

Military Education Council Meeting

April 29, 2021 10:30 am

Present: Thomas Teper, Chair, Jenny Bateman, James Brennan, Kent Choquette, CAPT Anthony Corapi, Jeffrey Eric Jenkins, LTC Daniel Johnson, Leanne Knobloch, Angela Lyons, and Lt Col Joseph Timberlake.

Absent: Jon Ebel, Surabhi Kiran, Jason Sakowski, Donovan Spann, and Weiliang Zhang

The meeting was brought to order at 10:36 am. Introductions were made as new members were present.

Prof. Brennan motioned and LTC Johnson seconded to approve the minutes from the 01/07/21 meeting with no changes.

Membership Change Prof. Teper reported that the University Senate has approved a change to the Military Education Council Bylaws on the number of faculty members required to be Senators. The original guidance was that three of the six faculty members were to be Senators. The new requirement is one of the six faculty members to be Senators. This change was requested to allow the vacancies on the Council to be filled easier and in a timelier manner. While it is important to maintain the connection to the Senate with at least one member, being a Senator isn't necessary for the work required of the MEC.

Update to Faculty Review Documents Ms. Bateman reported that the "Nomination Procedures" document and the "Faculty Review Guidelines" document have the addition of the word "Military" anywhere before the words "Assistant Professor." Military Assistant Professor is the official position title that is given to all ROTC Faculty at the Assistant level. This change is to clarify the job title for the Faculty Review Committee and MEC.

This brought forth some discussion regarding other parts of the Faculty Review Guidelines document. Primarily, the necessity of pursuing a graduate degree at the University of Illinois. Most Military Assistant Professors will pursue a graduate degree while in the position, if they don't already have one. They can pursue the degree at any institution. Prof. Teper and Ms. Bateman will work to make some additional changes to the document to clarify the requirement that the candidate has the inclination and potential to pursue a graduate degree, and will share with the MEC.

Teachers Ranked as Excellent Prof. Teper reported that CAPT Corapi, LT Hartman in Naval Science and CAPT Drabowicz and Mr. Ashworth in Military Science were all recognized as "Teachers Ranked as Excellent" for the Fall 2020 semester.

Viola Koenigsberg Award Prof. Teper reported that Naval Midshipmen Emma Thompson was selected as the recipient for the Tri-Service ROTC Viola Koenigsberg Outstanding Female award, which recognizes the top female cadet/midshipmen in ROTC. Prof. Teper and the other review board members spoke of how impressive and deserving all three candidates were in the interviews.

Commissioning Instead of the typical Tri-Service Commissioning Ceremony, each service will hold their own separate ceremony on May 17th in order to accommodate COVID gathering restrictions.

Army ROTC will have eighteen students commission, and will host the ceremony at an off-campus location, The Venue. They will do two sequential ceremonies, each with under 100 people present in

order to accommodate all the commissioning students and allow their families and guests to attend. LTC Debby Read will be a guest speaker at the ceremonies. Army is also planning to commission one student over the summer. That ceremony will likely take place outdoors at Krannert, as they had a good experience doing a single commissioning in that location last summer.

Air Force ROTC is still considering options for the location for their ceremony. As a backup, they have Huff Hall room 112 reserved, which will accommodate their group, potentially with two ceremonies. They have ten students commissioning, two of which will be into the Space Force- the first students to commission to Space Force directly from U of I AFROTC.

Naval ROTC is planning to commission nine students on the forecourt of Foellinger Hall. This will allow for two guests per student in that area and then overflow onto the grass of the quad for additional guests. As a weather contingency, they will use the truck parking area at Illinois Fire Service Institute with the large bay doors open.

Briefing LTC Johnson spoke on how the Army ROTC was able to conduct classes and activities in-person this academic year. They utilized lot 31, painted with distancing circles, for their outdoor PT and labs. Some adjustments were necessary to allow some remote instruction for students who were unable to access the building because of problems with their Safer Illinois App access or because of quarantine requirements. They also identified some improvements in communication in the unit by including more personnel on virtual meetings (than would have usually attended pre-covid).

Vaccine There was some discussion regarding the military's stance on the COVID Vaccine. LTC Johnson reported that when the vaccine receives official FDA approval it will become mandatory for the military, but until that point, it is highly encouraged. CAPT Corapi reported that Midshipmen must be vaccinated in order to attend Naval ROTC summer training. Lt Col Timberlake reported that Air Force is not requiring the vaccine for summer training, and has a mitigation plan in place for those who are not vaccinated. In all three services the vaccine is highly encouraged.

CALC/PHYSICS CAPT Corapi mentioned an issue that has come up for a small number of their non-tech major students. All Naval ROTC students are required to take two semesters of calculus and two semesters of physics. One of these courses is Physics 212, and in order to take it, the University requires them to take Calculus 3. For non-tech majored students who wouldn't generally need Calculus 3, this has been an unnecessary additional load. Waivers to not require Calc 3 have been denied to date. Prof. Choquette said that he thought he could assist with getting such an exception approved for this small number of Physics 212 students.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:44 am.