



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY

West Point, New York 10996

August 14, 2008

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

Department of Social Sciences

Dear Friends,

Greetings from the Hudson Valley! The summer is winding down, and the class of 2012 is getting ready to march to Camp Buckner for the summer—a real change for those of us who still feel nostalgic towards Lake Frederick. For the most part, however, the recent changes at West Point are a function of the ongoing wars that the Army is fighting as we take steps to better prepare our cadets for what they will face as officers. The Corps is larger, with 1300 cadets entering with the class of 2012. In light of our Nation's pressing challenges, the Army needs more officers, especially those from West Point, and the Superintendent, LTG Buster Hagenbeck, has expanded the Corps (and our teaching loads) appropriately. The Corps is also more focused and aware of the world. Many members of the class of 2010 were only 11 years old on 9/11, so for most of their educated lives, the Nation has been at war. Incoming cadets arrive at West Point with both the full knowledge that they will likely be in combat upon graduation, and with an earnest desire to serve.

The new Commandant, BG Mike Linnington (USMA '80) arrived in May and is implementing several changes initiated by his predecessor—MG Bob Caslen, who just took command of the 25th Infantry Division. Although the Com, a former math instructor, is not adding calculus training in Beast, one of his big changes is “splitting” the yearling summer at Camp Buckner into two parts. The first three weeks is largely unchanged—it is for yearlings and includes training as members of a squad and experiencing all branches of the Army. The second half of Camp Buckner is now “Cadet Leader Development Training,” and has shifted to the summer before a cadet's first year. It is a more intense and realistic leader development experience where the firsties complete leadership challenges as patrol leaders integrating all of their military development in the field just 10 months before graduation. As usual, we have several Department officers supporting the Com who will help him carefully assess these new summer programs, and their initial reports have been promising. A side benefit is that yearlings now spend the other half of their summers in military schools or on internships, so many will report to Economics or American Politics classes in the fall sporting newly earned Airborne or Air Assault wings.

Speaking of the summer, cadets continue to have truly mindboggling opportunities in the Academic Individual Advanced Development and Conflict and Human Security Studies internship programs. Over 160 cadets participated in the programs that sent cadets from Latvia to China and all points in between. Highlights include travels

through Poland, Peru, India, Tanzania, Israel, Vietnam, Liberia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Germany, Cambodia, Australia, Hungary, Qatar, and Ghana. Many of our cadets, especially American Politics majors, worked in Washington in the Pentagon, State Department, OMB, and with several members of Congress. Senator Jack Reed hosted a reception for the cadets and Army leadership just a few days before his trip to the Mideast with Senator Barack Obama. It was great to have the cadets visiting the leadership on Capitol Hill where they see the real impact that people and policy can have on our democratic process. These internships are life changing experiences for cadets and would not be possible without the generous support of so many of you, including General Brent Scowcroft, Dana Mead, Bill Murdy, Walt Lincoln, Ken Hicks, Bob Baldwin, as well as the MacArthur, Olmsted, and Cudahy Foundations. Thanks!

In addition to the cadets' summer adventures, the faculty keeps very busy as well. In a growing industry, a total of 12 Department members deployed this summer. Some were either starting or finishing year-long tours (LTC Chris Hornbarger in Iraq and MAJ Bill Skimmyhorn in Afghanistan). Our international relations Director, LTC Suzanne Nielsen, finished six-months doing great work for GEN Dave Petraeus. LTC(P) Joe Felter and Mr. Brian Fishman, from the Combating Terrorism Center, worked in Iraq with Joint Special Operations Command. Majors Tom Greco, Chris Springer, and Rebecca Paterson worked economic and political development in Northern Iraq. Our Not-Head, COL Cindy Jebb, and Comparative Politics Director, MAJ(P) Tania Chacho, traveled throughout Iraq conducting an assessment of human terrain teams. MAJ Bill Bundy is working with the 173d Brigade in Afghanistan, and I just returned from Iraq after a short trip to help facilitate the upcoming transition between GEN Petraeus and LTG(P) Odierno. As you can well imagine, we have far more requests than we have faculty available—and our first priority remains teaching cadets—but it is tremendous to bring recent, real-world experience back into the classroom. Another benefit of these trips is the opportunity to visit with so many Department alumni who, from GEN Petraeus and throughout nearly every staff and command, are making tremendously significant contributions in the war effort. It is inspiring to see the impact that so many Department members, and indeed all members of the Army and other services are making.

In addition to sending faculty “down range,” we continue to address tough challenges in forums such as Senior Conference. This year's conference topic was requested by the Chief of Staff of the Army and addressed one of our Nation's most important issues: “The Army's Professional Military Ethic in an Era of Persistent Conflict.” We had a rich three days of discussions, including presentations by GEN George Casey, GEN Scott Wallace, and former Secretary of Defense, Bill Perry. The papers and insights from that conference will continue to contribute to Army policy in the years to come. More information on the conference is at <http://www.dean.usma.edu/departments/sosh/seniorconf/index.htm>.

Even before Senior Conference, we honored our cadets who achieved academic excellence at the Department's Awards Ceremony in May with several special presenters, including: Mr. Robert A. Whitfield, BG (Ret) Thomas E. Carpenter III, Mr. George and Mrs. Cynthia Houghton, and Mrs. Trudy Pojman. We continue to present the George Osborn Comparative Politics award thanks to Bill Murdy, the SCUSA leadership award thanks to BG (Ret) and Mrs. Jordan, and the excellence in Terrorism Studies award thanks to BG (Ret) and Mrs. Howard. We also recognized four outstanding instructors as winners of the William Murdy Award for Teaching Excellence in the Department of Social Sciences: Majors Paul Oh, Kevin Toner, Nick Ayers, and JC Mikits. We are extremely grateful for Bill Murdy's generous support of this award that recognizes our core mission of teaching.

We had 25 new faculty members report this summer and, for the first time since the 1970s, each military faculty member (and one of the civilians) had served in combat zones. They come to us fresh from the best graduate school programs, and they will be inspiring teachers and role models for the cadets. They truly are the best that the Army has to offer, and it is great that the Army continues to support us with exceptional faculty. As you see bright, talented officers who would be great Department instructors, please direct them to the prospective faculty link on our website at: <http://www.dean.usma.edu/departments/sosh/>. Our departing XO, LTC Dan Evans, concluded his XO duties with the now traditional summer hike up Storm King Mountain. We will miss Dan, but we are fortunate to have Capt Amanda Gookins as our new XO...and perhaps the first Air Force officer to serve as XO (although there may have been an Air Force XO during the 1950s).

Two of the "new" faculty members are COL Jeff Peterson who is returning from completion of his PhD and command of a Stryker Battalion in Iraq to be the Director of the Economics stem and MAJ(P) Reid Sawyer who finished his PhD program at Columbia and has reassumed his duties as Director of the Combating Terrorism Center. They both have big shoes to fill. As I mentioned in my last letter, COL Maggie Belknap, retired this spring after four great years directing the economics stem and is now working in New York. LTC(P) Joe Felter completed a tremendous tour as the CTC Director and is on his way to a war college fellowship at Stanford. Another significant departure is Dr. Don Snider, who is retiring after over 10 years with the Department as a Professor of Political Science and our Army's leading expert on civil-military relations. If anyone ever needs proof that one person with the right ideas can change an Army, they just need to study Don Snider and the way that he intelligently and persistently reeducated the Army with the tenets of the Army profession over the past decade. Fortunately, I think he won't be able to stop himself from continued involvement as he and Caroline move to Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Finally, on August 28, COL Herman Bulls will retire after nearly 20 years with the Department—three on the faculty and the rest as an Army Reserve officer. His two weeks each year with the

Department provided great mentorship, inspiration, levity, and occasionally gourmet pizzas for all of us; Herman's contributions to the Academy throughout the years have been truly remarkable.

Continuing the tradition of the "Social Sciences Chair" at the National War College, LTC Suzanne Nielsen will be spending the year there, replacing LTC Ike Wilson, who just finished his year at the National War College and is back to continue directing the American Politics stem. As you can imagine there might be just a few things to cover in American Politics in the midst of the election year, and Ike and his faculty will inspire the cadets to put a bit more analysis into politics than they see in the media.

As you can see, a letter like this could go on and on because of all of the Department's great work—a true reflection of the tradition of excellence that all of you have given to us. While we cannot mention the passing of all Department members, I think it is appropriate to acknowledge two Department members who touched so many lives. We will sorely miss LTG Bill Odom and GEN Bill Knowlton, who passed away in June and August, respectively. Both men had a tremendous impact on the Academy and our Nation, and their memory continues to serve as an inspiration to us all.

We hope that you will be able to join us to learn more about the Department at the Fall Reunion and Tailgate, which will be on September 20 when Army beats Akron. We start the day's activities with an Open House in Lincoln Hall before the parade and then tailgate until shortly before game time. (The exact times of the parade and kickoff are dependent on the ESPN TV sports contract and will be announced by 8 September. We will send an email out with those details as soon as we have them). Please see the enclosed flyer with all of the details, or see our website at <http://www.dean.usma.edu/departments/sosh/Alumni/Index.htm>, and sign up by September 12. If you have questions about the reunion, please contact Ms. Joy Pasquazi at 845-938-6401 or joy.pasquazi@usma.edu.

We sincerely hope you will be able to join us at the Fall Reunion.

Best regards,



Mike Meese
Professor and Head
Department of Social Sciences