

LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY

**ACADEMIC ELECTIVES AT WEST POINT: A FUTURE-ORIENTED,
PHILOSOPHICAL CHANGE**

FOR

LD 720

THE AMERICAN MILITARY EXPERIENCE AT WEST POINT

**COL JOHNSON
MAJ MARKEL**

BY

CPT JOHN VERMEESCH

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High on a bluff overlooking the Hudson River sits the United States Military Academy at West Point. Since its establishment in 1802 change has been slow to occur, at times appearing to rival the speed with which water can change the very granite upon which the Academy rests. But just as water uses the freeze-thaw effect to crack granite, West Point has had freezes and thaws of its own that have gradually led to significant changes in the institution. One such period of freezing and thawing involved the academic reforms that occurred between the inception of the electives program during the era of Superintendent, Lieutenant General Garrison H. Davidson, in the 1950s and the introduction of academic majors in 1983. An interesting question revolves around the notion of why General Davidson felt the Academy needed to infuse academic electives into an academic program of instruction that had produced quality officers for over one hundred years. Of additional interest is the question of how General Davidson was able to co-opt the Academic Board, the Academy's governing body, to forgo its traditional stance of institutional parochialism and support of the status quo, to favor academic reform. The answer to the second question lies in the answer to the first. Lieutenant General Garrison H. Davidson believed that academic electives would instill in West Point a change in educational philosophy that would better serve the U. S. Army of the future. He was right, and his concepts have had far reaching impacts that have allowed the academic program of the modern Academy to evolve and include not only electives, but also academic majors and fields of study for each cadet.

Historical reflection requires one to analyze a situation within the context it occurred. This means that historians must take into account the personalities and motivations of the individuals who made the decisions surrounding an event. The

investigation of academic reform at West Point is no exception to this rule. Before one can understand why General Davidson felt academic reform was necessary, one must first understand the basic philosophy from which he operated. In other words, what made a man "who was not a graduate of any school of higher education, military or civilian, as a matter of fact not even of the Cooks and Bakers School which in the late twenties was a requirement for all junior company grade officers," institute academic reform at West Point.¹

While he was the Commandant of the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, General Davidson provided a clear view of his philosophy of organizational change.

It was at Leavenworth that I first put into practice my policy of creative curiosity as my approach to a new assignment. This didn't mean that I was automatically dissatisfied with what I found. It did mean I wasn't going to make any changes for change sake but that I was going to carefully study my mission and make a detailed personal estimate of the situation with respect to its current execution to satisfy myself that it was being carried out in the most common sense, effective manner possible.²

He combined this approach with a deep-rooted concern for how his organization's performance would effect the future of the Army. His estimate of the situation at Leavenworth left him concerned that CGSC was failing in part of its mission by not adequately developing doctrine for the future. He was afraid the college might be teaching its students how to win the last war.³ "His conclusion or his estimate was that CGSC was still too much a World War II training school for staff officers."⁴ This

¹Garrison H. Davidson, Lieutenant General, U.S. Army, *Grandpa Gar: The Saga of One Soldier as Told to His Grandchildren* (Personal Memoirs, USMA Archives, 1974), 130.

² *Ibid.*, 144.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Dr. Ivan J. Birrer, Service at the Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas 20 January 1948 to 30 June 1978, interview by Major Robert A. Doughty, 34.

philosophy of change and preoccupation with the future needs of the Army set the stage for the changes that Davidson would later try to implement at West Point.

It was at Leavenworth, in the mid 1950s, that the General first began to think about reforming the Academy in order to carry it into the coming decades. His reflections about his own cadet experience and how they prepared him for duty as an officer led him to a number of important conclusions. First, some of the academic course-work had been "as antiquated as the strapped leather puttees that hadn't seen a shine since they were taken out of the box that the professor had worn."⁵ This meant, in Davidson's mind, that the Academy, like Leavenworth, was preparing its graduates to win the last war.

Second, General Davidson believed there was too much diversity in the academic effort that cadets had to exert. Some struggled to get by while others were able to complete their requirements with little or no effort. He attributed much of this to the technically weighted course load, postulating that cadets who were more inclined for humanities related subjects probably had little interest in many of the classes the Academy required them to take. These thoughts led the General to believe that he would need to reform the curriculum at West Point in order to stress cadets at both ends of the performance and interest spectrum.⁶ By doing so, the Academy could continue to produce officers who could think clearly in stressful situations and who had the intellectual curiosity to continue self-development throughout their careers, thus meeting the needs of the future.

⁵ Garrison H. Davidson, Lieutenant General, U.S. Army, *Grandpa Gar: The Saga of One Soldier as Told to His Grandchildren* (Personal Memoirs, USMA Archives, 1974), 155.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 156.

Finally, Davidson was not afraid to challenge the Academy's policies that he believed were based solely on the vestiges of tradition. He felt strongly that if what West Point was doing was not preparing its graduates to serve the Army in the future, then it should not be doing it. His personal observation of officers serving their country in combat and peacetime made him call into question some of the pre-commissioning practices of the Academy. "Observation of people, non-graduates as well as graduates, in combat situations during World War II and in Korea had convinced me that the monolithic nature of the Military Academy curriculum did not merit the sacred homage paid it."⁷ When General Davidson arrived at West Point in July 1956 and assumed his responsibilities as Superintendent, he was already armed with these ideas about the Academy's curriculum and the performance of its graduates in the field Army. Combined with his philosophy of organizational change, these ideas set in motion the forces that would eventually yield academic reform.

Upon his arrival to the Academy, Superintendent Davidson immediately began to formulate boards of officers to investigate his assumptions and determine if the Academy was effectively accomplishing its mission. At that time the mission of the United States Military Academy was to "instruct and train the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate will have the qualities and attributes essential to his progressive and continued development throughout a lifetime career as an officer of the Regular Army."⁸ One of the boards he appointed was under the direction of the Assistant Commandant of Cadets, Colonel J. J. Ewell. General Davidson charged the Ewell Board with making an estimate

⁷ Ibid., 161.

⁸ Garrison H. Davidson, "Memorandum For Each Member of the Academic Board" Annex I of the *Record of the Meeting of the Academic Board, 15 January 1959*. Vol 71(West Point: 1959), 1.

of "the qualities and attributes that will probably be essential to an officer of the Regular Army during the period 1968-78, and the extent, if any, to which they differ from the corresponding qualities and attributes required during the previous two decades."⁹ In this charter, one can see again General Davidson's preoccupation with ensuring that his organization was serving the Army's future needs.

The Ewell Board concluded that in the future officers would need, among other things, the ability to think. By this it meant that the ability to think should be the primary objective of education and this ability was comprised of several components. These components included the ability to reason rapidly with precision, grasp and solve complicated problems, think critically and originally, and the possession of intellectual curiosity and a thirst for knowledge.¹⁰ The Academy had room for improvement in developing leaders with these attributes and who also had the ability to communicate effectively.

Davidson was also in tune with the changing demands the nation was placing on its Army. The Army charged him with graduating lieutenants capable of solving the problems of the Cold War, in which the Army's own role was in question. This caused the Superintendent to question West Point's entire educational process.

In the past five years the interest and attention centered on educational problems have increased proportionately with the increase in the speed of missiles and jet planes. Additional boosts to this movement have been given by the impulse of the Sputnik-Explorer era and the sudden urgency of the realization that our national survival is more closely related to educational accomplishment than any but the most far-sighted had previously suspected.¹¹

⁹ *Superintendent's Curriculum Study*, West Point: Report of the Evaluation Committee, (West Point: 18 November 1958) 1.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, A-1.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 1.

In this environment, Davidson believed that a change in educational philosophy from one that instilled mental discipline to one that fostered intellectual curiosity was in order. He thought that such a movement would help bridge the gap between West Point and other educational institutions in America and throughout the world. He also believed citizens, in general, would be much better educated in the future and that would put corresponding demands for education on officers. They would require, in Davidson's opinion, a far more extensive field of knowledge. He believed West Point to be at a very important crossroads concerning the education that the Military Academy presented its cadets.¹² By trimming the academic program and implementing academic electives in the cadets' First Class year, he concluded that the Academy could come more on line with the educational needs of the Army.

Based on the results of the Ewell Board and his own ideas about education, Superintendent Davidson ordered a curriculum study in January 1958. He wanted the Board to investigate the plausibility of maintaining a core academic curriculum while at the same time eliminating antiquated courses in order to make room for electives, which would help to expand the cadets' horizons. To Davidson it "seemed a truism that an individual does best [at] that in which he has a natural interest. Therefore it appeared desirable to weed out all but the core subjects essential to the basic foundation of all graduates, to limit the required curriculum to these and use the balance of the time where a student might pursue subjects of his own choosing."¹³ The Board's results were less than satisfactory to the Superintendent. It proposed sticking to the rigid schedule of

¹² Garrison H. Davidson, "Memorandum For Each Member of the Academic Board" Annex I of the *Record of the Meeting of the Academic Board, 15 January 1959*, Vol 71(West Point: 1959), 1.

¹³ Garrison H. Davidson, Lieutenant General, U.S. Army, *Grandpa Gar: The Saga of One Soldier as Told to His Grandchildren* (Personal Memoirs, USMA Archives, 1974), 162.

mathematics, science, and engineering while instilling only one elective. The time for the elective would come from reducing the military law course by one semester.¹⁴

To further his cause, Davidson had his staff conduct extensive surveys of all cadets and living graduates from the classes of 1900 to 1958. Staff members designed the surveys to gain recommendations about which courses the institution could cut, and what electives, if any, it could institute. They also surveyed graduates and non-graduates who had been extremely successful in their careers, as well as graduates who were enrolled in post-graduate education programs. Of those West Point graduates enrolled in graduate school who responded to the surveys, 88.6 percent of them indicated that they were in favor of the plan to provide electives in the Academy's curriculum.¹⁵ Among the general population of graduates, 84 percent of respondents favored retention of a core curriculum, with almost half favoring electives in the cadets' last two years.¹⁶

Fueled by the findings of the graduate surveys and dissatisfied with the Academic Board's extremely limited recommendations for reform, General Davidson then commissioned an outside committee to review the curriculum. The new curriculum review board concluded in January 1959 that the Academy should maintain a prescribed curriculum for the majority of the studies included therein, but that it should provide for electives for all cadets in the first class year. It further recommended that additional

¹⁴ *Superintendent's Curriculum Study*, Report of the Evaluation Committee, (West Point: 18 November 1958), 39.

¹⁵ Research Division Office of the Registrar United States Military Academy, *The Analysis of the Graduate Student Questionnaire*, USMA Archives, (West Point: 16 November 1959), 3.

¹⁶ C. M. Mount, *Memorandum, Subject: Proposed Report on Graduate Opinion of the USMA Academic Curriculum*, (USMA Archives: 10 March 1959).

electives for those cadets who could proceed more rapidly through the prescribed studies.¹⁷

In light of this review and the support of the graduate questionnaires, by April of 1959 the Academic Board was willing to instill two electives on a trial basis. At the 24 April Academic Board meeting, the Academic Board voted unanimously in favor of a number of proposals supporting the electives program: "It was moved and seconded that in view of the comments and recommendations of the Curriculum Review Board the Academic Board favors elective courses for all cadets on a trial basis."¹⁸ The Board went on to say that it "concur[s] with Recommendation 1, that the curriculum of the Military Academy be prescribed as to the majority of the studies included therein, but that there be provision for electives for all cadets in the final year and possibility of additional electives available to cadets who accelerate their progress through the prescribed studies."¹⁹ Additionally, the Board decided that "electives will be offered in both the social-humanistic and science-engineering areas during the First Class year," but that "the present ratio of distribution between the social-humanistic and the mathematics-science-engineering stems shall not be materially disturbed in the residual fixed curriculum."²⁰ This decision to implement two electives combined with other subtle revisions in the method of instruction was profound in the overall course of the Academy's history. This reform marked the beginnings of a change in the basic educational philosophy of the Academy.

¹⁷ *Report of the Curriculum Review Board*, USMA Archives (West Point, 23 January 1959), 3.

¹⁸ *Proceedings of the Academic Board. Record of the Meeting of the Academic Board, 24 April 1959.* West Point: 1959, 1.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.

The specific recommendations for instructional practices outlined in the Superintendent's curriculum study provided further evidence of this change in philosophy. As the Academic Board sanctioned these practices, the educational philosophy of the Academy moved further from a fixation on instilling mental discipline to one that emphasized expanding intellectual curiosity and promoted original thought. Such practices included things like fostering the cadet's ability to think and to integrate his knowledge by emphasizing the relationship of specific material to the scope of the entire course, by taking opportunities to relate specific course material to the entire curriculum, and by giving attention to the historical development of specific knowledge and pointing out unexplored areas of the field. Additionally, the Academy moved toward a more informal classroom atmosphere by using seminar teaching techniques, and by placing less emphasis on daily grading and by using more essay examinations.²¹

Superintendents had been trying to implement similar academic reforms since before General Douglas MacArthur was the Superintendent. When General Davidson assumed his assignment as USMA's Superintendent, a rigid academic program existed that had little flexibility concerning the needs of cadets. The Academic Board believed that it knew what cadets needed to face the challenges of the Army. The Board's belief was that West Point graduates had always served the Army well by being schooled in a curriculum heavily laden with mathematics, science and engineering. Each member of the Academic Board had the same voting power, and the Superintendent had only one

²¹ *Superintendent's Curriculum Study*, Report of the Evaluation Committee (West Point: 18 November 1958), 40-41.

vote on the Board. The Board determined policy at the Academy, and was generally averse to change.²²

How Superintendent Davidson got his reforms past the Academic Board was a testimony to his political shrewdness and to the fortunate situation in which he found himself. Several important factors played a role in his success. First, the changing world and educational environment helped create the conditions for academic reform. Second, Davidson's use of the graduate surveys provided invaluable supporting evidence to substantiate his views. Third and most importantly, the composition of the Academic Board during his tenure provided him with several allies that afforded the opportunity for change.

The world environment in 1958 was rapidly changing, as was the role of the United States Army. In the late 1950s, the Army found itself fiscally constrained by a President who believed that the answer to U.S. security was found in a large nuclear arsenal, not in a large standing Army.²³ As the Army searched for answers about its future missions, one can infer that West Point was also concerned about its future role. One way to increase the pool of applicants to the Academy during this period was by making the school seem more attractive to adolescent America by shaping the academic curriculum to look somewhat more like that of a regular university. The Academy was painfully aware of how the image of the post war Army influenced recruiting, and academic reform was one way to combat this trend.²⁴

²² John P. Lovell, *Neither Athens Nor Sparta? The American Service Academies in Transition* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 115.

²³ Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 531-535.

²⁴ Garrison H. Davidson, Lieutenant General, U.S. Army, *Grandpa Gar: The Saga of One Soldier as Told to His Grandchildren* (Personal Memoirs, USMA Archives, 1974), 160.

The second way that General Davidson got academic reform past the Academic Board was by using the graduate survey generated data to support his arguments. Davidson knew from the onset that he would meet resistance to change. He also knew that the resistance was based more on inter-organizational bureaucracy and reluctance to give up time from a particular department than on valid arguments against the increased specialization that the electives would bring about. One analyst observed that "a further factor reducing the probability of major change was the fact that each board member was a department head, jealously cognizant of the diminution of his domain that might result from modification of the curriculum."²⁵ To make room for electives meant that some department head would have to give up a portion of his time in an already tightly packed schedule.

To combat this trend, Davidson got a broad approval base from the large pool of living Academy graduates. "It was crystal clear to me [General Davidson] from the outset that changes of these proportions would need more than the opinion of a new Supe to sell them to an Academic Board with long established vested interests so my case would have to be prepared carefully and backed by as much factual data as the nature of the problem permitted if the Academic Board was to be convinced."²⁶ It did not hurt his cause that he had the support of the President of the United States with regard to academic reform. President Eisenhower relayed to Superintendent Davidson in June of 1958 that he should continually examine all aspects of the Military Academy, especially

²⁵ John P. Lovell, *Neither Athens Nor Sparta? The American Service Academies in Transition* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 115.

²⁶ Garrison H. Davidson, Lieutenant General, U.S. Army, *Grandpa Gar: The Saga of One Soldier as Told to His Grandchildren* (Personal Memoirs, USMA Archives, 1974), 163.

those that had become routine. He charged him with "getting rid of anything being done for tradition's sake which cannot be justified otherwise," and to "stand back and take a long look at what is being done from the standpoint of the mission and of the future."²⁷

The third, and final, contributing factor to Superintendent Davidson's success in instilling academic reform was that the composition of the Academic Board during his tenure provided him with several allies that afforded the opportunity for change. In reporting about his relationship with the members of the Board, he had this to say:

I had one particular advantage in pleading my cause. My associations with the members of the Board were more intimate than superintendents usually enjoyed. While it was not a peer relationship throughout, it was fairly close to one. I had served with most of the professors before in one capacity or another, with five as fellow cadets in the Corps.²⁸

Supporting this contention is the fact that during Davidson's tenure, six of the fourteen other officers serving on the Academic Board had been in their positions for five years or fewer. Three officers had less tenure than Davidson did on the Board.²⁹ In addition, Davidson had philosophical allies on the Board. He could particularly count on Colonel George A. Lincoln from the Department of Social Sciences and Colonel E. R. Heiberg from the Department of Mechanics because they shared his zeal for the elective program. As early as 1954, Colonel Heiberg called for electives because he believed that the Academy attempted to teach too much engineering "to that segment of the class which has neither the aptitude nor the need for such education."³⁰ Having two allies on a Board

²⁷ Garrison H. Davidson, *Memorandum For Colonel Renfroe Outlining the Views of President Eisenhower*, USMA Archives, 23 October 1958.

²⁸ Garrison H. Davidson, Lieutenant General, U.S. Army, *Grandpa Gar: The Saga of One Soldier as Told to His Grandchildren* (Personal Memoirs, USMA Archives, 1974), 163.

²⁹ *An Institutional Self-Evaluation of the United States Military Academy: "A Report Prepared for the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools,"* (West Point: Office of the Dean, November 1958), 14.

³⁰ E. R. Heiberg, Colonel, *Memorandum, Subject A BS or BA Elective for Cadets*, USMA Archives.

of fifteen officers, particularly when one was from the math, science, and engineering disciplines, proved to play a significant role in helping institute academic reform.

By getting two electives infused into the academic program, General Davidson had set the tone for future change and a new educational philosophy at West Point. His academic reform initiative would have “the most enduring impact on the Military Academy.”³¹ The implementation of electives was a long and hard fought battle. Once the first electives penetrated the academic program, however, the freezing and thawing of academic reform continued over the next several decades. The twenty five-year progression of academic reform from the Davidson era to 1983, was a reflection of the Academy’s acceptance that it must adapt to meet the needs of a more diverse world.

After the changes of the Davidson era, academic reform progressed slowly but steadily. Throughout the early 1960s, the academic program stayed the course with little to no change. The emphasis of academics was clearly still embedded in the math, science, and engineering curriculum. By 1965, however, the Academy had increased the number of electives cadets could take to four.³² A few years later, events in the Army, namely the United States involvement in the Vietnam War, were increasing the demands for lieutenants with a broader based education. In 1967, the Superintendent, Major General Donald V. Bennett, was calling for specialization by cadets. In 1968, the Academic Board voted to increase the number of electives to six. West Point permitted cadets to choose electives from “among 110 offerings in the four areas of elective

³¹ John P. Lovell, *Neither Athens Nor Sparta? The American Service Academies in Transition* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 108.

³² Theodore J. Crackel, *The Illustrated History of West Point*, (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Incorporated, 1991), 297.

concentration, either selecting all six from one of these areas or choosing electives from each."³³ The four areas of concentration included basic sciences, applied sciences and engineering, humanities, or national security and public affairs. Even still, the Academy prescribed the vast majority of the academic curriculum.

In the early 1970s, the potential existed for cadets to graduate having taken eight electives. "Each cadet is required to select and complete either six or eight elective courses. The exact number depends on whether or not he concentrates his electives and the area in which he concentrates. In addition to the required elective courses, those cadets who validate core courses must complete an equivalent number of elective courses prior to graduation."³⁴

A number of studies conducted in the mid 1970s concluded that cadets were overloaded with requirements and that the Academy should scale back academics. Consequently, in 1977 the Academic Board reduced the cadets' academic load to thirty-one core courses and ten electives. Furthermore, the number of electives the cadets had to choose from had grown exponentially to over 200 courses.³⁵

By 1981, cadets were following an academic path that led them down one of two tracks, either a math-science-engineering (MSE) track or a humanities public affairs (HPA) track. Although cadets were rapidly becoming increasingly specialized, the Academy still insisted on implementing a broad-based core curriculum.

³³ *An Institutional Self-Evaluation of the United States Military Academy*: "A Report Prepared for the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools." (West Point: Office of the Dean, January 1969), 48.

³⁴ *United States Military Academy Academic Program: Academic Year 1970-1971*, (West Point: Office of the Dean, Spring 1971), IV-1.

³⁵ Theodore J. Crackel, *The Illustrated History of West Point*, (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Incorporated, 1991), 298.

Because the Army works with both people and machines and serves in the United States and abroad, it needs officers whose education has provided them with a firm grasp of the realities of sciences and engineering, and an understanding of mankind. While colleges without the Academy's unique mission may permit their undergraduates to major or specialize in a special academic discipline, West Point's special purpose and its accumulated experience of over 170 years of designing curricula to meet the Academy's and the Country's needs argue in favor of a broader curriculum that leads you to study in both the arts and the sciences.³⁶

Even while cadets were reading this in their *Academic Program*, the Superintendent and the Chief of Staff of the Army felt that "the time may be right to move forward with the majors concept."³⁷ One year later, the Academic Board approved the majors program, and by 1983, the Department of the Army granted approval for sixteen academic majors at West Point. Cadets could choose from among the sixteen areas and declare a major, or they could opt for a field of study. Even with academic majors and fields of study implemented, the Academy still espoused the need for "a broad curriculum that leads you to study in both the arts and the sciences."³⁸ As such, the curriculum still required cadets to take a significant number of engineering courses as part of the core curriculum. Twenty-five years after the first electives entered the academic program of the United States Military Academy, General Davidson's new educational philosophy came to fruition in the form of full-blown academic majors. In this context, General Davidson did in fact "succeed in getting the first olive out of the

³⁶ United States Military Academic Program: Academic Year 1980-1981. West Point: Office of the Dean, Spring 1980, 1-2.

³⁷ Proceedings of the Academic Board. *Record of the Meeting of the Academic Board, 27 September 1982*. Vol 95. West Point: 1982, 2.

³⁸ *United States Military Academic Program: Academic Year 1983-1984*, (West Point: Office of the Dean, February 1983), 1-2.

bottle and in providing a program that permitted each cadet to go as far as fast as his personal abilities permit.”³⁹

Since Davidson’s era, critics of academic reform have argued that the changes in the curriculum have led to specialized cadets who feel less compelled to serve their nation as Army officers. Specialization leads to an increased desire to attain greater recognition within a given field. Specialization may compel school-trained economists, for example, to serve in an economic capacity rather than as a combat arms officer in the Army. The resulting trend, critics say, is that “academic majors will erode the desire for a lifetime of service and that attrition among young officers will increase.”⁴⁰ The results of academic reform on attrition rates indicate the opposite, however, depending on the academic area of concentration. Among Academy graduates who majored in history, for example, retention rates are much higher for every class than the retention rate within the general class population. For instance, amongst the 1990 USMA graduates, 37.8 percent of the class currently remains on active duty, but 61 percent of those officers from the class of 1990 who majored in history remain on active duty.⁴¹ Based on these statistics, it seems that retention rates are more dependent on other factors in the Army such as operational tempo and quality of life than on academic specialization during the pre-commissioning years.

Lieutenant General Garrison H. Davidson created change in the educational philosophy of the United States Military Academy by initiating academic reform through

³⁹ Garrison H. Davidson, Lieutenant General U.S. Army (retired). *Grandpa Gar: The Saga of One Soldier as Told to His Grandchildren*. Personal Memoirs, USMA Archives, 1974, 164.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 3.

⁴¹ Information obtained from Colonel Johnson via e-mail, prepared by the USMA Office of Policy, Planning, and Analysis. I could not be obtain additional statistics for other academic majors prior to submission of this work.

the introduction of electives into the academic curriculum. This change allowed the Academy to move from a philosophy rooted in mental discipline to one embedded in the principle of creating intellectual curiosity. His wooing of all of the affiliated parties, such as the pool of graduates and the Academic Board, during this process could serve as a model for organizational change at the Academy. Ever mindful of the needs of the Army, Davidson helped create an environment that inspired an Athenian mind to solve the problems of a Spartan world. His concept of graduates who were creative and original thinkers can carry the Academy into the next century. As West Point continues to struggle with its own version of the Athens-Sparta conflict, its leaders must remember that it will always take Athenian like mental acuity, combined with Spartan resolve, to continue to pour water into the cracks in the granite. This pouring of mental water leads to the freezing and thawing changes that move not only the Academy, but the Army as well.

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