



UNDERSTANDING THE ARCTIC OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT COURSE (UAOEC)

EXPLORING PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE ARCTIC OPERATING CONDITIONS

COURSE OVERVIEW

Understanding the Arctic Operational Environment explores how environmental and climate conditions shape Arctic operations across the North American Arctic, European High North, and Russian Arctic. Using a Past, Present, and Future structure, learners examine key trends in sea ice, permafrost, weather, terrain, infrastructure, and regional geography to better understand operational and security implications in a changing Arctic.

Course Objectives

Learners will gain critical knowledge and skills to:

- Describe how the Arctic operational environment has changed over time across the North American Arctic, European High North, and Russian Arctic.
- Recognize key environmental, climate, and weather trends affecting sea, land, and air operations in the Arctic.
- Explain how changing Arctic conditions create operational and security challenges for military and security practitioners.
- Compare regional differences across the North American Arctic, European High North, and Russian Arctic.
- Analyze future Arctic operating conditions, operational implications, and mitigation considerations.



Learning Experience

This virtual course features:

- Two weeks (~20 hours) with asynchronous modules and one live session
- Organized around a Past, Present, and Future exploration of the Arctic operating environment
- Compares the North American Arctic, European High North, and Russian Arctic



Who Should Attend:

- Security and defense professionals
- Military planners and strategists
- Policy makers, analysts, and educators
- Interagency and international partners

WHY IT MATTERS

The Arctic is changing in ways that affect access, mobility, infrastructure, logistics, and security considerations across the region. Understanding these environmental trends helps practitioners recognize how conditions differ across the North American Arctic, European High North, and Russian Arctic. This course helps learners connect environmental change to operational understanding and future planning.

This two-week course is delivered primarily in an asynchronous format, allowing participants to complete readings and assignments on their own schedule. One live 2-hour synchronous session is held on the last Friday to support discussion, synthesis, and applied analysis.