Module 3

USMC Culture
Goals and Objectives

- State the Core Values of the Marine Corps
- Understand common USMC customs and courtesies
- Describe common USMC traditions
- Identify a minimum of two cultural characteristics unique to the Marine Corps
- Understand common USMC leadership principles
Core Values

- Successful teams share a common vision and adhere to common values
- Marines and Civilian Marines are expected to strive for the same values
Core Values

- What do they mean to you?
  - Honor
  - Courage
  - Commitment
Traditions
“Semper Fidelis”

- Marine Corps motto
- Customs and traditions set Marines apart—”Semper Fi” keeps us together
- Latin for “always faithful”
- Underscores the Core Value of commitment
Traditions
The Oaths

- Pledges, vows, and oaths are serious aspects of everyday life
- All Marines take an oath to affirm their commitment
- Oaths are part Constitutional requirement, part custom
- Marine Officers take an Oath of Office
- Enlisted Marines take an Oath of Enlistment
I, ______________, do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely without mental reservation or purpose of evasion; that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter.

that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

So help me God.

Oath of Enlistment

Oath of Office
Traditions
The Marines’ Hymn

- Revered tribute to warriors and the proud battle history of the Corps
- Written in 1859, words appeared on recruiting posters in 1898
- Oldest service song
- When played, Marines come to attention and others are respectfully quiet
Traditions
Marine Corps Birthday

- Officially 10 November 1775
- Very important date to all Marines
- Major General John Archer Lejeune set the standard and penned the birthday message
- Celebrated on the battlefield or in garrison
- Birthday Balls—often elaborate and include a formal dinner, dancing, and a pageant
- Cake-cutting ceremony
Symbols and Icons
Eagle, Globe, and Anchor

- USMC emblem and icon of greatness. Since 1868.
- Eagle represents our Nation
- Globe represents our worldwide service.
- Anchor represents the Naval origins and amphibious nature of the Corps
Symbols and Icons

Ceremonial Swords

Officers wear the Mameluke Sword

- Lieutenant Presley O’Bannon received one as a gift after the victory at Derna Tripoli
- Enlisted sword fashioned after cavalry sword
- They are the two oldest weapons in our nation’s arsenal today in continued use
Symbols and Icons
Marine Corps War Memorial

- Dedicated to all Marines whose lives have been lost in defense of our nation
- Depicts the flag raising at Iwo Jima
- Located near Arlington National Cemetery outside Washington, DC
- 32-foot-high memorial with 60-foot flagpole
Customs and Courtesies

- Traditional form of politeness of arms
- Courtesy is a prerequisite for discipline—afforded to all ranks at all times
- Discipline and courtesy contribute to esprit de corps
Customs and Courtesies
United States Flag

- U.S. flag represents the nation
- Everyone should show proper respect for the U.S. flag
- Stand and cover your heart when in review or when the flag is being raised/lowered
- Same respect should be shown for the playing of the National Anthem
Customs and Courtesies

Salute

- Gesture of respect and comradeship
- Greeting between senior and junior ranks
- Junior renders the salute and the senior returns it
- Historically, the salute conveyed friendly intentions
- Salutes can be hand, rifle, or “eyes right”
Customs and Courtesies

Parades

- Held to mark important events
- Marines march in formation
- Music plays a major role and is typically provided by a Marine Band
- Parade is a universal symbol of professionalism, discipline, and esprit de corps
- Evening Parade at Marine Corps Barracks and Sunset Parades are premier examples
Customs and Courtesies
Ceremonies and Social Occasions

- Birthday Ball
- Change of Command/Post and Relief
- Promotion and Retirement Ceremony
- Award Ceremony
- Wetting Down
- Hail and Farewell
Cultural Characteristics

Uniforms

- Uniforms are functional, traditional, and distinctive
- Main uniform types are Field, Service, and Dress
- Insignias and medals or ribbons are worn on the uniform to show unit, personal, and professional achievements
Cultural Characteristics
Dress Uniform

- Evening Dress contains many historical elements

*Can you point out four?*
Cultural Characteristics

Rank

- Visible sign of achievement
- Denotes a level of leadership
- Indicates the level of responsibility for personnel, equipment, and mission
- Responsibility grows with each increase in rank
- USMC has three rank structures
  - Enlisted
  - Warrant Officer
  - Officer
Within the enlisted ranks, Private has no insignia

Increasing responsibility accompanies each step up in rank

Marine Corps prides itself on strong leadership at the NCO level
Warrant Officer

- Technical officer specialist with extensive knowledge, training, and experience with a particular system or equipment
- Advances from the SNCO ranks
- Attends Warrant Officer Basic Course

Chief Warrant Officer 5
Chief Warrant Officer 4
Chief Warrant Officer 3
Chief Warrant Officer 2
Warrant Officer
Officer

- Officers comprise 12% of the total active force
- 57% are company grade
- Officers are commissioned
Cultural Characteristics
Military Time & Dates

- Based on 24-hour clock
- Used operationally and is based on Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), known to the USMC as “Zulu time”
- Daily use is based on local time
- Date is written 21 Mar 08
Cultural Characteristics—Jargon

- Marine and Naval history influence phrases and terms
- Acronyms are prevalent
- When you are unsure about what was just said, ask!
Wrap-Up

The Marine Corps has a unique culture based on years of tradition and custom. The symbols and icons remind us of its rich heritage, and the day-to-day nuances reinforce the legacy.