

A Tour of the US Service Academies
Class 2:
US Coast Guard Academy
US Air Force Academy

Jim Dunphy
Dunphyjj@aol.com

US Coast Guard Academy

- USCGA has much in common with the three DOD academies, but has some differences
- Need to consider both the history and current status of the USCG to understand



US Coast Guard

- In a way the USCG is one of the oldest services
- In another way, it is one of the youngest



US Coast Guard

- 1790 – The Revenue Marine Service founded at request of Alexander Hamilton
- 1848 – US Life Saving Service formed



US Coast Guard

- 1915 – these two organizations merge to form the USCG
- So while the USCG dates from 1915, they use 1790 on their logo



Organizational Location

- First located in the Department of the Treasury (as in Alexander Hamilton)
- 1967 – transferred to the Department of Transportation
- 2003 – transferred to the Department of Homeland Security
- Comes under the Navy when deployed in war time

USCGA

History

- The roots of the USCGA are in the School of Instruction of the Revenue Cutter Service
- First established in New Bedford MA, the school used the cutter USRC *Dobbin* (r) for instruction
- Not a true academy, but rather a two year apprenticeship, with minimal class work.
- Only averaged 5-10 cadets per class



USCGA History

- The School moved a number of times, finally settling in New London in 1910
- Became the Revenue Cutter Academy in 1914, and with the merger the next year, then the USCGA
- Moved into its current location in 1930

Admissions

- As noted, unlike USMA, USNA, or USAFA, a nomination is not required.
- The admitting class is usually only 240, and the acceptance rate is a low 16%
- The percentage of women at the USCGA is 35%, much higher than at any of the other academies

Admissions

- As with other service academies, tuition is free, and cadets (USCGA students, although in ships, are referred to as cadets) receive a stipend
- Upon graduation, officers incur an eight year commitment, a minimum of five years of which must be served on active duty.

Naval Training

Each year, the cadets in the summer have a different form of naval training

Naval Training

- In the first year, the cadets are given basic military training, culminating in a week aboard the USCGC *Eagle*
- The *Eagle* is the only active masted tall ship in the US military (The USS *Constitution* is technically on the Navy's rolls)
- In the second summer, cadets spend five weeks on the *Eagle* and then five weeks on an operational USCG ship



Naval Training

- The third summer is dedicated to technical training and a tour training the “swabs” (new cadets)
- Before their senior year, the cadets spend all 10 weeks aboard an active ship

Organization

Rear Admiral Jim Rendón
Superintendent



Captain Melissa L. Rivera
Commandant of Cadets



Athletics

- Teams are known as the Bears, after the USRC *Bear* which was involved in a dramatic rescue in Alaska in 1897
- USCGA plays in Division III (non scholarship)
- Its principal rivals are Connecticut College, located nearby, and the USMMA



Athletics

- The most famous person associated with USCGA athletics was HOF player Otto Graham
- He was helped in getting the HC job in 1957 by friend George Steinbrenner



Athletics

- By 1963, the team was undefeated and went to the Tangerine Bowl
- He left the USCGA in 1966 to become the HC of the Redskins for three years, with a record of 17-22-1
- He returned to the USCGA in 1969, and served as AD until his retirement in 1984



Athletics

- Currently the USCGA fields teams in 26 sports
- 14 men's and 12 women's
- Most popular and successful are sailing, rugby and lacrosse

A tour of the USCGA



Overview of USCGA and the Thames River



Hamilton Hall

Named after Alexander Hamilton, Hamilton Hall is the main administration building



Waesche Hall

Home of the USCGA museum, library and admissions office



USCGA Chapel

Built in 1952 on highest ground at the USCGA, this interdominational chapel includes a widow's walk



Chase Hall

Barracks housing the entire Corps, along with offices for the Commandant



Bear Plaza

Just outside Chase Hall, dominated by Objee the Bear



USCGA Alumni Center

Built in 2005, houses the USCGA Alumni Association along with ballrooms and other space



USCGA Memorial Field

Stadium for the football team, and also site of graduation

Traditions

100th night

- All service academies have some version of 100th night
- Takes place in late February, 100 nights before graduation
- At USCGA, the pecking order reverses and the fourth class (freshmen) become kings for a day

Traditions

Silver dollars

- Again, similar to the other service academies
- At graduation, cadets bring two silver dollars to the ceremony
 - One goes to the goat – the cadet last in order of merit
 - The second goes to the enlisted sailor who provides the new ensign with their first salute

Traditions

Objee bear

- As noted, the Objee Bear is the symbol of the Academy and located in Bear Plaza
- Before football games or other big events, the Objee Bear is decorated with jerseys or other clothing and becomes a rallying point for the cadets

Traditions

Square root club

- Members of this club have grade point average so low when you take the square root it gets larger
- For the non math oriented, this means < 1 (the square root of .81 is .9)

Traditions

Square root club

Members had to make a midnight pilgrimage to the grave of Hopley Yeaton (the first Revenue Service officer) and

- light a candle
- and then smoke a pipe while sharpening their dividers (a device used for measuring distances on a chart) on top of the crypt.

Traditions

Square root club

- Supposedly this will get them through their exams
- When we get to West Point, we will make a similar pilgrimage to the statue of General John Sedgwick



USAFA

USAAF

- Initially, aviation assets were part of the Signal Corps, but on entry into WWI, became the US Army Air Service
- In 1926, became the US Army Air Corps, a branch of the Army, with a chief and Assistant Secretary of War for Air



USAAF

- At the beginning of WWII, again redesignated as the US Army Air Force, on a par with Army Ground Forces and Services of Supply
- Essentially a separate arm, responsible for all air operations and not just support of ground operations



USAF

- There was a Joint Chiefs of Staff during WWII, with General Arnold of the USAAF as an equal member.
- Service unification was a contentious issue after the war, with the Navy opposing unification



USAF

- The National Security Act of 1947 created the structure we now know
- Included:
 - DoD
 - USAF
 - CIA
 - NSC



Origins of the USAFA

- Almost from the start of aviation, there were calls for a separate Air Academy
- In 1925, maverick Army General Billy Mitchell testified before Congress:

to have an air academy to form a basis for the permanent backbone of your air service....very much the same way that West Point does for the Army, or that Annapolis does for the Navy

Origins of the USAFA

- With the creation of a separate Air Force in 1947, 25% of West Point and Annapolis grads could secure commissions in the USAF
- A Service Academy Board, headed by Columbia University President Dwight Eisenhower, called in 1950 for the establishment of a separate Air Force Academy
- In 1954, Congress passed and then President Eisenhower signed a bill creating the USAFA

Origins of the USAFA

- An advisory commission was created, to include Charles Lindbergh and Carl Spaatz, to determine the site of the new USAFA
- Among the candidates:
 - Alton IL (25 miles north of St. Louis)
 - Lake Geneva WI (between Chicago and Milwaukee)
 - Colorado Springs CO
- Final selection was Colorado Springs

Origins of the USAFA

- The 306 members of the USAFA class of 1959 reported in July 1955 to Lowry AFB in Denver
- Since there were no upperclassmen, Air Training Officers, recent grads of USMA, USNA and the Citadel were assigned
- In August 1958, the Corps moved to Colorado Springs
- The first class graduated and was commissioned in June 1959



USAFA Uniforms

Designed by Hollywood
Director Cecil B. Demille

A Tour of the USAFA



USAFA Chapel

The interfaith USAFA Chapel is the most prominent landmark at the USAFA and brings to mind soaring in flight



Polaris Hall

USAFA Center for Character and Leadership

Only opened in 2016, this building, reminiscent of the tail of an aircraft, provides instruction in leadership



Vandenberg Hall

Named after an early CoS of the USAF, this is one of the cadet barracks



Sijan Hall

The other barracks, named after a 1965 grad who was awarded the Medal of Honor



Harmon Hall

Houses USAFA leadership



Fairchild Hall

Named after the first Commander of Air University,
it is the main academic building



Mitchell Hall

The cadet mess hall is named after controversial BG Billy Mitchell



Arnold Hall

Named after General of the Army/Air Force Hap Arnold, Arnold Hall serves as the student union



Terrazzo

Central area of the Academy around which the main buildings are located



Stadium

Home of the Falcons, a historically very successful football team

Leadership

LTG Jay Silveria
Superintendent



BG Kristin Goodwin
Commandant



Alums

Greg Popovich

Long time coach of the San Antonio Spurs



Chesty Sullberger

Pilot, Miracle on the Hudson



Alums

Heather Wilson
Secretary of the Air Force



**Chad Hennings -Outland Trophy winner,
long time Dallas Cowboy**



Non Alums

Brian Billick
Baltimore Ravens Coach



Harry Chapin
Singer



Non Alums

Alberto Gonzalez
US Attorney General



Miles O'Keefe (middle)
"Star" of the 1981 movie Tarzan



Traditions

First year – acceptance

- Cadets when admitted into Basic Cadet Training are not considered yet cadets
- At the end of training, they are given their 4th class shoulder boards and officially considered part of the Corps of Cadets



Traditions

First year – recognition

- At the end of the 4th class (freshman) year, recognizes that the 4th class have completed a rigorous training schedule
- They are now considered upper classmen (and ready to boss new Cadets coming in!)



Traditions

First year – recognition

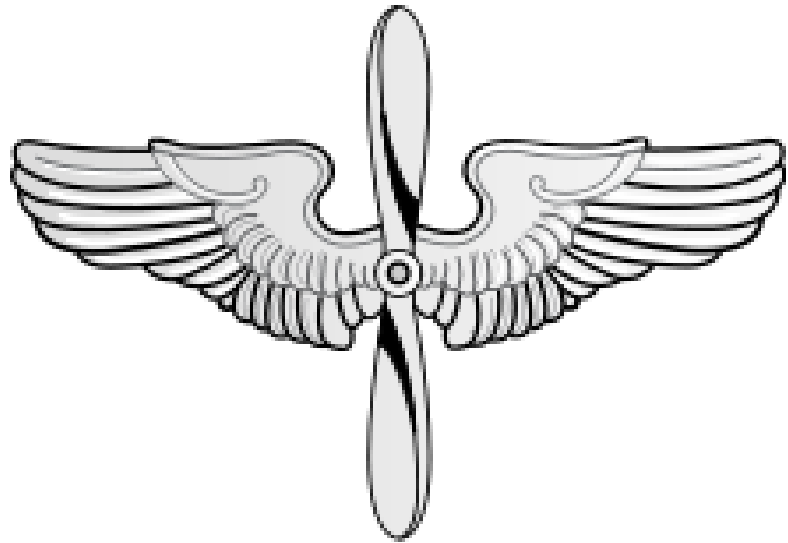
- Includes several activities:
 - a leadership course,
 - an assault course
 - “The Run to the Rock”
- Afterwards
 - Individual squadron ceremonies
 - Wing wide dinner



Traditions

First year – recognition

- Also, with recognition the cadets can then wear the prop and wings on their service cap
- Cadets who are descendants of USAAF members or USAFA grads can wear silver props and gold wings insignia



Traditions

Class Rings

- USAFA grads follow in a tradition set by USMA grads in 1835 of class rings
- They are awarded as 2nd classmen (juniors) right before graduation of the 1st class (seniors)



Traditions

Class Rings

- In keeping with the USAFA color scheme, silver, as compared to USMA/USNA gold
- Class crest on one side, USAFA crest on the other



Traditions

Class Rings

- Until graduation, worn with class crest facing cadet, then reversed at graduation.
- Class rings of deceased grads can either be displayed or melted down to be used to make new rings



Issues

- Honor violations
- Sexual Harassment
- Proselytizing
- Racist Graffiti

Honor violations

- As with the other service academies, the USAFA has a honor code
- The wording is very similar to that at USMA or USNA:

We will not lie, steal, or cheat, nor tolerate among us anyone who does.

Honor violations

- With this code, many tests and other events are unmonitored, trusting the cadets not to cheat
- There have been a number of honor scandals, the largest being in 1965, when over 100 cadets were expelled after cadets stole test information and passed it along

Honor violations

- Additional scandals took place, usually with cadets who already took an exam passing information to cadets who had not
- The honor code remains, and most cadets would be opposed to any changes in it

Sexual Harassment

- Female cadets had been at the USAFA since 1976, when Congress passed legislation to allow women to attend all the federal service academies
- There was still a rocky path to integration at all of the academies, particularly the USAFA

Sexual Harassment

- An anonymous email was sent in January 2003 to the Secretary of the Air Force, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, both Colorado Senators, and members of the media
- The noted indicated that there was a prevalence of sexual harassment at the USAFA, and little being done about it by the USAFA leadership

Sexual Harassment

The Secretary of the Air Force directed the AF General Counsel to establish a working group to

- Review cadet complaints and USAFA responses
- Review allegations of sexual harassment since 1993
- Review AF Office of Special Investigations cases

Sexual Harassment

The report was issued in September 2004. Among the findings:

- 19% of cadets reported incidents of harassment, with 7% reporting actual rapes
- Most were directed towards 4th and 3rd classmen, who were under 21 and given alcohol (which would have led to their punishment if reported)
- The report concluded that this climate was known to leadership at the USAFA

Sexual Harassment

However, little actual discipline was meted out

- In one example, a Colonel, who was only on post for two months after most of the reported rapes occurred, was forced into retirement
- The leadership was removed, and the Superintendent at the time, LTG John Dallager, retired as a MG
- In 2005, the Secretary of the Air Force determined that no action should be taken against other USAFA leadership, now mostly retired, since they “acted in good faith.”

Sexual Harassment

In 2005, the Secretary of the AF promulgated an “Agenda for Change”

- The Vice Commandant of Cadets was specifically tasked with overseeing sexual climate issues
- Female cadet rooms will remain in the general cadet area, but be clustered together
- Any cadet providing alcohol to an underage cadet will be dismissed immediately
- Amnesty will be provided in investigations of sexual assault except of the assaulter

Sexual Harassment

In 2005, the Secretary of the AF promulgated an “Agenda for Change”

- All medical personnel will be trained in dealing with sexual assault
- Mentoring program will be begun
- The USAFA sign “Bring me men” will be changed (later changed to "Integrity First. Service Before Self. Excellence In All We Do.")
- Any false accusations of sexual assault will be prosecuted

Proselytizing

- As noted, mandatory chapel is no longer permitted as Service Academies
- As the nation grows more diverse, particularly in religion, the body of the Cadet Wing also gets more diverse.

Proselytizing

- Mickey Weinstein, a 1977 USAFA grad, founded the Military Religious Freedom Foundation
- In part this is a reaction to his experience at the USAFA – he is Jewish, and was faced with anti Semitic slurs, swastikas and the like



Proselytizing

- While Weinstein and the MRFF have been in litigation with all services, it is the USAFA and particularly the USAFA that is of concern
- Led to a USAFA report that concluded while there was not active proselytizing, not enough was being done to support other religions



Proselytizing

Examples in the report

- Anti-Semitic remarks
- Official sponsorship of a showing of the film *The Passion of the Christ*
- A locker room banner that said academy athletes played for "Team Jesus."

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Proselytizing

A 2010 survey found that 41% of non Christian cadets said they were subjected to unwanted religious proselytizing at least once or twice last year at the school

Proselytizing

- After these reports, the Air Force released new guidelines
 - To discourage public prayers at official events or meetings
 - To facilitate worship by non-Christian religions- to include an outdoor worship area for cadets following Wicca, Neo-Druidism, or other earth-based religions

Racist graffiti

- In September 2017, racist graffiti was found outside a black cadet's room at the USAFA prep school on campus.
- The USAFA Supe took this occasion to speak out forcefully against racism

If you can't treat someone from another race, or different color skin, with dignity and respect, then you need to get out.



Racist graffiti

- It was later found out that the graffiti was actually done by the black cadet himself, and there was some thought this was to get out of trouble for misconduct.
- The cadet had left USAFA before the authorship of the graffiti had been established.



Next class

A short trip down US 50 to
Annapolis to tour the US
Naval Academy, aka Canoe U.