OCTOBER, 1968

ROTC program may be altered; faculty starts reappraisal

The Academic Senate has started a reappraisal of ROTC programs.

The action came after four faculty members prepared a paper saying that academic credit should not be given for military science activities.

After discussion which included Student Body President Denis Hayes and four other students, the Senate without dissent created a study committee which is to report by Jan. 15. Its members were not immediately appointed.

The resolution creating the committee said "It is the sense of the Senate that ROTC programs should be altered, but that proper relations between the ROTC departments and Stanford may be established by review and reform of present relations."

Authors Listed

Authors of the ROTC paper were Asst. Prof. Joseph D. Sneed, philosophy; Asst. Prof. Anne T. Kostelanetz, English; Asst. Prof. Bradley Efron, statistics; and Prof. John D. Goheen, philosophy.

Last year, 241 students were enrolled in Army, Navy and Air Force ROTC programs, all of which are voluntary. Of this group, 125 held ROTC scholarships covering full tuition and fees, $75 for books, and a $50 monthly subsistence allowance.

Over the past five years, the number of Stanford students enrolling in ROTC has declined:

	Freshmen	Total undergraduates
1963–64	167	586
1964–65	121	554
1965–66	115	241
1966–67	98	201
1967–68	69	241

By far the largest loss in enrollment has been sustained by Army ROTC, which fell from 343 to 76 Stanford students in this period. Air Force enrollment dropped from 99 to 32, while Navy ROTC enrollment declined from 144 to 133, including 93 scholarship holders.

Last year, 98 students completed military science programs at Stanford, taking military courses for 16 to 33 of the 180 academic units required for graduation.

"The quality of teaching staff in the military science programs is not comparable with that in other departments at Stanford," the paper notes. "Few of these men hold advanced degrees from highly regarded institutions . . . (and they) are not engaged in creative research or scholarship pertinent to the subjects they teach.

"Text materials for military science courses are standardized. . . . There is some indication that this material does not present a significant intellectual challenge to Stanford students. . . . Students seldom receive less than a 'B' in military science courses.

"Some of the material covered — weapons, marksmanship, tactics, and so forth—appears to be of such a narrowly pragmatic, non-academic nature as to raise doubts about its legitimacy within a university curriculum." No academic credit is given for military drill.

ROTC department heads said they welcome an objective and dispassionate study.

The important question, they said, is whether universities are willing to help provide "well-educated officers to lead and manage vital segments of our nation's defenses.

"Opposition to ROTC frequently stems from an assumed incompatibility between the values of the military profession and the values of higher education," which we do not believe to be the case."

Marine Col. Robert L. Thomas, NROTC; Col. Stanley M. Ramey, Army ROTC; and Major Leon Heinle, AFROTC, noted that it would be unfortunate if "the strong sense of fair play and humanitarian precepts" basic to Stanford students no longer had a place in military councils.

They noted that ROTC courses are voluntary, and said the opinion that the quality of teaching isn't comparable with other departments is "not documented by scientific evidence."

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