

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

THE UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE OFFICER'S
TRAINING CORPS: PROVIDING THE RIGHT LEADER
FOR THE TRANSFORMING FORCE

by

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ABSTRACT

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The Global War on Terrorism is forcing the United States Army to transform at an unprecedented pace. This transformation may cause some of the most dramatic doctrinal and organizational changes the U. S. Army has ever experienced in such a short amount of time. The emerging junior leaders of the future force will require a different set of skills and attributes than their contemporaries from the Cold War period.

Army ROTC produces seventy-five percent of the new officers for the U. S. Army. Cadet Command must continue to attract, train and commission agile and adaptive leaders of character. This is a significant challenge for Cadet Command and the United States Army.

This research paper examines Cadet Command's pre-commissioning training plan to determine if it will produce agile and adaptive leaders our Army needs to face emerging threats.

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THE UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE OFFICER'S TRAINING CORPS: PROVIDING THE RIGHT LEADER FOR THE TRANSFORMING FORCE

Leaders aren't born; they are made. And they are made just like everything else, through hard work. And that's the price we'll have to pay to achieve that goal, or any goal.

- Vince Lombardi

Prior to World War I, the primary means of producing officers for the United States Army was either the United States Military Academy at West Point or by direct commissioning. World Wars I and II caused the size of the Army to grow dramatically in a very short time. Conventional means of accessing our officer corps were not sufficient to meet the rapidly growing demands. As a direct result, Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs were established on college campuses throughout the country. Since that time, ROTC has become the largest source of new Lieutenants for the U. S. Army.¹

Because of evolving threats and an ever changing environment, the Army of today and the future must have leaders who know how to think and not just what to think. An officer's education may evolve over his or her entire career, but the pre-commissioning phase of an officer's training will lay the framework and foundation for lifelong learning. Army ROTC has a great history of producing high caliber officers who have made significant contributions during war and in times of peace. If the U. S. Army is going to be successful with its ongoing transformation initiatives, it must have a professional and versatile officer corps. Recruiting, training, retaining, and accessing officers with the right skills and attributes are significant challenges that lay ahead for the Army ROTC program.

Cadet Command has published a "Future Lieutenants Study" wherein they identified the major challenges and made recommendations on how they intend to overcome these challenges in order to provide the Army with the leaders it will need.² Adapting to an ever changing environment will ensure that Cadet Command, its 14 Brigades and 272 Battalions,³ will continue to produce outstanding officers capable of meeting future demands. This paper examines Cadet Command's pre-commissioning training plan to determine if it will produce agile and adaptive leaders. In addition, this paper will provide some recommendations on possible improvements to the existing ROTC program.

AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Army gets its Officer Corps from four different sources. The United States Military Academy at West Point produces between 900 and 1,000 new Lieutenants each year.⁴ Nearly

100 % of these Lieutenants go on active duty. ROTC accounts for 75% of all new commissions into the Army each year.⁵ The Army Reserve Officer Training Corps commissions approximately 3,900 new Lieutenants each year. Approximately 2,900 of these Lieutenants go on active duty and the remainder goes into the Army Reserve or Army National Guard.⁶ In addition to West Point and ROTC, there are approximately 300 other Soldiers commissioned each year. These officers come from Officer Candidate School and from direct appointments. In general, U. S. Army Recruiting Command recruits for Officer Candidate School (OCS).⁷ The OCS mission varies quite a bit depending on Army needs, since both ROTC and West Point are recruiting for a projected mission four years from now. In 2003 Army ROTC had approximately 30,800 Cadets nation wide. In comparison, Air Force ROTC had about 17,500 cadets and the Navy's program had about 6,000 Midshipmen.⁸ In fiscal year 2004, Army ROTC commissioned 2,076 officers on active duty and 1,168 officers into the reserve forces. The active goal was 2,350 and the goal for the reserves was 1,770.⁹

Army ROTC began on college campuses in 1916. It was established as part of President Woodrow Wilson's National Defense Act of 1916. One of ROTC's initial goals was to bring more college educated men into the U.S. Army.¹⁰ It was, and still remains, an excellent way to leverage the existing U. S. university system to help provide leaders for the U.S. military. Practically speaking, Army ROTC can expand its numbers quicker than the United States Military Academy to meet increased demands for officers. During World War I, Army ROTC played a significant role in meeting the needs of the American Expeditionary Force that fought in Europe. During World War II, ROTC rapidly expanded to produce officers for the military which experienced near exponential growth. Some large university programs, like the University of Pittsburgh, commissioned up to 1,000 new Lieutenants every six months during the early 1940s.¹¹

ROTC TODAY

Today, the Army ROTC organization is made up of 2 regions. The Eastern Region has its headquarters at Ft. Knox, Kentucky. The Western Region is headquartered at Ft. Lewis, Washington.¹² Together, these 2 regions constitute Cadet Command which is based at Ft. Monroe, Virginia. On February 15th, 2002, U.S. Army Cadet Command combined with the U.S. Army Recruiting Command to form Accessions Command.¹³ This new command was created to insure all recruiting, for officers, cadets, warrant officers, and enlisted personnel is synchronized and complementary. This consolidation has already enabled our Army to make more efficient use of our advertising dollars. It has also enabled the Army to approach recruiting

in a much more holistic manner. This new holistic approach looks at accessing someone in the Total Army. It has broken down the “walls” between ROTC, enlisted recruiters, and reserve recruiters.¹⁴ All recruiters can now get credit for referrals and for getting someone to join a component for which they may not have direct responsibility.

In the past, ROTC and enlisted recruiters often found themselves competing for the same prospects. Now many ROTC detachments have an enlisted recruiter on their staff.¹⁵ This recruiter may help Cadets get into the Simultaneous Membership Program. The Simultaneous Membership Program enables a Cadet to be a member of ROTC and also drill with a local reserve unit.¹⁶ These recruiters also recruit on campus, looking primarily for those students leaving school before completion of a 4 year degree. As part of their on campus recruiting efforts they often find prospects that are a good match for ROTC. These recruiters’ missions are based on overall accessions whether the candidate is active duty, reserves or contracting with ROTC. In the past, one prospect might have had up to 4 different Army recruiters talking to them about different programs; one person talking to the prospective Soldier may be a Captain from ROTC, there may be a different active duty Army recruiter, a reserve forces recruiter and a National Guard recruiter. This redundancy had high potential to send mixed signals to the prospect. Recruiting Command and Cadet Command now work hand in hand to get prospects into the program which is the best match for them.¹⁷

Cadet Command’s Eastern and Western regions are physically divided into fourteen Brigades. The Eastern Region has six Brigades and the Western region has 8 Brigades. These Brigades cover all 50 states including Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico.¹⁸

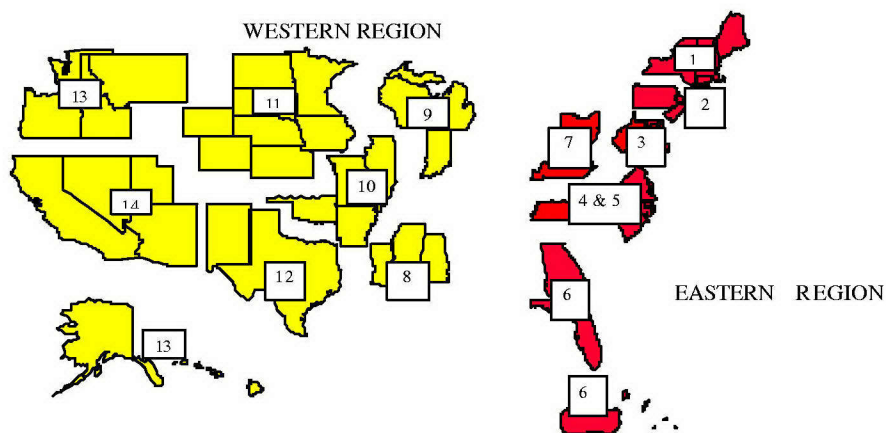


FIGURE 1. ROTC COMMAND STRUCTURE

Within these Brigades there are 272 host colleges and universities.¹⁹ Many of these schools have cross enrollment agreements with other schools in their local area. These cross enrollment agreements allow students to take ROTC classes at the host institution and receive academic credit at their school. The amount of effort that goes into recruiting from these cross enrollment schools varies dramatically from one ROTC battalion to the other. Much of it depends on the personality of the Professor of Military Science and whether he or she believes there is a viable market at the 'sister' schools.

Each host institution normally has a Lieutenant Colonel as the Professor of Military Science (PMS). A few very large programs, such as Virginia Military Institute, the Citadel, Virginia Tech and Texas A&M, have a Colonel as the PMS, but there are very few programs that large.²⁰ Each ROTC unit is commonly referred to as a Battalion by Cadet Command. The PMS is routinely referred to as a Battalion Commander.

Very few of the 272 schools have the same structures and/or organizations. The size of the cadre is normally proportional to the recruiting and commissioning mission of that school.²¹ There is normally one cadre member for every two to three officer commissioning requirements. Majors and senior Captains are assigned as Assistant Professors of Military Science (APMS).²² Senior NCOs are assigned as instructors, operations sergeants, administration sergeants, and supply specialists. The cadres are made up of a variety of active duty soldiers, active guard and reserve (AGR) soldiers, Department of the Army civilians, contractors, and school employees. The Professor of Military Science is an Active Component or Reserve officer, selected by a centralized selection board at Cadet Command. A prospective PMS must apply for the job, be interviewed, selected by Cadet Command and then accepted by the school where they will be assigned.²³

Many ROTC battalions are located on college campuses with Air Force and/or a Naval ROTC program. Naval ROTC units are normally headed by a Navy Captain or a Marine Corps Colonel. Air Force ROTC units generally have a Colonel as their Professor of Air Science. This collocation of different ROTC units creates an environment where the services may be in competition for the same college students, since there are a limited number of students who have a propensity for military service. Army regulation 145-1, "Senior Reserve Officers Training Corps Program: Organization, Administration and Training" encourages collaboration between different service ROTC programs.²⁴ Though collaboration is encouraged, there is nothing mandated by formal agreements that is designed to improve economy and efficiency amongst the different service's programs.²⁵

PAST STUDIES

The Army has conducted periodic surveys and studies of ROTC to ensure that the program remains relevant and is producing the type of officer our Army needs.²⁶ Cadet Command has conducted surveys at the Army War College and at the Sergeants Major Academy to see if our leaders from the field believed ROTC was producing Lieutenants with the requisite skills and attributes to be effective and efficient leaders. This periodic self-assessment by Cadet Command is very healthy and helps to ensure cadets receive the proper pre-commissioning training.

A variety of formal studies have also been conducted over the past thirty years. The Review of Education and Training for Officers (RETO) study, completed in 1978, made several recommendations on how ROTC should assess leader development. One of its most noteworthy contributions was the establishment of TRADOC's pre-commissioning common core tasks.²⁷ The Reserve Officer's Training Corps Study Group Report was published in 1986. The results of this study provided the basis for having ROTC established as a major subordinate command under TRADOC.²⁸ An Army Science Board report, published in 1996, stimulated much discussion about the need for Army scientists, but had little impact on ROTC operations.²⁹ While past studies did provide a forum for ROTC to assess itself, they sometimes had a limited practical affect. This was mainly because there was not a specific staff section responsible for the implementation of the recommendations from these studies. Today there is a Training Development Cell at Cadet Command that addresses recommendations from these self-assessment studies.³⁰ These dedicated resources provided significant improvement over the previous disjointed efforts at evaluating and implementing recommendations.

PRE-COMMISSIONING TRAINING

Pre-commissioning training is comprised of two main components. They are military skills/professional knowledge and Professional Military Education (PME). The PME is designed to provide a cadet with military skills and professional knowledge so they can be successful during their initial training, whether that is an Officer Basic Course or The Basic Officer Leader Course. Professional Military Education consists of four parts: a baccalaureate degree; completion of Military Science and Leadership (MSL) Advance Course and Leader Development and Assessment Course (LDAC, summer camp training normally between the junior and senior years); completion of Enhanced Skills Training Program (ESTP); and demonstrated proficiency in military history.³¹

Cadets must possess a baccalaureate degree granted by an accredited four year degree granting institution and they must have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale. Cadets must also successfully complete the following MSL courses, which are 3 semester credit hours each.³²

- MSL 301 Leadership and Problem Solving
- MSL 302 Leadership and Ethics
- MSL 401 Leadership and Management
- MSL 402 Officership

They must complete the Enhanced Skills Training Program (ESTP) which assesses and develops ROTC cadets' communications, problem solving, and analytical skills through training and assessment in mathematics, grammar and reading. ESTP is an online application which should be completed in either the sophomore or junior year. In order to meet the military history requirement, cadets must complete a one semester course in military history given by an academic department or by a MSL instructor who has attended the military history instructor course.³³

The Enhanced Skills Training Program, an example of Cadet Command's effort to modify the training program, was initiated in response to a concern that newly commissioned lieutenants did not all possess the fundamental skills in math, communications, and reading required by an Army officer.³⁴ This program seeks to level the playing field by insuring that all newly commissioned officers have at least a basic grasp of the fundamentals. But what is this really saying about US colleges and universities? Do our schools give out degrees to a lot of students who do not possess rudimentary reading, writing, and arithmetic skills? Our universities are some of the finest in the world. Students from countries all around the globe still come to the United States to get their undergraduate and graduate level education. The educational levels of most college graduates make me believe that the vast majority of college graduates have mastered the basic skills. The Army should get out of the business of verifying that cadets have a good foundation in grammar, math, and reading. We are wasting valuable resources by having the cadets do this extra online work just to make sure they are capable of doing what every college graduate should be able to do; read and write at an acceptable level. An Army officer does not need to be a great composer but should have a firm grasp of basic grammar. The Army should look to some of the practices used by successful civilian companies. Companies such as Delta Airlines, Coca Cola, and Home Depot target schools where they have gotten top notch employees in the past. If the Army determines some schools are producing graduates with less than acceptable educations, then we should no longer recruit

from those schools. We should concentrate Army ROTC efforts at schools that produce well educated graduates and top notch leaders.

QUALITY VERSUS QUANTITY

Without question, it is very difficult to determine the exact type of lieutenant the US Army will need in the future. If we do not know what the requirements will be, how can we train someone for this uncertainty? The focus must be on training someone how to think and not what to think.³⁵ Army ROTC often closes programs that do not produce sufficient numbers. We must, however, carefully balance our desire for quantity with our need for quality. If we are verifying rudimentary skills then we may not be getting the right quality of people. Major corporations recruit from schools where they have gotten high performing people in the past. We should do the same. It may be worth while to have a cadre of two soldiers at a university even if we only commission three to five officers each year. We must not be overly enamored with large programs that produce large numbers of officers. If we are concerned whether our new officers can read, write and do basic math, can we really believe that we are getting agile and adaptive leaders for our future conflicts?

During the Cold War, the Army's focus was on training and developing leaders to fight the Soviets in Europe. The emphasis was on preparing for a mid to high intensity conflict against a somewhat predictable adversary. Much time was spent on developing templates of enemy formations and preparing to counteract their doctrine. Battle lines were more clearly defined and it was easy to identify the enemy. Our future leaders at all levels are going to need a very broad range of intellectual skills and abilities if they are going to function effectively in an increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environment. Rapidly changing technology, globalization, and the fact that many tactical decisions and actions may have dramatic operational and strategic implications will continue to make the Army reassess the way we develop our future leaders.³⁶

THE ENDSTATE OF TRAINING

Cadet Command has concluded that all initial (pre-commissioning) training must accomplish the following:³⁷

Impart	Enable	Provide	Establish
Knowledge	Analytical processes	Problem solving skills	Strong writing skills
Skills	Decision making	Mathematical skills	Strong verbal communication skills
Abilities		Computer skills	

TABLE 1³⁸

Currently, Cadet Command does not base its commission mission on numbers of lieutenants from specific majors.³⁹ As a result, there is no way to determine if the Army is commissioning enough officers with the requisite science, math, and engineering (SME) skills to meet future requirements. Nor is there any data stating how many and which type of academic majors the Army may require in the future. The Army may also be losing some of the best and brightest potential officers to the Navy and Air Force because of the Army policy caps on scholarship money.⁴⁰ For instance, the Navy pays full tuition at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. They have targeted that school because it produces the people with the technical skills the Navy needs. The Army has a cap of \$20,000 per year for tuition and the cost of Carnegie Mellon is approximately \$28,000. This disparity may encourage students with a propensity for military service to choose Naval ROTC over Army ROTC. In this particular instance, the emphasis of the Army ROTC program at the University of Pittsburgh was on getting a set number of cadets versus cadets with certain abilities. Specifically they looked for students who wouldn't cost much (in state tuition at a public or semi-public school) so they could give out a greater number of scholarships. There was seldom discussion of academic majors or GPAs as long as the students were passing. This is not to imply that high academic achievement is necessarily a good indicator of who will be a successful Army officer, but there should be a balance to insure the Army is getting an adequate cross section of the students so as to meet future needs. Cadet Command should conduct a study to determine a good mix of academic majors required of the Officer Corps. They should then award scholarships and "mission" ROTC Battalions based on academic disciplines. A sufficient number of these scholarships should be reserved for science, mathematics, and engineering students, much like the effort made to attract Nurses.

In 2002 a new set of textbooks were introduced for Army ROTC.⁴¹ Prior to that, there was a great deal of disparity between the battalions with regard to the program of instruction. General topics were dictated to the battalions, but the lesson plans and teaching techniques were developed at the battalion level. This lack of standardization often led to vast differences

between the battalions. These new text books go a long way towards standardizing and improving instruction across all 272 schools.

According to the Agile Leader's Study being conducted by the U. S. Army War College, the following attributes are essential for future Army leaders.⁴²



TABLE 2⁴³

Effective leaders must be capable of doing all of these things and they must also work to develop these same skills in their subordinates.⁴⁴

As a result of multiple studies and continuous self assessment, Cadet Command's program of instruction routinely evolves to meet new demands.⁴⁵ As part of the future Lieutenant study, Cadet Command interviewed a wide range of leaders. From analyzing the new text books and cadet command's regulations, it appears they have adopted General (Ret.) Peay's strategic view of pre-commissioning education and training. According to the study, by "strategic", General Peay believes pre-commissioning instruction should primarily be educational and theoretical instead of teaching a large number of perishable skills. The goal of pre-commissioning training should be to instill lasting values and attributes in the cadet on which he or she can build for the remainder of their careers.⁴⁶

Cadet Command is shifting the focus of their Leader Development and Assessment Course (LDAC, previously called advanced camp) to a more technical and tactical training event with less emphasis on assessment of the cadets.⁴⁷ LDAC was historically viewed as a final test or a rite of passage for the cadets, so a good portion of the MSIII year was often dedicated to getting cadets ready for the evaluation. Brigade commanders often used the evaluations results from LDAC to determine how well a PMS was doing. The shift, to focus more on training and less on evaluation, will benefit the overall program by allowing the cadre to focus on teaching the subjects versus “prepping” for the test. This must be accomplished by less on campus training as well as more focus on educating the cadets. Cadre members must instill in the cadets the motivation to become life long learners. The days of teaching squad level movement and ambush techniques on college campuses should come to an end.

ROTC AND ACADEMIA

ROTC on college campuses is a very important vehicle to remain connected with the American public. ROTC should be a conduit for academia to interject itself into our Army, not a conduit for the Army to interject itself into academia. We must minimize the extra requirements we place on cadets. The last thing we want is for students to get a “second major” in ROTC. As such, we must encourage the cadets to become involved in school activities. If our cadets spend too much time writing operations orders, preparing for field training exercises, or other duties associated with the cadet battalion chain of command, they have less time to be part of school clubs and organizations. We must put greater emphasis on cadets being leaders and members of school organizations. In this respect, it is much more important for a cadet to be the president of the math club than to be a cadet battalion commander. The president of the math club can send a message to other students and faculty that the cadet battalion commander may not have an opportunity to do. That message can be multifaceted: Army officers are intelligent scholars, community leaders, and their Army is made up of people just like them. This aspect of Army ROTC is critical for the all volunteer force to remain connected to the nation we serve. In the long run, it may also assist recruiting efforts thanks to the positive impression it will leave with the community.

ROTC junior and senior level course work now stresses Army values,⁴⁸ Officership⁴⁹ and service to the nation.⁵⁰ The emphasis appears to be on selfless service which is completely appropriate. We need our young cadets to view service to our nation as a key element of military service. They cannot think of ROTC as just a way to pay for college. If they believe it is only a way to get money, then they may negatively influence their non-ROTC peers, and could

also have a negative impact on the retention of their Soldiers once they come on active duty. Everything about ROTC should be geared toward leader development and career/national service motivation. Little emphasis should be placed on military unique skill acquisition at this phase of an officer's education and training.

At the same time, ROTC must remain balanced enough to ensure sufficient skills are taught to allow a future lieutenant to be successful at their basic course and lay a foundation for success in their first assignment.⁵¹ Cadet Command has identified a set of skills, attributes, actions, and values they believe all junior officers need in order to be successful. The ROTC training and educational plan is based on these four key components.⁵²

<u><i>Decision making</i></u>	ability to make complex, rapid decisions in a chaotic, ambiguous, time constrained environment
<u><i>Interpersonal</i></u>	Work as a team member, effectively work with individuals and groups of diverse backgrounds
<u><i>Analytical</i></u>	ability to break down complex problems and discern relationships between parts of a problem
<u><i>Synthetic</i></u>	broad, comprehensive understanding of a combination of information
<u><i>Computer proficiency</i></u>	with spread sheets, graphics and word processing
<u><i>Oral and written communication</i></u>	ability to clearly communicate a message to a diverse audience
<u><i>Information filtering</i></u>	ability to scan a large amount of information and determine what is relevant
<u><i>Research</i></u>	seek new knowledge and information

TABLE 3. SKILLS⁵³

<u><i>Mental agility</i></u>	ability to rapidly comprehend complex problems
<u><i>Flexibility</i></u>	quickly adapt to new situations
<u><i>Adaptability</i></u>	quickly adjust to a variety of missions
<u><i>Physical hardiness</i></u>	strength, endurance and self confidence

<u>Emotional hardiness</u>	function effectively in an ambiguous and rapidly changing environment
<u>Followership</u>	loyalty and dedication to one's unit and superiors
<u>Dominance</u>	desire to take charge when in charge

TABLE 4. ATTRIBUTES⁵⁴

<u>Teambuilding</u>	coaching, evaluating, mentoring subordinates and identifying your role in the larger organization
<u>Decision making</u>	identifying the problem, collecting and analyzing information, implementing a solution

TABLE 5. ACTIONS⁵⁵

<u>Self-less service</u>	willingness to place interests of nation, unit and subordinates above your own
<u>Respect</u>	recognize the dignity of others; treat others fairly

TABLE 6. VALUES⁵⁶

Cadets can learn as much from observing the ROTC cadre as they can from their course work. Cadet Command's Future Lieutenants' Study states, "The dynamic and assertive young Captain who nurtures professional relationships with cadets is perhaps the program's best recruiting and retention tool."⁵⁷ ROTC is hiring more and more contractors to do a variety of tasks, to include teaching, in an ROTC battalion.⁵⁸ A retired Lieutenant Colonel contracted to teach ROTC may be technically proficient enough to present the course material. This approach to resourcing faculty, however, may be very short sighted where the only real benefit is getting more Soldiers back in deployable units. Will this short term fix have a negative long term affect on the recruiting and retention of ROTC cadets? Most Cadets and college students connect on a different level with someone closer to their age than to someone closer to their father's age. They would be able to relate more with a young Captain, just out of company command, than with a contractor with any level of experience. ROTC cadets not only need to learn what is in the textbooks but, more importantly, they need to hear what is currently going on in the real Army. A young Active Duty Captain will be able to give them first hand accounts of what will be expected of them and what they may encounter. This assignment philosophy falls in line with emerging personnel policies that try to capitalize on officer's experiences. To

complement this, each Captain should be paired with a senior Sergeant First Class or Master Sergeant. From this team a cadet will get a taste of both a company commander's and platoon sergeant's perspective on roles and responsibilities. Contractors are well suited to fill administration or other supporting functions, but Captains and Senior NCOs should be the face of our Army when recruiting and teaching cadets.

The Army ROTC program is constantly evolving to insure that it produces agile and adaptive leaders our Army needs now and into the future.⁵⁹ I believe this is true based on personal observation of ROTC Lieutenants in the field and because of how well our Army is performing in both Iraq and Afghanistan. This personal observation is also born out by the critical study of noted behavioral scholars.

Today's junior officers are not afraid to lead in ambiguous conditions. They can execute a mission with minimal guidance. They are an incredibly valuable resource to a transforming Army that has desired and sought adaptive capacity in its leaders. The crucible of OIF has delivered to the Army, a cohort of adaptive leaders. The challenge for the Army is to encourage and leverage this priceless potential.

- Dr. Leonard Wong

Army ROTC is sufficient to meet the current and future needs of our emerging officer corps. Since the training and education part is on track, the next step is to determine what else can be improved upon in order to insure our ROTC Lieutenants are optimally prepared to take on the role of future Army leadership.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Cadet Command should explore the possibility of combining Naval, Air Force and Army ROTC or any combination thereof at universities that have more than one of these programs. There is potential for increased efficiencies especially in regards to administration and other support functions. Research could also be directed at the benefits of joint pre-commissioning training in order to inculcate "jointness" at the grass roots level of our officer corps.

Under the current Army ROTC structure there is a great opportunity to consolidate many administrative and supply functions. A study should be conducted to explore the possibility of centralizing many of these functions at the Brigade or higher level. Personnel actions across the Army are becoming more automated thereby lessening the need for personnel clerks at lower unit levels. Issue facilities at major installations are now centralized and, in many cases, CTA-50 items are pushed to the units based on requirements. Army ROTC should capitalize on these trends and adopt similar policies so as to reduce overhead and realize personnel savings.

Cadet Command should evaluate the training model for the cadets at the United States Military Academy. West Point Cadets do not have an FTX during each academic semester like the ROTC Cadets. Similar models should be adopted for all Cadets with an emphasis on academics during the school year and a focus toward field type training during the summer.

The concept of team teaching should also be explored by Cadet Command. Primary instructors for the first through third year cadets could be a post-command Captain and a Sergeant First Class with recent platoon sergeant experience. MS IVs could be taught by a Lieutenant Colonel and a senior Master sergeant or Sergeant Major team. These teams are well suited to teach pre-commissioning tasks and would give the cadets real insight into what they will encounter during their initial assignment.

CONCLUSION

Army ROTC is an important and viable means of producing agile and adaptive leaders. Currently, 52% of all General Officers are ROTC graduates compared to 33% for the Military Academy, 9% for OCS and 6% from direct appointment (primarily specialty branches such as doctors, dentists, veterinarians, chaplains and lawyers). Contractors may, in fact, play an increasingly important role in filling the ranks of ROTC cadre. In this regard, however, it is imperative that Cadet Command evaluate the right mix of Soldiers and contractors when staffing ROTC units. Cadet Command should make maximum use of contractors in supporting roles such as supply and administration. Active duty officers and NCOs should be the primary trainers and educators of our cadets. It is indeed time to explore opportunities to establish joint ROTC programs in order to lay the foundation for our joint officer of the future. Regardless, Army ROTC must continue to evolve and adapt to a changing environment in order to remain on its current path of producing leaders of character.

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ENDNOTES

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