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## Student opinions and interests regarding a proposed Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) at the University of Northern Iowa / Paul C. Kelso

Paul C. Kelso

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STUDENT OPINIONS AND INTERESTS  
REGARDING A PROPOSED  
ARMY RESERVE OFFICER TRAINING  
CORPS (ROTC) AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

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Report # 1-79-G

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OFFICE OF STUDENT RESEARCH  
University of Northern Iowa  
Cedar Falls, Iowa

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## INTRODUCTION

During the 1978-79 school year, officials from the Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) detachment at the University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa contacted officials at the University of Northern Iowa regarding the possibility of establishing an ROTC extension center at the University of Northern Iowa.

Following the initial contacts and visits to the campus by ROTC officers from the University of Iowa, officials at the University of Northern Iowa decided to conduct a survey of University of Northern Iowa students to determine their interest in the proposed ROTC program.

This report summarizes the results of the questionnaire survey conducted on the University of Northern Iowa campus during pre-registration and registration for returning and new undergraduate students for the Fall Semester 1979.

The purpose of the survey was to provide students with an opportunity to indicate if ROTC would be beneficial to the students and to the university and to determine their interest in participating in ROTC if the proposed program was available.

## THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire (Appendix A) was developed following contact with ROTC officials at the University of Iowa and individual meetings with the Vice President for Student Services at the University of Northern Iowa.

Two forms of the questionnaire were developed - one for returning students and one for new students. Both included a short description of the proposed program and questions pertaining to opinions about and interest in the program.

Since any proposed program, if adopted, could not be operative before the Fall Semester 1980, it was assumed that a majority of the initial participants

would come from the new students rather than the returning students. Therefore, on the form distributed to the new students additional optional space was available for name, student number, and interest in receiving additional information about ROTC.

#### SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION SHEET

In addition to the information pertaining to ROTC, included on the reverse side of the card on which the questionnaire was printed, a supplemental information sheet including a statement and a list of student prepared questions pertaining to ROTC was approved and made available for examination by students during the registration procedure. (See Appendix B)

#### DEFINITION OF TERMS

Returning Students - undergraduate students who attended the University of Northern Iowa prior to Fall Semester 1979 and registered for classes for the Fall Semester 1979.

New Students - undergraduate students whose first registration for classes at the University of Northern Iowa was Fall Semester 1979.

Veterans - individuals who indicated they had served in the armed services of the United States prior to Fall Semester 1979.

Respondents - undergraduate students at the University of Northern Iowa who registered at the University of Northern Iowa Fall Semester 1979 and returned a completed ROTC questionnaire.

#### THE SAMPLE

Questionnaires were made available for distribution with Fall 1979 registration materials to all on-campus undergraduate students who registered for classes no later than August 31, 1979. Returning students received the questionnaires at the Registrar's Office while new students received them with registration materials distributed by the Academic Advising Services.

## ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

### Characteristics of Responding Students

Of the 9153 undergraduate students who were enrolled for classes (Registrar's Report - September 20, 1979) Fall Semester 1979, a total of 6059 (66%) returned questionnaires to the scheduling office. As Table 1 (See Appendix C) reveals, 66% of the freshmen, 92% of the sophomores, 75% of the juniors and 26% of the seniors participated in the survey with 71% of the returning students and 56% of the new students represented.

Table 2 (See Appendix C) gives a comparison of the distribution of the responding students by sex and status with the total undergraduate student population. The percentages of male and female students were almost identical while the percentages of returning and new students were very similar indicating that the respondents were representative of the entire undergraduate student population.

### Could ROTC be Beneficial?

In response to the statement "I feel that Army ROTC at UNI could be beneficial to the university and the student body," 2,921 (48%) of the students including 1,985 (45%) of the returning students and 936 (58%) of the new students felt that ROTC could be beneficial to the university and the student body (Table 3 - See Appendix C). This group included 53% of the freshmen, 41% of the sophomores, 55% of the juniors and 49% of the seniors. However, 3,138 (52%) of the students (55% of the returning students and 42% of the new students) felt that it could not be beneficial.

Less than one-half (45%) of the male students and more than one-half (52%) of the female students felt that it could be beneficial. In the freshmen and sophomore classes 61% of the new students, compared with only 39% of the returning students in those classes, felt it could be beneficial.



### Student Interest in Participating in ROTC

In the event that ROTC classes were offered at UNI, students could indicate if they (1) were definitely interested (2) might be interested or (3) would not be interested. A total of 5820 responded to this item, with 79 (1%) definitely interested, 583 (10%) indicating they might be interested and 5158 (89%) revealing they would not be interested.

#### Definitely Interested

As shown in Table 4, (See Appendix C) a total of 79 students including 50 returning students and 29 new students indicated a definite interest in ROTC. Of the 79, a total of 10 (6 former students and 4 new students) were veterans while 54 (68%) had freshmen or sophomore classification.

#### Might Be Interested

Of the 583 students who indicated that they might be interested in ROTC (Table 5 - See Appendix C), 345 (including 22 veterans) were returning students and 238 (including 4 veterans) were new students. Of the total group, 267 (46%) were freshmen and 171 (29%) were sophomores.

#### Would Not Be Interested

A total of 5158 students (Table 6 See Appendix C) were not interested in ROTC. Of this group 3910 (including 151 veterans) were returning students and 1248 (including 21 veterans) were new students. By classification 1691 (33%) were freshmen and 1565 (30%) were sophomores.

### Student Interest in Applying for an ROTC Scholarship

A total of 228 students (120 men and 108 women) indicated an interest in applying for an ROTC scholarship. As Table 7 (See Appendix C) reveals 105 (including 91 freshmen) were new students and 123 (including 34 freshmen) were returning students.

### Student Interest in More Information About ROTC

In the optional space on the questionnaire new students were given an opportunity to indicate a desire for more information about Army ROTC and to sign their names for purposes of identification. As Table 8 (See Appendix C) reveals, 46 students, including 4 veterans, requested more information. Of the 46, a total of 42 (91%) were freshmen and sophomores.

Further analysis of the questionnaires revealed that 16 (55%) of the new students who were definitely interested in ROTC and 121 (51%) of those who might be interested signed their names in the optional space provided for new students.

### SUMMARY

#### Summary of the Data

This survey was conducted to obtain opinions of University of Northern Iowa undergraduate students concerning a proposed Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) and their interest in participating in the program if courses were offered.

The questionnaire was made available to all undergraduate students who registered for classes for the Fall Semester 1979. Of the 9153 registrants, 6059 (66%) returned questionnaires including 66% of the freshmen, 92% of the sophomores, 75% of the juniors, and 26% of the seniors. Included were 71% of the returning students and 56% of the new students.

#### Characteristics of Responding Students

- 1) 54% of the respondents were females, 42% were males, and 4% did not indicate their sex.
- 2) 74% were returning students while 26% were new students, 33% were freshmen, 29% sophomores, 25% juniors and 8% seniors while 5% did not indicate their classification.

ROTC Could be Beneficial to the University and the Student Body (N=6059)

- 1) 52% responded, "No" (55% of the returning students including 61% of the freshmen and 61% of the sophomores).
- 2) 48% responded, "Yes" (58% of the new students including 61% of the freshmen and 61% of the sophomores).
- 3) 52% of the female respondents felt it could be beneficial contrasted to 45% of the male respondents.

Student Interest in Participating in ROTC (N=5820)

- 1) 1% (79) were definitely interested including 54 freshmen or sophomores and 10 veterans (5% of the veterans).
- 2) 10% (583) might be interested including 438 freshmen or sophomores and 26 veterans (13% of the veterans).
- 3) 89% (5158) were not interested including 3256 freshmen or sophomores and 172 veterans (83% of the veterans).

Student Interest in Applying for an ROTC Scholarship (N=228)

- 1) 53% were male and 47% female.
- 2) 46% were new students.
- 3) 79% were freshmen or sophomores.

Desire For More Information About ROTC (N=46)

- 1) 91% were freshmen or sophomores.
- 2) 1% were veterans.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE (FRONT SIDE) RETURNING STUDENTS

UNI STUDENT SURVEY REGARDING RESERVE OFFICER TRAINING CORPS (ROTC)

In order to determine student interest in offering Army ROTC at UNI, please answer the following questions:

1. I feel that Army ROTC at UNI could be beneficial to the University and the Student body.        Yes        No
2. If Army ROTC were offered at UNI,
  - I would definitely be interested.
  - I might be interested.
  - I would not be interested.
3. I would be interested in applying for an Army ROTC scholarship.        Yes        No

PERSONAL DATA:

Sex:        M        F Age:        Academic Group; FR        / SO        / JR        / SR        / Veteran?        Yes        No

Please return this card with your registration materials to the Scheduling Office.

(Over)

QUESTIONNAIRE (BACK SIDE) ALL STUDENTS

STUDENT SURVEY - ARMY ROTC

The University of Northern Iowa is currently considering offering Military Science courses on the UNI campus through cooperation with the US Army ROTC detachment at the University of Iowa. If a program is established, UNI students could become commissioned officers in the United States Army and Reserve Forces by participating. Although Army ROTC has traditionally been a 4-year program, students can now complete in 2 years, if they choose. The Army offers 3, 2 and 1 year scholarships covering all tuition, books, lab fees and most expendable supplies plus \$100.00 tax free subsistence allowance each month. All Advanced ROTC students (last 2 years) receive the \$100.00 per month allowance even if not on scholarship. Students who successfully complete the program are commissioned as second lieutenants and either enter active duty (3 years obligation, 4 year for scholarship students) or join a Reserve Forces (Army Reserve or Army National Guard) unit. The Army can now guarantee Reserve Forces if active duty is not desired.

1979/PCK

(Over)

QUESTIONNAIRE (FRONT SIDE) NEW STUDENTS

UNI STUDENT SURVEY REGARDING RESERVE OFFICER TRAINING CORPS (ROTC)

In order to determine student interest in offering Army ROTC at UNI, please answer the following questions:

1. I feel that Army ROTC at UNI could be beneficial to the University and the Student body.        Yes        No
2. If Army ROTC were offered at UNI,
  - I would definitely be interested
  - I might be interested.
  - I would not be interested.
3. I would be interested in applying for an Army ROTC scholarship.        Yes        No

PERSONAL DATA:

Sex:        M        F Age:        Academic Group: FR        / SO        / JR        / SR        / Veteran?        Yes        No

OPTIONAL

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student No. \_\_\_\_\_

I desire more information about Army ROTC.        Yes        No

Please return this card with your registration materials to the Scheduling Office.

(Over)

APPENDIX B

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION SHEET

We at UNI are concerned. The ROTC unit at the University of Iowa is proposing to establish a sub-chapter here at UNI. Why are they doing this? They say it is because they wish to help students with scholarship money. Yet very few in ROTC receive money until their junior year when they are contractually bound to the army. A more plausible reason is that ROTC cannot maintain enough members to meet government regulations. That means the ROTC unit at U of I will be forced to close unless they get more people. They must have 17 juniors in the program to exist. While they have enough juniors now, there are only 11 sophomores in the program at U of I. And this problem in membership exists elsewhere too. At ISU there was a scandal in which one officer resigned in protest over the lies and abuse that ROTC was inflicting on the university and the students. 30% of the detachments in the 4th Region, the region that we are in, have less than 17 juniors. Another 52% have less than 25 sophomores. Since over half of the sophomores quit the program before their junior year there are many ROTC programs in deep trouble. These include: U of Oregon, [sic] Oregon State, [sic] U of Wyoming, U of South Dakota, U of Nebraska, Idaho State, U of Idaho, UCLA, Iowa State, Utah State, U of San Francisco in our 4th Region, and other schools including Michigan State, U of Michigan, Rice University, Texas Christian University, and U of Missouri. Noting these problems, we have ten questions that must be answered satisfactorily before a ROTC unit is set up here at UNI.

- 1) Are we at UNI just saving the ROTC program at the University of Iowa, and will UNI benefit as a school from ROTC or just U of I?
- 2) How will credit be arranged for ROTC cadets if the unit is based at U of I, and will ROTC instructors reside in Cedar Falls-Waterloo, or in Iowa City making contact and accountability difficult?
- 3) Will contact hours consist of actual hours spent in class, or will it also consist of illegitimate things such as field trips, canoe and camping trips, etc.?
- 4) What arrangements have been made to prevent fraud by ROTC in its recruitment activities?
- 5) In fact can ROTC be held accountable by UNI for acts of fraud, deception, etc., that has occurred at other schools if those schools haven't held ROTC accountable?
- 6) Will a meaningful Officer Education Committee to oversee ROTC be established to review academics, recruitment, etc.?
- 7) Will special groups of students be targetted [sic] for recruitment (such as athletes, club members, etc.) just to hold numbers up without any real intention of joining the army?
- 8) Would the students recruited into ROTC normally meet army enlistment standards?
- 9) What provisions are there to protect those who wish to drop out of ROTC from arbitrary treatment by local ROTC personell? (sic)
- 10) Will ROTC look out for student rights, inform students of army policy, and in fact follow those policies even if it means closing the sub-chapter at UNI?

APPENDIX C

TABLES

TABLE 1  
RESPONSE RATE TO QUESTIONNAIRE

CHARACTERISTIC	NUMBER OF ENROLLED UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS (9/20/1979)	NUMBER OF RESPONDING STUDENTS	% RESPONSE
<u>SEX</u>			
MALE	3953	2560	65
FEMALE	5200	3260	63
UNKNOWN	0	239	N/A
TOTAL	9153	6059	66
<u>CLASS</u>			
FRESHMEN	3032	1989	66
SOPHOMORES	1913	1759	92
JUNIORS	2043	1529	75
SENIORS	1827	472	26
UNKNOWN or UNCLASSIFIED	338	310	92
TOTAL	9153	6059	66
<u>STATUS</u>			
RETURNING STUDENTS	6277	4454	71
NEW STUDENTS	2876	1605	56
TOTAL	9153	6059	66

TABLE 2

SEX AND STATUS OF RESPONDING STUDENTS

COMPARED WITH ALL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS (FALL 1979)

CHARACTERISTIC	RESPONDING STUDENTS		TOTAL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS	
<u>SEX</u>	NO.	%	NO.	%
MALE	2560	42	3953	43
FEMALE	3260	54	5200	57
UNKNOWN	239	4	0	0
TOTAL	<u>6059</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>9153</u>	<u>100</u>
 <u>STATUS</u>				
RETURNING STUDENTS	4454	74	6277	69
NEW STUDENTS	<u>1605</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>2876</u>	<u>31</u>
TOTAL	6059	100	9153	100



TABLE 3  
R O T C    COULD BE BENEFICIAL TO THE UNIVERSITY AND THE STUDENT BODY

RETURNING STUDENTS									NEW STUDENTS									TOTAL RESPONDENTS									P E R C E N T
MALE			FEMALE			TOTAL			MALE			FEMALE			TOTAL			MEN			FEMALE			TOTAL			
YES	NO	TOTAL	YES	NO	TOTAL	YES	NO	TOTAL	YES	NO	TOTAL	YES	NO	TOTAL	YES	NO	TOTAL	YES	NO	TOTAL	YES	NO	TOTAL	YES	NO	TOTAL	
<u>FRESHMEN:</u>																											
124	206	330	154	235	389	278	441	719	281	233	514	494	262	756	775	495	1270	405	439	844	648	497	1145	1053	936	1989	33
<u>SOPHOMORE:</u>																											
259	439	698	392	565	957	651	1004	1655	22	17	39	41	24	65	63	41	104	281	456	737	433	589	1022	714	645	1759	29
<u>JUNIOR:</u>																											
322	333	655	442	317	759	764	650	1414	30	23	53	43	19	62	73	42	115	352	356	708	485	336	821	837	692	1529	25
<u>SENIOR:</u>																											
107	132	239	114	108	222	221	240	461	5	1	6	5	0	5	10	1	11	112	133	245	119	108	227	231	241	472	8
<u>CHI<sup>a</sup>:</u>																											
9	12	21	18	17	35	27	29	56	2	3	5	5	5	10	7	8	15	11	15	26	23	22	45	34	37	71	1
<hr/>																											
<u>TOTAL:</u>																											
821	1122	1943	1120	1242	2362	1941	2364	4305	340	277	617	588	310	898	928	587	1515	1161	1399	2560	1708	1552	3260	2869	2951	5820	
<u>PERCENT:</u>																											
42	58		47	53		45	55		55	45		65	35		61	39		45	55		52	48		49	51		
<hr/>																											
<u>WPD<sup>b</sup>:</u>																											
0	0	0	0	0	0	44	105	149	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	82	90	0	0	0	0	0	0	52	187	239	4
<hr/>																											
<u>GRAND TOTAL:</u>																											
						1985	2469	4454							936	669	1605							2921	3138	6059	100
<u>PERCENT:</u>																											
						45	55	74							58	42	26							48	52	100	

a. Class not included

b. No personal data

TABLE 4

## STUDENTS DEFINITELY INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN ROTC

RESPONSE	RETURNING STUDENTS									NEW STUDENTS									TOTAL										
	<u>VETERANS</u>			<u>NON-VETERANS</u>			<u>TOTAL</u>			<u>VETERANS</u>			<u>NON-VETERANS</u>			<u>TOTAL</u>			<u>VETERANS</u>			<u>NON-VETERANS</u>			<u>TOTAL</u>				
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W
FRESHMEN	0	0	0	4	5	9	4	5	9	1	1	2	8	12	20	9	13	22	1	1	2	12	17	29	13	18	31		
SOPHOMORES	1	0	1	13	9	22	14	9	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	13	9	22	14	9	23		
JUNIORS	1	3	4	4	3	7	5	6	11	2	0	2	3	1	4	5	1	6	3	3	6	7	4	11	10	7	17		
SENIORS	1	0	1	2	4	6	3	4	7	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	2	5	7	3	5	8		
TOTALS	3	3	6	23	21	44	26	24	50	3	1	4	11	14	25	14	15	29	6	4	10	34	35	69	40	39	79		

TABLE 5

## STUDENTS WHO MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN ROTC

RESPONSE	RETURNING STUDENTS									NEW STUDENTS									TOTAL										
	<u>VETERANS</u>			<u>NON-VETERANS</u>			<u>TOTAL</u>			<u>VETERANS</u>			<u>NON-VETERANS</u>			<u>TOTAL</u>			<u>VETERANS</u>			<u>NON-VETERANS</u>			<u>TOTAL</u>				
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W
FRESHMEN	2	0	2	36	29	65	38	29	67	2	0	2	93	105	198	95	105	200	4	0	4	129	134	263	133	134	267		
SOPHOMORES	8	1	9	67	78	145	75	79	154	1	0	1	7	9	16	8	9	17	9	1	10	74	87	161	83	88	171		
JUNIORS	2	1	3	48	17	65	50	18	68	0	0	0	9	9	18	9	9	18	2	1	3	57	26	83	59	27	86		
SENIORS	6	2	8	18	28	46	24	30	54	1	0	1	1	0	1	2	0	2	7	2	9	19	28	47	26	30	56		
CLASS NOT INDICATED	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	2	3	1	2	3		
TOTAL	18	4	22	170	153	323	188	157	345	4	0	4	110	124	234	114	124	238	22	4	26	280	277	557	302	281	583		

TABLE 6

## STUDENTS NOT INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN ROTC

RESPONSE	RETURNING STUDENTS						NEW STUDENTS									TOTAL											
	<u>VETERANS</u>			<u>NON-VETERANS</u>			<u>TOTAL</u>			<u>VETERANS</u>			<u>NON-VETERANS</u>			<u>TOTAL</u>			<u>VETERANS</u>			<u>NON-VETERANS</u>			<u>TOTAL</u>		
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T
FRESHMEN	23	4	27	265	351	616	288	355	643	12	2	14	298	736	1034	310	738	1048	35	6	41	563	1087	1650	598	1093	1691
SOPHOMORES	34	6	40	575	863	1438	609	869	1478	0	2	2	31	54	85	31	56	87	34	8	42	606	917	1523	640	925	1565
JUNIORS	47	4	51	550	734	1284	597	738	1335	2	1	3	37	51	88	39	52	91	49	5	54	587	785	1372	636	790	1426
SENIORS	28	3	31	184	185	369	212	188	400	0	0	0	4	4	8	4	4	8	28	3	31	188	189	377	216	192	408
CLASS NOT INDICATED	2	0	2	18	34	52	20	34	54	1	1	2	4	8	12	5	9	14	3	1	4	22	42	64	25	43	68
TOTAL	134	17	151	1592	2167	3759	1726	2184	3910	15	6	21	374	853	1227	389	859	1248	149	23	172	1966	3020	4986	2115	3043	5158

TABLE 7

## INTERESTED IN APPLYING FOR ROTC SCHOLARSHIP

RESPONSE	MEN			WOMEN			TOTAL		
	<u>RETURNING</u>	<u>NEW</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>RETURNING</u>	<u>NEW</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>RETURNING</u>	<u>NEW</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
FRESHMEN	22	44	66	12	47	59	34	91	125
SOPHOMORES	25	4	29	22	3	25	47	7	54
JUNIORS	16	5	21	9	2	11	25	7	32
SENIORS	4	0	4	13	0	13	17	0	17
TOTALS	67	53	120	56	52	108	123	105	228

TABLE 8

## DESIRE MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ARMY ROTC

RESPONSE	VETERANS			NON-VETERANS			TOTAL		
	M	W	T	M	W	T	M	W	T
FRESHMEN	2	1	3	15	21	36	17	22	39
SOPHOMORES	0	0	0	1	2	3	1	2	3
JUNIORS	1	0	1	3	0	3	4	0	4
SENIORS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	3	1	4	19	23	42	22	24	46

