

ROTC SENATE MEETING  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
APRIL 21, 2011

[In these minutes: Navy Brief, Air Force Brief, Army Brief]

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University Senate; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represent the view of, nor are they binding on the Senate, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.]

PRESENT: Paul Ruden (chair), Michael Conway, Steven DiNobile, Joel Fortenberry, Robert McMaster, Tom Brothen, Joan Howland

REGRETS: Perry Leo, Shawn Curley

I). Professor Paul Ruden convened the meeting and welcomed those present. Lt. Col. Conway invited those present to the Joint Service Review on April 30 and the Commissioning Ceremony on May 20 at 6:00 p.m.

II). CAPT DiNobile provided the committee with a Navy briefing. Presentation highlights included:

- The NROTC (Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps) mission is to develop Midshipmen morally, mentally and physically, and to instill them with the highest ideals of honor, duty and loyalty. In addition, the NROTC strives to ensure students graduate within a 4-year timeframe, and to commission them as officers in the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corp. If necessary, they can take classes during the summer, and scholarships are provided for this. This summer one student will be taking additional courses.
- Currently, the NROTC unit staff is comprised of ten individuals. CAPT DiNobile informed the committee that on June 1, 2012, he would be retiring. The Executive Officer was extended a year; Lieutenant Laird will be at CENTCOM headquarters for a year; The USMC Officer and the USMC Gunnery Sergeant will be transferring in June.
- There are 62 students in the Midshipmen Battalion –Seven are in the Seaman to Admiral 21<sup>st</sup> Century Program, and five in the Marine Enlisted Commissioning Education Program (MECEP). Fifty are Midshipmen.
- A majority of NROTC students are enrolled at the University of Minnesota (42) as opposed to the program's cross-town affiliate the University of St. Thomas (19). CAPT DiNobile noted that the NROTC's goal is to have 80% of its graduates nation-wide in technical majors. CAPT DiNobile explained that there are three tiers of degrees in the Navy. Tier one is engineering, Tier two is science and math, and Tier three is business and liberal arts.
- Commissioning statistics were shared: December 2010 – 4 USN; January 2011 – 1 USMC; May 2011 – 8 USN and 4 USMC; August 2011 – 1 USN. The graduates have degrees in mechanical engineering, aeronautical engineering,

mathematics, civil engineering, economics, criminology, geology, history, physiology, fisheries and wildlife life biology, and business administration. The NROTC program tries to commission one submarine officer from the University of Minnesota each year. This year there will be three submarine officers. Professor Ruden asked if all these individuals are nuclear trained. CAPT DiNobile confirmed that they are.

- Examples of NROTC extracurricular activities and community service activities were noted – Military excellence competitions such as the Securian Winter Race and the Tulane Drill Meet; community service such as color guard services, Adopt-A-Highway, junior ROTC drill meet judging, and Habitat for Humanity.
- Special events were also noted.
  - NROTC guest speakers – FBI Current Events, UMPD Alcohol Awareness, E-6 Crew Presentation, Submarine Crew Presentation
  - Camp Ripley Field Training Exercise
  - Joint Services Review/Ball
  - Honor Flight – ROTC students welcome WWII veterans when they return from a visit to Washington D.C. memorials
  - Joint Military Athletic Competition
  - Battalion Competition
- Freshmen, sophomore, and junior summer training opportunities were cited. Examples include but are not limited to Aviation Week, Surface Week, Sub Week, Marine Week, Enlisted Cruise, and Officer Cruise. CAPT DiNobile stated that he would participate in a summer training program in Norfolk, VA.
- CAPT DiNobile stated the outlook for Navy funding is tighter budgets for travel, unit operations, and personnel costs. He noted travel for midshipman physicals would be cut. He also noted that the Navy would be commissioning three newly appointed officers into the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR). They would not receive pay, but would receive medical benefits. Commissioning into the IRR aligns officer accessions with training and manpower requirements, and saves money by reducing personnel costs. Professor Tom Brothen asked if this would affect the individuals' graduation. CAPT DiNobile stated it would not.
- The NROTC accession program is focused on a decrease in the number of active duty slots, promoting technical majors, and increasing diversity. Professor Joan Howland asked if many students enter the ROTC program from high school JROTC programs. CAPT DiNobile stated that only four students entered from that program. Lt. Col. Conway noted that in the Army, the JROTC program is not considered a feeder program for the University ROTC. It is designed to produce better citizens.

III). Lt. Col. Fortenberry provided the committee with the Air Force briefing. Presentation highlights included:

- Lt. Col. Fortenberry noted that competition to enter the Air Force ROTC program is fierce. Scholarship cadets are not guaranteed field training, and if they do not qualify for field training they lose their scholarships. Additionally, if the cadets

do not graduate on time, their scholarships are terminated. If the cadets fail to meet academic standards, they may be required to repay their scholarships.

- Lt. Col Fortenberry and CAPT DiNobile discussed the differences in the Air Force and Navy approaches to providing scholarships and filtering out those individuals who are unable to progress in the programs.
- Lt. Col. Fortenberry pointed out the organizational chart and personnel listing. He noted he is retiring in October 2011 and will be leaving this summer. The new commander, Lt. Col. Schwartz will arrive on August 1, 2011. Capt. Worley is leaving in June and will be replaced by Capt. Bliss. Capt. Cooper will be remaining. Tech. Sgt. Gasparovich will be remaining. Staff Sgt. Blake is separating from the Air Force and will be replaced by Staff Sgt. Bylund in August. University employee, Mr. Tony Yulo, will remain.
- The Cadet Profile: The average cumulative cadet GPA is 3.18 compared to a national average of 3.0. Lt. Col. Fortenberry indicated he would like to improve this. In fitness scores, the cadets were first out of 144 programs.
- Twelve out of 20 cadets were selected for Field Training. The eight who were not selected can continue or leave the program. Three cadets disenrolled due to academic issues.
- Lt. Col. Fortenberry noted that on a national level it is the most competitive time in program history. In 2013 there will be a 59.7% select rate.
- The Air Force will commission 10 cadets in FY11. Cadet Chris Rausch will be the distinguished graduate in May.
- Lt. Col. Fortenberry expects continued program growth with scholarship growth remaining steady through 2012-13. There will be approximately 20 to 25 scholarships in the fall.
- Professor Ruden asked Lt. Col. Fortenberry if he was concerned about the number of commissionees. Lt. Col. Fortenberry responded that the stated goal is to commission 15 cadets per year, but if every Air Force ROTC program met this goal more graduates would be created than are needed. Currently, the Air Force is shrinking overall to meet congressionally mandated numbers. And some cadets will wait for active duty commissions due to budget constraints.

IV) Lt. Col. Conway provided the committee with the Army briefing. Presentation highlights included:

- The Army ROTC mission is: “To commission the future officer leadership of the U.S. Army and motivate young people to be better citizens.”
- The Army has been authorized for 16 cadre personnel, but 14 have been assigned.
- Lt. Col. Conway stated he is scheduled to depart this summer and is considering retiring. A replacement has not yet been identified for his position. Master Sgt. Crawford will be leaving this summer and may not be replaced. One supply position remains unfilled, but it cannot be filled until the hiring freeze is lifted.
- The breakdown of the number and class of cadets was shared with the committee. Currently, there are a total of 133 cadets. This is an increase of 65 cadets since Spring 2006. Lt. Col. Conway noted he is not concerned about the lower number of cadets in the freshman class because there will be lateral recruits.

- Lt. Col. Conway noted that due to poor weather training had been postponed and some cadets were behind.
- Examples of spring 2011 battalion events were shared, e.g., joint military athletic competitions, leadership labs, field training exercises at Camp Ripley, joint service review/ball, and commissioning.
- Cadet summer training opportunities were also shared with the committee. Examples included: Leadership Development and Accessions Camp, Cadet Troop Leadership Training, and Cadet Troop Leadership Training Internships, Cadet Practical Field Training, Nurse Summer Training Program, specialty schools, and the Cultural Internship Program.
- Lt. Col. Conway noted that the number of applicants selected for the Cultural Internship Program had dropped from 10 to 8, but stated that many University cadets are regularly selected for Airborne Training and Air Assault Training. He also noted that three cadets were participating in the Regional Culture and Language Immersion Program.
- University Contributions and Incentives – There has been very little change in this area. Lt. Col. Conway stated the Army ROTC program contributes steady funding to the University. He noted that some parts of the Armory are unusable, there are worn floorboards and missing tiles and lead abatement is needed in the firing range. He stated that the University must make a decision about building maintenance, but expressed concern that repair work might make the Armory unusable for a year. He noted that he did not raise the issue of building maintenance at his recent meeting with members of the Board of Regents.
- Lt. Col. Conway stated the Army ROTC program contributes approximately \$680,642 to the University in scholarships and guard/reserve benefits. The ROTC class at other affiliate schools generates \$82,497 in tuition for the University of Minnesota.
- Student life contributions to the University and community include, but are not limited to: Campus Veterans Day celebration; Gopher Adventure race; Veteran's Transition Center (Comfort for Courage), color guard, Homecoming parade, St. Thomas Academy and Cretin Derham Hall inspections; Upper Midwest JROTC Challenge, Science Fair, participation in the Army Ten-Miler, and the Honor Flight program.
- Contributions to University faculty and staff support were provided to the committee. The Department of the Army funds 14 of 15 faculty and staff positions. The current funding is over \$800,000 per year plus benefits.
- Lt. Col. Conway stated he had participated in a budget meeting with Mary Stein and he is concerned about the proposed five percent cut to the Army ROTC budget. He pointed out that the Army budget is made up primarily of fixed costs and very little of the budget is discretionary.
- University and individual Army ROTC awards were shared with the committee. Sample University awards include: ranked first out of 44 ROTC programs in 3<sup>rd</sup> ROTC Brigade (Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, North Dakota, South Dakota, Illinois, Michigan, Kansas and Nebraska); received Order of the Founders and Patriots of America award for best overall managed battalion in Cadet Command four years in a row.

- This Battalion is in the top 1% of all Army ROTC Battalions across the country. They received the General MacArthur Unit Award for top recruiting and cadet performance in 2008 and 2010.
- The committee discussed whether or not grade inflation had been occurring at the University. Professor Ruden indicated as an example that this issue had been recently reviewed in his Department, and there has been no noticeable grade inflation over the last ten years. Professor Brothen noted there has been an increase in the average grades of students at the University, but there has also been an increase in the quality of the students and in the competition to enter the University. Lt. Col. Conway stated Army scholarships are also more difficult to obtain. In order to encourage students to enter the Army, he is emphasizing the good job opportunities and the steady pay provided by the Army.
- Lt. Col. Conway stated the Army ROTC is commissioning 25 cadets this year, and next year's class has about 40 cadets. About half of the cadets being commissioned will go on active duty. Those not on active duty, will go to the Army Reserve or Army National Guard.
- Lt. Col. Conway noted his replacement had been identified, but then received a command at Fort Carson. He stated he believes his replacement will be at the University for three years.
- Professor Ruden thanked Lt. Col. Conway and Lt. Col. Fortenberry for their work, and indicated he would prefer if the turnover in their positions was less frequent. Lt. Col. Conway and Lt. Col. Fortenberry thanked the committee for its support.
- Vice Provost McMaster invited Lt. Col. Conway and Lt. Col. Fortenberry to meet with him.

Hearing no further business, Professor Ruden adjourned the meeting.

**Follow up:** Copies of the PowerPoint presentations for each of the briefings were e-mailed to committee members following the briefing.

Dawn Zugay  
University Senate