

A STUDY OF THE METHODS AND FACTORS FACILITATING  
EFFECTIVE TRANSITION FROM COMPULSORY  
TO VOLUNTARY ROTC

by

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## INTRODUCTION

Military training at Kansas State University began in 1865 as a result of the Morrill Act of 1862. Commonly known as "The Land Grant College Act," this statute donated large grants of public lands to colleges and universities throughout the United States, especially those specializing in the mechanical and agricultural arts, that included in their curriculum two years of military training for all able-bodied male students.<sup>1</sup>

Contrary to public opinion the Morrill Act does not provide, only implies that military training is mandatory. It was not until 1934 under the Supreme Court Decision in *Hamilton versus Regents*, that the position of the federal government, the state, the institution and the rights of the individual were established.<sup>2</sup> The decision of the court left the matter in the hands of the state and the institution as to whether there would be compulsory military training under the Morrill Act.

Prior to 1931 enrollment in military courses at Kansas State University was compulsory due to a faculty ruling. In 1931 the Kansas Legislature made military training mandatory

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<sup>1</sup>U. S. Statutes at Large 503, Chap. 130, Vol. 12, Act of July 2, 1862, Thirty-seventh Congress, Second Session.

<sup>2</sup>Hamilton v. Regents, 293 U. S. 245 (1934).

for all able-bodied male students.<sup>1</sup> This law was in effect until July 1, 1965 at which time this act was amended in portion as follows:

One of such courses shall ~~may be compulsory and~~ be required of ~~every-regularly-enrolled~~ each male student of such university or college during the freshmen and sophomore years, in accordance with policies established by the state board of regents.<sup>2</sup>

The State Board of Regents, upon the recommendation of President James A. McCain and upon approval of the Curriculum Committee, Kansas State University, authorized ROTC training at Kansas State University on an optional basis beginning with the second semester of the 1965-66 academic year.<sup>3</sup>

The transition from one-hundred and one years of compulsory ROTC to voluntary participation was completed during the second semester of academic year 1965-66. So effective was this transition that eighty-two percent of the male students enrolled in ROTC the first semester re-enrolled voluntarily the second semester.<sup>4</sup> During the academic school year of 1966-67, thirty-five percent of the total male enrollment

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<sup>1</sup>"We're Number One," K-Stater, XVII (July, 1967), 7.

<sup>2</sup>Senate Bill 94, State of Kansas, July 1, 1965.

<sup>3</sup>General Minutes, Kansas State Board of Regents, May 22, 1965, cited in letter by Daniel D. Beatty, Business Manager, Kansas State University, May 28, 1965.

<sup>4</sup>Statement by Colonel B. L. Ruggles, personal interview.

of Kansas State University was participating in ROTC.<sup>1</sup>

The success enjoyed by the Air Force and Army ROTC programs at Kansas State University was vividly portrayed in the "K-Stater" published by the Kansas State University Alumni Association in July, 1967. Accomplishments noted in this article are as follows:

1. Kansas State University has the largest purely voluntary Air Force program in the United States. In academic year 1966-67 there were 1,309 cadets, compared with an average of 476 in Big Eight and Ten schools.
2. The Army ROTC Department has the largest cadet corps in the Fifth Army Area which covers thirteen midwestern states, ranking it seventh in the nation.
3. Kansas State University was first in the number of Air Force scholarships awarded in the 1966 and 1967 national competition.
4. The Army ROTC Department received one of the largest number of scholarships in the Fifth Army Area.
5. Kansas State University Air Force ROTC cadets won three medical scholarships out of thirty-four awarded nationally.
6. The number of advanced cadets in the Army ROTC program is the largest in history.
7. The Cadet Wing Commander of the Air Force ROTC Cadet Wing was selected the top cadet of the nation for academic year 1966-67.
8. Ten Air Force cadets were recipients of regular appointments in the Air Force in the June 1967

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<sup>1</sup>"We're Number One," loc. cit.

commissioning ceremonies. This number was the largest of all colleges and universities offering Air Force training.<sup>1</sup>

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this report was to determine the methods and factors employed by the Kansas State University Administration and the Heads of the Air Force and Army ROTC departments to complete a transition from compulsory to voluntary ROTC without any significant decrease in interest and participation in Air Force and Army ROTC.

#### PROCEDURE

The information presented in this report was obtained from the libraries at Kansas State University; documents from the administrative files at Kansas State University; the files and personal interviews with the respective ROTC departments; and the author's personal observation during the period of transition.

The findings of this report may serve as suggestions for courses of action to be taken by other universities involved in a transition from compulsory to voluntary ROTC and may be helpful to those ROTC departments who need to revitalize their total ROTC program.

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<sup>1</sup>"We're Number One," op. cit., p. 4-7.

## DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

For the purpose of this study the following terms are defined:

Advanced ROTC. The last two years of a four year course in the Reserve Officer Training Corps leading to a commission in the Armed Forces.

Basic ROTC. The first two years of a four year Reserve Officer Training Corps program leading to a commission in the Armed Forces.

Corps Training. A portion of the ROTC on-campus educative experience that centers around the organized cadet corps rather than the classroom. An activity that is largely cadet planned and directed.

Field Training Unit. A four or six week field training activity or camp conducted during the summer months at a military base or post which is an integral part of the two or four year ROTC program.

Four-Year Program. A ROTC program consisting of four years of basic and advanced ROTC.

ROTC. Reserve Officer Training Corps.

Two-Year Program. A ROTC program consisting of a six week field training unit which negates the requirement for two years of basic ROTC.



## PREVAILING ATTITUDES TOWARD COMPULSORY ROTC

Interest in deleting the requirement for compulsory ROTC became increasingly evident in 1964 when university officials anticipating 1965 legislative action by the State of Kansas to delete required ROTC, embarked upon the task of determining current attitudes of the federal government and the Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges concerning compulsory or voluntary participation in ROTC.

Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges. In a letter to Kansas State University in October of 1964, Russell I. Thackrey outlined briefly the trends in ROTC since World War II.<sup>1</sup> He indicated that 49 colleges and universities at one time required military training of all able-bodied male students in the first two years of college.

Beginning in the early 1950's the Massachusetts Institute of Technology deleted their requirement for compulsory ROTC primarily due to the pressures of the engineering curriculum. During the next decade several institutions such as California, Colorado State, Cornell, Iowa State, Michigan State, Ohio State and others deleted compulsory ROTC.

Mr. Thackrey indicated that Illinois, Kansas, Maine, Washington and West Virginia had laws at one time which

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<sup>1</sup>Russell I. Thackrey, Executive Secretary, Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, (Letter, October 13, 1964).

required their land-grant institutions to require military training. Illinois and Washington have repealed these laws leaving Kansas as one of not more than three states having such a legal requirement. In all other states the matter is under the jurisdiction of the state board of trustees or regents.

Mr. Thackrey acknowledged that his attitude toward required military training had undergone considerable change. This change was brought about by the nature of the defense problem, college curricula, and the attitudes of the Department of Defense.

Department of Defense. Throughout the 1950's it became increasingly evident that the Department of Defense did not regard required ROTC as essential to the success of the ROTC program. In 1958 the Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges appointed a committee headed by Dr. John A. Hannah, Michigan State University.<sup>1</sup> This committee requested an audience with the Armed Forces Policy Board and asked for a definitive statement as to its attitude toward compulsory ROTC.

The Department of Defense indicated that it did not regard required military training as essential--as compared with voluntary ROTC--to the production of commissioned officers and to the defense of the country. While the Department

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

recognized certain values of a compulsory program, it did not regard them as being within the scope of its responsibility. The Armed Forces Policy Board felt that whether or not to have required ROTC was strictly an institutional matter and that the Department of Defense would follow the wishes of the institution. Following the 1960 national elections a similar survey of the new administration indicated the same attitude was prevalent.

#### KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY SUPPORTS VOLUNTARY ROTC

Based on the investigations and information available, Kansas State University in February of 1965, endorsed a legislative proposal which would authorize the Board of Regents of the State of Kansas to determine if ROTC was a compulsory part of the curriculum.<sup>1</sup>

In this endorsement President James A. McCain cited the "ROTC Vitalization Act of 1964" passed by the 88th Congress as the immediate reason for endorsing voluntary ROTC. He stated that this act provided for:

1. A four-year officers' training program similar to the present program, but subsidized with a limited number of federal scholarships.
2. A new accelerated officers' training program concentrated in the junior and senior years only, including a six-week camp preceding the

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<sup>1</sup>James A. McCain, President, Kansas State University, (Letter, February 13, 1965).

junior year of enrollment. This program eliminated the need for a required two-year basic course prior to enrollment in the advanced course.

General Committee Action. As a result of the statutory requirement for ROTC being rescinded, a committee was appointed by the President of Kansas State University to consider efficacious procedures for the transition to voluntary ROTC. This committee was representative of various sectors in the university, including the officers in charge of the Aerospace Studies and Military Science programs.

The objectives of this committee were to determine the anticipated effects on the various curriculums in the university, the possible need for additional faculty positions to staff courses elected instead of ROTC, the lead time necessary for the ROTC departments to adjust their programs and recruitment to a voluntary status, and the need for the appropriate faculty committees to consider the variety of possible substitute electives for ROTC. The committee recommended that:

1. ROTC be made optional for male students beginning with the spring semester of 1966. This delay would permit internal adjustments during the summer of 1965 and give the respective ROTC departments the fall semester of 1965 to adjust their programs for change.
2. Immediately following favorable action by the Board of Regents, an ad hoc University ROTC Advisory Committee be appointed, composed of a member of each college curriculum committee, exclusive of Home Economics and Veterinary

Medicine, the chairman of the Faculty Senate Committee and the Professors of Aerospace Studies and Military Science.<sup>1</sup>

University ROTC Advisory Committee. This committee was appointed to identify and study the problems involved in implementation of a voluntary ROTC program and to make recommendations for consideration. Problems identified for study were:

1. Each curriculum for men required ROTC. A change to voluntary ROTC necessitated curriculum changes which permitted a "free choice" of electives to replace ROTC or designated electives which forced the student to choose between designated courses.
2. The decision by many male students to select other electives rather than ROTC could impose an increased enrollment in other curriculums and severely impose a hardship on the present faculty.
3. Increased academic credit above the four hours credit allowed for ROTC during the freshmen and sophomore years.
4. Determination and formulation of a university policy concerning participation in ROTC.
5. Ways in which the university could assist the military units during the transition period.<sup>2</sup>

The recommendations of this committee as adopted by the university were:

1. Effective February 2, 1966 any qualified male student had free choice as to whether he would

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<sup>1</sup>John Chalmers, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences, (Letter, May 6, 1965).

<sup>2</sup>Marna Hart, "Optional ROTC Creates Changeover Problems," Kansas State Collegian, May 25, 1965, p. 4.

enroll in course work offered by the Departments of Aerospace Studies and Military Science.

2. The hours vacated in each curriculum were to be maintained as free electives and not be filled by college specified courses.
3. The Professors of Aerospace Studies and Military Science should have time scheduled at pre-enrollment sessions to speak to incoming freshmen.
4. All university personnel would be informed that it was the policy of the university to encourage qualified men to enroll in the ROTC program.<sup>1</sup>

#### UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION ENCOURAGES PARTICIPATION IN ROTC

On July 2, 1965, James A. McCain, President of Kansas State University released a tape for use of KSAC Radio (University Radio). This was an announcement of the deletion of the requirement for ROTC at the university. It was indicated in this tape that President McCain during that week had addressed himself to the men students enrolling at Kansas State and stated that:

The Reserve Officers' Training Corps offers substantial advantages and I urge each of you to give it careful and serious consideration . . . . It is increasingly apparent that our nation must maintain military strength in the interest of safeguarding freedom and preserving the peace of the world. The training you receive in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps will equip you to contribute in a worthy

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<sup>1</sup>William Stamey, Assistant Dean, College of Arts and Sciences, (Letter, July 15, 1965).

manner to that military strength. Unless you have some compelling reason for not doing so, I recommend the ROTC program for your serious consideration . . .

. . .<sup>1</sup>

Comments of this nature were indicative of the support given ROTC by university administrative officials and various college faculty members.

Freshmen Orientation. The established policy of the university permitted the Department of Aerospace Studies and Military Science an audience with all incoming male freshmen during the summer orientation sessions and other scheduled periods. At these sessions a representative from the College of Arts and Sciences explained the purposes of the orientation period and introduced a 16mm film featuring James A. McCain, President of Kansas State University.<sup>2</sup> In this film he briefly outlined the history of ROTC and Kansas State's participation in this program. He pointed out that although no longer compulsory, this did not minimize its importance and central place it had enjoyed for over one hundred years. He pointed out to the students that they should enroll in ROTC for the following reasons:

1. The military training received under ROTC equipped one to discharge an obligation to his country.

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<sup>1</sup>Radio Announcement, KSAC Radio, James A. McCain, Manhattan, Kansas, July 2, 1965.

<sup>2</sup>Film Address, James A. McCain, Manhattan, Kansas, undated.

2. Most students under the present system of selective service faced a period of duty with the Armed Forces. The training received under ROTC permitted one to contribute more effectively and to engage in this duty at the level of a commissioned officer.
3. Training received under ROTC contributed to the building of character, self-discipline, and it instilled in students a deeper understanding of our free democratic institutions.

The heads of the Department of Aerospace Studies and Military Science were afforded the opportunity to relate the objectives of their programs and cite the opportunities available in each. Time was reserved for a question and answer session for those interested.

Statewide Publicity. President James A. McCain indicated that he seldom missed an opportunity during his travels over the state to relate to the public the image that ROTC was creating on the Kansas State University campus. He stated that he had been favorably impressed with the calibre of students who had chosen ROTC and stressed this fact when the occasion permitted.<sup>1</sup>

#### INTERNAL ADJUSTMENTS IN THE ROTC DEPARTMENTS

Recognizing that a conversion to voluntary ROTC would occur in the near future, Lieutenant Colonel G. K. Hollingworth and Wayne B. Smith, Executive Officers' of the

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by President James A. McCain at an Air Force ROTC Luncheon, Manhattan, Kansas, April 1967.



Department of Aerospace Studies and Military Science, respectively, indicated that adjustments for change began as early as academic year 1963-64 with increasing emphasis in academic year 1964-65. The author was a faculty member of the Department of Aerospace Studies during the period 1960 to 1967 and was closely associated with the changes in attitude and practices which occurred.

Counseling Service. A program was initiated wherein each cadet was interviewed by his instructor at least once a semester. The interview normally lasted approximately 15 minutes for freshmen and sophomores and from 20 to 40 minutes for the advanced cadets. These interviews were scheduled by the instructors and each student was encouraged to return for subsequent sessions if he so desired.

These interviews were designed primarily to assist the student with any problems that he might have or to direct him to the appropriate agency that handled such problems. These counseling sessions were not a direct approach for advanced ROTC recruitment. It was rather an indirect approach in which the student, his problems and his aspirations became the focal point of attention.

Less Emphasis On Drill. It was concluded that the requirement for approximately 30 hours of drill was unnecessary for the college student when a high school drop out could

accomplish as much in 4 hours at a basic military unit.<sup>1</sup>

It was felt that this requirement was a determining factor for students not choosing ROTC whose grade point average exceeded 3.0. As a result freshmen were not required to participate in drill during their first semester of 1965-66.

Previously the freshmen and sophomore ROTC cadets performed their functions on the drill field entirely under the supervision and mercy of the advanced cadets. Under the new concept of corps training, volunteers from the sophomore class who had potential leadership ability and possessed a grade point average of 2.000 or better, were given the opportunity to exercise leadership roles in the corps training period rather than becoming mere participants in drill. According to Lieutenant Colonel Hollingworth, the concept of teaching small group management and leadership had a tremendous motivational impact on the cadet participants.<sup>2</sup>

Emphasis in corps training on small group management and on cadet participation. Cadets in the ROTC programs were given the opportunity to appear before their peers in some type of leadership role. This instilled confidence in most cadets and provided an excellent tool of identifying potential

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by Lieutenant Colonel G. K. Hollingworth, personal interview.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

candidates for the advanced program and ultimate commissioned status in the armed forces.<sup>1</sup>

Academic Achievement. Increased emphasis in academic excellence was continually stressed and since academic year 1964-65, has been a primary determining factor in eligibility requirements for enrollment and continuance in either the basic or advanced courses.

A cadet applying for advanced ROTC had to possess at least a 2.000 grade point average. Under a quota system normally imposed for enrollment in advanced ROTC, a 2.000 grade point average was often insufficient for serious competition. To be eligible to compete for a scholarship required at least a 2.500 grade point average. The advanced cadets had an approximate grade point average of 2.500 in academic year 1966-67.<sup>2</sup>

A student in the basic course had to remain in good standing with the institution and not be on academic probation. His progress had to be such that he could reasonably be expected to possess a grade point average of 2.000 by the end of his sophomore year.

Advanced cadets who had been placed on academic probation by the university either for low cumulative grade point average or a low semester average, were placed on probationary

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ruggles, loc. cit.

status with the department and were ineligible for further pay until the academic probation was removed. At such time he was entitled to retroactive pay.

Cadets who were required to have a 2.000 grade point average for graduation and consistently failed to meet this standard were in serious jeopardy as a cadet and faced possible disenrollment from advanced ROTC.<sup>1</sup>

Academic achievement was recognized through the scholarship program, competitiveness in selection for advanced ROTC and cadet promotions. Cadets receiving semester honors and other notable academic achievements were presented ribbons at appropriate recognition ceremonies.

Publicity. Arrangements were made with the Kansas State News Bureau to support an energetic news release program wherein achievements of cadets would be recognized through news releases. According to Lieutenant Colonel Hollingworth over six thousand news releases were sent by the Air Force ROTC unit to hometown newspapers during the period 1963-1967.<sup>2</sup>

The image of ROTC was greatly enhanced through this type of media. Many people who had little opportunity to be exposed to ROTC and its functions received some exposure during this period. Colonel B. L. Ruggles, Professor of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Hollingworth, loc. cit.

Aerospace Studies, indicated that many freshmen cadets had cited the publicity program as being a factor in their becoming interested in ROTC prior to enrollment in the university.<sup>1</sup>

Departmental Recruiting. Early in 1964 it was determined by the Professors of Aerospace Studies and Military Science that recruitment for advanced ROTC had to be instigated earlier than the sophomore year. It was concluded that increased emphasis should be directed to the incoming high school senior.<sup>2</sup>

Brochures outlining the total ROTC programs were prepared by the respective ROTC departments and forwarded to the upper male classmen in their senior year of high school. In addition, this brochure was forwarded to each counselor and librarian of each system.

These brochures outlined a brief history of ROTC at Kansas State University and oriented the incoming student to the ROTC programs. Included were course descriptions for both the basic and advanced courses, purposes and benefits derived from ROTC and obligations assumed by each individual upon entering the program.

Student Involvement In Recruiting. Students were

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<sup>1</sup>Ruggles, loc. cit.

<sup>2</sup>Statement by Lieutenant Colonels G. K. Hollingworth and Wayne B. Smith, personal interview.

encouraged to promote ROTC in their living groups and their home communities. Each student was asked to identify peers who might be potential candidates for ROTC. Once identified, contact was made either by brochure or personal interview. The involvement of the student in creating an impressive image of ROTC was one of the primary factors involved in the enhancement of the ROTC image on the Kansas State University campus.<sup>1</sup>

Field Trips. A program for orienting the cadet to his future career was increasingly emphasized subsequent to 1964. This program provided meaningful field trips to military installations in an endeavor to orient the cadet and provide first hand knowledge of Air Force and Army life as it existed.

The Army ROTC department had nearby Fort Riley which provided field training trips and demonstrations in such areas as infantry, armament and signal corps activities.

The Air Force provided flights to various bases and local orientation flights. Bases visited were oriented toward cadets of a particular career area and were enthusiastically endorsed by the cadets.

A field trip to a military installation permitted the cadet to observe those in his particular career area and become better acquainted with his future duties as they exist.

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<sup>1</sup>Ruggles, loc. cit.

This often dispelled erroneous misconceptions a cadet had about his particular skills and how they would be utilized.<sup>1</sup>

ROTC Vitalization Act of 1964. Public Law 88-647 passed by the 88th Congress provided some significant changes to the ROTC program and strengthened the attractiveness of the program to more students.<sup>2</sup> President Lyndon B. Johnson indicated that he was convinced that this new law would bring about a marked improvement in the ROTC program whose objectives were to furnish the largest source of trained officers for our armed forces.<sup>3</sup> The bill established a new two-year program and retained the previous four-year program with modifications.

The two-year program was designed for those students who were precluded from completing the first two years of basic ROTC due to the nonavailability of the program at the school they attended or their option not to take it when offered.

This program eliminated the necessity for two years of basic ROTC prior to becoming eligible for the advanced course. Instead each applicant for the advanced course who

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<sup>1</sup>Statement by Major J. Bruce Passey, personal interview.

<sup>2</sup>Public Law 88-647, 88th Congress, H. R. 9124, October 13, 1964.

<sup>3</sup>Office of the White House Press Secretary, Statement by the President, October 14, 1964.

had not completed two years of basic had to attend a six-week field training unit during the summer preceding enrollment in the advanced course.

Under the modified four-year program, the Air Force and Army were given authority to award scholarships covering tuition, cost of books, miscellaneous fees, and to provide a retainer of \$50.00 per month up to a total of four college years. These scholarships were authorized only to those enrolled in the four-year program and were not applicable to the two-year program.

Retainer pay was advanced to not less than \$40.00 nor more than \$50.00 per month for 20 months of advanced training. Previously the amount was approximately \$27.00 per month.

A factor considered as neither de-motivating nor motivating was the requirement for all advanced cadets to enlist in the Air Force or Army Reserve in the lowest enlisted grade and be subject to call to active duty should the contract between the cadet, the university, and the federal government be willfully violated.

Universities and colleges were given the option of selecting either the two or four year plan, or both. Kansas State University elected both plans.

Mental Testing. Prior to 1964 the Air Force ROTC Department administered the Armed Forces Qualifying Test only to those cadets who indicated a desire to apply for the



advanced program. This was a three and one-half hour test which had to be completed successfully in order to be eligible for advanced ROTC. If a cadet was desirous of flying, an additional three and one-half hour test was required.

At the beginning of academic year 1964-65 it was recognized that the testing program as handled could be a demotivating factor inasmuch as cadets normally do not like to devote extra time for testing. Since it was not required, there was little effort expended by the cadet to take advantage of it. It was felt that this test should be a part of the curriculum and that test results in the majority of instances, could become motivational to the testee.<sup>1</sup>

This test was administered to practically all of the basic cadets utilizing night sessions. The results were favorable in that cadets who had little interest found that they were qualified for further training and were more inclined to apply for advanced ROTC. This was evident in September, 1966 when 213 applicants applied for advanced ROTC with only 64 spaces available. It is believed that results of these test had its impact on increased interest.<sup>2</sup>

Physical Testing. Prior to academic year 1964-65, cadets who applied for advanced ROTC in the Air Force were administered physical examinations at Forbes Air Force Base

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<sup>1</sup>Ruggles, loc. cit.

<sup>2</sup>Ruggles, loc. cit.

in Topeka, Kansas, whereas, the Army ROTC Department had nearby Fort Riley.

Cadets desiring to take physicals for the Air Force programs had to be transported to Topeka for a 7 a.m. appointment. By the time they arrived back on the Kansas State campus they had missed a whole day of classes. This was a negative factor for recruiting inasmuch as conscientious students were hesitant to consider Air Force ROTC for either this reason or it became one of the determining factors in final declination.<sup>1</sup>

Coordination with the Director of Student Health, Dr. H. P. Jubelt, revealed that his basement facilities could be utilized and organized efficiently to support a mass physical program wherein 250 cadets could be given physical examinations during a two day period.

Authority was obtained from Air Force authorities and a medical team has been furnished each academic year since 1964-65. This mass physical program exceeded the expectations of the Air Force ROTC Department, the United States Air Force Hospital at Forbes who furnished the medical team, and Headquarters, Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Hollingworth, loc. cit.

<sup>2</sup>Ruggles, loc. cit.

Physicals under this program involved approximately one hour of the cadet's time and did not interfere with classes. It was motivational to the extent that it was efficiently organized and readily identified those who were physically eligible for the advanced program.

Esprit de corps. Under the leadership of the respective ROTC department heads since 1964, the prevailing attitude throughout the departments was one of determination and pride. The author was advised in September 1964 by Colonel B. L. Ruggles that within two years the Air Force ROTC Department could be the number one Air Force ROTC department in the nation.<sup>1</sup> This was indicative of the optimism displayed by both departments and must be one of the intangible factors that greatly influenced the success of the programs.

Esprit de corps permeated the entire faculty of the ROTC departments and the cadet corps. Faculty personnel in the ROTC departments with various university backgrounds, were no longer "Oklahoma Sooners" or "Texas Aggies" but were Kansas State "Wildcats." Identification with the university was encouraged and members expended considerable effort in widening their range of university acquaintances. This in effect created a good image of ROTC and promoted communication among the ROTC staff and faculty. This type of favorable influence toward ROTC was instrumental since those who

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<sup>1</sup>Ruggles, loc. cit.

favor ROTC often act in an advisory capacity to students.<sup>1</sup>

Optimistic leadership promoted pride in the ROTC national auxiliaries such as Pershing Rifles, Arnold Air Society and Angel Flight. A determination that these organizations would be more influential on campus and distinctively ROTC was realized when the Athletic Department requested that the ROTC departments permit all three organizations to assume specific responsibilities during sports events. As service organizations, they have been instrumental in promoting ROTC on the campus.<sup>2</sup>

Classroom Instruction. Advanced course classes and insofar as practical, basic classes, were conducted in a way that provided a large measure of student involvement and participation as well as recurrent opportunities for productive group discussions and the development of communicative skills.

The recent approach was student centered rather than instructor centered. More emphasis was placed on student participation and their involvement in a leadership role.<sup>3</sup>

#### EXPERIENCES OF OTHER INSTITUTIONS

A survey of eight major institutional ROTC departments

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<sup>1</sup>Hollingworth, loc. cit.

<sup>2</sup>Statement by Captain Robert D. Remlinger, personal interview.

<sup>3</sup>Statement by Major Donald H. Tarrant, personal interview.

who have changed from compulsory to voluntary ROTC was accomplished in January 1965. This survey was conducted jointly by both of the Kansas State University ROTC departments in an effort to identify problems involved in transition to voluntary ROTC and study recommendations and procedures which could be applied at Kansas State University. A summary of the procedures followed at other institutions and their experiences and recommendations are indicated in the following paragraphs.

Colorado State University. This university changed from compulsory to voluntary ROTC effective with the academic school year 1962-63. Enrollment in Air Force ROTC decreased from 995 to 570 for a 57 percent retention rate. Included in this retention rate were students who elected to substitute ROTC for one year of physical education as approved by the university and those required to continue in ROTC as a result of having already enrolled in the institution prior to September 1962.

The ROTC departments were afforded nine months lead time to make preparations for voluntary status. No evidence is available to indicate that new innovations were instituted nor that there was genuine encouragement by administrative officials for students to continue in ROTC. The President of the University did send an informative letter to each incoming male student concerning the ROTC programs but did not

directly encourage participation.<sup>1</sup>

Cornell University. ROTC became voluntary in the academic year 1960-61 and had a decrease in enrollment from 2,893 to 1,415 for a retention rate of only 49 percent. The voluntary program, although not purely voluntary, went into effect in June 1960 with the first voluntary group entering in September 1960. Male students at this university had to elect either physical education or ROTC which contributed immeasurably to the 49 percent retention rate.

Lack of university support for ROTC is indicated as a key factor in decreased participation in the ROTC programs. No other recommendations were made which would facilitate transition.<sup>2</sup>

Florida State University. Compulsory ROTC was abolished as of September 1964 with a retention rate of approximately 61 percent. All students already entered in ROTC were required to continue enrollment until the basic course was completed, contributing to the 60 percent retention rate.

Evidence indicates that sufficient lead time of one semester was allowed and that the university gave wholehearted support to the voluntary program. An incoming three-week freshmen orientation program was established to

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<sup>1</sup>F. W. Bexfield, Colonel, USAF, Colorado State University, (Letter, January, 1965).

<sup>2</sup>Richard D. Sullivan, Lieutenant Colonel, USAF, Cornell University, (Letter, January 21, 1964).

indoctrinate all male students concerning the benefits of ROTC and academic counselors were urged by the administration to encourage all male students to participate in ROTC.<sup>1</sup>

Iowa State University. Voluntary ROTC was instituted in September 1962 with a lead time of one semester. The Air Force ROTC department, for example, enrolled approximately 900 freshmen cadets under the compulsory program and in September 1962 only 342 enrolled in the voluntary program. In the fall of 1964 only 210 freshmen enrolled in spite of an intensified information and recruiting program.

Pitfalls identified with a change from compulsory to voluntary participation was a lingering negative attitude on the part of both the students and faculty. This was a factor which hampered continued participation. Positive attitudes of both students and faculty were considered paramount.

Iowa State University recommended the following procedures:

1. Preparation of a university booklet concerning the benefits of ROTC and a letter from the university president. This booklet and letter should be mailed to each incoming male student.
2. A letter should be written by the ROTC departments and mailed to each incoming freshmen.
3. Students and parents should be briefed during the summer freshmen orientation period.

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<sup>1</sup>William P. Moody, Major, USAF, Florida State University, (Letter, January 22, 1965).

4. The ROTC departments should conduct at least one personal interview with each student during the first semester.<sup>1</sup>

Michigan State University. In September 1962, without any lead time, voluntary ROTC was established with a significant decrease in participation. As an example, Air Force ROTC enrollment of 1,953 cadets in academic year 1961-62 decreased to 656 in academic year 1964-65. In the two year period required for a complete change from compulsory to voluntary, approximately 74 percent of the Air Force ROTC cadets elected not to continue.

Male students enrolling at Michigan State are required to enroll in ROTC or attend a five-week ROTC orientation course. At the end of the orientation course they are permitted to continue as ROTC cadets and receive credit for the semester or discontinue with no allowable credit.

The President of Michigan State University makes an opening address to each orientation class and outlines the benefits that are derived from ROTC. Evidence available does not indicate any other specific steps that were taken during the transition period.<sup>2</sup>

Oklahoma State University. Voluntary ROTC was effective with the academic year 1965-66 and the ROTC departments

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<sup>1</sup>Joseph F. Sage, Lieutenant Colonel, USAF, Iowa State University, (Letter, January 22, 1965).

<sup>2</sup>George A. Davies, Lieutenant Colonel, USAF, Michigan State University, (Letter, January 21, 1965).



were not afforded any lead time for transition. A significant decrease in enrollment was encountered. For example, Air Force ROTC enrollment decreased from 1,655 to 775.

Evidence available does not reveal any significant factors which may have been employed during the transition period.<sup>1</sup>

Pennsylvania State University. Compulsory ROTC was abolished in the spring of 1964 allowing the ROTC departments eight months lead time in which to make adjustments. A significant decrease of participation in ROTC was noted in that only 20 percent of the students enrolled in Air Force ROTC elected to remain. No significant recommendations were made for effective transition.<sup>2</sup>

University of Nebraska. The ROTC departments were not allowed any lead time between compulsory and voluntary ROTC and the university did not issue any policy statements encouraging students to participate in the program. No recommendations were made with the exception of increased emphasis on recruiting the high school senior and participation in the summer freshmen orientation program.

ROTC became voluntary in September 1964 with the students having the option of taking one year of ROTC in lieu

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<sup>1</sup>Bill J. Tutlin, Colonel, U. S. Army, Oklahoma State University, (Letter, April 20, 1965).

<sup>2</sup>Charles E. Barnett, Lieutenant Colonel, Pennsylvania State University, (Letter, January 21, 1965).

of one year of physical education. Even with the incentive to take at least one year of ROTC, enrollment decreased in the Air Force ROTC program from 1,166 to 646 while the Army program decreased from 900 to 400.<sup>1</sup>

A review of literature from selected universities does not indicate that preparation for voluntary ROTC occurred as far in advance of actual change as did Kansas State University. Neither does it indicate, in most instances, enthusiastic support of ROTC by university officials.

Evidence indicates that selected universities changing from compulsory to voluntary ROTC in either 1965 or 1966 had a significant decrease in student participation.<sup>2</sup> On the following page are some Air Force ROTC enrollment figures which are considered indicative of trends encountered in other departments. The trends occurred during the same time period when Kansas State University made a successful transition from compulsory to voluntary ROTC and established remarkable records in the ROTC area.

A review of the evidence indicates that in general the ROTC departments at the various universities were unaware of impending institutional changes that were to occur in their programs and did not have adequate time to lay the groundwork

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<sup>1</sup>Frank E. Sullivan, Colonel, USAF, University of Nebraska, (Letter, January 22, 1965).

<sup>2</sup>W. P. Bacon, Lieutenant Colonel, Headquarters AFROTC, (Letter, undated).

for a totally different program.

<u>University</u>	<u>Compulsory Enrollment</u>	<u>Voluntary Enrollment</u>	<u>Retention Rate</u>
Georgia Tech	1,267	600	47%
University of Hawaii	1,249	381	30
Southern Illinois University	2,759	511	18
Indiana University	1,720	449	26
Purdue University	2,497	983	39
University of Maryland	3,807	918	26
University of Missouri	1,742	329	18
Montana State University	725	325	44
North Carolina State University	1,528	691	45
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY	1,358	1,088	80

It is further evident that most of these departments were not adequately supported by the university through a program designed to encourage student participation in ROTC activities.

The degree and enthusiasm in which the various ROTC departments directed their energies during this transition period is immeasurable but it is assumed that in some instances there was much to be desired.

#### SUMMARY

The ability of Kansas State University to successfully make a conversion from compulsory to voluntary ROTC was significant in that the respective ROTC departments made distinctive accomplishments during and subsequent to the transition period. So distinctive were these accomplishments that the Under Secretary of the Army personally requested President

James A. McCain to forward information relative to the procedures used by Kansas State University.<sup>1</sup>

Many factors involved at Kansas State University have been utilized at other universities. The enthusiasm and degree to which they have been used is immeasurable but the results indicate that they have not achieved the successes as enjoyed by Kansas State University.

There have been noted in this study many factors and methods which were employed by both the state, Kansas State University and the ROTC departments. Some of the factors that aided Kansas State were:

1. Adequate lead time was afforded the university and the ROTC departments to make internal adjustments.
2. University support of a voluntary ROTC program through orientation and counseling.
3. An intense departmental counseling and publicity program.
4. Integration of the ROTC departments into the academic community.
5. Optimistic attitude of the university and ROTC departments.
6. Orientation to the military community through planned field trips.
7. A student centered approach in the classroom and in corps training.

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<sup>1</sup>Information Sheet, Kansas State University, (Forwarded by Letter, May 24, 1967, from Colonel Ralph Wright to the Executive Officer, Office of the Under Secretary of the Army).

It is evident that each of these factors have played a significant part in the ROTC program.

The author is of the opinion that of the factors and methods employed, three are paramount and indispensable to any college or university contemplating a change from compulsory ROTC.

Support Of The University. The leadership, support and encouragement of the President of the University is paramount to the success of any academic program. It becomes increasingly important to a voluntary ROTC program that must rely on orienting, encouraging and recruiting a student for enrollment who has not been subjected to the military and has developed little if any interest in this area.

The President of Kansas State University, Dr. James A. McCain, has utilized the position of his office to influence and encourage freshmen students to enroll in ROTC. His contribution to the orientation program has been vital and has been a stimulant to enrollment.

The support given ROTC by administrative officials tends to permeate all facets of university life and enhances the ROTC image on campus.

Adequate Lead Time. The administrative officials of the university, working closely with the ROTC departments and the state officials, sponsored proposals which permitted the ROTC departments sufficient lead time to make adjustments in their overall programs.

A change from a program which requires participation to one that requires recruitment necessitates a change in philosophies, attitudes and practices.

Departmental Leadership. An ambitious and thriving program in any area requires dynamic and enthusiastic leadership. Lack of this type leadership is detrimental to any well balanced program.

ROTC leadership must excel in this aspect since ROTC course offerings are academic electives and are not required in any curriculum. Secondly, the faculty of the ROTC departments too often do not interject themselves into the academic community. A large number of ROTC faculty personnel are not volunteers for this type of duty and tend to remain isolated from the "heart of the campus."

An effective ROTC program requires the support of the university and this depends largely on the intensive drive, motivation and communicative ability of the department heads. It is through this medium that communication is established between ROTC and the university. An effective leader in ROTC must broaden his associations on campus and must adopt the philosophy that these associations contribute to the overall effectiveness of the ROTC program.

Leaders in ROTC must be willing to become involved. Involved in the student, his problems, aspirations, successes and disappointments. He must create a warm and friendly environment for the student and maintain an open door policy

for all. He must be willing to forego tradition and take a step forward.

#### APPLICATION

The factors and methods identified in this study may be utilized as a guide for other colleges and universities who contemplate change to voluntary ROTC. It may also benefit voluntary ROTC programs who have a need to revitalize their programs.

The factors employed by Kansas State University are perhaps not unique in themselves. The author is of the opinion that the manner in which they were carried out, the optimism reflected by those individuals involved, and the determination that the ROTC image would be magnified, is perhaps the unique contribution Kansas State University has made.

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A STUDY OF THE METHODS AND FACTORS FACILITATING  
EFFECTIVE TRANSITION FROM COMPULSORY  
TO VOLUNTARY ROTC

by

LARRY MARSHALL HOLMES

B. S., Kansas State University, 1965

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
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1968

The transition from one-hundred and one years of compulsory ROTC to voluntary ROTC was completed during the second semester of academic year 1965-66. The purpose of this report was to determine the methods and factors employed by Kansas State University Administration and the Heads of the ROTC departments to complete a transition from compulsory to voluntary ROTC without any significant decrease in interest and participation. This information was obtained from the libraries at Kansas State University; documents from the administrative files of Kansas State University; the files and personnel interviews with the respective ROTC departments; and the author's personal observation during the period of transition.

The State Board of Regents and Kansas State University, recognizing the need for a voluntary ROTC program and the need for a continuance of interest and participation of students, provided the ROTC departments sufficient lead time to adjust their programs accordingly. Rather than establishing the effective date as September 1965, the Board of Regents established the date as mid-semester to allow the ROTC departments one semester to make adjustments while in a compulsory status.

The university encouraged all able-bodied male students to participate in the voluntary program during freshmen orientation and this was a significant factor in that 82

percent of the cadets returned under voluntary status. In academic year 1966-67, 35 percent of the male students at Kansas State University were enrolled in ROTC.

Recognizing a forthcoming change in the compulsory program, the ROTC departments began making internal adjustments as early as academic year 1963-64 with increasing emphasis on adjustment in 1964-65. An extensive counseling program was instigated and cadets were counseled at least once a semester. The student became the focal point of attention in classroom instruction and corps training. The student was afforded opportunities to exercise leadership roles in various capacities.

Emphasis on academic achievement was stressed and publicity and recruiting became paramount. The student in his last year of high school was oriented to ROTC through a mailing of brochures to all students in the upper half of their graduating class. Students already in ROTC identified and encouraged their peers to enroll.

Orientation visits to military bases and posts were instigated and the ROTC Vitalization Act of 1964 authorized scholarships on a competitive basis. Mental testing and physical examinations were used as motivational tools to attract cadets into the advanced program.

Enlightened leadership in the ROTC departments and encouragement by university administration created an esprit

de corps that permeated the ROTC departments and their cadet corps. This permeation influenced increased activity by the national organizations of Arnold Air Society, Angel Flight and Pershing Rifles and enhanced the image of ROTC on the Kansas State University campus.

The ROTC department heads accepted their responsibilities with enthusiasm and integrated their faculty into the academic community, enabling them, through this broad university association, to create a favorable attitude toward ROTC.

The successes achieved by Kansas State University during this transition period have not been typical of other colleges and universities. All of the factors employed by Kansas State University are perhaps not unique, but the optimism and enthusiasm in which they were supported achieved remarkable results.