



**The Report of the
Headquarters Review Group
Concerning the
Religious Climate
at the
U. S. Air Force Academy**

22 June 2005

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

Executive Summary

On 2 May 2005, the Acting Secretary of the Air Force, Michael L. Dominguez, directed the Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel, Lieutenant General Roger A. Brady, to form a cross-functional team to assess the religious climate at the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) and their progress in integrating principles of respect in their character development program. Specifically, the team was directed to assess policy and guidance on the subject, appropriateness of relevant training for all personnel at USAFA, practices in the Academy community that would either enhance or detract from a climate that respects both the “free exercise of religion” and the “establishment” clauses of the First Amendment, effectiveness of USAFA mechanisms in addressing complaints on this subject, and relevance of the religious climate to the entire Air Force. The team was not tasked to investigate cases of specific misconduct, nor to determine individual accountability, but to refer specific cases to appropriate authorities, including the Air Force Inspector General. Two specific cases involving individuals who have been mentioned repeatedly in the press (Brigadier General John Weida and Captain Melinda Morton) are being reviewed by Inspector General channels; therefore, these cases are not resolved in this report. Seven other specific cases reported to the team were referred to the chain of command for follow-up.

The Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel, assembled a team (with Headquarters representatives from Personnel, Judge Advocate General, General Counsel, Chaplain Service, Legislative Liaison, Public Affairs, Manpower & Reserve Affairs, Secretary of the Air Force and the Air Force Chief of Staff Command Staffs, as well as the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the United States Naval Academy) which reviewed policy and guidance documents, court cases, press reports and findings of previous groups that had reported on the issue of religious climate at the USAFA, and coordinated with the academy staff in preparation for the on site visit. The team was informed on issues of concern by previous surveys, team reports and media coverage.

The HQ USAF team found a religious climate that does not involve overt religious discrimination, but a failure to fully accommodate all members’ needs and a lack of awareness over where the line is drawn between permissible and impermissible expression of beliefs. The Academy is aggressively engaged in dealing with an issue that has been the subject of rigorous debate for throughout the Nation’s history. The Superintendent responded to some well-publicized events early in his tenure and, upon finding evidence of some concern about religious bias in anonymous surveys he conducted, began a much broader effort to incorporate the importance of religious respect in the Academy’s character development program. This continuing effort to nurture a climate of respect for the diversity of beliefs at the Academy has received the support of the USAFA community, including many who have expressed concern. The team found that the events that have been reported in the media framed the discussions and were cited repeatedly by individuals expressing concern about the religious climate. The team also researched the background behind the widely reported “55 complaints,” in reality a

collection of observations and events reported by about thirteen people, and purported to have taken place over a four-year period. Throughout the assessment, the methodology used by the Review Group, using both individual interviews and focus groups, did not yield empirical data regarding specific events, but facilitated important discussions that aided the team in assessing the overall climate.

During the visit, the team was made aware of seven specific events of what appeared to be questionable behavior, and these events were referred to the chain of command for follow-up. The team identified nine findings regarding the overall climate and made nine recommendations that are detailed in the report.

The findings covered the following areas:

- Perception of religious intolerance.
- Inadequate guidance regarding religious expression.
- Training concerning religious diversity and respect.
- Occurrences of perceived bias.
- Accommodation of religious observances (to include flexibility in cadet scheduling process and dietary needs).
- USAFA access for affiliated chapel programs.

The recommendations include actions that are required of USAFA and of HAF in the following areas:

- Develop policy guidance for Air Force commanders and supervisors regarding religious expression.
- Reemphasize policy guidance for commanders and staff judge advocates regarding appropriate endorsement and advertising of unofficial or affiliated groups of which Air Force members may be a part and oversight of these groups that have access to Air Force personnel.
- Reemphasize the requirement for all commanders to address issues of religious accommodation up front, when planning, scheduling, and preparing operations.
- Develop guidance that integrates the requirements for cultural awareness and respect across the learning continuum, as they apply to Airmen operating in Air Force units at home as well as during operations abroad.
- Direct USAFA to develop an integrated plan, as part of its overall character development program, that promotes increased awareness of and respect for diverse cultures and beliefs in its military, academic, and athletic curriculum.
- Provide plan for ensuring a single focal point for cadets, as well as permanent party, to raise issues regarding the human relations climate.
- Continue robust use of internal controls to assess climate and implement corrective action. Additionally, coordination among the associated agencies should be reviewed to improve cross-flow of information to command.
- Provide continuing opportunities for all cadets to learn about, discuss, and debate issues of religion and spirituality in a developmental setting with peers and role models, as such discussion is essential to character development.

These findings and recommendations regarding the religious climate at USAFA can be summarized in three areas: institutional policy, cadet behavior and faculty and staff behavior.

The Department of Defense, HQ USAF and the USAFA leadership have provided appropriate policy regarding the importance of non-discrimination and a climate of respect. However, there is a lack of operational instructions that commanders and supervisors can use as they make decisions regarding appropriate exercise of religion in the workplace.

The team found that failure to address the religious needs of cadets of minority religions, during the planning phase of academy schedule development, placed the burden for seeking religious accommodation on the cadets. This created the impression among some cadets that USAFA was insensitive to their religious beliefs and needs.

There were reports made to the team by cadets of religious slurs and disparaging remarks between cadets. Two particular incidents were referred to leadership by the HQ USAF team for follow-up. Both incidents have been resolved to the satisfaction of the complainants. The cadets, both individuals and in focus groups, reported that such events do occur occasionally but have become less frequent over the last two years, indicating an improving climate. The examples of religious slurs and disparaging remarks presented to the team are clearly unacceptable and cannot be tolerated. They also accentuate the importance of understanding that the USAFA is about the development of character in 18-22 year olds who are becoming adults, which includes interacting with others cadets of different belief systems and determining what they themselves believe. This growth process sometimes involves inappropriate behavior. USAFA leadership is dealing with that behavior appropriately.

There were also reports, usually framed in the context of events reported in the media, that some cadets had been overly aggressive in the expression of their faith, offending some and, in some cases, creating an impression of insensitivity regarding the beliefs of others. Likewise, some members of the faculty and staff also have strong religious beliefs that have, on occasion, been expressed in ways that others found offensive. While these expressions appear to be well intentioned, they reflect a lack of awareness that their position as instructors and government officials made these expressions inappropriate in a particular setting. USAFA leadership has identified some of these expressions of faith as inappropriate in the environment in which they were made, and has taken action to correct them.

While the team talked to individuals who were concerned or who had been offended by what they regarded as a climate of religious bias, a significant majority of individuals contacted, including cadets, faculty and staff, expressed the opinion that the overall climate had improved over the past two years. Many attribute this improvement to the efforts of the USAFA leadership in implementing the Agenda for Change (a map for cultural change at the Academy directed by SECAF and CSAF) and the

recommendations of other review groups, as well as leadership placing special emphasis on the subject of respecting a diversity of views in the area of religion. Many individuals were not aware of the issue or had only been made aware through media reports.

Clearly, there are challenges of respect and accommodation that the USAFA leadership must continue to address very aggressively. The HQ USAF team found they are doing that. While overt discrimination and other clearly inappropriate behavior cannot and will not be tolerated, what exactly does or does not constitute “establishment” is not always as clear. The task of providing for free exercise of religion, while not appearing to establish a religion, is complex enough in any government setting. Arguably, it is even more complex in a military environment and yet again more challenging in a university, military setting.

In an effort to minimize the risk of discrimination or the perception of “establishment,” some might suggest that religion and discussion of it be minimized, outside the statutory allowances specific to the chaplaincy. However, this would have at least two equally undesirable effects. First, it would ignore that clause of the First Amendment that protects the free exercise of religion. Second, and perhaps as important, it would deny the unique nature of military service.

The development of leaders of character is the mission of the USAFA. And, it is undeniable that for many individuals their character development is inseparable from their religious beliefs. Hence, it is incumbent upon the USAFA to afford the opportunity for cadets to develop their character in that context, while respecting the fact that cadets have differing religious beliefs or may have none at all. Put simply, the academy should provide appropriate development opportunities to meet the needs of all cadets. Unnecessary restriction of that opportunity would have a deleterious effect on the character development of cadets at a particularly formative time of their lives.

Similarly, inherent in military service is the very real potential that individuals may be asked to forfeit their lives in defense of the Nation. Again, for some individuals, the ability to withstand the privations of military service and face the prospect of death in the performance of their duties requires strength of character that is founded upon their religious faith. It is their source of strength in times of trial. Deliberately minimizing the ability of cadets and their role models to discuss these weighty issues in a developmental setting, including their foundational beliefs, would undermine the maturation and character development process we seek to foster.

While this challenge is daunting, it is not “Mission Impossible.” The task is not simple, but the principle is. The USAFA, and the Air Force as a whole, must create and nurture a climate founded on *respect*, the very bedrock of our core values of *Integrity first, Service before self*, and *Excellence in all we do*.

Critical for all Airmen is that these principles become integrated into every aspect of our training and continuing education. Critical to commanders is that they be given a set of guidelines upon which to base decisions regarding how they recognize and build on

the inherently spiritual nature of their people and create the conditions that demonstrate the value of and respect for the great diversity of belief systems within our Air Force.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Roger A. Brady". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "R" and "B".

ROGER A. BRADY
Lieutenant General, USAF
Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel

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I. The Secretary's Tasking

On 2 May 2005, the Acting Secretary of the Air Force, Michael L. Dominguez, tasked the Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel, Lieutenant General Roger A. Brady, to assemble a cross-functional team to assess the religious climate at the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) and the Academy's progress in integrating principles of respect in their character development program (Attachment A). Specifically, the team was directed to assess:

- a. Air Force and Academy policy and guidance regarding the subject of religious respect and tolerance.
- b. Appropriateness of relevant training for the cadet wing, faculty and staff.
- c. The religious climate and assessment tools used at the USAFA.
- d. Practices of the chain of command, faculty, staff and cadet wing that either enhance or detract from a climate that respects both the "free exercise of religion" and the "establishment" clauses of the First Amendment.
- e. Effectiveness of USAFA mechanisms in addressing complaints on this subject to include the chain of command, the Inspector General and the Military Equal Opportunity office.
- f. Relevance of the religious climate to the entire Air Force.

The team was not tasked to investigate cases of specific misconduct, or to determine individual accountability. Any such cases that were identified have been forwarded to the appropriate authorities, including the Air Force Inspector General.

At the core of this issue is the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which all members of the U.S. Armed Forces have sworn to protect and defend. It states that, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...". The United States Air Force operates within these constitutional guidelines by embracing as its Core Values: Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence In All We Do. Inherent to these values is respect--respect for oneself, for the Air Force and its values, and for each other. The relevant issue for the team was to determine whether USAFA is fostering this foundation of respect in its efforts to develop leaders of character for the United States Air Force and the Nation.

II. Methodology

The team's approach to accomplish the assigned mission was to conduct a thorough review of existing guidance, followed by a USAFA site visit during 10-13 May to obtain first-hand information. The site visit began with a formal in-brief by USAFA staff to include a chronology of events, an overview of their respect program, and their chaplaincy programs. The entire team also participated in a Respecting Spiritual Values of all People (RSVP) session. Following the in-brief, program reviews focusing on religious accommodation were conducted in the following areas: policies, training, assessments, complaint mechanisms, and chaplaincy. Additionally, a three-tiered approach was incorporated to collect personal insights and concerns. This consisted of

interviews with key personnel; focus groups with cadets, faculty, and staff; and open sessions where anyone who wanted to could walk in for a private one-on-one interview.

To maximize the opportunity to obtain thorough insights and honest feedback, the following information was provided at the beginning of each interview session:

- a. This is a Higher Headquarters Review Group—not the Inspector General.
- b. This is not an investigation or an inquiry.
- c. We are “taking the pulse” of the USAFA community regarding religious practice and respect.
- d. We will not attribute your comments unless a policy or statute has been violated or someone’s health, welfare, or safety is in jeopardy.
- e. If we are made aware of specific acts of misconduct, and have sufficient information to act upon, we are obligated to report that to appropriate authorities.

The team interviewed 20 key personnel:

USAFA/CC – Lieutenant General John Rosa, Superintendent

TRW/CC – Brigadier General John Weida, Commandant and 34th Training Wing Commander

DF – Brigadier General Dana Born, Dean of the Faculty

AH – Dr. Hans Mueh, Director of Athletics

AH – Mr. Fisher DeBerry, Head Football Coach

DS – Colonel Wayne Kellenbence, Director of Staff

HC – Chaplain, Colonel Michael Whittington, Senior Staff Chaplain

JA – Colonel Michael McAntee, Staff Judge Advocate

IG – Colonel Thomas Philipkosky, Inspector General

PL – Colonel Harvey Johnson, Commander, USAFA Preparatory School

CV-P – Colonel Debra Gray, Vice Commandant for Strategy & Plans

CWC – Colonel Joseph Mazzola, Director, Center for Character Development

CVK – Major Kelly Phillips-Henry, Director, Cadet Counseling Center

XPC – Lieutenant Colonel Vicki Rast, Director, Climate & Culture Division, Plans and Programs Directorate

XPC – Dr. Heidi Smith, Assoc Prof, Behavioral Science & Leadership; and staff member of Climate & Culture Division, Plans and Programs Directorate

ABW – Colonel Susanne LeClere, 10th Air Base Wing Commander

ABW – Colonel Ellsworth Tulberg, 10th Air Base Wing Vice Commander

ABW – Captain Joseph Bland, Former 10th Air Base Wing Military Equal Opportunity Officer

AOG - Mr. James Shaw, President & CEO USAFA Association of Graduates

DFM – Mr. Michael Roth, USAFA Graduate and Visiting Professor, Management Department

Focus groups were the second method used to develop a perspective on the USAFA climate. Cadets were randomly selected based on the following categories: First and Second Class (Senior and Junior) or Third and Fourth Class (Sophomore and Freshman) Jewish, Protestant, Catholic, mixed, and other. “Other” refers to those cadets who identify themselves with a religion not listed above, or no religion, or who identify themselves as Atheist or Agnostic. Permanent professors and senior faculty were interviewed in their own groups separate from the remaining faculty and staff to avoid any perception of intimidation. All groups were limited to a maximum of ten people. 197 personnel participated in the following groups:

Permanent Professors	3 Groups
Faculty/Staff	6 Faculty Groups and 2 Staff Groups
Cadets	2 Protestant Groups (Sr/Jr and So/Fr) 2 Catholic Groups (Sr/Jr and So/Fr) 3 Jewish Groups (Sr/Jr and So/Fr and Mixed) 2 Mixed Faith Groups (Sr/Jr and So/Fr) 2 “Other” Groups
USNA Exchange Midshipmen	1 Group
Athletic Coaches	2 Groups
Air Officers Commanding (AOCs)	1 Group
Academy Military Trainers (AMTs)	1 Group

Team members were available throughout the entire visit for one-on-one, private interview sessions in the cadet area (Fairchild Hall) as well as on the main base (Community Center). A total of 69 one-on-one open interviews were conducted.

Between the program reviews, key personnel interviews, focus groups, and open sessions, over 300 people met with Review Group members during the visit. Designated team members also observed RSVP sessions that were conducted for permanent party and cadets.

Following the team's return to Washington additional interviews were conducted with Dr. Kristen Leslie (Assistant Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling, Yale University Divinity School); Col Harvey Johnson, Commander, USAFA Preparatory School; a 2004 USAFA graduate who had previously highlighted concerns; Chaplain, Captain Melinda Morton (one of the USAFA Protestant chaplains); and Mr. Mikey Weinstein, a 1977 USAFA graduate.

After the initial assessment briefing to the Acting Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff, the Air Force leadership decided to invite a team of five members from the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF) to visit the Academy (7-9 June) for the purpose of providing an external perspective and informing the assessment of the Review Group. This team that conducted the follow-on assessment was comprised of retired military chaplains and one former vice wing commander. They represented the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Jewish, Orthodox, Reformed Christian Church, and Religious Society of Friends (Quaker) faith groups.

The NCMAF provides ecclesiastical endorsement for clergy who serve as chaplains in the armed forces; it is a non-profit, independent organization supported entirely by voluntary contributions from the member faith groups and other interested parties. Members represent the total theological spectrum of faith organizations that make up the organized religious community of the United States. Their members, as endorsers for particular faith groups, are the points of contact between the Armed Forces and over 250 religious denominations and faith groups.

III. Background and Chronology of Events

A. Background

Religion is a subject of interest to many Americans in general, and no less so to the age group that the USAFA cadet wing represents. According to a recently published AP-Ipsos survey (a leading global survey-based research group), "Religious devotion sets the United States apart from some of its closest allies. Nearly all U.S. respondents said faith is important to them and only 2% said they do not believe in God."

The Religious Congregations and Membership study published in 2000 by the Glenmary Research Center in Nashville, Tennessee, indicated some of the more conservative Christian religious groups (e.g., Latter-Day Saints, Churches of Christ,

Assemblies of God, Roman Catholic) increased membership by 16 to 19% over the decade from 1990 to 2000, while more mainline Protestant churches declined in strength over the same period. The Presbyterian Church, USA, for example, declined 12%. Glenmary director Ken Sanchagrin noted, “Socially conservative churches that demand high commitment from their members grew faster than other religious denominations in the last decade...astounded to see that by and large the growing churches are those that we ordinarily call conservative. And when I look at those that were declining, most were moderate or liberal churches. And the more liberal the denomination, by most people’s definition, the more they were losing.”

This growth in interest and numbers is consistent with what research conducted by the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) at the University of California, Los Angeles, found on college campuses across the nation. They found that among students entering college in 2004, three-fourths say they are “searching for meaning/purpose in life,” eight in ten believe in God, more than two-thirds pray, more than half perceive God as “love” or as the “creator” and about half experience God as a “protector.” USAFA data for the class entering in 2004 show that USAFA cadets are more likely to identify themselves as Christian than students at other institutions and while measures of spirituality (time spent in prayer/meditation, consider themselves “born-again” Christians, attended religious service in past year) are trending downward for students at other institutions, they are trending upward for USAFA cadets. Put simply, there is a strong interest in the religious aspects of life among a majority of USAFA cadets. Ongoing research by CIRP indicates they are somewhat more conservative and more likely to identify themselves as religious/spiritual than their college-age peers across the nation.

As demographic background regarding the Air Force, a recent check (31 March 2005) of the Air Force Personnel Data System (containing all Air Force military records, officer and enlisted) reflects that 80% (286,730) identified themselves of religions that are considered Christian-based. This is compared to 85% of USAFA cadets and 78% of USAFA permanent party who consider themselves aligned to a Christian religion.

The Air Force is committed to upholding a Constitution that both protects each American’s right to freely exercise their religion and forbids the government’s establishment of religion. Balancing the competing requirements of the Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment has long been a challenge to the federal government. The Supreme Court has noted that while the two clauses express complementary values, they often exert conflicting pressure. While we believe the Air Force as a whole has effectively navigated this difficult terrain, this task is made all the more complex given the unique learning environment of the Air Force Academy.

The cadet experience at the Air Force Academy is like no other in the Air Force or other university. The best and brightest high school students in the country are brought to the Academy from Congressional districts all over the country. But unlike their peers on most other campuses, these cadets are restricted to the confines of the USAFA grounds virtually 24 hours a day. As they progress through the 4-year program,

they are allowed increasingly more time off-campus, but Monday - Friday they are almost exclusively on the military base. This means that most aspects of their lives--academic, athletic, military, social, and spiritual--are played out at this Federal facility. Hence, the maturation--mental, physical, social, and spiritual--must take place on the grounds of this Federal institution.

The most obvious, and perhaps most significant, demographic of USAFA is that, like most other undergraduate institutions, the cadets are overwhelmingly in the 18-22 year old age range. Approximately 1,300 cadets enter USAFA every July. They come from across the nation and from a wide variety of home environments. They share a high degree of academic achievement (average SAT score is >1,300) and as a group they are very athletic. They vary considerably in their maturity and ability to live harmoniously and respectfully with peers from different backgrounds. Many come from a home in which they have their own bedroom, a computer, sound system, cell phone and television.

At USAFA they share a room with one and perhaps two roommates and there are essentially no amenities for the first year. Throughout their Academy career, every waking hour is accounted for, their behavior scrutinized and corrected, and the academic demands are significant. Even the most disciplined and mature cadet is seriously challenged. A majority of the cadets respond positively and flourish, but some have difficulty adapting and behave in inappropriate, insensitive ways. In some circumstances, their immaturity and frustration in a new environment manifests itself in behavior that is not respectful of fellow cadets. This is neither acceptable nor surprising. Over the four years of the USAFA program, it is the Academy's role to assist the cadets in their maturity to adulthood and standards of character worthy of officership.

B. Chronology of Events

The team discovered or was shown evidence of concern over religious issues that date to the mid-1990s. In a 1994 USAFA Report on Respect and Dignity prepared for the then Superintendent, a concern was raised regarding "notoriously fundamentalist Christian speakers." Additionally, one faculty member interviewed by the team presented a syllabus from 1994-95 that included a Bible verse and a statement that cadets would learn "awe and respect for the creator of the universe." The same individual related discussions from the same timeframe when he had expressed concern over what he considered proselytizing by the Christian Leadership Ministries (CLM is a part of Campus Crusade for Christ that ministers to university faculty worldwide). This indicates that the issue of religious influence at USAFA is not new.

The following chronology records a series of events that began in April 2003 when the current USAFA leadership arrived and the Agenda for Change efforts began. Below are events that, in large part, generated the ongoing discussion about USAFA's religious climate. The associated circumstances and resulting actions are based upon available documentation and personal interviews.

April 2003--The current Commandant arrived at USAFA. Since the previous Superintendent had retired and the Senate had not yet confirmed the current one, the Commandant was also the *acting* Superintendent until July 2003.

During this month, the Commandant released a USAFA-wide e-mail on the National Day of Prayer. The team interviewed several cadets, faculty, and staff that felt this e-mail was an inappropriate use of position to endorse religion and was exclusionary. Two days after the e-mail was sent, at a meeting with faculty, this senior member explained his thought process and stated he did not intend to offend or exclude anyone.

September 2003—The Commandant spoke at the Fourth class (freshmen) Protestant Retreat sponsored by USAFA Chaplain Staff. The cadets and faculty the review group interviewed stated this senior member introduced the “J for Jesus” hand signal and the accompanying “Rocks!” response. Furthermore, cadets reported he later used the “J for Jesus” hand signal at a briefing with cadets from various religious backgrounds, to include no religious preference. The Christian cadets that were familiar with its meaning responded with “Rocks!” Several cadets interviewed said they went along with it without knowing its true meaning and then later felt duped when they discovered its meaning. On the day following the second “J for Jesus” event, the Commandant, realizing on his own that his actions may have been inappropriate in the diverse group of cadets, brought the event to the attention of the Superintendent. He was counseled by the Superintendent, and subsequently addressed each of the cadet classes on the subject of religious respect.

October 2003--USAFA Culture Change Plan developed, emphasizing a climate of respect and culture of candor (Attachment B).

December 2003--The Christian Leadership Ministries (CLM) purchased advertisement space for a Christmas greeting in USAFA’s base newspaper, *Academy Spirit*. The advertisement, signed by over 250 individuals – to include key USAFA personnel, included the messages, “We believe that Jesus Christ is the only real hope for the world” and “there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved. – *Acts 4:12*”. Cadets, faculty, and staff talked about the inappropriate, non-inclusive nature of the Christmas greeting endorsed by numerous members who were also in their chain of command. It was reported to the team that CLM posted virtually identical Christmas greetings in the *Academy Spirit* every year since 1991. Made aware of this situation, the Superintendent expressed concern and in turn, CLM did not run the advertisement for the winter holidays in 2004.

January 2004—Officer Development System (ODS) implemented USAFA-wide. ODS provides a holistic framework designed to coordinate and integrate cadet developmental activities across their entire four-year experience. Specific objectives are developing each cadet’s appreciation that being an officer is a noble way of life, fostering a commitment to character-based officership, and developing competencies essential to this identity as character-based officer-leader. One of the ODS outcomes is to produce

officers who appreciate the significance of their own spiritual development, accept the beliefs of others, and foster mutual respect and dignity among all individuals.

Formally recognizing this fundamental aspect of human development in its ODS is not unique to the Academy; educators have long held that individual moral search is an inherent, even vital, component of any robust undergraduate education. Including this element in the ODS explicitly recognizes this naturally occurring quest and links it to the overall mission of the Academy. ODS recognizes that a spiritually fit leader is one that recognizes that many of his or her people find their personal essence and motivation in their spiritual core—that, for many, represents a vast reservoir of moral and ethical fortitude. The Academy's ODS does not offer specific solutions to spiritual development; rather, it seeks to provide an environment and support structure that nurtures every cadet's individual spiritual nature, inner priorities, or philosophy of life.

February 2004--“The Passion of The Christ” advertisement flyers/e-mails generated perceptions of intolerance. Cadets reported that their peers placed an advertisement flyer on all 4,000+ place settings at Mitchell Hall (the cadet dining facility) and in other common locations in the cadet area. Cadets felt they were being proselytized and pressured to see the movie. Jewish cadets told the team they encountered anti-Semitic comments that they believe “The Passion of The Christ” flyer event inspired.

In response to the flyer incident, the Commandant e-mailed religious respect guidance (Attachment C) to his training wing leadership, with instructions to pass to all Airmen, including cadets. The Commandant wrote, “because of our mission focus, we do not discriminate based on any factor other than the ability to get the job done. With that background, I need your help to ensure we have a positive environment for our teammates of all faiths, or no faith.”

Shortly after the flyers were distributed, the Commandant spoke to the cadets about religious tolerance during their noon meal. During his remarks the daily announcements, set to an automatic timer, continued to be displayed on the dining hall's theater-like projection screens. One announcement that appeared on the screen during his talk included a Bible quote. Although coincidental, some cadets saw it as a mixed message and evidence of religious intolerance. USAFA has since implemented procedures that insert staff oversight into the content and display of such announcements.

Later that year, the Commandant highlighted religious tolerance in his September 2004 briefing to freshmen and sophomore cadets and in his December 2004 briefing to junior and senior cadets.

March 2004--The Superintendent e-mailed religious respect guidance (Attachment D) to all USAFA members. The Superintendent addressed “The Passion of The Christ” advertisement by saying, “The manner in which communication was delivered was inappropriate, and I regret any perception of intolerance these actions may have created.” USAFA has also implemented procedures that insert staff oversight into the dissemination of information to include announcements at meals and proper display

of flyers. This policy was reemphasized in November 2004, when the Superintendent addressed religious issues during his cadet-wide briefing.

During this month, two surveys were administered to permanent party and cadets. The Organizational Culture Survey was developed at the request of the Superintendent as part of the Agenda for Change. Comments received from this survey brought senior leadership attention to a broader perception of religious bias among permanent party. The Class of 2004 Cadet Climate Survey was also administered and identified gaps in experiences of Christian relative to non-Christian cadets. Results also showed non-Christian responses as perceiving a less tolerant religious climate at USAFA. For more details on these surveys see Section IV.

May 2004--A cadet identifying himself as an Atheist (now a USAFA graduate) identified "several examples of the overtly Christian environment at USAFA that all cadets are required to endure regardless of personal religious beliefs that have occurred within official capacities." His complaint was based upon his perception of a "pervasive problem" with the religious climate and the "systematic bias" against any cadet that does not espouse Christianity.

Details of his complaint included: the highest levels of leadership at USAFA implicitly endorse Christianity. These overt gestures include comments, prayers, songs with religious references (e.g., God Bless America) at official (mandatory) ceremonies, religious messages at the footers of numerous e-mails, and a squadron mural with a religious reference. Additionally, he felt during the Christian season of Lent, the cadet wing is forced to adhere to the Catholic diet of no meat on Fridays. During his 2000 BCT, he was placed in what cadets commonly called "Heathen Flight" and marched back to the dorms with other basic cadets who preferred not to attend voluntary evening worship services. Furthermore, he requested permission from the USAFA Chaplain Staff to form a SPIRE group for Freethinkers (an organized group of Atheists who assemble regularly to discuss ethical issues, various cultures and religion and other aspects of life) but was denied the opportunity because the proposed group was not "faith based." Additionally, his formal request to use a 'non-chargeable church pass' to attend Freethinkers of Colorado Springs meetings was denied. In October 2002, he wrote to the then USAFA Superintendent to make him aware that he was offended by his "there are no Atheists in foxholes" comment. He stated, "this statement is offensive to me, and others, because it excludes, and condones this exclusion, of Atheists from defending their country and way of life through the armed services." The then Superintendent wrote a memo back to the cadet thanking the member for the feedback and apologizing for offending the member.

More recently in response, USAFA senior leadership has taken numerous steps to improve the religious climate to ensure USAFA creates a positive environment for cadets of all faiths, or no faith. The review group's findings indicate that a lack of clear guidance from higher headquarters leadership created a question as to what role religion is to play in "official duty" life and continues to cause uncertainty as to what is appropriate behavior of commanders, faculty, staff, coaches, and cadets. In addition, the

group's findings address dietary religious accommodations at cadet dining facility. The Superintendent and Commandant also issued directives to address religious expression in e-mails and advertisements for religious-related groups.

USAFA officials did not endorse the term "Heathen Flight." The term was used during Basic Cadet Training. All basic cadets are afforded the voluntary opportunity to attend an evening worship service. The basic cadets that do not elect to attend the evening services are returned to their rooms for uninterrupted downtime. This cadet-developed term described this group. Although inappropriate, this had been a standing 'nickname' at USAFA according to several cadets and graduates the Review Group interviewed.

In addition, the current USAFA Chaplain Staff stated they would attempt to accommodate a Freethinker cadet by explaining to the cadet's chain of command that Atheism is an acknowledged belief system as defined in Air Force Instructions. The current Chaplain Staff has not received a recent religious accommodation request from a Freethinker cadet. The current staff has supported Atheist groups in SPIRE. For example, the 2004 Basic Cadet Training (BCT) SPIRE program included a non-religious group. This group personally requested to disband after BCT.

The complainant raised these issues to the Air Force Inspector General after what he perceived to be an inappropriate response on the part of the USAFA Inspector General and the Military Equal Opportunity office. In an attempt to address his complaints, the Air Force Equal Opportunity office sent a memorandum to the lieutenant in November 2004. Moreover, the Vice Commandant responded to the lieutenant's November 2004 e-mail on the progress of USAFA's religious atmosphere, citing the newly developing Religious Respect training (RSVP).

The team found that in the processing of this case, there were two time gaps. These were the result of the change of station of the complainant, and later because of medical problems experienced by the individual working the case at the Air Staff. USAFA and HQ USAF have taken action to preclude future delays in handling such cases.

July 2004--USAFA's then-Senior Staff Chaplain approved a request from a USAFA Chaplain to invite Dr. Kristen Leslie and six students from Yale Divinity School to visit Basic Cadet Training (BCT) for one week in the summer of 2004. BCT is for newly arriving freshmen (called basic cadets) and is held each summer in the cadet area and at a remote location on the Academy Reservation called Jack's Valley. The program provides an opportunity for more senior cadets to exercise their leadership skills. The faculty and staff refine skills applicable to a deployed field location, which means a busy period of counseling and pastoral care by chaplains.

Dr. Leslie's expertise was sought to help chaplains understand issues concerning the prevention of sexual violence. Divinity School Students were there to observe and to obtain practical experience.

Upon the completion of BCT, Dr. Leslie and Chaplain Morton combined to author a two-page after action memorandum (Attachment E) to provide feedback for the USAFA Senior Staff Chaplain. The Yale Divinity School visit memo highlighted “consistent specific articulations of Evangelical Christian themes during general Protestant services” as a concern. These comments refer to a Protestant service held during BCT. Available to cadets were seven distinct religious worship services that included two Protestant services, one liturgical and one contemporary. Some of the Yale Divinity School team elected to attend the contemporary service. The Chaplain for that service is an ordained minister endorsed by the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, an Evangelical, Pentecostal denomination.

The memorandum alleges that the Chaplain made three statements that they considered inappropriate. He confirmed that he made two of the statements (Protestant cadets were encouraged to chant the phrase, “This is our chapel and the Lord is our God” and were encouraged to “pray for the salvation of fellow BCT members who chose not to attend worship”) but denies (as was alleged) exhorting the cadets to tell their classmates they would “burn in hell” if they did not comply with a particular doctrine. While these comments, if they were made, may be considered offensive or unnecessarily strident by some, they are not uncommon expressions of Foursquare Gospel doctrine. It should be noted that the freedom to express one’s religious views in a voluntary worship service designated for a particular faith group is a condition of endorsement by a chaplain’s sponsoring organization. The Review Group interviewed Dr Leslie and she affirmed the content of her after-action memorandum.

At a Graduate Leadership Conference held that same month, the Vice Commandant first interacted with a couple of graduates and parents dissatisfied over the allegation that Jewish cadets were not being religiously accommodated and highlighted an apparent ‘evangelical’ tone at USAFA.

August 2004--At a follow up meeting, the Superintendent and Senior Staff Chaplain met with two representatives from the Graduate Leadership Conference to discuss their specific concerns. At that time, the Superintendent identified the Senior Staff Chaplain as the “point person” with whom individuals could address their concerns about such matters. Roughly 13 people (cadets, recent graduates, faculty, and staff) contacted the Senior Staff Chaplain with approximately 50 such allegations, spanning a 4-year period.

In turn, the Chaplain developed a Religious Diversity Plan for USAFA based on the above allegations and the results of the March 2004 Faculty/Staff Culture Survey and the Class of 2004 Climate Survey. Immediately he responded with a proposal for the development of an in-depth educational program for every level of Academy life. By the end of that same month he presented to USAFA staff a religious diversity plan covering the next year of activities. Additionally, the plan called for training on religious diversity to be required for all. This included mandatory training for all Special Programs in Religious Education (SPIRE) leaders. The expanded SPIRE training included having all

SPIRE leaders sign a “covenant” (Attachment F) pledging adherence to the rules and guidelines taught in the training. These new requirements increased oversight for this program by the chaplaincy. Ultimately, the training initiatives led to the RSVP program.

September 2004--A phased Campaign Plan (Attachment G) was developed by the USAFA staff to address religious climate concerns specifically to improve religious accommodation and respect. In addition, the Chaplain Staff and Vice Commandant met with facilitators of SPIRE and CLM and also hosted roundtable discussions with cadets, faculty, and staff. The meeting was specifically called to discuss issues of religious respect and proselytizing. Every Protestant SPIRE leader was called in for this two-hour discussion.

Fall of 2004--The Cadet Climate Survey was conducted and included religious climate questions. Although the survey data reflected improvements from the 2002 survey in support of religious freedom and reduced pressure to be involved in religion at USAFA, gaps existed between Christian and non-Christian responses on most items with non-Christians responding more negatively to questions concerning religious tolerance. For more details on this survey see Section IV.

September-October 2004--A USAFA team processed all religious information from climate surveys, focus groups, reports from individuals and started to develop religious respect training (later this evolved into the program Respecting the Spiritual Values of all People – RSVP). Small group RSVP training for all base personnel began in March 2005. In April 2005, the USAFA Board of Visitors was presented with this training and also that month, USAFA proposed Phase 2 and 3 follow-on religious respect seminars.

November 2004--The USAFA Head Football Coach displayed a “Team Jesus” banner in the locker room. The Coach removed the banner the same day, as soon as the Director of Athletics voiced concerns to him.

November-December 2004--USAFA conducted senior leader (permanent party and cadet leadership) focus groups on religious respect designed to raise consciousness on the issue, clarify guidance, and outline training. In addition, senior leaders reviewed the way forward, to include policy, sub-campaign plan, and lesson plans for upcoming base-wide religious respect training.

December 2004--After discussions with the Superintendent, and in response to his request, Dr. Roche, then Secretary of the Air Force, directed the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Mr. Michael Dominguez, to provide the Superintendent with assistance assessing religious tolerance at USAFA. Mr. Dominguez sent his Deputy Assistant Secretary for Equal Opportunity to the Academy to assess the religious climate and evaluate the plan for a positive religious environment. At the suggestion of the Air Force Chief of Staff, the team included a Rabbi who is a retired Navy Chaplain, a former National Director of Inter-Religious Affairs for the American Jewish Committee, and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. Based upon this

visit, the team validated that there was evidence of some inter-religious insensitivity/intolerance among cadets, and on the part of the permanent party and faculty, but that the intolerance did not appear to rise to the level of “rampant discrimination” or a “crisis.” Additional findings from this visit are included in Section IV and their entire report is at Attachment J.

Also during this month, a CLM representative (who is also a member of the Faculty Forum Committee on Diversity) proposed a series of noontime forums to discuss religious diversity; its goal was to promote dialogue among faculty and staff and would cover all faith groups. One instructor was concerned that “people feel religion is being crammed down their throats, their workplace isn’t secular, etc.” He felt, “this episode is an example of the problem of religion at this institution,” and alleged that the initiative was not properly vetted through the Faculty Forum. Faculty leadership relooked the proposal and since RSVP training was scheduled to begin in the near future, the decision was made not to hold that specific diversity series at that time. However, in February, a similar event was sponsored by CLM and was attended by approximately 50 people during lunchtime.

April 2005--Americans United for Separation of Church and State wrote a 14-page report entitled *Religious Coercion and Endorsement of Religion at the United States Air Force Academy* (Attachment H) and submitted the document to the Secretary of Defense.

The report contained instances of what Americans United alleges were attempts by Air Force officials to establish a predominant religion at USAFA and failures by Air Force officials to accommodate the religious needs of some cadets. It repeats most of the allegations that appeared in other media sources prior to the report date, and advocates for the guiding principle of that organization. The Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel responded to Americans United on behalf of the Secretary of the Air Force, ensuring the group of the Air Force’s concern and determination to nurture an environment of religious respect at USAFA and throughout the Air Force.

May 2005--Acting Secretary of the Air Force directed a review of USAFA by this team.

June 2005—Acting Secretary of the Air Force asked the National Conference on Ministry to Armed Forces (NCMAF) to conduct a site visit to USAFA.

IV. Review of Documents, Programs, and Focus Groups/Interviews

A. Introduction

This section contains the Review Group findings pertaining to reviews of governing guidance currently in use by USAFA; Special Programs in Religious Education (SPIRE); the current religious tolerance training program for faculty, staff and cadets, “Respecting the Spiritual Values of All People” (RSVP); the complaint response mechanisms at the USAFA; an assessment of the climate at the Academy based on USAFA-sponsored surveys; and interviews of faculty, staff and cadets through focus groups and one-on-one interviews with the USAFA community by members of the Review Group.

B. Governing Guidance

Discussion of the role of religion at USAFA must begin by recognizing the Constitutional underpinnings of analysis of religion in a governmental context. The First Amendment guarantees free exercise of religion and, in addition, prohibits government establishment of religion. Also, free exercise necessarily involves the First Amendment’s free speech guarantee. Analysis of individual situations requires case-by-case, fact-specific application of the language of the Constitution itself. Transforming court cases, other statutes, and DoD and Air Force instructions into hard and fast, all-encompassing, “bright line” rules is difficult because a single factor may drive a different conclusion. An overarching principle with respect to the First Amendment, pertinent to the USAFA review, is that the government may not aid one religion, endorse religion in general or endorse religions in particular, or favor one religion over another.

Department of Defense policy favors the rights of military members to observe the tenets of their respective religions. Commanders are guided to safeguard freedom of expression to the maximum extent possible and to approve requests for accommodation of religious practices unless such accommodation will have an adverse impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, standards, or discipline.

The Air Force entrusts commanders with the responsibility to apply higher headquarters guidance to the particular facts and distinct situation in their command at any one particular time. These commanders rely on advice from their staff, such as staff judge advocates and chaplains. As will be apparent from consideration of these legal and policy tests, commanders and their staffs must carefully apply the law and policy to specific situations, and the particular facts may determine whether a course of conduct is appropriate.

Department of Defense Sources

DoD Directive (DoDD) 1300.17, “Accommodation of Religious Practices within the Military Services,” sets forth DoD policy that:

A basic principle of our nation is free exercise of religion. The Department of Defense places a high value on the rights of members of the Armed Forces to observe the tenets of their respective religions. It is DoD policy that requests for accommodation of religious practices should be approved by commanders when accommodation will not have an adverse impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, standards, or discipline (para 3.1).

Additionally, para 3.2.4 - Military Departments should include relevant materials on religious traditions, practices and policies in the curricula for command.

Likewise, DoDD 1325.6, “Guidelines for Handling Dissident and Protest Activities Among Members of the Armed Services” establishes DoD-wide standards for discrimination complaint processing and resolution in order to:

Promote an environment free from personal, social, or institutional barriers that prevent Service members from rising to the highest level of responsibility possible. Service members shall be evaluated only on individual merit, fitness, and capability. Unlawful discrimination against persons or groups based on ... religion ... is contrary to good order and discipline and is counterproductive to combat readiness and mission accomplishment. Unlawful discrimination shall not be condoned.

Specifically, para 3.2 – The Service members’ right of expression should be preserved to the maximum extent possible, consistent with good order and discipline and para 3.3 – No commander should be indifferent to conduct that, if allowed to proceed unchecked, would destroy the effectiveness of his or her unit.

DoDD 1350.2, “Department of Defense Equal Opportunity Program” makes it unlawful to discriminate against persons or groups based on ... religion, ...this is contrary to good order and discipline and is counterproductive to combat readiness and mission accomplishment.

DoD Human Goals Charter, dated July 1998 created an environment that values diversity and fosters mutual respect and cooperation among all persons. Additionally, the Charter makes military service in the DoD a model of equal opportunity for all regardless of religion....

Air Force Sources

The Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff have consistently issued memoranda to all Air Force personnel on the topic of discrimination and sexual harassment. These memoranda align with the Air Force Core Values that seek to ensure dignity and respect for all members of the Air Force family.

Their direction in this area of religion has been further amplified in the form of Air Force Instruction (AFI) 36-2706, "Military Equal Opportunity Program". In addition to delineating the process by which military members can raise complaints of discrimination, the AFI also serves as a restatement of the Air Force policy regarding discrimination of all types. The AFI was updated on 24 July 04, but it, and the prior edition, essentially hold that it is Air Force policy not to condone or tolerate unlawful discrimination ...within the Armed Forces or in the civilian workforce. The Air Force implements five core elements to assist commanders in measuring MEO program effectiveness: policy, communications, education and training, enforcement (complaints) and assessments. The Defense Equal Opportunity Council (DEOC) Task Force on Discrimination and Sexual Harassment developed these core elements that apply to unlawful discrimination and sexual harassment.

- The Air Force recognizes that all written or verbal communications degrading individuals on the basis of ... religion... remain a form of unlawful discrimination.
- It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual or group because of their ... religion....

In a similar fashion Air Force Instruction (AFI) 36-2707, "Non-Discrimination in Programs and Activities Assisted or Conducted by the Department of the Air Force" makes applicable the Title VI provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to the Air Force and restates Air Force policy that:

No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination on the basis of ... religion...under any program or activity either conducted by the Air Force, or receiving federal financial assistance disbursed by the Air Force (para 1.1).

AFI 36-2707 goes on to emphasize in para 1.3 that the Air Force...provides equal opportunity...irrespective of...religion. Para 1.4 specifies that whenever unlawful discrimination is found...the Air Force will take immediate action to address inequalities or inconsistencies that adversely affect people, and ensure channels are available to air complaints without fear of reprisal.

With respect to whether USAFA should establish a policy addressing religious practices at USAFA, it was the opinion of the Air Force Judge Advocate General in 2000 that no policy was required, noting that the issue was complicated by the fact that there was a lack of applicable Federal and DoD guidance, and a lack of evidence that USAFA leadership was insensitive to the religious needs of the cadets. Additionally the AF/JA noted that USAFA leadership was empowered to educate staff and other officials to the fact that their actions in the area of religion were not unfettered and were not without consequences.

AFPD 52-1, Chaplain Service, Spiritual health is fundamental to the overall well being of Air Force personnel...commanders accommodate the religious needs of their personnel to enhance operational readiness and combat effectiveness.

USAFA Sources

The Superintendent, Commandant of Cadets, Dean of Faculty, and the Commandant of the USAFA Preparatory School, all had established policy letters regarding respect. Since the team's visit, the Director of Athletics has one as well (Attachment I).

C. Special Programs in Religious Education (SPIRE)

SPIRE is a multi-faith USAFA Chapel program that exists under the direction of the Senior Staff Chaplain to help cadets and cadet candidates grow in their faith. The Chaplain Service at USAFA organized it in the 1980s. The program's self-stated purpose is to help cadets become better officers by facilitating their spiritual development and promoting Air Force Core Values. SPIRE meets Monday evenings in various locations throughout the cadet area in small groups during the Fall and Spring semesters. It also meets during Basic Cadet Training. The SPIRE program is currently comprised of several distinct ministries:

CATHOLIC SPIRE

Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS)

BUDDHIST SPIRE

JEWISH SPIRE

ORTHODOX SPIRE

PROTESTANT SPIRE

Baptist Student Union

Campus Crusade for Christ

Christian Leadership Ministries

Church of Christ

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

CROSS*training* (Alliance of Reformed Disciple Making - ARDM)

Fellowship of Christian Athletes

Liturgical Protestants

Men of Christ

The Navigators

Officers Christian Fellowship

Seekers

Sisters With a Purpose (SWAP)

Solutions

Youth With A Mission (YWAM)

Approximately 900 cadets participate in this weekly program. The chapel staff has only 11 chaplains. Because of the heavy participation, approximately 90 volunteers are used in the program. Recognized lay and para-church volunteers primarily lead Bible studies and seminars. Seven of the SPIRE leaders are graduates of the Air Force Academy, five are ordained ministers with Doctorates and Masters Degrees in Theology, ten are members of the faculty at USAFA, and others are retired or active duty Air Force Officers. In addition to leading the Monday SPIRE classes and Bible studies, these volunteers reportedly spend approximately 160 hours per week in individual counseling, personal discipleship and mentoring of cadets. During the Fall 2004, SPIRE leaders sponsored 6 weekend retreats with a total cadet attendance of 235. During his welcome briefing in September 2004, Chaplain Whittington spoke to all workers and leaders concerning the importance of promoting respect for all faiths.

All leaders and workers are required to sign a SPIRE volunteer work covenant (Attachment F) which states that religious sensitivity training is mandatory for all leaders and volunteers prior to working with students, and that they must foster tolerance of spiritual and religious diversity by promoting respect and cooperation among the entire USAFA community. All are required to have a valid proxy card and parking pass. In addition, the Senior Staff Chaplain must approve all guest speakers, visitors, religious material, special events and advertisements. Leaders and workers are required to report all critical issues affecting USAFA welfare and morale to a chaplain. Monthly SPIRE breakfast meetings are held to address issues. The USAFA chaplaincy established a program in 2004 to provide more oversight of the groups involved in SPIRE. This initiative is very appropriate and helps ensure the program remains a positive proponent of religious respect that is consistent with our Air Force Core Values. However, complaints relayed to the team indicate that guest speakers making presentations at SPIRE events may not be sufficiently aware of USAF standards regarding religious respect, a situation which USAFA can readily address.

D. Respecting the Spiritual Values of All People (RSVP) Training

RSVP training development began in late 2004 to encourage a high level of respect for others' religious rights and to highlight the USAFA values of fair treatment and mutual respect. It was developed in response to religious respect concerns that were noted in the Faculty/Staff Spring Survey's written comments and in the Cadet's Fall 2004 Climate Survey. The training was initially designed by chaplains and other Academy staff members for the USAFA faculty, staff and cadets and concentrates on Department of Defense and Air Force policies on religious tolerance. The Air Force Chief of Chaplains then reviewed USAFA's proposal and streamlined it from 90 minutes to 50 minutes to better align with the academic schedule of 50-minute class periods and focus specifically on the immediate issues. His suggestion was to use this initial block as a precursor to additional modules. Additionally, the content of the training was expanded to better address the full spectrum of diversity. In the version that began to be given USAFA-wide in March 2005, the training provides scenarios depicting religious insensitivity—religious slurs, proselytizing, and lack of respect or consideration for another's religious preference. The training team is composed of one member each of the Judge Advocate General, Chaplain Service, and Commander groups. It is designed to be interactive and generate discussions with attendees.

The setting for RSVP training is designed for small groups to allow for discussion. Originally the training for cadets was set for after lunch; it was later moved to the evening after classes.

Review Group members received RSVP training from the staff and also sat in on several staff and cadet sessions. These sessions varied in effectiveness and lacked consistency in presentation. Some groups were too large (30+) to allow group discussion. Most notably, there was a strong correlation between how well the instructor related to the audience and the overall success of the training session.

Faculty and staff indicated that the training was a good reminder of religious insensitivity. Others said that, although well intended, it did not do a good job of teaching respect or tolerance. One individual commented having the chaplains design the program was like having the fox in the henhouse.

There was mixed feedback about RSVP from the cadets. Cadets stated it was a good reminder about basic lessons. Many applauded the Chaplain Staff for their dedicated efforts. However, many cadets did not seem to understand the reason for RSVP training and did not think it was necessary or effective. They believe that it "talked down" to them and did not give them any tools to deal with the problem.

Faculty, staff, and cadets voiced several recommendations to make the RSVP training more effective. For example, "night classes were ineffective; move the class to daytime hours." Many stated the training would be taken more seriously if senior leadership, in particular the Superintendent, opened the course both to demonstrate leadership's commitment and to put the issue in context. A staff member noted that the

cadets need concrete guidance. The RSVP program coordinators indicated training could only go so far without Air Force-wide guidance with regard to religion in the workplace. Cadets thought highlighting situations that really happened would be helpful. It was also noted that they learned about the religious intolerance concern from the press not the leadership. Cadets also indicated more discussion would be valuable and they would like to see examples of practical situations they would encounter as cadets. They recommended a “check list” and a “tool kit” for how to respond to religious intolerance, similar to that which cadets were given for sexual assault. It was recommended that the training needed to provide the appropriate tools to deal with the problem and there was mention that an outside briefer would be beneficial; they said they are bombarded with briefings by the staff and outside briefers were a “breath of fresh air.” They brought up training from sexual assault as a positive example. Others requested more cadet involvement in the training. Interviewers also heard that a required class on world religions and other cultures would be beneficial. Instructors lost the interest of the audience when they “read the script.”

RSVP is a noteworthy first step in educating the USAFA faculty, staff, and cadets on religious respect. The chaplains and staff members who designed RSVP spent many hours over several months developing, preparing, and executing the training. This was a monumental task when taking into consideration the scope of 10 teams training 8,000 personnel in small groups in the course of a few months. The Superintendent and the Senior Staff Chaplain should be commended for initiating RSVP to address this self-identified problem head-on. However, the RSVP program will need course corrections to fully benefit staff and cadets.

Phase II and Phase III of RSVP are currently under consideration. Phase II will deal with a series of world religion and culture sessions. Phase III will cover leadership and deployment scenarios. (It should be noted that none of those being interviewed were aware that the training they were receiving was the first part of a three part series.) Also, due to the range and complexity of the subject matter in Phases II and III, the courses may take several sessions to cover.

Note: Cadets, faculty and staff provided very meaningful feedback on RSVP training. As indicated, the reviews were mixed. In one faculty focus group a professor made an important observation. The faculty, some of whom have been at USAFA for many years, are experts in curriculum development. Their courseware goes through at least a year of development, rewrites and reviews before it is first presented. The RSVP developers felt significant pressure to develop a program quickly, over a few months, and it has some of the deficiencies inherent in rapid development and delivery. Regarding cadet critiques, a comment by a USAFA graduate was insightful, “In a cadet’s world, free time is the coin of the realm. Anything that diminishes it, regardless of its merit, will be met with great cynicism.” That said, putting the training in context for the audience and providing a more interactive presentation will enhance the training.

E. Internal Control Mechanisms

Several avenues are available for cadets, faculty, and staff to register complaints regarding any aspect of the USAFA environment. Along with the chain of command and chaplains, USAFA personnel may direct their concerns to the Inspector General (IG), the Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) office, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) office and the Cadet Counseling Center.

Since January 2002, four IG complaints have been filed that are related to religious issues; two were from anonymous complainants and one each from a cadet and parent. Two of these four are currently open and under investigation; the other two, one alleging “too much religion in the military” and one alleging “an inappropriate response on the part of the USAFA Inspector General and the Military Equal Opportunity office” have been closed. Since the IG Complaints Resolution Program may not be used for matters normally addressed through other established grievance or appeal channels, the IG also referred the religious respect concerns of an additional two cadets and one active duty member to USAFA Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) office.

The MEO office serves both cadets and permanent party for unlawful discrimination issues to include religious respect. The office received two informal complaints regarding religious discrimination since January 2002. The first complaint included a concern that religious beliefs were a motivator in a hiring selection process. This was addressed by a commander but was not substantiated. The complainant was satisfied with the results. A second informal complaint is currently under the review of a commander. The cadet complainant had the option to have MEO conduct a formal complaint clarification but instead elected to have his chain of command address the issue.

In addition, commanders communicated with MEO on three occasions when alleged unlawful discrimination issues were worked within their unit; all cases reached resolution. Two of these cases involved religious messages in e-mails, in which both cadets were briefed on proper procedures and religious respect. The third case included an alleged religious comment on prayer and God, in which the alleged offender denies the statement and the complainant is no longer available for follow-up, having been discharged for reasons not related to this incident.

Finally, two cadets and three active duty members contacted MEO for assistance related to religion, to include definition of unlawful discrimination, information on how to file an MEO complaint and other MEO procedural questions.

The EEO office is the primary complaint mechanism for civilian employees. Since January 2002, three EEO complaints have been processed to resolution. These included two cases of religion being a factor for denial of official union time and one

conflict with religion and duty hours. All three cases were resolved to the satisfaction of the complainants.

There is also a cadet PEER (Personal Ethics and Education Representative) program that serves as an informal means of raising concerns and venting frustrations. It appears the majority of cadets are confident in this program and use it substantially.

Started in August 2004, PEER is a consolidation of previously existing cadet human relation programs, used to provide cadets a one-stop peer support related to human relations and sexual assault. The program has at least one PEER per cadet squadron and there is one overall PEER for the cadet wing. These representatives are selected through an application process and a selection board. PEER cadets work for the Vice Commandant and are trained as the primary referral agents for cadets to route concerns to the most appropriate helping agency, thus serving as a guide and facilitator for the cadet population. They serve as a conduit to direct cadets toward official reporting channels and helping agencies.

Since its inception, PEERs have received five contacts related to religious climate concerns; all were investigated and resolved except one that is still in review. Prior to the PEER program cadets filled similar positions as Human Relations Education Officers (HREOs) and received six contacts related to religious climate concerns. Such reasons for PEER/HREO contact included: inappropriate religious comments, advertisements for prayer meetings/religious-related organizations, religious-natured e-mails (to include, Bible verses in e-mail footers), and a request for assistance in developing a religious accommodation request/plan. PEERs also submit human relations complaints to the human relations noncommissioned officer at Academy Counseling Center.

The Academy Counseling Center is available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day and functions in a similar manner to counseling centers at civilian colleges and universities. The International Association of Counseling Services has accredited the center since 1993. The primary goal of the center is to enhance the well-being and personal effectiveness of USAFA cadets as they strive to become Air Force officers. The counseling center is organized into four divisions: Counseling Services, Human Relations, Sexual Assault Services and Substance Abuse Prevention Education. Clinical staff members include licensed mental health providers from a variety of disciplines.

Unlawful discrimination concerns are brought to the Center's Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute-certified noncommissioned officer (NCO) either directly from cadets or through the PEERs. This NCO is trained to the same degree as all other Air Force Equal Opportunity technicians. Cadets have reported similar concerns to the Center as to their PEERs. The unlawful discrimination complaints that cannot be resolved at the Center are forwarded to USAFA MEO.

Overall, the Academy seems to have appropriate internal control mechanisms in place and abides by standard policy. They appear to suffice in terms of services and counseling availability. However, it is less clear that cadets and staff are aware of these avenues and know how to use them when needed. Coordination and communication

between these helping agencies seem to be lacking. There were indications that some of the offices located outside of the cadet area were not readily accessible to cadets. The recent decision to open a MEO office in the vicinity of the cadet terrazzo is a positive step taken by Academy leadership. In addition, cadets' knowledge of the various programs was limited.

F. Academy Surveys

An integral part of the USAFA internal control program is their extensive use of surveys to assess and improve the climate and culture of the Academy. The primary mechanisms for obtaining data are the Cadet Social Climate Survey and the Organizational Culture Survey.

Prior to 2003--The team reviewed Cadet Social Climate Survey data from 1995 to the present. These surveys addressed major areas to include, race, discrimination, gender, reprisal, intercollegiate athletics, and religion. From 1995 - 2002, religion was consistently the first and second most positively rated climate area. From an analytical methodology standpoint, the 1995 - 2002 survey data on religion was analyzed and presented at the factor level (meaning the main focus was on the score assigned to the overall religious climate, not on individual questions). On a 1 - 6 scale, with 1 equating to "poor" and 6 equating to "good", the average overall score for religious climate during this period was 4.43 with a high of 4.6 to a low of 4.0. Although there were some indications of perceived religious discrimination (cadet on cadet), the focus appeared to be on the overall positive religious climate score since there were several areas rated lower than religious climate. The 2003 survey did not include religious questions and the 2004 survey was the first time USAFA analyzed and presented religion data at the item (question-by-question) level, with particular attention given to the gap between Christian and other faith groups' responses. The 2003 and 2004 cadet surveys are addressed below in greater detail.

Fall 2003--This Cadet Social Climate Survey did not ask religious questions, at the direction of the then Secretary of the Air Force, Dr Roche. The focus was specifically on sexual harassment/assault.

Spring 2004--USAFA conducted a comprehensive survey of faculty and staff. This survey, the Organizational Culture Survey, was developed at the request of the Superintendent as part of the Agenda for Change. Overall, the survey indicated the culture climate at USAFA was positive. Respondents, however, were also encouraged to provide written comments to the survey. It was these additional comments that brought the concern about religious tolerance at USAFA to the attention of the Academy's leadership and was a major impetus for the RSVP Training. The findings were highlighted to the USAFA Board of Visitors and the General Officer Steering Committee in November 2004.

Overall findings included:

- Christians surveyed were more likely than other groups to affirm that USAFA fosters religious freedom and people at USAFA respect non-Christian views.
- Faculty reported the least favorable perceptions of religious tolerance/respect at USAFA.
- Although respondents agreed that religious respect is desirable, fewer believe that religious tolerance/respect exists at USAFA.

Also during this same time frame a Cadet Social Climate Survey was administered to a small segment of the graduating class (approximately 13% of the cadet wing) and included religious-related items. It did highlight some concerns. However, statistically, USAFA correctly placed more emphasis on the later results from the Aug 04 survey that included all cadets and therefore was a better representative sample.

Fall 2004-- A Cadet Social Climate Survey administered in the Fall semester addressed a broader range of subjects. It included items on race, gender, athletics, discrimination, alcohol, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual assault reporting, confidence in leadership, safety, tolerance, and specific items on religious climate, along with warrior identity and culture change. The Defense Manpower Data Center and the Air Force Personnel Center validated the survey.

Although the survey results reflect there had been improvements in support of religious freedom, and there is reduced pressure to be involved in religion at USAFA, gaps exist between Christian and non-Christian responses on most items with non-Christians responding more negatively to questions concerning religious tolerance. 30% of non-Christian cadets responding believe that Christian cadets are given preferential treatment. Additionally, over 50% of all cadets responding agree that religious slurs/comments/jokes are used.

G. Focus Groups

The comments, suggestions and views obtained from the Focus Groups were very diverse. These views vary from those who feel oppressed by the environment to those who find nothing wrong to those who are unaware. Some Jewish cadets and several Faculty and Staff had particularly strong feelings about the religious climate at USAFA. Various members of all focus groups expressed concerns that have been noted throughout the report. Potential instances of misconduct reported to Review Group members were referred to persons with the authority to deal with them.

Sample demographics from the Fall 2004 Cadet Climate Survey indicate the cadet wing as: Atheist (2.3%), Buddhist (.9%), Christian (85.2%), Hindu (.3%), Islamic (.4%), Jewish (1.5%), No religious preference (7.3%), and Other (2%).

First and Second Class Jewish Cadets (10 cadets)

Although they said that overall there is a positive environment at the USAFA, members of this group perceive problems with religious tolerance among fellow cadets, some faculty, some leadership, and several athletic department coaches. The cumulative effect of continually being exposed to a Christian atmosphere, the failure of staff to adequately address religious accommodation issues, the lack of a standard set of rules for pass privileges and religious accommodations, various egregious actions of a few faculty/staff members, and inappropriate behavior toward non-Christians by individual cadets have made the environment insensitive to their needs and at times coercive. Some cadets felt that an ignorance of different religions is often the root of insensitive remarks made by a select few cadets. They also had issue with prayer before mandatory events and felt that they were predominantly Christian-based. The group commented on the inappropriateness of an email regarding the National Day of Prayer that was sent to all cadets by the Commandant of Cadets. They also felt that the RSVP training was “way off target” and too remedial and glossy for people who really need it.

Most of these ten cadets were not “practicing” Jews and therefore suggested we contact specific cadets who are very active in the USAFA Jewish community. The two cadets we spoke with at a later time had significant issues they felt needed to be addressed by USAFA. In particular, they felt the administrative procedures in place and the conflicts with scheduled training, made it difficult for cadets of minority faiths to obtain permission to attend Sabbath and non-Sunday religious worship services. In addition, the cadet dining facility does not meet the dietary needs of all cadets. Both cadets experienced proselytizing by certain members of the faculty, staff, and athletic department, and religious comments/slurs made by other cadets. Specific instances have been referred to the proper authority. They expressed their belief that the environment has improved over the past year. The Jewish cadets greatly appreciate the efforts of the current Superintendent to improve the religious climate at USAFA.

Third and Fourth Class Jewish Cadets (8 cadets)

This focus group provided similar inputs to the First and Second Class Jewish Cadets listed above. The following comments were representative of the group: “Most of the problems here are with fellow cadets; some cadets are ignorant of religious groups other than Christianity.”

“There are continuous instances of religious intolerance but few of these reflect actual malicious intent.” “Freedom of religion does not exist if you are not a Christian.” “Even though there is a cumbersome pass procedure to attend religious services, AOC and cadet leadership pressure you to make “the right choice” and choose duty over religion.” “Although the current Rabbi is a very nice man, the Jewish program does not meet my needs.” Some cadets in this group felt that USAFA does not do a good job of accommodating certain faiths and often schedules major military events during Jewish holidays/holy days. Most felt that things have gotten better over the past year and religious/cultural demeaning jokes and slurs have become less frequent.

First and Second Class ‘Other’ Cadets (9 cadets)

This group included cadets with no religious preference, Hindu, Buddhist, Atheist, and Agnostic. The tone of the conversation was markedly different than some of the other groups. Religion was not a major part of these cadets’ lives. Consequently, they do not feel strongly about the issue and don’t see it as a problem that affects them. They felt that the environment at USAFA is very accepting and tolerant of various religions. The term “Heathen Flight” of BCT, although clearly inappropriate, was considered more of a joke to those interviewed in this group and something they proudly called themselves. They enjoyed being part of the “Heathen Flight” because they said they were able to go back to their rooms to rest versus going to church. They said it was a term similar to several others used by cadets in BCT to distinguish between different groups (i.e. Heathen Flight, Sick-Lame & Lazy Flight, etc.). Some cadets were adamant that prayer before mandatory events (i.e. Dining Ins, Pinnacle, etc.) was inappropriate. Several also experienced “discomfort” with the athletic department and its pro-Christian stance. These cadets did not like the RSVP training because they said they already know what was being taught.

Third and Fourth Class ‘Other’ Cadets (7 cadets)

These “Other” cadets (those who claim to be either a religion not listed above, no religion, Atheist, or Agnostic) spoke highly of the religious climate at USAFA. None of them had experienced nor observed any inappropriate actions by fellow classmates, faculty, or staff. They found the “Heathen Flight” name amusing, not demeaning. They felt the level of attention to issues of religious respect at USAFA is overblown.

First and Second Class Protestant Cadets (10 cadets)

These cadets had comments on both sides of the spectrum with regard to the religious climate at USAFA. Some had experienced proselytizing by fellow cadets and faculty. They were not comfortable with “The Passion of the Christ” flyers being spread all over campus, but felt the problem was addressed quickly by the leadership. Some were also uncomfortable with the Commandant of Cadets’ email on the National Day of Prayer. They also felt that religious accommodation is not standard among squadrons and scheduling of major events should be more accommodating to religions other than Christian. Some cadets perceived that USAFA is now too “politically correct” and cadets of Christian faith are now being discriminated against, while others believe a clear “separation of Church and State” is needed.

Third and Fourth Class Protestant Cadets (10 cadets)

This group didn’t feel there were many issues of concern. They felt it is the responsibility of the individual to speak out when/if offended. In addition, they felt that the resentment that exists when someone misses a mandatory training event is not just applicable to religious activities but tied to other reasons (i.e. athletics, debate team, etc.).

First and Second Class Catholic Cadets (9 cadets)

The overall, unanimous, position of these cadets was clear: free exercise of religion is not a problem at USAF. Senior leadership, staff, faculty, and members of the cadet wing at USAFA are viewed as religious, but never use their positions to force or coerce others. Two cadets did remain after the others departed to share their story of a particular coach. They felt the coach “crossed the line” by requiring team members to participate in a team prayer after each game/practice.

Third and Fourth Class Catholic Cadets (10 cadets)

These cadets were surprised that this is an issue at USAFA and think the media has made it an issue. None of these cadets had specific instances of religious intolerance or bias.

First and Second Class Mixed Faith Cadets (8 cadets)

The group consensus was that this issue seems to be extremely overstated. Only two of the cadets have ever witnessed some semblance of religious intolerance, albeit minor in their opinion. They did mention they were witness to some minor jokes and light humor but nothing that would be considered disparaging. One cadet mentioned that his Jewish roommate had difficulty getting out of a function to attend Passover. Another said the Academy appears to be "worried about offending anyone." Several cadets mentioned that prayers given before official functions may cause some of the "minority" cadets to feel uncomfortable. Most indicated RSVP training did not seem very effective.

First and Second Class Mixed Faith Cadets (7 cadets)

Again, the group consensus was that there is respect for all cadets at USAFA, regardless of religion. A few of the cadets did address the "The Passion of the Christ" flyers that were distributed. They said this was no different than other flyers disseminated for various events. One of the cadets, a Mormon, said that he and his roommate, who is Catholic, often spoke about their religions as a way to educate each other. They and other cadets talk casually about their religious differences and he couldn't recall anyone ever being offended. A few of the cadets did, however, indicate that there had been a few occasions in which leadership didn't seem to be aware of some of the "other religions and beliefs" throughout USAFA. All of these cadets felt RSVP was a "waste of time" and had no value. Finally, the consensus among this group was that they are happy to be at the Academy and they wish someone would “set the media straight”. Some of the cadets had no idea about the religious issue until they read it in the paper.

Naval Academy Midshipmen (5)

All are finishing a one-year exchange tour at the Air Force Academy--two Catholic, two Protestant, and one Jewish. The midshipmen are extremely pleased with the religious climate at the Air Force Academy. None had witnessed or heard of any religious intolerance or religious disrespect among cadets. When asked about differences between the Naval Academy and the Air Force Academy, they each expressed disappointment that USAFA does not have a chaplain prayer at the noon meal.

Air Officers Commanding (8 AOCs)

The AOCs felt that religious accommodation requests are not a 'religious' issue, but a 'team spirit' issue. Anyone absent, for any reason, is perceived as lacking team spirit. They also felt that the pendulum has swung too far and now open discussion is discouraged among cadets. They do not know what is right in regards to religious talk and feel that USAFA has the dilemma of being a government property but also the cadets' home. They felt strongly that more guidance is needed.

Academy Military Trainers (9 AMTs)

This group does not feel that they have overarching, standardized guidance on religious accommodation and their experience with accommodating cadets varied greatly. One example includes a Jewish cadet who was allowed to have a refrigerator in his room for his kosher food, unlike the cadets of other faiths in his squadron. However, since Mitchell Hall does not have kosher food, this cadet would march to the dining facility with his squadron, drink some water, and then go back to his room to eat his own food. Almost all AMTs shared a "duty over religion" attitude.

Permanent Professor and some senior Faculty/Dept Heads (22 faculty)

This group was positive and believed there is not an overall negative or system problem with respect to religious tolerance at USAFA. They are not surprised, however, that there were incidents of religious intolerance because the cadets are 18-22 years old, come from all walks of life, and are conservative in nature. They also discussed some scheduling problems and feel the burden is unfairly placed on cadets of minority religions to ask for religious accommodation consideration. A librarian said he has witnessed SPIRE facilitators with chapel-sponsored access/proxy badges using the library to counsel cadets on religious matters. With regard to cadet accommodations, they agreed that most of the decisions are made at the squadron level and are not standard. Finally, they all concurred that the Commandant of Cadets is overly criticized in the press, and that he is the best leader/commandant they have seen in many years. Group members believed RSVP was valuable, but suffered from rushed development and inconsistent quality of presentation.

Other Faculty Groups (34 total)

Faculty 1 (Military)

All members of the group felt that their own faith life and that of their students was well respected and that no religious intolerance characterized their USAFA experience. The group was completely comfortable with their religious freedoms. Insensitive remarks about religion are rare and may be just mistakes made by very young people or poor choice of words.

Faculty 2 (Military/Civilian)

The non-Christian members of this group indicated that Senior Leadership, to a person, made them feel like ‘evil people’ if they were not one of the Christians. A few acknowledged that some of the leadership is ‘extraordinarily aggressive’ in the expression of their faith. Some members of minority faiths also revealed they suspected they had been non-selected for faculty advancement and military promotion; however, no specifics were given. The Christian faculty members of this group expressed their belief that Christianity is a ‘proselytizing religion’ and they have a right, even duty, to do so.

Faculty 3 (Military/Civilian)

The Professors said they have no specific USAFA or department instruction on what is permitted/not permitted to say in the classroom as it relates to religion. One member recalls supporting a cadets’ religious accommodation request by rescheduling an exam. Others asked, “Do we have to give up religious freedom to be in the military?” Finally, several pointed to a Senior Leader as the one who pushed the religion issue from ‘sub-threshold’ to over the ‘threshold’.

Faculty 4 (Military/Civilian)

This group was also very diverse on their views of religious tolerance and where religion fits in the classroom. One faculty member felt strongly that USAFA is a religiously biased environment and very coercive. Another said his wife would not talk about her faith in the spouses’ group for fear of hurting her husband’s career. One member stated he did not feel there are any tolerance issues and expressed that discussing his faith in the classroom is part of being role model for the cadets. There were some however, that expressed comments such as “religion does not belong in the classroom.” This appeared to be a general consensus that, in their opinion, there ought not be any expressed religious preferences by faculty in the classroom, as these preferences have the potential to lead to implied favoritism or opportunities for students who share those preferences to receive special treatment. They all concurred that the religious climate varies between departments. RSVP needs to give tools to those being trained.

Staff (Staff/Air Base Wing) (11 total)

This group was made up of members from the Air Base Wing, hospital, cadet clinic, and faculty department. They haven't seen the issues the media is reporting. They all concurred that small incidents are taken out of context and people are 'oversensitive'. Overall, this group felt there weren't too many issues and USAFA is a relatively good environment. They did, however, feel there may be some scheduling and accommodation issues. One member found one of the faculty departments an 'uneasy' environment for non-believers.

Athletic Department (Coaches) (16 total)

Coaches claimed that there was no problem with religious respect at USAFA. They suggested that the instances in the newspapers were blown out of proportion, and that this review teams' visit was unnecessary.

As a group the coaches were asking for guidelines. One coach said he leads his team in prayer and invokes Jesus' name regularly. Another coach said he doesn't want to insult anyone, so he holds a minute of silent prayer before each game, and he says "Amen" after an appropriate time. The next coach said he doesn't include any religion into his program at any point. One coach was convinced it was DoD's policy that teams could not pray, while another thought that is was USAFA's policy. Yet another felt it wasn't policy because prayer with the team was authorized. Collectively, they asked: "Can we pray with our teams? Can we pray to God? Can we pray to Jesus?"

Coaches said the SPIRE people from off campus are all around there. An Athletes in Action representative reportedly came to one coach and asked him to encourage his team members to join his Christian worship group. Coaches said the Fellowship of Christian Athletes is still active at USAFA, and they felt that it was "good for the kids." However, several coaches said they were uncomfortable with a senior leader pushing the National Day of Prayer breakfast and saying something like "All good officers will be there", and one coach questioned whether it was appropriate to advertise and promote attendance at Bible studies over the PA system.

One coach stated the focus should be on individual assertiveness to be a good officer, offering that if someone is offended they need to learn to deal with it on their own. One coach stated that football is too visible. If he had put the banner up in his locker room it would have been appropriate, and no one would have cared.

H. One-on-One Interviews

The team had several open sessions in which members of the USAFA community were invited to attend and speak in confidence to a member of the Review Group.

Cadets' Summary

Numerous cadets met with review group members over the three-day period. Many cadets were worried about the “pendulum swing” that may restrict religion and SPIRE activities. “Reverse religious discrimination is rampant and evangelical Christians are under constant attack and scrutiny solely on account of their beliefs.” They felt that SPIRE, Bible study, and chapel are all essential to BCT and to the development of leaders. SPIRE helped strengthen their faith and helped them get through the tough times. They expressed their belief that the media is blowing the issue out of proportion and USAFA is letting the media drive their decisions. They didn’t know religious respect was an issue before they saw it in the media. Cadets are now very careful of what they say and are wary of open discussion. One cadet said “The Air Force I signed up for didn’t say I had to leave my religion at the door—it’s part of who I am.”

Others noted religious accommodation problems. In addition, the cadets do not like RSVP at night and believe it is not necessary. Cadets need practical guidance to use in their day-to-day lives as cadets. Many were confused over the rationale for the RSVP training.

Faculty/Staff/Perm Party Summary

Several permanent party members from various mission elements took advantage of the one-on-one personal interviews with Review Group members. The insights obtained reflected diverse views of the religious climate at USAFA. Some expressed their belief that there is no religious coercion or prejudice at the Academy. They suggested that USAFA is like any other university in that critical thinking needs to be taught and the classroom is the place to discuss differing views while respecting the views of others. A few faculty members expressed their concern that the current climate of insecurity stifles free academic discourse. In addition, character building is important at USAFA and some felt cadets need to understand the importance of spiritual beliefs. “This is the Armed Forces where members put their lives on the line—faith takes on even greater significance during times of conflict and we need to make room for faith”. Alternatively, some members felt strongly that the religious intolerance problems at USAFA were very real, and had been there for a long time. “I came here from the line of the Air Force, and was immediately stuck by how religion permeated this place like nothing I had ever seen before in the Air Force”. One faculty member felt that “Academic Freedom” was used as a “Get Out of Jail Free” card to say things that are otherwise totally unacceptable in a military environment. They feel the problem is not with the cadets but with some of the leadership and various faculty members. One faculty member stated that in her opinion the entire faculty is too homogeneous. Others suggested that the behavior was with the majority of the faculty. Some perceived that selection of staff/leadership is based on religion. This perception also extended to the admission of cadets, “The kids we are bringing in here now are not a reflection of America. Whether they realize it or not, people of religion are selecting kids of religion to fill USAFA.”

Finally, a few faculty/staff stated they had seen similar activities in the larger Air Force, suggesting that at every rank people quietly acquiesce to demonstrative religious behavior of those more senior to them.

I. USAFA's Initial Consolidation of Concerns

The team specifically reviewed allegations described in the media as the “55 complaints.” These allegations, though not specifically in the team’s charter, set the stage for its review. The Senior Staff Chaplain discussed USAFA’s collection and consolidation of these allegations of religious insensitivity in an effort to properly scope the extent of perceived religious bias. In August 2004, the Chaplain, as the project lead, initiated this collection of religious respect incidents from the entire USAFA community. He eventually compiled approximately 50 such concerns from 13 different people. The incidents reportedly occurred over the previous four years. USAFA used this list to serve as data points as they mapped out their diversity plan and corresponding religious respect training. In addition, USAFA leadership dealt with the allegations that reflected specifics. Others were very general or reflected impressions of the individuals reporting and did not provide sufficient information for individual follow-up action.

The general areas of these concerns were: inappropriate comments, accommodations, lack of sensitivity to minority religions, proselytizing/religious expression, prayer, and Christian guest speakers. USAFA has made adjustments in their programs and practices in several of these areas to address concerns and the remaining items are being addressed in the Review Group’s recommendations for further action.

J. December 2004 Headquarters Air Force Assessment

In December 2004, after discussions with the Superintendent, and in response to his request, Dr. James Roche, then Secretary of the Air Force, directed SAF/MR, Mr. Michael Dominguez, to provide assistance with assessing religious tolerance at USAFA. Mr. Dominguez sent his Deputy Assistant Secretary for Equal Opportunity to USAFA to assess the religious climate and evaluate the plan for a positive religious environment. At the suggestion of the Air Force Chief of Staff, the team included a Rabbi who is a retired Navy Chaplain, a former National Director of Interreligious Affairs for the American Jewish Committee, and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. This visit spanned a day and a half on the ground at USAFA, and consisted of discussions with the Superintendent and Vice Commandant, the chaplains, the Center for Character Development, and a group of selected cadets representing a variety of religious and non-religious based traditions. In addition, they reviewed and critiqued an early version of Respecting the Spiritual Values of all People (RSVP) lesson plan. Upon their return the team met with Dr. Roche and Mr. Dominguez and provided their assessment verbally.

On 25 January 2005, the team submitted a written report of their findings (Attachment J) that included the following findings:

The team did not find indications of a crisis in regard to religious insensitivity/intolerance nor did it note any consistent signs of rampant discrimination on the basis of religion. They reported that USAFA leadership had initiated a good first response, and was actively working to improve the religious climate. The RSVP training being developed was described as “very good”, but the team suggested greater integration with other initiatives such as gender sensitivity, equal opportunity, core values, and character development. In addition, cadets felt that if a problem were brought to any USAFA chaplain, that chaplain would do his or her best to help.

The team, however, observed manifestations that resulted from a lack of understanding concerning broader issues of respect for individual rights and a lack of clarity of a vision that embraces spiritual development as core to Air Force values and mission. Cadets they interviewed felt there were some problems, especially in terms of being “bombarded” with religious information and/or “invitations”/solicitations over the email, and sometimes by flyers. The movie “The Passion of the Christ” was cited as one example. Some cadets felt religious quotes included as part of the signature block on emails contributed to the problem of “religious bombardment”, or military sponsored “evangelization.” There was also a feeling that some cadets and permanent party did not understand policies or sensitivities.

Chaplains expressed some fear that cadets think that the first course of action after encountering insensitivity is to make a report (following the concept of reporting sexual abuse or assault), rather than attempt to work things out. Cadets also expressed some fear that respect for the spiritual component of leadership has been reduced to lip service. Their perception was that much of the Academy leadership would prefer to avoid issues of spirituality, in part because of fears of being accused of offending those who do not see themselves as religious. Finally, cadets indicated there were some problems with comments by faculty. For example, when one student indicated that his or her religion took a stand against evolution, the instructor ridiculed such a belief.

Based upon this visit, the team validated that there was evidence of some inter-religious insensitivity/intolerance among cadets, and on the part of permanent party, including faculty; however, the team did not note any consistent signs of rampant discrimination on the basis of religion.

K. June 2005 National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF) Assessment

The NCMAF team conducted an independent review at the request of the Acting Secretary of the Air Force. The team was comprised of five members from the various faith groups: Evangelical Friends Church (Quaker), Christian Reformed Church in North America, The Orthodox Church In America, Jewish, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. They conducted a site visit at USAFA on 7-8 June 2005 and met with approximately 180 cadets and permanent party.

The following areas were reviewed:

- Concerns regarding incidents of alleged over-reaching religious influence by senior leadership, faculty, and staff
- Effectiveness of RSVP training
- First Amendment, Character development, and Ethics
- SPIRE Program
- Adequacy of the religious program

Their findings were very similar to those of the Review Group. They provided 11 recommendations and highlighted certain areas for improvement. Their complete report is at Attachment K. It is noteworthy that the NCMAF team highlighted that USAFA senior leaders, faculty, and staff appeared exhausted by the relentless media attention, especially since the Academy had already identified the concerns and were addressing them. The NCMAF team identified a concern over the danger of moving the pendulum too far in the opposite direction. The team pointed out that along with looking into the isolated incidents, Academy leaders have attempted to identify root causes and to design corrective and preventive measures. The team also emphasized that there are potentially polarizing views regarding the role of religion in our nation's public square and at USAFA and highlighted the need for and importance of clear guidance. Non-Christian cadets told them that the problem at USAFA is accommodation, not necessarily intolerance. Scheduling conflicts between mandatory training and religious activities were a major concern they heard about. The NCMAF Team Lead stated that solutions to the religious respect issue would require continued insightful leadership, openness, respect, and goodwill.

V. Findings and Recommendations

This section contains events and observations that the HQ USAF team found important to identify in assessing the overall religious climate of USAFA. In all, the team had nine findings of which one, termed “Climate,” contains six events and behaviors. For all findings any corrective action already taken by USAFA is also described. In addition, seven specific instances of potential misconduct by individuals were referred to appropriate authorities for further command review and action. Recommendations are included at the end of this section.

A. Findings

1. Perception of Religious Intolerance: USAFA identified through surveys of both permanent party and cadets that there was a perception of religious intolerance among some at the Academy. The USAFA leadership continues to be very aggressive in using anonymous surveys to assess the academy climate across a range of issues including religious respect.
 2. Guidance: There is Department of Defense, Air Force, and USAFA policy guidance regarding religious accommodation, prohibitions against religious discrimination, preserving service members’ right of expression, etc. Senior USAFA leaders have distributed statements supporting the rights of individuals to hold religious beliefs or to have none, and stating the importance of respecting this right for all people. However, there is no guidance indicating the specific appropriate parameters for either the free exercise or the establishment of religion. This need for guidance also applies to contract personnel (e.g., coaches). Similarly, there are no relevant materials on culture and religion in the curriculum for new Air Force commanders, as required by DoD instruction. This lack of guidance is a source of concern and frustration for leadership, staff, faculty, and cadets at USAFA.
- The Academy’s Staff Judge Advocate requested specific advice on prayer from the HQ USAF Judge Advocate General’s office in 2000. In turn, they provided guidance with regard to specific instances of prayer and advised against adopting a general policy concerning prayer. In December 2004, the current Superintendent requested that a more specific policy be provided that would be applicable to USAFA and the greater Air Force.
3. Training: USAFA has initiated a new program entitled Respecting Spiritual Values of All People (RSVP), Phase I, as part of their effort to enhance a climate of respect for individuals of different belief systems. The program is not adequate, by itself, to address the issue of religious respect for the entire USAFA community, but it is a significant initial effort in developing a comprehensive program.
 4. Climate: Cadets, faculty and staff expressed concern that there was inappropriate bias toward a predominant religion and a perception of intolerance of other views. The team found this concern among the cadet wing, in the 34th Training Wing, Faculty, and the

Athletic Department, but it was not pervasive within each of those areas. Virtually all individuals contacted agreed that USAFA's religious climate has steadily improved under the leadership of the current Superintendent. Concerns expressed to the team consistently focused on the following six occurrences and behaviors:

a. Senior faculty and staff members, in efforts that may have been well-intentioned, have made public expressions of faith that some faculty, staff and cadets believed to be inappropriately influential or coercive. As a result of this, some military and civilian faculty expressed concern about the impact of religious affiliation on their personal career advancement. Some cadets expressed objections to what they perceived to be mandatory prayers at official functions and in sports locker rooms. Additionally, some faculty members and coaches consider it their duty to profess their faith and discuss this issue in their classrooms in furtherance of developing cadets' spirituality.

These incidents reflect the need for guidance and training regarding proper conduct and established parameters.

b. Some cadets used printed flyers and the Mitchell Hall (cadet dining room) public announcement system to advertise religious events in ways that other cadets found offensive.

Following the inappropriate use of flyers and the public announcement system, it was determined that there was inadequate guidance for some aspects of the cadet-led meal formation and for appropriate means of advertisement of events. New guidance is now in effect.

c. Some cadets have experienced religious slurs and disparaging remarks made by other cadets.

USAFA leadership (and in one case, the HQ USAF team) conducted follow-up on specific occurrences of religious slurs and disparaging remarks, when there was sufficient information provided. The experience of academy leadership and that of the HQ USAF team was that cadets clearly want this behavior to stop, but they are not inclined to provide the information needed to pursue the complaint. Individuals interviewed, and focus groups of minority religion cadets, indicate the environment has improved over the last two years.

d. Some faculty and staff members paid for their names to be included on a holiday announcement in the *Academy Spirit* (a base newspaper published by a commercial firm for USAFA), which had an overtly Christian message (December 2003). A similar advertisement has been published every year since 1991, when the sponsoring group received a USAFA/JA opinion indicating it would be permissible if only the names of faculty and staff, without rank or position, were listed. This advertisement was viewed as inappropriate and one cadet cited it in his complaint about religious issues at USAFA.

The Superintendent expressed concern and CLM did not publish the advertisement during the 2004 winter holiday season.

e. The Commandant led cadets at a voluntary Christian retreat in a Christian “challenge and response” cheer regarding Jesus. He later led the same cheer in a larger group of cadets of mixed faiths. Some cadets regarded this as inappropriate.

The senior leader who conducted the “challenge and response” was counseled by the Superintendent and in turn addressed and explained his actions to each cadet class.

f. The USAFA football coach placed a banner on the wall with an overtly Christian message. Some cadets, faculty and staff found the action inappropriate.

Upon learning about the banner hung by the football coach, the Director of Athletics directed it be removed and it was taken down that same day. Both the Director and the Superintendent have had discussions with the coach regarding appropriate expressions of faith by individuals in positions of authority.

5. Internal Control Mechanisms: USAFA leadership uses surveys, complaint referral processes, and day-to-day feedback to address cadet and staff complaints and assess trends. The team found these mechanisms functioning but not thoroughly integrated. It is not clear that cadets understand when or how to use the various mechanisms.

6. Accommodation: When building the USAFA cadet schedule, USAFA does not give appropriate consideration to the diverse religious practices of cadets of minority faiths. Hence, the full burden of initiating the accommodation process falls upon the cadets, heightening their sense that individuals not of the Christian faith are not being treated fairly.

In April 2005, the Academy assigned a chaplain to work with the Training Wing Scheduling Office to advise on religious observances as schedules are being developed. Additionally, beginning in March 2005, plans were being developed to provide accommodation to cadets requiring excusal from military training events in the coming academic year.

7. Standardized Processes: The process of granting religious accommodation requests to cadets is delegated to the cadet squadron level and is not standardized across the academy.

USAFA will implement an improved, standardized policy for granting accommodation measures prior to the start of the 2005-2006 academic year.

8. Kosher Meals: These meals are not always available to Jewish cadets and other minority cadets desiring them as part of their religious observance.

As a result of the team's visit, USAFA is developing options to provide kosher meals on a more consistent basis.

9. SPIRE Leaders' Access: The USAFA Chaplain Staff sponsors a Special Program in Religious Education on Monday evenings for 18 groups (CLM meets at another time), including Christian, Jewish, Buddhist and other belief systems. More than 900 cadets (almost 25% of the cadet wing) participate voluntarily in this program. Volunteers that lead the groups must obtain security badges but a concern exists about their access to cadets; unfettered access could be perceived as institutional bias towards religious groups.

Since the summer of 2004, volunteers who participate in these programs receive training and sign a "covenant" that provides guidelines for appropriate conduct of the program. This level of oversight was added as part of the efforts of the newly assigned Senior Staff Chaplain.

B. Recommendations

The findings of the HQ USAF team and their recommendations that follow have application to the Total Force in the same manner lessons-learned are applied throughout the entire Air Force. The Review Group recommends:

1. Headquarters USAF develop policy guidance for Air Force commanders and supervisors regarding religious expression. This guidance should provide relevant considerations for a commander who must exercise discretion in the area of religious expression based on the specific facts and particular situation present in his or her command. This guidance should instruct commanders to ensure compliance to stated standards by contract employees and include review of contracts upon renewal.
2. Headquarters, USAF reemphasize policy guidance for commanders and staff judge advocates regarding appropriate endorsement and advertising of unofficial or affiliated groups of which Air Force members may be a part.
3. Headquarters, USAF reemphasize policy guidance for commanders and chaplains regarding oversight of unofficial or affiliated groups that operate on Air Force bases and have access to Air Force personnel. USAFA needs to review access parameters for SPIRE-affiliated groups, specifying that access outside the weekly SPIRE period must be at the specific request of the cadet and limited to specific time periods and facilities.
4. Headquarters, USAF reemphasize the requirement for all commanders to address issues of religious accommodation up front, when planning, scheduling, and preparing operations, in concert with the accomplishment of their assigned mission. Accommodations involving diet and scheduling flexibility for religious observances merit special attention.
5. Headquarters, USAF develop policy guidance that integrates the requirements for

cultural awareness and respect across the learning continuum, as they apply to Airmen operating in Air Force units at home as well as during air and space expeditionary operations abroad.

6. Headquarters, USAF direct USAFA to develop an integrated plan, as part of its overall character development program, that promotes increased awareness of and respect for diverse cultures and beliefs in every part of its academic, military, and athletic curriculum. Such cadet learning should include instruction in cadets' rights to hold religious beliefs (or none), how to respectfully express rejection of others' beliefs, and instruction in constitutional safeguards and policy provisions covering freedom of religious expression and non-establishment. The Air Staff provide oversight and implementing guidance for USAFA to form an interfaith, ecumenical team, including the use of subject matter experts from outside the Department of Defense, in developing this program.

7. USAFA provide for HQ USAF review its plan for ensuring a single focal point for cadets, as well as permanent party, who have issues regarding the human relations climate (e.g., a single clearing house, ombudsman, etc., for determining what statutorily established complaint mechanism is appropriate for handling the issue).

8. USAFA continue its robust use of internal controls to assess climate and implement corrective action. Additionally, coordination among the associated agencies should be reviewed to improve cross-flow of information to command. Increased integration and awareness will enhance leadership's ability to identify and react to trends. HQ USAF should ensure that these efforts are consistent with ongoing assessments of the larger Air Force.

9. USAFA provide continuing opportunities for all cadets to learn about, discuss, and debate issues of religion and spirituality in a developmental setting with peers and role models, as such discussion is essential to character development.

VI. Conclusion

USAFA is aggressively addressing a subject that continues to be widely debated in the public arena. The root of this problem is not overt religious discrimination, but a failure to fully accommodate all members' needs and a lack of awareness over where the line is drawn between permissible and impermissible expression of beliefs. USAFA must continue to provide cadets with the opportunity to develop their character, whether in the context of their religious faith or otherwise. The Air Force's Core Values, founded on respect, provide the guide to ensuring all religious activities at USAFA reflect adherence to the First Amendment prohibition against denying the free exercise of religion or establishing a religion.



SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

Attachment A

02 MAY 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF, PERSONNEL

SUBJECT: Religious Climate at the United States Air Force Academy

The USAFA continues to make considerable progress in assessing the religious climate and integrating principles of respect for individual beliefs in their program for character development. Nevertheless, there are lingering allegations that I take very seriously.

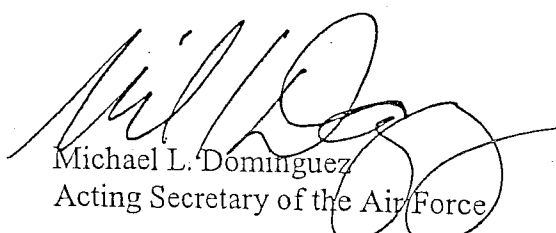
Effective this date, I am directing you to assemble a cross-functional team to assess:

- a. Air Force and Academy policy and guidance regarding the subject of religious respect and tolerance.
- b. Appropriateness of relevant training for the cadet wing, faculty, and staff.
- c. The religious climate and assessment tools used at the USAFA.
- d. Practices of the chain of command, faculty, staff, and cadet wing that either enhance or detract from a climate that respects both the "free exercise of religion" and the "establishment" clauses of the First Amendment.
- e. Effectiveness of USAFA mechanisms in addressing complaints on this subject to include the chain of command, the Inspector General and the Military Equal Opportunity office.
- f. Relevance of the religious climate at USAFA to the entire Air Force.

You should solicit information from all parts of the USAFA community. Your report will include your findings and may include recommendations for enhancing the Air Force's effectiveness in dealing with this issue.

Coordinate closely with the Air Force Inspector General and refer any allegations of specific misconduct to him for consideration. The Inspector General will take action as appropriate and provide the task force with relevant information.

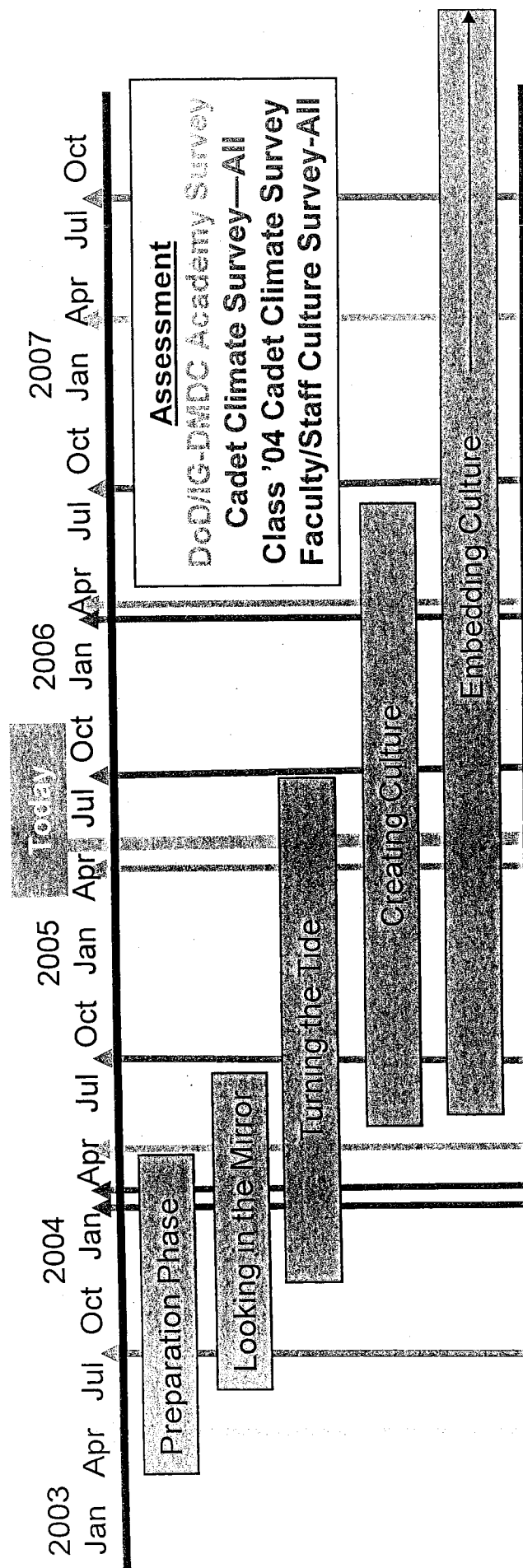
All Air Force resources are at your disposal for this effort, and you may consider outside resources as well. Provide your preliminary assessment to the Chief of Staff and me by 23 May 2005.


Michael L. Dominguez
Acting Secretary of the Air Force



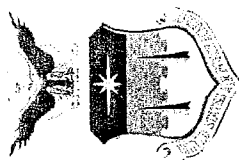
USAFA Culture Change Plan

Creating climate of respect for people and culture of candor at USAFA



- Preparation Phase: New personnel, Initial assessment, Culture change plan, Align USAFA with AF doctrine and standards (ODS, UCMJ), Theme of respect across all climate areas
- Looking in the Mirror: Build institutional support through systematic assessment/feedback, Evaluate policies
- Turning the Tide: Renew focus and commitment, Communicate expectations/outcomes, feedback and accountability, Ongoing dialogue
- Creating Culture: Align processes with USAFA vision/mission, Reinforce respectful behavior
- Embedding Culture: Internalizing culture of respect, Long-term integration of officer development processes

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Commandant's email to TRW staff on Religious Respect (27 Feb 04)

-----Original Message-----

From: Weida John A BrigGen 34 TRW/CC

Sent: Friday, February 27, 2004 1:19 PM

To: Tindell Stephen C Civ 34TRW/SD (Stephen.Tindell@USAF.AF.mil); Brenkert Eric LtCol 34TRW/SEF; Graham Michael MSGT 34TRW/CCF; Hafner Stefan CMSgt 34TRW/CCS; Jones Joel A Maj 34TRW/CCE; Kafer James R Capt 34TRW/CCQ; Kendall Jeffrey Col 34 OG/CC 3-3330; Monteith Glada Col 34TRG/CC; Steinhour Norma Civ 34 TRW/CCA; Williams Greg NMI Civ 34 TRW/CCP; Baker Steve F Col 34 EG/CC; Berry Thomas J Jr Civ 34 TRW/CWC; DeAustin Bradley J Civ 34 TRW/AH; Drohan Thomas A Col 34 TRW/CO; Fiebig Jeffrey W Col 34TRW/IMA; Gann Sharon M Civ 34 TRW/SD; Gray Debra D Col 34 TRW/CV; Mazzola Joseph Col 34TRW/CWC; Nelson George J Jr LtCol 34 TRG/CD; Powell Ronald K Jr LtCol 34 OG/CD; Walker William P Col 34 TRW/AHP

Subject: HOT! Get this to all your troops asap!

Warriors...get this out to all your troops asap please...report back 100% contact.....thanks

43 Airpower!

Good afternoon....another week as a warrior in the world's greatest Air Force is almost over!

I have three topics I would like to talk to you about

One...thank you for your dedication, professionalism, and commitment to excellence...I am proud to be part of your team! Together, we have accomplished in 10 months what most outfits get done in 10 years....turn to the person next to you and say thank you!

Two....there are several great athletic contests this weekend at USAFA...I encourage you to go out and support our track, basketball, and hockey teams this weekend

Three...we are privileged and blessed to live in this great country. One of the strengths of our country is our diversity. Our Air Force reflects that diversity. Our success on the battlefield depends on getting the most out of each and every individual, regardless of their background, race, sex, or religion.

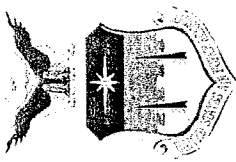
Because of our mission focus, we do not discriminate based on any factor other than the ability to get the job done

With that as background, I need your help to ensure we have a positive environment for our teammates of all faiths, or no faith

- Before you put up a poster, distribute a flyer, or send an e-mail to the entire cadet wing/organization, pass it up the chain of command for approval
- The movie addressed in the posters, flyers, and the mass e-mails sent in the last few days is in no way endorsed by the AF, or the AFA
- Feel free to practice your faith during your personal time, but be very careful about forcing your faith into your professional realm
- Its ok to be passionate about your faith, but be sensitive to the views and feelings of others on our team, especially in the work environment

Thanks again for your dedication to excellence...have a great weekend...walk tall, be proud...GO FALCONS!!!!!!!

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Superintendent's Guidance on Religious Respect (3 Mar 04)

-----Original Message-----

From: Rosa John W Jr LtGen USAFA/CC
Sent: Wednesday, March 03, 2004 2:55 PM
To: USAFA_All
Subject: Superintendent's Guidance

We are privileged and blessed to live in this great country and serve in the greatest Air Force in the world. One of the strengths of our country is our diversity, and our Air Force reflects this diversity. Our success on the battlefield depends on every individual, regardless of their background, race, gender, or religion. We will not tolerate any unlawful discrimination. USAFA is, by design and necessity a pluralistic environment. Our cohesiveness depends on establishing a climate of mutual respect. We embrace pluralism as an institutional norm because it best provides for freedom of religious expression, protection of minority views, and a robust academic exchange of ideas.

We need your help to foster a positive environment for every teammate. The recent display of posters and a Cadet Wing email advertising a mass audience opportunity to see the movie *The Passion of the Christ* was brought to the attention of senior leadership. The manner in which the communication was delivered was inappropriate, and I regret any perception of intolerance these actions may have created. The posters and email communicated a message that could be misinterpreted as an official endorsement and were not properly approved for release. Taking the initiative to set up an opportunity for cadets to join together in any activity, religious or otherwise, is welcome. Advertising of community-related activities is encouraged, but must be done in the right way. **Before putting up a poster, distributing a flyer, or sending a mass e-mail, get it approved through the appropriate level in your chain of command. This requirement applies at any Air Force installation. The materials linked below give more details on this topic.**

When you put on your uniform, you do not have to leave your faith or religious convictions behind. Nonetheless, we all need to be sensitive and considerate toward those who may not share our beliefs. Any religious opinion voiced in an overly assertive or repetitive manner marginalizes those holding divergent views. We all need to work together to foster an environment that embraces diversity and guarantees religious freedom. Take this as an opportunity to open a dialogue with teammates with different beliefs. Those who make up the majority faith groups may need to listen rather than speak. Only through sincere communication and a true exchange of ideas can we improve and maintain a healthy religious climate. Be respectful, patient, and open minded. Together, we can turn this issue into one that strengthens and unites us as a team. Thanks in advance for your support.

JOHN W. ROSA
 Lieutenant General, USAF
 Superintendent, USAFA

Policy Guidance and References:

AFI 36-2706, *Military Equal Opportunity and Treatment Program*
<http://www.e-publishing.af.mil/pubfiles/af36/af36-2706/af36-2706.pdf>
 AFI 33-129, *Transmission of Information via the Internet*
<http://www.e-publishing.af.mil/pubfiles/af33/af33-129/af33-129.pdf>
 AFI 33-119, *Electronic Mail (E-Mail) Management and Use*
<http://www.e-publishing.af.mil/pubfiles/af33/af33-119/af33-119.pdf>
Standards of Ethical Conduct, The Military Commander and the Law
<http://milcom.jag.af.mil/ch08/standards.htm>

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY
USAF ACADEMY COLORADO

30 July 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR CH COL MICHAEL WHITTINGTON

FROM: CH CAPT MELINDA MORTON

HQ USAFA/HCX

1ST GROUP CHAPLAIN

SUBJECT: After Action Report: BCT II Chaplain Practicum Training: Special Program in Pastoral Care, with the resources, supervision and selected students of Yale Divinity School.

1. 22 July - 28 July Dr. Kristen Leslie and Graduate Students from the Yale Divinity School, along with USAFA active duty and reserve chaplains, participated in a BCT II, Specialized Practicum in Pastoral Care.

1.1. The Yale team participated in all aspects of USAFA BCT Chaplain pastoral care exclusive of privileged communication.

1.2. Yale team members lived in Jack's Valley with USAFA Chaplains, observing and actively participating in worship services, Basic Cadet and Cadre visitation, SPIRE, BCT training courses (LCR, Obstacle, Confidence, and Assault), Self-Aid Buddy Care and Honor instruction. In addition, practicum members observed and participated in Cadet Chapel services, and GE briefings, services and general pastoral care.

2. The Program Objectives for BCT II Chaplain Practicum Training: Special Program in Pastoral Care were as follows:

2.1. Provide USAFA/HC chaplains rigorous assessment and advanced training in specialized pastoral care to victims of sexualized violence and practical methodologies for the prevention of sexual assault

2.2. Provide USAFA/HC chaplains this detailed assessment and specialized pastoral care training in the demanding practicum environment of Basic Cadet Training. Improve chaplain mission support (care to cadets) through real-time, practical and supervised application of enhanced chaplain counseling techniques, cadet-centered pastoral interaction and specifically directed ministry of presence.

2.3. Improve USAFA/HC chaplain crises and pastoral care response to cadets by addressing pastoral care issues in the training environment.

2.4. Provide a dynamic practicum environment where USAFA/HC chaplains may work with credentialed experts in the field of pastoral care to victims of sexualized violence.

2.5. Provide critical reflection on the USAFA/HC chaplain role in the Academy Response Team (ART) process.

2.6. Provide the USAFA/HC team well-developed feedback on pastoral care for victims of sexualized violence, cadet ministry and worship events, organization of ministry of presence, general and crisis pastoral counseling protocols and implementation of Agenda for Change items.

2.7. Provide USAFA/HC chaplains resources to extensively and critically examine cultural influences prevalent in the cadet population. Develop practical and pro-active chaplain ministry skill-sets to positively influence USAFA climate and culture changes:

3. Yale Practicum Team (YPT) members provided daily structured feedback and detailed observations to the USAFA Practicum coordinator, Chaplain Morton. Chaplain Morton passed all feedback to Chaplain Watties, the USAFA chaplain in charge of all BCT and Summer Ministries.

4. On 28 July 2004, the Yale Practicum team provided the entire USAFA Chapel staff extensive verbal assessment. This feedback session occurred following a regularly scheduled staff meeting, held in the USAFA BCT Chapel tent, Jack's Valley.

5. YPT major assessments and suggestions for improvement of USAFA pastoral care are as follows:

5.1. Talent and enthusiasm of USAFA Chaplains: YPT noted the enthusiasm and individual talent of chaplains delivering consistent and intentional pastoral care. The staff was appropriately organized and

scheduled to serve BCT cadets and cadre as well as cadets experiencing GE and other summer training and academic environments.

5.2. Credibility bolstered by chaplain presence. YPT indicated that an appropriate number of active duty and reserve chaplains were available for pastoral care and counseling. In addition, chaplain's ministry of presence at training courses, tent visitation and throughout the BCT program lent credibility to statements of care and concern.

5.3. Gender issues. On the assault course, YPT observed women cadre confronting women BCT cadet trainees. (Challenging verbal confrontation is appropriate to training in the Assault Course environment.) The YPT noted that these verbal critiques were focus on gender rather than on performance as a contribution to the team. This very public and gender-based interaction may contribute to a perpetuation of negative climate and culture. Women Cadre indicated that they were trying to make the trainees "strong and emotionally well-prepared for cadet life." Chaplains observing these interactions apparently did not recognize these exchanges as inappropriate training.

5.4. Challenges to pluralism. YPT observed consistent specific articulations of Evangelical Christian themes during general protestant services. (BCT and GE) Protestant Cadets were encouraged to chant the phrase, "This is our Chapel and the Lord is our God." Protestant Basic Cadets were encouraged to pray for the salvation of fellow BCT members who chose not to attend worship. During general protestant worship in Jack's Valley, attending Basic Cadets were encouraged to return to tents, proselytize fellow BCT members, and remind them of the consequences of apostasy. (Protestant Basic Cadets were reminded that those not "born again will burn in the fires of hell.") Protestant Basic Cadets were regularly encouraged to "witness" to fellow Basic Cadets. Protestant Basic Cadets were commonly told that Jesus had "called" them to the Academy and military life. Protestant Basic Cadets were informed that God's plan for their life included attending USAFA.

5.5. YPT clearly articulated a concern that such stridently Evangelical themes challenged the necessarily pluralistic environment of BCT. YPT expressed a concern that the overwhelmingly Evangelical tone of general protestant worship encouraged religious divisions rather than fostering spiritual understanding among Basic Cadets. YPT suggested that the USAFA Chaplain Service reconsider the worship dynamics and Chaplain/Basic Cadet interaction during BCT. YPT suggested focusing on aspects of ecumenical teamwork and developing an appreciation of spiritual diversity.

6. The YPT expresses great appreciation for the USAFA Practicum Experience. Active Duty and Reserve Chaplains gave graciously of their time and experience, creating a helpful learning environment and facilitating the assessment process.

Kristen J. Leslie

Assistant Professor in Pastoral Care and Counseling

Yale Divinity School

Director, BCT II Chaplain Practicum Training: Special Program in Pastoral Care

MeLinda S. Morton, Ch Capt

1st Group Chaplain

USAFA

Practicum Coordinator, BCT II Chaplain Practicum Training: Special Program in Pastoral Care

SPIRE Volunteer Leader Covenant

We are mutually agreed and committed to the following guidelines:

1. Leaders will attend worship services at the USAFA Chapel as often as possible, but no less than once a month unless exempted by the Senior Staff Chaplain.
 - Exemptions are granted on an individual basis and must be submitted in writing to the Senior Staff Chaplain.
2. Leaders and volunteers will function with the approval and under the authority of the USAFA Senior Staff Chaplain.
3. Religious sensitivity training is mandatory for all leaders and volunteers prior to working with students
4. Leaders and volunteers must not distribute literature inviting cadets to off-base worship services which will compete with Chapel services.
5. Leaders and volunteers must foster tolerance of spiritual and religious diversity by promoting respect and cooperation among the entire USAFA community.
6. All guest speakers, visitors, religious material, special events and advertisements must be approved by the Senior Staff Chaplain.
 - Requests must be submitted to your chaplain SPIRE director (CSD).
7. Leaders and volunteers must obtain a valid proxy card and parking pass from the CSD.
8. Leaders and volunteers must sign a SPIRE contract at the beginning of each school year.
9. Leaders and volunteers must adhere to the USAFA Chapel dress code.
 - You are representatives of the chapel at all times. Professional dress is required (no shorts, blue jeans, t-shirts, men's sandals, etc.).
10. Leaders and volunteers must report to a chaplain all critical issues affecting USAFA welfare and morale.
11. Every SPIRE group will have one designated POC / SPIRE Leader. All information from the CSD to the SPIRE volunteers and from the SPIRE volunteers to the CSD must be handled by the appointed POC.
 - The Protestant POC's must attend a monthly meeting
 - All POC's must submit a monthly attendance report
 - All POC's must ensure the cleanliness of their SPIRE room
 - All POC's must have a current folder on file with the SDC containing the following information:
 1. Doctrinal statement
 2. Purpose statement of the ministry
 3. List of volunteers and their resumes
 4. Sponsoring organization
 5. Overview of curriculum
 6. Recommendation letter from the sponsoring organization
12. POC's will request SCA for retreats by contacting the CSD. The CSD will forward the SCA # upon approval.

(Chaplain SPIRE Director)

(SPIRE Leader -- Organization)

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

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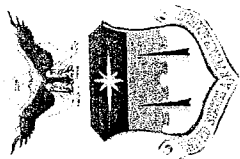
(Chaplain SPIRE Director)

(SPIRE Leader/POC - Organization)

(SPIRE Worker)

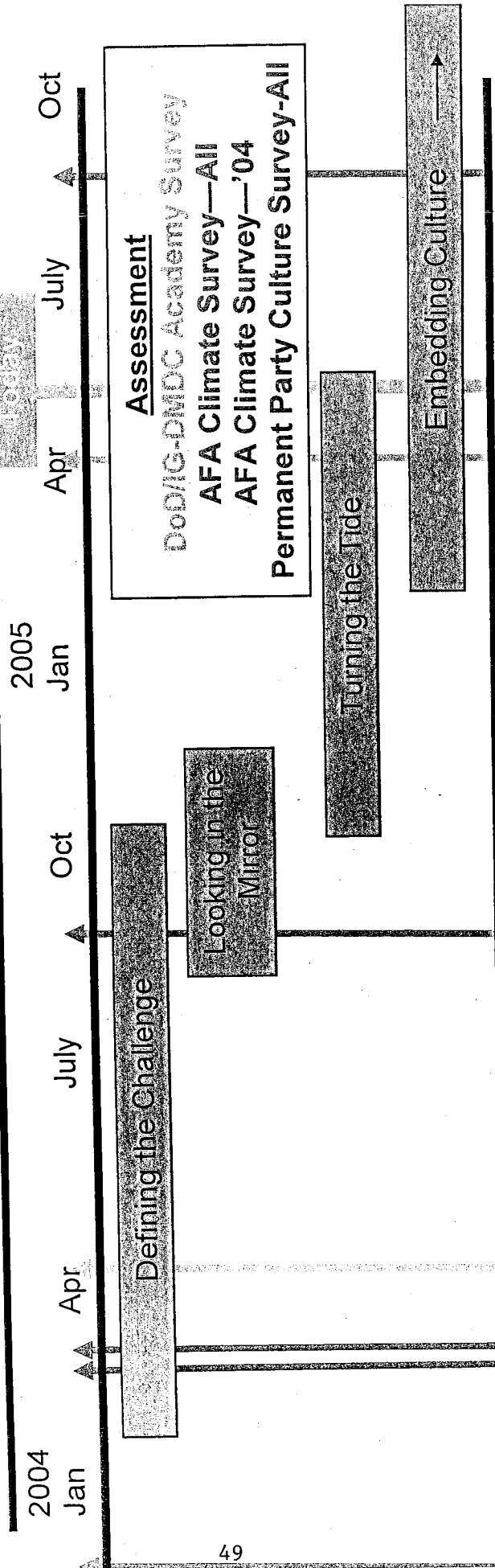
Phone: _____

E-mail: _____



USAFA Sub-Campaign Plan to Address Religious Climate Concerns

■ Phased plan to improve religious accommodation and respect



Defining the Challenge:

Looking in the Mirror:

Turning the Tide:

Embedding Culture:

Assessment (surveys and focus groups), incident review, discussions with key constituents
 Commander policy letters, Senior leader offsite, educating faculty and staff--all personnel recognize problem
 Educating cadet wing and Prep School cadet candidates, educating ABW
 Reinforcement in human relations/character education (CVK and CWC),
 Computer Based Training module (HC), BCT lesson, reinforcement at all levels of command

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April 28, 2005

Hon. Donald H. Rumsfeld,
Secretary of Defense
Office of the Secretary
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1400

Dear Secretary Rumsfeld,

Recent news reports have highlighted instances of religious discrimination and the promotion of evangelical Christianity at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs.

The legal staff of Americans United for Separation of Church and State has investigated these allegations. Our attorneys have interviewed cadets and their families, Academy staff and career Air Force officers. They have reviewed documents and examined other materials and have concluded that these complaints have merit and must be addressed.

I have asked the attorneys to prepare an in-depth report on the problems at the Academy. A copy is enclosed for your review. I hope you will agree that the incidents explained therein are serious and worthy of your attention.

Since the American Revolution, citizens of all religious backgrounds have come together to defend our nation. A soldier's religious beliefs or lack thereof should be irrelevant to his or her ability and willingness to defend the country. The situation at the Air Force Academy sends exactly the opposite message. The close relationship between the Academy and evangelical Christianity sends a message of exclusion to those of other faiths. It may very well dissuade some from considering the military as a career.

I believe this would be disastrous for our country. Obviously it is not in the best interests of the United States to push out talented and patriotic men and women by creating the impression that the Academy tolerates religious bias. The institution, like all of our service academies, must provide a welcoming atmosphere to all. It may not legally espouse a religious point of view.

April 28, 2005

Page 2

Our organization supports the right of individual cadets to express their faith or worship as they see fit. However, we oppose all forms of government-sponsored religious coercion and believe that the creation of an atmosphere of hostility toward certain faiths and preference toward others in the Academy presents a serious constitutional problem.

The enclosed report documents in detail a multitude of serious instances of the mixing of church and state at the Air Force Academy. We urge you to take the steps to correct these problems and ensure that the Academy is open to cadets of all religious faiths and those with none.

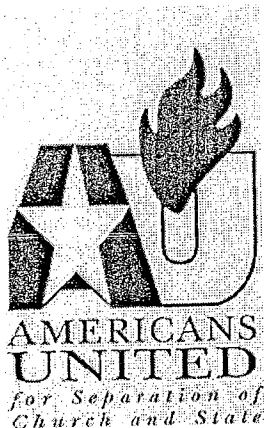
I believe it is imperative that our Legal staff and I meet with the relevant Air Force officials to discuss the incidents detailed in this report. We wish to see a speedy resolution to these problems so that the Academy may return to its primary mission of producing officers who will focus on the defense of our nation and not the promotion of evangelical Christianity.

Prompt action on your part will also spare the Academy the possibility of a prolonged and costly period of litigation from cadets and staff who believe their constitutional rights have been violated. The problems at the Academy appear to be pervasive and systemic and will not go away without intervention.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. Due to the serious nature of these complaints, I request a reply from the relevant officials within 30 days outlining what steps will be taken to ensure that the Academy operates within the parameters of the Constitution.

Sincerely,

Barry W. Lynn,
Executive Director
Americans United for
Separation of Church and State



518 C St., N.E.

Washington, D.C. 20002

(202) 466-3234

(202) 466-2587 fax

americansunited@au.org

www.au.org

Report of Americans United for Separation of Church and State on Religious Coercion and Endorsement of Religion at the United States Air Force Academy

Americans United for Separation of Church and State has received numerous complaints from a variety of sources, representing diverse religious backgrounds, about extremely troubling religious policies and practices at the United States Air Force Academy. We have investigated those complaints and come to the conclusion that the policies and practices constitute egregious, systemic, and legally actionable violations of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

Coerced Religious Practice

Americans United has received reports from former and current cadets — confirmed by members of the U.S. Air Force Academy's "Permanent Party"¹ — that Academy faculty, staff, members of the Chaplains' Office, and upperclass cadets frequently pressure members of the Cadet Wing to attend chapel and undertake religious instruction.

1. We have been informed, for example, that, during a Basic Cadet Training session attended by a team of observers from the Yale Divinity School, one of the Academy chaplains — Major Warren "Chappy" Watties — led a Protestant worship service in which he encouraged the attending cadets to return to their tents and proselytize cadets who had not attended the service, with the declared penalty for failure to accept this proselytization being to "burn in the fires of hell." Although literally hundreds of witnesses can attest to the fact that Major Watties ran the service and encouraged attendees to proselytize their non-attending classmates, we are informed that the Academy has downplayed the significance of the incident, reporting to the Air Staff at the Pentagon that the chaplain who conducted that service and encouraged proselytization of cadets was not a member of the Academy's Permanent Party but instead was merely a visiting Air Force reservist. That report is incorrect: Major Watties is a full-time chaplain at the Academy. Indeed, he enjoys the distinction of having been named as the U.S. Air Force's current Chaplain of the Year. What is more, the Air Staff has now expressly condoned Major Watties' actions — at the same time that the Academy is denying that Major Watties ever made the statements reported by the Yale Divinity School team and the other attendees at the service. See Pam Zubeck, *Air Force deems chaplain's call appropriate*, GAZETTE (Colo. Springs), Apr. 27, 2005.

¹ The Permanent Party includes those permanently assigned to the Academy as faculty and staff.

More generally, the Yale Divinity School team reported, and our complainants have confirmed, that Academy chaplains regularly encourage cadets to “witness” other cadets — *i.e.*, attempt to convert them to evangelical Christianity. We have also been informed that, when cadets declined to attend chapel after dinner during Basic Cadet Training, they were made to suffer humiliation by being placed by upperclass cadet staff into a “Heathen Flight” and marched back to their dormitories. Similarly, we have learned that, at a football practice just before an Easter Sunday, head-football-coach Fisher DeBerry informed the cadets on the team that he expected to see them in church for Easter services. All of these incidents — which are, we have been assured, merely a representative sampling of routine occurrences at the Academy — constitute forms of unlawful religious coercion or pressure by members of the Academy’s Permanent Party and the Cadet Wing.

The United States Supreme Court has consistently held that, “at a minimum, the Constitution guarantees that government may not coerce anyone to support or participate in religion or its exercise, or otherwise act in a way which ‘establishes a [state] religion or religious faith, or tends to do so.’” *Lee v. Weisman*, 505 U.S. 577, 587 (1992) (quoting *Lynch v. Donnelly*, 465 U.S. 668, 678 (1984)) (alteration in original). To be sure, it is both constitutionally permissible and appropriate for the armed forces to provide military chaplains insofar as this is necessary to ensure that service-members can satisfy their spiritual needs. *See Sch. Dist. v. Schempp*, 374 U.S. 203, 226 n.10 (1963); *Katcoff v. Marsh*, 755 F.2d 223, 237-38 (2d Cir. 1985). But neither chaplains, nor other members of the Academy’s Permanent Party, nor even upperclass cadets — who are, of course, imbued by the Air Force with command authority over underclass cadets — may aggressively proselytize for any particular faith. *See, e.g., Baz v. Walters*, 782 F.2d 701, 709 (7th Cir. 1986) (finding that public-hospital chaplain cannot proselytize patients because, although government could lawfully provide hospital chaplains, it must “ensure that the existence of the chaplaincy does not create establishment clause problems,” and “[u]nleashing a government-paid chaplain who sees his primary role as proselytizing upon a captive audience of patients could do exactly that”).

2. We have also been informed of numerous instances in which prayer was a part of mandatory or otherwise official events at the Academy. For example, we have learned that each mandatory meeting of the cadet cadre during Basic Cadet Training has opened with a prayer, and that many other official events at the Academy — including mandatory meals in Mitchell Hall (the Academy’s Cadet Dining Facility), mandatory awards ceremonies, and mandatory military-training-event dinners — have been opened with prayers. The federal courts have upheld certain forms of government-sponsored prayer in only two very narrow contexts: prayer at the opening of legislative sessions (*see Marsh v. Chambers*, 463 U.S. 783, 790-91 (1983)), and prayer at university graduation ceremonies (*see Chaudhuri v. Tennessee*, 130 F.3d 232 (6th Cir. 1997); *Tanford v. Brand*, 194 F.3d 982 (7th Cir. 1996)). But a central rationale for the decisions allowing prayer at university graduation ceremonies is that those events are “significant, once-in-a-lifetime event[s],” for which nonsectarian, non-proselytizing prayer may be appropriate as a means to solemnize the occasion. *Doe v. Duncanville Indep. Sch. Dist.*, 70 F.3d 402, 406-07 (5th Cir. 1995); *see also, e.g., Chaudhuri*, 130 F.3d at 236. As for other school activities, which are “far less solemn and extraordinary” than graduation ceremonies, the courts have consistently held that officially sponsored prayer is impermissible. *See, e.g., Doe v. Santa Fe Indep. Sch. Dist.*, 168 F.3d 806, 823 (5th Cir. 1999)

(rationale for permitting nonsectarian student-initiated prayer at university graduation ceremony “hinged on the singular context and singularly serious nature of the graduation ceremony,” and did not apply to school sporting events), *aff’d on other grounds*, 530 U.S. 290 (2000); *Chaudhuri*, 130 F.3d at 236; *Ingebretsen v. Jackson Pub. Sch. Dist.*, 88 F.3d 274 (5th Cir. 1996) (striking down state statute permitting student-initiated prayer at school sporting events); *Duncanville*, 70 F.3d at 406-07; *Jager v. Douglas County Sch. Dist.*, 862 F.2d 824 (11th Cir. 1989) (striking down regulation calling for holding of invocations at high-school sporting events).

Especially pertinent is the decision of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit in *Mellen v. Bunting*, 327 F.3d 355 (4th Cir. 2003), *cert. denied*, 541 U.S. 1019 (2004), in which the court held that the Establishment Clause strictly prohibited school-sponsored prayer during mealtimes at the Virginia Military Institute — even though cadets were not required either to attend meals or to participate in the prayers if they did. *Id.* at 371-72. Among the reasons for that holding was the court’s conclusion that “the First Amendment prohibits [a publicly funded military academy] from requiring religious objectors to alienate themselves from the [academy] community in order to avoid a religious practice.” *Id.* at 372 n.9 (citing *Lee*, 505 U.S. at 596).

And even in the very limited contexts where courts have approved government-sponsored prayer, they have made clear that only *nonsectarian* prayer is allowed and that prayers specific to any particular faith invariably violate the Establishment Clause. *See, e.g., Wynne v. Town of Great Falls*, 376 F.3d 292 (4th Cir. 2004) (town council violated Establishment Clause by opening sessions with prayers containing references to Jesus Christ), *petition for cert. filed*, 73 U.S.L.W. 3473 (U.S. Jan 28, 2005) (No. 04-1052); *Bacus v. Palo Verde Unified Sch. Dist. Bd. of Educ.*, 52 Fed. Appx. 355, 356-57 (9th Cir. 2002) (school board’s practice of ending prayers with phrase “in the Name of Jesus” “displays the government’s allegiance to a particular sect or creed,” namely Christianity, and therefore violates principle that “one religious denomination cannot be officially preferred over another”); *Coles ex rel. Coles v. Cleveland Bd. of Educ.*, 171 F.3d 369, 371, 385 (6th Cir. 1999) (Board of Education’s practice of opening meetings with prayer held unconstitutional in part because “the prayers in this case were clearly sectarian, with repeated references to Jesus and the Bible”); *Rubin v. City of Burbank*, 124 Cal. Rptr. 2d 867 (Cal. App. 2002) (references to “Jesus Christ” in prayers that opened city-council meetings held unconstitutional).

Meals, cadet cadre meetings during the course of Basic Cadet Training, and the like are all, of course, relatively routine occurrences at the Academy — and certainly not once-in-a-lifetime events. And hence, even nonsectarian, non-proselytizing prayer — much less the explicitly Christian prayer that apparently occurs with some frequency at such events at the Academy — cannot be squared with the strict mandates of the Establishment Clause. And although the constitutional violations here are made all the more egregious by virtue of the fact that attendance at these events is mandatory for cadets (*see generally, e.g., Lee*, 505 U.S. at 587), the Establishment Clause would prohibit prayer in these contexts even if the events were entirely optional, insofar as cadets were forced to choose between being subject to a prayer in order to attend and fully participate in an Academy event, on the one hand, and refraining from attending the event, on the other (*see Mellen*, 327 F.3d at 372 n.9; *see also, e.g., Santa Fe*, 530 U.S. at 312 (“[i]t is a tenet of the First Amendment that the State cannot require one of its citizens to forfeit his or her rights and

benefits as the price of resisting conformance to state-sponsored religious practice” (quoting *Lee*, 505 U.S. at 596)); *Thomas v. Review Bd.*, 450 U.S. 707, 716 (1981) (“A person may not be compelled to choose between the exercise of a First Amendment right and participation in an otherwise available public program.”)). Nor does it make any difference to the constitutional analysis whether cadets at the events are required either to speak or otherwise to participate actively in prayers. For the Supreme Court has held that merely requiring objectors to maintain silence during a prayer constitutes coerced participation in that prayer. *See Lee*, 505 U.S. at 593. And the Fourth Circuit has held that, in light of the special nature of military-academy life, the *mere presence* of cadets at an official prayer is unconstitutional, even if there is no requirement that the cadets remain silent or stand at attention. *See Mellen*, 327 F.3d at 371-72.

3. In addition to receiving reports of coerced attendance at religious services and prayers at official events, we have also learned of a number of other methods by which members of the Permanent Party and upperclass cadet staff have encouraged or put pressure on classmates and underclass cadets to engage in religious practices generally, and most especially in evangelical Christian religious practices.

For example, we have been told that a number of faculty members have introduced themselves to their classes as born-again Christians and encouraged their students to become born-again during the course of the term. We have also been informed of at least one instance where a history instructor at the Academy ordered students to pray before they were permitted to begin their final examination for the course. In addition, we have received copies of a full-page “USAF A CLM 2003 Christmas Greeting” published in the Academy’s newspaper, the *Academy Spirit*. The “Greeting” lists approximately 300 signatories — arranged by Academy department — who jointly declared their “belie[f] that Jesus Christ is the only real hope for the world;” announced that “[t]here is salvation in no one else;” and directed cadets to contact them in order to “discuss Jesus.” Among the signatories are 16 heads or deputy heads of the Academy’s academic departments, 9 permanent professors, the then-Dean of the Faculty, the current Dean of the Faculty, the then-Vice Dean of the Faculty, the Academy’s Director of Athletics, and the Academy’s head football coach, as well as spouses of these and other members of the Academy faculty and staff. And we have received copies of a sign placed on every plate in the Cadet Dining Hall and posted widely throughout the Academy announcing a Christian-themed program related to the movie *The Passion of the Christ*. The flyers announced that the program was sponsored by the Christian Leadership Ministries “in coordination with the Office of Cadet Chaplains,” and stated that “This is an officially sponsored USAFA event — please do not take this flyer down” — a notation that does not generally appear on flyers announcing programs of a non-religious nature.

The Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution forbids public officials from taking any action that “has the purpose or effect of ‘endorsing’ religion.” *County of Allegheny v. ACLU*, 492 U.S. 573, 592 (1989). Impermissible governmental endorsement of religion occurs whenever a public official — such as a military officer or faculty member at a public educational institution — takes any action that “convey[s] or attempt[s] to convey a message that religion or a particular religion is *favored or preferred*.” *Id.* at 593 (quoting *Wallace v. Jaffree*, 472 U.S. 38, 70 (1985) (O’Connor, J., concurring in judgment)) (emphasis in original). Reduced to

simplest terms, the Supreme Court has held that the Establishment Clause prohibits any official action that promotes religion generally or shows favoritism toward any particular faith. *See, e.g., Bd. of Educ. v. Grumet*, 512 U.S. 687, 703 (1994) (“a principle at the heart of the Establishment Clause [is] that government should not prefer one religion to another, or religion to irreligion”); *Allegheny*, 492 U.S. at 604 (“Whatever else the Establishment Clause may mean (and we have held it to mean no official preference even for religion over nonreligion), it certainly means at the very least that government may not demonstrate a preference for one particular sect or creed (including a preference for Christianity over other religions.)”); *Larson v. Valente*, 456 U.S. 228, 244 (1982) (“The clearest command of the Establishment Clause is that one religious denomination cannot be officially preferred over another.”).

When faculty members evangelize or proselytize in the classroom, the message is manifest: To please their instructors, cadets should embrace the instructors’ faith. And when large portions of the Academy’s Permanent Party issue a joint statement in the Academy’s official newspaper espousing one particular creed and encouraging cadets to approach them about it as the path to “salvation,” the message is equally clear: To curry favor with the officers who hold sway over their lives, cadets should seek religious instruction from those officers. In short, faculty members and other officers who use their official positions to communicate such messages — as so many members of the Academy’s Permanent Party have — are sending a strong and unequivocal message of the Academy’s and the United States Air Force’s unconstitutional endorsement of religion.

4. What is more, we have received numerous reports about non-Christian cadets being subjected to proselytization or religious harassment by other, more senior or upperclass cadets, thus reinforcing the message of endorsement conveyed by the Permanent Party. Even setting aside the fact that these upperclass cadets apparently are not punished for their conduct (even when they attack other cadets using religious epithets — a common occurrence at the Academy, we have discovered), upperclass cadets are, of course, given command authority over their subordinates; and hence, they act in an official capacity under the auspices of the United States Air Force. As one recent Academy graduate explained the situation to us, upperclass cadets have virtually total control over the lives of underclass cadets — and therefore often exercise far more direct influence than even the Academy’s Permanent Party does. For that reason, not only does harassment by an upperclass cadet constitute official governmental conduct, but cadets who face proselytization or religious harassment from upperclass cadets will naturally conclude that mimicking their superiors’ religious beliefs and practices is necessary to succeed at the Academy — or at least to avoid the wrath or ill-will of those with the power to punish. Harassment by upperclass cadets — especially when combined with proselytizing of cadets by the Permanent Party — thus creates a pervasively religious atmosphere that sends “a message to nonadherents that they are outsiders, not full members of the political community.” *Allegheny*, 492 U.S. at 595. That divisive message, communicated by faculty, staff, and upperclass cadets, constitutes a clear violation of the Establishment Clause. *See id.* at 593-94 (government must refrain from conveying message that religion generally, or any religious belief in particular, is favored or preferred).

Pervasiveness of the Problem

Because of the nature of the military command structure, the Academy leadership is singularly well-positioned to stamp out official religious discrimination and favoritism by giving appropriate orders and enforcing them under the terms of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. By the same token, actions by senior Academy leadership in the officer ranks that undercut attempts to achieve those ends send a strong message to cadets about what conduct is permissible and even favored at the Academy — a clear and unequivocal endorsement of religion in violation of the First Amendment. And in that regard, complaints from multiple sources make clear that violations of the Establishment Clause are not merely aberrant acts by a few rogue individuals, but instead are reflections of *systematic and pervasive religious bias and intolerance at the highest levels of the Academy command structure*.

1. Notably, we have received a host of reports about incidents in which Brigadier General Johnny Weida, in his official capacity as Commandant of Cadets, has endorsed religion generally and his own faith (as an evangelical Christian) in particular, in clear violation of the Establishment Clause.

General Weida has, for example, officially endorsed “National Prayer Week” in a mass e-mail message to the Cadet Wing that can only be described as a prayer and a directive to pray. Among other things, General Weida’s e-mail message instructed cadets to “[a]sk the Lord to give us the wisdom to discover the right, the courage to choose it, and the strength to make it endure”; and the message informed the cadets that “He has a plan for each and every one of us.” Similarly, in an official “Commander’s Guidance” document, General Weida instructed cadets that they “are accountable first to your God.” Such official proselytization and prayer by a public official is, of course, the hallmark of unconstitutional conduct under the Establishment Clause. *See Allegheny*, 492 U.S. at 592 (government officials may not take action that “has the purpose or effect of ‘endorsing’ religion”).

And if those incidents were not enough to demonstrate the severity of the problems at the Academy, it seems that General Weida has established a system of code words that he shares with evangelical Christian cadets in order to provide them with opportunities to proselytize others in the Cadet Wing. Specifically, at a Protestant chapel service during Basic Cadet Training, General Weida told the attendees the New Testament parable of the house built on rock — a metaphor for building faith on the firm foundation of Jesus. *See Matthew 7:24-29; Luke 6:46-49*. General Weida then instructed the cadets that, whenever he uses the phrase “Airpower!,” they should respond with the phrase “Rock Sir!,” thus invoking the parable from the New Testament. General Weida advised the cadets that, when asked by their classmates about the meaning of the call and response, the cadets should use the opportunity to discuss their Christian faith. And General Weida regularly invokes the “Airpower!” call in official statements in order to prompt the religiously based “Rock Sir!” response.

Indeed, General Weida has used his “Airpower!” call-and-response to undercut even the few attempts that have been made at the Academy to address particular incidents of religious intolerance

and coercion — thus sending an especially strong message of favoritism toward Christianity and those who share General Weida's Christian faith. For example, after the Academy received complaints arising out of the placement on every cadet's plate at mealtime of advertisements for a screening of the movie *The Passion of the Christ*, Lieutenant General John Rosa apparently ordered General Weida to read to the fully assembled Cadet Wing an official "apology" (or, more accurately, a statement, drafted by the Chaplains' Office, of the Academy's policy regarding the posting and distribution of flyers). But General Weida opened his remarks with the "Airpower!" chant, thus sending the strong message that cadets should ignore his perfunctory reading of the statement. What is more, throughout General Weida's speech, a quotation from the New Testament Book of Ephesians was projected onto several large screens strategically positioned throughout Mitchell Hall (the huge Cadet Dining Facility where General Weida addressed the Cadet Wing at the mandatory noon meal), further reinforcing General Weida's message of official endorsement of Christianity and belying any apparent message of religious neutrality, inclusion, or toleration. Similarly, in a mass e-mail message sent to the Cadet Wing in the wake of the incident over the *Passion of the Christ* flyers, General Weida instructed cadets to "be very careful about forcing your faith into your professional realm"; yet he opened the message with the "Airpower!" invocation, thus unequivocally incorporating his own faith into his "professional realm."

General Weida's incitement of cadets to proselytize other cadets in his preferred form of Christianity, and his creation of the call-and-response system to facilitate their doing so, are particularly clear instances of official Academy endorsement of religion. And his undercutting of any message of religious toleration, mutual respect, or separation of church and state through his well-timed use of that mechanism only serves to underscore the message that the Academy command gives preference to evangelical Christianity over other faiths.

At a more basic level, we have been informed that General Weida has cultivated and reinforced an attitude — shared by many in the Academy Chaplains' Office and, increasingly, by other members of the Academy's Permanent Party — that the Academy, and the Air Force in general, would be better off if populated solely with Christians. A stronger message of official preference for one particular faith is hard to imagine. And because, as a number of senior Air Force career officers have now confirmed for us, Air Force Academy cadets and junior Air Force officers rapidly come to the conclusion that rewards go to those who think like their general officers, these young people learn that professional success comes with emulation of the practice of explicitly incorporating Christianity into the performance of their official duties. So when leaders such as General Weida support and contribute to a culture of religious intolerance and official favoritism, Establishment Clause violations become commonplace.

2. Thus, it should come as no surprise that other members of the Air Force Academy's Permanent Party are equally unrestrained in their egregious violations of the Establishment Clause. As we have already described such widespread practices as faculty members proselytizing in the classroom and directives from Academy chaplains to proselytize other cadets, we will not belabor the point unduly by trying to recount all of the violations by Academy officials about which we have received complaints. But to underscore the open, notorious, and pervasive nature of the violations, we do wish to call special attention to the actions of one other member of the Academy staff —

head-football-coach Fisher DeBerry — as his conduct in violation of the Establishment Clause is not only clear, but also longstanding and well-documented.

Last fall, Coach DeBerry placed a banner reading “I am a Christian first and last * * * I am a member of Team Jesus Christ” in the locker room used by the Academy’s football team. He posted the banner just two weeks after the Academy had initiated a program of religious sensitivity training — a topic to which we will return later — and one day after General Rosa had informed the Academy’s Board of Visitors of his plans for addressing religious intolerance at the Academy. *See* Pam Zubeck, *DeBerry gets sensitivity training*, GAZETTE (Colo. Springs), Dec. 1, 2004. Although DeBerry supposedly received “counseling” from General Rosa concerning the banner (*see id.*), DeBerry’s official favoritism towards Christianity has not wavered: He has since been quoted as saying that religion is “what we’re all about” at the Academy (Todd Jacobson & Pam Zubeck, *AFA coach says religion is paramount at school*, GAZETTE (Colo. Springs), Feb. 26, 2005 (quoting Coach DeBerry)). He has also stated that he continues to “advise[] his players to attend church the day after games.” *Id.* He has further stated that, after games, the team members and he “get on our hands and knees and we wrap our arms around each other and we thank God for the opportunity of having competed that particular day.” *Id.* We have also been informed that DeBerry routinely gives speeches at official Academy and prep-school events, and that his speeches have overtly sectarian themes and are invariably laden with explicit references to Jesus. Indeed, DeBerry has consistently incorporated religion into his coaching and the performance of his other official duties throughout his many years at the Academy. *See e.g.*, Jacobsen & Zubeck, *supra* (noting DeBerry’s self-report that he has held team prayers during his entire 21-year coaching career at the Academy).

Yet aside from the one occasion of “counseling” by General Rosa over the “Team Jesus Christ” banner, it seems that no action has ever been taken to discipline Coach DeBerry for his behavior — and certainly none that was sufficient to cause DeBerry to change that behavior. On the contrary, the Colorado Springs *Gazette* recently reported that General Rosa has announced that it is permissible for DeBerry to lead the football team in prayers, as long as those prayers do not promote any particular religion. *See* Jacobsen & Zubeck, *supra*.

3. But General Rosa’s statement of policy is wrong as a matter of law. The U.S. Supreme Court and all other courts to consider the question have held that officially sponsored prayer may not be held at athletic events at public educational institutions. *See, e.g., Santa Fe Indep. Sch. Dist. v. Doe*, 530 U.S. 290, 305-08 (2000) (striking down student-initiated, student-led prayer before football games); *Ingebretsen v. Jackson Pub. Sch. Dist.*, 88 F.3d 274 (5th Cir. 1996) (striking down state statute permitting student-initiated prayer at sporting events); *Jager v. Douglas County Sch. Dist.*, 862 F.2d 824 (11th Cir. 1989) (striking down regulation calling for holding of invocations at high-school sporting events). Indeed, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit has ruled that coaches or other school employees may neither participate in nor supervise prayer during practice or in the locker room before a game, even if the prayer is initiated and led by the students themselves. *Doe v. Duncanville Indep. Sch. Dist.*, 70 F.3d 402 (5th Cir. 1995).

Among the many reasons that team prayer accompanying sporting events at public institutions has been held to be unconstitutional is the fact that attendance at games is not voluntary

for members of the team; and, in any event, the courts have held that the Establishment Clause forbids even what are clearly designated as voluntary pre-game prayer sessions because the hierarchical nature of the coach-player relationship might make team members feel pressure to attend. *See, e.g., Doe v. Duncanville Indep. Sch. Dist.*, 994 F.2d 160, 165 (5th Cir. 1993) (coach's involvement in religious activity with students would be "perceived by the students as inducing participation they might otherwise reject"). Thus, it is irrelevant as a legal matter as well as illusory as a practical matter that Coach DeBerry purports to allow non-Christians to opt out of post-game team prayer (*see Jacobson & Zubeck, supra* (relating not only DeBerry's description of supposed opt-out right for non-Christians, but also his report that no team members have ever exercised that right)).

Official Discrimination Against Non-Christians and Non-Religious Cadets

We have also received multiple reports of unequal treatment of, and official discrimination against, non-Christian cadets who wish to attend religious services or study sessions.

1. It is our understanding that Christian cadets who wish to attend Christian religious services and religious study sessions (such as "Sunday school" or Bible study) on Sundays are eligible for "non-chargeable passes" — *i.e.*, special passes to leave the Academy grounds that do not count as regular leave. By contrast, cadets who celebrate the Sabbath on other days of the week — such as Jewish or Seventh-Day Adventist cadets, who celebrate the Sabbath on Saturday — are not able to obtain such non-chargeable passes to attend Saturday services off the Academy grounds. Indeed, we have been told that Saturday Sabbath observers frequently are denied any opportunity at all to attend religious services because mandatory events such as training, parades, and football games are routinely scheduled for Saturdays, and cadets are not permitted to miss those activities in order to attend religious services. Meanwhile, such mandatory events are not scheduled for Sundays, when they might otherwise conflict with the ability of cadets to attend Christian worship services.

The provision of special passes for attendance at Christian religious services and religious study sessions that are not available on equal terms to persons of other faiths is a straightforward instance of one faith being preferred over others, in violation of the Establishment Clause. *See, e.g., Allegheny*, 492 U.S. at 593-94, 604; *Larson*, 456 U.S. at 244. Simply put, the Air Force is constitutionally obligated to ensure a diversity of religious viewpoints in the religious programming that it provides; and granting special favors to Christians or special status to their preferred forms of religious observance is highly improper. *See, e.g., Katcoff*, 755 F.2d at 226-27 & n.1 (approving provision of military chaplaincy in part because Army "provid[ed] religious facilities for soldiers of some 86 different denominations" and did not favor any particular faith over others); *Adair v. England*, 183 F. Supp. 2d 31, 56-58 (D.D.C. 2002) (Navy's chaplaincy policy favoring liturgical over non-liturgical Christians held to be presumptively unconstitutional).

2. We have also been informed that Academy officials have discriminated against non-religious students by denying them other privileges that are routinely available to religious students. For example, General Weida has authorized cadets to hang crosses or other religious items in their

dorm rooms, whereas Academy regulations prohibit cadets from displaying non-religious items in similar fashion. In addition, we have been informed that at least one cadet was denied a non-chargeable pass to attend a Freethinkers' meeting off base because the officers and the cadets in his chain of command regarded Freethinkers' meetings as not faith-based, and therefore not entitled to the same treatment given to Christian worship or study. And, based on that same official determination, the officers and cadets in the chain of command also denied this same cadet's request to form a Freethinkers' "SPIRE" group under the auspices of the Academy's Special Program in Religious Education.

When the cadet complained about these and other incidents to the Academy's MEO office (*i.e.*, its equal-opportunity office), the officer in charge, Captain Joseph Bland, refused to recognize the complaint as one for religious discrimination because the cadet had identified himself as an atheist. Captain Bland then attempted to proselytize the cadet into Catholicism. We understand that Captain Bland was competitively selected as, and currently holds the title of, the U.S. Air Force's MEO Officer of the Year. In sum, the Air Force officer charged with investigating and resolving complaints of religious discrimination at the Academy, and recognized by the Air Force as being the outstanding MEO officer for that entire branch of the service, not only had a fundamental misunderstanding of the legal definition of religious discrimination (*see generally, e.g., Wallace v. Jaffree*, 472 U.S. 38, 53-54 (1985) ("the individual freedom of conscience protected by the First Amendment embraces the right to select any religious faith or none at all")), but also thought it entirely proper to commit a straightforward violation of the Establishment Clause in the course of performing the official duties of the MEO office.²

The Supreme Court has consistently held that the First Amendment prohibits government from preferring religion to non-religion just as much as it prohibits government from preferring one faith to any other. *See, e.g., Grumet*, 512 U.S. at 703 ("a principle at the heart of the Establishment

² Additionally, serious Establishment Clause concerns are implicated by the composition of the Chaplains' Office and the SPIRE program. In this regard, we are informed that the Academy's Cadet Wing consists of approximately 30% Catholics, 30% non-evangelical Protestants, and 30% evangelical Protestants, with the remaining 10% including Jewish, Islamic, and other non-Christian cadets as well as cadets who elect not to declare any religious affiliation. Yet the Academy's chaplains' core is overwhelmingly composed of Protestant chaplains, virtually all of whom are evangelical Christians. The vast majority of the SPIRE groups are designated as "Protestant." And all of the "Protestant" SPIRE groups are evangelical. The United States District Court for the District of Columbia has held, however, that the Navy's chaplaincy program was presumptively unconstitutional because two-thirds of the Navy's chaplain slots were filled with liturgical Christian clergy, when liturgical Christians constituted only one-third of the Navy's religious personnel. *See Adair*, 183 F. Supp. 2d at 56-58. Under *Adair*, the dramatic mismatch between the overwhelming numbers of evangelical Protestant chaplains and SPIRE groups, on the one hand, and the actual percentage of evangelical Protestants in the Cadet Wing on the other, would be strong evidence of an unconstitutional preference for evangelical Christianity over other Christian and non-Christian religious denominations.

Clause [is] that government should not prefer one religion to another, or religion to irreligion”); *Texas Monthly, Inc. v. Bullock*, 489 U.S. 1, 8-9 (1989) (plurality opinion) (it “is part of our settled jurisprudence” that First Amendment “prohibits government from abandoning secular purpose in order to put an imprimatur on one religion, or on religion as such, or to favor the adherents of any sect or religious organization” (citation omitted)); *Epperson v. Arkansas*, 393 U.S. 97, 104 (1968) (“The First Amendment mandates governmental neutrality between religion and religion, and between religion and non-religion”); *Torcaso v. Watkins*, 367 U.S. 488, 495 (1961) (government cannot “constitutionally pass laws or impose requirements which aid all religions as against non-believers”); *Everson v. Bd. of Educ.*, 330 U.S. 1, 18 (1947) (First Amendment “requires the state to be a neutral in its relations with groups of religious believers and non-believers”).³

Providing non-chargeable passes to cadets for attendance at religious services and study sessions — and specifically Christian ones — without providing similar opportunities to attend non-religious alternatives clearly constitutes providing a special benefit to religious cadets not available to others. Additionally, it is our understanding that while a few of the Academy’s SPIRE groups are run by Academy chaplains, the Academy also permits several outside Christian groups to host SPIRE groups, thus affording them special access to the Academy facilities and to the cadets, while denying the same privilege to an outside Freethinkers’ group. Doing so is plainly the “unjustifiable

³ Thus, the Supreme Court held in *Texas Monthly*, for example, that a state violated the Establishment Clause by enacting a sales-tax exemption for religious periodicals without extending the exemption to non-religious periodicals. 489 U.S. 1. The plurality explained that when a law directs a benefit exclusively to religious organizations, the government “provide[s] unjustifiable awards of assistance to religious organizations’ and cannot but ‘convey[] a message of endorsement’ to slighted members of the community.” *Id.* at 15 (plurality opinion) (quoting *Corp. of Presiding Bishop v. Amos*, 483 U.S. 327, 348 (1987)). Similarly, in *Estate of Thornton v. Caldor, Inc.*, 472 U.S. 703 (1985), the Supreme Court struck down as violative of the Establishment Clause a state statute that provided Sabbath observers with an absolute right not to work on their Sabbath (*id.* at 710-11), holding that the statute constituted unconstitutional governmental preference for Sabbath observers over “other employees who have strong and legitimate, but non-religious, reasons for wanting” a particular day off. *Id.* at 710 n.9. And the lower federal courts have similarly held governmental benefits to be unconstitutional when they are directed exclusively to religious organizations or persons. See, e.g., *Finlator v. Powers*, 902 F.2d 1158, 1162-63 (4th Cir. 1990) (statute exempting “Holy Bibles” from state’s retail-sales and use taxes violated Establishment Clause); *Haller v. Pa. Dep’t of Revenue*, 728 A.2d 351 (Pa. 1999) (sales-tax exemption for religious articles, Bibles, and other religious publications sold by religious organizations violated Establishment Clause); *In re Springmoor*, 498 S.E.2d 177 (N.C. 1998) (statute granting property-tax exemptions to nursing homes only if homes were owned, operated, and managed by religious or Masonic organizations violated Establishment Clause); *Thayer v. S.C. Tax Comm’n*, 413 S.E.2d 810 (S.C. 1992) (exemption from use tax for religious publications violated Establishment Clause); *Port Wash. Union Free Sch. Dist. v. Port Wash. Teachers Ass’n*, 702 N.Y.S.2d 605 (N.Y. App. Div. 2000) (religious-holidays provision of collective-bargaining agreement violated Establishment Clause by giving religiously observant teachers more leave than non-religious teachers).

assistance to religious organizations” that slights both non-believers and adherents to alternative religions, in violation of the First Amendment.⁴ *Texas Monthly*, 489 U.S. at 15 (quoting *Amos* 483 U.S. at 348).

Inadequate Remedial Measures

We do not know what disciplinary actions, if any, senior Air Force Academy leadership has ever taken as a result of any complaints of religious intolerance or harassment. We are aware that the Academy has recently instituted a program known as “Respecting the Spiritual Values of All People.” But firsthand, eyewitness reports confirm that this “RSVP” program is woefully inadequate to address the pervasive and systemic problems of official religious intolerance, discrimination, and coercion at the Academy.

First of all, we have been told that the RSVP program as currently constituted is not the program of religious sensitivity training originally developed by members of the Chaplains’ Office and sanctioned by the team of outside experts from the Yale Divinity School. As it was described to us, the original proposal was to implement a program to expose attendees to forms of religious expression with which they are unfamiliar; to teach toleration and mutual respect in order to counteract the official culture of religious discrimination and coercion at the Academy; and to explain the importance of ensuring that official conduct is strictly neutral with respect to religion. But we have learned that the program was substantially modified after a visit from the Air Force’s chief of chaplains — Major General Charles Baldwin — and that the resulting RSVP program does not adequately teach and promote the fundamental constitutional requirement of separation of church and state.

⁴ In that regard too, the determination that a Freethinkers’ group is not religious, and the denial of non-chargeable passes and the denial of permission to form a SPIRE group on that basis, cannot be squared with the federal courts’ recognition that legal protections for “religion” necessarily must extend not only to mainstream religions, but also to any other deeply held belief systems. “In considering a first amendment claim arising from a non-traditional ‘religious’ belief or practice, the courts have looked to the familiar religions as models in order to ascertain, by comparison, whether the new set of ideas or beliefs is confronting the same concerns, or serving the same purposes, as unquestioned and accepted ‘religions.’” *Africa v. Pennsylvania*, 662 F.2d 1025, 1032 (3d Cir. 1981) (quotation marks, brackets, and citation omitted). As long as a sincerely held belief system “confront[s] the same concerns” (*id.*) as a traditional religion, in other words, government lacks the power to assess the validity of that belief system, and must afford it the same treatment as any recognized, mainstream religion. See, e.g., *United States v. Seeger*, 380 U.S. 163, 184 (1965). And hence, the Academy’s official determination that Freethinkers’ meetings are non-religious and unworthy of treatment as a religion may well constitute an unconstitutional preference for traditional religious sects and creeds over what as a matter of law must also be treated as a religion.

We have also learned that even the watered-down message of this current incarnation of the RSVP program is being implicitly undercut. Among other things, we have been told that senior Air Force Academy officials — including General Weida — have just within the past few days, and during their actual duty hours, attended a program (held by an evangelical Christian group and specifically endorsed by the Air Force Academy Office of Cadet Chaplains) that identified “secularism” and “pluralism” as specific threats to “the followers of Jesus.” This program, which was attended by General Weida and other senior Air Force Academy officials, directly contradicted the message of mutual respect and toleration that the RSVP program purportedly conveys. Furthermore, the Office of Cadet Chaplains endorsed the program notwithstanding the fact that the Chaplains’ Office is the entity charged with conducting the RSVP program — thus casting serious doubt on the sincerity of the Chaplains’ Office’s commitment to the stated goals of the RSVP program.

Effect of Religious Discrimination at U.S. Air Force Academy

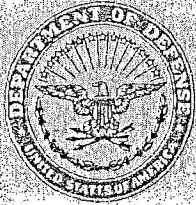
Finally, we are aware of at least two cases in which highly qualified individuals were dissuaded from attending the Academy and entering into the Air Force officer corps — despite longstanding and fervent desires to do so — after learning of the official culture of religious intolerance and hostility toward those who do not subscribe to and practice evangelical Christianity. When the Air Force is denied the service of the country’s best and brightest young people because they feel excluded from the Academy by religious intolerance, the armed forces and the Nation as a whole are weakened. What is more, in light of the traditional role that military-officer training has played in cultivating local, state, and national leaders in both the public and private sectors, the effective exclusion from the Academy of highly qualified, highly motivated young men and women on the basis of their religion — or their unwillingness to conform to the religious practices of those in charge — is the very archetype of the “message to nonadherents that they are outsiders, not full members of the political community,” that the Constitution forbids. *Allegheny*, 492 U.S. at 595. A public institution that conveys that message straightforwardly violates the Establishment Clause. *See, e.g., id.*

* * *

The investigation by Americans United for Separation of Church and State into the policies and practices of the United States Air Force Academy has revealed numerous flagrant and egregious violations of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, as well as a general climate of religious coercion and official hostility toward those who do not practice evangelical Christianity. *We have concluded that both the specific violations and the promotion of a culture of official religious intolerance are pervasive, systematic, and evident at the very highest levels of the Academy’s command structure.*

This report was prepared by the Legal Department of Americans United for Separation of Church and State. For further information, contact:

Ayesha N. Khan, Legal Director
Richard B. Katskee, Assistant Legal Director
AMERICANS UNITED FOR SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE
518 C St., NE
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 466-3234
www.au.org



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY
USAF ACADEMY, COLORADO

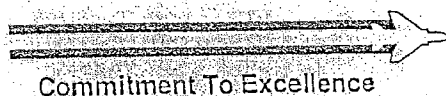
FEB 05 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION C

FROM: HQ USAFA/CC

SUBJECT: Establishing and Maintaining Positive Human Relations in the Workplace

1. The environment at the Academy should always remain free from social, personal and institutional barriers that may prevent our personnel from rising to the highest level of responsibility possible. We must maintain an optimum force of dedicated and diligent personnel who are committed to employing practices that support equal opportunity and exemplify respect for human dignity as we contribute our best to our nation's defense.
2. Previous policy letters have emphasized that discrimination and sexual harassment will not be tolerated and any violation of this policy will be investigated in accordance with AFI 36-2706, *Military Equal Opportunity and Treatment Program* and for civilians AFI 36-1201, *Discrimination Complaints*. As professionals, commitment to excellence must be the benchmark of every officer, airman, cadet and civilian as we share the responsibility of creating a "non-hostile" work environment that represents a harmonious and productive workplace. Because effective communication is an important aspect of this kind of workplace and facilitates positive human relations, every member must take an active role in the communication process. Superiors and subordinates alike must acknowledge and respect the diversity of viewpoints expressed by one another. I encourage you to support open and honest dialogue within your organizations to establish and maintain a positive working environment throughout USAFA.
3. The attached guide, "Human Relations Discussions in the Workplace," is provided for all unit directors, managers and supervisors to use in discussions with their personnel. Within 30 days of arrival, supervisors should brief all Academy newcomers on the Air Force and Academy policies concerning human relations in the workplace, sexual harassment and discrimination. AFPAM 36-2705, *Discrimination and Sexual Harassment* is available as a tool to provide insight and guidance. Signed acknowledgments should be filed in the orderly room's Personnel Information File (PIF) for military and in the Supervisor's Employee Work Folder (AF Form 971) for civilians. All personnel should periodically review this pamphlet and promote participation in workplace discussions.


JOHN W. ROSA
Lieutenant General, USAF
SuperintendentAttachment:
Human Relations Guide

Commitment To Excellence

GUIDE FOR "HUMAN RELATIONS DISCUSSIONS IN THE WORKPLACE"

This guide is intended to provide the Air Force Academy workforce with a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities each individual has toward keeping the human relations climate at the Academy high. The zero tolerance policy at the Air Force Academy is intended to be administered in a fair and equitable manner. Each individual has the right to confront an individual whom they may perceive is infringing upon their rights to work in a harmonious environment. The chain of command is also available to address issues that impact an individual's work environment. Commanders and supervisors alike must accept their responsibilities in ensuring nonretribution for all members. If these basic principles are followed, then the human relations climate at the Academy will continue to remain high, along with morale and productivity. The following are some steps which commanders and supervisors should implement to maintain a positive human relations climate in their organizations:

1. Within 30 days of arrival, supervisors should brief all Academy newcomers on the Air Force and Academy policies on keeping positive human relations in the workplace, sexual harassment and discrimination. (Use AFPAM 36-2705 as a tool.)
2. Supervisors should lead discussions on positive human relations in the workplace, to include sexual harassment and discrimination, at least on an annual basis for all assigned Academy personnel.
3. To gain maximum benefit from these discussions, groups should not exceed 10 people.
4. One-on-one discussions may be used at the request of an individual in the unit.
5. Suggested agenda for discussions follows:
 - a. Define and discuss sexual harassment and discrimination
 - b. Brief on Air Force policy of zero tolerance
 - c. Discuss individual responsibilities
 - (1) Supervisor's responsibilities
 - (2) Subordinate's responsibilities
 - (3) Co-worker's/third party responsibilities
 - (4) Victim's responsibilities
 - d. Discuss reporting procedures
 - e. Discuss consequences of violations
 - f. Sign statement

6. Materials for discussion are available through the 10 ABW Military Equal Opportunity office.
7. Each discussion participant should sign a written statement which will be filed in the orderly room Personnel Information File (PIF) for military and in the Supervisor's Employee Work Folder (AF Form 971) for civilians. Commanders may direct orderly room personnel to annually audit forms on all military, in which case, a designated representative from each unit will also perform the audit on civilian folders.

PARTICIPANT:

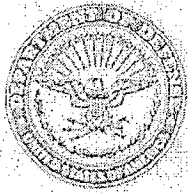
I have discussed and understand the importance of positive human relations in the workplace and avoiding any kind of discrimination or sexual harassment. I also understand the Air Force policy of zero tolerance of discrimination, sexual harassment or violence in the workplace and understand that I may be subject to appropriate action if I participate in any of these acts/behaviors.

Signature _____ Date _____

SUPERVISOR:

I have discussed with my subordinate and ensured he/she is aware of the importance of positive human relations in the workplace and avoiding discrimination or sexual harassment. I affirm I will enforce the zero tolerance policy of discrimination, sexual harassment or violence in the workplace and that I will ensure no reprisal will be taken against anyone as a result of their bringing forward an allegation of discrimination/sexual harassment or violence in the workplace.

Signature _____ Date _____



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 34TH TRAINING WING
USAF ACADEMY, COLORADO 80840-6260

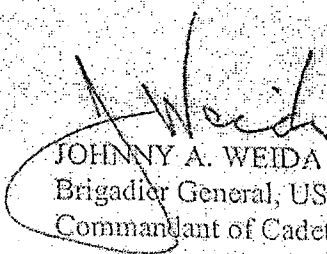
MEMORANDUM FOR ALL 34 TRW PERSONNEL

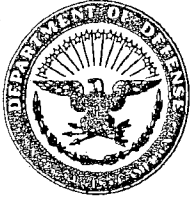
24 JUL 2003

FROM: 34 TRW/CC

SUBJECT: Human Dignity and Respect

1. Every member of the USAFA team deserves dignity, respect, and the opportunity to rise to the highest level of responsibility their character and talents can take them. To accomplish this, we must realize the value of diversity and foster mutual respect and cooperation among all members of our team regardless of race, color, ethnicity, sex, religion, national origin, age or, for our civilian employees, handicapping conditions. The Air Force Equal Opportunity policy is clear: zero tolerance for unlawful discrimination—including sexual harassment.
2. My goal for this institution is simple: to ensure everyone is treated with dignity and respect and encourage the development of every member's full potential. Just as importantly, we must ensure each cadet that graduates has the character, honor, integrity, and sense of service and excellence required of a second lieutenant in the world's greatest air and space force.
3. Because the Academy's mission is unique, 34 TRW OI 36-27, *Human Relations Program*, and the Cadet Human Relations Handbook were developed to supplement guidelines in AFI 36-2706, *Military Equal Opportunity and Treatment Program*. They highlight responsibilities and procedures to assist you in resolving concerns that impede our mission as students, professionals and warriors.
4. I charge all members of the USAFA team—active duty, civilian, and cadets—to become familiar with the contents of the above publications. Doing so will help you live up to your responsibilities as officers, noncommissioned officers, civilian employees, and cadets in order to realize each person's full potential.


JOHNNY A. WEIDA
Brigadier General, USAF
Commandant of Cadets



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

THE DEAN OF THE FACULTY

USAF ACADEMY, COLORADO

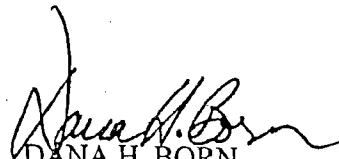
24 January 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL DEAN OF THE FACULTY PERSONNEL

FROM: HQ USAFA/DF

SUBJECT: DF Policy Statement on Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

1. We are members of the world's best Air and Space Force – no matter if we are military or civilian! Our mission is *"to educate, train and inspire men and women to become officers of character motivated to lead the United States Air Force in service to our Nation."* In order to do this, we must operate in an environment rich in diversity and dignity and free from any forms of discrimination.
2. DoD and Air Force policy do not condone or tolerate unlawful discrimination or sexual harassment within the Armed Forces or in the civilian workforce. It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual or group because of their race, color, national origin, religion, or gender. Such discrimination will not be tolerated and any such actions will be dealt with quickly and fairly.
3. Harassment and discrimination run contrary to our mission. We will strive to foster an academically rich environment where everyone has the opportunity to do his or her job and where there is mutual respect, trust, and an opportunity to succeed. I encourage you to report any discrimination or sexual harassment first through your chain of command and allow your commander the opportunity to correct the situation. In the event the situation cannot be resolved at this level, contact the Military Equal Opportunity office at 333-4258 or the Civilian Equal Employment Opportunity office at 333-4132.
4. Our diversity is our strength, and by working together ... no matter what our race, color, national origin, religion, or sex ... we create an extraordinary Air Force team.


DANA H. BORN
Brigadier General, USAF
Dean of the Faculty



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY
USAF ACADEMY, COLORADO 80840

Policy AH-007

2 June 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL

FROM: HQ USAFA/AH

SUBJECT: AH Policy Statement on Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

1. We are members of the world's best Air and Space Force – no matter if we are military or civilian! Our mission is "to educate, train and inspire men and women to become officers of character motivated to lead the United States Air Force in service to our Nation." In order to do this, we must operate in a diverse environment free from any form of unlawful discrimination.
2. DoD and Air Force policy do not condone or tolerate unlawful discrimination or sexual harassment within the Armed Forces or in the civilian workforce. It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual or group because of their race, color, national origin, religion, or gender. Such discrimination will not be tolerated and any such actions will be dealt with quickly and fairly. In addition, it is inappropriate for commanders, supervisors or others in a leadership position to use such positions to promote any type of specific religious belief or religion in general.
3. We will foster a rich environment where everyone has the opportunity to do his or her job and where there is mutual respect, trust, and an opportunity to succeed. We all know the value of team, the importance of respect among teammates and that such respect is critical – to our success in competition and in our mission of forging leaders of character. I encourage you to report any discrimination or sexual harassment first through your chain of command allow your commander the opportunity to correct the situation. In the event the situation cannot be resolved at this level, contact the Military Equal Opportunity office at 333-4258 or the Civilian Equal Employment Opportunity office at 333-4132.
4. Diversity is our strength, and by working together ... no matter what our race, color, national origin, religion, or sex ... we create an extraordinary Air Force team.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hans J. Mueh".

DR. HANS J. MUEH
Director of Athletics



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY PREPARATORY SCHOOL

USAF ACADEMY COLORADO

6 Jul 04

MEMORANDUM FOR USAFA PREPARATORY SCHOOL STAFF AND CADET CANDIDATES

FROM: USAFA/PL

SUBJECT: Policy on Equal Opportunity, Treatment, and Employment

1. As Positive, Responsible, Enthusiastic Professionals who Honorably Uplift Student Knowledge, Integrity, Excellence, and Service and as outstanding cadet candidates, with impeccable integrity and character, we are to treat all human beings with respect and dignity, regardless of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, age, or disability. There is no gray area here. Once again, we treat all human beings with respect, dignity, and equality, as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, judging people on "the content of their character."
2. This policy applies to each and every person at the Preparatory School, and it applies 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week, everywhere. Not only do illegal discrimination and sexual harassment damage the mission, they demoralize and denigrate human beings. Simply put, this behavior is inhumane, unjust, and repulsive. Commanders and supervisors at every level will take immediate action to address any allegation of discrimination or harassment, and they will firmly punish offenders, when allegations are substantiated. In case there is any confusion, here are just a few examples of inappropriate behavior: racial jokes or remarks, sexist remarks, sexually-explicit jokes and pictures, touching without permission, promoting someone because you prefer their race or gender, demoting someone because you don't, etc.
3. If you believe someone has discriminated against you because of race, sex, color, religion, or national origin (also for civilians; age or disability) or has sexually harassed you, I encourage you to first address the issue with your chain of command or with our Prep School MEO POC, 1st Lt Cathy Fernengel, USAFA/PLDE. If you aren't satisfied with the result or if you'd prefer to contact them directly, you may contact the 10 ABW Military Equal Opportunity Office at 333-4238 or the Civilian Equal Employment Opportunity office at 333-4132. Remember, I have absolutely no tolerance for discrimination or sexual harassment. Prevention is much better than punishment. As Positive, Responsible, Enthusiastic Professionals, I'm confident we can, and will, prevent this behavior from occurring.

HARVEY D. JOHNSON, Colonel, USAF
Commander



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON DC

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

125 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR SAF/MR

FROM SAF/MRE

SUBJECT: Staff Assistance Visit to USAFA, 13-15 December 2004

TRAVELER(S): Ms. Shirley Martinez, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Equal Opportunity, USAF, Rabbi Arnold E. Resnicoff, CAPT, CHC, USN (Ret), Consultant on Interreligious Affairs Maj. Joseph Sanders, USAF, Chief of Diversity Policy, MRE, USAF

PURPOSE: The visit to United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) was focused on an assessment of the religious climate and the plan to foster a positive religious environment. For two days, our team observed, interacted and learned a great deal about the issues in regard to the possibility of interreligious insensitivity/intolerance at USAFA. The trip consisted of discussions with the Superintendent and Vice Commandant, the chaplains, the Center for Character Development, and a group of selected cadets representing a variety of religious and non-religious based traditions. The trip was guided by the following objectives:

- Assess the magnitude and extent of issues in regard to religious climate.
- Understand and assess USAFA's plan to respond to religious issues and determine support needed.
- Provide an assertive response to claims and accusations of problems with religious climate.

GENERAL FINDINGS

We did not find overt indications of a crisis in regard to religious insensitivity/intolerance nor did we note any consistent signs of rampant discrimination on the basis of religion. Instead, we found that there were residual issues that will require a continuation of the current tactical responses and a greater emphasis on operational and strategic responses. The issues we observed were manifestations that resulted from a lack of understanding around the broader issues of respect for individual rights and a lack of clarity towards a vision that embraces spiritual development as core to Air Force values and mission. The USAFA's leadership has initiated a good first response, and is currently working to enhance the coherency, integration, and execution of plans to improve the religious climate. At a time when religious intolerance and hostility has fueled discord and violence in areas throughout the world, the USAFA – with its mission of educating leaders of character – must continue to take all actions necessary to make the Academy (and ultimately, the USAF) a model of leadership based on values and respect.

BACKGROUND

- Recent media interest has focused on instances of perceived religious insensitivity at USAFA. The issue has been framed as one of respect for others beliefs.

- The Air Force Academy developed indicators that pointed to this issue through staff, faculty and cadet surveys in early 2004. Media interest began in November 2004.
- The Superintendent (Lt Gen John Rosa) has led the effort to develop and deliver sensitivity/respect training. He has briefed the media, the Board of Visitors, CORONA, parents clubs and alumni organizations on religious respect issues and the steps taken by the Academy to resolve them. In addition, he has expanded the portfolio of current character consultant (Michael Josefson) to include a study of the complaints lodged against the USAFA.
- An initial round of religious sensitivity and respect training has already been completed and is entitled Respecting the Spiritual Values of all Persons (RSVP). The Superintendent has asked for internal and external reviews of the training to ensure maximum effectiveness.

-- 2 Nov 04: USAFA/HC and 34 TRW/CV-S presented a 2-hour seminar to 300 Academy senior permanent party, cadet leaders, and staff, faculty

Small group, 50-minute version under development; will be given to all staff, faculty and cadets beginning early in 2005

- The Superintendent has been actively engaged on this issue for quite some time and he enjoys the full support of the Secretary of the Air Force, the Chief of Staff and USAF Chief of Chaplains in his efforts and direction.

ANALYSIS

Analytical framework: Issues linked to religion in the military can be analyzed from three interrelated perspectives:

- 1) *Religious Accommodation*. Accommodating religious free exercise in ways that require exceptions to existing regulations. DOD Directive 1300.17 and AFI 36-2706 provide overall guidance on the accommodation of religious practices. While not every religious practice can be accommodated in every situation, the goal is that religious free exercise should be accommodated to the greatest extent possible, given the immediate military situation.
- 2) *Respect*. While it is not necessary for individuals to "respect" all religions or systems of belief, we should respect the right of others to hold different personal belief and value systems (with the understanding that their beliefs do not conflict with their oath of office or their adherence to USAF Core Values) and treat others with respect based on their actions, regardless of our opinion of those personal beliefs. Our oath to protect and defend the constitution includes its guarantee of religious freedom. The fact that fellow cadets have taken that oath freely and are ready to lay their lives on the line for our nation, if required, should make it crystal clear that they are worthy of the highest levels of respect. The push here should be respect for the *rights* of others to hold different beliefs, not necessarily whether those beliefs are *right*.
- 3) *Vision*. It is possible to work to accommodate free religious exercise, and to avoid words or actions that show disrespect, but seeing these actions as regrettable, inconvenient, or somehow in conflict with mission accomplishment. USAFA culture (and for that matter, USAF culture) should include the vision that diversity, including religious diversity, greatly strengthens our

nation – and sets us apart from nations where the image of an interfaith military (or "interfaith foxhole") would be unthinkable. Therefore, while working to ensure religious accommodation policies are understood and followed, and working to increase sensitivity in the area of religious diversity as we do so in other areas, the overriding issue is culture: vision and values.

USAFA ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. PERCEPTION OF EVANGELIZATION. The cadets we interviewed felt that there were some problems, especially in terms of being "bombarded" with religious information and/or "invitations"/solicitations over the email, and sometimes (as in the case of the movie, "Passion of the Christ") by flyer. Some students felt that religious quotes included as part of the signature block on emails contributed to the problem of "religious bombardment," or military-sponsored "evangelization."

Recommendations:

A. Mechanically restrict the use of group email addresses to selected individuals. While there are restrictions on the use of large group emails, cadets may regularly ignore these restrictions.

B. Initiate a "push-pull" policy regarding religious information on the internet. Add a religious link to the cadet portal, so that cadets desirous of religious information can click that link to "pull" information. (The religious link could lead to a secondary page, where there could be a choice of links for religious events, religious information, religious bulletin boards, even a chaplain "prayer of the day," if desired – so long as the user would have the choice of what he or she sees.) Emails of a religious nature would be delivered to specific lists of cadets who request to be on that list—with the proviso that a system is in place to allow immediate deletion of a cadet upon his or her request to be removed from the list.

C. No material of a religious nature should be posted on the internet or distributed by flyer (and there should be specific, limited areas – such as bulletin boards or religious information racks—where flyers or other religious materials could be made available) without the approval of the chaplains.

D. Enforce policies already in place, such as the policy that does not allow quotes to be included in email signature blocks. (Emails, along with other forms of correspondence at the academy, should be viewed as training for correspondence in the USAF.)

E. Chaplains should brief USAFA leadership regarding potentially sensitive issues and events. *It should be noted that the movie, Passion of the Christ, was the subject of national controversy, and special sensitivity should have been exercised regarding any USAFA publicity linked to it.*

2. CHAPLAIN SUPPORT. The cadets we interviewed felt that if a problem were brought to any USAFA chaplain, that chaplain would want to help, and would do his or her best to help. There was a feeling that some cadets and permanent party did not understand policies or sensitivities, and that increased interaction with chaplains and more effective utilization of chaplains would help.

Recommendations:

A. USAFA leadership should ensure that chaplains are an integral part of initial cadet briefings as early as possible during indoctrination, including staff and faculty orientation.

B. Cadets, faculty, and staff should realize and understand that these are leadership issues, not chaplain program issues.

3. **SENSITIVITY TRAINING.** The RSVP presentation, currently in preparation, is very good, but can be enhanced. In addition, it seems too much like a stand-alone presentation, and should be linked to other initiatives currently in place.

Recommendations:

A. That this initiative be linked to other initiatives, such as gender sensitivity, equal opportunity, core values, and character development. (Suggestions for such links will be included in our recommendations.)

B. That the USAFA consider highlighting 3 February commemoration of "Four Chaplains Day," supporting the vision of "unity, not uniformity" by the story on which that day is based.

C. Explicitly incorporate RSVP concepts as part of the Core Values program, focusing on the supporting value of *respect for others*, under the higher value of *service before self*.

D. In keeping with the push to differentiate the issue of respecting the rights of others from respecting the beliefs of others and to facilitate integration with other efforts, change the name of this initiative. (One possibility would be RRR – "Triple R" – "Respecting Religious Rights.")

4. **REPORTING/RESPONDING.** The chaplains expressed some fear that cadets think that the first course of action after encountering insensitivity is to make a report (following the concept of reporting sexual abuse or assault), rather than attempt to work things out.

Recommendations:

A. Stress the concept of assault versus insensitivity, and appropriate actions in each case.

5. **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT.** The cadets we interviewed expressed some fear that respect for the spiritual component of leadership has been reduced to lip-service. Their perception was that much of the Academy leadership would prefer to avoid issues of spirituality, in part because of fears of being accused of offending those who do not see themselves as religious.

A. Increase discussion of spirituality (linked to "the human spirit" and the outcomes presented in the Officer Development System) as opposed to religious belief systems. Concepts such as sacrifice, and "service before self" – commitments that put something above our own life – must be seen within the framework of spirituality.

B. Clearly define religion and spirituality [Note, the RSVP presentation quotes AFI 36-2706 in a way that uses "religion" to describe beliefs such as atheism.]

C. Ensure that there is a "dignified alternative" to attending chapel services for those who do not want to attend, but do not want to be seen as disloyal. For example, a designated room made available for cadets who do not attend chapel services.

6. FACULTY TRAINING. The cadets we interviewed indicated there were some problems with comments by faculty. For example, if a student indicated that his or her religion took a stand against evolution, the instructor ridiculed such a religious belief.

Recommendations:

A. Expand faculty and staff development programs to include an established standard of pipeline training on religious sensitivity and the vision of religious diversity.

B. Review the policy on academic freedom at a unique institution such as the USAFA. Academic freedom in an institution that believes in teaching by example should include the concept of expressing one's belief with respect. (Here, perhaps the instructor could acknowledge the right of citizens in the U.S. to hold different opinions on a host of subjects. However, the instructor should have the right to state that he/she will teach evolution as it is accepted by the scientific community – and the right to state that he/she personally believes this scientific approach to be the correct one.)

7. VALUES-BASED CULTURE. In terms of USAFA culture change plan, there must be a more integrated and coherent presentation of values, codes, slogans, and initiatives as well as a clearer link between a plan to improve religious climate and an overall culture change plan. For example, the present honor code – "We will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor tolerate anyone among us who does" – is framed entirely in the negative, and does not include any reference to respect (i.e. respecting the rights of others to hold differing religious beliefs).

Recommendations:

A. Establish a single point of contact under the Superintendent to oversee and facilitate the strategic integration of character development throughout staff and cadet education, training, and experiences.

B. Expand understanding, interpretation, and presentation of initiatives, so that they are linked by common core values. For example, the "vision" of the Cadet Honor Code could be presented as follows:

- "We will not lie" includes promising to avoid "the big lie" – words or actions that belie the AF Officer's Oath of Office. So, for example, once we have sworn to protect and defend the constitution, with its constitutional guarantee of religious freedom, we would be lying if we demeaned that freedom through our words or actions.

- "We will not cheat" includes the vow that we will not cheat ourselves out of the chance to be the best "leader of character" that the Air Force might have. We will not cheat those who put their trust in us to put "service before self," in order to protect our nation and its freedoms. We will not cheat the Air Force. We will commit ourselves to the core values that will make us strong, our Air Force strong, and our nation strong.

- "We will not steal" includes the concept that stealing another person's self-respect is worse than stealing his physical property. We will give all others their due in terms of the respect they deserve as a result of their joining us, putting on the uniform, and taking the oath along with us to protect and defend our constitution – even, if necessary, at the cost of their lives.

- "Nor tolerate anyone among us who does" – should be linked to the supporting core value of *loyalty*, under the value of *service before self* – in a way that stresses the complexity of loyalty: "I will be loyal to a fellow cadet, until the point where I am disloyal to

the academy; I will be loyal to the academy [and later, to squadron, wing, etc], until it becomes disloyalty to the AF; I will be loyal to the AF until the point where it becomes disloyal to the nation."

LARGER AIR FORCE ISSUES

Just as there is a lack integration of programs at the USAFA level (although the need for such integration and linkage has been identified and is being addressed by USAFA leadership in plans for the future) there is potentially a lack of integration through and clarity of vision in regard to religious diversity at the broader Air Force level.

Review and improve integration of core values and principles into AF operations.

Recommendation:

A. Incorporate elements of Lieutenant General Rodger Brady's, AF/DP, concept paper on religious respect into AF posture statement as well as AF and DoD directives and instructions.

B. That an AF Culture (i.e. Culture of Airmen), reinforcing vision and values, reach across all functions at the highest level of the Air Force, to include the Chief of Staff, and leaders in areas such as training, Equal Opportunity, Public Affairs, legal, chaplain, etc, to consider how all issues can be linked together through—and tested against-- USAF vision and values.

C. That USAF Core Values be reviewed (both the values and the way they are presented). For example, we question whether we should continue to list the supporting core value, "tolerance" – a term that President George Washington rejected, and said we as a nation had moved beyond, some two hundred years ago! At the very least, it should be changed to "beyond tolerance." Perhaps "teamwork" would be better.

AF Core Values presentations should stress the importance of each of those three words, not merely values. For example, "core" should indicate that we are not demanding that every man or woman in the AF hold identical values. On the contrary, our vision (and our culture) is dedicated to respecting differences in values. But there are certain basic, "bottom-line," "core" values that are non-negotiable. Without a commitment to these values, it is impossible to serve in our Air Force.

8. SUMMARY

1. *Assess the magnitude and extent of issues in regard to religious climate.*

We did not find overt indications of a crisis in regard to religious insensitivity/intolerance nor did we note any consistent signs of rampant discrimination on the basis of religion. Our suspicion is that the level of religious insensitivity/intolerance on civilian university campuses would be just as problematic, or worse. However, this fact should not deter us from responding to the observed issues *within the overall effort to change USAFA climate and culture to one that models mutual respect on the part of all cadets.*

2. *Understand and assess USAFA's plan to respond to religious issues.*

At the USAFA (and in the larger USAF) there are many programs and initiatives that are not appropriately linked. At best, we miss opportunities to have programs reinforce each other. At worst, there is "program overload" and the danger of one program working against another.

Where possible, all programs aimed at strengthening respect, improving climate and culture, and building officers of character and honor—including new efforts in the area of interreligious affairs--should be brought together within a framework of USAF and USAFA culture, based on vision and values.

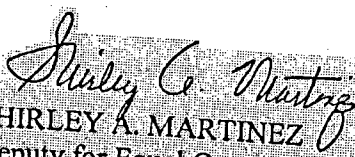
3. *Provide an assertive response to claims and accusations of problems with religious climate.*

Based on this short visit, which included discussions with the Superintendent and Vice Commandant, the chaplains, the Center for Character Development, and a group of selected students representing a variety of religious traditions, there is evidence of some interreligious insensitivity/intolerance among cadets, and on the part of permanent party, including faculty. Additional meetings and discussions, including some with representatives of the permanent party, would be beneficial.

Next Steps

- Follow-up visits: This trip did not afford us the opportunity to speak to those individuals who are "leading the charge" in terms of accusations against the USAFA (including some of the charges shared with the press), one future step would include an opportunity to speak to them. Another future step would be to speak with the faculty, leaders in the area of sports, etc. -- and to review the curriculum of ethics courses, to see how core values are included or could be included.

Briefings: SECAF was briefed on our findings and assessment on Jan 12. We are currently scheduled to brief the HASC on Feb 10.


SHIRLEY A. MARTINEZ
Deputy for Equal Opportunity
(Manpower and Reserve Affairs)

cc:
SAF/OS

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MINISTRY TO THE ARMED FORCES

7708 GRIFFIN POND COURT
SPRINGFIELD, VA 22153

JACK D. WILLIAMSON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June 16, 2005

The Honorable Michael L. Dominguez
Acting Secretary of the Air Force
1600 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20330-1660

Dear Mr. Secretary,

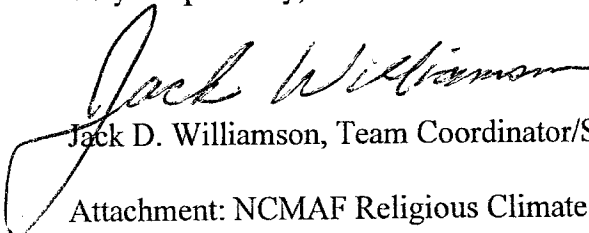
At your invitation and request, the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF) sent a team of five members to the Air Force Academy on June 7-8, 2005 to assess the climate related to allegations of religious intolerance.

It is no secret that America is experiencing a robust debate regarding the role and expression of religion in public life. This discussion is playing itself out, at least in part, at the Air Force Academy. While there are more Christians than all other faith groups combined in America and at the Academy, our Constitution and Department of Defense directives mandate that non-establishment of religion, free exercise of religion and religious accommodation applies equally to all. It is our belief that this is the fundamental issue at the Academy, as well as in our public square debate.

Our observations and recommendations are based on a one and a half-day assessment of a very complex issue. Despite the limited duration of our visit, we saw, heard and read enough to know that well-reasoned and balanced solutions will require continued insightful leadership, openness, respect and goodwill by all who live and work at this premier institution. We believe the Air Force Academy has the opportunity to exemplify the great American experience of living cooperatively and respectfully in a society of great diversity.

The attached report represents our best effort to understand the issues and the Academy culture with as much objectivity and fairness to all sides as possible.

Very Respectfully,


Jack D. Williamson, Team Coordinator/Spokesperson

Attachment: NCMAF Religious Climate Report

cc: Lt Gen Roger A. Brady
Lt Gen John W. Rosa, Jr.
Ch, Maj Gen Charles C. Baldwin

(703) 455-7908 (Voice) (703) 455-7948 (Fax)

E-Mail: jack@ncmaf.org

maureen@ncmaf.org

www.ncmaf.org

National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces Team Assessment Report on Religious Climate at United States Air Force Academy

What is National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF)

The National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF) is a non-profit organization comprised of approximately 220 members who represent their different religious denominations and faith groups. Members serve as endorsers of clergypersons to serve as chaplains in the military representing their respective denominations/faith groups. Their common goals are to recruit, endorse and provide oversight for clergypersons who desire to serve as chaplains in any one of the branches of the United States Armed Forces. Endorsed chaplains agree to respect and accommodate the free-exercise of religion for military members and their families regardless of their religious orientation or for those with no religious affiliation.

NCMAF Team Members

Five members were selected on short notice at the request of the Acting Secretary of the Air Force, Michel L. Dominguez, to conduct an independent review of the religious climate at United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) following allegations of religious intolerance and excessive Evangelical Christian influence. The team represented a cross-section of Christian and Jewish religious bodies:

Jack D. Williamson, Chaplain, Colonel USAF (Ret) — Evangelical Friends Church (Quaker);

Frank W. Clawson, Colonel, USAF (Ret) — The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints;

Herman Keizer, Jr., Chaplain, Colonel, USA (Ret) — Christian Reformed Church in North America;

Theodore Boback, Chaplain, Lieutenant Colonel, USA (Ret) — The Orthodox Church in America; and

David Lapp, Chaplain, Colonel, USA (Ret) — Jewish.

Scope

The team's review was constrained by time (7-8 Jun 05), but we had complete cooperation from the senior leadership, faculty, staff and available cadets. Fact-finding meetings were held with approximately 180 USAFA personnel and cadets. Opportunities were afforded for one-on-one private interviews with individuals who desired to speak with team members. The discussions were open and frank and provided a forum for religious and non-religious personnel to discuss the issues. We did not knowingly talk to any of the cadets who reported the

55 incidents of alleged religious intolerance or inappropriate slurs made by other cadets regarding their religious orientation.

Climate

Senior leaders, faculty and staff appeared exhausted and frustrated by relentless media attention, especially since the Academy leadership already had identified the problem and were taking corrective action. To many, recent command decisions are perceived as reactive to external forces, with the danger of moving the pendulum too far in the opposite direction. Some expressed concern that “the baby is going to be thrown out with the bath water.” Although the external attention has been consuming for the senior leaders and staff, religious awareness has been heightened across the board, as well as concerns about what restrictive changes may follow.

Complex Issue

The complexity of the issue was apparent from the beginning. Distractions from external sources combined with the multi-perceptions of the issue complicate problem definition and solution development. Achieving a balance between mission accomplishment and accommodation of religious practices among a diverse population is extremely challenging. The influence of a predominately Evangelical Christian community in Colorado Springs creates additional challenges. In addition, the lack of clear guidance regarding the appropriateness of religious expression, both on and off duty, as well as the perception that character development and religious values are intertwined, add to the complexity of the problem and sensitivity of all involved.

USAFA Identified Problem

The issue regarding religious intolerance was first identified during the Class of 2004 Climate Survey. Preoccupation with the sexual assault issue may have delayed earlier detection of this issue. Although any incident of religious intolerance is inexcusable, the numbers of incidents reported by cadets have not been numerous. Along with looking into the isolated incidents, Academy leaders have attempted to identify root causes and to design corrective and preventive measures. They determined that the main issue was a lack of respect for and insensitivity toward others regarding religious beliefs and practices. A religious sensitivity training program titled *Respecting the Spiritual Values of All People (RSVP)* was developed. All Academy personnel have received this initial training. Follow-on training is being developed to build upon the foundation laid by RSVP. Feedback regarding the training from faculty, staff and cadets was mixed, but it has achieved the goal of heightened awareness, coupled with concerns about what may follow.

NCMAF Team Observations

With the above preface, the rest of the report will focus on the team's observations and recommendations. The following areas were reviewed:

- Concerns regarding incidents of alleged over-reaching religious influence by senior leadership, faculty, and staff
- Effectiveness of RSVP training
- First Amendment the Constitution, Character Development, and Ethics
- Religious accommodation for minority religious groups
- Spiritual programs in Religious Education (SPIRE)
- Adequacy of the religious program to meet the diverse religious needs of the USAFA personnel.

Over-Reaching Religious Influence

Heightened awareness has revealed some long-standing practices that were over-reaching in many areas, including the Athletic Department and other disciplines. A significant number of people expressed the opinion that the Commandant of Cadets has exercised undue influence with strong religious overtones in some of his communiqués to cadets and staff.

It is the opinion of the team that efforts to remedy the sexual assault scandal may have contributed to the current issue. Some faculty and staff expressed concern that senior leaders' actions following the sexual assault scandal were based on the assumption that student behavioral problems were viewed as moral deficiencies that could be corrected only with religious (primarily Evangelical Christian) moral values. They feel this has set the tone for the problematic religious climate over the last two years.

Gender issues are also present in the current religious climate. The definition of the role of women in American society and in the church is a lively debate within the Evangelical Christian community. The role of women in the military is, at times, different from the defined role of women in the evangelical community. For example, one incident reported to us was a distraught parent concerned that the church her daughter was attending was trying to her into a career change from pilot to missionary. The reason given to the female cadet was that being a pilot was not a proper Christian role for women. Some women faculty members reported other incidents of role conflicts created by outside religious influence. These differing views of the place and role of women is of concern when off-base churches or religious groups cause female cadets to question their calling to military service, especially when these cadets are away from parental influence.

There is also a feeling among some faculty members that the faculty is not very diverse in its makeup and that the selection/hiring practices favors those of an Evangelical Christian orientation. It was reported that the Foreign Language Department has the greatest diversity represented among their faculty compared to other departments. That said, none of the faculty or staff members we talked to felt they were discriminated against because they did not embrace the religious views of senior leaders, department heads, or rating officers. All felt that Professional

Military Education (PME) and the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT) slots were fairly allocated and religious orientation was not a factor in the selection process.

Some cadets and faculty members who did not profess a particular religious affiliation and do not choose to be involved in religious programs seem most disturbed by any religious overtones in communiqués from senior leaders or peers. Although small in numbers, they were vocal in their desire to eliminate any reference to religion during their academy experience as cadets or permanent party members. They have no desire to hear a chaplain offering a prayer at a Change of Command ceremony nor do they think it is appropriate. They feel any religious overtones in cadet character development and ethics training is over-reaching and constitutes command's undue influence and endorsement of a particular religious affiliation.

As an example, one staff member reported that when he was a cadet, his commander tried to influence him to attend the Navigators (an influential evangelical religious group at the Academy). After the third time of saying no, he began to worry if it would affect his grade. As a cadet, he felt the officer had attempted to apply undue influence on him. He didn't mind the first invitation, but the second and third times were uncomfortable for him. While this situation occurred more than ten years ago, it suggests that elements of the current problem existed long before the current leadership arrived.

There are opposing and divergent views of the role of religion in our nation's public square and at the Academy. One view accepts the open expression of religion in public fora and ceremonies, during the performance of professional duties and accepts personal expressions of faith commitments. The other view desires to exclude the mention of religion in all public, state controlled fora and ceremonies, and sees personal expression of religion in the performance of public duties as a violation of another's rights and freedoms. Those with these views would assign religion to the private, not the public, sphere. These opposing, divergent views are polarizing, allowing for little, if any, middle ground. These extremes make it difficult for commanders and political leaders to develop coherence in policy and procedures which can foster a middle ground with respect to religious expression in the public square and in the life of the Academy.

Effectiveness of RSVP Training

The effectiveness of the RSVP training program gets mixed reviews from USAFA personnel as well as from NCMAF team members. Many cadets didn't seem to know what precipitated the mandatory training. They were told to attend the training, but didn't understand what was driving it and were not told the details regarding allegations of religious intolerance. Most had become aware of the issues from parents who called after seeing the media coverage. In discussions with the USAFA Superintendent he was shocked to learn that Cadets did not seem to know the issues surrounding the need for the RSVP training. Although the message was transmitted, it appears that many cadets did not fully understand what precipitated the training. Frequently in the intense training environment at the Academy, cadets (18-22 year-olds) can become preoccupied with things that seem much more important than the message being delivered and tune out things they feel don't specifically apply to them.

A few cadets made the comment that the training just provided another list of things they are not permitted to do. Others felt the underlying message was that one's religious or spiritual views are strictly a private matter and should not be discussed in any public forum, especially as government employees. While many said that it raised their awareness, one of the backlashes associated with the heightened awareness is the tendency to create 4,000 dormitory lawyers scrutinizing every e-mail message or communiqué from senior leaders, faculty, or staff. Cadet leaders also feel they are under close scrutiny, creating a climate of guarded response and second-guessing.

Some feel that extreme censorship of only religious flyers has had a chilling effect and infringes on their free-exercise of religion. Although the Air Force Academy is a government institution, many believe that an environment of academic freedom is critical in cadet development of convergent and divergent thinking, analysis and synthesis, and independent critical thinking. They feel academic freedom is not possible if any discussion of religion or spirituality becomes off-limits.

There is a feeling among some faculty and staff that issues funneled up the chain are not responded to or acted upon. This has created feelings in some of being disenfranchised and not being regarded or respected as equal members of the team, particularly if their views of the issues are different from those of senior leadership.

First Amendment of the Constitution, Character Development, and Ethics

Some reported that the character-based training is religiously orientated, implicitly or explicitly and that morality and ethics are portrayed to exist only within a religious framework. Others feel that character can be developed without any religious context. Faculty, staff, and cadets who are deeply religious attest that their religious values form the basis for their character development and conduct. Both groups had strong feelings on each side of the spectrum, again indicating the complexity of the issue.

The faculty members we spoke to indicated that the principles of free exercise of religion and religious accommodation plus the prohibition for the government to establish a religion are addressed during studies on the U.S. Constitution. We were not able to validate this input because of our time constraints. However, few cadets seemed to have a grasp on their role as future officers and commanders pertaining to these issues.

Religious Accommodation for Minority Groups

Interviews with cadets from different religious persuasions were quite revealing. Those cadets representing different Christian denominations generally felt that the issue was exaggerated. On the other hand, devout Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu and Jewish cadets viewed the problem as an accommodation issue not necessarily one of intolerance. According to their perception, religious accommodation for the Christian majority was automatic since by law the Academy doesn't typically hold training events on Sundays. However, for those whose faith traditions call for religious worship on days other than Sunday, they were only infrequently successful in being excused from training events to attend religious services. The burden for

requesting such release from scheduled training was placed solely on the shoulders of the cadet who at times felt intimidated and made to feel that they were letting their fellow cadets down if they were not present for the training event. After having their requests denied once or twice, they frequently stopped asking.

Some stated there appears to be a double standard regarding excused releases from training events. For example, intercollegiate athletes were routinely excused without any implication they were letting the other cadets down, while those who requested release for religious reasons were treated differently. The differing treatment within the cadet community is part of a larger problem that needs to be evaluated in terms of unit cohesion and esprit de corps. Commenting on a similar situation, a cadet explained that some cadets would cover for another cadet who may have been drinking alcohol and in jeopardy of being disciplined. This "looking after" or "protecting" a fellow cadet is considered acceptable behavior among some cadets. On the other hand, cadets who seek to be excused from unit activities to attend religious ceremonies and worship services are sometimes viewed as disloyal or as avoiding duty. These behaviors demonstrate insensitivity toward cadets from minority religious groups. Academy leadership expressed concern about these behaviors, because they are contrary to the principles of respect for the beliefs and human dignity of others that the Academy is attempting to affirm.

Until recently, little consideration was given to non-Christian holidays when planning and scheduling training events. However, the staff has now tried to schedule around important non-Christian religious holidays to the maximum extent possible, trying to achieve a balance between mission accomplishment and religious accommodation. The cadets from minority groups expressed concern that it would be inappropriate to start conducting more training events on Sunday to balance out the number of times each group is adversely affected by mission training requirements. What they desire is accommodation not balanced restrictions.

Spiritual Programs in Religious Education (SPIRE)

Approximately 900 cadets participate in the SPIRE program. There are 19 functioning groups from a variety of religious persuasions. Groups are formed at the request of the interested cadets. These groups meet on Monday nights for approximately one hour. SPIRE lay leaders must have a letter of appointment from their religious denomination authorizing them to function as the SPIRE leader and they must sign a covenant regarding their participation in this program. They operate under the supervision of the Academy chaplains. Lay leaders come from a variety of backgrounds. A few of the groups are chaplain led, while the remaining groups are led by faculty members or civilian representatives from faith groups in the Colorado Springs community.

For many cadets, especially those associated with minority religious groups, SPIRE is their only contact with others of their faith since they frequently are unable to attend worship services on Friday or Saturday. With nearly 25% of the cadets participating in the program, SPIRE serves a very important need for a significant number of cadets. Some credit SPIRE as the key to their decision to remain at the Academy and complete the challenging officer training program.

However, many have expressed concerns regarding SPIRE leader presence at campus locations such as the library on days other than Monday evening. Their presence in these locations conveys command endorsement. For some SPIRE leaders, such as Campus Crusaders for Christ, their full-time ministry is focused toward college students like the cadets attending the Academy, so they are present at these locations nearly every day. According to the Academy chaplains, all SPIRE leaders sign an agreement (covenant) that they will only meet with cadets who are participating in their respective SPIRE program, but to many, their presence at these locations has the appearance of recruitment.

Some cadets have expressed concerns regarding the recent decisions to discontinue the Wednesday evening SPIRE programs for Basic Cadet Training (BCT). This change seems ill advised without fully understanding the potential impact such actions might have on attrition. At a minimum a survey should be conducted to determine the value of the BCT SPIRE program on retention. Most who participate receive great strength and encouragement from other cadets who share similar beliefs.

Adequacy of the Religious Program

The religious program is structured to provide for the diverse religious needs of the USAFA personnel.

Currently all chaplains report through the senior staff chaplain to the Direct Report Unit (DRU) commander. Some of the chaplains are allocated to the 10th Air Base Wing Commander for ministry to the permanent party personnel and the Prep School students, while others are allocated to the 34th Training Wing for ministry to cadets. The senior staff chaplain generally is not invited to attend the senior staff meetings; so therefore, the commander may not have the benefit of direct input on religious programs and concerns.

A subtle, though perhaps meaningful, difference exists between how the command culture of the Air Force and other services places responsibility for base religious programs. In the main, line Air Force officers leave total responsibility to chaplains, whereas commanders of other services generally exercise greater involvement. In fact, in other services programs are referred to as "the commander's religious program." It is our view that chaplains should be responsible for advising, developing and running Academy religious programs, but Academy commanders ultimately need to be responsible and accountable for ensuring that all religious programs are inclusive and respectful of all faith traditions.

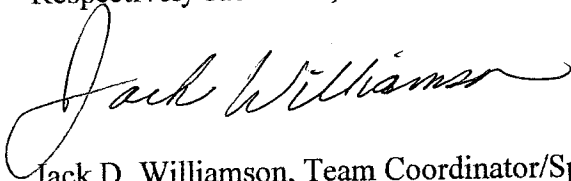
Recommendations

1. Commander Training: Ensure that all commanders fully understand the Constitutional First Amendment mandates with regard to Establishment, and Free Exercise of Religion. In addition, they should understand Religious Accommodation issues as referenced in DoD 1300.17, Para 3.2.4 and be current with regard to the Joint Ethics Directive (5 CFR 2645.702) and Air Force and USAFA Policies.

2. USAFA Personnel Training: Ensure that all USAFA personnel are current in training of the Constitutional First Amendment mandates with regard to Establishment and Free Exercise of Religion. As well, they should understand Religious Accommodation issues as referenced in DoD 1300.17, Para. 3.2.4 and be current with regard to the Joint Ethics Directive (5 CFR 2645.702) in addition to AF and USAFA policies.
3. USAFA Policies: Review and update as necessary, current policies regarding Establishment, Free Exercise and Religious Accommodation practices both from a legal perspective and a balanced professional appropriateness perspective.
4. First Amendment of the Constitution, Character Development, and Ethics: Review current curriculum for adequacy regarding Establishment, Free exercise, and Religious Accommodation. Also, evaluate if character development and ethics courses are overly entrenched in religious overtones and make changes as determined appropriate.
5. USAFA Academic Curriculum: Review the curriculum to determine the advisability of additional course work addressing religious issues commanders face in operational environments to prepare cadets for combat leadership, in addition to Constitutional issues they will face leading a religiously pluralistic American Military.
6. USAFA Religious Sensitivity Training. Seek outside professional consultation and instructional design specialists to upgrade the current *Respect for the Spirituality of All People* (RSVP) training program and future RSVP training modules. Develop evaluation matrices to measure training effectiveness.
7. Over-reaching religious influence of USAFA Personnel: Ensure that all USAFA personnel understand the inappropriateness of over-reaching religious influence considering positions of authority, rank and perceptions thereof.
8. Spiritual Programs in Religious Education (SPIRE): Continue with the Monday evening SPIRE program for cadets as it is currently operating including the Wednesday evening SPIRE program for Basic Cadet Training. However, limit installation access for civilian/retired military lay leaders on all other days to designated areas such as the chapel or the Chaplain's Oasis lounge where greater chaplain oversight can be ensured. Have the Chaplain responsible for program oversight meet with all SPIRE leaders quarterly to review issues and reinforce policies. Re-validate the SPIRE Covenant agreements with lay leaders annually and discuss the meaning and intent of each item. Ensure that an HC project officer maintains an appropriate and regular monitoring program. This person should provide minutes of the quarterly SPIRE leader meeting to the Installation Staff Chaplain and provide a status briefing on a regularly basis.
9. Communications: Consider refining communication processes for USAFA personnel, up and down the chain of command, to help ensure that both majority and minority voices are heard and responded to in a timely fashion.

10. USAFA Chaplain Work Assignments: Consider realigning the majority of the chaplains under the 34th Training Wing Commander and the 10th Air Base Wing Commander, but retain at least one senior chaplain on the DRU senior staff. This may merit review of manpower requirements, since the DRU operates much like a small MAJCOM.
11. PME: Consider including educational tracts in Professional Military Education (PME) as referenced in DoD 1300.17, Para. 3.2.4.

Respectively submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jack D. Williamson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "W".

Jack D. Williamson, Team Coordinator/Spokesperson
NCMAF Executive Director

GLOSSARY

ABW – Air Base Wing

AFI – Air Force Instruction

AH – Athletic Department

AMT - Academy Military Trainer

AOC - Air Officer Commanding

AOG - USAFA Association of Graduates

BCT - Basic Cadet Training

BOV - USAFA Board of Visitors

CC – Commander

Ch – Chaplain

CIRP - Cooperative Institutional Research Program

Classes: First Class – Senior; Second Class – Junior; Third Class – Sophomore;

Fourth Class – Freshman

CLM - Christian Leadership Ministries

DEOC - Defense Equal Opportunity Council

DF – Dean of Faculty

DoDD – Department of Defense Directive

EEO - Equal Employment Opportunity

HC – Chaplain Staff

IG – Inspector General

JA – Judge Advocate

MEO - Military Equal Opportunity

NCMAF - National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces

NDAA - National Defense Authorization Act

ODS - Officer Development System

PEER - Personal Ethics and Education Representative Program

Permanent Party – Person assigned to the Air Force Academy, excluding cadets

Pinnacle – Culmination of events that signify a new phase for Four Degree cadets

(Freshmen) into the Cadet Wing and a corresponding increase in privileges, responsibilities, and expectations

RSVP - Respecting the Spiritual Values of All People

SJA – Staff Judge Advocate

SPIRE - Special Programs in Religious Education

TRW - Training Wing