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Editor's Forum

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EDITOR'S FORUM

In the spring edition of the editor's forum we have one interesting paper concerning self defense training for pilots. In an uncertain world and within an industry like aviation pilots have a greater risk of confronting directly the threat of terrorism. This threat may come at any time. We have been exposed to the effects of a traditional aircraft take over by hijackers and or terrorists. Measures are in place to minimize the exposure of this type of situation with the installation of secure doors to the flight deck down to intensive screening of passengers at the terminal.

Perhaps what pilots may not realize are the potential dangers that exist beyond the "flight takeover." By nature pilots on the ground may be targets of terrorism for a number of reasons to include the company they represent as an employee to the potential kidnap of the pilot to be used to pilot a stolen aircraft for harmful purposes. Regardless of the purpose, pilots who are unable to protect themselves with weapons due to their proximity in foreign countries or in places that prohibit such carriage, the pilot may find it useful to protect themselves using martial arts as a deterrent.

Dr. Edward John Overchuk of Kent State University has given us a option to consider for pilot self defense. In Dr. Overchuk's paper "Self Defense 101: An Exploration of Self Defense Training and Its Applicability for College Flight Majors", the idea of offering martial arts training to students in aviation programs at universities presents some positive possibilities to address the afore mentioned issues.

The benefits of martial arts training as a method of self defense when other means may not be practical should be obvious. The side benefits of self discipline training to religious development are but a few others. The term martial arts have many meanings throughout different cultures. Offering such training in the university environment may have some drawbacks but may also have some tremendous possibilities to address many different collegiate issues. Enjoy the reading of Dr. Overchuk's paper and see what you think. You may certainly agree or disagree with the idea through the forum of the *Journal of Aviation Aerospace Education and Research*.

Another area of interest comes from my attendance at the winter meeting of the Aviation Accreditation Board International (AABI) held this year in Jacksonville FL. For the past couple of years AABI has been transitioning from traditional academic standards of accreditation to Outcomes Criteria based accreditation. Not new at this, AABI is following the lead of regional accreditors and other specialized accreditors.

With Outcomes Criteria based accreditation along comes Outcomes Assessment systems that must develop the evidence necessary for an institution to show the criteria are being met. The assessment systems may become the driving force in education if an institution is seeking accreditation whereas the concept of "embedded assessment" provides a structure to capture evidence of student performance.

The sixty four dollar question is, at what point can embedded assessment practices interfere with "academic freedom"? Faculty has for centuries fought hard to maintain one of the fundamental practices of education and that is "academic freedom." Now having to provide evidence of learning the burden on faculty may be self incriminating. Will the assessment system drive what I teach? Will the evidence that the assessment system captures be an indicator of my abilities as an educator? I have already felt the resistance to this at my institution.

Editor's Forum

Perhaps you have had dealings with this paradigm shift in accreditation. I would certainly like you to share your thoughts and ideas on this by submitting your papers to the Forum section of the *JAAER*.

Have a great summer.

Fly safe.

Bill Kohlruss

Editor