

GAO

Testimony

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MILITARY EDUCATION

Issues at the National Defense
University

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Panel:

At your request, we have been reviewing the implementation of the Panel's recommendations at the National Defense University (NDU). Today, I would like to share with the Panel the results of our efforts at the National War College and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.¹ The Panel made 41 recommendations to improve military education at each of the two colleges.

Overall, each college has implemented, or taken action to implement, all the recommendations pertaining to it. One partially implemented recommendation is a key recommendation pertaining to the frequency of examinations and papers and the use of letter grades for evaluating them. In addition, the recent turnovers at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces and the upcoming turnover of the heads of the University and the National War College appear inconsistent with the Panel's recommendation on providing stability among the heads of these schools.

During the course of our review, two areas that may impact the colleges' ability to attract and retain quality civilian faculty in the future--another key concern of the Panel--were brought to our attention. The first involves a preliminary Department of Defense (DOD) proposal that academic material be reviewed for accurate representation of DOD and national military policies before public release or publication. The second deals with the government-wide ban on receiving honoraria.

Each of these areas is discussed below.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PANEL'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Both the Industrial College of the Armed Forces and the National War College have taken actions to implement all the Panel's recommendations. Appendixes I and II summarize the recommendations by college, together with our characterization of the implementation of the recommendations.

One key recommendation dealing, in part, with the frequency and grading of examinations and papers is partially implemented. Both colleges require students to prepare various essay type papers that are critiqued by the faculty. The papers are graded as either exceeding standards, meeting standards, or failing to meet standards, but no letter grades are assigned. Instead of written examinations, students are evaluated on their classroom performance and preparation of various academic papers for their courses.

¹The third college is the Armed Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Virginia.

Officials at both colleges stated that they have complied with the intent of the recommendation but do not plan to administer letter grades or introduce written examinations.

FACTORS AFFECTING CIVILIAN FACULTY

Attracting and retaining quality faculty were major goals of the Panel. During our review, two issues were brought to our attention that may affect the colleges' ability to attract and retain quality civilian faculty members in the future. These are (1) a proposed DOD policy review of unofficial academic materials and (2) the government-wide ban on receiving honoraria.

Policy Review of Unofficial Academic Papers

A DOD Directive (5230.9) covers official academic material that is prepared for public release or publication. It presently states that this material is subjected to a policy review by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs. On the other hand, material that is not prepared for official representation is not subject to an official policy review.

On unofficial published academic material (outside the classroom), faculty and students have had wide latitude in the past to express their views, and their materials have undergone only a security review by the public affairs office. Normally, a disclaimer² would appear at the beginning of the material.

The proposed revision would make unofficial published academic material subject to policy reviews before public release or publication. The revision has not been approved by the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

In our discussions with Public Affairs personnel responsible for the proposed change, we have been told that their intention is to review academic materials simply to ensure that DOD and national military policy is not misrepresented. However, college officials expressed concerns about the proposed change and stated that, as currently drafted, the directive could seriously hinder their efforts to attract quality faculty.

They maintain that reviewing officials could disapprove unofficial academic materials for public release or publication if they deemed the materials have inaccurately reflected official DOD and national

²A sample disclaimer that appears on the material would state "The views expressed are those of the author. They do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government."

military policies. The material would have to be revised before being approved for release. College officials stated that the revised directive would inhibit the ability to challenge policy and think independently. They also stated that the current disclaimer is sufficient to ensure that users of the material understand the role of the DOD personnel discussing the policies as well as how the material can be used.

This Panel has continually emphasized that faculty and students be provided freedom to express their academic views. This emphasis was expressed in the Panel's 1989 report and as recently as May 1992, when this Panel discussed degree-granting authority with the heads of the intermediate colleges.

Ban on Receiving Honoraria

The recent changes in the rules governing the acceptance of honoraria by government officials affect civilian faculty at the colleges. The most significant change precludes federal employees at all levels from receiving compensation for such activities as making speeches or writing articles. Officials at the colleges told us that, in the past, civilian faculty members used honoraria to supplement their income. This is no longer allowed. College officials were not able to provide us with specific cases in which individuals have left the college or have refused to accept a faculty position as a result of the ban. However, they are concerned that this may constrain their ability to attract quality civilian faculty in the future.

Mr. Chairman, you and Members of this Panel have also addressed this issue, especially in your attempts to revise the legislation prohibiting the receipt of honoraria for academic personnel.

We are continuing to monitor both of the above areas.

TENURE OF COMMANDANTS

In its report, the Panel recommended that presidents and commandants of schools serve a minimum of 3 academic years. During times of major change in the academic program, such as curriculum development, the Panel noted that presidents and commandants should stay longer, perhaps 4 or 5 years, to ensure stability in the schools at the highest level.

Over the last 3 academic years--a period of major curriculum changes--the Industrial College has had two commandants. One commandant served 1 year, the other 2. The President of NDU and the Commandant of the War College have each served 3-year terms.

In addition, at the beginning of academic year 1992-1993 (which starts in August 1992), a simultaneous turnover will occur. The President of NDU and the Commandants of both colleges will be new

to their positions, thereby diminishing the stability the Panel sought. The Panel may want to consider ways to ensure stability at the professional military education institutions and discuss them with DOD.

Mr. Chairman, that completes my prepared statement.

INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE ARMED FORCES' IMPLEMENTATION OF PANEL
RECOMMENDATIONS

<u>No.</u>	<u>Panel report^a</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Status of recommendations^b</u>
1	Key 1	Framework for education	I
2	Key 2	Faculty quality	I
3	Key 9	Frequency of grading of examinations and papers	PI ^c
4	I-1	Focus of education framework	I
5	II-5	Faculty teaching strategy	I
6	III-5	Joint doctrine development	I
7	III-6	Military faculty mix	PI ^d
8	III-7	Military faculty qualifications	PI ^d
9	III-8	Military student mix	PI ^d
10	III-9	Prerequisite for joint education	PI ^d
11	III-10	Report on faculty/student selection criteria and policies	I
12	III-12	Environment for joint education	I
13	III-13	Student/faculty ratios	PI ^d
14	IV-7	Standards for joint education	PI ^d
15	IV-9	Participants in joint doctrine development	I
16	IV-10	Military faculty mix	PI ^d
17	IV-12	Recruiting competent military faculty for a joint school	PI ^d
18	IV-13	Military student mix	PI ^d
19	IV-16	Responsibility for joint education	I
20	IV-31	School mission	I
21	IV-32	Types of students	PI ^d
22	V-1	Recruiting and maintaining quality faculty	I
23	V-2	Specialists/career educators	PI ^d
24	V-4	Faculty development program	I
25	V-5	Cadre of career educators	PI ^d
26	V-7	Credit for joint duty assignment	PI ^d
27	V-9	Civilian faculty quality/mix	I
28	V-10	Advanced degrees required for senior school faculty	I
29	V-11	Hiring quality civilian faculty	I
30	V-12	Student/faculty ratios	PI ^d

No.	Panel report ^a	Subject	Status of recommendations ^b
31	V-13	Faculty exchange with academies	I
32	V-14	Commandant selection	I
33	V-15	Commandant's tour length	I
34	V-16	Attributes of a commandant	I
35	V-17	Commandant involvement in military student selection	I
36	V-18	Military student qualifications	I
37	V-21	Limitation of professionals attending joint schools	I
38	V-23	Active/passive instruction	PI ^c
39	V-24	Rigorous performance standard	PI ^c
40	V-25	Evaluation of examinations and papers	PI ^c
41	V-26	Distinguished graduate program	I

^aKey recommendations are those recommendations that the Panel identified as key in the executive summary to its report. Recommendation I-1 appears in chapter I, entitled "Introduction." Recommendation II-5 appears in chapter II, entitled "Educating Strategists." Recommendations III-5 through III-13 appear in chapter III, entitled "An Expanded Role for Joint Education." Recommendations IV-7 through IV-32 appear in chapter IV, entitled "Realigning Professional Military Education." Recommendations V-1 through V-26 appear in chapter V, entitled "Quality."

^bStatus of recommendations:
I = Implemented
PI = Partially implemented.

^cThis recommendation was characterized as partially implemented because ICAF does not have letter grading as the Panel recommended.

^dThis recommendation is beyond ICAF's control to unilaterally implement.

NATIONAL WAR COLLEGE'S IMPLEMENTATION OF PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS

<u>No.</u>	<u>Panel report^a</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Status of recommendations^b</u>
1	Key 1	Establishing framework for education	I
2	Key 2	Faculty quality	I
3	Key 9	Frequency and grading of examinations and papers	PI ^d
4	I-1	Focus of educational framework	I
5	II-5	Faculty teaching strategy	I
6	III-5	Joint doctrine development	I
7	III-6	Military faculty mix	I
8	III-7	Faculty qualifications and student/faculty ratios	PI ^c
9	III-8	Student mix	I
10	III-9	Prerequisite for joint education	PI ^c
11	III-10	Faculty/student selection criteria and policies	I
12	III-12	Environment for joint education	I
13	III-13	Student/faculty ratios	PI ^c
14	IV-1	Focus of strategy by school	I
15	IV-7	Standards for joint education	I
16	IV-9	Participants in joint doctrine development	I
17	IV-10	Military faculty mix	PI ^c
18	IV-12	Recruiting competent joint school faculty	I
19	IV-13	Student mix	I
20	IV-16	Responsibility for joint education	I
21	V-1	Recruiting and maintaining quality faculty	I
22	V-2	Specialists/career educators	I
23	V-4	Faculty development program	I
24	V-5	Cadre of career educators	I
25	V-7	Joint duty credit	I
26	V-8	Retired officers and dual	

		compensation law	I
27	V-9	Civilian faculty credentials	I
28	V-10	Advanced degrees for senior school faculty	I
29	V-11	Incentives to hire civilian faculty	I
30	V-12	Student/faculty ratios	PI ^C
31	V-13	Faculty exchange with academies	I
32	V-14	Commandant selection	I
33	V-15	Commandant's tour length	I
34	V-16	Commandant/President as general/ flag officer and involvement in instruction	I
35	V-17	Commandant involvement in student selection	I
36	V-18	Military student qualifications	I
37	V-21	Officers in professional category attending joint schools	PI ^C
38	V-23	Active/passive instruction and grading	PI ^d
39	V-24	Rigorous performance standard	PI ^d
40	V-25	Evaluation of examinations and papers	PI ^d
41	V-26	Distinguished graduate program	I

^aKey recommendations are those recommendations that the Panel identified as key in the report's executive summary. Recommendation I-1 appears in Panel report, chapter I, entitled, "Introduction." Recommendation II-5 appears in Panel report, chapter II, entitled, "Educating Strategists." Recommendations III-5 through III-13 appear in Panel report, chapter III, entitled, "An Expanded Role for Joint Education." Recommendations IV-1 through IV-16 appear in Panel report, chapter IV, entitled, "Realigning Professional Military Education." Recommendations V-1 through V-26 appear in Panel report, chapter V, entitled "Quality."

^b = Status of recommendations:
I = Implemented
PI = Partially implemented
NI = Not implemented

^cThese recommendations are beyond the college's ability to implement unilaterally.

^dThese recommendations are partially implemented because the college does not use letter grades as recommended by the Panel.

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