

IN THE CASE OF: [REDACTED]

BOARD DATE: 21 January 2025

DOCKET NUMBER: AR20230010757

APPLICANT REQUESTS: constructive service credit for his master's degree and civilian experience

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING DOCUMENT(S) CONSIDERED BY THE BOARD:

- DD Form 149 (Application for Correction of Military Record)
- Curriculum Vitae
- DA Form 61 (Application for Appointment)
- DA Form 5074-R (Record of Award of Entry Grade Credit)
- Official Administrative Transcript

FACTS:

1. The applicant did not file within the 3-year time frame provided in Title 10, U.S. Code, section 1552(b); however, the Army Board for Correction of Military Records (ABCMR) conducted a substantive review of this case and determined it is in the interest of justice to excuse the applicant's failure to timely file.
2. The applicant states, in effect:
 - a. Upon his direct commissioning onto active duty through the health professions scholarship program, he completed a DA Form 5074-R (Record of Award of Entry Grade Credit (Medical and Dental Officers)). Unfortunately, at the time, he was not aware that his master's degree or work experience had not been added for entry grade credit.
 - b. Beginning in the year of 2015 and ending in the year of 2016, he completed a graduation program for which he received a Master's of Science in Biomedical Science with a concentration in research and cell biology. During this program, he completed a thesis, which required extensive experience with literature reviews, basic science, and laboratory experiments. Completion of this program also required knowledge of genetics, pharmacology, physiology, and ethics beyond what is received in a general Doctor of Medicine program. Because of this experience, he has been able to initiate and complete research projects during residency; some resulting in publication.

c. He plans to continue pursuing an active role in research throughout his military career; adding to the body of scientific literature as well as improving department and system level issues. A task he has completed on multiple occasions at the Tripler Department of Behavioral Health. Additionally, he has been able to excel, during his time on the inpatient and consultation liaison services in his role as a 60W (Psychiatrist) (residency training status).

d. His additional knowledge and experience of genetics, physiology, pharmacology, as well as his research background have allowed him to expand upon the biopsychosocial (biologic, psychological, social) model of how psychiatry is practiced today. This skill set has been and will continue to be greatly utilized above and beyond what he received in his terminal degree training as a Doctor of Medicine.

e. Post residency, he believes this additional skill set may better prepare him for fellowship training and otherwise bolster the U.S. Army mission of providing excellent and efficient psychiatric care to its Soldiers. Utilization of the skill set and experience obtained, during this degree program, will also assist in mentoring junior leaders in obtaining further Army schooling, bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, and terminal degree training.

f. Additionally, he has over two years of experience as a healthcare policy analyst. In this role, he continued to use his honed abilities in market research and system level analysis to develop compelling presentations for key opinion leaders and stakeholders in healthcare policy and the pharmaceutical industry. He acted in the role of a scientific liaison for decision makers at the corporate executive level. These skills are easily transferrable to a division psychiatry or department head position; where a single psychiatrist acts as a cabinet member for their commanding officer, leading the direction of the health of the fighting force. Being able to analyze system level problems and develop solutions is a key skill for an Army psychiatrist, behavioral health officer, and all medical officers in general.

g. All the education that he has obtained, prior to commissioning, should be recognized for the role it played in paving the way for him to be an effective, efficient, and empathetic scholar, leader, and specialized psychiatrist.

3. The applicant provides the following documents:

a. His curriculum vitae which shows his civilian education, leadership roles, work experience, publications and poster presentations, and honors and awards. The entire document is available for the Board's review.

b. His official academic transcript from [REDACTED] University [REDACTED] which is available for the Board's review.

4. The applicant's service record contains the following documents:

a. DA Form 71 (Oath of Office - Military Personnel) shows he took the oath of office as a Reserve Commissioned Officer, in the rank of second lieutenant, on 12 May 2017.

b. DA Form 5074-R (Record of Award of Entry Grade Credit (Medical and Dental Officers)), 23 February 2021, shows he received constructive service credit for his Doctor of Medicine degree from 14 August 2017 through 10 May 2021. He received 4 years of credit, which qualified him for the rank of captain.

5. On 4 March 2024, the Director, Medical Education Directorate, Office of the Surgeon General (OTSG) provided an advisory opinion, which states:

a. The applicant is requesting constructive service credit for his Master's in Biomedical Sciences from the [REDACTED]. He completed one year of full-time study and was awarded the degree on, 15 May 2016.

b. Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 6000.13 (Accession and Retention Policies, Programs, and Incentives for Military Health Professions Officers), 30 December 2015, is the governing directive in the determination of constructive service credit. Enclosure 3, paragraph 1.c(4) states: "Credit will be awarded for any period of advanced education in a health profession (other than medicine and dentistry) beyond the baccalaureate degree level that exceeds the basic education required for the appointment, if such advanced education will be directly used by the Military Department concerned." A Master's in Biomedical Science is not required to become a physician.

c. The OTSG has not previously recommended credit for such a master's degree as a preface to Medical School, with the sole exception of when the master's degree required research and when the officer went on to publish research, as an Army physician. The applicant had research time, as part of his master's degree. Additionally, he used those research skills, while on active duty, in authoring a manuscript that per his curriculum vitae has been accepted for publication. To that end, he meets the above requirements of the DoDI as the research skills developed in his master's program are being directly utilized by the Army. Therefore, he should be granted credit in accordance with DoDI 6000.13. This instruction notes he may be awarded one year of constructive service credit for each year of full-time graduate equivalent education, for which he completed a one-years master's degree.

d. The applicant also makes a request for constructive service credit for his work experience, before attending medical school. OTSG has not previously recommended constructive service credit for work experience. There is no evidence that it is warranted in this instance.

e. Therefore, the recommendation of the Medical Education Directorate, OTSG, is to approve the request for constructive service credit for his Master's of Biomedical Science on the grounds that it meets with the intent of the applicable regulation in that the Army has received direct benefit from his degree by way of his research publication. This is an opinion only, final determination will be provided by the Board.

6. On 21 May 2024, the advisory opinion was provided to the applicant to allow him the opportunity to respond. On 22 May 2024, he thanked the agency for the correspondence and had no concerns. He would like to waive the fifteen day pause.

BOARD DISCUSSION:

After reviewing the application and all supporting documents, the Board determined partial relief was warranted. The applicant's contentions, the military record, and regulatory guidance were carefully considered. Based upon the findings and recommendation of the OTSG advisory opinion and the appearance of concurrence from the applicant, the Board concluded there was sufficient evidence to award the applicant one year of constructive service credit for each year of full-time graduate education; however, the portion of the request related to additional work experience service credit is not warranted.

BOARD VOTE:

Mbr 1 Mbr 2 Mbr 3

: : : GRANT FULL RELIEF

   GRANT PARTIAL RELIEF

: : : GRANT FORMAL HEARING

: : : DENY APPLICATION

BOARD DETERMINATION/RECOMMENDATION:

1. The Board determined the evidence presented is sufficient to warrant a recommendation for partial relief. As a result, the Board recommends that all Department of the Army records of the individual concerned be corrected by one year of constructive service credit for the one year of full-time graduate study completed on 15 May 2016.
2. The Board further determined the evidence presented is insufficient to warrant a portion of the requested relief. As a result, the Board recommends denial of so much of the application that pertains to additional service credit based upon work experience.

5/4/2025

X

CHAIRPERSON

I certify that herein is recorded the true and complete record of the proceedings of the Army Board for Correction of Military Records in this case.

REFERENCES:

1. Title 10, U.S. Code, section 1552(b), provides that applications for correction of military records must be filed within 3 years after discovery of the alleged error or injustice. This provision of law also allows the ABCMR to excuse an applicant's failure to timely file within the 3-year statute of limitations if the ABCMR determines it would be in the interest of justice to do so.
2. Army Regulation 135-101 (Appointment of Reserve Commissioned Officers for Assignment to Army Medical Department Branches) states in paragraph 3-2 (Determination of entry grade for officers not ordered to active duty) table 3-1 states credit for additional advanced degrees. Degree must add adjunctive skills primary to performance in the anticipated duty position. Credit is awarded based on full time equivalent education up to 24 months for a Master's Degree.
3. DoDI 6000.13 (Accession and Retention Policies, Programs, and Incentives for Military Health Professions Officers):
 - a. Enclosure 3, 2c (Constructive Service Credit) states this credit is awarded to a person who begins commissioned service after obtaining the additional education, training, or experience required for appointment, designation, or assignment as a health professions officer. The designation will be to the same grade and date of rank

comparable to that attained by officers who begin commissioned service after getting a baccalaureate degree and serve for the period of time it would take to obtain the additional education. Constructive service credit will only be used to determine initial grade, rank in grade, and service in grade for promotion eligibility.

b. Enclosure 3, paragraph 1c.(4) states credit will be awarded for any period of advanced education in a health profession (other than medicine and dentistry) beyond the baccalaureate degree level that exceeds the basic education required for the appointment, if such advanced education will be directly used by the Military Department concerned.

//NOTHING FOLLOWS//