

ROTC Subcommittee
May 5, 2021
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, Mark Bell, Thomas Brothen, Jonathan Carter, Melissa Hoaglin, Robert McMaster, Blake Torgna

ABSENT: Greg Beilman

OTHERS: Commander Andrew Behlke, executive officer, Naval ROTC

1. Unit Presentations

Professor Joan Howland, chair, called the meeting to order. She welcomed and extended appreciation to the unit commanders, subcommittee members, Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education Robert McMaster, and Amber Bathke, senate associate, University Senate Office. Howland informed members that she had been invited to provide an update to the Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP), the ROTC Subcommittee's parent committee, earlier in the semester. She noted that members of SCEP were impressed with the ROTC program, particularly the high students' high GPAs and the high percentage of students who graduated in four years.

McMaster then extended his thanks as well, commending the ROTC program for running effectively and efficiently in spite of the pandemic. He acknowledged challenges, especially related to the Armory building and lack of full financial support (room and board) for ROTC students. He acknowledged that this puts the University at a disadvantage for recruitment, and said that he had talked to the University of Minnesota Foundation about this issue and is hoping to identify some donors to provide support for room and board for ROTC students at the University.

Army

Lieutenant Colonel Melissa Hoaglin provided the [Army ROTC update](#), noting the following:

- Scholarship numbers are expected to drop during the next two years, due to decreased funding.
- About 25% of the cadre turned over this semester. She thanked subcommittee members for reviewing all of the files for the incoming cadre members.
- 90% of the cadre and 50% of the cadets are vaccinated against covid-19.

Mark Bell asked how the [leadership stand down targeting extremism](#) was implemented in the ROTC. Hoaglin responded that the cadets were split up into small squad-level teams (10-20 people) that did eight different training activities on extremism. [Posters](#) were also put up in the

gym, she said. In addition, cadets participated in a two-hour online, interactive training on sexual harassment ([the Sexual Harrassment/Assault Response Program, or SHARP](#)).

Air Force

Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Carter began by showing a brief [video](#), then provided the [Air Force ROTC update](#). In particular, he called attention to the following:

- The Air Force is being more selective currently. Therefore, the number of AFROTC cadets is low this year, and will probably remain low for the next couple of years.
- Most students are from outside of the Twin Cities metro area. AFROTC has one scholarship specifically for someone who graduated from a Minneapolis high school, but it has not been used in that way for the last few years. The donor has been willing to let it be used for other students, in the case of a lack of students from Minneapolis.
- There are some programs in the AFROTC, notably aerospace engineering, that will extend scholarship to cover a fifth year of study, and quite a few students do take five years to graduate.
- Seven cadets (55%) were selected for field training. If they are not selected, cadets are not commissioned in AF. Usually, the selection rate is around 80-85%.
- Two cadets will be commissioned into Space Force.

McMaster said that he was slightly concerned that it was taking some students five years to graduate. He acknowledged that there are some programs that are difficult to complete in four years, but noted that he had seen a shift toward four years even in engineering. He asked Carter to strive for four year graduation as much as possible. Carter acknowledged this request.

Navy

Captain Blake Torgna provided the [Naval ROTC update](#), highlighting the following points:

- The staff and cadre are pretty much all new as of this year, with the exception of University staff member Susie Sanchez.
- The Navy is struggling with diversity, especially in the ROTC. Navy-wide, there were 12 applicants for the diversity-based scholarships.
- 100% of the midshipmen are now vaccinated against covid-19.
- NROTC is hoping for University support on two things:
 - A group of African American submariners dating back to the very first African American who gained submariner qualifications in 1948 is coming to Minnesota for a week in September. There is a possible opportunity to host them at the University for a panel, perhaps in conjunction with African American and African Studies or another related department. Carter said he would appreciate a contact within that department, if that seems of interest.
 - The Navy Preparatory program is a program where a university hosts and provides a scholarship and room and board for applicants for the first year to prepare people that maybe did not have the strongest opportunity in high school days to be able to prepare them, especially for the technical degrees. The University would cover the first year of college, and the Navy would pick it up after that. This is in part to address the diversity issue. Torgna said that he would like to start this program at the University and at St. Thomas.

- Regarding extremism, there is not a preponderance of people in the program that have extremist views, but as officers they definitely will have sailors/marines in their charge that will. Therefore it is important to train future officers to be able to deal with that.

Hearing no further business, Howland thanked everyone for their time and work, and adjourned the meeting.

Amber Bathke
University Senate Office