

# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

## Monterey, California



## THESIS

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE LEADERSHIP EDUCATION AND  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AT THE UNITED STATES  
NAVAL ACADEMY

by

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June 2003

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**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE LEADERSHIP EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAM AT THE UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
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## **ABSTRACT**

Company officers at the United States Naval Academy are responsible for the leadership development of midshipmen. To attract higher quality officers to serve as company officers for the Brigade of Midshipmen and to provide officers with an opportunity for an advanced degree, the Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) Program was established in 1997. This program allows Navy and Marine Corps officers to receive a Master of Science in Leadership and Human Resource Development from the Naval Postgraduate School. After the first year, the program graduates serve two years as company officers and work closely with the midshipmen of the brigade. This research uses data obtained from semi-structured interviews and self-administered questionnaires of 27 LEAD program graduates. It focuses on the perceptions of graduates concerning the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the program, and makes recommendations for change and improvement. This research adds to the body of knowledge and recommendations that exist and serves as a five-year retrospective on the perceptions of the effectiveness of the program and whether or not the program is perceived to be meeting its goals.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

*Every great leader I have known has been a great teacher, able to give those around him a sense of perspective and to set the moral, social, and motivational climate among his followers.*

Vice Admiral James Bond Stockdale, USN

### A. BACKGROUND

The United States Naval Academy (USNA) is a four-year undergraduate institution administered by the United States Navy. The students at the Naval Academy are called midshipmen and referred to collectively as the Brigade of Midshipmen. The mission of the Naval Academy is to develop, educate, and train midshipmen in preparation for their commissioning and service as officers in United States Navy or United States Marine Corps. In addition to receiving an education, midshipmen participate in leading and training other midshipmen in all aspects of military life.

The Brigade is divided into 30 companies, with each company having a commissioned officer in the Navy or Marine Corps acting in a supervisory role to provide leadership and guidance to the midshipmen in their journey towards a commission. This company officer billet is perhaps the most vital and influential position for any officer taking part in the education and development of the future leaders of the Navy and Marine Corps.

In 1995 the Superintendent of the Naval Academy, Admiral Charles R. Larson, wanted to make a change in the selection, education and training of company officers. Recognizing the degree of influence a company officer has over midshipmen, he sought a change that provided "an educational program geared to company officer and instructor skill requirements" and attracted "high-quality junior officers to the Naval Academy by providing a career enhancing educational opportunity." (Larson, 1996) Admiral Larson's stated purpose of the program was "to increase the level of education, training, and

professionalism of the junior officers assigned to the company officer and leadership instructor billets at the Naval Academy." (Larson, 1996)

Admiral Larson invited the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) of Monterey, California to submit a proposal for a program of graduate education "that would address the Academy's and officer-student career needs." (USNA Memorandum of Agreement, 1996) The Academy and NPS agreed on a year-long curriculum, including a thesis, to precede the two-year assignment as company officer. The degree was designed to focus on leadership development, which should have value not just for the company officer tour, but also for the career development of the officer when he/she returns to the operating forces and continues to lead and develop junior personnel.

In August 1997, 11 members of the first cohort of the Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) Program convened in Luce Hall at USNA. They graduated in August of 1998 and were awarded a Master of Science degree in Leadership and Human Resource Development. After one year as students in the LEAD program, the officers spent the next two years serving as company officers within the Brigade of Midshipmen. The second cohort began in June of 1998 followed by a new group in June of each year since that time. At the time of this writing, there have been six cohorts.

There have been eight evaluation activities that have been conducted since the program's inception. These activities included interviews with graduates during their tenure at USNA, interviews with battalion officers and faculty, a review with the Superintendent, USNA, and ongoing feedback from USNA military directors. To date, there has been one published study of the LEAD program. Jo Anne Cunningham completed a 1999 thesis entitled *A Formative Evaluation of the Leadership Education and Development Program Curriculum*. This study will be discussed in Chapter II. Given the length of time since that study, it is an appropriate time for another review of the program.

## **B. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study assesses the perceptions of LEAD graduates about the LEAD program and makes recommendations based on those perceptions. This study uses five research questions to examine the program:

- 1) Is the LEAD program perceived to be effective in meeting the Educational Skill Requirements as set forth in the program description?
- 2) Is the LEAD Program perceived to be an effective preparatory program for assuming the duties of a Company Officer?
- 3) What are the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the LEAD Program?
- 4) What can be done to improve the LEAD Program?
- 5) Has the LEAD Program been beneficial to officers after they leave the USNA and continue their careers? If so, how?

## **C. RESEARCH METHODS**

### **1. Introduction**

Both interviews and a questionnaire were used to obtain data. The researcher is an alumnus of the Naval Academy and a student in the LEAD program. He will serve two years as a company officer following graduation from the LEAD program.

### **2. Data Collection Methods**

Interviews were the primary method of data collection for this research. There are several advantages to face-to-face interviewing as compared to other forms of data collection. The primary advantages are the length of time one can spend with an interviewee, the ability to clarify confusing questions or difficult concepts, the ability to ask follow-up questions to open-ended questions, and the ability to probe other areas in addition to the original interview protocol. (Bernard, 2000, p. 230) There are

disadvantages to face-to-face interviews as well. These types of interviews are intrusive and reactive. The interviewee may respond to body language or tone when being interviewed. They are also time consuming; both the interview itself and the processing of the data. (Bernard, 2000, p. 231)

The second method of data collection used for this research was a self-administered questionnaire. These questionnaires were sent via U.S. mail in paper form or by electronic mail in the form of an electronic file. There are many advantages to this method. Using this method, a researcher can gather data from a large number of respondents, all respondents receive the same questions, thus reducing researcher bias, and respondents are less likely to be self-conscious about their answers given their anonymity. (Bernard, 2000, p. 233) Disadvantages include having no control over interpretations of questions, and low-response rates, particularly from mailed (as opposed to electronically mailed) questionnaires. (Bernard, 2000, p. 234)

### **3. Participation**

The first interview conducted was with the USNA Commandant of Midshipmen, Colonel John R. Allen, USMC. Colonel Allen is a Naval Academy alumnus, class of 1976. The LEAD program comes within the scope of responsibilities of the Commandant. Colonel Allen was interviewed for his insights into and perceptions of the program. The interview protocol for his interview is contained in appendix A.

At the time of this study, 26 graduates of the LEAD program were assigned at USNA. The researcher asked 20 graduates if they would participate in an interview about the program. Nineteen of them agreed to be interviewed. Due to time constraints, 17 of the 19 graduates were interviewed. Interviewees were selected at random. Those interviewed included 11 Navy officers and six Marine officers. Fifteen of them were currently serving company officers, one was a battalion officer, and one was a leadership instructor in the USNA Leadership, Ethics, and Law (LEL) Department. The researcher conducted the interviews in the office of each participant. The company officer interview protocol is contained in Appendix B.

The format for all interviews was semi-structured. In these types of interviews, the researcher has specific, open-ended questions prepared for the interviewee. (Rubin and Rubin, 1995, p. 5) For this study's interviews, the questions and a small amount of reading material were given to the participants ahead of time to give them time to prepare for the interview and reflect upon the LEAD program. The reading material included the LEAD program educational skill requirements, course listings, and the protocol itself. All interviewees were instructed that their participation would be anonymous, and that anything that might identify them would be removed from their comments. Interview time ranged from 55 to 90 minutes. All interviews were tape recorded and then transcribed verbatim.

Over 40 LEAD graduates from cohorts I through V have departed USNA and moved on to other duty stations, or left the military. The researcher used a U.S. Navy electronic mail search engine and contacted the USNA Alumni Association to obtain their electronic mail addresses and U.S. mailing addresses. Electronic mail addresses of 25 former LEAD students were obtained.

These students were sent a questionnaire via the internet in the form an electronic file. The questionnaire is included in appendix C. The recipients were able to type their responses into the file and send it back to the researcher electronically. The researcher received ten responses using this method. The response rate for this method was 40 percent (10/25). The respondents included nine Navy officers and one Marine officer. No follow-up emails were sent to those who did not respond, and the researcher was not able to identify whether or not the addresses themselves were valid or current. It should be noted that, at the time of this research, there was a war in progress between the United States and Iraq and the world situation may have affected the response rate. Most LEAD graduates return to the operating forces when they detach from USNA and are deployed throughout the world. Access to electronic mail is at times very limited.

In addition to electronic mail, the researcher was also able to obtain 25 home addresses for LEAD graduates in cohorts I through III. The USNA Alumni association provided the information. After checking the list for invalid addresses and duplications of addresses of graduates who had already responded electronically, 17 questionnaires

were sent out via U.S. Mail. The questionnaire was the same one that was sent out electronically. The recipients were given the option of writing their responses on paper and mailing them to the researcher, or typing their answers in an electronic file and sending their responses via the internet. To date, no responses have been received via this method. Again, the world situation at the time of this writing may have affected the response rate.

#### **4. Limitations**

There are two primary limitations with respect to this study. The researcher previously mentioned the difficulty of locating program graduates who are spread throughout the globe, particularly during a time of war. The researcher attempted to contact 50 out of 69 program graduates, or 72 percent. He received input from 54 percent (27/50) of those whom he tried to contact, and 42 percent (27/69) of all graduates of the program.

A second limitation of this study is its focus on the perceptions of LEAD program graduates and other stakeholders of the program. These perceptions do not necessarily address what they learned from the program, how it changed their behavior, or how it made their organization more effective. The research questions focus on the graduates' opinions of the program as a whole, what they have found useful in the program, and how the program can be modified or improved to better serve students, the Naval Academy, and the naval service.

#### **5. Data Analysis**

In his book *Social Research Methods*, H. Russel Bernard writes, "analysis is the search for patterns in data that help explain why those patterns are there in the first place." (Bernard, 2000, p. 419) This study focuses on the qualitative analysis of data. In other words, the researcher will interpret the text of interviews, looking for words and themes in the texts and examine how they relate to each other and to the program being evaluated. (Bernard, 2000, p. 418)

To aid in the search for these patterns, the researcher uses a grounded theory approach to data analysis. Grounded theory is "a set of techniques for identifying

categories and concepts that emerge from the text and linking the concepts into substantive and formal theories." (Bernard, 2000, p. 443) Bernard presents six steps to grounded theory:

1. Produce transcripts of interviews
2. Identify themes
3. Pull all data from those categories together and compare them
4. Think about how categories are linked together
5. Use relations among the categories to build theoretical models
6. Present the results using quotes from interviews that illuminate theory

In his book *Qualitative Evaluation Methods*, Michael Quinn Patton elaborates on the grounded-theory approach:

By way of contrast to logical deductive theory construction, a grounded theory approach to evaluation research is inductive, pragmatic, and highly concrete. The evaluator's task is to generate program theory from holistic data gathered through naturalistic inquiry for the purpose of helping program staff and decision makers understand how the program functions, why it functions as it does and the ways in which the impacts/consequences/outcomes of the program flow from program activities. (Patton, 1980, p. 81)

This study used inductive analysis and coding to identify themes and make recommendations concerning the LEAD program. Inductive coding is used when one is in the exploratory or discovery phase of research to discover patterns of behavior or thought in a set of texts. It contrasts with deductive coding in that the researcher is not starting with a hypothesis to be tested, but instead is allowing theories or themes to develop by studying the data. (Bernard, 2000, p. 444) In this study, the researcher combed through the texts of the interview transcripts and typewritten responses to questionnaires to discover patterns and themes with respect to the LEAD program.

#### **D. SUMMARY**

Since its inception, the LEAD program has been an important part of the Naval Academy's mission to train and prepare the naval service's future combat leaders. The time is right for a closer look at the LEAD program and to determine in what ways, if any, it can be improved. The following chapter provides an in-depth look at the origins of the LEAD program and its current organization today. It will also examine program evaluation and provide a context for this study.

## **II. BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

*You are mentors. You will set the tone. You will set the attitude. You will either excite them or turn them off. There is no more important role than being a role model.*

Admiral Leon "Bud" Edney, USN  
Inaugural Convocation Ceremony  
LEAD Program, 1998 (Price, 1998)

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part focuses on the establishment of the LEAD program and how it is structured. This cursory background on the LEAD program will help the reader more fully understand the purpose of the program, provide a better understanding of the mission of the Naval Academy, and show how this program is a vital part of its mission. The Naval Academy exists to develop combat leaders. Therefore the officers charged with minting these new leaders must have many tools at their disposal for the development of midshipmen. The LEAD program attempts to provide them some of those tools.

The second part of this chapter focuses on program evaluation in general. The LEAD program, with a mission so vital to the Naval Academy and to the Navy, must be responsive to evaluation and change, and must be subject to critical examinations from within. In order to look at any program, a researcher must understand program evaluation and be able to apply its ideas and concepts.

### **B. THE LEADERSHIP EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

The United States Naval Academy was founded in 1845 to provide the Navy with a school that educated and then commissioned officers for duty in the naval service. Throughout this time, officers in the naval service assigned to USNA have served as leaders, instructors, and mentors to midshipmen in their journey towards a commission in the Navy or Marine Corps.

The Brigade of Midshipmen is the basic military unit of the Naval Academy, which consists of two regiments, with three battalions in each regiment, and five companies in each battalion. Each company has a commissioned officer assigned to it with the rank of Lieutenant or Lieutenant Commander for the Navy, and Captain or Major for the Marine Corps. Usually there is one Marine Officer for every four Navy officers. The officers are there to provide leadership, mentoring, and guidance to midshipmen throughout their time at the Naval Academy.

The billet of company officer is a crucial one at the Naval Academy. Like a Marine and his drill instructor, a midshipman rarely forgets the name of, and the experiences with, his or her company officer. Former Naval Academy Superintendent Admiral Charles R. Larson once described the job of the company officer as "the most important job at the Naval Academy. They're the role models with more influence here than anyone else." (Thorn, 2001) In spite of this, there was never any formal education, training, or preparation for officers posting as company officers until the late 1990s.

In the early 1990s a series of major scandals occurred at the Naval Academy. In 1993, two dozen midshipmen were expelled in the biggest cheating scandal in the school's history where over 134 midshipmen were implicated. (Valentine, 1994) Two years later, a 1995 undercover operation implicated 26 midshipmen in a drug-dealing scandal and several midshipmen were implicated in an auto theft ring that same year. (Reuters, 1996) These scandals occurred while Admiral Larson was Superintendent, and he initiated several changes and programs to combat what he saw as "young people today who have a higher tolerance level for other people doing wrong as long as they are not directly involved." (McIntyre, 1996) One of the changes he initiated was the LEAD program.

The Naval Academy allowed several schools the opportunity to submit proposals for a curriculum for the program. The Naval Postgraduate School was "selected because of its reputation of designing and delivering Navy-relevant, high quality graduate-level educational programs" and its "in-depth knowledge about, and appreciation of, the unique environment of USNA." (USNA Memorandum of Agreement, 1996)

The LEAD program is a joint venture between the Naval Academy and the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS). Simply put, the program offers prospective company officers the opportunity to pursue graduate education in the first year of a three-year tour at USNA, before filling the billet of company officer during the second and third years of the tour. The original Memorandum of Agreement between the institutions, signed in November of 1996, describes the impetus for the program:

USNA determined that a major modification in its "company officer" orientation and development program could result in significant positive improvement in the impact that company officers have on graduates of the USNA. Further, USNA determined that the new program should be a graduate-level educational program that offered career-enhancing benefits to the participants.

In addition to the two stated objectives of the program--a more educated company officer capable of having an increased impact upon midshipmen's lives and the "career enhancement" of a graduate degree--a third unspoken benefit is gained by having all graduates return to the fleet for a "payback tour." All graduates of the program are expected to spend at least one tour at sea or otherwise return to the operating forces. Prior to the program, some officers treated a tour as a company officer as a transition billet, where they would prepare to leave military service by pursuing graduate education or seeking civilian employment. Consequently, officers who were not planning to remain in military service were leading and mentoring midshipmen. With the LEAD program, the Navy avoids this potential "mixed signal." Returning to the operating forces is in itself an example of an individual officer's commitment to the naval service, and to his or her duties as a naval officer. Colonel John Allen, USMC, current USNA Commandant of Midshipmen, described this aspect of the program:

The advantage of the LEAD program is that it really gave us the opportunity at the Naval Service level to select people who are more career minded. That to me is absolutely key. If we don't have someone walking in the door...who is utterly committed to a career, maybe they change their mind later, but if they are not ...absolutely committed to that, then we are in trouble.... So the kind of person who is going to sign up for that is going to be someone who is philosophically wedded to remaining in the Navy. (Allen, J. R., Interview, February 2003)

The LEAD program is not a company officer preparation program. This has been a point stressed by both the Naval Academy and the Naval Postgraduate School from the program's inception. Though the demands and responsibilities of the company officer billet are certainly a concern for students in the short term, the program is also designed to educate a cadre of officers who will have a background in leadership development and human resources management. In theory, the Navy will be able to place these officers in other billets that require the skills and education received in the program. The Navy gives graduates a subspecialty code of 4500--Leadership Education and Development-- in the Applied Disciplines major area of the Navy's subspecialty system. Every subspecialty has a set of Educational Skill Requirements (ESRs) to articulate the purpose and goals of its program.

NPS, in conjunction with USNA, developed the educational skill requirements for the program prior to developing the curriculum. Complete descriptions of each requirement are found in Appendix E.

## **LEADERSHIP EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM EDUCATIONAL SKILL REQUIREMENTS**

- 1. Management Fundamentals:** Leadership, Management, and Organization. Officers will have the ability to apply basic management and leadership practices to organizational operations.
- 2. Evaluating and Improving Group Performance.** Officers will become skilled at analyzing and improving group morale, cohesion, and performance.
- 3. Motivating Subordinates.** Officers will effectively motivate subordinates to achieve high standards in all military endeavors.
- 4. Evaluating and Improving Individual Performance.** Officers will become skilled in analyzing and improving the performance of individuals.
- 5. Being a Role Model for Subordinates.** Officers will model and otherwise communicate the information about the military that subordinates will need to know to successfully transition to Naval and Marine Corps Leaders.

**6. Managing Educational Processes.** Officers will have a foundation of knowledge about educational processes that will enable them to effectively teach and develop their subordinates.

Each year, 15 students are selected for the program. The Navy selects about 12 officers and has an informal rolling process that is handled through each officer's "detailer" or career manager. The Marine Corps selects three students per year and has a formal application process and a board that reviews all applications and selects the students. The Naval Academy requires that a mix of warfare specialties be represented so that midshipmen are exposed to a broad range of occupational specialties among the company officers. This exposure broadens a midshipman's perspective on the opportunities available to him. LEAD students generally have anywhere from four to 11 years of commissioned service. Additionally, one student per year is selected from the instructors in the Leadership, Ethics, and Law (LEL) department. To date, 69 students have graduated from the LEAD program.

LEAD students report in June of each year to begin their course work. The curriculum currently consists of 23 consecutive courses. Instructors travel to the Naval Academy from the Naval Postgraduate School's main campus in Monterey, California, or from other locations, for one to two-week periods to teach a particular course. The students are generally in class from four to six hours a day, with outside reading and project work assigned when not in class. All students are required to complete a thesis on a subject approved by the NPS faculty. Appendix D lists the course descriptions and their corresponding educational skill requirement.

Course work is complete by March, leaving the last two to three months of the year-long program available for thesis work. This period is also a time when the students are slowly introduced to their job as a company officer and to the midshipman companies to which they will be assigned.

## **C. PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS**

There have been several evaluations of the LEAD program since its inception in 1997. These evaluations include end-of-year reviews with students and with the Superintendent, USNA, and interviews with the Commandant of Midshipmen, and several battalion officers. Changes and improvements have been minor in scope (e.g., elimination of three courses, credit changes on others) and reflect the Naval Postgraduate School's continuing efforts to evaluate and develop the program over the years. There have been no major format changes or adjustments to the program's structure or function.

In 1999, Navy Lieutenant Jo Anne Cunningham published a thesis entitled *A Formative Evaluation of the Leadership Education and Development Program Curriculum*. Her research questions focused on students' perceptions of how their skills in leadership development were changed as a result of the program and the strengths, weaknesses, and suggested improvements. Cunningham interviewed 11 graduates of the first cohort of the program. The interviews took place about three months into their tours as company officers. Cunningham recommended a second formative evaluation using input from subsequent cohorts and staff members of USNA, which was conducted but not published. This thesis research is the most comprehensive evaluation to date because it examines the perceptions of graduates from each of the first five cohorts of the program.

## **D. PROGRAM EVALUATION**

Program evaluation has many schools of thought and perspectives. There is no one method, or even a specific set of terms and definitions to make up the body of knowledge in this domain. This section focuses on the various approaches to program evaluation. Their differences and similarities are discussed. Additionally, the author discusses the applicability of selected aspects and approaches in program evaluation with respect to the LEAD program.

### **1. A Simple Approach**

Some approaches to program evaluation are very simple in nature. In their book

*Thinking About Program Evaluation*, Richard Berk and Peter Rossi assert that, if anything, attempts at program evaluation have the potential to reveal knowledge about a particular subject that was previously not known:

That is, the proper measure of success is adding to current knowledge, not what ultimately what would be good to know. Thus, if very little is known about the effectiveness of a particular program, an evaluation that would rate as weak on a pure methodological scale may nevertheless be an enormous success in practice. (Berk and Rossi, 1999, p. 5)

Berk and Rossi also discuss the difficulty in defining "effectiveness," since the main goal of program evaluation and evaluation research is to shed light on whether or not a program is effective. The word "effective" can have different meanings for different organizations. In terms of the LEAD program, one organization may deem the program effective because it views the main purpose of the program as awarding Master's degrees. If this is a measure of effectiveness, then obviously the LEAD program is a success. However, this measure does not account for whether or not the program is meeting its goals as defined in the skills requirements or any other criterion. Berk and Rossi point out that two issues must be addressed before deciding whether a program is effective. First, the goals of a program must be established or identified. (Berk and Rossi, 1999, p. 13) Second, effectiveness must always be addressed with the question, "Compared with what?" (Berk and Rossi, 1999, p. 14) Given this, the authors present three meanings of program effectiveness: marginal, relative, and cost.

*Marginal effectiveness* addresses the issue of dosage and whether or not more or less of something is needed. The previous evaluations of the LEAD program involved this concept. The changes made were in response to feedback from students, instructors, and Naval Academy staff members. *Relative effectiveness* addresses the issue of whether or not to continue on with a particular program or comparing several options to each other with respect to types of programs. Lastly, the authors address *cost effectiveness*, a measure that they describe as "comparison in units of outcome per dollar" (Berk and Rossi, 1999, p. 14). This aspect of the LEAD program is not examined in this study. The author addresses questions that touch on both relative and marginal effectiveness. In

doing so it addresses LEAD program graduates' perceptions of the program's structure, administration, and purpose.

## **2. Formative, Summative, and Goal-Free Evaluations**

Michael Scriven is a distinguished author regarding program evaluation and has been credited with advancing many concepts and terms throughout the field. (Shadish, 1991, p. 74) He is best known for his ideas on formative, summative, and goal-free evaluations. He describes *formative evaluation* as designing and using evaluation to improve the program being evaluated, whereas *summative evaluation* is designing and using evaluation to judge merit. Finally, *goal-free evaluation* requires evaluators to ignore goals, and to match effects of programs against needs of those affected by the programs.

Scriven's approach to evaluation differs from that of Berk and Rossi. He views the purpose of evaluation as making a judgment on the program being evaluated. Merely providing information about a program is not enough. Determining what is bad and good about a program should be a goal of evaluation. (Shadish, 1991, p. 75) He calls this the science of valuing. He asserts that "evaluation research must produce as a conclusion exactly the kind of statement that social scientists have for years been taught is illegitimate: a judgment of value, worth, or merit." (Shadish, 1991, p. 75)

Two of Scriven's better-known contributions to evaluation research are formative and summative evaluations. Scriven states that formative evaluation should be "to provide feedback to people who are trying to improve something." (Shadish, 1991, p. 78) Summative evaluations are conducted when an organization is trying to decide between several options or whether or not to terminate or fund a program. (Shadish, 1991, p. 78)

Finally, Scriven writes about goal-free evaluations where the evaluator approaches the program without the knowledge of stated goals of the program. The evaluator isolates himself from the personnel who run the program and any knowledge of its history. Its emphasis is on discovery of information without regard to any prior knowledge of the program. (Shadish, 1991, p. 81)

Scriven's approach towards formative evaluation is appropriate for an evaluation of the LEAD program. The main purpose of this study is to provide information and feedback about, and make judgments on, the merits of particular aspects of the LEAD program, to aid NPS and Naval Academy administrators in making decisions about the program.

This study does not address whether or not the goals of the LEAD program have been achieved. The Educational Skill Requirements (Appendix E) are the desired end-state the program attempts to achieve with its students. A summative evaluation would be extremely difficult to conduct in both defining and measuring worth, merit, or value-added with respect to the end state of the program.

### **3. Responsive and Preordinate Evaluation**

Stake (1975) has written extensively on evaluation research. Responsive evaluation uses a qualitative approach to program evaluation, whereas preordinate evaluation relies heavily on quantitative data. He provides some key terms and definitions:

*Responsive evaluation:* These evaluations orient to program activities rather than program goals, respond to audience information needs, and consider different values of people interested in the program when judging its adequacy. (Shadish, 1991, p. 270)

*Preordinate evaluation:* Evaluations that emphasize program goals as evaluation criteria, using objective tests for data collection, and standards or program personnel to judge programs. (Shadish, 1991, p. 270)

*Case-study Methodology:* Use of interviews, observation, examination of documents and records...resulting in a case report. Writing is informative, narrative, with verbatim quotations. (Shadish, 1991, p. 270)

Stake (1975) views program evaluation as meaning "that someone will report on the program's merits and shortcomings." (Shadish, 1991, p. 274) Unlike Scriven, he does not see the purpose of evaluation being the rendering of a summative or value judgment,

but rather it is to describe values and how the client or personnel involved view the program. (Shadish, 1991, p. 274) Stake is not a proponent of preordinate evaluation in dealing with educational programs, stating it often "does not focus on the variables that educational administrators have control over." (Shadish, 1991, p. 275) Preordinate evaluation is effective when it is important to know if goals have been reached. (Shadish, 1991, p. 279) He advocates responsive evaluation when examining educational programs:

An educational evaluation is responsive evaluation (1) if it orients more directly to program activities rather than to program intents, (2) if it responds to audience requirements for information, and (3) if the different value-perspectives of the people at hand are referred to in reporting the success or failure of the program. (Shadish, 1991, p. 276)

Stake (1975) cites several advantages to responsive evaluation. He believes that it allows important program variables to emerge and that it "accommodates ongoing changes in the program and its evaluation...and reports multiple views about what people think is good or bad." (Shadish, 1991, p. 276) He also states that "it is much more likely that whatever truths, whatever solutions there are, exist in the minds of the people who are running the program, participating in the program, those patrons of the program, [the evaluator] is making his greatest contribution...when he is helping people discover ideas, answers, solutions, within their own minds." (Shadish, 1991, p. 277)

Stake (1975) also emphasizes the use of case studies to improve a program or practice. He sees their primary purpose as discovery of information rather than confirmation of task or goals. The case study allows the reader to experience a program vicariously. (Shadish, 1991, p. 286) He believes case studies allow readers to form their own opinions and judgments about a particular program. (Shadish, 1991, p. 289) Stake sees this method as being particularly useful when doing responsive evaluation. He acknowledges a weak point in using case studies is the concern for the validation of the study itself.

Stake's preference for responsive evaluation is suited toward an evaluation of the LEAD program. As stated earlier, responsive evaluation focuses on program activities

rather than program goals. Qualitative measures such as interviews and questionnaires support responsive evaluation, and are the best way to gather information about a program. The interview protocols and questionnaire used in the present research focus on the students' perceptions of the format and structure of the LEAD program, and ask what can be improved and what should be changed.

#### **4. Philosophical Frameworks**

Green (1998) presents program evaluation and evaluation research for both qualitative and quantitative methods. She establishes four "philosophical frameworks" and provides four sub-categories for each framework. *Postpositivism* is a method of program evaluation that focuses on the goals or outcomes of a program and is directed at high-level policy makers within an organization. The two approaches that are most applicable to evaluating the LEAD program are *Pragmatism* and *Interpretivism*. These methods focus on key audiences of either program managers or the beneficiaries of the program itself. They use a mix of both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection. (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998, p. 376) Pragmatism evaluates programs using quantitative and qualitative measures with respect to its goals or end state. Again, this study does not focus on the goals of the LEAD program. This study examines the students' perceptions of the program as a whole. The applicable aspects of pragmatism deal with observations about what functions well and what needs improvement. The philosophical approach that is best suited towards evaluating the LEAD program is interpretivism. This approach focuses exclusively on the stakeholders' perceptions of the program being evaluated using qualitative measures such as interviews, case studies, and document reviews to evaluate programs. (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998, p. 376) Finally, Green's *Normative Science* framework focuses on social justice and ideological views of programs and evaluations. It is not applicable to this study.

#### **5. Kirkpatrick's Four Levels**

Donald Kirkpatrick breaks program evaluation down into four levels: reaction, learning, behavior, and results.

*Reaction* is how beneficiaries or participants in a program react to a program.

Kirkpatrick calls this a measure of customer satisfaction. (Kirkpatrick, 1998, p. 19) He believes that in order for a program to be successful, and to continue to be useful to an organization, "customer" reactions must be positive. (Kirkpatrick, 1998, p. 20) This is the simplest and most common form of program evaluation. It is feedback and perceptions that are readily available to the researcher (Kirkpatrick, 1998, p. 25)

This type of evaluation is particularly suited towards educational programs. The LEAD program conducts this level of evaluation at the end of each course in the form of student opinion forms (SOFs). These forms contain questions about course content, structure, and the professor who taught the course. The SOF contains questions about certain aspects of an individual course where the respondent can answer in an "agree" or "disagree" format using a Likert scale. Qualitative feedback is also encouraged as every SOF has an area where respondents can add additional comments.

This reaction level is the main focus of interviews and questionnaires with respect to the LEAD program. The researcher examines the opinions and perceptions of LEAD program graduates. One way in which this study differs from Kirkpatrick's definition of the reaction level concerns the scope and volume of the data obtained. Kirkpatrick focuses this level on immediate reaction, and subsequently developing a standard on which to base opinions about the program once a norm is established. His most common tool for this practice is the SOF, or "happiness sheet" as he likes to call them. (Kirkpatrick, 1998, p. 25) However, this study primarily uses face-to-face interviews to collect data. One advantage to using interviews for an evaluation is that the respondent can give a more thorough account of his or her experiences with the program and elaborate on questions as opposed to just agreeing or disagreeing with a statement. Similarly, the interviewer can probe in different directions during an interview in order to explore more fully the ideas and opinions that arise.

The *Learning* level is defined as "the extent to which participants change attitudes, improve knowledge, and/or increase skill as a result of attending the program." (Kirkpatrick, 1998, p. 20) This level is geared toward training programs where skills are imparted and can be readily measured. This level would be very difficult to evaluate with respect to the LEAD program. Much of the coursework, with a few exceptions, concerns

material that is not easily measurable or quantifiable. In order to assess learning, pre-course measures of existing knowledge would be needed.

The *Behavior* level is defined as "the extent to which change in behavior has occurred because the participant has attended the training program." (Kirkpatrick, 1998, p. 20) Again, this is another aspect to program evaluation that is more applicable to training environments as opposed to educational environments. Given that no mechanisms are in place to measure performance or behavior of company officers prior to entering the LEAD program, this aspect of evaluation is not be examined or measured.

The *Results* level is defined as the final results that occurred because the participants attended the program. (Kirkpatrick, 1998, p. 23) It differs from the behavior level in that it is about the organization as opposed to the individual. This is a level that cannot be attained with respect to the LEAD program, as the goals of the program involve things that are very difficult, if not impossible, to measure.

Kirkpatrick's four levels are especially appropriate for training programs and programs where skills learned can be easily measured. His *reaction* level is the one aspect that is appropriate to evaluations of this type of educational program.

## **E. SUMMARY**

There is a large volume of material relating to program evaluation and evaluation research. Not all scholars agree on their approaches to program evaluation, especially when dealing with qualitative methods of evaluation. Some scholars disagree both on methods and reasons for evaluations altogether.

There are similarities and differences in all the program evaluation approaches discussed in this chapter. The most critical difference between them involves the purpose of an evaluation itself. The first question one should ask when evaluating a program is *Why is the program being evaluated?* Berk and Rossi, Green, and Kirkpatrick, all see value in an evaluation being done to increase the body of knowledge about a program. Scriven and Stake take a different approach, stating that value judgments should be made about a program, or a particular aspect of a program, as opposed to just providing

information. This study examines several methods and uses those that are appropriate to evaluating the LEAD program. Chapter III examines data collected from interviews and questionnaires of LEAD program graduates. The purpose of this study is not to judge the merit of the LEAD Program, or to judge outcomes. It is a formative evaluation in the sense that the program is being evaluated to see how it can be improved. Finally, it is a responsive evaluation in that the actual structure and classes of the program are discussed as opposed to program outcomes, and a broad range of former students are interviewed in order to determine whether the program is functioning well and serving students' needs.

### III. DATA ANALYSIS

*Any man facing a major decision acts, consciously or otherwise, upon the training and beliefs of a lifetime...if they are successful in dealing with the unexpected it is upon the basis of past experience and training.*

Fleet Admiral Ernest King, USN

#### A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the themes that evolved from data that were collected from the USNA Commandant of Midshipmen, LEAD graduates who are currently serving as company officers, and LEAD graduates who have completed their tours as company officers. The Commandant and current company officers participated in semi-structured interviews that encouraged dialog about the subject at hand. (See Appendices A and B) The graduates who have left USNA provided data via electronic questionnaires. (See Appendix C) The following are the themes the researcher found with respect to each of the research questions.

#### B. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

##### **1) Is the LEAD program perceived to be effective in meeting the Educational Skill Requirements (ESRs) as set forth in the program description?**

This research question was posed to the Commandant of Midshipmen and current company officers, only. All were given the LEAD program's ESRs, course listing, and course descriptions a few days prior to the interviews. Themes related to this question included needs analysis and the specific responses regarding the ESRs. The needs analysis surfaced as a result of comments made by the Commandant who discussed the relationship between the ESRs and the USNA Strategic Plan. The USNA Strategic Plan is a periodically updated document that sets goals, standards, and direction for the Naval Academy in pursuit of its stated mission.

### **a. Needs Analysis**

The researcher began his research by interviewing the Commandant of Midshipman, Colonel John Allen, USMC. The purpose of this was to get the Naval Academy administration's views of and thoughts concerning the program. The researcher asked Colonel Allen for his opinions of both the ESRs and the curriculum. He indicated that before the ESRs could be addressed, the Naval Academy should conduct a needs analysis to ensure that the program and the ESRs are aligned with the Naval Academy's Strategic Plan. Colonel Allen explains:

Without knowing what Admiral Larson's end state was, potentially expressed as a document, a vision document, or concept document, or something along those lines, then I can't step back from that and say that the curriculum and the ESRs of the NPS LEAD program ever supported that end state, or looking back whether they support it today...We have to do better, first of all by deciding what it is that the LEAD program should do for the Naval Academy at the strategic level and then define the LEAD program from there and develop the ESRs and so on. Now, I am not sitting here saying that the LEAD program isn't working, because clearly we have had great success with the company officers. But what I am saying is I think we need to do the analysis; it is time to do the analysis.

During the interview, Colonel Allen made it clear that he was very pleased with the program, and the results he has observed in the quality of the individual company officer. He did feel that the program needed a review, both at the academic level and the program as a whole, to ensure that the program is in congruence with the direction and goals of the Naval Academy.

### **b. ESRs/Curriculum**

One question the researcher asked of the current company officers concerned the relevance of the ESRs, and whether or not they should be modified. Every interviewee responded positively towards them and felt that they were appropriate for what are the purpose and the goals of the program. One LEAD graduate expressed his thoughts of the ESRs in terms of how appropriate they were in his capacity as a leadership instructor.

Especially after reviewing them after being detached since graduation basically, I definitely look back probably with a more clear eye and see

that they do fit...my knowledge that I gained from the LEAD Program is directly influencing now the leadership education that the Midshipmen are getting, based on my education in the LEAD Program.

One officer spoke of the ESRs and goals of the program in terms of relevance to his job as a company officer.

I thought that I found them to all be very applicable, to be honest with you... I was just reading through the highlights on it on most of these and they all seem to be relevant to what it is I have to do here...I've seen where I personally had to do a few of these things here and there but not all them with my job in the Hall. Obviously I think they have been good, they were applicable to things we need to know despite the fact that I haven't had to use them all.

Although he mentioned that he did not make use of each skill requirement, it should be noted that the requirements are not tailored specifically for the company officer billet, but rather they are attributes and knowledge that the LEAD graduate should expect to use throughout his or her subsequent service.

Overall, the issue of ESRs and whether or not they should be improved, changed, or scrapped produced unanimity among the LEAD program graduates. Nearly every respondent felt that, as goals or an end state, they were what the program should be providing to its students.

The following four research questions were addressed in both the interview protocol for current company officers and the questionnaire sent to LEAD program graduates who have since departed USNA for a subsequent tour of duty.

**2) Is the LEAD Program perceived to be an effective preparatory program for assuming the duties of a Company Officer?**

One idea that both the Naval Academy and the Naval Postgraduate School stress is that the LEAD program is not a "company officer preparatory program." The program is designed to produce an officer who is well versed in leadership development and management techniques, among other skills. In fact, the Marine Corps acknowledges LEAD graduates by bestowing a secondary military occupational specialty (MOS) of

"Leadership Development Specialist." The Navy gives its graduates a sub-specialty in "Leadership, Education, and Development." However, the task on the horizon for all LEAD students is the billet of company officer and all the preparation that entails. It is a chance to put to practical use some of the knowledge, skills, and ideas obtained while a student in the LEAD program. Most participants saw the program as good preparation for their jobs as company officers.

Preparing to lead midshipmen...is much different than leading a division and interacting with First Class Petty Officers, Chiefs, other Div-Os, and Department Heads. This program really afforded an opportunity to take a strenuous look at types of leadership that are effective and why.

Another officer noted that it was beneficial given the focus of the company officer-the midshipmen.

I think so, the investment in human capital is always good, and taking time out and doing education is a benefit. Here in particular where we are talking with young people's development, and although I think we have really good people to start with that you are working with, and so it's good to be able to talk about some of that stuff from an ethical standpoint...I felt enriched from the process; it was a very rewarding process.

One officer felt the education he received was at odds with the leadership styles and techniques he experienced once he assumed the job as company officer.

With respect to preparing us for the duties as a Company Officer, I would have to say not really. My perception remains that the Commandant and the Battalion Officers didn't really want you to practice new or innovative leadership techniques. This might vary from Battalion to Battalion, but the Company Officers in my Battalion didn't have the authority to make any decisions of consequence.

Another officer expressed similar views on a perceived incongruence between leadership theory and techniques he learned in the classroom and what he could practice in Bancroft Hall, the midshipmen barracks where company officers work.

The LEAD program was interesting and I learned many things, but the practical material taught in the LEAD program was difficult to implement in Bancroft Hall due to restrictions on the company officer's authority...I

found being a company officer more challenging than I thought because of this.

One officer noted that it was not just the curriculum that was beneficial to his preparing for his tour as a company officer. The year to become familiar with his surroundings was an unstated benefit of the program.

The other value for me--not being a graduate--was a year of observing from the outside. The cultural awareness. So it's like getting into the pool slowly, whereas if I had come from [previous duty station] into X company I would have lost my mind...Being able to slowly spiral into Bancroft Hall for me personally was very good. I entered the pool from the shallow end and waded out to the deep end and now I'm just treading water furiously. So that was a value.

Overall, only two out of 27 participants felt that the program was not beneficial to them in preparing them for their duties as company officers.

### **3) What are the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the LEAD Program?**

#### **a. Strength: The Cohort**

The single most repeated comment about the strengths of the program was the benefits of the cohort--of having a group of officers work and study together for a year before being assigned as company officers in Bancroft Hall. Nearly every interviewee mentioned this as the greatest strength of the program. One company officer saw the benefit in terms of the group cohesion that is achieved.

That's one of the advantages of the cohort...you mix a whole bunch of personalities and experience together, and I think that's the unintended consequence that is probably the most beneficial aspect of the entire master's program...certainly when Admiral Larson and whoever decided to make this program...they had to consider the synergy that you were going to build out of a group of people studying together, being together essentially for an entire year...but I don't think they saw the significance of what I see is the greatest benefit to that program and that is the cohesion you get in the cohort.

Another officer spoke of the benefits of getting to know one's fellow company officers in the year prior to assuming the duty, and how those relationships can benefit both themselves and the Naval Academy itself.

I think by far the most positive aspect, the big take away for the Academy and for company officers in general is you're trapped in a room with 16 people and you get to know those 16 people really well. You form that team; you form a certain amount of cohesion before being dropped into this command...The ability to form an identity with a group of people and then be put into the job where you're going to be dealing with those people on a daily basis is a great thing. I think if there was a way to take that idea and apply it everywhere in the military, everywhere in the military would be more effective. Just the fact that if I had certain questions about any aspect of my job, based on spending a year in a classroom with 15 other people, I know which one of those guys I can call and, hey, I had this happen to me today, what would you do...I can't think of any environment where you get a year to get to know people like that, prior to be thrown into the fire as it were, of this type of a situation. I think that is by far the single greatest benefit of the program. I think that's good for us as company officers and it's also good for the Academy as an institution. I think we spent a lot of time talking about what we were going to be like as company officers and what the job was going to be like and how we were going to, in our own small ways, as a group of 15 new company officers, make a difference in the Hall. And present a united front to the midshipmen and kind of coordinate and I really felt that is good for the Academy. It wouldn't happen if we weren't in that environment for a year to get to know each other.

Another officer explained how the relationships formed during the LEAD program can also benefit the midshipmen of the brigade.

That's easy for me. The fact that you spend a year together with a cohort of people. My guess would be if you talked to any of the other guys they'd probably say...the same thing...It's so easy here in the Hall now that we're all company officers to be able to call one of those other guys and say, hey, I've got this going on, what are you doing about it or if one of my kids and one of their kids are in the same situation or in trouble together or in the same class, or even if I'm sending people to someone for professional advice, I know absolutely who to send them to. By far the best benefit of this program is the group of 15 of us that came over here to become company officers together, absolutely.

One LEAD graduate expressed his thoughts about the cohort aspect of the program in terms of personal growth and the knowledge gained from exposure to less familiar services and areas of the military.

I got A LOT out of it, but that's just me... It forced me to think about stuff I've never thought about, and the insights of the other 13 cohort members was what made the program great. I'm a "coffee drinking, donut eating, let's go to sea everyday" SWO. I have my views of the world, and my take on leadership, which are obviously rooted in my own experiences. Getting to know 13 other officers of the naval service and their experiences/perspective was an education in and of itself. I consider THAT my master's degree, not any tests I took or thesis I wrote. Learning about leadership and getting to know how pilots, sub-drivers, and Marines think--that was really cool I thought. Especially the Marines. I learned more from the three Marine Captains during the year of LEAD and my two years as a Company Officer than I ever expected to. To a person, they were phenomenal, and the SWOs and Marines in our cohort formed a great bond.

Nearly every LEAD graduate interviewed, as well as the respondents to the questionnaire, felt that the relationships developed during their time as students was invaluable and for many it was the biggest benefit of the program.

#### **b. Strength: Practical Application**

Many of those interviewed mentioned specific courses when discussing the strengths of the program. These courses had a direct practical application to the billet of company officer. The two most often mentioned courses were the *Ethics and Moral Development* course, and the *Counseling* course. One officer felt that these two courses meshed well with their duties as company officers

The biggest ones were the counseling skills class and the ethics class, because that has a huge tie in with the ethics center here and the development of character that Colonel Allen is trying to instill here --that's a huge part of it--the character development process--so there were some courses that were really relevant.

Another officer felt that the counseling course had the most practical application to his duties in Bancroft Hall.

Probably the biggest one that was most beneficial was...counseling. I mean 90 percent of what you do as a company officer so in terms of counseling, active listening and understanding how to approach the Midshipmen and just understanding their mind set and their age group and how they think about the world and things, it is absolutely essential.

Overall, the LEAD graduates interviewed felt that there were many aspects to the program that had a direct application to their subsequent duties as company officers, with the aforementioned courses being most frequently cited.

**c. Weakness: "Wave tops"**

The most commonly mentioned negative aspect of the program was concerning the depth and breadth of the program. There was a general feeling among many of those interviewed that many subjects were just briefly explored, and that the modular format of the program's structure limited the amount of time one could spend on a particular subject. One officer suggested that there is simply too much material for a year-long program, and therefore not enough time is spent on each subject.

I think fundamentally they are teaching all the things they need to teach in the LEAD program. If I could summarize, and this would be a recurring theme in anything I say to you, my complaint with the LEAD program is not enough time is spent on these important topics. That we have put too much into the curriculum for the short period of time. If anything I would argue that...it's too much for a graduate curriculum to pack into the time that we have.

Another argued that the current setup of the program makes the coursework akin to survey courses instead of graduate work.

Some of these things you just can't cover in that period of time--in what I would argue is graduate education. Do I think the curriculum meets those ESRs--yes. I just worry that what we do is we give people a familiarity with a topic as opposed to really educating them about it. A mile wide and an inch deep.

Another felt that he wasn't being given graduate education, but rather a brief overview of the topics and ideas that make up the LEAD program and therefore he did not internalize the subject matter.

The status quo is we expose people to all these topics. We give them a broad exposure to it. They recognize some of the terminology. They have heard of the concepts but they don't necessarily understand them or even get a lot of chances to process them. If you are going to tell me this is graduate education, then give me a graduate education in it. Don't give me familiarization training; which is what I felt like the LEAD program did. I got familiarization training. As I stand in the classroom and teach leadership, I am literally every class drawing upon the things that I learned in management class in my other graduate curriculum because I know them, I processed them, I regurgitated them, I used them. What I learned in the LEAD program was kind of topical-skimming over the surface.

One officer felt that the amount of work compressed into a short period of time did not allow for retention or absorption of the material.

The most problematic issue with the program was the volume of work in the short period of time. I know that there are theories showing that learning is enhanced in a one-subject environment but I do not feel that I had time or the room in my day to reflect upon and cognitively assimilate as much of the subject matter as would have been possible in a more traditionally paced program. However, I am aware that the time limits of the program necessitated this hackneyed “firehose” method of military education.

One disagreed and felt that the amount of classroom time was not only sufficient, but perhaps more than a normal graduate level program.

For the most part people getting MBAs they go to class about three days a week where we go to class five days a week and five hours at a time. It's totally different. My friend goes for an hour or an hour and a half, comes home for 2 – 3 hours and goes back for another hour. Some days she has three classes and that's over three hours worth of class and that's a lot. If you're on that kind of a schedule it takes 24 months. But if you go to class five hours a day five days a week that's 25 hours of class a week. There are not a lot of grad programs that teach 25 hours of class a week so I think we are talking about apples and oranges.

Eight of 17 (47 percent) interviewees mentioned the fact that they thought the LEAD program could improve the way it delivered classes, and could re-examine how much time is spent on particular subjects.

#### **4) What can be done to improve the LEAD Program?**

Many ideas for improving the LEAD program emerged from the interviews and questionnaires. The ideas that were discussed most often were a call to reexamine course emphasis, whether or not to retain the thesis requirement for the program, and whether or not to increase interaction between students in the LEAD program and Commandant's staff.

##### **a. Reexamine Course Emphasis**

In response to the fact that many felt that the course work was "a mile wide and an inch deep," many suggested that the program could be improved by increasing the scope of certain courses, while reducing or eliminating other courses.

One officer felt there was too much reading to do within the time allotted. The format of the courses was such that there was too much to cover in any one particular subject with respect to the time in the classroom.

I would say...make it a more robust leadership Master's, i.e., get deeper into the leadership areas rather than skimming the surface as we talked about. Matter of fact, now you're bringing back some old memories of when I was actually in the program, my complaint was that we only scratched the surface, i.e., the 400 pages of reading and guess what, your class is three days long. They had to know that the reading wasn't getting done. What a waste of trees was my point.

Several students suggested the removal of the thesis requirement would have other benefits--such as allowing for more classroom learning and the ability to go more in-depth into particular subjects. One suggested that it is hard to go too far in depth with the way the course is designed now.

The student would be better educated if the thesis went away and there were more classes. The reason is, the courses are firehosed, and they are wave tops. You're skimming wave tops on theory and you're skimming wave tops on things that I thought were pretty neat ideas but we never delved into them.

Another officer suggested that the amount of time allotted for particular classes could be examined.

I would say give more time to go into more depth in a topic so you can spend more time. Military leadership in a week or 10 days? Come on.... let's do that for three weeks or four weeks. Performance measurement...ok that is a week long class or three days. Motivational theory? You can't do it in three days. Some of those things deserve more time.

Finally, one officer suggested that he is more suited towards classroom learning rather than independent research.

I would say get rid of the thesis and add more instruction, more course load, but that may also have to do with my learning style, which for me I get more out of somebody talking about it than me trying to go in and do independent research and read from a book and try to figure out what's being said and how it applies.

Nearly half of all interviewees (47 percent) suggested that the LEAD program would benefit from having certain classes increased in their scope.

#### **b. Thesis: Yes or No?**

This was one issue for which the researcher found little lack of opinion. Of the 17 LEAD graduates interviewed, eight recommended keeping the thesis as part of the program (47 percent), eight recommended doing away with the thesis requirement in lieu of another requirement (47 percent), and one did not feel strongly either way.

Many of the current company officers felt the thesis was the one aspect of the program that lent it academic rigor, stating that the course would be far less of a challenge without it.

I think that the program isn't challenging enough to justify the awarding of a master's degree if you don't have a thesis. I got more professionally out of doing the thesis than I got out of the course work. I think it was a challenge, I think it was something looming on the horizon that was built up to be this culminating event in this program. For me, getting it done was a great deal of professional satisfaction. It was the only thing that gave me professional satisfaction--completing the thesis. The only thing that gave me professional satisfaction was the amount of work and the sense of accomplishment I had when I completed a project the magnitude of the thesis. The only way I can look at my diploma and feel even remotely proud of my accomplishment of a master's degree is because of the thesis.

Another officer commented on how the thesis process itself was a rewarding experience and as such was a valuable part of the LEAD experience.

When you're in the throes of the thesis it's a pain...but I think the accomplishment of finishing it and feeling proud about that thing on my wall and, the beauty of LEAD is you just go to class, you do some reading and take a couple of tests, if that's all that symbolized, I don't know that it would be on my wall. But I think that I've overcome that huge hurdle, because they make it so huge and because the time line is so compressed, "Hey I completed this." I managed to find time in my day, whether I was in class at the time or I was writing after classes were complete. The fact that I completed that, I feel proud about that.

There was a major difference of opinion between those who were interviewed, and those who responded to the questionnaires. Of the ten questionnaire responses the researcher received from LEAD graduates, nine of the respondents (90 percent) thought that the thesis requirement should remain, while one was indifferent. The most-often-cited reasons were the personal benefits of going through the thesis process, and the perceived credibility the thesis adds to the program.

I would not substitute anything for the thesis if I wanted the same results. The results I speak of were threefold. For one, the act of researching and producing the thesis made me more competent as an instructor and in assisting the midshipmen in my company with many of their academic issues. It changed the way I cognitively attacked leadership problems. Also, the time to research allowed me to study and become singularly familiar with a specific area of my choice. Finally, the thesis was beneficial in helping me gain access to a doctoral program. Overall it helped me personally and professionally.

Another officer echoed this sentiment and thought that removing the thesis as a requirement would change the nature of the LEAD program.

A thesis is universally recognizable in the academic field and lends real legitimacy to the program. Otherwise, the program will degenerate into "Navy training courses."

There were also very strong opinions with respect to eliminating the thesis as part of the graduation requirement. One officer argues against having a thesis in economic terms.

The question I have is "Is the bang that you get out of that document worth the investment for it?" I question that. When you look at it not only as far as the resources that are poured into it--not to mention the advisors are compensated for being a part of the thesis process...then lay on top of that just your time and wages as an officer. I mean literally that document is tens of thousands of dollars--not sure if you look at the big picture that it's worth it.

Another felt there are more effective uses of a LEAD student's time and the institution could find alternatives to the time-consuming thesis requirement.

I would say could we use the time more productively, and the question is if we make this a company officer transition, would that be a better use of our time rather than ending classes in March or April and saying crank through and create this stack of paper that maybe nobody is ever going to read and maybe really doesn't have a lot of relevance, maybe our time would be better spent--continuing in further classes that are a part of the business school and public policy element out at Monterey, and specifically more preparation for assuming the role of company officer .

One officer suggested a group project or some sort of substitute for the thesis in order to meet NPS's degree requirements. The time saved could be spent better preparing for subsequent duties.

I think we can better utilize the time in doing a more formalized transition prep --learning what the culture is like--in lieu of cranking out this thesis product...maybe our thesis replacement is some sort of project that each working group does as part of the transition and preparation process in lieu of the thesis so that we can meet whatever Monterey's requirements are for an end product.

Finally, one officer felt that the only reason that there was a thesis requirement was for the very reason of academic legitimacy, and that this has detracted from the rest of the program.

I feel like we have held on to the thesis requirement to legitimize this graduate curriculum but it has been at the expense of learning in the

classroom. I would get rid of the thesis because I think a couple of things happen. One: it forces us to compress covering the material in too short a period of time. As people progress through the curriculum, and they get the pressure applied to them about thesis, thesis, thesis, people make a conscious decision--"Hey, am I going to keep doing my best in the classroom, and push off the thesis until later with the risk of finishing late or not at all?" "Or am I going to just do what I need to do to get by in the classroom, sacrificing education in an attempt to finish my thesis...?" Thesis--great requirement-- but it only fits in a curriculum where you have a year and a half to do it.

There was an even split among current company officers as to whether or not the thesis requirement should remain. Those LEAD graduates who have since departed USNA for the operating forces were nearly unanimous in answering the questionnaire that the thesis should remain.

### **c. Formal Link**

The LEAD program has essentially been an NPS program. That is, the program consists of the classroom instruction and the thesis. There has been very little formal interaction between the students of the program and the Commandant's staff, on which each student will eventually work. Very little training has been institutionalized with respect to the students immediately assuming the role of company officer. The LEAD student prepares for the job of company officer on his or her own-with the net result being a LEAD graduate is as prepared for his or her job as he or she wants to be. Many students felt that this was a flaw in the program, while others thought that that is exactly how it should be.

Five out of ten (50 percent) questionnaire respondents thought that there should be no formal link and no additional training added to the program. Those opposing any type of training aspect to the program were adamant that the program be a "hands off" area to the rest of the institution. Eleven out of 17 (64 percent) interviewees responded that there should indeed be a training element added to the LEAD program to better prepare company officers for their subsequent duties.

One officer complained that there was a lack of preparation with respect to starting right away with "Plebe Summer," the institution's name for the indoctrination process for incoming Fourth Class Midshipmen, or first year students.

I think the expectation is there that you're in that LEAD Program to become a company officer, your next step is company officer, you're going to fleet up to company officership. If that's the case then absolutely there should be a training program associated with that. It shouldn't be that literally you're dropped into Plebe Summer.

One company officer felt that there should be added classroom instruction, and more interaction with the Commandant's staff.

There needs to be some practical application in the classroom whether it is seminars and the like –that prepare one for assuming the roles as a company officer –and I think we need to set up the frame work where, more formally, individuals spend time in the Hall to see what's happening.

Another suggested a formal mentoring program from the beginning of the LEAD program, where former LEAD students would be assigned to the newest cohort of LEAD students.

I think a mentor program might be in order--have a company officer assigned to a new guy in the LEAD program when he/she checks in. Have a sponsor program as if the person was coming to a new squadron/ship. The two could meet periodically (once a month is not excessive and more often if they want to.) I think this would decrease the culture shock from moving over to Bancroft and they will have a dose of reality (you can't do everything you want to in Bancroft Hall) before they get over there.

Another officer thought that more interaction between LEAD cohorts and the Naval Academy was called for, but cautioned against it becoming too formal a program.

I talked about assigning a mentor or running mate. And that will have mixed results as well. The more programmatic the system becomes, the more bureaucratic the system becomes, the less effective it is at achieving--it's a diminishing returns kind of thing--so yes we have this program where officer A is assigned to Officer B--but like any mentor/protégé relationship, it has to be a mutual selection process in order for it to really be effective otherwise it is really a counselor or trainer/trainee as opposed to a mentor/protégé kind of thing. So assigning a running mate? I have had sponsors assigned to me--those have been disastrous; I have buddies stationed ahead of me those have been very successful. So yes I think there should be efforts made to strengthen the bond outside of the Commandant's PME where we see your faces and you see our faces.

Still others were adamantly against any sort of interference with the LEAD program from the Commandant's staff. One officer felt it would adversely affect the educational process.

During the program AND in hindsight, I believe the relationship between the LEAD program and the Commandant's Staff was appropriate, qualitatively and quantitatively. Any greater demands from the Hall or more formal linkage would detract from the value of the separation and time available for independent study within the bounds of the LEAD classes.

Another officer felt it should come down to an officer's personal initiative, and that it is incumbent upon the officer to prepare for his or her duties.

No. If a master's student needs more interaction in Bancroft—for understanding or integration--he can do what he needs to make it happen. Not everyone wants or needs it and forcing it takes focus away from the degree portion of the tour. One of the advantages of that year...is the ability to calm down from running with your hair on fire for the last five years in the Fleet and reflect on what you've done and what you are/should be taking away from the material with which you're being presented. There's plenty of time already budgeted in to your three-year tour to do Bancroft stuff. The year...ought to be just that. I think you'll make better Company Officers if they don't go through the program as members of the Commandant's Staff but as simply master's students. You'll probably have better master's students, too.

Another officer felt that the separation was a primary consideration to officers interested in the program, and should not be changed.

Well...no...There shouldn't be a real formal link... I'm a big believer (as a SWO) in two things...number one, you don't start the relieving process before it's time (i.e., Company Officers shouldn't be mirroring anyone or asking questions of the guy they are relieving 6 months out...if they are...the type of officers we are looking for, they can figure out the place and assume the role of the Company Officer in 20 minutes)...number two, know what your job is and stick to it... The whole selling point for the master's program is that it's a year off to think big thoughts and get a master's...that is your job during that year, not being a Company Officer or linking to Bancroft Hall.

Finally, one officer commented that the two issues should be separate and distinct, and that any solutions regarding preparing for company officer duties should not be a part of the LEAD program.

Absolutely that has to happen.... the formal link...I don't think it has to be involved in the master's program.... just the transition between company officers...the institution needs to be more concerned about that transition, and I don't think those things contribute to attainment of the master's degree.... that would be considered the institution transitioning you.... there's plenty of time in the schedule...7 months...there is definitely time you could take an hour or 2 hours and do those things.....pairing you up with a company officer right from the start.....instead of waiting until a month before you are supposed to relieve and then saying ok that you are going to be the new X company officer. So it's up to you to go touch base with that person. It is more professional transition, rather than incorporating that into the LEAD program itself. I think it is something that can be on top of it. It think its not a gap between USNA and NPS, I think it's a gap between the 16 that are in that program and the institution...they said stay away don't get involved, you're not going to be tasked.

There was definitely a divergence of opinion on this particular issue, with no clear trend as to which direction the program should go. About half of those contacted were happy with the amount of interaction between the Commandant's staff and the LEAD program, while the other half felt a real need for change.

**5) Has the LEAD Program been beneficial to officers after they leave the USNA and continue their careers? If so, how?**

As stated before, the LEAD program exists to provide a cadre of officers who are well versed in leadership development, management and will assume "leadership roles in military education and training." (USNA MOA, 1996) Colonel Allen adds that "in huge numbers, in numbers way out of proportion to however many of them there are, the Navy and Marine Corps are going to come back to them over and over again and select them for jobs." (Allen, J. R., Interview, February 2003) So an important question to ask is whether or not the former students felt their education was beneficial to them once they returned to the operating forces after their tour at USNA.

One former LEAD student commented upon the chance for reflection the year of study provided, and how he still reaps benefits from his year in the LEAD program.

The LEAD program if nothing else gives you a chance to sit and think about what makes people tick. Even better, it gives you a chance to think about what makes different people tick differently. That's something that most officers aren't given a chance to be educated on or sit and reflect about. If you take that away from the program, you got something out of it and it can only help you down the line as an officer in any job you do, really. This sounds strange but I've taken more away from the program the longer I have to reflect on and think about it.

One officer commented on the differences he saw between himself and his peers at department head school after he transferred from USNA.

I've seen just in SWOS Department Head School that my experiences and perspective are just a little broader than a lot of my peers. Especially in the leadership realm, where so many are clueless...the LEAD program and being a Company officer prepared me to think about things on a level I won't see again until I'm a Commanding Officer. It broadened my perspective, matured me as a leader, and made me a better Naval Officer and SWO.

Another officer commented how the LEAD program has an overall utility, whether one is in a billet that specifically requires this type of background, or for any leader in the naval service.

I think the program in general is beneficial to anyone leading people in the navy. In my next job in a few months, I will be a department head in a...squadron, joining them on cruise. I am currently in charge of all training for [a] staff. I use people skills 90 percent of the time to get the job done effectively and efficiently. The LEAD program emphasizes this the most in my opinion.

The education received and the time served as a company officer proved to be of value to this former LEAD student who found direct application of his experiences in Bancroft Hall in the operating forces.

Working with personnel issues. For example, I have used some of my notes from the Military Sociology/Psychology and Motivation and Empowerment classes. I have given the CO and XO recommendations for

options to handle conduct cases based on personality disorders, i.e., do you 'slap' the guy on the wrist or do you give him 30 days restriction and demote him one pay grade? Each individual is different, even if the 'crime' is the same (my experience is that most CO's do not know this--they want to set a 'standard' punishment for a certain type of conduct case).

One former company officer felt that he benefited from his education, and that he was a more well-rounded officer because of this. However, this wasn't necessarily the case for his peers, who didn't have the benefit of the LEAD education. This made for some interesting interaction with his shipmates.

On the flip side, in using some of the communications and negotiation techniques from the LEAD program while serving in my post-USNA billets, I have become more frustrated with the parochialism and myopia I deal with on a daily basis aboard ship. I think the lessons from the program worked better in the company officer environment because many of my peers could relate to the techniques and issues we were discussing and the manner in which they were proposed. To dumb my answer down, so far, rage and skullduggery still seem to work better in the fleet when they are the primary methodology for all of your co-workers.

Finally, one former LEAD student echoes what NPS and USNA see as the *raison d'etre* for the program.

The whole idea--we talked about it in our cohort--should it be a practical course about teaching you how to be a company officer and I don't agree with that at all. I would say it is not a practical course to teach you how to be a company officer. It is to teach you how to be a better leader, a better manager, a better educator, in the future. I think it is more.... in tune with what I think it should be.

The researcher found that every LEAD graduate contacted, either through the interview process or questionnaires, found the program and his or her subsequent experience as a company officer to be a worthwhile endeavor and that they were better officers having completed the program.

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## IV. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*You should never forget the power of example...enlisted men take their cue from you.*

Major General John A. Lejeune, USMC

### A. SUMMARY

The graduates who were contacted for this study were overwhelmingly positive about their experience with the LEAD program. The researcher either interviewed or received a questionnaire from at least one member of each of the first five cohorts of the LEAD program. In nearly every case, the graduates contacted felt the program prepared them for their duties as company officers, as well as their duties in subsequent billets. The strength most often mentioned by graduates was the bond formed with classmates during the program. Those bonds translated into a more effective working environment during their time as company officers. The weakness most often mentioned by graduates was a feeling that particular courses and topics were not examined with enough depth, and thus retention was affected. A majority of graduates felt that the program could be improved if more training and preparation were provided prior to assuming the duties of company officer.

### B. RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 1. Needs Analysis

The LEAD program, its curriculum, and the Educational Skill Requirements (ESRs) were developed in 1996. There is currently no USNA instruction or document governing the program.

**Recommendation:** The Naval Academy should conduct a needs analysis to ensure that the LEAD program meets its needs, is supportive of the mission of the Naval Academy, and aligned with its Strategic Plan. This analysis would be the first step to establishing a vision or concept document or instruction for the LEAD program. The Naval Postgraduate School, in conjunction with the Naval Academy, would then be able to review and update the ESRs and curriculum.

## 2. Assignment Process

The Navy and Marine Corps have two very different processes for admission to the LEAD program. The researcher believes the Navy can benefit from the method the Marine Corps uses.

Each year at a given time, the Marine Corps solicits applications for the LEAD program among other curricula at NPS via a Marine Administrative (MARADMIN) message. Marines are required to submit their requests via the chain-of-command and receive favorable endorsements at every level of the chain-of-command. Applicants can rank order their choice of curricula. A board is convened at Headquarters, Marine Corps after the application deadline. The board then selects from the pool of applicants who have listed the LEAD program as one of their choices. In approximately November of each year the results are released via a MARADMIN message for the class convening the following June. There are several benefits to this method. For one, the board gets to see all applications at the same time, and therefore is able to contrast the records of the individuals applying for the program. Secondly, all applicants who are accepted to the program know well in advance of the program's convening date.

The Navy uses a less formal method, and arrangements are made via the applicant, the applicant's "detailer" (the officer charged with making personnel assignments for other officers), and the director of the LEAD program. The system is a rolling application process where applications are considered as the director of the LEAD program receives them. The director forwards applications along with a recommendation to the Superintendent, USNA via the Commandant of Midshipmen for final approval for admission of Navy officers to the program. Navy applicants are usually required to be interviewed by members of the chain-of-command, but the researcher has found that this has varied widely among LEAD graduates. The current director of the LEAD program has streamlined the process, but the researcher believes the program would benefit from a more formal process.

**Recommendation:** The Navy should adopt an application process similar to the Marine Corps process. The applications would be handled via the chain of command and individual detailers, with a board chaired by the director of the LEAD program that

would ultimately make recommendation to the Superintendent, USNA. Applications could be solicited at a certain date each year, and the results would be published via naval message by a set date annually as well.

### **3. Identify Billets**

The Navy and Marine Corps should identify and expand the list of billets requiring the Navy's 4500-subspecialty code--Leadership Education and Development or the Marine Corps' Special Education Program (SEP) MOS 9603--Leadership Development Specialist. Currently, the only billet requiring this educational background is the USNA company officer. There are a host of billets for which an officer with one of these specialties would be well suited. The following are billets that are recommended for having this degree requirement:

Battalion Officer, USNA

Leadership Instructor, Leadership, Ethics, and Law Department, USNA

Professor of Naval Science, Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC)

Marine Officer Instructor, NROTC

**Recommendation:** Identify billets that would require (or at least desire) an officer with this background. The Navy and Marine Corps would be able to further use the skills and experience LEAD program graduates have as they progress through the ranks. There are many organizations that have billets or needs for this type of educational background, and the Navy and Marine Corps should ensure that benefits of the LEAD program are maximized.

### **4. Expand the Program**

The USNA Strategic Plan outlines milestones for the improvement of the facilities and programs at the Naval Academy. There are eight focus areas of the plan, with one being *Leadership and Professional Excellence*. One of the strategic initiatives the plan outlines is *Expand the Company Officer's Masters Program*. Two instructors from the LEL Department have graduated from the LEAD program as a result of this initiative. The strategic plan states that this will "provide a common foundation for

leadership instruction in Luce Hall, and the practice of leadership in Bancroft Hall, athletic fields, extracurricular activities, and professional training," as well as "improve the quality of leadership instruction." (USNA Strategic Plan, 2002) These benefits are fairly intuitive. However, there is another benefit to expanding the program as well. When asked why he thought leadership instructors should be a part of the LEAD program, one LEAD graduate responded:

The one thing that I found most beneficial this last semester was my relationship, my network, with the company officers. My 'in,' so to speak, with them. Though I'm not a company officer, I'm not an outsider to the company officers. I'm a real big insider, even to the company officers in the cohort before me. They know me as a LEAD grad and because of that I have instant credibility and instant bonds with them and when I go to them for certain things. Everything from a minor O-Rep issue with one of the guys on my team...to dealing with getting instructors to teach the course. I found out I have a totally different rapport with them, a totally different trust that when I tell them, "I need you to teach this for me and I promise that I'm going to support you in this," they trust that I'm going to do it.

The above demonstrates the unity of effort and teamwork throughout the institution that expanding the LEAD program can provide.

**Recommendation:** The Navy and Marine Corps should expand the number of USNA leadership instructors in the LEAD program. The current LEAD program facilities in Halligan Hall can allow for a maximum of 20-22 students. The current cohort has 17 students. All remaining seats in the LEAD program after the 15 annual company officer billets are filled should be reserved for leadership instructors in the LEL department. This would allow five to seven instructors a year coming into the LEL department with an advanced degree. In doing this, within two years all leadership instructors in the LEL department will have advanced degrees. Like their company officer counterparts, they would serve for two years as leadership instructors, with a return to the operating forces as a "payback" tour. This would also ensure that all USNA Leadership instructors are those who have demonstrated a commitment to remaining in the Navy and Marine Corps for an additional tour.

## **5. Training Element**

Many graduates interviewed expressed an interest in receiving training in various aspects of their duties and responsibilities as company officers. In previous years, a number of briefs and introductory sessions were held to familiarize LEAD students with the different programs and evaluation tools available to company officers. These classes ranged from the conduct and honor systems, to the academic departments. While these briefs were certainly beneficial, they were not extensive enough to provide a thorough understanding of the different programs at work throughout Bancroft Hall and within the brigade of midshipmen.

**Recommendation:** Introduce a series of training classes taught by subject matter experts from the Commandant's staff. These classes should take place in the April-May time frame, and should involve subjects such as the Conduct system, the Aptitude for Commissioning system, and the Honor system. NPS provides the bulk of the LEAD program (i.e., the curriculum and the thesis requirement.) Adding a training aspect to the program would be the Naval Academy's contribution.

## **6. Thesis Requirement**

As stated in the previous chapter, there was a wide variety of opinions on whether or not to drop the thesis as a degree requirement for the LEAD program. In general, there was a split between those who felt that the thesis requirement lent academic rigor and credibility to the program, and those who felt the thesis requirement came at the expense of classroom learning and preparation for their duties as a company officer.

**Recommendation:** Retain the thesis requirement. There are strong and well-reasoned arguments for going either route. NPS and USNA should explore alternatives without a thesis requirement but within NPS's requirements for a degree, and present its findings to the Commandant of Midshipmen for consideration.

## **7. Review Curriculum**

LEAD graduates voiced complaints some courses didn't delve deep enough into a given subject, or that the time allotted for the subject didn't allow for internalizing the material. This is an obvious drawback in providing the courses in a modular, consecutive

manner that the program requires. Nevertheless, the researcher believes that an examination of the curriculum in terms of emphasis, rather than content, would benefit the program greatly.

**Recommendation:** NPS should review the curriculum and examine whether or not some subjects should receive greater emphasis, paying particular emphasis to subjects that have a practical value for both the company officer billet, and leadership billets in general (e.g., ethics, counseling, and military leadership.)

## **8. Spread the Word**

The LEAD program is a fantastic opportunity for an officer to continue the process of "lifelong learning" and to continue to develop his or her leadership skills by being "where the rubber meets the road" in terms of the future of the naval service. Most importantly, it is a chance for an individual officer to have a tremendous impact on a large number of young men and women in their formative years as both officers and American citizens.

**Recommendation:** USNA should ensure that all commands throughout the Navy and Marine Corps are made aware of the LEAD program and the opportunities it presents for officers serving in the operating forces and elsewhere. A multi-media presentation should be developed and made available electronically to build awareness of the LEAD program.

## **C. RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

As LEAD graduates become more numerous and progress through the ranks of the naval service, a study of retention and promotion rates for LEAD graduates, and subsequent billet assignments would provide important information for the Navy and Marine Corps, USNA, and NPS. It is very difficult to quantify whether or not the LEAD program is meeting and achieving its goals set forth in the ESRs. A more practical measure of value to the naval service would be whether or not the program has affected retention and promotion rates of LEAD graduates, and whether or not the LEAD education and experience was used in other areas during subsequent tours.

## **APPENDIX A – INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR THE COMMANDANT OF MIDSHIPMEN**

Are the Educational Skills Requirements still valid today? Should they be changed/modified?

Do you feel the curriculum is currently meeting those requirements?

What is the most positive aspect of the program as you see it?

Are there any negative aspects?

What changes/improvements would you make to the program?

Should there be a thesis requirement? Why/Why not.

In assessing the program's effectiveness, what specific questions would you ask the current students? Graduates?

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## **APPENDIX B – INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR COMPANY OFFICERS**

Are the Educational Skills Requirements still valid today? Should they be changed/modified?

Do you think the curriculum is currently meeting those requirements?

What is the most positive aspect of the LEAD program as you see it?

Are there any negative aspects?

What changes/improvements, if any, would you make to the program?

Should there be a thesis requirement? Why/Why not.

How has the program helped you in terms of your duties as a company officer?

Should there be a more formal link between the program and the Commandant's Staff?

How has the program helped you in terms of your duties as a Naval officer in general?

How would you assess the program's effectiveness?

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## APPENDIX C – LEAD ALUMNI QUESTIONNAIRE

### ASSESSMENT OF USNA LEADERSHIP EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT (LEAD) PROGRAM

**Instructions:** The purpose of this assessment is to determine your perceptions of the LEAD program, how you think the program can be improved, and whether or not the program has assisted you in carrying out your duties as a naval officer since you have left USNA and returned to the fleet. Completing the survey is strictly voluntary. Your input will be greatly appreciated. Please type in your comments, save the word document, and send it back to Major P.J. Zaleski at zaleski@usna.edu by 25 April 2003. Your input will be anonymous. Anything that might identify you will be removed from your comments.

**Rank:**

**Service:**

**Year commissioned:**

**Undergraduate Degree and Institution:**

**Date you departed USNA:**

**Billets since departing USNA:**

#### **Preparation for Company Officer Duties**

1. Was the LEAD program effective in preparing you for your duties as a Company Officer? If so, how? If not, why not? Please elaborate.

2. Should there be a more formal link between the LEAD program and Bancroft Hall/Commandant's staff?

#### **Duties as a Navy or Marine Corps Officer**

3. Has the program been beneficial to you after you left USNA? If so, how?

4. Have you had any billets that required or used the P-code you acquired?

**Strengths and Weaknesses**

5. What was/were the most positive aspect/aspects of the program?

6. Comment on any weaknesses in the program.

**Thesis**

7. Should there be a thesis requirement? Why or Why not? What would you substitute in lieu of the thesis?

**Improvements**

8. What changes or improvements would you make to the program?

**OTHER COMMENTS:**

9. Is there anything else you would like to add?

**Thank you for your time.**

## **APPENDIX D – USNA MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT, 1996**

### **A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE U. S. NAVAL ACADEMY AND THE NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL:**

#### **USNA 'LEADERSHIP EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM CURRICULUM'**

##### **Article I: BACKGROUND**

- USNA determined that a major modification in its “company officer” orientation and development program could result in significant positive improvement in the impact that company officers have on graduates of the USNA. Further, USNA determined that the new program should be a graduate-level educational program that offered career-enhancing benefits to the participants.
- In June 1995, USNA invited the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) to submit a proposal that would address the Academy's and officer-student career needs. NPS was selected because of its reputation of designing and delivering Navy-relevant, high quality graduate-level educational programs. NPS also possesses an in-depth knowledge about, and appreciation of, the unique environment of USNA.
- NPS developed a set of Educational Skill Requirements (ESRs) designed to meet the unique educational needs of the USNA's company officer development. Further, a “strawman” curriculum was also developed and proposed to USNA in August 1995. (See Attachment A for elaboration of ESRs and listing of proposed courses developed by NPS for the USNA Company Officer Program).
- In January 1996, USNA selected NPS to develop and deliver the first offering of the proposed graduate-level Leadership Education and Development Program. An in-depth review of the proposed program was held at USNA in June 1996, and it was agreed that a formal Memorandum of Agreement be created. It is expected that the MOA will guide the further development of the program and its implementation beginning in June 1997.
- This document and its attachments when signed will serve as the Memorandum of Agreement between USNA and NPS that guides the development and implementation of the Leadership Education and Development Program and each party's responsibilities in making this program a success.

## Article II: PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF PROGRAM

- A graduate-level program entitled: Leadership Education and Development will offer a set of core courses and specialization courses that prepare graduates for leadership roles in military education and training. Core courses will develop skill in leadership, management, computer applications, and educational psychology. Further, a unique set of specialized courses and educational experiences will be offered to supplement and expand on the foundation provided by the core courses.
- **The structure of program -- courses and projects -- will be more intense than traditional graduate programs.** Students and faculty in the USNA program will meet in 1-3 week long course modules at USNA (each course will meet 8-12 hours per week, with students typically taking two courses per week). Students will be expected to spend an additional 20-30 hours per week in out-of-class learning activities (reading, project work, preparations for case discussions, etc.). Some courses are expected to be offered using a combination of distance learning (video-teleconferencing) technology and onsite (at USNA) faculty presentations. A masters-level thesis will be required of all graduates. Students will be encouraged to conduct institutional research using USNA data for their thesis research.
- It is expected that **12-15 Naval officers (03 and 04)** will be 'enrolled' in each **12-month, full-time program**. The USNA program will **start in June 1997**.
- Completion of the program will result in a **master's degree awarded by NPS**. The specific title of the degree is still to be determined. It will probably be a Master of Science in Leadership Development. As deemed appropriate by NPS, credit for prior academic work completed at quality colleges will be transferred to this program.
- NPS and USNA will seek to ensure that a **P-code** be awarded, possibly in the area of Education and Training Management Specialist (ETMS), upon completion of the program. NPS will initiate discussions with CNET (the current ETMS subspecialty sponsor) as soon as the MOA is signed.
- **Curriculum reviews will be held at USNA to review and evaluate program quality and sponsor satisfaction.** NPS and USNA senior leadership will meet at least bi-annually to review formally and critically evaluate the program. The objective is to identify program strengths, as well as weaknesses, and to jointly determine actions required to reinforce strong points and remedy any deficiencies. Program review meetings will occur at least quarterly between NPS program managers/faculty and USNA program managers.

## Article III: RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **The U.S. Naval Academy will:**

- **Identify and provide the students to be enrolled in this program.** Students selected for the program will meet Navy and/or Marine Corps requirements for selection to fully-funded graduate education as well as NPS minimum academic standards. Officer-students will be expected to be engaged in full-time education during the period June to July of the following year, with minimal non-educational requirements placed on them.
- **Provide complete funding for the program.** NPS agrees to deliver the program for a fee of \$300,000 for each class of 15 or fewer students. Additional students (beyond 15) within a cohort group will cost \$12,000 each. Specific payment schedule will be worked out between USNA and NPS. During 1996-97, USNA will pay NPS \$300,000 to support course and program development efforts, as well as the first 4 months of the initial program (June - September 1997).
- **Serve as curriculum sponsor.** USNA, in close collaboration with NPS, will develop and approve a set of detailed Educational Skills Requirements (ESRs) that will guide the design and conduct of the graduate educational program. (See Attachment A for a set of proposed ESRs developed for this program). Ongoing reviews of the program will occur, with formal curriculum reviews scheduled at least bi-annually.
- **Provide onsite logistical support to the educational program.** Classrooms and audio-visual equipment will be provided as required, along with at least two faculty offices where NPS faculty can meet with students, prepare for class, store teaching materials, and meet USNA colleagues and other visitors. USNA will provide copy/printing support for educational materials (handouts, notes, students papers, and non-textbook readings). Required student books and other required copyrighted materials (e.g., case studies, software, and monographs) will generally be made available through the USNA bookstore.
- **Give NPS faculty priority BOQ availability** or provide other suitable on-campus housing. It is expected that normally two faculty will be on TDY to USNA at any given time.
- **Coordinate with BUPERS to affect P-coding of desired USNA billets.** NPS will assist USNA in its efforts, including coordination with CNET, BUPERS, and other relevant parties.

## 2. The Naval Postgraduate School will:

- **Develop the curriculum, in consultation with USNA senior staff.** Details of course structure and schedule are still to be determined, but a preliminary listing of course titles is included in Attachment A.

- **Deliver the 12-15 month curriculum on an ongoing basis.** It is expected that new classes will commence each spring. During the spring-summer period, two cohort groups of students may be enrolled at the same time, one starting the program, and one ending.
- **Award the graduate degree earned by graduates of this program.**
- **Provide faculty to teach and direct the program.** The majority of faculty will be regular Monterey-based graduate faculty. When teaching in the USNA program, faculty will typically be on 1-3 week TDY assignments to the Annapolis/DC area.
- **Assume responsibility for NPS faculty and administrator expenses associated with the program,** including travel, lodging and per diem, telephone, preparation of teaching materials, etc.
- **Coordinate the administration and logistics involved in delivering the program,** including travel, lodging, scheduling, and other details of program management. NPS program administrators will work closely with USNA administrators to ensure smooth operation of the program.

#### **Article IV: OVERSIGHT AND PROGRAM REVIEW**

Program review and oversight will be the joint responsibility of both USNA and NPS. Operational reviews will be ongoing, with quarterly review sessions scheduled and attended by the NPS Academic Associate, designated NPS faculty, and designated USNA leaders and faculty. Formal curriculum reviews will be held at least bi-annually and attended by the senior leadership of both USNA and NPS, including:

- Superintendent and/or Provost, U. S. Naval Academy
- Superintendent and/or Provost, Naval Postgraduate School
- Commandant of Midshipman, USNA
- Chairman, Department of Systems Management, NPS
- Director, Professional Development Division, USNA
- Head, Leadership and Ethics Department, USNA
- Academic Associate, Leadership Education and Development Program Curriculum, NPS

#### **Article V: PERIOD OF AGREEMENT**

This agreement shall be effective immediately upon signing and will continue for an indefinite period. This agreement may be terminated with a nine-month notification by either party.

#### **Article VI: FUNDING**

The USNA will arrange for payments of all agreed amounts to be made to the Naval Postgraduate School in accordance with established procedures. Program managers and financial management officials will annually review current year costs and anticipated changes in program requirements to project the next fiscal year costs. Additionally, they will make recommendations to USNA and NPS about revised budgets and funding arrangements. By mutual consent, financial adjustments can be made at any time. Annual adjustments to levels of funding will be made after review and open discussion. It is noted that both parties share a fundamental agreement that NPS should be fully reimbursed for all reasonable costs associated with the program and that USNA should be provided with a high quality educational program at a competitive price.

**ACCEPTED:**

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ADM Charles R. Larson  
Superintendent  
U. S. Naval Academy

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

RADM Marsha J. Evans  
Superintendent  
U. S. Naval Postgraduate School

**A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN USNA AND NPS:**

**USNA 'LEADERSHIP EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM CURRICULUM'**

**SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:**

- USNA (ADM Larson) and NPS (RADM Evans) review, modify if necessary, and sign MOA by 1 October 1996.
- In anticipation of the signing of the formal agreement, NPS (team led by Professor Crawford) continue development of course content and maintain close contact with USNA program manager (CDR Pat Walsh) to identify and address emerging questions and issues.
- Finalize financial arrangements before end of FY96.
- Arrange for NPS Provost Richard Elster to visit USNA in August or September 1996 to discuss program with USNA academic and military leaders.
- Professors Harris and Crawford to visit USNA in late September to present and discuss a detailed action plan and implementation schedule for the program.
- USNA/NPS Public Affairs Officers formally announce (press releases, Navy Times, etc.) program agreement in October 1996.

# APPENDIX E – EDUCATIONAL SKILL REQUIREMENTS

## THE LEADERSHIP EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

### Graduate School of Business and Public Policy Naval Postgraduate School

#### Program Educational Skill Requirements

1. Management Fundamentals: Leadership, Management, and Organization. Officers will have the ability to apply basic management and leadership practices to organizational operations.

Officers will understand the fundamental principles of leadership and management in military organizations. They will be able to implement appropriate structures for organizations and jobs; they will understand state-of-the-art information technologies and planning and budgeting tools; they will become skilled in spoken and written communications; and they will understand the higher-level leadership skills and the systems perspective of organizations in which day-to-day organizational operations and strategy formulation occur.

2. Evaluating and Improving Group Performance. Officers will become skilled at analyzing and improving group morale, cohesion, and performance.

Graduates of the program will have the ability to analyze and improve group effectiveness through leadership practices that also develop the leadership abilities of subordinates. This ability will be based on knowledge of managing people from diverse backgrounds, teambuilding, conflict management, group dynamics and management of change. Officers will be exposed to varied approaches for building strong shared values within the military

3. Motivating Subordinates. Officers will effectively motivate subordinates to achieve high standards in all military endeavors.

Program graduates will have the ability to motivate subordinates in order to provide focus and encouragement as they face the rigorous requirements and goals of the military. This ability requires an understanding of how effective leaders use goal setting, equitable discipline, reward systems, analysis of individual needs, empowerment, coaching, and high expectations to achieve peak performance from individuals.

4. Evaluating and Improving Individual Performance. Officers will become skilled in analyzing and improving the performance of individuals.

The officers will have the ability to evaluate the performance of subordinates and provide appropriate feedback and counseling. This includes activities that range from formal performance appraisal to informal assessment on an ongoing basis. These skills require

knowledge of basic performance measurement and giving feedback, as well as knowledge of how to deal with performance outside of the norms that may lead to violations of military rules and regulations.

5. Being a Role Model for Subordinates. Officers will model and otherwise communicate the information about the military that subordinates will need to know to successfully transition to Naval and Marine Corps Leaders.

Officers will utilize the operational experience they bring to the job, in addition to a broader base of knowledge created through the program, to visibly embody the high standards and values of Naval and Marine Corps officers. The Officer will communicate knowledge of the military culture, current policy and operations, and future plans for the Navy and joint operations in the Department of Defense. These abilities are based on a knowledge of the military in a democratic society, managing organizational cultures, DoD policy, and the behaviors of good role models and mentors.

6. Managing Educational Processes. Officers will have a foundation of knowledge about educational processes that will enable them to effectively teach and develop their subordinates.

The program graduate will have the ability to formulate and answer research questions about educational experiences within the Navy and Marine Corps. Through the thesis process, the officer will explore important issues while concurrently broadening his/her knowledge of training and education in the military.

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## APPENDIX F– LEAD COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

MN3109 Ethics and Moral Development (3-0). Frameworks are presented that are based on the traditions of ethical thought, moral theory, and moral reasoning that apply to the recent history of the armed forces. Practical applications that officers may encounter in the military are explored. Thought-provoking discussions on the topics of ethics, honor, and integrity as they relate to everyday life are conducted. PREREQUISITE: Undergraduate course in Naval Leadership and admission to graduate standing.

MN3101 Models of Leadership in Complex Organizations (2-0). Historical and contemporary models of leadership are studied to provide a perspective on the academic study of leadership. The systems view of organizations is examined to frame the curriculum. PREREQUISITE: Undergraduate course in Naval Leadership and admission to graduate standing.

MN3160 Methods of Inquiry (3-0). The basics of scientific reasoning and the structuring of inquiry (research design, measurement and operationalization, and sampling) are provided. Research strategies, e.g., experiments, surveys, etc. are studied with the criteria for choosing a particular method based on the strengths and weaknesses of each. PREREQUISITE: Admission to graduate standing.

MN3162 Tools of Inquiry (3-0). Analytic methods are integrated with research strategies. Statistical methods oriented toward management applications are studied and practiced. Students are divided into groups for intensive study of the methods they will use for their thesis work. PREREQUISITES: MN3160 and MN0123.

MN 4143 Defense Manpower and Personnel Analysis (2-0). Tools for policy analysis are reviewed and evaluated in the context of representative cases from DoD and the military services. Techniques are provided to identify policy tradeoffs, the dynamic impact of major policy decisions, and long- and short-term consequences of decisions. PREREQUISITES: MN0123, MN3160, and MN3162.

MN 4129 Performance Assessment (2-0). Theory and methods of assessing the performance of individuals and organizations are studied. Applications are provided that use leadership-related data on midshipmen that are available a USNA. Students use the data to learn to assess leadership potential of subordinates. PREREQUISITES: MN3160, MN3162, MN0123, and MN4143.

MN3104 Motivation and Empowerment (1-0). A model of empowerment and a framework of the major theories of motivation are examined from the perspectives of the leader and subordinates. Case analysis is used to balance theory and application with cases that focus on a variety of Navy and Marine Corps organizations. PREREQUISITE: MN3101.

MN3135 Educational Theory (3-0). Major theories of learning are analyzed and applications to USNA educational needs are addressed. Navy and Marine Corps education and training practices, technologies, trends, and infrastructure are studied. PREREQUISITE: MN3104.

MN3102 Military Leadership (2-0). Models of leadership are studied in depth in the context of how they have been used by notable military leaders. The emphasis is on self-assessment and self-development as well as the development of subordinate leaders. PREREQUISITE: MN3101.

MN3138 Adult Development (2-0). Theory and research in personality are examined as a function of individual development. Various theories are explored with emphasis on development of USNA midshipmen. PREREQUISITE: MN3135.

MN 3129 Organization Design (2-0). Organizations are studied from a systems perspective in which the leader must analyze the internal and external components and their interrelationships to design the appropriate structural configuration for the organization. Organizational theory provides the foundation for this study of the structure and design of military organizations. PREREQUISITE: MN3101.

MN4113 Military Sociology and Psychology: Leadership Dimensions (2-0). Study of the military as a social institution, focusing on the internal organization and practices of the armed forces as well as the relationship between the military and society. The psychological principles employed in a variety of military areas are reviewed. PREREQUISITE: MN3101.

MN4120 Managing Diversity (3-0). Individual differences in the workplace and how these differences inhibit and enhance the way people work together are examined. The leader's roles in creating a cohesive organization in which every individual can achieve his or her maximum potential and productivity are explored. PREREQUISITES: MN 3104, and MN3138.

MN3103 Group Dynamics and Teambuilding (2-0). Human behavior in group settings and leadership in building cohesive teams are the focus of this course. Group structural characteristics, stages of development, problem solving, and decision making are studied. PREREQUISITE: MN3129.

MN3106 Conflict Management (1-0). A model is studied that offers students five conflict handling strategies that are used for various conflict situations. An overview of negotiation literature is provided, and students practice using the strategies and negotiation techniques. PREREQUISITE: MN3101.

MN3333 Leadership Communications (4-0). Mental models, strategic metaphors, and communication efficiency issues are introduced to create a foundation for exploring bottom-line thinking and high-impact writing in military environments. Managing others' writing, giving feedback, listening, counseling, managing your boss, upwards and downward influence, handling the press, and organizational learning are the focus of readings and exercises. PREREQUISITE: Consent of Instructor.

MN3112 Counseling (3-0). Counseling theories and the fundamentals of counseling are studied. Students explore applications with midshipmen as well as other Navy and Marine Corps performance review and counseling situations. PREREQUISITES: MN3135 and MN3138

IS3181 Integrating and Leveraging Information Technologies (3-0). The attributes of information technology are studied in conjunction with the management aspects of developing and maintaining systems in support for DoD and the Joint Services. Leader roles and responsibilities in resource allocation, planning, acquiring, and implementing technologies are addressed. PREREQUISITE: Admission to graduate standing.

MN 4101 Leadership in the Military Culture (2-0). The relationships between the leadership and the components of organizational culture are studied. Environmental factors, people, tasks, structure, culture, and organizational outcomes, e.g., productivity, are examined across a wide variety of military cultures. Techniques are studied to enable leaders to analyze and effectively alter cultures to achieve organizational goals. PREREQUISITES: MN3101 and MN3102.

MN4104 Strategic Management (3-0). Complex managerial situations requiring comprehensive integrated decision making are analyzed. Topics include operational and strategic planning, policy formulation, and executive and environmental adaptation in military organizations. PREREQUISITES: MN3111, MN3102, MN3103, MN3104, MN3129, and MN4101.

MN4080 Research Colloquium (2-0). Meetings are held throughout the thesis research process to integrate course work with thesis progress and results. PREREQUISITE: Consent of Instructor.

### **Lab Description**

MN0163 Thesis Writing Workshop (0-1). Guidelines for scientific writing for the thesis are given with examples and opportunities for practice. PREREQUISITE: MN3160 and MN3162.

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## APPENDIX G – LEAD COURSE LISTING BY ESR

### LEAD COURSES BY EDUCATIONAL SKILL REQUIREMENTS

#### *Management Fundamentals*

Leadership in Complex Organizations  
Organization Design  
Defense Manpower and Personnel Analysis  
Performance Assessment  
Leadership Communications  
Military Sociology and Psychology  
Integrating and Leveraging Information Technologies  
Leadership in the Military Culture  
Strategic Management  
Methods of Inquiry  
Tools for Inquiry  
Thesis

#### *Evaluating and Improving Group Performance*

Performance Assessment  
Motivation and Empowerment  
Adult Development  
Group Dynamics  
Managing Diversity  
Military Sociology and Psychology  
Conflict Management  
Methods of Inquiry  
Tools of Inquiry  
Leadership in the Military Culture

#### *Motivating Subordinates*

Ethics  
Military Leadership  
Motivation and Empowerment  
Counseling  
Adult Development  
Managing Diversity  
Group Dynamics and Team Building  
Leadership in the Military Culture  
Leadership Communications  
Counseling

### ***Evaluating and Improving Individual Performance***

Models of Leadership in Complex Organizations  
Performance Assessment  
Motivation and Empowerment  
Ethics  
Counseling  
Managing Diversity  
Adult Development  
Leadership Communications

### ***Being a Role Model***

Models of Leadership in Complex Organizations  
Defense Manpower and Personnel Analysis  
Motivation and Empowerment  
Adult Development  
Military Leadership  
Ethics  
Managing Diversity  
Leadership in the Military Culture  
Military Sociology and Psychology

### ***Managing Educational Processes***

Leadership Communications  
Adult Development  
Performance Assessment  
Motivation and Empowerment  
Educational Theory  
Counseling  
Methods of Inquiry  
Tools of Inquiry  
Defense Manpower and Personnel Analysis  
Thesis

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## APPENDIX H – PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. **Service:** 20 U.S. Navy officers.  
7 U.S. Marines.
2. **Gender:** 26 males.  
1 female.
3. **Warfare Specialties:** 8 Surface Warfare Officers (SWO)  
8 Naval Aviators  
7 U.S. Marines  
4 Submarine Officers
4. **LEAD Cohort:** I – 4  
II – 0  
III- 6  
IV – 6  
V – 11
5. **Alma Mater:** 19 USNA Alumni  
8 Non-USNA

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