

ROTC Subcommittee
November 28, 2017
Minutes of the Meeting

These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes reflects the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration, or the Board of Regents.

[In these minutes: Unit Presentations]

PRESENT: Joan Howland, (chair), Elizabeth Ambrose, Thomas Brothen, Nicholie Bufkin, Chris Carter, Art Hill, Chris Hughes, Collin Keenan, Perry Leo, Robert McMaster, Sue Staats, David Wagner

GUESTS: Jennifer Reckner, chief of staff, Office of Undergraduate Education

1. Unit Presentations

Chair Joan Howland called the meeting to order and welcomed members. She thanked the unit representatives for hosting.

Navy

Captain Nicholie Bufkin introduced herself, saying she was newly assigned and was a University of Minnesota alum. She then provided the committee with a Naval ROTC update and highlighted the following points using a PowerPoint presentation:

- There are 51 midshipmen this year-- 14 freshmen, ten sophomores, 13 juniors, and 14 seniors. This includes one student enrolled at Macalester College and 13 at St. Thomas University.
- 37 midshipmen are STEM majors.
- The midshipmen achieved an average GPA of 3.207.
- Fall 2017 events included field training at Fort McCoy, WI, the Navy and Marine Birthday balls, an Adopt-a-Highway cleanup, and a 5K fundraising event, which netted about \$7000.

Howland asked what the money raised is used for, and Bufkin responded that it is managed by the midshipmen as a student organization, and goes towards expenses such as balls, clothing, lodging at drill meets, travel to leadership lectures, etc.

Bob McMaster inquired about the midshipmen enrolled at Macalester and St. Thomas, and their engagement at the University of Minnesota. Bufkin said that they are fully integrated in the batalion; drills take place Tuesday mornings at 6:15 a.m. so that all can participate. McMaster then asked how many credits are required in Naval Science, and Commander Chris Carter responded that for Navy, there are 24 credits, or six classes. Marines have four required classes. He added that ROTC classes are open to all University of Minnesota students, and McMaster asked how many civilian students enroll in these classes. Less than 10% of the classes are comprised of civilians, Carter responded.

Air Force

Lieutenant Colonel Chris Hughes presented the following highlights:

- He will retire in the summer of 2020. Captain Justin Mason will depart summer 2019, and Captain Daniel Hatzung will also depart summer 2020
- This year there are 78 cadets (25 freshmen, 18 sophomores, 13 juniors, 14 seniors, and eight other); out of this, 46 are on scholarship
- The average GPA is 3.27, and many of the cadets are STEM majors
- 26% of the cadets are female and 18% are students of color
- Fall 2017 events included the annual Night at the Armory open house for high schools students and freshmen on November 10th; field training at Camp Ripley, and a POW/MIA ceremony with the local community on September 22nd
- The Det. 415 running team placed 5th out of 188 in the Army Ten-miler, and the overall program achieved the top 6% in fitness in the nation
- There is great pride in the program-- there is one alum on staff, and five alumni have been back at the Armory to speak to cadets

Art Hill asked whether it is common that students cannot finish in four years, and Hughes said that it is. McMaster said that according to administration in the College of Science and Engineering, most can finish in four years if they have PSEO or AP credits. Hill commented that he would like to see a four-year program that can realistically be completed in four years. Perry Leo said that it can be done, but because of course sequencing, students have to plan carefully, as well as work hard. Hughes added that sometimes students choose to take longer because they like to extra things like study abroad, complete a minor, etc.

Army

Lieutenant Colonel Collin Keenan provided the Army ROTC update:

- There has been a lot of transition in the unit. New captains will arrive in December 2017 and February 2018, and a new staff sergeant will arrive in December 2017. Captain Gardner will retire in December 2017, and Major Dave Wagner is leaving at end of the academic year. Keenan leaves summer 2019.
- There are currently 108 cadets-- 74 from University of Minnesota, 20 from St. Thomas, and the others from six other schools (Bethel, Augsburg, Hamline, Concordia, Macalester, and Metro State)
- 72 cadets are on scholarship; 46 of these are University of Minnesota students. Many are also enlisted in the MN National Guard, and therefore qualify for tuition reimbursement, so there is very little student debt among cadets.
- Of the 108 cadets, there are 16 freshmen, 26 sophomores, 34 juniors, and 32 seniors
- 23% of cadets are female, 21% are students of color
- The average GPA is 3.297
- The rate of retention in the ROTC through graduation is 85%
- Fall 17 accomplishments include a 100% pass rate at camp, which takes place between the junior and senior year at Fort Knox; Three cadets placed in the top 10% of the nation; and the team placed 8th out of 76 in the Army 10-miler

Hill commented that he was concerned about continuity, and Keenan said that the ROTC is advocating for three-year assignments in order to increase continuity, but three years is a long time in one place for members of the military. He added that the civilian staff make up a lot of the continuity. Howland said that continuity is good, but the services do really well with transition, because it is part of their lifestyle.

McMaster wondered how cadets are so good in physical fitness, and Keenan said that they recruit scholar-athletes. Major David Wagner added that this is accomplished through scholarships-- the high school scholarship includes a physical fitness test, and there are campus-based scholarships for those in the program to reward physical fitness and GPA.

Hearing no further business, Howland adjourned the meeting.

Amber Bathke
University Senate Office