

Results from NEPDP Survey 2019

(Completed July 2020)

1. How well do you feel each of the following subjects was addressed in your bridging program? (Your answer will direct my efforts to improve content.) Dans quelle mesure pensez-vous que chacun des sujets suivants a été abordé dans votre programme de transition? (Votre réponse dirigera mes efforts pour améliorer le contenu.)
 - Needs improvement on: Research and Writing (2/11 requested); Listening and Note Taking (1/11 requested); Preparation for Exams (1/11 requested).
2. Looking back on your time at RMC, what is the most important thing that should be included in the bridging program? Avec le recul sur votre séjour au CMR, quelle est la chose la plus importante qui devrait être incluse dans le programme de transition?
 - Careful selection of courses/material that will be relevant and useful to future employment - vice courses that fit a workable (simplified) timetable. Moreover, NCMs need to examine their future roles and situations in which they will be required to offer input/advice, and align selected courses appropriately. For example, taking GOE is interesting and worthwhile, but unless you foresee deploying to a particular region - or having soldiers that will - the 'juice' is not worth the 'squeeze' - and several other course offerings fall into this category.
 - I believe that the essential studies skills book should be provided 3 months prior to course start. Yes David, it's Shawn here.
 - Learning the process of writing a paper, how to cite. Have the NEPDP write a short 2 page paper with citations. Then everyone should have a meeting with the Writing Centre to see where they can improve or where their downfalls are. Although not everyone used the Writing Centre, the merits are huge.
 - There should be a pre bridging phase teaching how to write essays so you could show up to the bridging course knowing how to do it or at least have a much better idea about essays. I found it very challenging in the early process of writing an essay of where to go with it. I had to have many conversations with my professor who mentored me.
 - Essay writing was a major part of almost ever course taken, some of the research articles were indepth and difficult to pull information from to support arguments. The bridging program could include more on how to read research articles, what info to look for and how is could be applied/incorporated in papers.
 - Examples of successful papers. Although it didn't take long, I wasn't completely comfortable with what the expectations were regarding paper writing, such as how to build my paper, how to effectively use my research to formulate an effective argument and how (and when) to cite references

- Note taking and preparation for exams is most helpful when considering the success over the entire year. Certainly, the tour of RMC, building layout to find your classes and a visit to the Star Diner are also imperative. Having a past NEPDP student or even another recent adult learner that attended RMC speak to the new batch of students may also help put them at ease or highlight potential problem areas to be aware of.
 - Previous candidates experience. The one person that took the programme that addresses us did not offer any tangible advice, and in fact, offered some bad advice about readings and preparation for exams.
 - How to do research at the various libraries and online
3. Remembering the bridging program that you had, what was the least useful part of it? (This may help me to make space for new material.) En vous rappelant du programme de transition que vous aviez, quelle en était la partie la moins utile? (Cela peut m'aider à faire de la place pour du nouveau matériel.)
- Perhaps just a personal perspective, however, I did not use the Queens library and found more than enough resources through Massey and Google Scholar. Not to say that the additional resource was unnecessary, but if NEPDP candidates can be shown how to use web tools, and appreciate that they will suffice, then more time can be spent researching potential essay topics - which I found to be very useful (and empowering) during the Bridging Program.
 - The introduction by Massey library staff.
 - Links are great (Owl Purdue) but using them/practicing would be beneficial.
 - For me, the library searches at Queens because most of the exercises would not work with the system. Many of the exercises had to be skipped or cancelled if I remember correctly. I understand the search phase was to show us how to proceed, but I think I could have figured it out by myself. Still, I think it can be useful when it works.
 - Writing
 - Each PO had its merits and benefitted candidates in varying ways. I would not change the current format, as everyone took something away from it at one point in time. I would limit the timeline to be 2 weeks, no longer.
4. What advice would you give to future NEPDP students about selection of courses? (It can be general advice, or specific comments about courses that are challenging, easy, useful, flaky, disorganized, etc) Quels conseils donneriez-vous aux futurs étudiants PQPFM sur la sélection des cours? (Il peut s'agir de conseils généraux ou de commentaires spécifiques sur des cours difficiles, faciles, utiles, désorganisés, etc.)
- A more detailed course description and list of available course options. The mix and match via RMC intranet made course offerings unclear.
 - Engage and talk with the cadets. They are a wonderful source of information. They also know all the tools/tricks for academic success. Don't be shy to visit the Writing

Centre. Make time to get together as a group. Talk to previous NEPDP for their experience.

- Choose courses to which you have an interest. Do not only select courses to ease your schedule or because you heard it is easy. It is essential to select courses based on what you intend to get out of it when you leave RMC.
- Personal interest is important.
- Find courses that are of interest both personally and professionally, it will make the reading and research interesting.
- Don't fight the process, and speak to profs early to ensure a comprehensive understanding of course expectations regarding deliverables
- Indigenous peoples and the Military (PSE120) is not what you think it is. There is very little about the relationship between indigenous peoples and the military and is more about the Indigenous views, literature, and some culture. It is relatively easy compared to all other courses and Dr. Chaput is a very inviting and friendly person. However, I do not recommend this course which runs for the 2 terms. A lot of critical thinking goes to ground and opposing views will not be resolved. Reconciliation is talked about a lot but could never be defined as to what that looks like. Any GEO course by Dr. Luciuk is highly recommended. He is a fascinating speaker and does not usually keep you in class until the end just for the sake of it. I learned an incredible amount from his lectures. Pay attention to the bridging class as Dr. Last will give you tools, knowledge, and resources that will set you up for success. Do not wait until papers are almost due to complete them as you will have many competing for your time at once. Expect to spend up to a week on each one if you want to achieve your best. Grammarly is a free app that help you with writing your papers. Be careful though and ensure you review the entire document after as some formatting/vocabulary might change unintendedly.
- I would offer the advice of taking a variety of courses that are in their personal interest, and not to have preconceived notions about any of the courses.
- Third and fourth year courses were more interesting and a better learning environment for a mature student.

5. What advice would you give to future NEPDP students about professors at RMC? (It can be general advice about how to deal with them, or specific comments about individuals to seek out or avoid. These will not be shared beyond NEPDP.) Quels conseils donneriez-vous aux futurs étudiants de la PQPFM sur les professeurs du CMR? (Il peut s'agir de conseils généraux sur la façon de les traiter ou de commentaires spécifiques sur les individus à choisir ou à éviter. Ceux-ci ne seront pas partagés au-delà du PQPFM.)

- I did not have an issue with any instructor, but did note that each had their own 'way of doing things.' Not a bad thing, but the NEPDP candidates will need to understand professor 'uniqueness' and learn from each stylistic approach - not revolt against the lack of standard/discipline.
- Arrange an individual meeting with your professor and discuss concerns/fears. Professors provide an unimaginable amount of support when engaged.

- Professors are professional
 - Talk to them about any issues or concerns right away. The profs like having NEPDP students in the class as we can actually give examples of what they are teaching. It can open dialogue.
 - It is imperative to find out right at the beginning of each of your classes what your professor intends are regarding your papers. Show your professor any of your drafts before writing your final phase to ensure you are going in the right direction. If you have any questions, ask. Professors are there to help and will help you.
 - They are there to help, don't hesitate to reach out to them for guidance on papers.
 - Every prof has their strengths. Civvy profs don't always understand how snr ncos like to plan and engage their work, but in every case they are willing to communicate if you ask... ask early
 - Dr. Boulden and Dr. Luciuk were two of my favourite professors. You will enjoy any class they teach as they are to the point, concise, and have a knack for explaining things so they are easily understood. David Last (yes I know you can see this!), will ensure you are successful by allowing you to resubmit assignments and will not surprise you with exam questions that you haven't seen before. The material and his teaching methods will have you confused throughout most of his courses and many NEPDP students who had him experienced this. In some strange way, it becomes clear towards the end of the course so don't be discouraged. No other professor will invest as much time in your success and understanding than him. LCdr Vanderpool was different from your typical Civilian professors. Some, like I, will find comfort in his familiar military instruction that follows the textbook to a "T". He is well organized and does not really take advantage of the academic freedoms that others take.
 - Speak to the professors. They love having senior NCOs in their classes and they love our input, as it enhances the classroom experience for all. Don't think that one professor is similar to another. Each has their own styles, and "academic freedom" allows them to have their own personal preferences when it comes to writing, research etc. In order to figure this out, it can be done easily by speaking to each professor, all of whom are very approachable.
6. What advice would you give to future NEPDP students about working with cadets and managing relationships with other students while at RMC? Quels conseils donneriez-vous aux futurs étudiants PQPFM sur la façon de travailler avec les élèves-officiers et de gérer les relations avec les autres étudiants au CMR?
- I would remind them that cadets are like any other cross-section of soldiers across the CAF. Some are driven, others not so much. Take the time to mentor the cadets that thirst for your experience, and do not get disheartened by those that place academics above all else - to include discipline, respect, punctuality etc. Treat them all professionally and always be the example of what 'right looks like.'

- The cadets are generally very intelligent. They are also timid of Senior NCMs, clearly identify yourself as a student and highlight that you do not engage there individual CoC. They see NEPDP candidates as outsiders upon initial engagement.
 - Treating them as peers
 - The cadets are eager to learn from you. Share your experiences.
 - Leave your "Chief" persona at home. You are only a student while at RMC and it will be challenging for some. Most cadets are curious and will engage you in asking questions. I would concentrate on those interested and leave the ones that are not alone.
 - When working with cadets it is good to understand quite a few of them wait until last minute, this could make group work stressful. I found them to be receptive though when approached to meet early and to start planning. They are busy, be flexible.
 - We are essentially cadets, treat the cadets as peers and you will profit enormously from the relationships over the year. Be an ambassador from the CAF snr nco perspective, and be the first to engage the students, they aren't always sure how to take us. Use your first name and learn their names and trades as well. This is perhaps the most important aspect of NEPDP, to learn about the experience of the officer corps at RMC (formative years indeed) from inside the circle
 - In most classes, you will not have to interact with them much and they will not generally open up to you unless you initiate conversation. In fact, they appear to be intimidated by your rank and would probably stand in the back before sitting down next to you if they had the choice. Once you open the door to them, they will be happy to seek and accept advice from you or ask questions about military life outside the RMC walls. You will find that they have heavy schedules, much heavier than that of an NEPDP student. Most will aim for 60% and write their papers the night before they are due.
 - Group work is the most challenging aspect to RMC. They cadets are young and inexperienced although they have great minds and good potential. They will try to defer to a senior NCOs experience to lead group work, and sometimes this is required to get them on track and on time.
7. Do you have any other comments about the NEPDP experience, preparation for it, or recommendations about the program? Avez-vous d'autres commentaires sur l'expérience PQPFM, sa préparation ou des recommandations sur le programme?
- It was a fantastic year, and if an NCM uses his/her time wisely, they will get a great deal out of the experience and leave a mark on countless future leaders. An opportunity not to be taken lightly.
 - The RMC culture is challenging at first, dress and deportment is not that of a typical CFB adjust expectations accordingly. Your previous professional experience will allow you to be successful in your studies. Weak high school/ post-secondary education results are not accurate predictors of your success at RMC. Your military experience and work ethic will determine your success. I would be happy to speak

with the group via media (zoom) or answer email. David you have my contact info on What's App.

- I wish we had some of the bridging tools prior to coming. Absolutely thought the breakfast before the start was a nice way to meet everyone.
- There should definitely be an online DLN prep course that should be included so older students do not have to learn how to write an essay while at RMC. Students should at least have an idea of that before they attend the classes. Taking 3rd and 4th year courses are nice as they are better than the 1st year courses in my opinion, but there is still a level of experience in writing expectation that comes with those courses which a Chief does not have. Although the professors are aware of that and are willing to help, it would have been nice to have online exposure to writing essays before arriving at RMC. While some teaching points were covered in the bridging program, I think it would help to be exposed to it before the bridging program who would serve of a refresher instead of a teaching mechanism.
- Overall great program, I moved my family here and found it was easy to balance both studies and family life.
- Be a student and a peer. Form relationships with everyone possible and check the ego at the commissionaire's desk
- Great program, and glad I did it. Avoid doing "extras" while you are on course so your studies don't get derailed. If social distancing requirements ease by the time you arrive, ensure you get together occassionally to talk. We did that once per week and we found it beneficial to share our trials and tribulations. Good luck!
- Start off slow. Take your mandatory classes and if possible take 4 courses in the fall term. This will enable you to relearn how to learn in an academic environment. I found that my second term of 5 courses was easier because of the lessons learned in the first term. Set goals, and timelines, and meet those. Time management is the key in academic success. Dont be afraid of the 3rd and 4th year courses. I found I enjoyed the higher level courses more than the first year courses.