 60 days to complete	• Identification of project management roles, responsibilities, decision points, and key deliverables required for effective systems acquisition management throughout all phases of a project's lifecycle

Both FPM 120A and 120B will be required before a student can take the classroom-based FPM 121 course, Acquisition Fundamentals of Program and Project Management II, to complete the FAC-P/PM entry level certification training requirements.

Upon successful completion of these courses, including the exams and post-course surveys, students will receive Continuous Learning Points (CLP), an electronic certificate of completion in your FAITAS/ATLAS account, and a record of completion entered into your FAITAS/DAU transcript.

Check FAITAS in July 2016 to register for FPM 120A and 120B!

NEW MOBILE APP

ACQUISITION CHALLENGE
PRICE ANALYSIS
NOW AVAILABLE!

Challenge: Score 160 points to earn your certificate.

Download the App & Play Today!

1. On your mobile device, open iTunes App Store (for Apple) or Google Play (for Android)

2. Search for and download "FAI Acquisition Challenge"

3. Find the FAI logo icon on your device to launch the app anytime, anywhere

FAI Launches Competency Assessment Pilots

FAI has taken the first steps in assessing the acquisition workforce (AWF) to ensure that training offered to our students provides the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to meet agency acquisition missions and goals. In April 2016, FAI conducted its first pilot of the Federal Acquisition Certification for Contracting (FAC-C) Competency Assessment survey tool. The assessment was developed by FAI and the competencies being assessed are closely aligned with the Acquisition Workforce Competency Survey (AWCS). This assessment survey will eventually be used as a tool to help identify potential training needs of the GS-1102 workforce.

Currently, the pilot assessment program is being conducted during the CON 360, Contracting for Decision Makers, course offerings through FAI and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Acquisition Academy (VAAA). The pilot will continue through the summer with approximately six classes of data collected. The assessment, which is a closed-book exam, takes less than an hours to complete, and, at this time, all participants remain anonymous. A professional psychometric team will analyze the data and provide recommendations to FAI and the VAAA in late September.

In addition to the FAC-C pilot, FAI is developing a similar assessment survey tool for FAC-P/PM. The first FAC-P/PM pilot program began in June with the VAAA PM Fellows Program and future survey offerings will be conducted through the senior level P/PM courses later this summer and into FY2017.

Both pilot assessments will allow FAI to use objective ways to evaluate the AWF across the Contracting and Program and Project Management functional areas and ultimately identify facets of the current training programs that need additional or more focused attention. If you have the opportunity, FAI is encouraging as many members of the AWF to participate in either pilot assessment in order to obtain this valuable data that will inform improvements to the future of acquisition training.

Ready...Set...Go! Back to Basics Kick Off!

In March 2016, FAI launched a survey to learn from you, key members of the Federal AWF the basic acquisition training topics that are most needed in the acquisition community. FAI heard you and is proud to announce that, over the course of the next year, it will be launching the Back to Basics (B2B) Program! B2B will consist of a series of learning opportunities presented in installments, where each episode will provide targeted training on one of the most requested topics from the survey. B2B trainings will feature multiple delivery methods (e.g., classroom-based, online modules, webinars), vary in length, and provide an ideal opportunity to earn Continuous Learning Points (CLPs).

The first installment of B2B is a **free webinar** that will be held on July 14, 2016, from 1:00pm–3:00pm (EDT). This webinar is offered in partnership with the General Services Administration (GSA) Federal Acquisition Service (FAS) and will address the proper establishment of Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs) under the Federal Supply Schedule (FSS).

This is a great opportunity to get all of your questions answered about BPAs under GSA Schedules and earn 2 CLPs for viewing, but advanced registration in FAITAS is required!

BACK TO BASICS (B2B) SERIES

WEBINAR:
GSA SCHEDULES BLANKET PURCHASE AGREEMENTS (BPAs)

JULY 14, 2016 FROM 1:00-3:00PM (EDT)

REGISTER IN FAITAS TODAY!

COURSE #: FCL-GSA-0036

EARN 2 CLPs FOR VIEWING!

FAIgov

FAI Expands Virtual Synchronous Training Offerings!

Over the past year, FAI has been piloting six virtual synchronous (real-time) training classes for FAC-COR level 2 (FCR 201). The Virtual Instructor-Led Training (vILT) pilots have proven so successful that FAI is expanding their use to include CON 170, Fundamentals of Cost and Price Analysis, and FCN 190, FAR Fundamentals, in FY2017. The vILT versions of CON 170 and FCN 190 will be comprised of 80 hours of training, conducted over a period of four weeks, during which students will experience a blend of four-hour instructor-led online classes, individual student/team activities, and examinations.

The vILT classes are hosted on the Adobe Connect platform and can be taken from **anywhere**. Students only need a computer with a Web browser and Internet connection and a phone to utilize a toll-free teleconference number. Sessions include live interaction with instructors who facilitate discussions, respond to questions, and orchestrate team activities to ensure a dynamic, enjoyable learning experience for everyone.

Register in FAITAS for NEW vILT Courses!

CON 170 (FED):
November 28, 2016, through December 23, 2016

FCN 190:
February 13, 2017, through March 14, 2017

The most tangible benefits of vILT classes are that students avoid travel, hotel, and per diem costs that might otherwise be incurred by their agencies. However, additional advantages are that vILT trainings provide greater networking opportunities with fellow Federal employees from (potentially) around the world and the ability for students to maintain their workload during training.

Don't miss this fantastic **free** training opportunity—both courses are available for registration in FAITAS today!

Instructions for Registering for Virtual-Instructor Led Training in FAITAS

Login to FAITAS → Go to Manage Career → Training → Search for Training

Select Order by Course Number below Resident and Distance Learning Offerings → Use Select Course drop-down to select FCN 190 or CON 170 (FED) → Click Submit

Standard Search

Select a course, then select 'Submit'

Resident and Distance Learning Offerings (e.g., CON 127, CON 270 (FED), FCN 101, FCN 400, FCR 201, FCL-A-0030, etc.)
○ Order by Course Title ● Order by Course Number

Continuous Learning Modules (e.g., CLC 056, FAC 018, HBS 428, etc.)
○ Order by Course Title ○ Order by Course Number

Select Course: FCN 190 - FAR FUNDAMENTALS   Submit

Select Virtual Class, VA below Locations for the Virtual-Instructor Led Training*

Location	Classes	Available	Waits
Virtual Class, VA	1	25*	0*
Auburn, WA	1	16*	0*
Denver, CO	1	0*	2*

* The "Available" column shows the remaining number of seats available, but does <u>not</u> guarantee a seat; there may be applications submitted ahead of yours. If the number shown is zero, an application may still be submitted with the expectation of being placed on a waitlist.

GS-1102s Report Higher Global Satisfaction than Their Federal Colleagues

Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) and FAI recently found similarities and differences in satisfaction between GS-1102s and the rest of the Federal workforce using data from the 2015 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS). FAI calculated and compared the differences between the 1102 and government-wide percent of positive responses[1] for a variety of FEVS questions, categories, and indices.

What Is FEVS?

The FEVS is a tool that measures employees' perceptions of whether, and to what extent, conditions characterizing successful organizations are present in their agencies. Survey results provide valuable insight into the challenges agency leaders face in ensuring the Federal government has an effective civilian workforce and how well they are responding.

In 2015, the FEVS received over 420,000 responses, including over 8,000 responses (roughly 2%) from GS-1102s.

GS-1102s More Positive than Government-Wide Averages

Overall, 1102s had a positive difference (i.e., more satisfied) over the government-wide average on 85% of questions (60 of 71 questions), including a positive difference of 5% or greater over the government-wide average for 13% of the questions. Additionally, the GS-1102 workforce compared favorably to the government-wide averages on a variety of key FEVS indicators, including satisfaction in the areas of training and development, how training needs are assessed, and the three OPM Indices.

---

[1] "Percent of positive responses" represents the percent of respondents who selected a positive response (i.e., "Strongly Agree" or "Agree") to the questions in a given category.

Training & Development – Overall, training and development was identified as a strength for the 1102 workforce when compared government-wide, with the top four largest differences all related to training and development.

Assessment of Training Needs – "My Training Needs Are Assessed" is the largest positive difference (+10.9%) between 1102s and government-wide respondents.

OPM Indices – 1102s were more positive across the three OPM indices, including the Engagement Index (+2.3%), the Global Satisfaction Index (+1.4%), and the New IQ Index (+1.8%), which is a measure of employees' sense of inclusion in their workplaces.

A comprehensive look at OPM's Global Satisfaction Index reveals a mixed view with GS-1102s responding more positively overall, but to only two of the four subcategories when compared to the government-wide average.

The Global Satisfaction Index measures employee satisfaction with four aspects of their work: their jobs, their pay, their organizations, and whether they would recommend their organizations as a good place to work. The index is comprised of four categories: Job Satisfaction, Pay Satisfaction, Organization Satisfaction, and Recommend Organization.

OPM Global Satisfaction Index and Categories	1102s	Government-Wide	Difference
Global Satisfaction	61.6%	60.2%	1.4%
Job Satisfaction	64.2%	65.2%	-1.0%
Pay Satisfaction	63.9%	57.1%	6.8%
Organizational Satisfaction	57.2%	55.7%	1.5%
Recommend Organization	61.1%	62.7%	-1.6%

HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

Results of the FAC-COR and FAC-P/PM Certification Level Thresholds Survey

FAI and the Program Management Executive Steering Board (PM ESB) of the [Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act (FITARA) IT PM Summit Improvement Initiatives](#) invited civilian agency Acquisition Career Managers (ACMs) to participate in a short survey to build a cross-reference matrix of what agencies are using as thresholds for their Federal Acquisition Certification for Program and Project Managers (FAC-P/PM) and Contracting Officer's Representatives (FAC-COR) certification levels.

The survey asked questions specifically related to COR and P/PM threshold levels, or, if the agency is not using a dollar threshold, what other factors are used to determine requirements for each level. By the end of April, 22 agencies had responded to the survey, providing inputs for one or both of the functional areas.

FAC-COR Thresholds Survey: Summary of Results

Twenty agencies provided responses to the FAC-COR threshold level questions, and 14 of those agencies reported using all three levels of FAC-COR certification. Among these 14, four agencies (DOC, HHS, HUD, and VA) have established dollar thresholds for each level that are used as standards throughout the agency. See the table and figure to the right for the FAC-COR dollar threshold data.
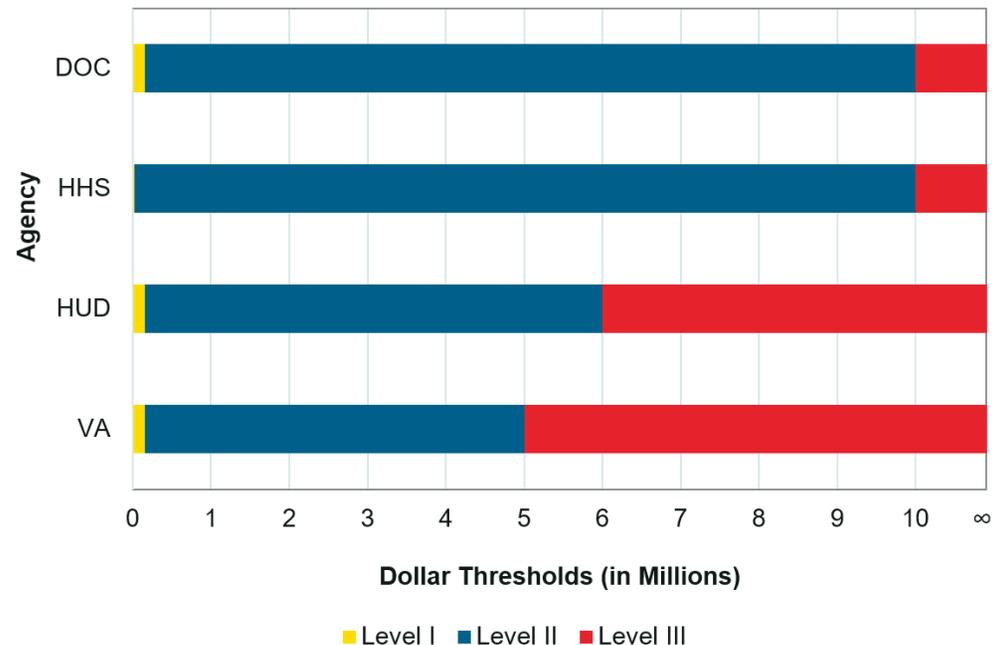
Some agencies not using dollar thresholds reported using other factors, such as complexity of the program or a mixture of dollars, complexity, and risk to determine the certification level of a COR assigned to the project.

Lastly, a few agencies reported that the thresholds were determined at the individual bureau level, depending on their needs.

FAC-COR Level	Thresholds of the Four Agencies with Established Dollar Values
Level I	Up to $25K (1 agency); Up to $150K (3 agencies)
Level II	Up to $5M (1 agency); Up to $6M (1 agency); Up to $10M (2 agencies)
Level III	Over $5M (1 agency); Over $6M (1 agency); Over $10M (2 agencies)

FAC-COR Dollar Thresholds by Level

Results of the FAC-COR and FAC-P/PM Thresholds Survey (Cont'd)

FAC-P/PM Thresholds Survey: Summary of Results

Twenty agencies provided responses to the FAC-P/PM items. Eighteen agencies reported using all three levels of FAC-P/PM certification, with eight of the 18 having established dollar thresholds for each level that is used as a standard throughout the agencies.
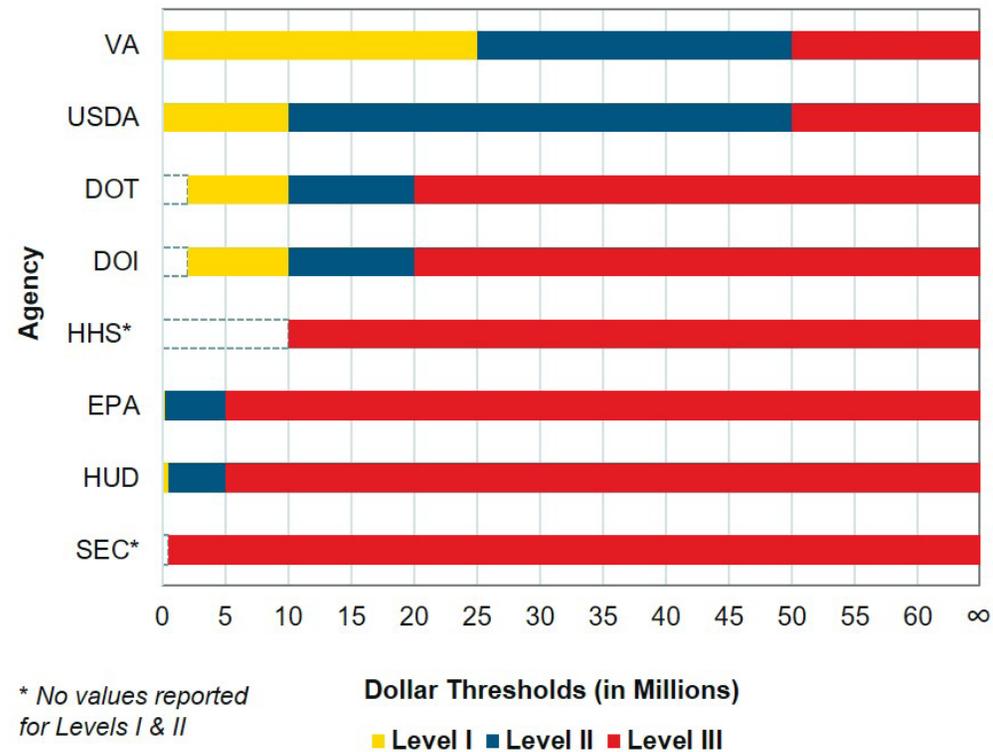
The eight agencies identifying dollar thresholds were VA, USDA, DOT, DOI, EPA, HUD, HHS, and SEC, though HHS and SEC only provided a threshold for Level III. See the table below and figure to the right for FAC-P/PM dollar threshold data.

Similar to the FAC-COR agencies not using dollar thresholds, some agencies reported using other factors, such as complexity of the program or a mixture of dollars, complexity, and risk to determine the certification level of a P/PM assigned to the project.

Two agencies indicated they use CPIC or the Exhibit 300 reporting as the threshold for Level III P/PMs, and two agencies reported that the thresholds were determined at the individual bureau level, depending on their needs.

FAC-P/PM Level	Thresholds of the Eight Agencies with Established Dollar Values
Level I	Up to $250K (1 agency); Up to $500K (1 agency); Up to $10M (1 agency); $2M–10M (2 agencies); Up to $25M (1 agency); 2 agencies do not use Level I FAC-P/PMs
Level II	Up to $5M (2 agencies); Up to $20M (2 agencies); Up to $50M (2 agencies); 2 agencies do not use Level II FAC-P/PMs
Level III	Over $500K (1 agency); Over $5M (2 agencies); Over $10M (1 agency); Over $20M (2 agencies); Over $50M (2 agencies)

FAC-P/PM Dollar Thresholds by Level

* No values reported for Levels I & II

Dollar Thresholds (in Millions)
■ Level I ■ Level II ■ Level III

This information is being provided to you, members of the Federal acquisition workforce; the COR and P/PM Functional Advisory Boards (FABs); and the Interagency Acquisition Career Management Committee (IACMC) and Chief Acquisition Officers' Council (CAOC) to start the conversation about standardization across the Federal space and to ensure that FAC-COR and FAC-P/PM certifications are reciprocal between agencies.

Research Proposal to Improve Contract Management by the Government Contracting Officer's Representative (COR)

According to the 2011 Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) Revisions to the Federal Acquisition Certification for Contracting Officer's Representatives (FAC-COR), "strengthening the acquisition workforce is critical to ensuring that the government gets the best value for the more than $500 billion of goods and services it procures annually. Improving the competencies of the acquisition workforce, including the contracting officer's representative (COR), is one component of strengthening the COR function." What are the other components that may strengthen the COR function? Etta Waugh, a professor of contract management at the Defense Acquisition University, is proposing to conduct a multi-case study, "Improving Contract Management by the COR," to explore other components to strengthening the COR function. The purpose of this study is to investigate ways to enhance the management of COR's resources, such as the timing of the COR's appointment, the time committed to contract management by the COR, and the organizational support provided to CORs.

Background

The current designation of the COR as an acquisition workforce team member has evolved in the history of contract management. Currently the level of resources to support the COR's contract management efforts varies across the government. In strategic management, such as resource-based theory, the use of the organization's tangible and intangible resources help it achieve better organizational performance. Aside from studies confirming the effectiveness of the competency-based management approach, key questions remain unanswered about the level and management of the CORs' resources needed for effective organizational performance. Specifically, there are questions regarding the appropriate mix of CORs' competencies, the level of time committed by CORs to contract management and their appointment timing, the organiza-tional support provided to CORs for contract management as well as the influence of the COR on contract outcomes. This research study will seek answers to these questions.

Conceptual Framework

The questions under investigation fall into three conceptual areas: the COR designation, the three COR inputs, and the CORs' activities, including the structure of the organization that may lead to successful outcomes. Figure 1 below displays the conceptual framework for the study.
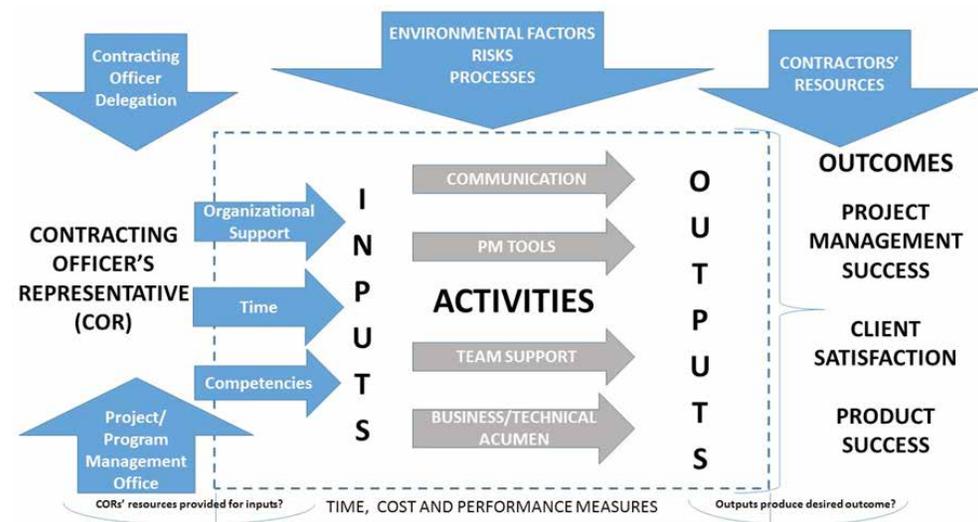

Figure 1. Conceptual framework. Adapted from "Project Cost Risk and Uncertainties: Toward a Conceptual Cost Contingency Estimation Model," by J. Buertey, 2014, *International Journal of Construction Engineering and Management*, 3(5), 145. Reprinted with permission.

FEDERAL ACQUISITION CERTIFICATIONS

Research Proposal to Improve Contract Management by the Government Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) (Cont'd)

The left side of Figure 1 shows the COR designation as the link between the contracting office and the project/program management office. It is assumed that both the delegation by the contracting officer and the nomination by the project/program management office contribute to the CORs' resources or inputs on the activities. The case study portraits of CORs will include the context in which CORs function, such as a contracting officer's delegation and the COR's alignment with the contracting officer and project/program management office. The three arrows represent the COR's resources that serve as inputs: organizational support, time, and competencies. An area that may influence the COR's resources and his or her activities is the context in which the COR operates, including the environmental factors, risks, and processes unique to each organization. A COR's activities include processes such as communication and providing knowledge in technical or business areas. The last area is the outputs, including the impact of the contractor's resources on the organization's performance. The aim of the study is to use the comprehensive framework presented to explore the characteristics of the three COR inputs (i.e., time, competencies, and organizational support), the COR's activities, and the structure of the organization that may lead to successful contract outcomes from the resource-based theory perspective.
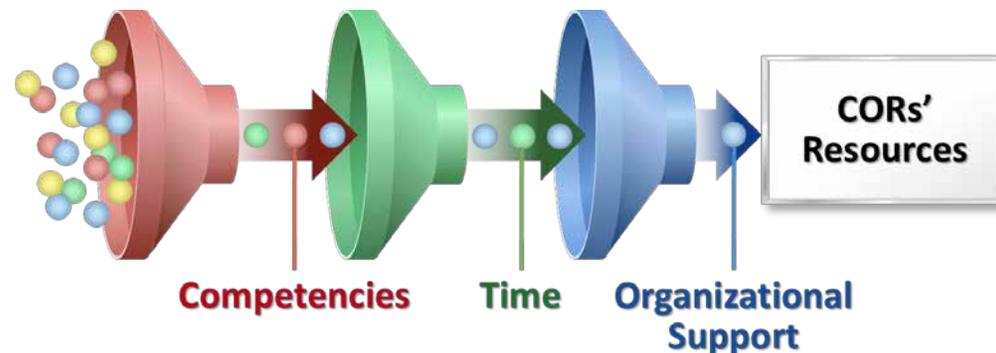
Research Plans

Initial steps are underway to gain the necessary approvals for conducting this research. Etta is currently soliciting recommendations for CORs at each of the three certification levels from a minimum of six Federal government agencies located in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. CORs participating in the study will form a sample population of 36 CORs of successful contracts, includ-

ing two CORs at each of the three COR certification levels. Data collection will include in-depth interviews and possibly focus-group discussions with the participating CORs and acquisition team members on their experiences with successful contracts. The agency or program will define and provide an explanation of their definition of successful contracts for purposes of the study.

What to Anticipate from Research

This research will result in three case studies (representing each COR certification level) offering a composite description of CORs' resource management approaches on successful contracts. The intent is to provide evidence to program managers on effective levels and mix of COR resources for contract management. This study will also provide a forum for CORs to express their views on an optimal contextual framework for effective organizational performance in contract management.

To learn more about this research project, please contact Etta Waugh at etta.waugh@dau.mil or 703-805-4374.

FEDERAL ACQUISITION CERTIFICATIONS

Reshaping IT Program Management Certification for Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act (FITARA) Update

Since the Information Technology (IT) Program Management (PM) December 2015 Summit, the Integrated Project Teams (IPTs) have been working on initiatives to help agencies leverage the Federal Acquisition Certification for IT Program and Project Managers (FAC-P/PM-IT) certification to comply with FITARA and the Services Acquisition Reform Act (SARA). For more information about the 2015 Summit and IPT initiatives, please see the Spring 2016 FAI Newsletter.

These IPT efforts promise to significantly improve the relevance, accessibility, adoption, and impact of the professional development solutions and certification programs offered to our critical corps of IT PMs. This article spotlights the work and progress that IPT #4 has made towards meeting their goal to "Improve, Integrate, and Simplify Competency Models."

IPT #4, upon review of the 33 IT PM Management and Technical competencies that are currently required for IT PM Specialization, identified several overlapping areas with the FAC-P/PM certification track. Since IT PMs need to be certified at the FAC-P/PM Mid or Senior level prior to taking IT PM Specialization training, the team found it necessary to consolidate these 33 competencies to eliminate redundancy and simplify the competency model.

As such, the IPT consolidated the current 33 competencies down to a proposed "Sweet Sixteen" that focus the IT PM on the additional requirements needed to better manage an IT program/project. The table to the right provides a list of the 16 proposed competencies and their definitions.

If these competencies are approved, FAI will reach out to the various training vendors to finalize training requirements and align Performance Outcomes and Terminal Learning Objectives (TLOs) to better prepare IT PMs with the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to effectively manage an IT program.

Draft P/PM-IT Competency List	Competency Definition
Needs Assessment	Identify need by requirement and mission, including mapping to organizational agency goals and objectives
Technology Awareness/ Team Building	Assemble the right people with the right level of technology to meet mission
Enterprise Architecture	Demonstrate understanding of the IT rules, regulations, and mission to meet organizational goals and operational decisions
Requirements Generation and Analysis	Ability to meet or exceed the organizational constraints, demands, necessities, needs, and parameters to meet mission
IT Strategy and Planning (and Stakeholder Analysis)	Ability to assess, plan, manage, monitor, and evaluate IT systems and support services along with stakeholder requirements to develop program and project strategies to meet mission
Capital Planning and Investment Assessment	Develop preliminary and subsequent capital plans, budgets, cost/benefit analyses, and investment decision documents for evaluation and justification of project and program costs
Analysis of Alternatives	Evaluate technology, develop alternatives for solutions, price solutions, and make cost/feature determinations offering trade space for making investment decisions
Contracting/ Procurement	Develop statements of work, ConOps, cost, schedule, scope, and support documents to provide best planning for the Program or Project
Acquisition Planning	Experience developing acquisition strategies, choice of vehicle, COTS vs custom development decisions, hosting of Industry Days, development of draft RFP for review and comment, and contract development
Product Evaluation	Conduct market analysis, market availibilty of COTS solution vs custom solution, solutions blending, technology evaluation, product availability as related to market research activities, and conveyance of those data to an AGO for evaluation
IT Program/Project Development & Mgmt	Development and management of IT specific Programs and Projects using best available tools, techniques, and practices
Quality Assurance	Ensure that the products and services developed from the IT Program and Projects meet mission requirements, mandated regulatory constraints, and accepted best practices
Risk Management	The documentation, assessment, pricing, and development of mitigation strategies for IT Programs and Projects
Operations and Maintenance	Ability to transition a program or project from development, testing, and handoff to operations, along with continuation strategies of the IT Project or Program under development
System Re-Engineering and Re-Evaluation	Sustaining engineering, Continuity of Operations, and assessment of best available and cost effective technology is utilized in re-assessment of the Project or Program set into operations
Program/Project Closeout	Ensure that Program and Project is closed out properly with proper handoff, deliverables are met, and contract options exercised as required for mission success

Stay tuned in the coming months for updates on IPT #4's progress towards finalizing these new competencies and reports from the other critically important IPTs!

TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGY

Is Your FAITAS Profile Information Correct?

Have you recently changed jobs, supervisors, or received a promotion? Did you update your profile in FAITAS to reflect those changes? Please take a minute to log on, review your profile information, and update as needed.

Having incorrect information in your FAITAS profile can impact many things, including processing FAITAS requests, obtaining Help Desk assistance, reporting agency workforce data, and securing space in training classes.

Identifying the Acquisition Workforce (AWF)

So who is a member of the acquisition workforce (AWF)? The answer to that will vary across the agencies. A surprising number of individuals are leaving the AWF field in FAITAS as the default setting: "NO." Perhaps it's less surprising that Contracting Officer's Representatives (CORs), Program/Project Managers (PMs), or people pursuing those certifications are leaving the AWF field in FAITAS as "NO" (some agencies only consider a COR part of the AWF if they are on an active contract).

However, if you are an 1102, then your FAITAS profile should reflect "YES" to the question, "Acquisition Workforce Member?" and your Career Field should reflect "Contracting."

Check your agency's resources page or contact your Acquisition Career Manager (ACM) to review who else is considered a member of the AWF within your organization, and then make sure your FAITAS profile reflects your proper AWF status.

Key Areas that FAITAS Profiles Impact

Processing FAITAS Requests
- Ensure that the supervisor selected in your profile is correct
- Remember that your supervisor is the first stop on your requests for training, certification, and other FAITAS workflow approvals

Reporting
- Agencies are able to track their employees' certifications and training through FAITAS reports
- Leadership uses FAITAS data to report on the status of their AWF and to guide future AWF planning, so it is important that your profile information is kept up-to-date

Helpdesk Assistance
- The FAI Helpdesk uses your profile contact information to reach out to you when you submit a ticket as well as to validate your account for password resets
- Incorrect information may cause delays in getting the help you need in a timely manner

Training
- FAI class seats are not reserved for specific agencies but are prioritized according to AWF member status, type/level of certification sought, and type/level of certification achieved
- Improper status identification in your FAITAS profile may result in a lower priority setting for FAI classes

Is Your FAITAS Profile Information Correct? (Cont'd)

Updating Your FAITAS Profile

To update your profile in FAITAS, please follow these steps:

1. Login to FAITAS.

2. Navigate to **My Status | Profile**.

3. Update data as necessary.

4. Confirm Supervisor selection is still correct, and update as necessary.

   - To change your Supervisor selection, click "Select User" to the right of the Supervisor Name field.

   - Click "Search," then click "Select" to the left of the individual you wish to select as your supervisor.

   - Select the checkbox to certify the selected supervisor is valid.

5. Click **"Update Information"** to save the new data.

> *It is extremely important that your FAITAS Profile is updated and accurate!*

FAITAS FEDERAL ACQUISITION INSTITUTE TRAINING APPLICATION SYSTEM

FAITAS Profile Tips

Tip #1: Make Sure Your AWF Status is Accurate

Tip #2: Make Sure Your Professional Situation is Accurate

Getting to Know Judith Dawson, Acquisition Career Manager, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

1. How long have you worked at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs?

I joined the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) on November 30th, 2015, as VA's Departmental Acquisition Career Manager (ACM) and the Director of Acquisition Human Capital Management Service (AHCMS). It was VA's mission as well as the desire to work for Ruby Harvey (the Chancellor of VA's Acquisition Academy) that led me on my newest and very rewarding career journey.

Judith Dawson, ACM, VA

VA is the largest Federal civilian agency, with a workforce of over 366,000 employees, of which 6% are acquisition professionals. In support of the VA's infrastructure, it is imperative to develop an experienced and well-trained acquisition workforce to carry out the Department's mission by providing critical support to our nation's Veterans and other government agencies through strategic acquisitions, logistics, and financial solutions. Our goal is to be the premier provider of innovative solutions for our clients and customers. As such, I am intimately involved with leading and serving VA's acquisition workforce professionals!

2. Where were you before coming to VA?

Prior to joining VA, I worked for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) where I served as the Homeland Security Acquisition Institute (HSAI) Workforce Strategy Lead. In this role, I was charged with formulating DHS-wide strategic initiatives geared toward improving the performance of nearly 20,000 acquisition professionals. Prior to my service with DHS, I reported to the Senior Procurement Executive (Dr. Angela Billups) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), where I served as the Departmental ACM and Director of the Office of Acquisition Workforce & Strategic Initiatives. Dur-

ing my six-year tenure with HHS, I created and established agency-wide certification programs and policies as well as several professional development programs for over 16,000 acquisition professionals. My career with HHS was an extremely rewarding experience.

3. Tell us about one of the biggest successes achieved by your team.

Identifying *one* of the biggest successes achieved by my team at VA is difficult because I have a team of 14 superstars who support me daily and an amazing senior leadership team, including Greg Giddens (Acting Chief Acquisition Officer), Jan Frye (Senior Procurement Executive), and Ruby Harvey (VAAA Chancellor), to champion and support ACM initiatives. However, I am most proud of my employees' willingness to embrace, transition, and carry out a new era of true "acquisition human capital planning." In this vein, my team focuses on infusing strategic initiatives designed to transcend VA's acquisition professionals as well as implementing engagement activities that inform and enhance the workforce in a holistic manner. Our team created a professional mantra for the AHCMS Directorate: "**Engage. Empower. Excel**." These guiding principles resound throughout VA's acquisition workforce and serve as a motivational force for current and future ACM initiatives.

4. What is the biggest challenge in your position?

As with most agencies, available resources, technological advancements, and funding for acquisition workforce training and development are huge challenges. An even larger challenge specific to VA is assessing and ensuring the technical and business "readiness" of VA's acquisition professionals as they progress throughout their careers. Because of this, I believe that a stronger emphasis on strategic and thoughtful leadership principles will be essential in creating performance and talent management approaches designed to attract and retain highly motivated, credentialed, and business savvy professionals. Recognizing that this will be no small feat, I also believe that before I am able

Getting to Know Judith Dawson, ACM, VA (Cont'd)

to get in front of these challenges, I must first reinvigorate the presence of the ACM's role at VA.

5. What motivates you to put your best foot forward on a daily basis?

The answer to this question is simple! It's my passion to be a proud civil servant dedicated to serving our country's Veterans. To do this, I understand how important it is to be a transformational leader, which requires thoughtful leaders to understand the importance of investing in an organization's most important asset—its employees. If you lead people by example, with open, honest, and transparent communication, they will develop a natural inclination to follow their leader, sort of like learning to dance the tango with your partner! The AHCMS Directorate is comprised of unique, dedicated, and hard-charging professionals, all of whom appreciate the leadership and joy that I bring to the VA. I thoroughly enjoy working with and leading this team of professionals, who without fail, give me many reasons to smile and keep me coming back to work every day!

6. What skills do you think are most critical to successfully perform your job?

I feel there are three critical skills required in measuring performance and quantifying success as a Departmental ACM. ACMs must 1) possess the ability to build rock-steady coalitions with stakeholders, 2) create environments that inspire team encouragement and team building, and 3) communicate effec-

tively. I strongly believe that in my role as a leader and ACM, I must be willing to serve my employees, clients, and customers first. I also recognize the importance of getting to 'yes' by being a true visionary. As the ACM, I must be able to accurately and succinctly communicate the vision for the acquisition workforce so they are able to come together as that "Enterprise Team" whose ultimate responsibility is to execute the mission of the VA.

7. What could the FAI team do to move the Federal acquisition workforce forward?

Let me first say that FAI was extremely fortunate to have Melissa Starinsky, who should be honorably noted as one of government's finest and most extraordinary 'mover and shakers'! Melissa's forward-thinking, laser-clear vision and mission-driven leadership style is undisputable and was critically needed in leading acquisition professionals across the federal space. Melissa's tenure at FAI brought about a positive steadiness that looked and felt refreshing. In addition, I'm extremely appreciative of the entire FAI team and their constant willingness to serve and support the VA—particularly in our most recent transition from eCert (a VA homegrown certification management system) to FAITAS—which has been nothing short of a monumental effort! In closing, I personally feel that FAI is already doing all the right things for all the right reasons!

8. What words of wisdom would you offer to your fellow Acquisition Career Managers?

I believe that ACMs should stand ready to embrace, celebrate, and leverage the differences that may be discovered as coalitions and partnerships are constructed, both internal and external to their organizations. ACMs should not only listen to the needs of their workforce but involve them in developing solutions to address various deficiencies. I constantly mention how very proud I am of my team at VA and their constant willingness to think outside of the box, which is critically necessary in a world where immediate knowledge is attainable via Google.
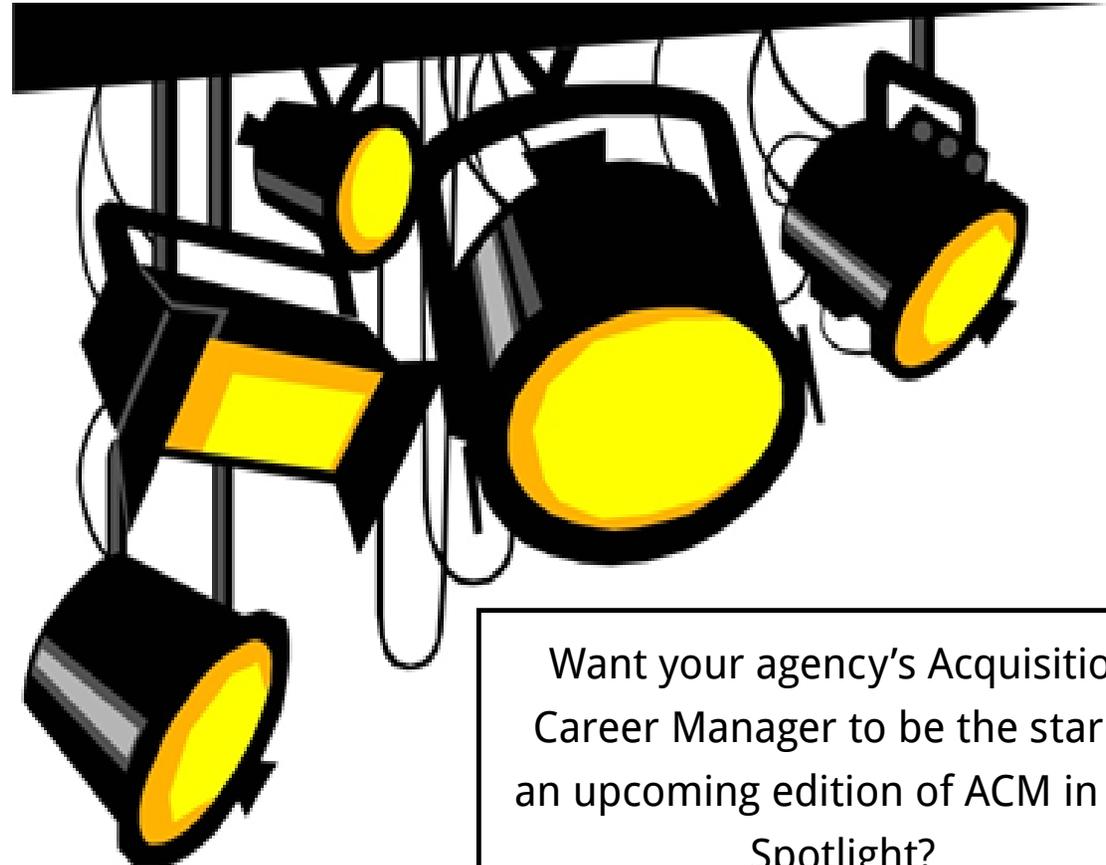
Getting to Know Judith Dawson, ACM, VA (Cont'd)

9. What goals do you have for your acquisition work-force?

My goal for the VA acquisition workforce is to ensure that "capture management" is clearly understood and utilized. While the intent of capture management focuses on developing strategies that elevate the "win probability," the theoretical underpinnings of this concept (winning = getting to yes) should be used daily when serving Veterans, customers, stakeholders, and employees.

I also support and reward innovative concepts, which promote lean concepts that streamline laborious business practices. Vigorously moving forward with a "can be" state of mind will foster a compelling desire for individuals to take more control of their professional careers. In support of this effort, I will continue to support calibrated activities with the VA Acquisition Academy (VAAA), sponsorship initiatives with various learning partners, and affiliations with the National Contract Management Association (NCMA) and ASI Virtual Acquisition Office, and I will work diligently to support the deployment of an Acquisition Corps framework, all of which will enhance the successful execution of acquisition-related programs across the VA.

10. What is something about yourself that others might not know?

Other than having a wonderful husband and two lovely children, my favorite "person" to hang out with is Lorenzo, my Labrador retriever. He always listens, knows how to make me smile, and—best of all—he only chews on the shoes I need to replace anyway.

Want your agency's Acquisition Career Manager to be the star of an upcoming edition of ACM in the Spotlight?
E-mail your nomination to contact@fai.gov.

WORKFORCE RESOURCES

Student Support

If you have training and development questions, always begin with your agency Acquisition Career Manager (ACM).

List of ACMs

FAI.gov

FAI Help Desk

DAU.mil

TEAM
T TOGETHER
E EVERYONE
A ACHIEVES
M MORE