The United States Military Academy’s mission is to educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate is a commissioned leader of character to the values of Duty, Honor, Country and prepared for a career of professional excellence and service to the Nation as an officer in the United States Army.
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Message from the Commandant

The United States Military Academy Military Program Strategic Plan, 2017–2022, provides guidance to accomplish the strategic priorities, goals, and objectives of the Military Program. It is aligned with the USMA Strategic Plan, Army Operating Concept, policy, and resources and is designed to focus the efforts of all Military Program personnel towards the achievement of the Military Program Vision.

USMA is recognized for leadership excellence throughout the Nation and around the world. To continue to be a world-renowned leader development institution, we must ensure that the Military Program grows and adapts to changes in the environment.

Throughout the history of West Point, the Commandant and Academic Board has thought deeply about how to execute the military aspect of USMA’s mission: to educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate is a commissioned leader of character committed to the values of Duty, Honor, Country and prepared for a career of professional excellence and service to the Nation as an officer in the United States Army.

As emphasized in the Army Operating Concept, the complexity of future armed conflict will require innovative and adaptive leaders that thrive in conditions of complexity and uncertainty. This plan coordinates the actions of the Military Program to instill the foundational military knowledge, abilities, skills, and leadership qualities in graduates needed to thrive in the future operating environment.

This strategic plan is the product of over two years of analysis, planning, staffing, and collaboration. The success of the plan is only as good as its execution. It is important that all leaders understand and follow this plan and then provide assessment and feedback so that the plan can be improved in the future.

Diana M. Holland
Brigadier General, U.S. Army
Commandant of Cadets
Introduction

The USMA Military Program consists of military science classroom instruction, military science summer training labs, military development sequence, military enrichment experiences, and the Academy and Military Program capstone officership course. The Military Program complements the Academic, Physical, and Character Programs to achieve the outcomes established by the West Point Leader Development System and USMA Strategic Plan.

The Commandant of Cadets is the program director for the Military Program. The major organizations executing the Military Program are the Department of Military Instruction (DMI), Brigade Tactical Department (BTD), and Leadership Development Branch (LDB). The Department of Military Instruction (DMI) is the proponent for the Military Program; the Director of Military Instruction recommends, plans, executes, designs, and validates the Military Program. The Commandant retains final decision and validation authority for all Military Program events, activities and requirements; and subject to the advice of the Academic Board and approval of the Superintendent, for its implementation. The Military Program Greenbook provides program-level guidance for cadet development goals, requirements, activities, classroom instruction, summer training events, leadership experiences, and policies of the Military Program.

Since the end of the Cold War, the environment in which West Point graduates serve as officers has changed considerably. The United States Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet 525-3-1, The U.S. Army Operating Concept (AOC): Win in a Complex World, describes how future Army forces will prevent conflict, shape security environments, and win wars. The AOC provides the intellectual foundation and framework for learning and for applying what we learn to future force development. Highlighting the Army’s leader development needs, it states:

> The complexity of future armed conflict, therefore, will require Army forces capable of conducting missions in the homeland or in foreign lands including defense support of civil authorities, international disaster relief and humanitarian assistance, security cooperation activities, crisis response, or large-scale operations. What all Army operations will have in common is a need for innovative and adaptive leaders and cohesive teams that thrive in conditions of complexity and uncertainty.¹

USMA is recognized for leadership excellence throughout the Nation and around the world and with this environment in mind prepares graduates to serve as Army leaders.

The Army Leader Development Strategy provides a comprehensive approach to developing Army leaders to meet the security challenges of tomorrow. Developing Army leaders into competent, committed professional leaders of character begins at USMA. It is here that the foundation of military competencies are instilled in each graduate. The Military Program is

¹ United States (U.S.) Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet 525-3-1, The U.S. Army Operating Concept (AOC), pg 16.
grounded in rigorous physical, emotional, and intellectual experiences that serve as the bedrock for developing graduates into competent, mentally agile, resilient, and morally prepared leaders of character.

The Military Program’s ability to instill foundational military competencies in every Cadet directly contributes to achievement of the USMA mission: to educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate is a commissioned leader of character committed to the values of Duty, Honor, Country and prepared for a career of professional excellence and service to the Nation as an officer in the United States Army.

USMA graduates are members of the Army Profession who provide values-based leadership. These values are defined by a combination of Army Values, the West Point Honor Code, and the motto, “Duty, Honor, Country.” These guideposts determine how graduates conduct operations in any environment.

The current and future operating environment requires exceptional intellectual capabilities, critical thinking, and creative problem solving. USMA graduates will be required to solve complex problems with very little structure and no approved solution. They must demonstrate the physical, mental, and moral courage to make ethical and effective decisions while leading Soldiers through uncertainty and danger. As commissioned leaders of character, they must have the talent to excel in combat so that their Soldiers and, ultimately, the Nation can rely on their leadership.²

The remainder of this document is the strategy for the Military Program to produce graduates with the military competencies depicted above. It amplifies the Military Program purpose and vision.

- Part I – Strategic Environment
- Part II – Strategic Vision
- Part III – Operational Approach and Organizational Goals
  - Organizational Goal 1: Cadet Excellence
  - Organizational Goal 2: Education and Training Excellence
  - Organizational Goal 3: Faculty Excellence
  - Organizational Goal 4: Superior Intellectual Capital
  - Organizational Goal 5: Organizational Excellence
- Part IV – Assessments and Planning Process

² United States Military Academy Strategic Plan 2015-2021
Part 1 – Strategic Environment

Strategic Environment

USMA is unique because it serves as both a US Army commissioning source and Bachelor of Science degree-awarding academic institution. USMA is established in United States Code (10 USC 4331 (a)) for the instruction and preparation for military service of selected persons called “cadets.” According to Department of the Army regulation 210-26, “USMA is under the immediate supervision and control of the Department of the Army” (Section 4334(a), Title 10, United States Code (10 USC 4334(a))). USMA operates under the jurisdiction of the Chief of Staff, United States Army (Department of the Army, General Order No. 3, 10 February 1977). Therefore, the Secretary of the Army, through the Chief of Staff of the Army, holds the USMA Superintendent responsible for developing our cadets into commissioned officers.

According to Department of the Army regulation 210-26, “the Superintendent, USMA will establish programs and procedures for the intellectual, military, and physical development of cadets. Subject to the approval of the Secretary of the Army, and consistent with Department of the Army policy and guidance, establish and maintain a 4-year course of instruction (COI).” Furthermore, according to Department of the Army regulation 10-87, the USMA Superintendent’s functional responsibilities include: establishment and maintenance of a 4-year course of instruction that qualifies cadets for award of a bachelor of science degree and commissioning as a 2nd lieutenant, subject to the approval of the Secretary of the Army (SA) and consistent with Department of the Army (DA) policy; assess to the Army a cohort of approximately 900 newly commissioned 2nd lieutenants each year, consistent with DA guidance; and establishment and maintenance of formal academic and athletic accreditations through the appropriate accreditation agencies.

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) is the primary agency responsible for accrediting West Point in its role to grant Bachelor of Science degrees; therefore, the guidance MSCHE provides forms a critical component in developing the holistic missions and visions of the Military Program and USMA.

Through the Secretary of the Army, the Training and Doctrine Command (TRA DOC) prescribes guidance, policies, procedures, and responsibilities for managing and conducting Officer Initial Military Training (IMT) and ultimately commissioning 2nd lieutenants. Officer IMT consists of BOLC (Basic Officer Leaders Course) A (Accessions/pre-commissioning training) (BOLC-A) and BOLC B (branch-specific/technical schools) (BOLC-B)/Warrant Officer Basic Course (WOBC).

TRA DOC Regulation 350-36 lists the Common Core Task List (CCTL) for both BOLC-A and BOLC-B organizations. The CCTL establishes the minimum requirements for IMT for junior officers. The CCTL is a combination of common military tasks, common leader tasks, and directed or mandated tasks for BOLC organizations.
As a pre-commissioning BOLC-A organization, USMA executes BOLC-A training in accordance with an established memorandum of agreement with the Deputy Commanding General, Initial Military Training, governing its method of ensuring instruction of tasks on the CCTL.

The Military Program Greenbook prescribes and details the military courses, events, and standards of performance for USMA Cadets; to include the execution of the CCTL. As the governing document of the Military Program, the Greenbook provides both a framework and foundation for the Military Program organization, orchestration, and execution. It establishes a standards-based environment, with clearly delineated requirements throughout the 47-month USMA experience.

The TRADOC BOLC-A CCTL details the minimum requirements for all pre-commissioning organizations. The USMA Military Program far exceeds the BOLC-A minimal requirements and applies resources and methods towards the achievement of the Military Program purpose, vision, and strategic goals described in this document.
Historical Context to the Strategic Plan

This strategic plan is the product of over two years of analysis, planning, staffing and collaboration. In September 2014, the USMA Superintendent, LTG Robert Caslen, directed the Commandant to create a strategic plan for the Military Program. The Commandant then directed the Department of Military Instruction, as the proponent for the Military Program, to lead a strategic planning working group and planning process to develop a strategic plan.

The Military Program Strategic Plan Working Group (MPSWG) consisted of military and civilian representatives from the Department of Military Instruction (DMI) Military Science Division, Military Training Division, Defense and Strategic Studies Division, the Simon Center for Professional Military Ethics (SCPME), the Brigade Tactical Department (BTD), the Special Assistant to the Commandant for Systems and Planning (SACSP), the Military Program Assessments Coordinator, and others.

The MPSWG used Operational Design to frame the environment and develop the military program problem statement, purpose, and vision. After multiple monthly In-Progress Reviews (IPRs) with the Commandant and Superintendent from October to December 2014, the Superintendent approved the Military Program problem statement, purpose, and vision and provided planning guidance before the MPSWG transitioned into mission analysis. Further IPRs were also conducted with the USMA Dean of the Academic Board.

With the Superintendent and Commandant’s planning guidance, the MPSWG conducted an extensive mission analysis of the Military Program. This included a review of all guiding regulations and policies (listed in the “References” section of this plan) and identifying all relevant constraints, facts, and assumptions, as well as identifying all specified, implied, and essential tasks. The analysis also included a historical review of all the past Military Program organizational and program changes. This historical review provided insights on past theories and assumptions that led to the current environment. A list of the major events considered during this review is provided in the “Military Program Historical Events” section of this plan.

During the Strategic Plan Course of Action development, the MPSWG recognized the need to conduct a BOLC-A CCTL review to ensure USMA is in compliance to Army requirements. As the proponent for the Military Program, the Department of Military Instruction serves as the USMA Liaison to the Army for pre-commissioning training and education requirements and coordinates, conducts, and monitors pre-commissioning education and training requirements for cadets. While a majority of the BOLC-A CCTL tasks are included in the Military Program curriculum and summer training events, many tasks are completed in the Academic (e.g., requirements for military history, writing, military justice, law of war, and code of conduct) and Physical Programs. In July 2015, an analysis of the BOLC-A CCTL was presented to the Superintendent. The major findings and subsequent guidance from the Superintendent were to resolve the few deficiencies found by identifying the location in the USMA curriculum where deficient tasks would be added and assessed to the required proficiency level.
In August 2015, the MPWSG presented Course of Action Analysis for the Strategic Plan to the Commandant and Superintendent. This analysis included new Military Program strategic goals and major objectives to achieve those goals in the pursuit of the Military Program vision.

After approving the strategic goals, the Superintendent directed the Commandant to conduct an external review of the Military Program to validate the direction of the military program and to validate planning up to this point.

While recognizing the merits of the present Military Program and its goals, subjecting them periodically to external review ensures that the program remains strong and relevant to the needs of our graduates and the Army. From 4–6 October 2015, USCC hosted a distinguished panel of active and retired military leaders and civilian experts to conduct the Military Program external review.

External Review Panelists:

- GEN (Ret.) John P. Abizaid
- LTG (Ret.) David W. Barno
- LTG Robert B. Brown
- Margaret C. Harrell, PhD
- COL (Ret.) David E. Johnson, PhD
- LTG H.R. McMaster, PhD
- BG (Ret.) Michael J. Meese, PhD
- GEN David G. Perkins
- SMA (Ret.) Kenneth O. Preston
- CSM Dennis J. Woods

The final report and finding of the Military Program external review are provided in the “2015 Military Program External Review Final Report” section of this plan. After USMA analysis of the external review recommendation, USMA reported the review’s findings and the subsequent actions to the Chief of Staff of the Army and Executive Steering Group.

With feedback and recommendations from the External Review, the MPWSG made adjustments to the Strategic Plan and presented the final COA Decision Brief to the Superintendent in March 2016 — thus finalizing the Military Program Strategic Plan.
Part II – Strategic Vision

Military Program Purpose

The purpose of the Military Program is to instill in cadets the foundational military competencies necessary to win in a complex world while inspiring them to professional excellence and service to the Nation as an officer in the United States Army.

Military Program Vision

The USMA Military Program is the world’s preeminent landpower military program that:

- produces leaders of character who demonstrate the mastery of foundational military competencies necessary to win in a complex world and are inspired to professional excellence;
- produces military faculty who demonstrate the military and intellectual competencies necessary to be effective institutional leaders in the Army and operational and strategic leaders in the joint force;
- and serves as an intellectual resource for solving military problems.
Part III – Operational Approach and Organizational Goals

The USMA Military Program Operational Approach (figure 1-1) visually depicts the broad actions the force must take to transform current conditions into those of the desired future state. The USMA Military Program has five lines of effort. A line of effort (LOE) is a mechanism to link multiple tasks with goal-oriented objectives that focus efforts toward establishing operational and strategic conditions. LOEs are used to accomplish specific strategic goals. Along each LOE are major objectives. These major objectives are clearly defined, attainable tasks or goals with measurable outcomes. The pursuit of all major objectives can occur simultaneously — they do not have to be done sequentially.

Figure 1-1: USMA Military Program Operational Approach

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3 United States Army Training and Doctrine Command Strategic Plan
Organizational Goal 1: Cadet Excellence

USMA graduates demonstrate the mastery of foundational military competencies necessary to win in a complex world and are inspired to military and professional excellence.

Rationale

Cadet development is the center of gravity of the USMA Military Program and critical to the desired end state of the Military Program Strategy. All ways and means will be aligned in order to instill in cadets the foundational military competencies necessary to win in a complex world while inspiring them to professional excellence and service to the Nation as an officer in the United States Army.

Major Objectives

1.1 Graduates exceed the Army pre-commissioning requirements and outcomes of BOLC-A.
1.2 Military Program achieves cadet development goals.
1.3 Graduates commission in career fields that best align their individual talents with the branch’s stated talent priorities.

Military Program Cadet Development Goals

USMA Graduates will:

- Demonstrate proficiency and confidence in foundational military competencies.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how to prepare soldiers and build teams.
- Apply concepts and principles of doctrine and warfighting to problem solving.
- Demonstrate how to critically think about and understand war and warfare in width, depth, and context.
- Demonstrate effective leadership competencies in accomplishing assigned missions.
- Demonstrate superior performance in troop leading procedures, marksmanship, and land navigation.
- Demonstrate courage, character, integrity, toughness, and commitment to the Army professional ethic.
Organizational Goal 2: Education and Training Excellence

The USMA Military Program provides the world’s preeminent military curriculum, pedagogy, and leadership experience in developing of foundational military competencies within graduates.

Rationale

The Military Program curriculum, training methodologies, and learning environments are the ways to achieving the level of military competencies in cadets by the end of their 47-month leader development experience.

Major Objectives

2.1 Design and present a core, graded Military Program curriculum and developmental experience which instills foundational military competencies.

2.2 Military Program employs and learns from utilizing the world’s preeminent military learning environments, advanced technological systems and resources, and methodologies.

2.3 Design and execute leadership experiences that progressively deepen Cadets’ perspectives and build their competencies.
Organizational Goal 3: Faculty Excellence

Military Program faculty possess the military and intellectual competencies necessary to be effective institutional leaders in the Army and operational and strategic leaders in the joint force.

Rationale

To develop superior Cadets, the USMA Military Program requires superior faculty with a mastery of military competencies and advanced skills in educating and training Cadets. Military Program faculty also serve as the “second graduating” class and based on the deliberate broadening and education they receive at USMA, return to the operational force as superior officers and non-commissioned officers ready to serve as effective institutional leaders in the Army and operational and strategic leaders in the joint force.4

Major Objectives

3.1 Attract, recruit, and retain a relevant, diverse, and highly capable group of faculty and staff.
3.2 Identify and send qualified faculty to advanced civil schooling programs that support the development of the Military Program goals.
3.3 Plan and execute a comprehensive professional development program
3.4 Members of the Military Program’s faculty are recognized by the Army and their academic colleagues across the Nation for excellence in military competencies, professionalism, and character.
3.5 Members of the Military Program’s faculty are highly sought after by Army operational units for competitive and critical assignments.

Military Program Faculty Development Goals

Military Program faculty will:

- Demonstrate a mastery of foundational military competencies.
- Demonstrate how to critically think about and understand war and warfare in width, depth, and context.
- Demonstrate mastery in preparing soldiers and building teams.
- Demonstrate the competencies necessary for increased roles and responsibilities in the Army.
- Maintain connection and relevancy to the operational force.
- Contribute knowledge to the profession of arms.
- Demonstrate courage, character, integrity, toughness, and commitment to the Army professional ethic.

4 Caslen, Robert L., Preparing Officers to Win In a Complex World, Army Magazine, December 2014.
Organizational Goal 4: Superior Intellectual Capital

The USMA Military Program generates new knowledge for the profession of arms, enhances the USMA curriculum, and provides the Army with an intellectual resource for solving military problems.

Rationale

Research and outreach in military studies on the tactical, operational, and strategic problems to move the boundaries of current military and academic knowledge is a core function of achieving the Military Program vision. The USMA Military Program is uniquely postured to evolve the body of knowledge that informs education, training, and inspiring cadets to military and professional excellence while building our capacity to serve the Army as an intellectual resource for solving military problems.

Major Objectives

4.1 Develop intellectual tools on recent and ongoing conflicts to educate present and future leaders on military problems and the necessary problem solving skills to win in a complex world.

4.2 Promote a culture of research and scholarship that incorporates faculty expertise and leverages research and scholarship to enhance curriculum and deepen cadet military development experiences.

4.3 Integrate the applicable resources at West Point into a relevant, interdisciplinary and integrated approach to solving military problems.

4.4 Advance external collaboration and a culture of outreach in areas that leverage the distinctive intellectual capital of the Military Program.

4.5 Communicate externally the relevant and responsive intellectual capital available at West Point.
Organizational Goal 5: Organizational Excellence

The USMA Military Program maintains a learning organization that achieves the mission using the most efficient and effective processes.

Rationale

As stewards of government resources, the military program will implement efficient and effective management, allocation, and monitoring processes for personnel and resources. Following the tenets of mission command while providing clearly defined functions, duties, and responsibilities with respect to institutional governance will guide daily operations.

Major Objectives

5.1 Faculty and staff embrace the tenets of mission command, effectively and efficiently undertaking tasks large and small with confidence and a clear sense of purpose.
5.2 Organize efficiently and effectively to maintain operational adaptability.
5.3 Operate through the Army operations process (plan, prepare, execute, and assess) while ensuring assessments inform decision making and resource allocation.
5.4 Operate with clear, effective, and efficient internal processes and procedures in consonance with USMA, Army, and Department of Defense policies, regulations, and standards.
5.5 Discover, develop, and use resources, digital infrastructure, and knowledge management systems that are innovative and agile in supporting Military Program excellence.
Part IV – Assessments and Planning Process

This section proposes a general approach, set of assumptions, and overview of the Assessment Plan that informs the USMA leadership on the progress of the Military Program Strategic Plan goals and objectives. The Assessment Plan relies on a broad framework that uses existing data to assess and track progress on plan objectives and actions. This strategic plan is the starting point for further refinement of the appropriate ways to assess our progress.

General Approach

1. Organize quantitative and qualitative indicators around goals and objectives.
2. When feasible, have multiple indicators for each objective that are focused on measurable factors.
3. Make the indicators flexible and adaptable so they are useful for external engagements and assessments both operationally with the West Point Strategic Plan and Cadet development within the West Point Leader Development System (WPLDS).
4. Make every attempt to refine and exploit existing sources of data and information.

Principles

1. No particular set of indicators will be sufficient. Rather, some sets or combinations will be used for tracking progress.
2. Indicators help to promote progress and improvement by holding divisions, departments, and the proponent for the Military Program accountable for working toward goals or objectives.

Assessment Plan

The assessment of the Strategic Plan will take place during both the academic year and summer training sessions. At the beginning of the year, the Commandant will publish the annual guidance, which will include the list of actions and initiatives for that year. These actions and initiatives represent the Commandant’s annual priorities. By the end of the fall semester, DMI’s staff will request certain topics to be discussed during the annual Cadet Summer Training (CST) After Actions Review (AAR) briefing to the Commandant. Additionally, DMI staff will ask for specific data that will assist in the assessment of identified goals. Once all of the departments, centers, and divisions have conducted their assessments, DMI’s staff will compile the data and complete a strategic assessment report. In addition to the data received from the assessment periods, the report will include an executive summary from the summer training committees on the assessment of the military program. Lastly, a Military Program Assessment Group (MPAG) will brief at the annual strategic offsite on collected assessments from the academic year and summer training events compiled into a strategic assessment report. The MPAG will be led by the DMI Assessments Coordinator and include representatives from: Brigade Tactical Department (BTD), Department of Physical Education (DPE), Simon Center for Professional
Military Ethic (SCPME), SACSP, and DMI (Strategic Planner, XO, MT, MS, Accessions, DSS, and MWI).

This strategic assessment report will be staffed with through the Commandant’s staff, DPE, BTD, SCPME, and DMI and published by the end of the year to serve as significant data for the development of the Commandant’s annual guidance report for the following academic year.
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2008 USCC Annual Outcomes Assessment


Military Program External Review Report, October 2015
Key Terms

Actions: Projects and initiatives the Commandant will use to accomplish specific objectives. These actions may include tasks, and short and long term studies.

Character: Viewed as the degree of integration of core values and beliefs into one’s identity such that individual behavior is consistent with core values and beliefs.

Competencies: A cluster of related knowledge and skills that affect a major part of an individual’s job (a role or responsibility), that correlates with performance on the job, that can be measured against accepted standards and that can be improved via training and development (ALC 2015).

Competency: An (observable) measurable pattern of knowledge, abilities, skills and other characteristics that individuals need in order to successfully perform their work. (DODI 1400.25, Volume 250)

Complexity: An environment that is not only unknown, but unknowable, and constantly changing (AOC 2014).

Education: A structured process to impart knowledge through teaching and learning to enable or enhance an individual’s ability to perform in unknown situations. Instruction with increased knowledge, skill, and/or experience as the desired outcome for the student. This is in contrast to training, where a task or performance basis is used and specific conditions and standards are used to assess individual and unit proficiency. (AR 350-1, 19 AUG 14).

End state: The desired future conditions USMA wants to exist. The end state promotes unity of effort; facilitates integration, synchronization, and disciplined initiative; and helps mitigate risk (ADRP 3-0, 16 May 12).

Foundational: A basis (as a tenet, principle or axiom) upon which something stands or is supported. An underlying base or support (Merriam-Webster Online).

Indicators: Specific measurements, both qualitative and quantitative, used to determine the Military Program’s progress in achieving the goals and objectives.

Leader training: The expansion of basic Soldier skills that qualifies Soldiers to lead other Soldiers (AR 350-1, 19 AUG 14).

Learning: Cognitive and/or physical process where a person assimilates information, and temporarily or permanently acquires or improves skills, knowledge, behaviors, and/or attitudes (AR 350-1, 19 AUG 14).

Line of Effort (LOE): A line that links multiple tasks using logic of purpose rather than geographical reference to focus efforts towards establishing operational and strategic conditions. (ADRP 3-0, 16 May 12)
Major Objectives (MOs): mid-to-long term (2-7 years) efforts that are necessary to collectively achieve the TRADOC Commander’s vision and end state. MOs are clearly defined, attainable goals with measurable outcomes (TRADOC Strategic Plan).

Mastery: Soldier understands the how and why of a task, and demonstrates the ability to perform the task at first unit of assignment and under combat conditions (TRADOC 350-36).

Objectives: Measurable statements of achievement that lead to the accomplishment of a goal.

Professional Military Education (PME): A progressive education system that prepares leaders for increased responsibilities and successful performance at the next higher level by developing the key knowledge, skills, and attributes they require to operate successfully at that level in any environment.

Purpose: Defines the fundamental reason for the Military program: why it exists and what it does to achieve its vision.

Strategic Goals: Broadly defined strategic positions or conditions that the Military Program is designed to reach. Goals close the gap between the Commandant’s vision and its current situation.

Training: A structured process designed to increase the capability of individuals or units to perform specified tasks or skills in known situation (AR 350-1, 19 AUG 14).

Vision: A description of the ideal state of the Military Program.
Military Program Historical Events

1817: Superintendent Sylvanus Thayer appointed an “Instructor of Infantry Tactics and Soldierly Discipline”

1825: Title of “Instructor of Infantry Tactics and Soldierly Discipline” changed to “Commandant of Cadets”

1902: Department of Civil and Military Engineering took the entire first class to the Gettysburg battlefield for a staff ride.

1919: Entire first class voyaged across the Atlantic for a two-month survey of Great War European battlefields.

1920: Superintendent MacArthur directs first- and third-class cadets to spend summer at Camp Dix, New Jersey

1923: Based on recommendation of a 1922 War Department board of officers evaluation of USMA, Superintendent Sladen abolished the Department of Practical Military Engineering (DPME) and transferred its training functions to the Department of Tactics. He also transferred the military history course from the Department of Civil and Military Engineering to Tactics. A few years later history was transferred back.

1946: After encouragement from CSA GEN Dwight Eisenhower, USMA added courses in applied psychology and leadership and created a new agency, the Office of Military Psychology and Leadership under the Commandant to teach those courses.

1967: Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS) presented West Point with a British officer’s sword as a prize awarded as a result of an inter-regimental military skills competition within the USMA Corps of Cadets.

1977: Department of Behavioral Science and Leadership created and consolidated under the Dean the academic components of the Commandant’s Office of Military Leadership (formerly Office of Military Psychology and Leadership).

1977: Department of Tactics re-designated as the Office of the Commandant, equivalent in stature to the Office of the Dean. The Office of Military Instruction and Office of Physical Education were elevated to the status of departments and each given a seat on the Academic Board.

1985: First graduating class to be given a Bachelor of Science with Field of Study/Major on diploma/transcript. Prior to 1985, all graduates were awarded a Bachelor of Science degree, no other notation was placed on the transcript.
1988: Brigade Tactical Officer (BTO) and Office of Leader Development Integration implemented

1988: Sandhurst competition extended to a two day competition

1989: First intersession (military science courses taught for 2 weeks 4 hours per day) implemented two weeks after Holiday Break

1990: Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership (BS&L) developed a master’s program for tactical officers

1990: Military Arts & Science (precursor to Defense Strategic Studies) first offered as a field of study for the Class of 1993.

1992: Congress removes West Point authority to grant Tactical Officers master’s degrees.

1993: Tactical Officer Education Program stated with Long Island University

1993: Sandhurst Competition opened to International participation

2003: Intersession stopped and military science restored to the academic year. Military Science was taught both semesters but only 20 lessons and had only .5 credit hours per semester

2004: Military Arts & Science became a Major rather than a Field of Study.

2005: Eisenhower Leader Development Program for tactical officers started at Teachers College at Columbia University

2006: A USMA Internal Military Tiger Team conducted an assessment of the military program and based on concerns that they were completing their last major military training event (Cadet Field Training) only 13 months into the cadet experience and poor performance of graduates on land navigation and marksmanship in their BOLC B (branch specific training) courses the Military Tiger Team recommended to:

- Refine Cadet Field Training (CFT I) so that it focuses on the essential, supportable BOLC Tasks.
- Create and enhance CFT2 so that it consists of leader development and application of skills learned.
- Split CFT across two summers, with CFT I becoming just Cadet Field Training. CFT II, would be moved to the First Class summer and be renamed to Cadet Leader Development Training (CLDT).

2007: Military Science (MS) Courses move from 20 Lessons (MS 101/201/301/401 and MS 103/203/303/403) to 40 lesson courses (MS100/200/300/400). This changed MS courses from all year round to one semester course of 40 lessons. MS credit hours then increased from .5 credit hours to 1.5 hours.
2007: MS400 Platoon Operations taught for one year.


2008: AY09 Cadet Leader Development Training (CLDT) started.

2008: The TRADOC Request for Forces (RFF) significantly reduced due to wartime manning requirements. Cadet leadership duties and training of new cadets responsibilities increased in cadet basic training. LTP increased from one week to two weeks.

2009: Cadet Summer Training (CST) 2009 was the last time CFT went to Mounted Maneuver Training at Ft. Knox – initially cut for funding then later since the Armor School moved to Ft Benning.


2013: Study of Studies titled “2013 Review of Previous Studies of Army Athletics with Focus on Army Football” conducted.

2015: Cadet Summer Training (CST) 2015. Cadet Field Training developed into Military Lab 100 (ML100) and ML300 started – these were Military Lab courses and an extension of MS100 and MS200/300. The topics for CFT and CLDT remained the same but the grade reporting changed. CLDT (ML300) changed from pass/fail course to letter grade for credit. CFT cadets receive a skills score and grade in ML100 as well as a Military Development (MD) 200 grade for military development (leadership).

2015: MX400 included as one of baseline 40 cadet core courses.

2015: The Modern War Institute created to achieve the military vision to serve as an intellectual resource for solving military problems and generate new knowledge for the military profession.
2015 Military Program External Review Final Report

30 October 2015

MEMORANDUM

THRU: BG J.T. Thomson, Commandant of Cadets

FOR: LTG Robert L. Caslen, Superintendent, U.S. Military Academy

SUBJECT: Report of Military Program External Review Panel

1. Overview. The Military Program External Review Panel was formed at the request of the Superintendent to review the West Point Military Program (See Appendix A, Superintendent’s Memorandum). The panel was charged with assessing the current program and providing insights on how to build a “World Class DMI.” The review is designed to find ways to sustain and improve the Military Program in ways that make it better recognized by the Army and more valued by cadets as a meaningful, inspirational foundation for officership in the U.S. Army. After reading several documents that provided the external context of the Military Program, the panel met at West Point from 4-6 October 2015 for a series of briefings, meetings, and sensing sessions with cadets and faculty. The panel developed its own additional questions and received full support from the Military Academy faculty and staff for all information requested. (List of information received and personnel the panel met with is at Appendix B). The Panel concluded that the Military Program at West Point is fundamentally sound, but there are several areas in which the Academy should take advantage of specific opportunities or adjust the existing structure to improve the effectiveness of the program.

2. Areas to Sustain. It is the hallmark of a leading-edge learning organization to ask for external assistance, even when most aspects are going well. While much of the emphasis of this report will be on areas to improve, it is important to note the many parts of the Military Program that should be sustained. These include:

- Vision for World Class Department of Military Instruction (DMI)
- Strong connection with the Army
- West Point Leader Development System Outcomes
- Sandhurst Competition
- Cadet Leader Development Training
- Modern War Institute (as a concept, which should be resourced adequately)
- Defense and Strategic Studies as an academic major or minor
- Quality and dedication of the DMI Faculty, Tactical Officers and Noncommissioned Officers
- Quality and maturity of the cadets, gaining perspective of their role in the Army
- Living Doctrine/Digital Rucksack
- Existing “rites of passage”
- Character Development Program
- Moral-Ethical Development; Duty, Honor, Country
3. **Current Window of Opportunity.** Several aspects of the present political-military environment provide key opportunities that West Point should leverage to improve the Military Program.

   a. **Army Leadership.** The Army leadership continues to value the importance of the Academy, and the Military Program in particular. West Point has established (and needs to continue to sustain) the idea that success at West Point has value not only for cadets and graduates entering the Army, but provides direct value for the Army. The relationship with TRADOC is particularly strong. Recent senior Army leadership changes, including a new Chief of Staff Army and prospective new Secretary of the Army, provide important opportunities to garner key support for changes to the Military Program.

   b. **Drawdown.** The Army has historically underscored its commitment to leader development whenever it has faced reductions, even in the face of shrinking resources. While the Army today has fewer soldiers in operational units, the Army may have the ability to provide additional summer training support and to support personnel in positions at West Point if that support can be clearly justified.

   c. **Preparation.** There has never been a time when West Point graduates have not gone to war in the 20 years after they have graduated. Today’s uncertain strategic environment makes it even more important for West Point graduates to be tough, competent, and resilient. West Point graduates must be afforded every possible opportunity to prepare during their Academy experience so that they can successfully lead soldiers on battlefields that have not yet been anticipated.

4. **Military Training: The Need to Reinforce Standards.**

   a. **Observation.** Over several years, the focus in cadet training has been on the leader development of the upper class. During the height of deployments for Iraq and Afghanistan, Army support for West Point was reduced and cadet cadre increased their role in training New Cadets in Cadet Basic Training (CBT) and rising yearlings in Cadet Field Training (CFT). Although cadets coped with this added responsibility, it is unrealistic to expect upper-class cadets to effectively train, supervise, and evaluate subordinate cadets to standard on Army tasks. Cadet leaders may have only marginally mastered these skills one or two summers previously, and reviewed them briefly in “train-the-trainer” sessions. This has produced a gradual erosion of standards and rigor in CBT and CFT. It has also contributed to only minimal CBT attrition: a mere handful of cadets wash out of CBT (11 or 0.9% in the class of 2018) with only a few more (approximately 41) being designated for retraining, usually for PT failures. Beyond the low attrition rate, plebes reported that CBT was much more strenuous for their upper-class cadre than it was for them and did not deliver the “crucible” Army experience that they sought or anticipated. At the same time, TRADOC is changing Army basic combat training to increase training and standards, improve nutrition, leverage understanding of human physiology, and enhance the rigor of BCT. Bluntly, West Point has under-qualified people training unqualified people to inadequate performance standards. It is clear that the basic training received by cadets during CBT and CFT is substantially inferior to that of enlisted soldiers in Basic Combat Training.
b. Recommendations:

1) **Train by Committee.** Training at West Point must always be done to standard— no exceptions. To achieve this standard, the Academy should reinstitute more “committee” type training, with appropriate support from the Army, thereby enhancing the consistency and proficiency of the training given to cadets. CLDT, which both West Point and the Army significantly resource, received high marks. Without changing CLDT, this recommendation would take some of the same approach and apply it to other summer training, especially CBT. Similarly, the Small Unit Leader Development (SULD) part of CFT was regarded as a good step. A similar module would be beneficial in CBT as well.

2) **Better Prepare Cadet Leaders.** Army Drill Sergeants are the gold standard in both team building and training soldiers to standard in a professional, demanding initial entry environment. Cadets performing similar tasks could benefit from attending segments of the Drill Sergeant School or from much greater exposure to Drill Sergeants at West Point for the Leader Training Program (LTP) and in cadet mentorship roles at CBT. This would also serve to significantly strengthen discipline, standards, and team building across summer training. In addition to Drill Sergeants, increased participation of noncommissioned officers during CBT and CFT will help ensure that cadets attain basic military knowledge coached by seasoned professionals, and are trained to standard. Cadet cadre should focus less on delivering training, and more on leading, coaching, and supervising underclass cadets.

c. **Increase the Overall Challenge of Cadet Basic Training.** Cadet Basic Training should be physically demanding, challenging, meet tough Army standards, and test the grit of the cadets. One or more “crucible”-like experiences should be added to the current CBT to build teamwork and a sense of accomplishment for the incoming class. Cadets reported that the final squad challenge and concluding 12-mile march-back of CBT was good, fun, and a “spirit/team building” experience. However, these tough events came only at the end of CBT, were interrupted by a distracting talent show, and saw 150 New Cadets excused from participation. (New Cadets on four fall Corps Squad teams—Football, Men’s and Women’s Soccer, and Volleyball—were excused). There should be an added crucible experience at or near the conclusion of first detail (including all cadets) and the talent show should be moved or eliminated to increase the rigor, stress, and reward of the CBT culminating experience. Cadets should further be rigorously graded on their performance in CBT, to include peer evaluations. Those cadets who do not demonstrate aptitude for service should be separated from the Military Academy or, at a minimum, receive an “F” in military development. “Recycling” substandard cadets into the succeeding summer class should be an option.

5. Military Education: The Sum is Far Greater than the Parts

a. **Observation.** Military education at West Point far exceeds the TRADOC/JPME standards required for pre-commissioning, but suffers an identity crisis.

1) **More than BOLC Tasks.** The Military Science curriculum currently concentrates on BOLC tasks, taught recurrently in MS 100, MS 200, and MS 300 and in the field. This is reflected, among other places, in the limited goals listed in the current Green Book.
The MS 100, 200, and 300 courses more than accomplish the required BOLC tasks (as reflected by almost no failing grades and cadets almost invariably finishing at the top of their classes at BOLC). While these courses received generally positive reviews, largely based on the quality of the instructor, they can and should go well beyond serving as updated MS classes of 30 years ago and better prepare cadets for the challenges of the future. Cadets could receive and absorb far more from their first three years of MS than is now the case.

2) **More than just MS classes.** A mistaken perception exists among some at West Point that unless a course is controlled and taught by DMI, it is somehow not part of a cadet’s military education. Even if the MS 100, 200, and 300 courses are improved as recommended below, they will remain similar, if only slightly better than, the MS courses taught to ROTC cadets. The unique comparative advantage of a West Point graduate is that each cadet receives a semester (or two) of military history, a semester of Constitutional and Military Law, a semester of Leadership, a four-year military-focused physical education curriculum, a civil-military subcourse in American Politics, a just war subcourse in Philosophy, and a wide variety of other areas of military emphasis throughout their curriculum and daily experience at West Point. Cadets fail to appreciate that they essentially already graduate with a minor (combined 5 courses or 15 hours) in defense and strategic studies, and neither the institution nor the DMI faculty recognize non-DMI courses as being integral to the Military Program.

3) **MX 400 needs a home.** MX 400 is generally regarded as a very good interdisciplinary course that accomplishes its original purpose—to bring together the interdisciplinary strands of the Military Program and to focus on inculcating the “Be” component of officership, after cadets have had over three years to “Know” and “Do” what it means to be an officer. When MX 400 began, it had strong leadership from other academic departments and from SCPME, which was an appropriate interim step so that the course could mature and so that DMI could prepare to take on responsibility for its management. That multi-departmental leadership and buy-in has eroded over time.

b. Recommendations.

1) **Strengthen MS Courses.** MS courses should be improved and “infused” with DSS content. Currently, teaching MS is one of many DMI missions and often competes poorly against the demands of Branch Week, Sandhurst, and preparing for summer training. Faculty time is stretched severely. Cadets should move from learning basic tactics in MS to understanding the complexity of the battlefield that they will encounter after they graduate. This may necessitate increasing over time the amount of credit hours committed to MS 100, MS 200, and MS 300, from the current 1.5 hours to 3.0 hours. The new interactive E-books are excellent and can provide additional methods of learning to leverage the contact time in class. The stovepipe division between DSS and Military Science also seems counterproductive, both for the development of MS courses and to leverage the newly educated DMI instructors with master’s degrees.

2) **Train all DMI Faculty.** While the master’s degrees will be a major plus for the officer faculty, it is also important to enhance the training for DMI NCOs. Leveraging instruction for NCOs at TRADOC schools or other preparation would ensure that they gain an increased basis of knowledge for their roles. DMI NCOs should also be given enhanced opportunities for
job-related further civilian education, such as instruction in instructional technology or education.

3) **Adjust MS Contact Hours.** As a radical concept, DMI could start MS classes in week 3 instead of week 1 of the semester and use the first two weeks for concentrated, fenced New Instructor Training to overcome the problem of DMI sprinting all summer long and then jumping unprepared into the Academic Year. Since MS courses are currently 1.5 credit hours, they require 60 hours of work. Instead of 40 one-hour lessons with 30 minutes of homework; a revised schedule could include 30 contact hours with 30 one-hour homework assignments. This would give those teaching MS adequate time for consolidated new instructor orientation and would lead to MS classes with greater cadet preparation and greater depth of focus. Even if MS courses were increased 3.0 credits, lesson 1 could start on the first day of the third week of the semester. Cadets receive sufficient additional instruction to support fewer contact hours because of the rich mix of lectures, leadership experiences, and military training they receive throughout the academic year.

4) **Recognize and publicize all aspects of the Military Program.** Each of the Academic Departments prides itself on its contributions to the military development of cadets. The Commandant and Dean should co-chair a review of the contributions of all courses, those noted above and many others, to illustrate to the entire staff and faculty how many courses from multiple departments all contribute to the Military Program. This is not a recommendation to change or micro-manage those parts of the academic program, but to increase their visibility and importance at the Academy. This would be a first step, which could evolve into the recommendation from LTG McMaster as “The Next Step in Developing Leaders of Character: Using the Interdisciplinary Approach to the Study of War to Integrate the Military and Academic Programs.” (See this paper at appendix C). The Academy should also consider restoring the second semester of military history as part of the core curriculum.

5) **Assign MX 400 to DMI.** MX 400 should have faculty from DMI and SCPME, be housed in DSS, and supervised by the DSS Academy Professor. DSS faculty, especially now that all DMI instructors will achieve master’s degrees, should earn those degrees in the interdisciplinary topics (history, political science, leadership, national security policy, public policy, sociology, philosophy) that would prepare them both for DSS courses and MX 400. This would enable them to teach not only MX 400 but also the other courses that could comprise the DSS Major (or Minor). Some additional faculty may be required to affect this change and maintain the high quality of MX 400 over time, but the responsibility and authority for the course should reside within DMI.

6. Building a Respected World Class Department.

   a. **Observation.** It will take hard work and many years of significant effort to develop and enrich DMI in order to achieve an enduring reputation of pre-eminence at West Point and in the Army. The resourcing of officers to attend graduate school and the creation of the Modern War Institute are key investments that together present a unique opportunity to significantly burnish the status of the department. Other steps can build on this momentum and help accelerate
change.

b. Recommendations:

1) **Increase Stature of DMI-6.** In the recent history of DMI, only one Professor and Head of the Department has become a general officer (BG Mike Garrett, who was the Head of DMI before he took brigade command.) In a shrinking Army, the DMI-6 position will be even less likely to produce GOs in the future. To offset this reality, DMI should request one PUSMA position for the department. This would enable the Professor and Head of DMI to be selected by a Board with a DA-appointed representative, approved by the Academic Board, approved at DA, nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate, and could serve beyond 30 years. If his or her career were deemed to be long and distinguished, the Superintendent could recommend that the DMI-6 be advanced to the rank of BG upon retirement. It is worth noting that this is the case at the Air Force Academy where their head of DMI is a Permanent Professor (and works for the Dean).

2) **Leverage the Modern War Institute (MWI).** MWI provides West Point the opportunity to become a recognized thought leader in modern war. However, MWI will be challenged by its resourcing and execution to make sure that whatever it does, it does well. To be effective, the Modern War Institute must be resourced adequately with a combination of public and private funding to accomplish critical tasks for the Army, leveraging all of the myriad other resources at West Point. To this end, West Point should take inventory of the other Centers that are or have been doing similar tasks to see if there could be synergy, outputs, or other resources that could be tapped to help launch MWI. Its current staffing plans seem wholly inadequate relative to its aspiration to become a serious leader in research, thinking, and writing about modern war and warfare.

7. Building Teams

a. **Observation.** Cadet Companies are important because cadets need to have the experience of being part of a well-run, cohesive, spirited team. A strong company identity and affiliation by cadets can help defeat cynicism, provide opportunities for greater unit-based cadet incentives (company privileges, awards) and help rebalance the cadet experience away from primarily individual achievement toward teamwork and collective accomplishments, much like the Army as whole. While 20-25% of cadets are intercollegiate athletes and gain a team experience in their sport, many other cadets participate in myriad clubs and teams, many may miss the opportunity to be part of an excellent team and to participate in making a team better.

b. **Recommendation: Enhance the role of cadet companies.** One suggestion is to bring back the use of “Commandant’s Saturdays” and require each company to execute a company event at least once each semester. This is not intended to be as elaborate as the mandatory “Regimental Saturdays” of the past where an entire regiment went through a training event, but would be something that could be reasonably planned and resourced at a company level. Ideally this event would be military training (running a range, conducting land navigation, training on other tasks), but could also be a service project or other company task that would
require leadership, team-building, and result in greater esprit de corps, planned and led by the cadet chain of command.

8. Conclusion. The Military Program at West Point is fundamentally sound, but could be made significantly more meaningful for cadets and their post-commissioning careers by making key strategic adjustments. West Point must continue to produce officers for the Army who are tough and ready to lead soldiers in a turbulent world wracked with violent conflicts and implacable adversaries. As officers, USMA graduates must be just as fully prepared to lead with integrity, skill and judgment in these challenging environments as they are to succeed academically. Modest additional investments in the Military Program now will go far to ensure this vital outcome for the Army and the Nation.

Approved by the Military Program External Review Panel:

GEN (Ret.) John P. Abizaid   COL (Ret.) David E. Johnson, PhD   GEN David G. Perkins
LTG (Ret.) David W. Baro   LTG H.R. McMaster, PhD   SMA (Ret.) Kenneth O. Preston
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