

# Uniformed Military Acquisition Officers Career Path Development Comparison



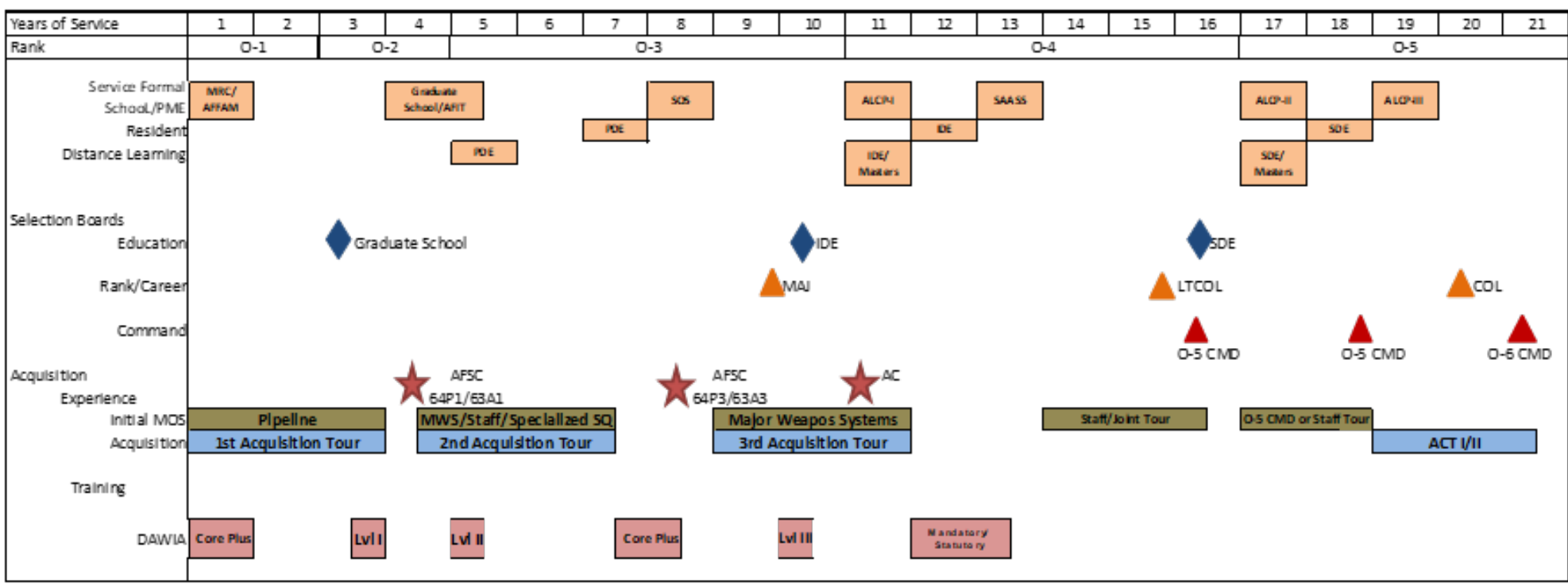
Naval  
Postgraduate  
School

## Abstract

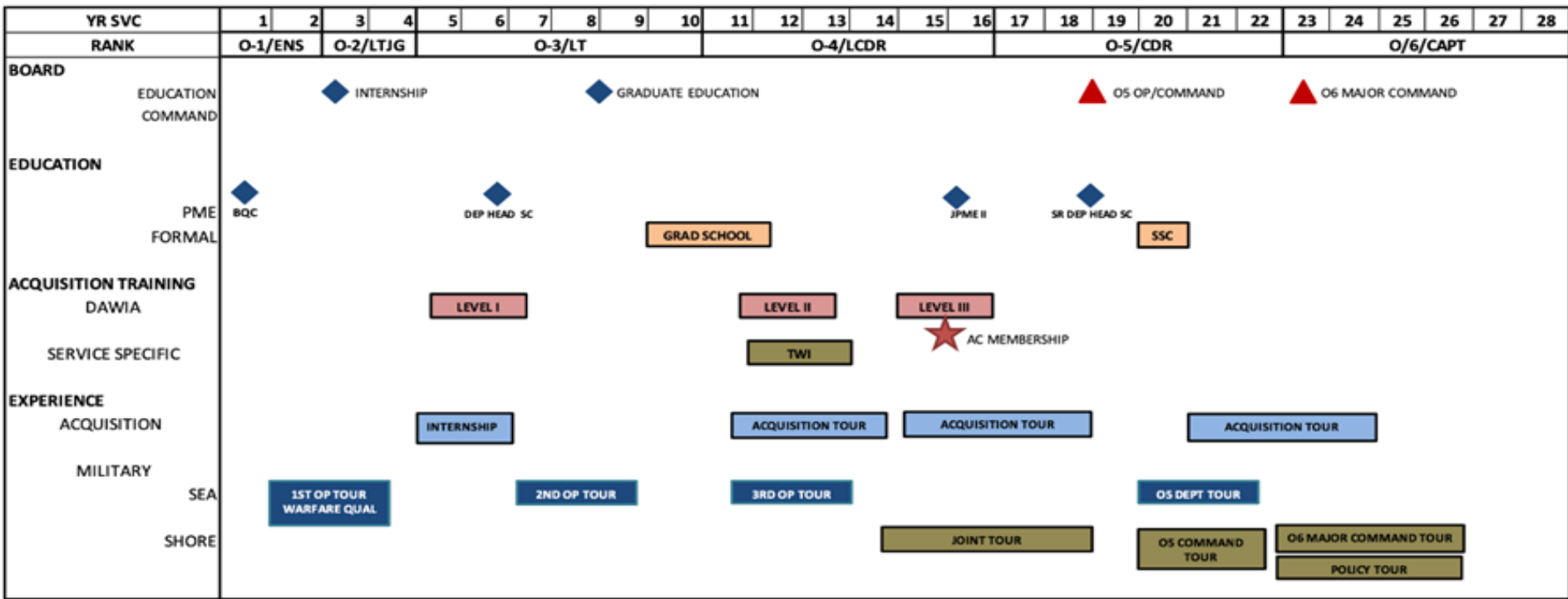
The purpose of this research was to compare the career path development of the Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Army Acquisition Officers and identify advantages and disadvantages from each Service. After an analysis of the differences, recommended changes to establish greater efficiency and symmetry within the Acquisition Officer’s professional development to serve more effectively in a Joint environment are proposed. The methodology included comparing U.S. Armed Forces processes and frameworks concerning career field education and training of uniformed Acquisition Officers in the contract management and program management fields. Each Service’s methods were compared to identify milestones for career progression of Acquisition Officers within each Service. Processes that would benefit other Services were identified, such as serving in non-acquisition positions as a junior officers and serving in back-to-back acquisitions tours once joining the acquisition workforce. These beneficial processes were used to create a Universal Acquisition Officer Career Path (UAOCP) that can be adopted by all Services to better synchronize military and civilian education, training, and experience across the Services for Acquisition Officers. The UAOCP would promote a level field of knowledge that could better serve the Joint acquisition environment.

## Uniformed Military Acquisition Officers Career Path

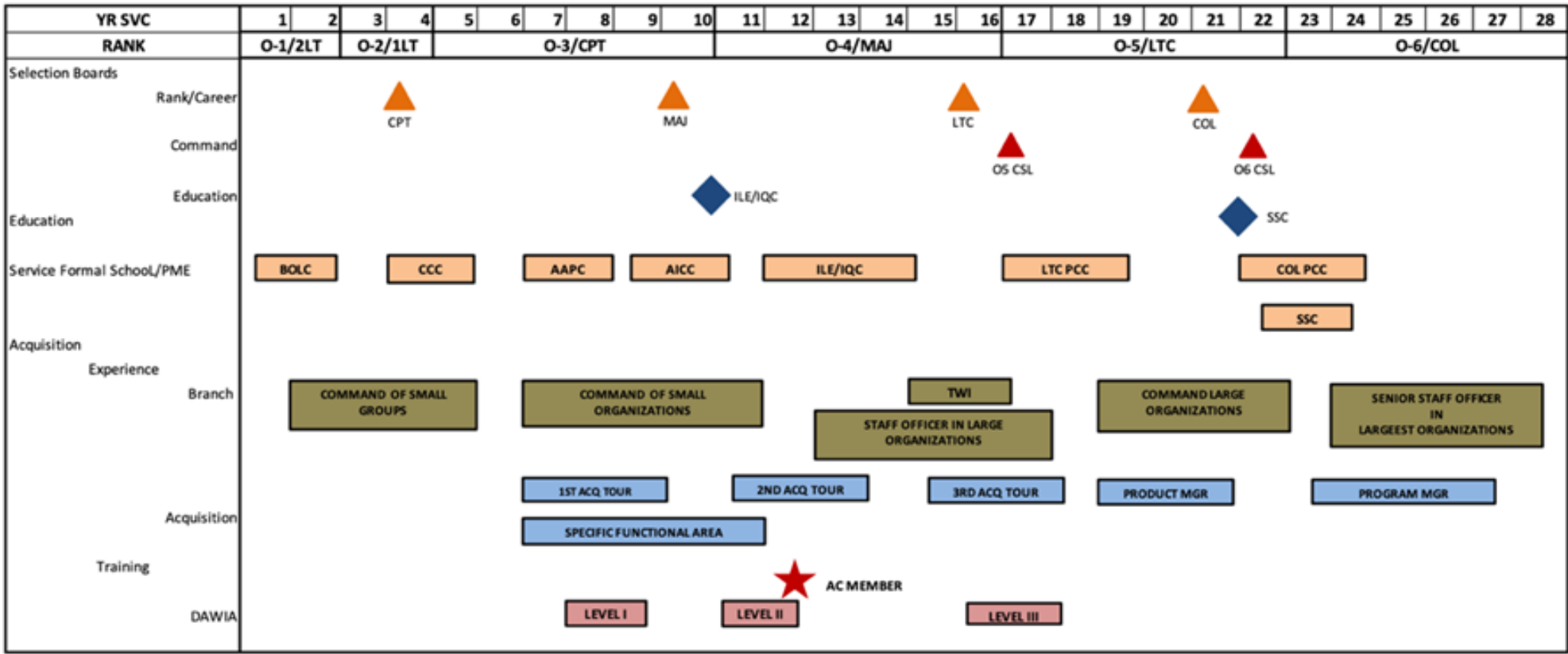
Air Force



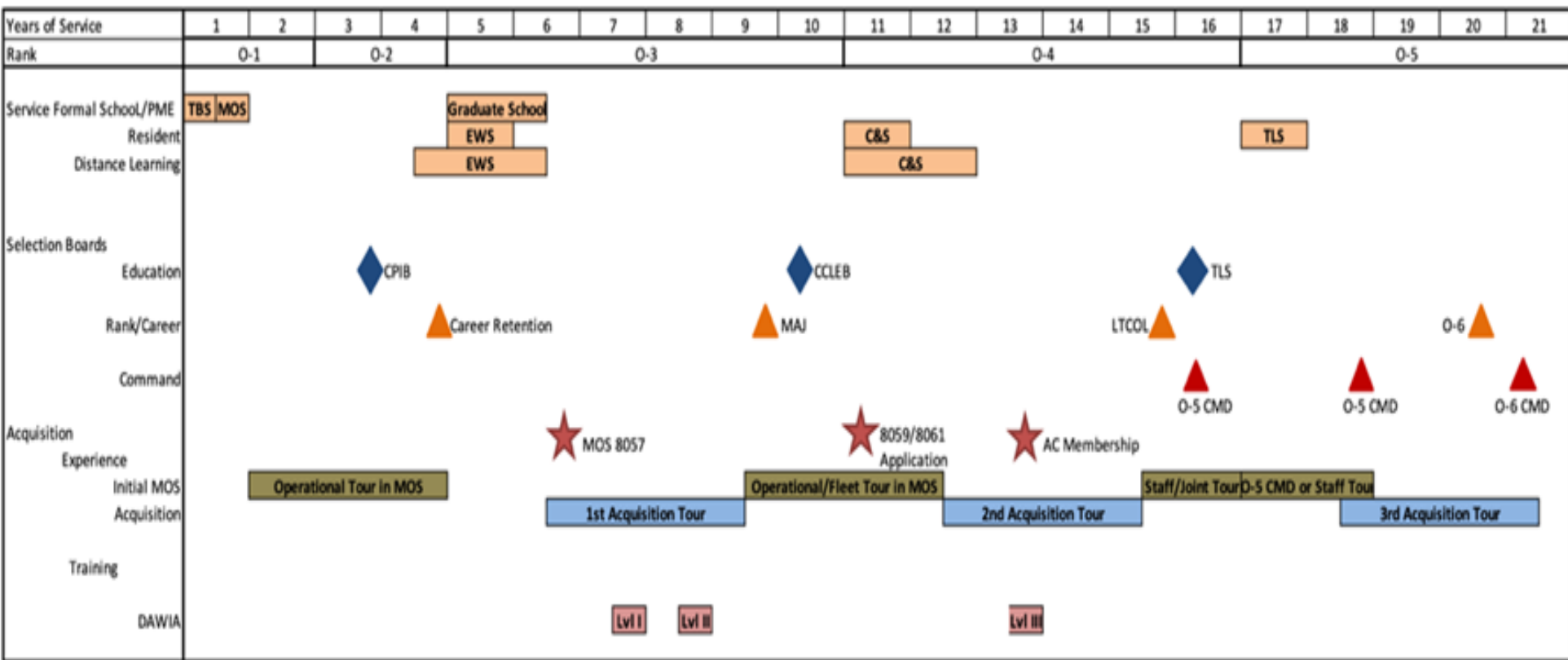
Navy



Army

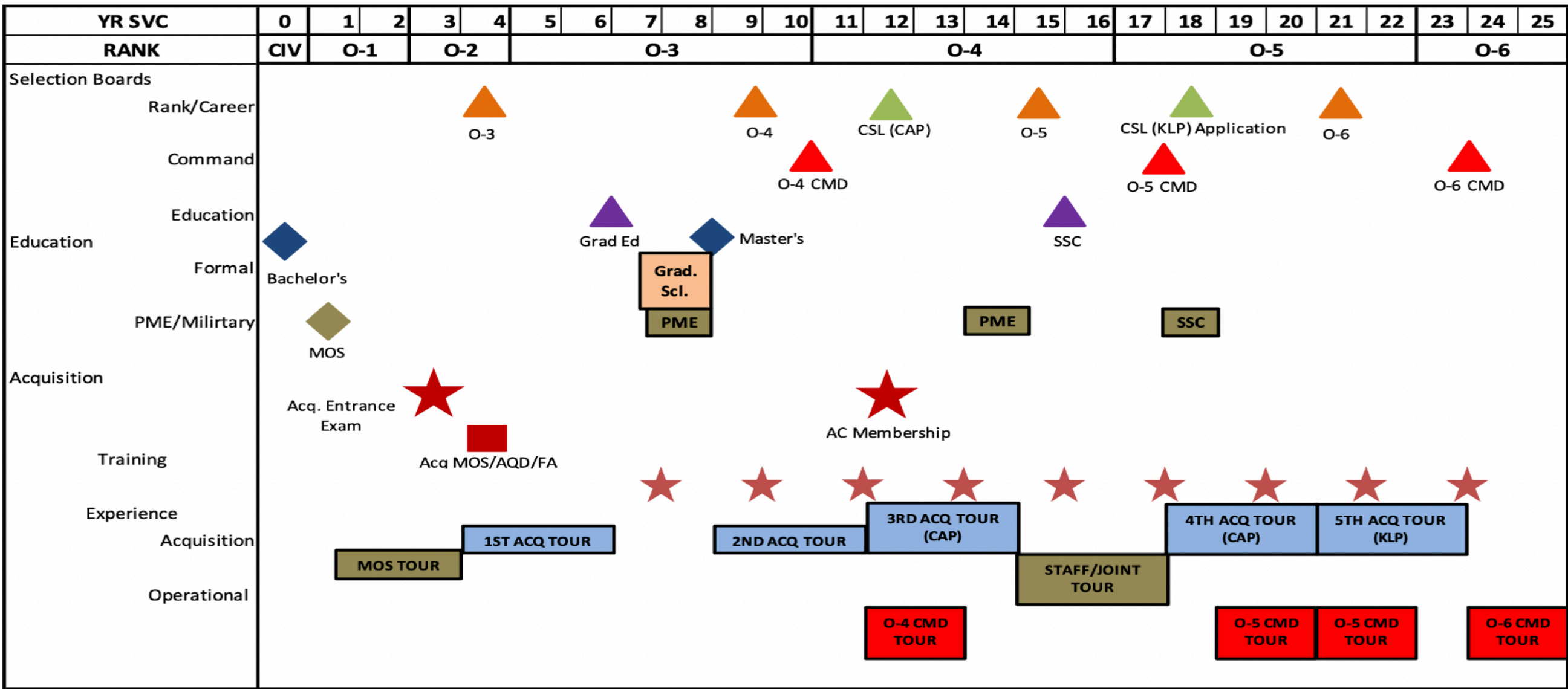


Marine Corps



## Results

## Universal Acquisition Officers Career Path (UAOCP)



- ▲ Promotional Board
- ▲ Acquisition Position Board
- ◆ Formal Educational Milestone
- Assignment to Acquisition Workforce
- ▲ Command Screening Board
- ▲ Formal Educational Screening Board
- ★ Major Acquisition Milestone
- ★ Validation of 80 CHECK hours
- AC Acquisition Corps
- ADQ Additional Qualification Designator
- ACQ Acquisition
- CAP Critical Acquisition Position
- CHEK Continuing Hours of Education & Knowledge
- CMD Command
- CSL Centralized Selection List
- FA Functional Area
- KLP Key Leadership Position
- MOS Military Occupational Specialty
- O-3 Captain/Lieutenant (Navy)
- O-4 Major/Lieutenant Commander (Navy)
- O-5 Lieutenant Colonel/Commander (Navy)
- O-6 Colonel/Captain (Navy)
- PME Professional Military Education
- SSC Senior Service School

The Universal Acquisition Officer Career Path (UAOCP) improves and synchronizes better military and civilian education, training, and experience across the Services. This recommended career path will promote a level field of knowledge which could better serve the Joint acquisition environment.

Acquisition Research Program  
Graduate School of Business & Public Policy

www.acquisitionresearch.net

Ashley McCabe, Maj, USMC  
Paveena Ritthaworn, LCDR, USN  
Darian Wilder, LCDR, USN

Advisors: Dr. Robert Mortlock  
Prof. Kelley Poree