



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
**UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY**  
West Point, New York 10996

August 16, 2012

Department of Social Sciences

Dear Friends,

Greetings from West Point! As the Class of 2016 marched back the 12-miles from Camp Buckner yesterday, they were accompanied by over 200 members of their 50-year affiliation class—the West Point Class of 1966. One of the Association of Graduates' great programs is linking cadets with their predecessors from a half-century ago, so this year's plebes will have the Class of 1966 participate in all significant class events from now until their graduation. And it should be a great plebe class. As part of the reduction of the Corps of Cadets from 4,600 to 4,400, we have reduced the size of the incoming class from 1,400 two years ago and 1,250 last year, to just over 1,150 this year. So between being more selective than ever and the mentoring from the Class of 1966, the Class of 2016 will embody the great potential for West Point, our Army, and the Nation.

The Department continues to excel teaching those cadets, and we are happy to have LTC Tania Chacho back to direct the Comparative Politics program after her year at the Naval War College. While she was gone, Dr. Thom Sherlock did a brilliant job directing Comparative Politics. Both COL Suzanne Nielsen, Director of International Relations, and COL Jeff Peterson, Director of Economics, were due for a “sabbatical-like” break from West Point, but their unique talents were in high demand elsewhere at this critical moment for our Nation and Army. Suzanne was asked by GEN Keith Alexander to join his personal staff addressing challenging cybersecurity issues at the U.S. Cyber Command. Jeff was asked by LTG Dave Perkins, Commander of Fort Leavenworth, to direct the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic. Moreover, these opportunities will enhance Suzanne's and Jeff's ability to contribute back at West Point when they return next summer (I made sure they had return tickets before they left!). And, while they are gone, there is no need to worry about the Department's programs because Dr. Scott Silverstone is directing International Relations and Dr. Dean Dudley is leading Economics. It is tremendous to have such exceptional senior faculty so that transitions like these are almost seamless.

Our new cohort of faculty arrived this summer just in time to bolster our intramural softball team, a combined Sosh and History faculty team (endearingly named Shistory). It is stunning every year when we have remarkable new faculty report for duty, and this cohort is no different. Between New Instructor Orientation, Cadet Summer Training, Summer Leader Seminar, AIADs, Language Immersion, and field research, it has been a busy summer.

While the spring seems like a faint memory now, it, too, was very productive. The highlight was certainly the visit of Dr. Henry Kissinger, who was the inaugural Class of 1952 Guest Speaker. He was scheduled to speak to about 1,100 cadets from American Politics and International Relations in Robinson Auditorium—and 1,500 cadets and faculty showed up,

resulting in a standing room only crowd who were spellbound throughout the entire lecture. Not only did Dr. Kissinger cover the gamut of foreign affairs, but he told the cadets of how he truly “became an American” serving with the 84<sup>th</sup> Infantry, mostly from Minnesota, during World War II. He also explained that his friendship with COL Lincoln and the Department of Social Sciences dates back to 1953 when he was a young assistant professor at Harvard. It was great for the cadets, faculty, and about 20 members of the Class of 1952 who attended and were recognized for their very generous gift that will permanently endow a guest speakers program at West Point.

The spring ended in a flurry with the Sosh Graduation Awards Ceremony, Graduation, and Senior Conference. Thanks again to all our presenters and supporters for our Awards program. It was great to see presenters who included Mr. George and Mrs. Cynthia Houghton, Mr. Edwin Meese III, COL (Ret) Louis Sudholz, Jr, Ms. Linda Burroughs, Mr. Guy Filippelli, Judge Kent Jordan, COL (Ret) Margaret Belknap, Mr. Robert Whitfield, Ms. Esther Whitfield, Mrs. Sophia Welling, Ms. Trudy Pojman, and Mr. William F. Murdy. It was a wonderful event, and everyone secured parking! We are grateful for our supporters who could not attend to include, BG (Ret) Russ Howard and Mrs. Paula Howard, BG (Ret) Lee Olvey, COL (Ret) Terry Pierce, BG (Ret) Amos Jordan, COL (Ret) Dana Mead, Ms. Carolyn Osborn and Mr. Robert Blatz.

This year’s Senior Conference, “America’s Prosperity and Security in a Networked World: Challenges and Prospects,” made us all both knowledgeable and somewhat paranoid. It was illuminating to hear from the private sector, government, and academe as cyber issues cross all boundaries. We were grateful to have GEN Keith Alexander as co-host, along with our keynotes: Senator Sheldon Whitehouse, Deputy Secretary of Defense Ash Carter, and Mr. Wes Bush, Chief Executive Officer of Northrop Grumman Corporation. Our panels were equally powerful, exploring issues of privacy and security, collaboration opportunities, varying perspectives on the characteristics of cyberspace, and the way forward. While the enormity of the issue is overwhelming, seeing the very talented group of experts share ideas was especially reassuring. I am now paying much more attention to those computer security warnings!

Next Monday we will begin class talking about the presidential campaigns in American Politics, a historic fiscal, monetary, and global financial crisis in economics, the shift to Asia in international relations, and the crisis in Syria in comparative politics—and that is all on day one! Providing the theoretical context that helps uncover the insights and nuances behind the headlines, makes the cadet and faculty exchange of critical ideas a powerful and fun teaching opportunity every day. In other words, if you cannot make class interesting this semester, better see if you still have a pulse!

The election in particular will be fascinating and important. Our faculty is already engaging with the press and academe with LTC Heidi Urben interviewing with PBS Frontline regarding the military vote and Dr. Rachel Sondheim leading a course for the American Political Science Association on civil-military relations. Later this semester, Dr. Nora Bensahel, LTG (Ret) Dave Barno, and Dr. Charlie Cook of The Cook Report, will be among many guest speakers who will be discussing critical issues with cadets.

Elsewhere at the Academy, we are continuing to assess, refine, and improve all of our programs to ensure that their value is accentuated as all aspects of the government, the Defense Department, and the Army look for areas to make necessary budget reductions. This has led to a renewed strategic planning effort at the Academy and an external review of our academic program by a panel of distinguished senior experts. I think this will make the Academy stronger, and in the process we have reemphasized the Social Sciences Department's own vision, which was crafted a few years ago (incidentally while I was in Afghanistan): **“The Department of Social Sciences provides an unparalleled, transformative opportunity for faculty, staff, and cadets who together pursue professional, intellectual, and personal growth guided by the values of Duty, Honor, Country. Members and alums of the Department are valued throughout the Army, DoD and the Nation for their intellectual capital and leadership.”** The words of the vision statement are important, but the essence of the Department remains our motto, **“Be Kind,”** and the **“Doctrine of No Surprises,”** which together facilitate the empowerment of our tremendous faculty to educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets—and in the process become the exceptional professionals that contribute mightily in the future.

This summer the Department sent 109 cadets on international internships throughout the world. Most were part of the Conflict and Human Security Studies program (CHSS) that places cadets with NGOs to increase our graduates' ability to interact effectively in other cultures. Cadets worked in a total of 28 countries on projects including water purification in Uganda, medical work in Ghana, teaching in Thailand and other projects in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Nepal, Bosnia, Jordan, China and Romania. Despite some "usual" problems with international travel, such as a military curfew in Ghana due to ethnic tensions, our cadets returned home safely and developed a much broader understanding of the importance of working effectively in other cultures. None of these internships would be possible without the generous support of Mr. Bill Murdy, Mr. Dana Mead, Mr. Rob Andy, the Captain Andrew R. Houghton Foundation, the Olmsted Foundation, and the Class of 1976 Cultural Immersion program.

Domestically, 62 cadets had tremendous opportunities as interns in government agencies, businesses, and other organizations. In Washington, we complemented the internships with a weekly summer enrichment program that included Senator Jack Reed, the Senate and House Armed Services Committees, the New America Foundation, CIVIC, the Heritage Foundation, NDU/ICAF, the Brookings Institute, the Center for a New American Security, the Joint Staff J5, Army G3/5/7, the Center for Naval Analysis, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the Arlington National Cemetery. Our domestic AIADs were made possible by the generous support of General Brent Scowcroft, JP Morgan, RAND, DHS, DIA, Veterans Affairs, Washington Penn Plastics, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and the Army staff.

The Combating Terrorism Center (CTC), under the leadership of our Distinguished Chair, General John Abizaid, has continued to provide significant insights of immediate policy relevance and is the analytical arm of choice for policymakers, analysts, and academics. This was most certainly emphasized when the CTC was asked to analyze Usama bin Laden's documents seized at Abbotabad and then release their report, with the documents, for the media and academics throughout the world to use. In addition to our terrorism minor and scheduled classes, we are privileged to have GEN (Ret) Abizaid teach a semester-long course on national security policy and the Middle East this term, which is sure to be exceptional.

The Office of Economic and Manpower Analysis (OEMA) continues leading innovation in Army human capital management. For example, OEMA has provided in-depth analysis to guide the potential reduction of Army personnel while avoiding the mistakes of previous drawdowns. At the request of senior leaders, OEMA analysts have also developed specific policy recommendations to improve senior officer talent management. Beyond the Defense Department, OEMA has collaborated extensively with the Veterans and Social Security Administrations, the Department of Labor, and the White House to understand and mitigate veterans' unemployment. Finally, OEMA is helping monitor the first cohort of officers entering graduate school in exchange for additional active duty service ("GRADSO"). This innovative incentive program, devised by OEMA, is steadily erasing the critical shortage of senior captains and majors and has restored officer retention to levels not seen since the 1980s.

This December we will be selecting faculty members mostly from year groups 2006-2008 to start graduate school in 2014. So if you know of great officers, please have them connect with our personnel staff at the Sosh website (<http://www.usma.edu/sosh/SitePages/Home.aspx>).

And we have saved the best for last—a new season of Army Football, where we are starting out undefeated! Seriously, Army has 32 returning seniors with a combined 168 starts, which is more than Air Force and Navy combined. The Department especially cheers for a particularly strong offensive left tackle, firstie Cadet Ben Jebb, son of COL Cindy Jebb, the Department's Not-Head (and a Sosh major—of course!).

We hope to see all of you join us at the Department Reunion on Saturday, September 29, when Army beats Stony Brook (we can beat them!). We will have coffee in Lincoln Hall at 8:00 a.m., the cadet parade on the Plain at 9:00, tailgate at the 49er lodge (near the Stadium) at 10:00; kickoff at noon; and a victory party back at the 49er Lodge after the game. Be sure to complete the registration on the attached form and call to get your tickets now. If you have any questions, please contact me at [michael.meese@us.army.mil](mailto:michael.meese@us.army.mil), Cindy Jebb, the Not Head at [cindy.jebb@usma.edu](mailto:cindy.jebb@usma.edu) or the XO, LTC Heidi Urben at [heidi.urben@usma.edu](mailto:heidi.urben@usma.edu).



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