Civic Education in the Military

Are Servicemembers More Prepared for Micro-Aggression or Macro-Aggression?

National Commission on
Civic Education in the Military

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Executive Introduction

The U.S. Armed Forces Should Not Be a Laboratory for **Social Experimentation**

The sole purpose of the U.S. Armed Forces is to defend the nation against its external enemies. The service academies train officers committed to fulfilling this mission.

This mission – defense of the nation – makes the U.S. Armed Forces arguably the most important institution in the United States. Without a nation, other institutions are meaningless because they would not exist.

Given its importance, the U.S. Armed Forces should not be a laboratory for social experimentation, especially one based on Critical Race Theory, a contentious and abstract social theory. Yet, as this Commission Report on Civic Education in the Military shows in great detail, Critical Race Theory is promoted within Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training throughout the military from the Pentagon through the ranks and in our service academies.

Critical Race Theory is based on an assumption that no matter what progress is made on ensuring equal rights for minorities, “white privilege” and “sub-conscious” racism continues to prevail among whites, no matter their professed support for diversity and inclusion in their workplace, community, or immediate and extended families. Critical Race Theory assumes that racism is systemic from the very founding of the United States and that the U.S. Constitution was drafted to ensure the white privilege of slaveholders. Whatever the appearance of progress – constitutional amendments and legislation to protect equal rights for racial minorities – is a façade that still preserves white privilege. Critical Race Theory is based on assumptions, not empirically derived evidence, and is by nature divisive. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs, which rely on Critical Race Theory, should not be seen as workplace sensitivity training.

The Commission on Civic Education in the Military began as a project to review civic education in the military. Our research team did not expect to find Critical Race Theory so embedded and pervasive. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs are found throughout the U.S. Armed Forces and our service academies. This year long study documents just how pervasive these training programs are in our Armed Forces and Service Academies and that DEI extends well beyond just formal training programs in the military and service academies.

The Founders of our nation understood and feared a politicized military. History had shown them that a politicized army easily became the tool of tyranny. The Armed Forces of the United States has proudly upheld this long tradition of separating mission from politics.

The commissioners for this project believe that military training for service men and women in all ranks needs to inculcate and reinforce pride in our nation, pride in service, and in our country’s motto, E Pluribus Unum (Out of Many One).

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Introduction

Respecting **Our Military**

The American people hold our service men and women and their leaders, who defend this nation from foreign enemies, in the highest esteem. The men and women serving in our Armed Forces stand ready to sacrifice life and limb to protect this exceptional nation. *E Pluribus Unum*, ("Out of Many, One"), our country's motto, captures the essence of our nation. Ethnically, racially, religiously, and culturally diverse, we stand united in our belief that liberty binds us as a nation.

E Pluribus Unum **Out of Many, One**

Today our cadets and midshipmen in our military service academies are instructed through Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training that belies – indeed, subverts – the concept *E Pluribus Unum*. In extensive and multiple DEI training programs that are implemented through every rank, our service men and women are instructed to believe that this nation was built on systematic racism embedded in the founding of our country and that that system underlies daily life in the country today. Racism is so endemic, these DEI programs declare, that people are not even aware of their racism. DEI training insists that "White supremacy" permeates every facet of American life, institutions, and individual thought and insists servicemembers utilize the divisive vocabulary of oppressed vs. oppressor.

However well-intended these mandates for DEI training, the ramifications of these programs pose long term consequences on multiple levels. Most importantly, our soldiers, sailors, Marines, and airmen, as well as service academy cadets and midshipmen, are being indoctrinated into a belief that they should defend a nation that is racist, sexist, homophobic, and transphobic to its core.

This report details how extensive DEI training is in our military. The report does not call into question the patriotism of our military leaders or their qualities as leaders. Nonetheless, we believe that urgent reform – the elimination of these DEI programs – should occur immediately. DEI programs should be replaced by civic educational programs that convey the strengths of our nation and an appreciation of our nation's founding principles, and professed ideals – achieved and aspirational.

A nation's military readiness lays in more than just weaponry, technological prowess, or strategic planning. Troop *esprit de corps* remains essential for victory in battle and war. Men and women fight and die for national ideals, their fellow soldiers, and their families.

This report provides a detailed account of DEI training, not found in other published accounts of military education and training. The importance of the report rests in its the details, even as new information on DEI training continues to be revealed, but the larger point of the report is how extensive and pervasive this training is within our military.

This report expresses a sense of urgency as to reforms needed now – not after more congressional hearings, new complaints, or more revelations. DEI, as it continues to be implemented, should be seen as a destructive force for a nation that lives in an increasingly dangerous world.

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

The National Commission on Civic Education in the Military finds that cadets and midshipmen at our military service academies are receiving extensive training in so-called civic education about racism, sexism, unconscious bias, and intersectionality that subverts our ideals. Furthermore, soldiers, sailors, Marines, and airmen across all branches of the military are occasionally subject to similar trainings across the military at all organizational levels. These trainings rely heavily on the tenets of Critical Race Theory (CRT) and are provided with the express goals of fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the workplace, and of rooting out alleged white supremacy in the military. Training is implemented by a vast DEI bureaucracy that extends from senior leaders at the Pentagon to the lowest ranks.

This year-long research project examining online and published materials available to the public, yet hidden from the unobservant bystander, is divided into three main parts. The first section provides the background of DEI training beginning in the 1970s through mandated executive orders in the 2010s and 2020s. This background is important to understand the changing nature of DEI training in the military and the issues raised by today's training. The second and third sections – DEI training in the services and at the three major service academies, respectively – reveal how extensive, divisive, and damaging this training is for those serving in our military.

The research reveals serious problems within our military complex. The U.S. military now has a well-developed, taxpayer-funded DEI bureaucracy dedicated to rooting out "white privilege" and white supremacy, and that allows for (and sometimes teaches) the overt criticism of the United States, its founding, its founders, and its founding documents, alleging that they are all rooted in systemic racism. This bureaucracy, with its accompanying trainings, is supported and implemented by Pentagon leadership. Trainings presented across all branches of the military and at our service academies not only include concepts but also encourage behavior that is prescribed by CRT without presenting alternative perspectives. Military leadership regularly asserts that DEI training is essential to building strong teams; how it does that is left unexplained, and no data are presented corroborating such claims.

Our vibrant religious, economic, and political history, with all its nuance, is simply glossed over or criticized, and little or no training is offered as a means of helping servicemembers, cadets, and midshipmen understand and appreciate America's founding philosophy or the Constitution servicemembers swear an oath to uphold and defend.

The commission posits the following:

- An effective military and healthy citizenry need to share and understand a common story as to the unique creation of the American Republic. A common story is necessary for unit cohesion, morale, and an effective fighting force. DEI carries inherently negative messages about Western civilization generally, and about the United States and its people specifically.
- As demonstrated in numerous surveys and reports, public K-12 educations fail woefully in teaching even the basics of American politics, government, and the Constitution. We cannot assume that recruits, servicemembers, new cadets, and midshipmen know the basics about the country they will defend. As one leader put it, "We don't do a good job of teaching civics in school anymore; the military has to make up for that deficiency in its own training."[1]
- A sole focus on identity-related themes produces divisiveness within our military rather than vital unity. This is not to argue that identity themes should be necessarily excluded in civic education, but those training and providing professional military education to our men and women in uniform should be required to teach American civic values to help them understand the unique nature of our constitutional republic.
- The massive DEI bureaucracy, its training and its pseudo-scientific assessments are at best distractions that absorb valuable time and resources. At worst they communicate the opposite of the military ethos: e.g. that individual demographic differences come before team and mission.

[1] Levine, et al, "Prohibited Extremist Activities in the U.S. Department of Defense," IDA Document P-33076, 9. https://www.ida.org/-/media/feature/publications/p/pr/prohibited-extremist-activities-in-the-us-department-of-defense/p-33076.ashx

Central Findings:

- DEI themes dominate the training and education that members of the armed forces receive about their country. As “white supremacy” and racism have become a central focus of DEI trainings, white supremacist racism is assumed to be the core problem of the nation and of the military; positive messaging about the country and its values disappears with the shift in focus. Servicemembers are asked to defend a nation that is an alleged cesspit of racism and discrimination.
- The defense of dividing servicemembers into racial, gender, and sexual identities is Orwellian. Rather than emphasizing that the strength of our military is a product of its unity and steadfast dedication to the American ideals of individual liberty and freedom, it is instead asserted that diversity (our differences) is our strength. Emphasizing differences and grievances sows distrust and undermines unit cohesion and teamwork.
- Traditionally, young people enlisted for many reasons, with a major one being patriotism — to protect the family, country, and faith. That patriotism, if held by a white male, now raises suspicions of white supremacy.
- The DEI bureaucracy extending from the Department of Defense (DOD) through the services and in the service academies is extensive and entrenched. Dating from the 1970s, its reach continues to grow and even extends to those leaving the service.
- Efforts to root out white supremacy involve not only training but appointing service members to act as the “eyes and ears” of the bureaucracy to turn in suspects. Suspicion replaces trust, understanding, and teamwork.
- DEI training focuses on rooting out “white supremacy” even though there is little or no evidence that there is a problem of white supremacy in the military. The massive hunt during the stand-down in 2020 located roughly 100 out of a force of 2.1 million. The ongoing search, implemented by Secretary Lloyd Austin in December of 2021, has turned up equally small numbers of extremists of any variety.[2] The most recent study released by the Department of Defense, the “Study on Extremist Activity within the Total Force” offered little new data and could only conclude that “extremism in the military is rare but dangerous.”[3]

[2] Will Carless, “The military ordered big steps to stop extremism. Two years later, it shows no results.” USA Today. July 21, 2023. Eric Schmitt, Jennifer Steinhauer, Helene Cooper, “Pentagon Accelerates Efforts to Root Out Far-Right Extremism in the Ranks.” The New York Times. January 20, 2021

[3] Will Carless. “After USA TODAY investigation, military finally releases internal extremism report.” USA Today. December 27, 2023.

Recommendations

Historically, military veterans were held up as ideal democratic citizens.[4] The internalized values of duty, honor, and country that military service imparted along with teamwork, leadership, working with diverse groups, and problem solving made veterans the glue of their communities. Military veterans, more often than non-veterans, volunteered and engaged in solving community problems. They carried the positive aspects of an inclusive warrior ethos into their communities.

The surest way to eliminate the concerning trends we have identified, and the growth of race- and sex-based scapegoating and stereotyping in the U.S. military, is to altogether end the DEI bureaucracy there. However, until such a time as the executive or legislative branches of the government choose to end the DEI bureaucracy in our federal agencies and military, we are left to advocate the pursuit of alternative avenues that may affect positive change despite existing policies.

Therefore, to address the shortfalls noted above, the Commission makes several recommendations that are aimed at restoring the warrior ethos in our military, fostering a climate of genuine unity and strength, and helping servicemembers understand and believe in American civic values and the uniqueness of our Constitutional Republic.

- We join the members of Congress, the Heritage Foundation, and other organizations in calling for a return to the military’s outstanding tradition of merit-based selections and promotions, and non-discriminatory equal opportunity.
- We recommend that all syllabi that are taught in the humanities and social sciences at our military service academies be made publicly available. The public has the right to know, and to challenge, the extent to which fashionable or ideologically based academic theories – Critical Race Theory, Gender Studies, Postcolonial Studies, etc. – shape the education of cadets and midshipmen at our military academies. These cadets and midshipmen will be commissioned as officers and are the future leaders of the United States military’s respective service branches.
- We support the inclusion of civic education – America’s commitment to freedom and opportunity – in military training. We recommend that the U.S. military provide educational training materials to its personnel that aim at enhancing servicemembers’ understanding of foundational American philosophy and values, the basics of American politics and government, the Constitution, and their oath to support and defend the Constitution. These formal training materials should be provided to personnel at our military service academies, in officer and noncommissioned officer (NCO) professional military education and training courses, and on a periodic and recurring basis on Department of Defense (DOD) installations, just as DEI trainings are offered at those places on a periodic and recurring basis.

[4] Eric B. Hodges, “Does U.S. Marine Corps Recruit Training Constitute a Type of Civil Education?” Journal of Political Science Education 13:1, 91-108.

Summary of Findings

Restoring Confidence in Our Military

Americans are rapidly losing confidence in our fundamental social and political institutions, including the military. Critical to restoring trust is a restoration of civic education focused on foundational principles upon which America's founders created the experiment of our democratic republic. Basic to our understanding of foundational principles are the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights.

> Our military personnel, service academy cadets, and midshipmen need to be trained in the **basics of foundational principles**.

DEI as Civic Education

In response to racial tension in the services, the DOD created the Defense Race Relations Institute (DRRI) in 1970 to combat extremism. When the training, which was supposed to promote racial understanding, took a turn toward Black Power-inspired material and a decrease in good order in the ranks, Congress investigated and cut the program's funding. In 1973, Congress curbed training excesses that damaged an already weakened military. The bureaucracy remained under a new name, but with an emphasis on equal opportunity.

Through the 1980s and most of the 1990s, concern about diversity and inclusion meant combatting sexual harassment and ensuring equal opportunity. The rollback turned out to be temporary. By the late 1990s, extremism and gang activity were added to equal opportunity as items of concern. But the real explosion came in two bursts: Executive Order 13583 of August 2011, President Barack Obama's order that mandated diversity and inclusion plans across the government. The second, more spectacular burst, came in 2020 and early 2021, with the death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police and the January 6th riot at the nation's Capital following President Donald Trump's lost reelection bid. Black Lives Matter, white supremacy, and the threat of insurrection were swirled together in the elite culture and in the military to propagate more radical change.

Building on the bureaucratic structures, procedures, and personnel training provided by the 2011 executive order, training in DEI principles rooted in Black Lives Matter ideas, made DEI the definition of real Americanism. These principles are the spawn of Critical Race Theory, an academic preoccupation that surfaced in the 1980s and 1990s that combined identity politics with a Marxist obsession with power. While for Marx the engine of history was class conflict, CRT divided the population between oppressor and oppressed, grounded in race and ethnicity, while encouraging similar disciplines to further division according to sexual and gender identities. To be against racism is not enough: antiracism means privileging the oppressed. Racism is "systemic," baked into institutions and everyday life. Oppressors, heterosexual white males especially, oppress by their mere existence. White men should be monitored for white supremacist ties. The rhetoric of "diversity" touts the benefits of diverse perspectives to teams, but DEI ideology attaches those perspectives to groups. DEI assumes that perspectives grow not out of individual backgrounds, experiences, and education, but out of sexual orientation, skin color, and gender.

A search for white supremacists – seemingly the only extremists that interest the military – has come up short: only 100 members of the military were deemed to be extremists out of a force of 2.1 million were found. The Rand Corporation surveyed veterans, presumably expecting to find sympathy for white supremacy. Instead, veterans were far less favorable to white supremacy than the general population, and a larger percentage had favorable views toward Black Lives Matter and Antifa.

Nonetheless, training in DEI and the force of trainers and assessors whose outcomes are reported up the chain of command, takes time and an unknown number of personnel. Arguing that dividing soldiers, sailors, Marines, and airmen into identity groups vis-à-vis DEI produces connectedness and generates new ideas ignores the effectiveness of the all-encompassing and unifying American identity that led to total victory in recent military conflicts.

Our detailed findings are found below. In summary:

Services

1) Each of the services follow federal DEI and anti-extremism regulations and programs. Staffing is extensive, starting at the top and reaching down to small units.

2) Spending on DEI programming is increasing. The DOD's allocation for DEI projects jumped from $68 million in fiscal year 2022 to $86.5 million in fiscal year 2023. The Pentagon is requesting $114.7 million for fiscal year 2024.

3) Only a handful of training modules are visible to the public. Among the examples, the Air Combat Command "toolkit" for holding "courageous conversations." Using current human relations parlance, the toolkit advises leaders to create "organizational cultures that encourage employees to bring their whole selves to work." Despite the mentions of non-judgmental listening, the toolkit includes examinations of white privilege and unexamined bias of the sort that suggest many members of the force should not bring their whole selves to work.[5] The Navy's anti-extremist training also considers Black Lives Matter (BLM) to be an apolitical public policy issue, a position contradicted by the January 6th riots and by BLM's own impact pillars advocating for progressive policy change in contrast to critics of it, who are counted as white supremacists linked with the January 6 riots.[6]

4) For the Air Force, using proper pronouns was an element of inclusion. "One way to foster a culture of inclusion is to add personal pronouns to email signature blocks," announced an article on retention. "While this may not seem like a big deal, it can influence whether someone will stay in their organization."[7]

5) Two Marine officers offered a Critical Race Theory critique of colorblindness. While ingrained in the Marine Corps, colorblindness was "unsound" because it protected white supremacy. They argued for explicit education in the history of blacks in the Marine Corps and a stepped-up emphasis on diversity and inclusion.[8]

[5] ACC Diversity & Inclusion Resource Toolkit For Facilitating Courageous Conversations
[6] https://www.foxnews.com/politics/navy-extremism-training-black-lives-matter; https://nypost.com/2021/03/30/navy-training-condones-black-lives-matter-advocacy-at-work/
[7] "Air Force Materiel Command Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility, "March, 2022.
[8] Lieutenant Colonel Brian Joseph Wilson and Captain Lakyra Nicole Pharms, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Naval Institute, Proceedings, February 2022, Vol. 148/2/1,428.

Service Academies

1) The academies, like the services, have federally mandated offices of diversity and inclusion. The offices coordinate training, support "affinity groups" based on gender, sexuality, race, and ethnicity, and promote celebrations based on those identities. "Eyes and ears" programs that encourage those trained and appointed to report overheard private conversations that challenge DEI precepts are common. So is "peer education," the practice of appointing cadets or midshipmen to guide regular conversations on DEI topics. The Naval Academy's program, for example, requires peer educators to conduct at least two small-group discussions each semester with the whole population and one per varsity/club sports team per semester. They also attend the United States Naval Academy (USNA) Diversity and Inclusion Conference and participate in continuing education as prescribed by the Diversity Peer Educator Program Manager.[9]

2) Little of what cadets and midshipmen encounter in the classroom is publicly available. In response to a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) suit brought by Judicial Watch, a legal watchdog organization that promotes government transparency, the Air Force Academy released PowerPoint slides from a social science course that was proposed to become a core requirement. The course presented Critical Race Theory ideas through the New York Times' 1619 Project, without noting the devastating criticisms offered by important scholars. While claiming that such material taught students how to think rather than what to think, the presentation suggested that criticism of Critical Race Theory was an example of a "moral panic" – the sort of contagion that launched the hunt for witches in colonial Salem.[10]

3) Other worrisome examples include the Humanities and Social Sciences at the Naval Academy requiring faculty candidates to submit diversity statements describing how applicants will contribute to the Academy's diversity and inclusion mission. A 2023 faculty position in English focused on post-colonial literature. A new History department position in 2023 was for a professor specializing in the history of black civil rights.

This mirrors the trends in the civilian academy toward a postmodern focus on race and gender, often with inattention to standard history and literature. West Point and the Air Force Academy offer minors in "Diversity and Inclusion Studies." A West Point cadet can elect a course that covers Queer Theory.

An exchange at the 2023 Air Force Academy Board of Governors meeting in 2023 sums up civic education in the military. The former head of the History department made a plea for returning a solid American history course to the core curriculum. Such a course would communicate "the origins, challenges, successes, and occasional missteps which have shaped or tested [American] values over time." Understanding American history in full would be the best defense against the mistaken, often politicized views that cadets might have haphazardly picked up. That proposal was rejected, with the claim that civic education was "sufficiently represented" in current "Human Condition, Cultures, and Societies" learning outcomes.[11] Knowledge of the nation that cadets defend is elective. DEI is the core.

[9] Commandant of Midshipmen, U.S. Naval Academy, Diversity Peer Educator Program, February 16, 2020.
[10] https://www.judicialwatch.org/documents/jw-v-dod-air-force-academy-crt-records-03510-pgs-45-58/
[11] Brig Gen (Ret.) Wells to Members of the U.S. Air Force Academy Board of Visitors, 13 April 2023, https://www.usafa.edu/app/uploads/April-2023-Board-of-Vistors-Meeting-Minutes.pdf

Civic Education in the Military

Background: History of DEI Training

Training to combat racism and extremism in the ranks began in earnest in the early 1970s. The domestic racial disturbances of the 1960s were mirrored in a military that relied on the draft to fight the war in Vietnam. Racial tension ran high, but an incident at Camp Lejeune in which fifteen white Marines were assaulted and one killed by groups of black and Puerto Rican Marines brought a congressional investigation and DOD action. Believing that radical ideas such as Black Power were beginning to infect the military, an interservice task force issued DOD Directive 1322.11, which created the Defense Race Relations Institute (DRRI) in 1970 to combat extremism.[12]

In its first three years of operation, the DRRI prepared thousands of trainers who ran seminars on military bases. Instead of targeting "black militancy" as Congress and the DOD intended, their training instead focused on individual and structural racism that combined to deny blacks equality. This training used Black Power principles. It was "the grandest attempt by any institution in any country to utilize intercultural training to achieve social change" up to that time.[13] All members of the military were required to finish eighteen hours of training that included confrontational small-group struggle sessions, not dissimilar to those seen in Mao's China, designed to encourage whites to acknowledge their latent or manifest racism.

By 1973, both the DOD and the House Armed Services Committee removed the Black Power messaging and training considering reports that the DRRI training had weakened discipline and added to, rather than reduced, tensions in a military already suffering from significant morale issues. Its budget was cut and few of the remaining trainers focused on race awareness full-time. The program itself was demoted by folding it into drug and alcohol education.[14]

The DRRI was renamed the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) but it retained the responsibility for designing training programs. Unit commanders usually delivered the programming, which reflected contemporaneous issues of sexual harassment and other ethnicities following recent demographics changes. In the 1980s, as the now all-volunteer military recovered capabilities and public confidence, the DEOMI focused on equal opportunity rather than the history of racism.

[12] https://www.defenseculture.mil/About-DEOMI/History/
[13] Harry R. Day, "Race Relations Training in the U.S. Military," 241.
[14] Say Burgin, "'The Most Progressive and Forward Looking Race Relations Experiment in Existence': Race 'Militancy', Whiteness, and DRRI in the Early 1970s," Journal of American Studies 49 (2015), 3, 557-574.

In the mid-1990s, new incidents revived concern with racism and extremism in the military. In 1995, two white supremacist members of the 82nd Airborne Division stationed at Fort Bragg executed a black couple as they walked in their Fayetteville, North Carolina neighborhood. Veterans Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols, both of whom had neo-Nazi connections, blew up a federal office building in Oklahoma City in 1995.

In response, Congress included in the National Defense Authorization Action for 1997, a requirement for human relations training for all service members. As part of initial training and regularly thereafter, members of the Armed Forces were to be instructed in "race relations, equal opportunity, opposition to gender discrimination, and sensitivity to 'hate group' activity."[15]

In 1994, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Equal Opportunity, whose role would be expanded with the creation of the Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI) in 2011, was responsible for sexual harassment and diversity efforts.

The new office signaled the forward march of an increasingly progressive agenda. President Barack Obama's executive order of August 2011 directed a government-wide diversity and inclusion drive. President Obama's executive order mandated the Office of Personnel Management and Office of Management and Budget to develop a strategic plan, updated every four years, to promote diversity and inclusion, while every agency, including the military, had to design plans for implementation and reporting on progress.[16]

While pursuing diversity and inclusion policies, the Department of Defense discovered that the military had a gang problem. A DOD instruction memo dated November 27, 2009, included "gang activity" along with extremist groups as problems that required attention in response to a congressional directive in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008.[17] While gang activity was and remains a problem, it seems not to have received sustained attention from the DOD or the services. On January 12, 2007, an FBI assessment warned that gang activity was increasing. Among the gangs found in the services were Crips, Gangster Disciples, Bloods, Latin Kings, MS-13, Vice Lords, as well as white supremacist groups. Among the crimes committed by gang members were theft of weapons, including machine guns and grenades, home invasions, drug distribution, robberies, murder, and attempted murder.

Recruiting gang members, the report sensibly observed, might "temporarily increase recruiting numbers," but they "could ultimately jeopardize the safety of other military members" and "disrupt good order and discipline and threaten military operations."[18] A 2009 Yale Law Journal article detailed the effects on professionalism and proposed reforms in recruiting, detection, and removal.[19]

[15] Congressional Research Service, Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity in the Armed Services: Background and Issues for Congress," December 23, 2015 – June 5, 2019.
[16] Executive Order 13583 of August 18, 2011, Establishing a Coordinated Government-Wide Initiative to Promote Diversity and Inclusion in the Federal Workforce, Federal Register Vol. 76, No. 163.
[17] Department of Defense Instruction Memorandum Number 1326.06, "Handling Protest, Extremism, and Criminal Gang Activity, November 27, 2009, Incorporating Change 2, Effective December 20, 2021; NDAA for FY 2008, Pub. L., No. 110-181, § 544, 122, Stat. 3, 116.
[18] FBI Intelligence Assessment, National Gang Intelligence Center, "Gang-Related Activity in the U.S. Armed Forces Increasing," 12 January, 2007.
[19] Gustav Eyler, "Gangs in the Military," The Yale Law Journal 118:696, 2/12/2009, 698-742.

The instruction memo, updated in December 20, 2021, directed service members to "reject active participation in criminal gangs…and in other organizations that advocate criminal gang doctrine, ideology, or causes" or risk disciplinary actions. But it is not a priority. The Army Criminal Investigation Command declared that violent gang activities were rarely associated with terrorist organizations, presumably white supremacist ones. Therefore, the gang problem was manageable. The Command recommended "forming multi-agency task forces and joint community groups" to address any problems of gangs within the military.[20] More recent reports suggest that the problem remains even if the DOD is no longer interested.[21]

Accelerating DEI Training

The riots and protests that followed the May 2020 death of George Floyd while in the custody of Minneapolis police caused many Americans, corporations, and other American institutions to voice support for Black Lives Matter. The U.S. military was no exception.

On June 18, Secretary of Defense Mark Esper noted the leadership of the military in ensuring racial equality but added that "we are not immune to the forces of bias and prejudice – whether visible or invisible, conscious or unconscious. We know this bias burdens many of our Service members, and has direct and indirect impact on the experiences of our minority members, the cultural and ethnic diversity of the force, and representation in our officer ranks. These things have no place in our military; they have no place in our country."[22]

Secretary Esper ordered a redesign of professional military education to teach service members about implicit bias, including trainings that included "scenario-based learning." DOD also added to its violence prevention programs a crackdown on microaggressions through bias training and bystander interventions "in response to improper remarks or other communications made by peers or superiors."[23]

[20] Summary Report, Gang Activity Threat Assessment, A Review of Gang Activity Affecting the Army, 30 September 2005. This report cited one white skinhead gang, the Nazi Low Riders, along with one interracial gang that formed in deployment to Kosovo.

[21] https://www.military.com/daily-news/2020/08/17/army-street-gang-activity-increasing-internal-report-shows.html; https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2022/04/03/3-army-soldiers-9-others-accused-in-gun-trafficking-ring/

[22] https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/2224494/secretary-mark-t-esper-message-to-the-force-on-dod-diversity-and-inclusiveness/

[23] CRS, Diversity and Inclusion," p 2; Secretary of Defense, Memorandum, "Immediate Actions to Address Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity in the Military Service," July 14, 2020.

The DEI bureaucracy exploded following this announcement.

In December 2020, Secretary Esper established a Department of Defense Board on Diversity and Inclusion tasked with identifying new polices and a federal advisory committee, the Defense Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion, to provide review and assessment. Many of the recommendations concerned affirmative action and equity (tracking data on performance evaluations toward an examination of potential biases, for example) and standardizing data collection and analysis to assess whether policies were producing the intended outcome. DEI material would now be integrated into the core leadership curricula in the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) and at the service academies, rather than treated separately: diversity leadership is a "core competency."[24]

President Donald Trump issued an executive order in September 2020, prohibiting federal funding for training on "divisive concepts." It came too late to have any effect. President Joe Biden revoked Trump's order the day he took office.[25]

The January 6th riot at our nation's capital provided yet another opportunity to further accelerate DEI training. When it emerged that several of those charged with crimes at the U.S. Capitol on January 6th had military backgrounds, military leadership expanded DEI training and the programing and surveillance aimed at stopping extremism that dated to the 1990s.

Defense Secretary Lloyd J. Austin III ordered a 60-day stand-down to address extremism in the ranks. Discussed in the DOD section below, the training implied that the January 6th participants were white supremacists, that white supremacy was the gravest domestic threat the nation faces, and that support for DEI was patriotism. The DOD's updated guidance provided a definition of "extremist activities" that were prohibited in all forms – liking on social media, participating in, funding, receiving funds, demonstrating, attending meetings, etc. Extremism included using force or violence as a way to deprive others of Constitutional rights, "advocating or engaging in unlawful force or violence to achieve goals that are political, religious, discriminatory, or ideological in nature," supporting terrorism or the overthrow of the government, advocating "widespread discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including pregnancy), gender identity, or sexual orientation."[26] Groups advocating such things were not named, but training suggested sources, such as an Anti-Defamation League pamphlet, for reference served as the bedrock of activism against such threats.

[24] Department of Defense Board on Diversity and Inclusion, Report Recommendations to Improve Racial and Ethnic Diversity and Inclusion in the U.S. Military, December 18, 2020.

[25] Executive Order 13950, September 22, 2020; Executive Order 13985, January 20, 2021.

[26] Department of Defense Instruction, Handling Protest, Extremism, and Criminal Gang Activity Among Members of the Armed Forces, Number 1325.06, Incorporating Change 2, Effective December 20, 2021.

Following the stand-down, the DOD ordered immediate steps and directed the establishment of the Countering Extremist Activity Working Group (CEAWG) to develop longer-term policies. Among those was the development of a "comprehensive training and education plan that provides regular training on prohibited extremist activity" across the DOD.[27]

This effort would be expanded despite noting that "available data generally shows that cases of prohibited extremist activity among Service members was rare." Fewer than 100 extremists out of a force of 2.1 million were found.[28]

Department of Defense: DEI and American Values

An immense and well-rooted bureaucracy has been created within the DOD. The cost to support it mounts: the DOD has requested $114.7 million for 2024. While that sum may be trimmed back and Congress will likely somewhat limit DEI programming, the request signals that DEI is a priority for the DOD. With spending increasing from $68 million in 2022 to $86.5 million in 2023, the military leadership seeks to "inculcate DEI principles across all DOD efforts," as a strategic goal.[29]

The DEI bureaucracy is vast to the point of redundancy. The 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) added a Chief Diversity Officer to the DOD and Senior Advisors for Diversity and Inclusion for each branch and the Coast Guard. That NDAA also requires a DOD Inspector General's investigation and report on the implementation of DEI "policies, processes, and mechanisms" and provides recommendations for further action. The Defense Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion draws its membership from business and academia, with regular activity directed by an executive staff of four.[30] Its subcommittees on racial and ethnic diversity, racial and ethnic inclusion, and racial and ethnic equal opportunity and treatment provide advice to the Secretary annually and produce reports that summarize the findings of its research.[31]

[27] Report on Countering Extremist Activity Within the Department of Defense. December, 2021.
[28] Report on Countering Extremist Activity Within the Department of Defense. December, 2021.
[29] https://www.congress.gov/118/crpt/hrpt301/CRPT-118hrpt301.pdf;
[30] http://www.dodig.mil/reports.html/Article/3602801/annual-report-to-congress-pursuant-to-fy-2021-ndaa-section-554-dodig-2024-034/
[31] https://www.dhra.mil/DACODAI/

The Defense Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion, led by two Senior Executive Service-level (the highest rung in the civil service classification) civilians, conducts research and makes recommendations on diversity and inclusion issues. It reports to the Secretary of Defense and the Deputy Secretary of Defense, through the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. Human Resources Activity within the DOD also includes a Diversity Management Operations Center. The Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion website does not indicate what it does, who does it, or much of what it has produced other than tweets celebrating diversity and accessibility.

In a March 23, 2023, House hearing on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the DOD and the military services, Representative Jim Banks (R-IN) asked Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Gilbert R. Cisnernos, Jr. how much the department spent on DEI projects and how many people were tasked with DEI programs. Cisnernos said he did not have those figures.[32]

The Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI), the agency created in the 1970s, produces research, training and education for trainers. Its training modules on extremism included case studies – one about a white supremacist discovered in 2019 and another on a neo-Nazi Satanist planning to murder American troops found in 2020. They are presented as examples servicemembers can use to identify and report such threats to order or even the lives of other servicemembers.[33]

Complaints that filtered into the media and to the office of Senator Tom Cotton (R-AR) indicate that white supremacy was the only example of discrimination and extremism and that training damaged unit morale. Anti-Republican partisan speech and hanging Black Lives Matter banners were acceptable. Criticizing the training because no evidence was provided of white extremism as a current massive problem was not acceptable. Dubious National Public Radio stories were presented as facts, and feedback on the presentations was not welcome.[34]

One of the few stand-down training videos available supports the complaints. While one of the four "vignettes" noted Islamic extremism, the enemy referenced throughout was white supremacy. Such extremism would destroy not only military effectiveness but the trust of the American people. That finding is in direct contrast to polling of both the public and the military, which finds the politicization of the military and its preoccupation with white supremacist extremism to be the source of weakened trust.[35]

[32] https://www.defense.gov/Multimedia/Videos/videoid/877325/
[33] The PowerPoints and discussion templates and assignments are found at https://www.deomi.mil/Portals/90/Documents/Toolkit/Key%20Topics/EXT-Part_1_2a._CS1_AG_FACIL-20221115.pdf?ver=bKPQ4zspTen04-QjLANIGg%3d%3d
[34] Memorandum, To Senate Armed Services Committee from Senator Tom Cotton, 10 June 2021, SECDEF/CJCS Posture Hearing.
[35] https://www.dvidshub.net/video/788047/eo-extremism-stand-down-day

An investigation of extremism and anti-extremist policies commissioned by the DOD found the stand-down training was “ineffective.” Even the trainers were unimpressed, and most of the leaders responsible for anti-extremist policies at DOD agencies and across the services found the training “unbalanced” and left some feeling “targeted” by the training.[36]

Repeated efforts to define “extremism” by DOD officials have not produced clarity about what associations, expressions, and attitudes are prohibited or what extremism means. “‘The first question is what even is extremism?’” said one senior official interviewed for the DOD commissioned study.[37] Leaders of the services complained they lacked guidance that would help them determine whether harassment, bullying, rude or inappropriate remarks, or evidence of shady associations were just that or extremism that ought to be investigated and prosecuted. According to the same report, DOD policy risks dividing and demoralizing the military. In the absence of a consistently communicated definition that draws clear lines around prohibited extremist behaviors and activities, there is a risk that misinterpretations could lead to a significant division in the force along political and ideological lines. “Several senior DOD officials interviewed by the [Institute for Defense Analyses] IDA team reported that some of their subordinates believe that the Department’s current focus on extremism is driven by ‘political correctness’ and ‘an unbalanced approach that targets only one side of the political spectrum.’”[38]

> Despite the persistent search for “violent extremists” in the military, **cases are rare**.

From 2018 to 2023, the Marine Corps identified 17 substantiated cases. The Air Force found 3 cases since 2021. Even accounting for broad definitions of “extremism,” an independent analysis found fewer than 100 substantiated cases across the military over the past few years. The DOD Inspector General found 92 cases that warranted action, almost all of which were handled through “administrative action, non-judicial punishment, or referral to command for appropriate action,” an indication that the infractions were minor.[39]

[36] Levine, et al, “Prohibited Extremist Activities,” p. 23.
[37] Levine, et al, “Prohibited Extremist Activities,” p. 9.
[38] Levine, et al, “Prohibited Extremist Activities,” 64.
[39] Levine, et al, “Prohibited Extremist Activities,” 33-34.

What is clear is that generating reports and conducting assessments of the services is a chief occupation of the Pentagon’s DEI bureaucracy. The DOD wastes an enormous amount of money and manpower for tasks of dubious value to the nation’s defense. The services are required to devote time and resources to trainings, data collection, and reports. For example, the Defense Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion holds biannual meetings to assess progress on DEI initiatives and make recommendations. Representatives from each of the services appear to provide overviews of their DEI initiatives and present PowerPoints that describe goals reached and missed and ongoing programming.[40]

The DEI bureaucrats rival their university counterparts in their vague responsibilities and in soaking up resources that do not contribute to the institution’s core mission. Their duties are to provide advice on “training in diversity dynamics” and on how to lead “diverse groups effectively.”[41] Senior Advisor to the Secretary of the Army for Diversity and Inclusion exemplifies empty bureaucratic rhetoric of diversity. Diversity offices located on military bases, he explains, are designed to “foster creativity, solve complex problems and enhance innovation,” which is important because “there is a lot of complexity in the world right now.”[42] All of the Major Commands, Field Commands, Air National Guard, and most Direct Reporting Units and Field Operating Agencies have Diversity and Inclusion Officers. They are responsible for overseeing and implementing DEI “programs, initiatives, and education and training.”[43]

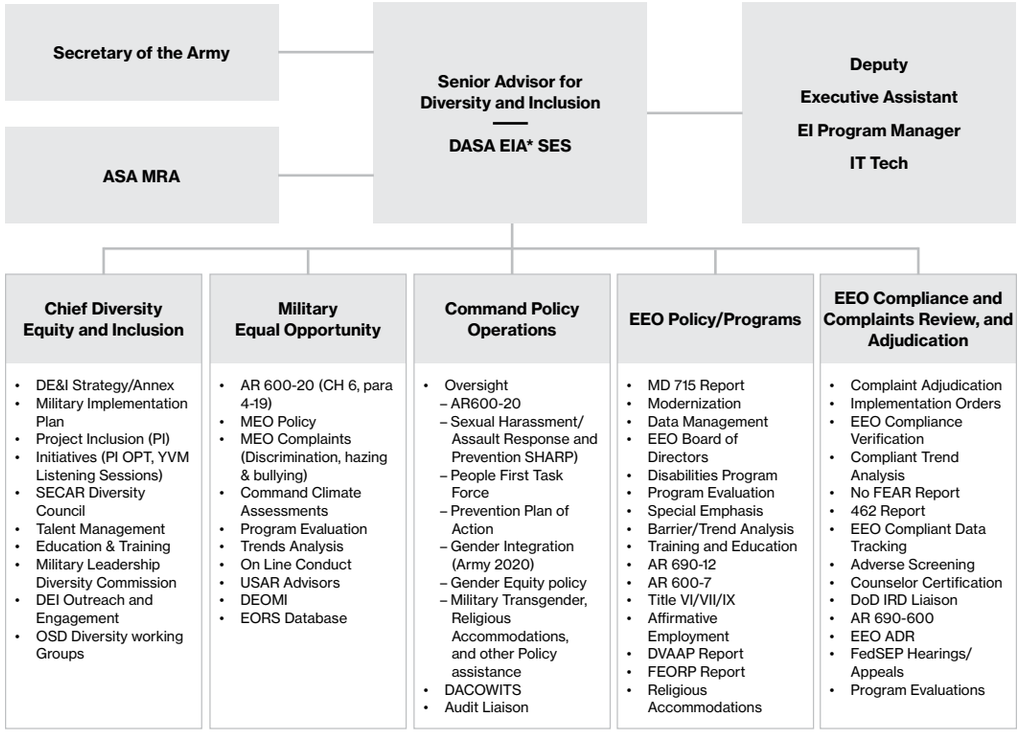
[40] https://www.dhra.mil/Portals/52/Documents/DMOC/DACODAI/DACODAI-Biannual-Bus-Meeting-Minutes-5-11-12-(21-06-23)Final.pdf
[41] CRS, “Diversity and Inclusion,” p. 2.
[42] https://www.army.mil/article/252771/armys_senior_adviser_for_diversity_inclusion_provides_insight_to_hrc_team
[43] Col Jenise Carroll, Deputy Director, SAF Diversity and Inclusion SAF/DI, “Building Enduring Advantages through Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility (DEIA),” 9 December 2022.

U.S. Army

DEI Bureaucracy: Army

The Army Equity and Inclusion Agency oversees the DEI and equal opportunity programs. Its mission is "supervision and oversight" of federal civil rights and equal opportunity law, and military equal opportunity policy, and DEI policy and programing. A Deputy Assistant Secretary also serves as the Senior Advisor for Diversity and Inclusion and reports to the Secretary of the Army. A Deputy and Chief Diversity Officer round out the DEI leadership. The Equity and Inclusion Agency is part of the Army's People Strategy that aims to improve recruitment and retention.[44] Each unit has an Equal Opportunity Leader and alternate. These leaders have completed a 60-hour course on "conflict management, perceptions and stereotypes, racism and sexism." They prepare and facilitate DEI training, help leaders address "climate detractors" and assist soldiers to file informal complaints, and train soldiers in bystander intervention. They are the ground-level representation of DEI policies.[45]

As an indication of the priority the Army places on DEI, the Senior Advisor for Diversity and Inclusion is both head of the Department of the Army Equity and Inclusion Agency and a senior advisor to the Secretary of the Army. The Agency's organizational chart shows the depth and breadth of the operation.[46]



*DASA EIA dual-hatted as the Senior Advisor to the SECARMY

[44] https://api.army.mil/e2/c/downloads/2022/11/09/6f62d339/u-s-army-equity-and-inclusion-agency-fact-sheet-2022.pdf
[45] Sgt. Maj. Jason L. Barton, "Confronting Racism and Discrimination in the U.S. Army," NCO Journal (August, 2020), 2.
[46] https://api.army.mil/e2/c/downloads/2023/04/04/12ac1d60/dasa-ei-org-chart-apr-4-2023-md715.pdf

DEI Plan: Army

According to the September 1st, 2020 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Annex to the Army People Strategy, the Army "must actively engage all populations because it is important to facilitate the DEI we seek to achieve." That is, DEI is important, not merely because of demographic change. DEI, the Army claims, "is integral to building trust and achieving overall readiness and mission accomplishment."[47]

Goal 1 calls for the commitment of leaders to "DEI practices at all levels of the Army," with objectives including the implementation of procedures that "ensure continuous leader awareness of DEI efforts," and awards for DEI leadership.

Goal 2 aims at recruitment and retention at lower ranks with promotion to the senior ranks in mind.

Goal 3 looks to expand the DEI bureaucracy: "sufficient resources are required to develop and institutionalize training and education, facilitate leader oversight, document and analyze trends, institutionalize talent management, and support other aspects of DEI."

Goal 4 is to implement DEI training that would "center on building trust, developing leaders who value differences, treating diverse individuals equitably, helping Soldiers and Civilians understand their potential biases, and creating shared understanding through open, two-way communication." The first stated objective of goal 4 is to develop DEI training for all career stages. The final goal calls for removing photos and information about an individual's race, ethnicity, and gender from materials submitted for promotions and implementing "total force strategic plans that expand diversity, equitable treatment, and inclusion."[48]

The idea that photos would harm diversity comes from social science studies on unconscious bias. But in 2021, the Navy apparently found that diversity – presumably meaning race, gender, and ethnicity – went down in the absence of photos.[49]

[47] The assumed benefit of diversity, teams that are effective because they tap into multiple points of view, draws on a McKinsey study of businesses. That study is questionable. https://econjwatch.org/articles/mckinsey-s-diversity-matters-delivers-wins-results-revisited
[48] U.S.Army, Army People Strategy, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Annex," 1 September 2020.
[49] https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2021/08/03/cnp-removing-photos-from-promotion-boards-has-hurt-diversity/

DEI Programming and Training: Army

In 2021 and 2022, the Army Equity and Inclusion Agency (AEIA) organized "Your Voice Matters" listening sessions on diversity and inclusion at Army bases. After a video featuring "senior leaders" who explained the importance of diversity and inclusion, soldiers and civilians working on base were encouraged to offer their views on racism, extremism, and sexual harassment. AEIA areas of responsibility include DEI strategy and implementation, affirmative action strategy and policy, Project Inclusion initiatives (including the "listening sessions"), DEI outreach, program evaluations, and oversight of policies on sexual harassment, and gender equity, among others. Given the wide area of responsibilities, additional deputies oversee some of these areas. The facilitators promised that the comments were "100%" anonymous, even though the sessions were in-person, since everyone wore civilian clothes and no comment was associated with an individual or unit.[50] Through its outreach and engagement set of services, it organizes DEI accolades and events, along with training and program evaluations.

To underscore the redundancy of this DEI bureaucracy, separate from the AEIA, the Threat Awareness and Reporting Program (TARP) establishes policy and has responsibility for threat awareness and reporting. TARP provides instructions for reporting information to Army Counterintelligence. To make reporting even easier, TARP utilizes iSALUTE, an online reporting program for reporting suspected extremism, espionage, sabotage, subversion, and terrorism activities. STRIDE (Systemic respect, Tolerance, Resilience, Inclusion, Dignity, and Equity), a program involving volunteers who wear distinctive tabs, coaches peer advocates in bystander intervention against racism, and sexual harassment.[51]

[50] https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2021/08/03/cnp-removing-photos-from-promotion-boards-has-hurt-diversity/

[51] https://www.army.mil/article/254098/medcoe_appoints_first_stride_peer_advocates

The Army describes DEI and anti-extremism, two categories that merge through the reduction of extremism to white supremacy, as an ongoing educational project.[52] Despite the loudly proclaimed priority, the Army is not eager to make public the content of that education. While the Army leadership's claims that DEI is vitally important and merely a reflection of Army and American values, the training is difficult to find. The *Wall Street Journal* resorted to a FOIA request to gain access to federal diversity and inclusion training. Noting that the jumble of documents produced lack context, such as how the documents were used, the report found the Army following President Joe Biden's order allowing the full inclusion of transgender individuals to the letter. Whether a soldier has completed the gender change in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) is the key.

> Once a servicemember designates this new gender marker, **they must be treated as if they were the gender they claim.**

While transgender servicemembers are responsible meeting standards for uniforms and grooming, those servicemembers "will use those berthing, bathroom, and shower facilities associated with the member's gender marker in DEERS."[53] If so, soldiers should respond with dignity and respect upon encountering a soldier who has not undergone surgical sex transition in showers or barracks. A woman encountering someone with male genitalia in the showers should ignore the person and assume the paperwork was in order.[54]

A report from the Army's Command and General Staff College pointed to complaints from current students about the woke content of a course on race and gender in American military history. Their objections centered on definitions of racism (a possibility for a dominant group, while people of color merely express prejudice) and gender (as a social construct) and sex (as biological). While the relevance of the course to their duties is unclear and the definition of race unnecessary, recognizing biological sex as a fact might get a university professor cancelled.[55]

[52] https://www.army.mil/article/244830/fort_mccoy_holds_extremism_awarenes_stand_down_training_supporting_dod_army_direction

[53] DOD Instruction 1300.28: In-Service Transition for Transgender Service Members." October 1, 2016. https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/features/2016/0616_policy/DoD-Instruction-1300.28.pd

[54] https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-u-s-governments-woke-training-federal-employees-diversity-equity-inclusion-11672251764 ; U.S. Army, "Policy on the Military Service of Transgender Persons and Persons with Gender Dysphoria Training Module," Tier 3: Units and Soldiers, 10 August 2021.

[55] https://trmlx.com/army-cgsc-teaching-officers-that-only-whites-can-be-racist-gender-is-a-social-construct/; https://teachingmilitaryhistory.com/riotto_profile

Marine Corps

DEI Bureaucracy: Marine Corps

The Marine's DEI offices are found under Manpower and Reserve Affairs. The elements include the Opportunity, Diversity, and Inclusion Branch, with a branch head, a deputy branch head, and an operations manager. The branch links DOD DEI policy with the Corps and develops and implements policies and programs. The Military Equal Opportunity program, another three-person office, oversees the professional Equal Opportunity Advisors and develops educational material and training on Prohibited Activities and Conduct, which includes sexual harassment, prohibited discrimination, harassment, hazing, bullying, dissident and protest activities, and wrongful distribution or broadcasting of intimate images.[56] The Diversity and Inclusion Program is headed by a manager. The office is the interface with the DOD, and "promotes and develops initiatives to highlight diversity and develop a culture of inclusion, administers the DEI review, and works on education and training.[57]

The Diversity Review Board assesses progress on DEI and recommends changes.

The Equal Opportunity Advisors are the ground-level points of contact for complaints and advice, the "subject matter experts on command climate and Prohibited Activities and Conduct."[58]

DEI Plan: Marine Corps

The most recent plan, dated May 2021, announces its aim: "to eradicate racism, sexism, and negative biases that diminish our warfighting effectiveness." While noting that the service has grown significantly more diverse since 2010, the plan deems the progress insufficient, especially at the leadership level. The plan outlines four lines of effort, focusing on diversity in recruitment, talent management, training and education, and leadership. Implementing these lines of action will promote "a culture of inclusion" in which Marines will be "unified in our fight against inequality, discrimination, and destructive biases."[59]

Perhaps the most overt program dedicated to DEI and a "culture of inclusion" is AIMED (Attract, Identify, Mentor, Educate, & Develop), which seeks "high-performing Marines from historically underrepresented populations in order to provide them an opportunity to visualize and pursue an officer career path, infusing the officer corps with different life perspectives and enhancing the Marine Corps' warfighting advantage."[60]

[56] https://www.marines.mil/News/Publications/MCPEL/Electronic-Library-Display/Article/1561150/mco-53541f/
[57] https://www.manpower.usmc.mil/webcenter/portal/MPE/pages_home
[58] https://www.manpower.usmc.mil/webcenter/portal/PACToolkit
[59] "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan," May 2021
[60] https://www.marforres.marines.mil/Programs/DAOP/

DEI Programming and Training: Marine Corps

In Fiscal Year 2022/2023, the Marine Corps reported that it incorporated DEI concepts into Professional Military Education. In addition, officers and senior enlisted receive DEI training, and DEI seminars are part of ongoing education.[61]

No training other than the stand-down module, which did not differ significantly from those of the other services, was available. Links for PowerPoints from the Equal Opportunity Advisors were missing, as was a list of products. While training goes on, we can only assume that its content does not differ significantly from that of the other services, since there is a good level of coordination and emphasis on using the same experts for content.

The Corps' Strategic Plan claimed that as of 2021, DEI training and education "lacks consistency" and was missing a "fully developed curriculum teaching Marines about the importance of diversity and how to effectively leverage it to instill equity and inclusion." It proposed continuous training and using the Petersen Chair for Diversity at the Marine Corps University to oversee instruction and research. The plan called for more money and personnel for DEI instruction.[62]

A concern with race and diversity appeared in other contexts. In 2020, Corps Commandant General David Berger asserted that diversity was essential to warfighting. "I am absolutely convinced: Too much similarity – too much that we look all the same, think the same, got the same background – we're going to get killed," he said, offering that his claim was "scientifically proven."[63] He would also claim that Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Representative Chip Roy (R-TX) had "zero evidence" that DEI training subtracted from readiness – ironically with zero evidence.

More recently, also invoking scientific expertise, two Marine officers – Lieutenant Colonel Brian Wilson and Captain Lakyra Pharms, offered a critical race theory critique of colorblindness. While ingrained in the Corps, colorblindness was "unsound" because it erased existing differences that are valuable to teams and protected racists. They argued for explicit education in the history of blacks in the Corps and a stepped-up emphasis on diversity and inclusion.[64]

[61] Defense Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion, Biannual Business Meeting Minutes, 11-12 May 2023, Tab C &D.
[62] "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan," May 2021
[63] https://taskandpurpose.com/news/marine-corps-diversity-berger/
[64] Lieutenant Colonel Brian Joseph Wilson and Captain Lakyra Nicole Pharms, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Naval Institute, Proceedings, February 2022, Vol. 148/2/1,428.

Air Force / Space Force

DEI Bureaucracy: Air Force

While the top-level officials are responsible for policy and programs, the Executive Diversity and Inclusion Council, which consists of Air Force leadership, offers advice. The Diversity and Inclusion Action Group works on implementation, assessment, and advice to the Executive Council.

The Diversity and Inclusion Task Force evolved into a permanent office at the end of 2020. There is a director, but the Air Force provides little additional information. It does not describe staff or specific responsibilities other than advancing the diversity and inclusion mission.

> The Space Force has a staff of eight **devoted to inclusion and diversity.**

Six are ranked at General Services 12, (GS-12), which provides them with high mid-level authority. All Space Force bases have full-time Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) coordinators.[65]

As if to underscore the DEI bureaucratic bloat, each major Air Force command has its own Diversity and Inclusion office that delivers training and implements policies. The director of the Materiel Command at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, noted that equality in outcomes was not expected, but "systemic problems that may hinder diversity" existed, that data would reveal them, and that the office could recommend solutions.[66] The team includes a chair and managers for affirmative employment, disability, equal opportunity, and inclusion.[67] By 2023, the Wright-Patterson air force base reported an anti-harassment program, an expanded DEI training program, including an unconscious bias course, and DEI PULSE. "Pause, Understand, Listen, Share, and Empathize" aims to help leaders have "difficult conversations" about race. No data is available demonstrating the extent to which climate has improved or worsened because of these initiatives, but more programs and trainings are in the works.[68]

The DEI leadership extends to the wing level, which also includes DEI managers. Commanders are required to conduct a climate survey annually called the Defense Organizational Climate Survey (DEOCS) Report, in which servicemembers are asked about topics related to "diversity, inclusion, connectedness, and equal opportunity topics." Unfavorable ratings (above 49%) on any "climate factor or subgroup climate factor" trigger a requirement for commanders to produce an action plan within 60 days to address problem areas.[69]

[65] Defense Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion, Biannual Business Meeting Minutes, 11-12 May 2023, Tab A.
[66] https://www.wpafb.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/2525214/diversity-and-equity-chief-focuses-on-inclusion/
[67] https://www.wpafb.af.mil/Units/DEIA/
[68] https://www.afmc.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/3356689/afmc-progresses-deia-initiatives-focuses-on-future/
[69] https://www.af.mil/portals/1/documents/diversity/dafi_36-2710_equal_opportunity_program.pdf p. 2.

DEI Plan: Air Force

Although race-based hiring and promotion quotas are illegal, the Air Force diversity and inclusion strategy released in 2021 aims to increase racial minorities and women in the Air Force through targeted recruitment and identifying and remediating any barriers to promotion. The FY21 Rated Diversity Improvement was budgeted at $18 million annually through FY25.[70]

The implementation of the 2021 strategy synergizes with the plans of other departments. In their 2021 "Flight Plan" the strategy for Diversity improvement is to "synchronize Air Force messaging and strategic communication to intentionally create an environment and conditions favorable to the advancement of all rated diversity initiatives. These initiatives are collaborative, deliberate, and focused, cooperating with the Total Force recruiting enterprise..." While no numerical goals are set for the accession or promotion based on identity, the Flight Plan states, "All efforts are targeted to increase awareness of aviation careers in various underrepresented segments, broaden our community outreach to attract diverse candidates, and strengthen our internal support infrastructure."[71] As demonstrated, this support infrastructure seems to mandate reporting of any behaviors that dissent from the DEI agenda.

DEI Programming and Training: Air Force

DEI training materials "at minimum, emphasize that a diverse force empowered within an inclusive culture maximizes individual, organizational, and operational performance," displaying that even a minimal presence of DEI makes focusing on identity essential to military success.[72] Training videos or PowerPoints were not available. But the Air Combat Command "toolkit" for holding "courageous conversations" echoed the 1970s training that the DOD once abandoned. The "polarizing social and political climate, coupled with global, traumatic events that directly and indirectly impact employees" require hard conversations. Using current human relations parlance, the toolkit advises leaders to create "organizational cultures that encourage employees to bring their whole selves to work." Despite the mentions of non-judgmental listening, the toolkit included examinations of white privilege and unexamined bias of the sort that suggest many members of the force should not bring their whole selves to work.[73] Using proper pronouns was an element of inclusion. "One way to foster a culture of inclusion is to add personal pronouns to email signature blocks," announced an article on retention. "While this may not seem like a big deal, it can influence whether someone will stay in their organization."[74]

[70] United States Air Force, Rated Diversity Improvement Strategy, March, 2021. https://www.aetc.af.mil/Portals/88/Documents/USAF%20Rated%20Diversity%20Improvement%20Strategy.pdf p. 14
[71] United States Air Force, Rated Diversity Improvement Strategy, March, 2021.
[72] https://www.af.mil/Portals/1/documents/diversity/1/afi36-7001.pdf
[73] ACC Diversity & Inclusion Resource Toolkit For Facilitating Courageous Conversations
[74] https://www.af.mil/News/Commentaries/Display/Article/2983558/a-culture-of-inclusion-is-key-to-success/

U.S. Navy

DEI Bureaucracy: Navy

The current DEI policy, implementation, and assessment falls under the Culture of Excellence framework. It extends from the Chief of Naval Operations down to the individual sailor. The Deputy Chief for Naval Operations for Personnel, Manpower, and Training is also Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, in addition to his other responsibilities.[75] Offices under that umbrella include the Navy Culture and Force Resilience Office, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Sexual Assault Prevention, and Women's Policy. The DEI office is tasked with providing advice to the Deputy Chief in developing and implementing strategy and makes available training and guidance on DEI in gender and LGBT issues.

The Deputy Chief is responsible for a Navy DEI plan on the same five-year cycle as the DOD process, assessment of recruitment, mentoring, and career development, to create "actionable, measurable mission statements."[76] The Navy Master Chief Petty Officer works with "affinity groups" based on gender, race, and ethnicity on retention, and develops performance metrics and procedures to remove any barriers to retention or promotion. Major Echelon 2 and Echelon 3 Commanders appoint DEI Practitioners. The Naval Education and Training Command is responsible for training materials for entry level up to the executive. The Navy Personnel Command ensures that DEI topics are covered in career development and that funds are available for sailors to attend affinity group national conferences. Coordination with DEI Practitioners occurs at the Command level regarding training, education, and assessment. Command Resilience Teams track demographic patterns by race, sex, and ethnicity in retention, duty assignments, promotions, and awards to alert commanders to issues that might affect climate.[77]

[75] https://www.navy.mil/Leadership/Chief-of-Naval-Personnel/Chief-of-Naval-Personnel/
[76] OPNAVINST 5420 115A, Navy Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy, 26 May 2022
[77] https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Support-Services/Culture-Resilience/Equal-Opportunity/CRT/

A summary slide presented in 2023 describes the DEI command structure within the Department of the Navy. (As a corps within the Department of the Navy, the Marines share resources within the Department.)[78]

Strategic Enabler: DON DEI Governance

Executive Diversity Advisory Council (EDAC) (Don Secretariat)	**Diversity and Inclusion Council** (Navy)	**Diversity Review Board (DRB)** (Marine Corps)	**Individuals with Disabilities Champions Council (IWD)** (DON Secretariat)
The EDAC operates under the sponsorship of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) (ASN (M&RA)).	This council of senior Navy leaders and workforce stakeholders convene to coordinate, align, and discuss Navy policies and programs that recruit, develop, and retain top talent to strengthen warfighting and mission effectiveness.	The DRB is an advisory body supporting the Director of Manpower Plans and Policy (MPP) Division, who serves as the Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) of the Marine Corps. The DRB considers DEI and command climate issues, which may impact total force operations now and in the future.	The IWD seeks to strengthen the DON's commitment to being a model employer by increasing collaborative efforts to recruit, hire, advance, and retain IWD across the Department.

DEI Plan: Navy

The most recent DEI plan issued in 2022 prescribes the bureaucratic arrangement described above. The array of high-level meetings and conferences to maintain coordination and to review outcomes testifies to the priority the Navy has assigned to DEI. The Culture of Excellence Steering Council, consisting of representatives of major Echelon 2 commands and Chief of Naval Operations staff, meets quarterly. The DEI Council, chaired by the Vice Chief of Naval Operations meets semi-annually, and at times brings in "recognized DEI leaders" from business and academia for advice.

The plan calls for the creation of a four-component cycle: "development of annual engagement objectives, collaboration in production of annual DEI Engagement and Resource Plan, coordination of Senior Leader DEI Engagement Calendar and engagement assessments through return on investment (ROI) analysis." The plan includes adherence to Critical Race Theory (CRT), which is stated as being "Designed for commanders to better understand factors impacting all command personnel through collaboration, command climate assessment and deckplate leadership engagement." To better understand the impact of these directives, the document specifically states that all active-duty Navy personnel, both Regular and Reserve, midshipmen, and reserve personnel are subject to these rules.[79]

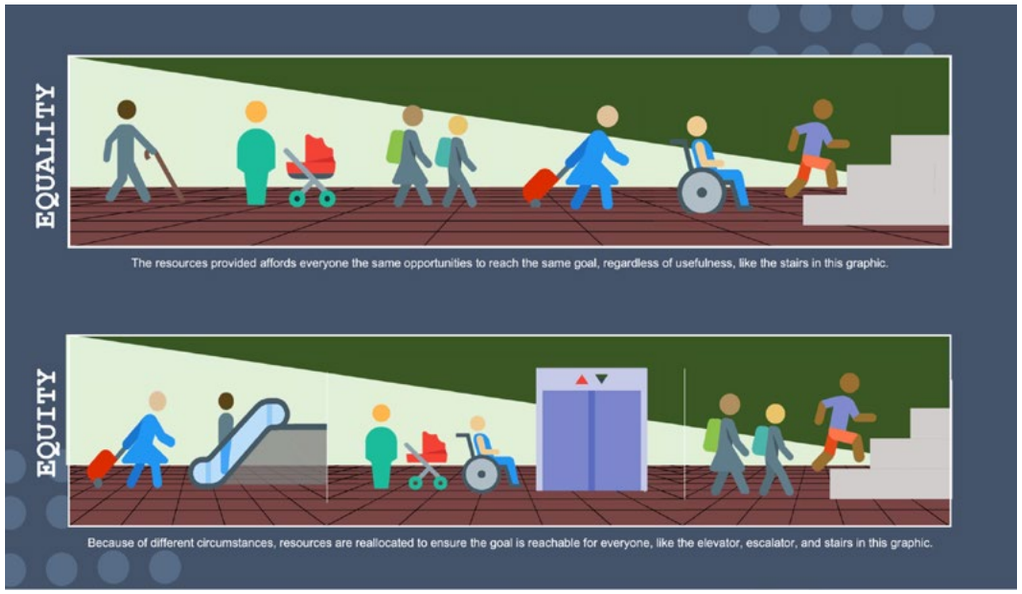
[78] Defense Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion, Biannual Business Meeting Minutes, 11-12 May 2023, Tab C & D.
[79] OPNAVINST 5420 115A, Navy Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy, 26 May 2022

DEI Programming and Training: Navy

In its report covering fiscal year 2022/2023, the Navy reports extensive training programming. Highlights include Introduction to DEI 101, Unpacking Your Bias, Emotional Intelligence, and Psychological Safety and DEI Observances.[80]

Like other services, the Navy promotes equal opportunity, a value shared by virtually all Americans. But in 2021, the Chief Diversity Officer followed up a declaration of respect for equal opportunity with a more divisive equity statement: "The Department of the Navy is committed to rooting out inequities that have sometimes kept that promise out of reach for underserved and underrepresented communities." In keeping with the branch that promoted a sailor's drag show aboard a warship, the training, education, and resources on sexuality is extensive.[81]

The Navy, uniquely, provides graphics to illustrate intersectionality and equity.[82]



[80] Defense Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion, Biannual Business Meeting Minutes, 11-12 May 2023, Tab C &D.

[81] https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Support-Services/Culture-Resilience/Diversity-Equity-Inclusion/LGBT-Resources/; https://www.militarytimes.com/off-duty/military-culture/2018/08/30/sailor-by-day-performer-by-night-meet-the-navys-drag-queen-harpy-daniels/

[82] https://www.navy.mil/Press-Office/Press-Releases/display-pressreleases/Article/2619239/don-announces-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-planning-actions/ DEI 101 Facilitators Guide; DEI 101, OPNAV N17.

DEI 101 includes sections that ask the participants to tick off their identities, explore the meaning of intersectionality, and examine their biases. Although the Navy, like the other services, promotes affinity groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality, those groups apparently do not threaten to create the frowned-upon narrow circles of friendship. The facilitator's guide provides an alert to potential problems in discussions of bias.

> "Be prepared for individuals who may try to **derail the conversation or negate the existence of bias."**

Participants who "refuse to acknowledge how bias has affected their lives or the lives of others may invalidate the experience of those with marginalized identities in the room and cause them harm. Prioritize a continuing conversation, rather than attempting to shut the conversation down. One suggestion is to acknowledge the bias-denier's comments and ask for other perspectives from the rest of the group."[83]

Given such an extensive script given for participants unwilling to relent to DEI, the Navy likely expected some sailors to push back against bias training. After all, it is the service that considered Black Lives Matter to be a safely apolitical public policy while BLM critics were white supremacists linked with the January 6th riots.[84]

[83] https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Support/Culture%20Resilience/Inclusion/DEI%20101%20Facilitator%20Guide_Final_5JAN2022.pdf?ver=e3BHEQS8Zxo890MZgKuAhQ%3d%3d

[84] https://www.foxnews.com/politics/navy-extremism-training-black-lives-matter; https://nypost.com/2021/03/30/navy-training-condones-black-lives-matter-advocacy-at-work/

The Service Academies

United States Military Academy: West Point

DEI Bureaucracy: West Point

The Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunity was established in 2014 and reports to the Dean. The office currently consists of the following:

- 1 Chief Diversity Officer
- 1 Diversity and Inclusion Specialist
- 1 Equal Opportunity Manager
- 2 Equal Opportunity Advisors
- 1 Administrative Officer

In addition, Diversity Outreach Officers are assigned to each geographic district to locate and encourage candidates.

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion supports fourteen Diversity Clubs and funds trips and other activities.

DEI Plan: West Point

West Point launched a Diversity and Inclusion five-year plan in 2020, to leverage diversity across the spectrum. The plan asserts that the core values the United States Military Academy (USMA) inculcates and its mission to produce leaders who defend the country will be strengthened by DEI. The DEI program will allow the USMA to "attract dynamic men and women, which inherently will strengthen the force."[85]

High points of the plan include:

- A speaker series and workshops connected with the annual Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Conference that covered such topics as unconscious bias.
- The implementation of the Excel Scholars Program, aimed at "high performing Cadets from underrepresented groups by encouraging them to strive for a higher standard and be an instrument for change."
- A retention program targeting first-year underrepresented students that provides peer tutoring and academic counseling.
- Outreach to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to recruit faculty, especially in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines and reaching out to other colleges and universities to "share best practices" on "building diverse and inclusive teams."
- Instituting yearly climate surveys to measure progress.
- As this report was being finalized, West Point changed its mission statement to no longer include "Duty, Honor, Country" as the motto of the school. The new version declares the mission to be "To build, educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets to be commissioned leaders of character committed to the Army Values and ready for a lifetime of service to the Army and Nation."[86] "Education", "training", and "Army values", as displayed throughout this Commission, now reflect Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion while omitting our founding values. While a statement claimed that the removed words will always "remain our motto," with those words carved in granite over building entrances and that motto uttered by freshmen to upper-class cadets, the changing of a long-standing front-facing vision perfectly encapsulates the successful assault DEI sycophants have brought upon our military.[87]

[85] https://www.dropbox.com/s/3p0l1jvkxn27jzb/USMA%20Diversity%20Inclusion%20Plan%20(2020-2025).pdf?e=1&dl=0

[86] Becky Sullivan, "West Point axed 'duty, honor, country' from its mission statement. Conservatives fumed." NPR. March 14, 2024. https://www.npr.org/2024/03/14/1238617877/west-point-usma-duty-honor-country-mission-statement

[87] Ltg. Steve Gilland. "A Message to The Long Gray Line." Westpoint.edu. March 11, 2024. https://www.westpoint.edu/news/press-releases/west-point-mission-statement-update-0

Training and Curriculum: West Point

West Point offers a minor in Diversity and Inclusion Studies, which is anchored by such courses as “Social Inequality,” “The Politics of Race, Gender, and Sexuality,” and “Power and Difference.” That course, according to the course description, served as “an introduction to the theoretical concepts of post-modernism. This will include a focus on Feminist Theory, Critical Race Theory, and Queer Theory.”

At least as recently as 2020, according to documents obtained by Judicial Watch through a public records lawsuit, cadets gain an education in Critical Race Theory on par with most major universities.[88]

Efforts include:

- A mandatory seminar on “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion,” that covers the structures of white power and extent of white rage.
- Instruction in Critical Race Theory that describes the ideology as studying how “racism is built into and reproduced through the institutions that organize everyday life.” Instructors in the course claim landmark civil rights legislation mainly benefited whites, according to the presentation.
- A course which asks how the COVID-19 Pandemic “promoted the already existing disparities in education” and asks cadets to reflect on where West Point falls short.

[88] https://www.judicialwatch.org/documents/jw-v-dod-west-point-crt-02616/

U.S. Naval Academy

DEI Bureaucracy: Naval Academy

The Naval Academy's Office of Inclusion and Diversity consists of:

- 1 Chief Diversity Officer
- 1 Assistant Chief Diversity Officer
- 1 Senior Chief Mass Communication Specialist, USN Command Climate Specialist
- 1 Deputy Directory, Equal Employment Opportunity
- 1 Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist

The office supports 13 Affinity Clubs, promotes 17 awards divided by race, gender, and ethnicity, and advises the Superintendent on issues connected with sexual harassment, equal opportunity, trainings, climate assessments, and formal complaints.

DEI Plan: Naval Academy

The USNA released its Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan in March 2021. According to its introduction, "Inclusion requires commitment and intentionality from everyone to increase self-awareness of biases, to learn how experiences and environments form biases, and understand how those biases impact their everyday decisions." It promises that diversity "is a force multiplier required to maintain maritime superiority and dominance on the battlefield."

High points include:

- Becoming "a school of choice because of an inviting, safe, and supportive campus where everyone feels they belong" regardless of background or identity. To achieve this, the plan required a "comprehensive cultural awareness and bias literacy training framework that includes annual training for all USNA leadership, faculty, staff, and midshipmen." This is so important that the commitment and presumably the training "can never reach an 'end'." The USNA tracks belongingness with a bi-annual survey and promotes membership in affinity groups. The USNA aimed to develop "a diversity and inclusion checklist and schedule" for all classes and trainings. A "comprehensive curriculum review" will make "the inclusion of marginalized scholarship and hidden histories" a priority in course offerings.
- Diversifying admissions through identifying scoring factors that might be "unintentionally discriminatory against students from underrepresented populations and disadvantaged school districts." Factors such as "grit" could be added to the scoring factors.
- Support for "midshipmen from underrepresented populations" by, for example, requiring bias literacy training for all leadership programs, and to "bring equity to the leadership and training opportunities" by making sure selection panels are diverse.
- Maintaining an inclusive campus by extending the bureaucracy and programming. This included the diversity office and a "position in each company that specializes in the education of peers."[89]

[89] https://www.usna.edu/Diversity/_files/documents/D_I_PLAN

Training and Curriculum: Naval Academy

A Judicial Watch FOIA request for the USNA training materials is still in progress. One course, HE 374, Topics in Gender and Sexuality in Literature, was made public through a FOIA request by the Daily Caller News Foundation. The course opens with the English Department's diversity statement, followed by one produced for HE 374, and another produced by the class. The course otherwise covers literature from the nineteenth century forward while tracing the history of the interpretation of that literature from 1970s-style feminism through current preoccupations with Critical Race Theory and Queer Theory. It would not be out of place in any college's Gender Studies department.[90]

The USNA 2022-2023 Annual Institutional Effectiveness Assessment provides insight into the implementation of DEI priorities. In it, the goal for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion is accomplished with "Trained Diversity Search Advocates (DSA) consistently used for tenure track faculty searches" and an increase in the number of DSAs. In addition, the assessment states that of the faculty candidates interviewed were "40% female, 25% minority" with tenure track hires "43% female, 14% minority."[91] To provide context, according to a 2022 demographics profile of Navy Active-Duty members, 79.3 percent were men, indicating the USNA's likely propensity to socially engineer their professoriate as opposed to taking the most qualified applicants from their likely male-dominant applicant pool.[92] A step toward meeting the goals were new hires posted in 2023 in History and English, with preferences for civil rights movement history in the first and Post-Colonial Studies in the second. These positions required applicants to provide diversity statements.[93]

The School of Humanities and Social Sciences produced its "Strategic Plan 2030." Its first priority, to "cultivate critical thinkers and effective communicators," points to sensible items such as supporting data science and foreign language instruction. The second priority, to "provide opportunities for midshipmen to explore, understand, and appreciate the complexity and diversity of humans," requires hiring diverse faculty and to support student cultural affinity groups. Special programs include "Civil Rights and Domestic Immersion programs focused on civil rights or themes of diversity and inclusion."[94]

[90] https://dailycaller.com/2023/12/25/navy-gender-sexuality-class/
[91] AEB_AY22-23_Institutional_Effectiveness_Assessment_Report.pdf (usna.edu)
[92] https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Infographic/2022-demographics-active-duty-navy-members.pdf
[93] The listings disappeared once positions were filled. Screenshots are available on request.
[94] https://www.usna.edu/HUMSS/_files/documents/HumSS_Strategic_Plan_2030.pdf#search=diversitycurriculum

The USNA's Center for Teaching and Learning provides support for faculty who wish to include DEI principles in their teaching. PowerPoint presentations, such as "How to Create an Anti-Racist Classroom: Developing and Implementing an Anti-Racist Pedagogy," (also available as a video) are among the suggested resources. Three books by Ibram X Kendi along with Robin DiAnglo's White Fragility are suggested reading.[95] Without syllabi, it is impossible to say how many teachers take advantage of the material or how much the existing courses focus on these books.

In 2020, the USNA installed a peer education program, appointing peers to guide regular conversations on DEI topics.

The outline of the program is as follows:

1) Conduct a minimum of two small group discussions within their company each semester. These sessions should include fewer than 15 participants per session when possible. A session will consist of an open conversation about leading a diverse group of people, ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity and respect and feels a sense of belonging in the group.

2) Conduct a minimum of one small group discussion per varsity/club sports team per semester.

3) DPEs [Diversity Peer Educators] can hold additional sessions or events at the discretion of their Company Officer, Senior Enlisted Leader, or Coach.

4) Participate in at least one Diversity and Inclusion Program event per semester. These include, but are not limited to: Cultural Affinity Group/Extra Curricular Activity events, Midshipmen Diversity Team events, etc.

5) Attend the USNA Diversity and Inclusion Conference, available only for cadets at the USNA.

6) Participate in any continuing education as prescribed by the DPE Program Manager.

7) Assist with the planning and execution of Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion.[96]

[95] https://www.usna.edu/CLT/Faculty_Resources/Diversity.php
[96] Commandant of Midshipmen, U.S. Naval Academy, Diversity Peer Educator Program, February 16, 2020.

U.S. Air Force/ Space Force Academy

Perhaps even more than Annapolis and West Point, the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) has been the focus of Congressional and public attention for its DEI programs. For context, since the creation of the United States Space Force in 2019, cadets for this new branch are educated at the USAFA; there is no separate academy as of this report. Since 2020, controversies have erupted concerning courses and training that covered – or advocated – Critical Race Theory.[97] Whether in response to that attention or simple institutional choice, the Academy's website is remarkably uninformative about DEI staffing and activities.

[97] See https://criticalrace.org/service-academies/united-states-air-force-academy/ for a list of links; and Matthew Lohmeier, Irresistible Revolution: Marxism's Goal of Conquest and the Unmaking of the American Military (2021).

DEI Bureaucracy: Air Force Academy

The USAFA lists the Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer, a position established in 2011, as the only member of the office staff. The page for the office features a short video along with a biography for the current Chief. According to the biography, the DEI Chief is "the strategic leader for developing and refining the strategic vision for culture, climate, diversity, and inclusion. He partners with faculty in curriculum development efforts to facilitate and maximize inclusive teaching and learning practices. Additionally, [the Chief] helps the institution develop and utilize diversity, equity and inclusion institutional data, metrics, research studies, and benchmarks best practices."[98]

Nonetheless, in 2020, the USAFA Superintendent asserted that "[e]very organization on base has had numerous people dedicate a significant amount of time and energy toward taking an honest look at biases that may be found within procedures, artifacts and attitudes around USAFA."[99] A Critical Conversations Working Group, out of the Center for Character Development, was established as a result of the Internal Racial Disparity Review.

The claim that numerous people are working on DEI is borne out in discussions of DEI issues. A Diversity and Inclusion Task Force is referenced in the 2020 weekly update. The minutes of the 2023 Board of Visitors meeting referenced, along with an action plan, a DEI Action Group, a DEI Executive Committee, and a Racial Disparity Review.[100]

Another example of an ad hoc group is the Transgender Working Group, which addresses policies that might require modification for transgender individuals. People who are transitioning still must complete the program in four years, although their treatment would likely require time away. This is an issue that arises from federal policy, not the academy itself.[101]

[98] https://www.usafa.edu/facultyprofile/?smid=40532
[99] Superintendent Weekly Update, September 17, 2020, https://www.usafa.edu › app › uploads › Supt-Weekly-Update-18.pdf
[100] https://www.usafa.edu/app/uploads/April-2023-Board-of-Vistors-Meeting-Minutes.pdf
[101] Ray Bowden, "Cadet Program Promotes Diversity, Inclusion Across Academy Campus," October 28, 2021. https://www.usafa.af.mil/News/News-Display/Article/2825838/cadet-program-promotes-diversity-inclusion-across-academy-campus/

DEI Plan: Air Force Academy

The USAFA has not issued a formal DEI plan that is visible to the public. The "U.S. Air Force Academy Internal Racial Disparity Review," dated September 21, 2020 and obtained through a FOIA suit by Judicial Watch on behalf of Stand Together Against Racism and Radicalism in the Services (STARRS), mentions the existence of such a plan and calls for it to be regularly updated.

The highlights of the Review[102] included:

- Expanding diversity and inclusion instruction by making a course, Behavioral Science 362, 'Class, Race, Gender, and Sexuality' part of the core or repurposing its content into shorter trainings. The latter seems to have been the choice. Two courses – one covering race and ethnicity and another gender and sexuality – have replaced the old 362.[103] The stated goal was not improved leadership but "to help cadets mature into D&I (Diversity and Inclusion) professionals for the Air Force."
- Expanding the dean-level curriculum review to check for diversity and inclusion topics.
- Educate and train cadets and staff on more specific D&I concepts and skills to decrease incidents of microaggressions, unconscious bias, etc., and enhance retention/inclusion. In addition, we must train our leaders across the institution on how to facilitate critical conversations on racial issues within their workplaces, so all Airmen can bring their full selves to work and leaders can create more inclusive spaces. Correlated to this effort is the need to develop a more robust racial bias incident reporting system with associated accountability and rehabilitation processes to restore relationships in the event biases or microaggressions are experienced."

[102] https://www.judicialwatch.org/air-force-academy-focus-on-crt/
[103] https://www.usafa.edu/app/uploads/COI.pdf p. 265.

Training and Curriculum: Air Force Academy

Among the tasks new cadets must complete before arriving on campus are three online training courses. The first of these is "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for Students." The handbook sent to incoming cadets informs them that they "will continue to see these themes repeated and reinforced" over the next four years. They will "be expected to promote a safe, healthy and inclusive campus environment at all times."[104]

According to reports released to the press and Congress, the content of DEI training went well beyond platitudes about getting along. In addition to lessons on microaggressions, the training included a scenario in which all students were expected to join their peers headed to a Black Lives Matter (BLM) rally, criticizing a white man for not agreeing with BLM and declining to attend the rally.[105]

As promised in the handbook, trainings continue beyond the initial DEI introduction. Less formal venues also reinforce the DEI message. The "kick off presentation" for the 2023 National Character and Leadership Symposium featured George Takei, the actor best known for his role in Star Trek and as a gay activist. He "gave cadets a call to action to promote democracy, engage in civic discourse, and fight for the rights of all."[106] Described as an actor and "human rights activist," Takei's more recent career as an unhinged partisan Twitter warrior, which would make him an unlikely spokesman for civil discourse, went unmentioned. The USAF's Cadet Wing Diversity and Inclusion Program, "unveiled" in 2021, included 82 cadets along with a few faculty and staff members. It joined with affinity groups to advocate "for equitable treatment of all cadets."[107] The Academy also offers "diversity and inclusion innovation awards" to cadets and faculty and staff.[108]

The USAFA offers a minor in Diversity and Inclusion Studies.[109]

[104] https://www.usafa.edu/app/uploads/2026-Appointee-Handbook.pdf
[105] https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/beltway-confidential/2788090/inside-the-woke-takeover-of-the-us-air-force-academy-2/; https://www.forbes.com/sites/erictegler/2022/11/09/as-the-air-forces-credibility-wanes-its-academy-devotes-time-to-diversity--inclusion-training/
[106] https://www.usafa.edu/national-character-and-leadership-symposium-star-trek-alumni-george-takei-promotes-civil-discourse-informed-democracy/
[107] https://www.usafa.af.mil/News/News-Display/Article/2825838/cadet-program-promotes-diversity-inclusion-across-academy-campus/
[108] https//www.usafa.edu/cadets-faculty-hailed-for-diversity-efforts/
[109] https://www.usafa.edu/af-academy-offers-cadets-optional-diversity-and-inclusion-minor/

Conflation of DEI as civic education is best illustrated by an exchange at the Board of Visitors meeting in 2023. American History was dropped from the core curriculum in 1986. Brigadier General (Ret.) Mark Wells submitted a lengthy letter asking if removal of American history from the Core could be reconsidered, while also expressing his dismay at reports of sexual harassment, the politicization of history, and the thin and often mistaken education in American history cadets likely have. A proper history course would describe the "contributions made by ALL people" to the American nation. "It's impossible to conceive how the values of American culture and governance regarding freedom, compassion, tolerance, and interpersonal gender relations can be inculcated into the members of the Armed Forces," the former Head of the History Department wrote, "without an honest collegiate level study of the origins, challenges, successes, and occasional missteps which have shaped or tested those values over time."[110]

This subtle plea for the sort of course that once was standard in American colleges and universities was reduced by Brigadier General Linell Letendre, the Dean of Faculty, to a worry that cadets were not getting enough DEI material. "I remain confident that Brig Gen Wells' concerns about the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion – as well as his concern about extremism…are sufficiently addressed by our 'Ethics and Respect for Human Dignity' and 'Human Condition, Cultures, and Societies' Academy Outcomes."[111] According to the Dean, knowledge of the nation's history can be covered in an elective a student can choose if interested. DEI is required.

[110] Brig Gen (Ret.) Wells to Members of the U.S. Air Force Academy Board of Visitors, 13 April 2023, https://www.usafa.edu/app/uploads/April-2023-Board-of-Vistors-Meeting-Minutes.pdf

[111] https://www.usafa.edu/app/uploads/April-2023-Board-of-Vistors-Meeting-Minutes.pdf

Syllabi for the courses that contribute to the core competencies that General Letendre mentioned are not publicly available. The material produced by the FOIA suit referenced above produced the PowerPoint slides from courses taught by a professor who was at the center of a controversy about teaching Critical Race Theory at the Academy. Slides from Behavioral Science 362, "Class, Race, and Ethnicity in Society," (Lesson 28) covered Critical Race Theory. It treated the 1619 Project, which was premised on the claim that the history of the American republic began with the arrival of the first enslaved blacks, as an example of new scholarly insight into race in American history. The lesson contrasted this with the 1776 Project, dismissed as a shorter, non-scholarly (no footnotes) treatment of the American founding. Absent was any notice of the serious criticism from eminent historians on both sides of the political aisle that gutted the central arguments of the 1619 Project. Even Nikole Hannah-Jones, who framed framing the 1619 Project, backtracked from the most novel assertions.

Indeed, debate did not seem to be encouraged, despite the Chief Diversity Officer's assurance that the course teaches "…cadets how to think – not what to think." Chilling dissenting discussion is the goal of DEI education, as dissenters are painted as lacking compassion or empathy. Opposition to Critical Race Theory, according to the instructor of Behavioral Science 362, is an example of an irrational "moral panic," like the hunt for witches in colonial Salem. An NPR report was the authority for this claim that seemed designed to shut down discussion and any exploration of the theory or its uses.[112]

The FOIA documents also included a series of slides on Black Lives Matter and white fragility. They appeared to be aimed at instructors who sought guidance on teaching those topics or using those ideas to shape their approach to teaching.

[112] https://www.judicialwatch.org/documents/jw-v-dod-air-force-academy-crt-records-03510/; https://www.usafa.edu/af-academy-offers-cadets-optional-diversity-and-inclusion-minor/

Veterans

DEI for Veterans

Education extended to those leaving the military so they would be on guard for "potential targeting of Service members by extremist groups." That work is coordinated with the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Homeland Security among other agencies.[113] Just as the stand-down training insulted those currently serving by implying that disloyalty was a widespread problem in the ranks, training for those departed or departing servicemembers questions their loyalty at least when they return to their communities. A 2021 *Military Times* article illustrates the themes repeated in numerous publications: veterans can be tempted to fill the new loss of purpose with extremist causes.[114]

A recent survey conducted by RAND found that 0.8 percent of veterans have favorable or somewhat favorable attitudes toward white supremacy, versus 7.0 percent of the whole population. The breakdown for the Proud Boys was 4.2 percent at least somewhat favorable, while the whole population is at 9.0 percent. The most striking finding is that veteran support for Antifa and Black Nationalism is far higher than for white supremacy: 5.5 percent for Antifa and 5.3 percent for Black Nationalism, although those percentages are also lower than for the whole population. Training may be targeting the wrong extremists.[115]

[113] Report on Countering Extremist Activity Within the Department of Defense. December, 2021.
[114] https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2021/12/03/how-extremist-groups-target-veterans-and-what-can-be-done-about-it/
[115] https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA1071-2-v2.html

Conclusion

The U.S. Armed Services serve a single purpose: Defending our exceptional nation from foreign enemies. Necessary to accomplishing this mission are officers and enlisted troops who understand the founding principles, heritage, and aspirations of a constitutional representative government.

In 1957, political scientist Samuel P. Huntington published the now classic book, *Soldier and State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* in which he argued that professionalism within the military was essential for maintaining objective civilian control of our Armed Forces. By professionalism he meant expertise, responsibility, and cooperation. To achieve professionalism within the military, he maintained, requires comprehensive study and training to develop expertise in organizing forces, the science of war and combat, and the management of violence. Entrance into the military profession presumes a hierarchy of rank and advancement based on merit and expertise.

Cohesion from high command through enlisted and unit ranks remains essential to a professionalized fighting force able to defend the nation. A professionalized military requires imbued shared values of military and service history, national heritage, and service pride. Current DEI training with is emphasis on Critical Race Theory imparts division and subverts a system of advancement based on merit and professional expertise. The military should not be seen as a laboratory for social experimentation based on a controversial academic theory—Critical Race Theory.

The DEI bureaucracy advancing critical race theory in the American military is vast and intrusive. Borrowing heavily from programs and ideas launched by human relations departments in large corporations and academia, that bureaucracy exists not to defend the nation or produce the military leaders of the future. Instead, it produces training materials that parrot dubious, even dangerous, theories that sow the seeds of division and resentment within the ranks of the military.

If a private company destroys its brand through a refusal to acknowledge a mistake in woke advertising, it is arguably no loss to the nation. If English departments lose majors and enrollment by offering not literature but woke groupthink available anywhere in colleges and universities, the nation will survive.

Competence, trust, accountability, creativity, and teamwork are all necessary components of our military's readiness and lethality, both of which are jeopardized by teaching an ideology with a track record in destroying those things. The military is charged with protecting the nation against foreign and domestic threats and needs servicemembers in its all-volunteer force to understand and believe in American civic values in order to have a unified force ready for any threats.

Commission Members

Matt Lohmeier

Author, Retired U.S. Space Force

Matt Lohmeier is a former lieutenant colonel and commander in the U.S. Space Force and is the author of the bestselling book *Irresistible Revolution: Marxism's Goal of Conquest & the Unmaking of the American Military*. Before his time in the Space Force, Matt was an F-15C fighter pilot and T-38 instructor pilot with over 1,200 hours.

A 2006 graduate of the United States Air Force Academy, Lohmeier began his active-duty military career as a fighter pilot. After flying, he cross-trained into space operations and worked in space-based missile warning. As a lieutenant colonel, he transferred in October 2020 into the United States Space Force and was placed in command of our nation's space-based missile warning system. He separated from active duty in September 2021.

Karrin Taylor Robson

Attorney, President of Arizona Strategies

Karrin Taylor Robson is an Arizona native, a long-time business leader and land use expert. She holds multiple degrees from Arizona State University including a juris doctorate degree from ASU's College of Law.

Karrin is President of Arizona Strategies, a land use strategy firm headquartered in Phoenix. Prior to forming Arizona Strategies, she served as Executive Vice President of DMB Associates and earlier as principal with the law firm of Biskind, Hunt & Taylor, PLC.

She has made public service a priority for her life, advocating for a dynamic and diverse economy, a world class education system and for a robust military in Arizona. Karrin has served on the boards of numerous government, community and economic development organizations, including the U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff's Civic Leaders Group. Prior to serving at the request of the USAF Chief of Staff she was tapped by General Robin Rand as the Honorary Commander at Luke Air Force Base.

John Cauthen

Retired U.S. Navy

John Cauthen, a 2002 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, served 12 years active duty as a naval aviator, uniformed instructor in the U.S. Naval Academy's History Department, served on various military staffs, to include time with NATO in Afghanistan working with the Afghan Interior Ministry, Afghan National Police, and as a defense and civil exercise program manager for the U.S. Coast Guard. He retired from the U.S. Navy Reserve in 2022.

John holds a Bachelor of Science, Political Science, from the United States Naval Academy as well as a Command and Staff Diploma from the U.S. Naval War College. Additionally, he has advanced degrees in History and Business Administration from American University and Arizona State University, respectively.

Paula Baker

Professor, Research Team Leader

Professor Paula Baker, Visiting Scholar at the Center for American Institutions, served as leader of the research team. She recently retired from the Department of History at the Ohio State University.

Center for American Institutions
Arizona State University