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**A Survey of Army Reserve Officer Training Corps  
Instructors to Determine the Importance of Integrating  
News Media Training Into the Cadet Curriculum**

**A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of the  
W. Page Pitt School of Journalism and Mass Communications**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts in Journalism  
Marshall University**

**By  
Captain Kent P. Cassella  
United States Army  
December 1997**

This thesis was accepted as meeting the research requirement for the master's degree.

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

The cover of the November-December 1995 issue of *Military Review* is emblazoned with the quotation, "We don't win unless CNN says we win." This testament to the power of the news media in military operations was given by General John Shalikashvili, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and was carried on the cover of this professional journal of the United States Army. The implied message in his statement is that professional military officers need to comprehend the power the news media have in a democratic society and their importance for the success of modern military operations.

War reporting has been the source of great controversy between the military and the media throughout American history. After more than 130 years, the fundamental dispute between the American news media and the American military has changed little (Andrews, 1991). The conflict stems from vast differences in their institutional philosophies. Soldiers and scribes have different purposes, and this inevitably results in animosities, especially in time of war. Press access and military security are inherently at odds (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995). Clashes are inevitable when the two institutions meet during a conflict. The news media want to tell the story, and the military wants to win the war and keep casualties to a minimum. The news media want freedom, and the military wants control (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

Since the Vietnam War, an institutional distrust of the news media has flourished, even among junior officers who never served in Southeast Asia. Unfortunately, this institutional distrust works to the disadvantage of the military because the news media

are the military's most effective means of communicating its story to the public.

(Bridgers, 1995).

Lieutenant General H. Hugh Shelton, U.S. Army, and Lieutenant Colonel Timothy D. Vane, U.S. Army, stress the important role of the commander in dealing with the power and effects of the news media when they say, "Once the United States deploys forces overseas, the commander becomes the lightning rod for everything that happens. His notoriety can expand geometrically overnight, and he embodies the operation for the American public. Therefore, the news media want access to his ideas, thoughts and explanations for what is happening in the area of operation. The commander must be prepared to meet the press and appear on live TV broadcasts" (Shelton and Vane, 1995).

U.S. Army Field manual 100-5, Operations, states, "The importance of understanding the immediacy of the impact of raw television coverage is not so commanders can control it, but so they can anticipate adjustments to their operations and plans."

Carnes Lord, security adviser to former Vice President Dan Quayle, describes the far-reaching impact of news media power. "The image of a single American helicopter pilot being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu almost immediately caused the Clinton Administration to announce the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Somalia" (McNulty, 1993).

Joint Pub 1-07, Doctrine for Public Affairs in Joint Operations, initial draft, states the news media are the principal source of information about the military for the general public and military families. Thus, commanders must view the news media as a critical

means of communicating with the American public and with military members and families.

The public in a democratic society has a right to know what is going on in its government and will either support or refute the actions of its elected officials at the ballot box. Elected officials then work to provide the public with what it wants, including a military. If the military does not assist the elected officials in showcasing its strengths as well as its future needs to the public, the military runs the risk of losing at the budget table, and the public may unwittingly put itself at risk with regard to its security (Bridgers, 1995).

The military has long recognized education as an important cornerstone of professional military development. In recent years several studies and reports have focused on education as the key to understanding the military-news media relationship and promoting successful communication between these two differing cultures.

The military has an overriding self-interest in getting its positive story out. To do so, it must communicate the leadership's views from the top down, and improve public affairs education at all levels, but especially among the young officers who will become the next generation of leaders (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995). In-depth study may significantly enhance the ability of the two to work together by improving the attitude and knowledge of professionals within the military and the media.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to survey current Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) instructors of military science for their views about the importance of building



an early foundation in news media training at the pre-commissioning level. Many articles have been written concerning the adversarial relationship between the military and the media, and several studies and reports have recommended the implementation of media training early in an officer's professional education.

### **Significance**

This study will provide some immediate feedback to Army officials concerning the feasibility of implementing a news media training program as part of the ROTC precommissioning curriculum. Because the researcher is associated with the U.S. Army, only that branch of service was included in the scope of this study.

General John M. Shalikashvili, USA, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has confirmed his support for such education, stating that "public affairs training should start sooner than it does and be more extensive than it is" (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

Recently, General Shalikashvili initiated an effort to refine the professional military continuing education process, with an eye to greater continuity and uniform quality throughout all levels of the professional continuing education system. (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

Some studies recommend that news media education should not be performed at the expense of essential military subjects. However, they suggest an integrated progressive building-block approach to news media training that provides officers media instruction at all levels of their continuing education. These studies claim such a system will be effective without forcing a trade-off of essential military subjects. This study will

provide feedback on the feasibility of implementing this progressive building block approach.

### **Research Questions**

1. Do ROTC instructors think formal news media instruction should be a part of the precommissioning curriculum?
2. If not, when do ROTC instructors think formal news media instruction should be presented?
3. Is there a difference in the perceived importance of providing cadets formal news media instruction between less experienced and more experienced ROTC instructors?

### **Hypotheses**

The hypotheses below were developed in part from findings of Aukofer and Lawrence's study of the relationship between the military and the news media, and from other literature (see Chapter 2) concerning the need for and implementation of news media training.

Aukofer and Lawrence indicate that implementation of attitudinal news media training at precommissioning levels can be easily inserted into the current curriculum of precommissioning programs without forcing a trade-off at the expense of essential military subjects. This survey seeks to further examine Aukofer's and Lawrence's claims from the perspective of professional Army ROTC instructors.

Hypotheses for this study focus on respondents' perceived importance of formal news media training for cadets and the feasibility of implementation in the current precommissioning curriculum.

Hypotheses also examine the differences in the perceived importance of providing cadets formal news media instruction between less experienced and more experienced ROTC instructors. This aspect of the hypotheses was developed based on observations made by the researcher during 10 years of personal military experience. This researcher perceives that a general attitudinal difference toward the news media may exist between officers with more military experience and those less experienced. Therefore, the hypotheses seek to examine if such attitudinal differences exist between instructors with less than 10 years military experience, for the purposes of this study labeled junior instructors, and instructors with more than 10 years military experience, labeled senior instructors.

The researcher's perception is that senior, experienced military officers maintain a more negative view of the news media, perceiving contact with news media as risky and media reports as negative toward the military until proven otherwise, while less experienced junior military officers have a less negative view of the news media in general.

The hypotheses for this study are:

**H1.** Junior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe media training should be an important part of a modern military officer's professional education.

**H2.** Senior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe media training should be an important part of a modern military officer's professional education.

**H3.** Junior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe there is adequate room in the current curriculum for the addition of media training.

**H4.** Senior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe there is little room in the current curriculum for the addition of media training.

**H5.** Junior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe media training should be provided at precommissioning stages of an officer's formal military education.

**H6.** Senior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe media training should be provided at later stages of an officer's formal military education.

### Theory

The cognitive paradigm is used to develop the theoretical framework for this research. It proposes a view that is a blend of humanism and behaviorism, with emphasis on thought processes, reasoning, and problem solving (Hilgard, 1980). This view focuses on the human ability to take information from the environment, analyze this information in a systematic way, and come up with a solution to a problem. (McMahon and McMahon, 1986).

The cognitivists say they have a working model of human consciousness (Hilgard, 1980), and this model is an elaborate, organized theory of how humans process information. Humans take material from the environment, match it to their past experiences, search the categories in their brain for additional information, compare what they have with what they have received, and arrive at a decision (McMahon and McMahon, 1986).

The cognitive paradigm includes cognitive processes that play key parts in shaping an individual's behavior. (DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach, 1989). These processes include perception, imagery, belief systems, attitudes, values, tendencies toward balance in such

factors, plus remembering, thinking, and numerous other mental activities. The cognitive components of a given individual's mental organization are products of his or her prior learning experiences, which may have been either deliberate, accidental, social, or solitary.

The hallmark of the professional is being able to understand and deal proficiently with ill-defined, risky, and complex problems, not just the less challenging ones. The cognitive learning process found to be the most helpful to professionals in achieving this level of understanding and proficiency is identified as cognitive apprenticeship. (Farmer, Buckmaster and LeGrand, 1992).

Cognitive apprenticeship used in continuing professional education teaches individuals how to think and act satisfactorily in practice. It transmits useful, reliable knowledge, based on the consensual agreement of practitioners, about how to deal with situations, particularly those that are ill-defined, complex, and risky. (Farmer, Buckmaster and LeGrand, 1992).

This education process helps professionals learn to perform satisfactorily in keeping with the expectations of their professions and society. Professionals can understand and deal with some situations by using common sense, logic, intuition, and the application of general principles. When these approaches are insufficient, self-directed and traditional, learning devices may provide the additional knowledge, attitudes, or skills needed to understand and deal satisfactorily with situations. However, these methods are often insufficient for learning to understand and deal satisfactorily with ill-defined, risky, and complex situations.

The cognitive apprenticeship process of learning is best applied when the task learned must be performed in a manner acceptable to society and the profession rather than whatever way the individual chooses. The use of this learning process is particularly appropriate when there is a realistic, low tolerance for error or risk. (Farmer, Buckmaster and LeGrand, 1992).

Therefore, this study seeks to examine responses from trained military professionals possessing varying levels of understanding and proficiency at solving ill-defined, risky, complex problems in crisis situations with low tolerances for error.

The responses received from these professionals will be considered for the effects of individual mental organization as products of prior learning experiences. The responses will be compared to military professionals both with similar levels of experience and with differing levels of experience. The comparison will examine the perceived importance of integration of news media training as part of cadets' professional education or cognitive apprenticeship.

## **Chapter 2**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

This chapter reviews recent studies and reports that relate education and leader development issues to the relationship between the military and the news media. These references are “The Military-News Media Relationship: Thinking Forward,” a study on the military--news media relationship by The Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College; “Vision 2000 -- Public Affairs into the 21st Century,” a publication from the Office of the Chief of Public Affairs outlining the direction of military-news media relations; and “America’s Team: The Odd Couple -- A Report on the Relationship Between the Media and the Military,” from the Freedom Forum First Amendment Center at Vanderbilt University. Finally, a summary will follow the literature review.

#### **Thinking Forward.**

The Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pa., produced a series of studies on the military-news media relationship in 1993. “The Military-News Media Relationship: Thinking Forward” is part of the series and is the work of Charles W. Ricks, a retired Army officer who now works as a researcher and consultant on news media relations.

Ricks reiterates that much work has been done to trace the origins of the continued tension between the military and the news media. However, research often strives to outline the history of the relationship and identify similarities in institutional culture and purpose on which to base agreements to guide future contacts rather than identify critical

elements of the relationship during crisis. It seems inevitable that such outlines fail during crisis or conflict because of their artificiality. This is because the military and the news media pursue very different objectives and often hold very different values (Ricks, 1993).

The goal of Ricks' study was to focus on the issues that most affect commanders as they execute their assigned missions. Commanders' concerns included their annoyance at the numbers of reporters, wariness over the news media's advanced technology and frustration at the lack of knowledge so many journalists displayed while covering the military. These reactions often cause commanders to distance themselves from reporters or to attempt to control them as they gather the news in the hope that such supervision will reduce the risks of security violations and confusing news reports (Ricks, 1993).

There is little likelihood that these concerns will resolve themselves if left alone. History records there were nine civilian war correspondents on the island of Tarawa in the South Pacific in 1943 and fewer than 30 on the invasion beaches of Normandy in 1944, but those figures are now of only passing interest. The 600 reporters in the entire Pacific Theater in World War II were nearly matched by the 500 journalists who quickly appeared on tiny Grenada in 1983 and in Panama City in 1989, and clearly surpassed by the more than 1,500 who covered the Persian Gulf War in 1990-1991 (Ricks, 1993).

There is no longer a question of whether the news media will cover military operations. Journalists likely will precede the force into the area of operation; and they will transmit images of events as they happen, perhaps from both sides of any conflict. It becomes the commander's responsibility to develop a sound plan for the conduct of news



media relations. Failure to do so will not affect the scale of news media coverage; it will, however, limit the command's ability to communicate effectively and risk distorting the public's perception of the military's effectiveness (Ricks, 1993).

A commander's success thus lies in education. Ricks states several ways commanders can prepare for encounters with the news media: by understanding the roles and capabilities of the journalists who cover military operations, by accepting the inevitability and desirability of their access to the force, by appreciating the importance of technology and its impact on operations security, by identifying and providing the resources necessary for timely support for the media relations mission, and by recognizing the necessity for appropriate education and training. If ignored, each of these represents a potential flashpoint for future disagreements. If addressed comprehensively, they can form the basis for cooperation in the midst of what will inevitably be complex and confusing situations (Ricks, 1993).

With regard to education and training, Ricks says both the military and the news media are woefully deficient in their knowledge of the other institution and in their training for those tasks necessary to make and report news during a military operation. With fewer opportunities [for journalists] to serve in the military, the cultural gap between the military and the news media can only widen (Ricks, 1993).

Of greatest importance to the success of the military's news media relations program is the commander's commitment to be as accepting of close news media scrutiny during an operation as of the favorable publicity during an exercise. It is imperative that commanders prepare themselves and their units to communicate operationally by

exercising those specific tasks most pertinent to the news-media-relations missions. (Ricks, 1993).

Ricks reports that news media relations training is necessary for those operating at the strategic, operational and tactical levels, and should be provided in both service schools and exercise environments. The dialogue between the military and the news media is not simply the concern of the public affairs staff. In fact, such dialogue is less important to reporters who are increasingly interested in speaking directly with those making decisions and performing the tasks of the operation. The early realization and acceptance of that fact argue strongly for a broad-based orientation to the news media and energetic scenarios which develop and exercise skills necessary to sustain the dialogue rather than emphasis on news media training for the public affairs staff. (Ricks, 1993).

Ricks concludes that it will be increasingly important for the military to become active, visible participants in the dialogue leading to the production of news reports in response to the pace and complexity of events and issues and the speed of the reporting process. It is no longer sufficient to remain passive in the face of news media scrutiny, reluctantly accept the visit of a reporter, and then complain about the results (Ricks, 1993).

## **VISION 2000.**

In 1994 The Office of the Chief of Public Affairs produced a publication called "Vision 2000 -- Public Affairs into the 21st Century," (Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, 1994) to establish an analytical framework for thinking about military public

affairs and all related issues critical to its future. It presents an intellectual foundation professionals can use to make informed choices.

The publication lists six requirements to meet the Public Affairs vision. Of significance to this study are the second and fourth requirements. Those recommendations were (Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, 1994):

2. Educate leaders on the significance of public affairs. Many of the Army's most senior leaders already understand the linkage between public affairs and national strategic goals, theater strategic and operational objectives and operational and tactical execution. They know that effective public affairs operations are a critical element in the determination and achievement of these goals and objectives.

However, all leaders must understand that the perception of an operation can be as important to success as the execution of the operation. They have to recognize that information technology and the evolving global media environment are blurring the distinction and bridging the gap between the strategic and tactical levels, so that it is possible for a tactical victory to be an operational or strategic loss -- and vice versa.

Leaders must also understand that attempting to impose limits and restrictions on media representatives will be increasingly difficult and ineffective. They must realize that if they deny access or frustrate the filing of stories, reporters will become suspicious, distrustful and alienated. This will lead them to find alternative sources of information, and will often

result in the publication of speculation and inaccuracy. They must know that the best approach is to be proactive, to acknowledge shortfalls as well as successes, and to discuss issues. They need to appreciate the fact that although not all news is good news, they should not obfuscate, attempt to withhold information or try to hide bad news.

To accomplish this, public affairs principles, tactics, techniques and procedures must be more thoroughly integrated into the doctrinal literature produced by TRADOC (Training and Doctrine Command--the agency responsible for all training in the Army) proponents other than public affairs. Public affairs education and training conducted in leader-development programs must be expanded. Every effort must be made to eliminate the perception that the media's purpose is to undermine, interfere, and criticize, and promote an attitude of mutual cooperation between the military and the media.

4. Public Affairs training must be provided for every soldier,

Department of the Army Civilian and Army family member.

All soldiers, from private to general, rifleman to chief of staff of the Army, must have an appropriate level of public affairs skills and knowledge. They must recognize that the news media are not a hostile force intent on undermining the Army's ability to operate, although they will frequently produce stories that are not favorable to the Army or the command.

A program of instruction to support public affairs training as an element of initial entry training must be developed and implemented. This initial entry training must be reinforced by the inclusion of public affairs in annual individual and unit training.

### **ODD COUPLE:**

In an effort to improve the relationship between the news media and the military, John Seigenthaler, chairman of The Freedom Forum First Amendment Center at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, asked Frank A. Aukofer and William P. Lawrence to work together on a plan that "might end the long-standing hostility and ease the never-ending tensions between the news media and the military in the United States," (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

The year-long study entitled "America's Team: The Odd Couple -- A Report on the Relationship Between the Media and the Military," was researched and written by Aukofer, a veteran journalist, and Lawrence, a retired Navy Vice Admiral, at The Freedom Forum First Amendment Center. Lawrence is a career naval aviator. While commanding officer of a fighter squadron flying off an aircraft carrier during the Vietnam War, he was shot down and spent six years as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam. Subsequently, his senior assignments included service as Superintendent of the U.S. Naval Academy, Commander of the Third Fleet, and Chief of Naval Personnel. Lawrence retired in 1986 after 35 years of service (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

Aukofer is Washington Bureau Chief of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. He joined the Milwaukee Journal in 1960 and moved to the newspaper's Washington bureau in

1970. Over the years, he has covered the civil rights movement, many of Washington's top news stories and national political conventions, and has had assignments in Mexico and Latin America. He was a member of the original Pentagon press pool and was in the first pool allowed into Saudi Arabia for Desert Shield. Later, he returned to cover Desert Storm (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

Aukofer and Lawrence's methodology involved extensive historical analysis, in-depth interviews of both military and media representatives, and face-to-face dialogue with members of both cultures. The population of military officers consisted of combat flag and general officers, plus mid-grade officers enrolled at the five military service colleges. As a result of the exchanges with these two groups, concerns and suspicions of both sides were brought out into the open. A mail survey of reporters and editors and military officers supplemented their findings and conclusions (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

After carefully studying the areas of contention between the news media and the military, Aukofer and Lawrence reported that future military leaders do not receive adequate news media education and training as they move up through the ranks. The military has an overriding self-interest in getting its overwhelmingly positive story out. To do so, it must communicate the leadership's views from the top down, and improve public affairs education at all levels, but especially among the young officers who will become the next generation of leaders. Fortunately, the military command structure makes such improvements possible. (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

Aukofer and Lawrence outline several recommendations for both the military and the news media to improve news media-military relations. The fourth recommendation on

their list for the military is: "The Secretary of Defense should ensure that the Professional Military Education System (PME) adequately prepares military officers to assist the news media in their vital role of informing the American public on the activities of the U.S. armed forces, with specific emphasis on the crisis/conflict situation." (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

Changes in Attitude. Aukofer and Lawrence say attitude and education are interrelated, each having a strong effect on the other. But, of the two, attitude is the more important because, without the proper attitude, knowledge will not be applied effectively. The First Amendment Center survey conducted for their report indicates that members of the armed forces do not differ substantially from members of other institutions and the public at large in their attitudes, both positive and negative, toward the news media (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

Presumably, it should be easy to mold attitudes among personnel in the armed forces because the military is homogeneous, hierarchical, and disciplined. Additionally, the military profession is unique in that there is little to no middle- or top-level entry. Personnel start at the bottom and work their way up, providing an extended period in which education and attitude development can be accomplished. (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

Research for the study indicated that military leaders need to better explain to personnel, particularly to those in the junior ranks, that the democratic system is vitally dependent on an informed public and that the news media are society's key institutions for this function. For the good of the country, therefore, members of the military have an

obligation to help the news media fulfill their role. Military leaders should stress that, because war is such a significant national event, the American people deserve to know as much as possible about its conduct. (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

A special effort is required for the news media to report on wars without jeopardizing the military's battlefield effectiveness and without revealing information valuable to the enemy. This can only be accomplished by effective planning and close cooperation with the news media, both before and during a conflict/crisis. It is vital that this be thoroughly understood by all in the military. (Aukofer and Lawrence, 79).

Educating the military. The armed forces have a well-defined system of formal Professional Military Education (PME) that consists of five levels, each available to officers of certain rank/experience. The levels are: precommissioning (cadets, midshipman), primary (O-3), intermediate (O-4), senior (O-5, O-6), and capstone (O-7). Most of the programs at the intermediate and senior levels are of nine- to 10-months duration and lead to the awarding of a master's degree in National Security Strategy, National Security Affairs, or similar disciplines (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

Aukofer and Lawrence report that some training for interaction with the news media is offered at all of the federal service academies, but more needs to be done. This can be accomplished through simple modifications that do not increase the demands on already heavily taxed cadets and midshipmen. First, academic courses, such as English, history and political science, should address the role of the news media in national life and culture and in the democratic process. In the required leadership courses that all the academies conduct, at least one course period should be devoted to discussing the



military leader's responsibility--in war and in peace--to assist the news media in informing the public about the armed forces' activities (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

But the major role of the academies is to establish an attitudinal foundation on which future military officers build throughout their careers, and this is the area where the most emphasis should be given. It is absolutely vital that, at this early stage, fledgling officers adopt a healthy attitude toward the news media, for this sets the course for the remainder of their careers (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

ROTC and Officer Candidate School (OCS) programs offer only rudimentary training concerning the news media, training which is dependent primarily on the initiative and imagination of local supervising officers. The time available to ROTC and OCS students is even more constrained than that available to service-academy students, so these programs should concentrate on shaping attitudes. (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

Aukofer and Lawrence say the primary weakness of the PME system appears to be the absence of any effort to link the news media education conducted at the various levels.

Building block approach. Under the 1986 Defense Reorganization (Goldwater-Nichols) Act, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is charged with the responsibility of overseeing PME. His office has published the Military Education Policy Document (MEPD), which provides general guidance and objectives for the conduct of PME in the armed forces. There is no reference in the MEPD to the importance of including news media education in the PME system (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

General John M. Shalikashvili, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has confirmed support for such education. "Public affairs training should start sooner than it does and be more extensive than it is." (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

An integrated building-block approach to news media education should be instituted. The precommissioning and intermediate levels of PME should concentrate primarily on shaping attitudes, while the higher levels should focus on more detailed knowledge, designed to prepare officers to plan and work with the press in a crisis/conflict situation. (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

Currently, news media education in the Army is only offered to executive-level leaders at senior or capstone PME levels and those in the public affairs specialty. By the time Army leaders get their first taste of news media training after 17 plus years in the service, many times it is too late to change the negative attitudes they may have about the media. Lieutenant Colonel Falkenbury, director of public affairs at the U.S. Army War College, said, "By the time they get here, many of them are carrying a lot of anti-media baggage with them." Falkenbury says that the answer to changing those attitudes is news media training early on, at all levels of military education (Steele, 1997).

Lieutenant Colonel Hiram Bell, director of the public affairs proponent activity, is the Army public affairs officer who is in charge of integrating media training into all levels. He says, "There are several steps under way right now to actually get public affairs education integrated throughout what TRADOC [Training and Doctrine Command -- the agency responsible for all training in the Army] calls its common core. So all soldiers,

enlisted, officer and warrant, would get appropriate public affairs instruction throughout their careers." (Steele, 1997).

### Summary.

The literature reviewed above indicates a need for increased and continued education in the military system to better understand the military-news media relationship. The military structure of formal PME is considered a perfect vehicle for implementation of a building block approach to news media education. The precommissioning and intermediate levels of PME should concentrate primarily on shaping attitudes, while the higher levels should focus on more detailed knowledge, designed to prepare officers to plan and work with the news media in a crisis/conflict situation (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

The major role of precommissioning programs is to establish attitudinal foundations on which future military officers build throughout their careers, and this is the area where the most emphasis to news media training should be given. It is absolutely vital that, at this early stage, fledgling officers adopt a healthy attitude toward the news media, for this sets the course for the remainder of their careers (Aukofer and Lawrence, 1995).

Building upon the results of Aukofer and Lawrence's and others' research, this study seeks to further examine the perceived need for and ease of implementation of news media training at precommissioning levels. However, the focus of this study is on officers and senior enlisted professional instructors who might be implementing news media curriculum changes at ROTC programs across the country.

## **Chapter 3**

### **DESIGN OF THE STUDY**

#### **Method of Research**

This study used a mail survey consisting of a series of statements designed to answer each research question and accept or reject the hypotheses. Statements examined the perceived need for and ease of implementation of news media training at precommissioning levels, as reported by ROTC instructors.

#### **Population and Sample**

A survey pack was sent to all 301 university Army ROTC programs across the nation. Addresses of the active Army ROTC programs were pulled from a 1996-1997 host university list provided by the ROTC Cadet Command, Training Directorate, Education Division, Fort Monroe, Virginia. The population of Army ROTC instructors was chosen because the majority of army officers receive their commission through ROTC programs. A cover letter requested any instructor of the university ROTC program to complete the survey.

An important limitation of this research is that the study population includes only instructors of Army ROTC programs; thus, the study will be unable to draw conclusions about instructors who teach at other precommissioning sources (United States Military Academy and Officers Candidate School). However, ROTC is the primary commissioning source for Army officers. The sample is representative of all Army professionals presently instructing ROTC.

### **Survey Response Percentage**

Of the 301 surveys mailed out, 236 were returned by the deadline. Of the 236 surveys, two contained so little information that they could not be used for statistical analysis. Therefore, 234 survey results were entered into a statistical software program designed specifically to analyze social science research data [SPSS-X]. The response rate for this research project was 77.7 percent ( $234/301=77.7$ ).

### **Research Instrument**

The survey pack (Appendix A and B) was mailed to each of the 301 universities' Army ROTC programs June 19, 1997. Included was a self addressed stamped envelope; a cover letter, which provided directions for completing the survey, encouraged recipients' participation, and promised anonymity; and a demographic information sheet, which requested information about participants' gender, age, years of military service and military rank.

Electronic mail proved to be a very useful tool for this research. The survey pack was preceded by an advance notification message (Appendix C) sent to each of the ROTC programs by e-mail June 13, 1997. On July 6, 1997, reminder messages (Appendix D) were also sent by e-mail to each ROTC program. It is noteworthy that of the 301 e-mail messages sent as advanced notification, 42 were returned as undeliverable. However, of the 301 reminder messages sent to the same addresses only two were returned as undeliverable. For future studies, e-mail would be an excellent alternative to some or all components of a survey. Advantages experienced in this research were elimination of postage costs for the advance and reminder notifications and, after entering all the e-mail

addresses into an address book, one document could be sent to all prospective respondents simultaneously.

The survey is a three-page questionnaire located in Appendix A. There are 27 questions on the survey: 21 positively worded, five-point Likert scale type questions and six questions to gather background information on each respondent. The breakdown of questions and their subjects:

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Q 1,5,8,9       | Importance of officer's knowledge of the news media.                     |
| Q 2,3,4,6       | Officer's responsibility to understand the news media.                   |
| Q 7             | Importance of news media training at cadet levels.                       |
| Q 10            | Importance of news media training at all training levels.                |
| Q 11,14, 18, 21 | Implementation level of news media training.                             |
| Q 12,15,16,17   | Ease of implementation of news media training at cadet levels.           |
| Q 13, 19,20     | Modifications required to implement news media training at cadet levels. |

### Hypothesis/Question Correlation

The questions in the survey are designed to obtain responses that support or reject each of the hypotheses in this study.

**Hypothesis one** – *Junior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe media training should be an important part of a modern military officer's professional education: questions 1, 2, 5, 6, 8 and 9 apply.*

**Hypothesis two** -- *Senior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe media training should be an important part of a modern military officer's professional education: questions 1, 2, 5, 6, 8 and 9 apply.*

**Hypothesis three** -- *Junior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe there is adequate room in the current curriculum for the addition of media training: questions 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19 and 20 apply.*

**Hypothesis four** -- *Senior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe there is little room in the current curriculum for the addition of media training: questions 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19 and 20 apply.*

**Hypothesis five** -- *Junior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe media training should be provided at precommissioning stages of an officer's formal military education: questions 7, 11, 14, 18 and 21 apply.*

**Hypothesis six** -- *Senior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe media training should be provided at later stages of an officer's formal military education: questions 7, 11, 14, 18 and 21 apply.*

### **Pilot Study**

A pilot test was conducted to identify areas of misunderstanding or confusion on the survey packet prior to its distribution to the survey population. Four professional military personnel of various ranks and experience stationed in the Huntington, West Virginia, area were used as the test respondents. Three of the four test respondents had ROTC

instructor experience. Ranks represented were lieutenant colonel, second lieutenant, chief warrant officer and sergeant first class.

The respondents were encouraged to ask questions if they had any doubts about any part of the survey. Feedback resulted in one change to the cover letter. A statement that an ROTC instructor of any rank can complete the survey was added to the cover letter. No changes were made to the questionnaire prior to its distribution to the university ROTC programs.

### **Treatment of Data**

Data were entered into the computer by the researcher using the SPSS-X system [Statistical Package for the Social Sciences].

The researcher interpreted the results of the survey data with the help of William J. "Joe" Iddings, assistant professor of educational psychology at Marshall University.

Respondents were divided into two groups based on years of military service. The junior group consisted of officers with ten or fewer years of military service. The senior group consisted of respondents having 11 or more years of military service.

Ten years of service was used as the cut point between groups because it correlates with a milestone in progression through the military rank structure. Officers usually hold positions at the lower-to-middle manager levels of responsibility [company grade] for the first ten years of service. The ranks associated with this ten-year period are lieutenant and captain. After ten years of service an officer is usually promoted to executive levels



of responsibility [field grade]. The ranks associated with this second ten-year period are major and above.

Although an officer's rank may roughly correlate with years of military experience, it was not used as a cut point between the groups because there is a possibility of a lieutenant or captain with more than ten years experience. Grouping by rank could lead to officers who have gained the experiences of more than ten years of military association being mistakenly grouped with the less experienced group instead of with those possessing a similar level of understanding.

Frequencies, percentages and mean scores were used to compile, examine and descriptively illustrate responses regarding the importance of media training, ease of implementation of training and demographic information.

Proportional testing was used to determine whether a statistically significant relationship existed between responses of the independent group [junior and senior groups] samples. Results of this test formed a basis for accepting or rejecting the established hypothesis.

## Chapter 4

### Findings

#### Respondents' Profile

Respondents were divided into two groups based on years of military service (time in service). Of the 234 surveys returned, 107 officers met the criteria for placement in the junior group while 127 were identified as the senior group.

**Time In Service.** The survey asked respondents to indicate how many years of military service they had at the time of the survey. The time in service ranged from one month to 29 years. The junior group consisted of respondents with one month to ten years of service. The mean years of service for the junior group was 6.9 years. The senior group consisted of respondents with ten or more years of service. The mean years of service for the senior group was 16.9 years.

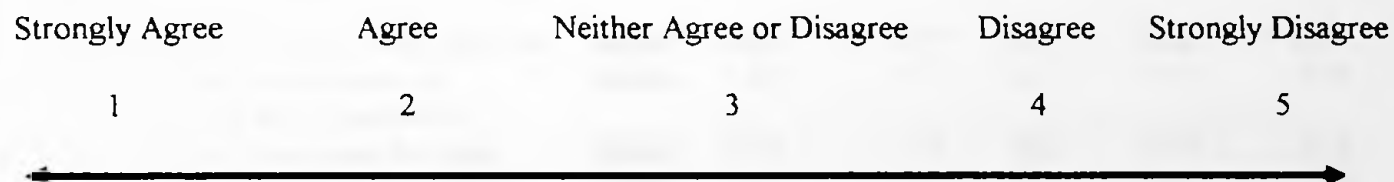
**Rank.** Officers surveyed for this study were lieutenants, captains, majors, lieutenant colonels and colonels. The junior group sample consisted of 20 lieutenants (18.7%), 86 captains (80.4%), and 1 major (0.93%). The senior group consisted of 33 captains (26.0%), 39 majors (30.7%), 54 lieutenant colonels (42.5%), and 1 colonel (0.79%).

**Age.** The age range of respondents was 21 to 50 years old. The age range of the junior officer group was 21-43 years old with a mean age of 30.0 years. The age range of the senior officer group was 31-50 years old with a mean age of 39.7.

**Gender.** A total of 234 officers responded to the survey. Of those respondents 92.7% were male and 7.3% were female. The junior group was 7.5 % female while the senior group was 7.1% of female.

### **Findings**

The results in this survey were prepared for analysis by coding all information gathered from the survey instrument and entering the data into a computer using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS-X). A five-point Likert scale was used to record the responses of the respondents. The five choices consisted of five words to measure respondents' responses to positively worded questions. The Likert scale states the issue or opinion of the respondent and obtains the respondents' degree of agreement or disagreement. The major advantage of this scale is the ability to obtain a summated value. An example of the Likert scale used appears below.



Three survey questions were not used in the analysis of hypotheses because they did not specifically answer any of the hypotheses. The results from these questions (questions 3, 4 and 10) are presented as non-hypotheses' findings beginning on page 42.

**TABLE 1**  
**Survey Question Groups with Junior/Senior Group Mean Responses**  
**and Percentages by Responses**

<i>Survey Questions</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
Q1. Modern officers should be trained to work with the news media.	Junior	2.04	24.3	57.0	11.2	5.6	1.9
	Senior	1.93	34.6	48.0	8.7	7.1	1.6
Q2. Officers should work hard to understand the news media.	Junior	2.42	13.1	46.7	28.0	9.3	2.8
	Senior	2.23	18.9	53.5	15.7	9.4	2.4
Q5. Officers should have a working knowledge of news media processes.	Junior	2.20	13.1	61.7	17.8	6.5	0.9
	Senior	2.14	15.7	64.6	10.2	8.7	0.8
Q6. An understanding of the news media is the responsibility of all officers, not just the public affairs officers.	Junior	2.18	11.2	68.2	13.1	6.5	0.9
	Senior	2.10	21.3	59.8	8.7	7.9	2.4
Q8. Officers should study the relationship between the military and the news media.	Junior	2.50	7.5	48.6	30.8	12.1	0.9
	Senior	2.24	9.4	66.1	15.7	7.9	0.8
Q9. In modern military operations, an officer's understanding of the news media is critical.	Junior	2.60	9.3	46.7	25.2	14.0	3.7
	Senior	2.44	14.2	48.8	18.9	15.0	3.1
Q12. Implementation of news media training can be accomplished through simple modifications to the current ROTC curriculum.	Junior	3.25	2.8	29.0	23.4	29.9	15.0
	Senior	3.30	3.1	32.3	14.2	32.3	18.1
Q13. Decisions to drop some courses will have to be made in order to make room for news media training.	Junior	2.89	12.1	30.8	21.5	25.2	9.3
	Senior	2.83	11.8	37.0	18.1	22.8	10.2
Q15. The current curriculum has space in which news media training could be inserted.	Junior	3.37	1.9	27.1	19.6	34.6	16.8
	Senior	3.37	3.1	33.1	8.7	33.9	21.3
Q16. News media training could easily be incorporated into related blocks of currently required ROTC instruction.	Junior	3.12	4.7	32.7	20.6	29.9	12.1
	Senior	3.27	3.1	33.1	15.7	29.9	18.1
Q17. Adding the requirement for news media training to the current curriculum will not be overtaxing to the ROTC program.	Junior	3.18	7.5	26.2	23.4	27.1	15.9
	Senior	3.35	1.6	33.1	15.7	27.6	22.0
Q19. Some courses could be dropped to make room for news media training.	Junior	3.88	0.0	7.5	21.5	46.7	24.3
	Senior	3.64	1.6	13.4	24.4	40.9	19.7
Q20. Simple modifications to the current curriculum for news media training will not increase demands on the ROTC program.	Junior	3.39	3.7	23.4	17.8	40.2	15.0
	Senior	3.51	1.6	27.6	13.4	32.3	24.4
Q7. News media training should be a concern at all cadet training programs.	Junior	3.52	2.8	10.3	33.6	38.3	15.0
	Senior	3.44	3.1	26.0	15.0	35.4	20.5
Q11. Learning about the news media needs to begin at the cadet level.	Junior	3.34	2.8	25.2	20.6	38.3	13.1
	Senior	3.32	3.9	31.5	14.2	29.9	20.5
Q14. News media training should be part of the ROTC curriculum.	Junior	3.50	1.9	18.7	22.4	41.1	15.9
	Senior	3.42	2.4	28.3	15.7	32.3	21.3
Q18. Learning about the news media needs to begin after an officer is commissioned.	Junior	2.56	18.7	39.3	15.9	19.6	6.5
	Senior	2.76	14.2	37.8	12.6	29.1	6.3
Q21. I welcome the implementation of news media training at cadet levels.	Junior	3.38	7.5	15.0	28.0	30.8	18.7
	Senior	3.44	2.4	29.9	16.5	23.6	27.6

*-Means were computed using a scale from 1 for "strongly agree" to 5 for "strongly disagree."*

All data were entered into the computer by a single research technician, then analyzed by comparing frequency and percentage distributions of the variables (Table 1). Hypotheses were tested using a  $z$ -test proportional analysis.

Frequencies and percentages were used to analyze hypotheses. Each hypothesis pair was evaluated by testing for differences between population proportions using data from the two independent samples (junior and senior groups). This  $z$ -test determined if there was a significant difference in responses between groups. In this test the probability level, or significance level, was set at .05.

### **Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1. Junior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe media training should be an important part of a modern military officer's professional education.**

**Hypothesis 2. Senior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe media training should be an important part of a modern military officer's professional education.**

Survey questions 1, 2, 5, 6, 8 and 9 were designed to collect information to test hypotheses one and two. Positive response percentages are compared and significance levels are shown in Table 2.

**TABLE 2.**  
*Comparison of percentage responses tested for proportional significance  
for Hypotheses One and Two*

<i>Survey Questions</i>	<i>Percentage of Jr. Positive Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Sr. Positive Responses</i>	<i>z-score</i>
Q1. Modern officers should be trained to work with the news media.	81.3	82.7	0.29
Q2. Officers should work hard to understand the news media.	59.8	72.4	2.00*
Q5. Officers should have a working knowledge of news media processes.	74.8	80.3	1.02
Q6. An understanding of the news media is the responsibility of all officers, not just the public affairs officers.	79.4	81.1	0.33
Q8. Officers should study the relationship between the military and the news media.	56.1	75.6	3.20**
Q9. In modern military operations, an officer's understanding of the news media is critical.	56.6	63.0	1.02

\*Denotes significant results with a p-level less than .05

\*\*Denotes significant results with a p-level less than .01

***Question 1. Modern officers should be trained to work with the news media.***

The answer to this question was yes. Both junior and senior ROTC instructors agreed that modern officers should be trained to work with the news media. Results from Table 2 show 81.3% of junior instructors agreed or strongly agreed with the statement while 82.7% of the senior instructors agreed or strongly agreed. A comparison of the group's responses shows no statistically significant differences between the junior and senior instructor samples. These responses support both hypothesis one and two.

***Question 2. Officers should work hard to understand the news media.***

The answer to this question was yes. Results from Table 2 indicate 59.8% of the junior instructors agree or strongly agree officers should understand the news media while 72.4% of the senior instructors agree or strongly agree. However, analysis of group responses yields a statistically significant difference in the level of agreement between

the group's responses ( $z = 2.00, p < .05$ ). Responses to question two support hypotheses one and two.

**Question 5.** *Officers should have a working knowledge of news media processes.*

The answer to this question was yes. Both junior and senior ROTC instructors agreed modern officers should possess a working knowledge of the news media. Results from Table 2 show 74.8% of junior instructors agreed or strongly agreed with the statement while 80.3% of the senior instructors agreed or strongly agreed. A comparison of the group's responses shows no statistically significant differences between the junior and senior instructor samples. Responses to question five support hypotheses one and two.

**Question 6.** *An understanding of the news media is the responsibility of all officers, not just the public affairs officers.*

The answer to this question was yes. Both junior and senior ROTC instructors agreed an understanding of the news media is the responsibility of all officers. Results from Table 2 show 79.4% of junior instructors agreed or strongly agreed with the statement while 81.1% of the senior instructors agreed or strongly agreed. A comparison of the group's responses shows no statistically significant differences between the junior and senior instructor samples. Responses to question six support hypotheses one and two.

**Question 8.** *Officers should study the relationship between the military and the news media.*

The answer to this question was yes. Results from Table 2 indicate 56.1% of the junior instructors agree or strongly agree officers should study the military-media relationship while 75.6% of the senior instructors agree or strongly agree. However,

analysis of group responses yields a statistically significant difference in the level of agreement between the group's responses ( $z = 3.20, p < .01$ ). Responses to question eight support hypotheses one and two.

**Question 9.** *In modern military operations, an officer's understanding of the news media is critical.*

The answer to this question was yes. Both junior and senior ROTC instructors agreed an officer's understanding of the news media is critical. Results from Table 2 show 56.6% of junior instructors agreed or strongly agreed with the statement while 63.0% of the senior instructors agreed or strongly agreed. A comparison of the group's responses shows no statistically significant differences between the junior and senior instructor samples. Responses to question nine support hypotheses one and two.

**Hypothesis 3.** **Junior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe there is adequate room in the current curriculum for the addition of media training.**

**Hypothesis 4.** **Senior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe there is little room in the current curriculum for the addition of media training.**

Survey questions 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19 and 20 were designed to collect information to test hypotheses three and four. Positive response percentages are compared and significance levels are shown in Table 3.



**TABLE 3.**  
*Comparison of percentage responses tested for proportional significance  
for Hypotheses Three and Four*

<i>Survey Questions</i>	<i>Percentage of Jr. Positive Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Sr. Positive Responses</i>	<i>z-score</i>
Q12. Implementation of news media training can be accomplished through simple modifications to the current ROTC curriculum.	31.8	35.4	0.58
Q13. Decisions to drop some courses will have to be made in order to make room for news media training.	43.4	48.8	0.83
Q15. The current curriculum has space in which news media training could be inserted.	29.0	36.2	1.16
Q16. News media training could easily be incorporated into related blocks of currently required ROTC instruction.	37.4	36.2	0.19
Q17. Adding the requirement for news media training to the current curriculum will not be overtaxing to the ROTC program.	33.6	34.6	0.16
Q19. Some courses could be dropped to make room for news media training	29.0	15.0	2.59**
Q20. Simple modifications to the current curriculum for news media training will not increase demands on the ROTC program.	27.1	29.4	0.40

*\*\*Denotes significant results with a p-level less than .01*

**Question 12.** *Implementation of news media training can be accomplished through simple modifications to the current ROTC curriculum.*

The answer to this question was no. Junior and senior ROTC instructors responded similarly by disagreeing with the easy implementation of news media training. Results from Table 3 show 31.8% of junior instructors agree or strongly agree with the statement while 35.4% of the senior instructors agree or strongly agree. A comparison of the group's responses shows no statistically significant differences between the junior and senior instructor samples. Junior instructor results do not support hypothesis three. Senior responses support hypothesis four.

**Question 13.** *Decisions to drop some courses will have to be made in order to make room for news media training.*

The answer to this question was no. Junior and senior ROTC instructors responded similarly by responding neutrally or disagreeing that courses would have to be dropped to make room for news media training in the current curriculum. Results from Table 3 show 43.4% of junior instructors agree or strongly agree with the statement while 48.8% of the senior instructors agree or strongly agree. A comparison of the group's responses shows no statistically significant differences between the junior and senior instructor samples. Junior instructor results support hypothesis three. Senior responses do not support hypothesis four.

**Question 15.** *The current curriculum has space in which news media training could be inserted.*

The answer to this question was no. Junior and senior ROTC instructors responded similarly by disagreeing there is room for news media training in the current curriculum. Results from Table 3 show 29.0% of junior instructors agree or strongly agree with the statement while 36.2% of the senior instructors agree or strongly agree. A comparison of the group's responses shows no statistically significant differences between the junior and senior instructor samples. Junior instructor results do not support hypothesis three. Senior responses support hypothesis four.

**Question 16.** *News media training could easily be incorporated into related blocks of currently required ROTC instruction.*

The answer to this question was no. Junior and senior ROTC instructors responded similarly by disagreeing news media training could be easily integrated with current class subjects. Results from Table 3 show 37.4% of junior instructors agree or strongly agree with the statement while 36.2% of the senior instructors agree or strongly agree. A comparison of the group's responses shows no statistically significant differences between the junior and senior instructor samples. Junior instructor results do not support hypothesis three. Senior responses support hypothesis four.

**Question 17.** *Adding the requirement for news media training to the current curriculum will not be overtaxing to the ROTC program.*

The answer to this question was no. Junior and senior ROTC instructors responded similarly by disagreeing that additional classes in news media training would not overtax the curriculum. Results from Table 3 show 33.6% of junior instructors agree or strongly agree with the statement while 34.6% of the senior instructors agree or strongly agree. A comparison of the group's responses shows no statistically significant differences between the junior and senior instructor samples. Junior instructor results do not support hypothesis three. Senior responses support hypothesis four.

**Question 19.** *Some courses could be dropped to make room for news media training.*

The answer to this question was no. Results from Table 3 indicate 29.0% of the junior instructors agree or strongly agree some course could be dropped while 15.0% of the senior instructors agree or strongly agree. However, analysis of group responses yields a statistically significant difference in the level of agreement between the groups'

responses ( $z = 2.59, p < .01$ ). Junior instructor results do not support hypothesis three.

Senior responses support hypothesis four.

**Question 20.** *Simple modifications to the current curriculum for news media training will not increase demands on the ROTC program.*

The answer to this question was no. Junior and senior ROTC instructors responded similarly by disagreeing that modifications to the curriculum would not increase demands on the program. Results from Table 3 show 27.1% of junior instructors agree or strongly agree with the statement while 29.4% of the senior instructors agree or strongly agree. A comparison of the group's responses shows no statistically significant differences between the junior and senior instructor samples. Junior instructor results do not support hypothesis three. Senior responses support hypothesis four.

**Hypothesis 5.** **Junior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe media training should be provided at precommissioning stages of an officer's formal military education.**

**Hypothesis 6.** **Senior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe media training should be provided at later stages of an officer's formal military education.**

Survey questions 7, 11, 14 and 21 were designed to collect information to test hypotheses five and six. Positive response percentages are compared and significance levels are shown in Table 4.

**TABLE 4.**  
*Comparison of percentage responses tested for proportional significance  
 for Hypotheses Five and Six*

<i>Survey Questions</i>	<i>Percentage of Jr. Positive Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Sr. Positive Responses</i>	<i>z-score</i>
Q7. News media training should be a concern at all cadet training programs.	13.1	29.1	2.96**
Q11. Learning about the news media needs to begin at the cadet level.	28.0	35.4	1.21
Q14. News media training should be part of the ROTC curriculum.	20.6	30.7	1.77
Q21. I welcome the implementation of news media training at cadet levels.	22.4	32.3	1.71

*\*\*Denotes significant results with a p-level less than .01*

**Question 7.** *News media training should be a concern at all cadet training programs.*

The answer to this question was no. Results from Table 4 indicate 13.1% of the junior instructors agree or strongly agree news media training should be a concern at all levels while 29.1% of the senior instructors agree or strongly agree. However, analysis of group responses yields a statistically significant difference in the level of agreement between the group's responses ( $z = 2.96, p < .01$ ). Junior instructor results do not support hypothesis five. Senior responses support hypothesis six.

**Question 11.** *Learning about the news media needs to begin at the cadet level.*

The answer to this question was no. Junior and senior ROTC instructors responded similarly by disagreeing that cadets need to learn about the news media. Results from Table 4 show 28.0% of junior instructors agree or strongly agree with the statement while 35.4% of the senior instructors agree or strongly agree. A comparison of the groups'

responses shows no statistically significant differences between the junior and senior instructor samples. Junior instructor results do not support hypothesis five. Senior responses support hypothesis six.

**Question 14.** *News media training should be part of the ROTC curriculum.*

The answer to this question was no. Junior and senior ROTC instructors responded similarly by disagreeing that cadets need to learn about the news media. Results from Table 4 show 20.6% of junior instructors agree or strongly agree with the statement while 30.7% of the senior instructors agree or strongly agree. A comparison of the groups' responses shows no statistically significant differences between the junior and senior instructor samples. Junior instructor results do not support hypothesis five. Senior responses support hypothesis six.

**Question 21.** *I welcome the implementation of news media training at cadet levels.*

The answer to this question was no. Junior and senior ROTC instructors responded similarly by disagreeing that they welcome the implementation of news media training for cadets. Results from Table 4 show 22.4% of junior instructors agree or strongly agree with the statement while 32.3% of the senior instructors agree or strongly agree. A comparison of the groups' responses shows no statistically significant differences between the junior and senior instructor samples. Junior instructor results do not support hypothesis five. Senior responses support hypothesis six.

### **Findings of Significance**

When comparing frequencies and percentages for differences between population proportions using data from the two independent group samples, four questions

(questions 2, 7, 8 and 19) yielded a statistically significant difference between junior and senior responses.

Analysis of question 2, *Officers should work hard to understand the news media* (Table 2), shows a significant difference ( $z = 2.00, p < .05$ ) in the level of agreement between junior and senior instructors regarding officers' efforts to understand the news media. Senior instructors report a higher level of agreement with this question than junior instructors.

Analysis of question 7, *News media training should be a concern at all cadet training programs* (Table 4), shows a significant difference ( $z = 2.96, p < .01$ ) in the level of agreement between junior and senior instructors regarding the importance of news media training at cadet levels. Senior instructors report a higher level of agreement with this question than junior instructors.

Analysis of question 8, *Officers should study the relationship between the military and the news media* (Table 2), shows a significant difference ( $z = 3.20, p < .01$ ) in the level of agreement between junior and senior instructors regarding officers' study of the military-news media relationship. Senior instructors report a higher level of agreement with this question than junior instructors.

Analysis of question 19, *Some courses could be dropped to make room for news media training* (Table 3), shows a significant difference ( $z = 2.59, p < .01$ ) in the level of agreement between junior and senior instructors regarding modifications required to implement news media training at cadet levels. Junior instructors report a higher level of agreement with this question than senior instructors.

## Non-hypothesis Findings

Three survey questions were not used in the analysis of the hypotheses because after completion of the survey the researcher determined they were poorly worded and did not specifically answer any of the hypotheses. Table 5 is a summary of responses for the three non-hypothesis questions.

**TABLE 5**  
**Non-Hypothesis Survey Questions with Junior/Senior Group Mean Responses**  
**and Percentages by Responses**

<i>Survey Questions</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
Q3. Dealing with the news media is an important aspect of an officer's responsibility.	Junior	2.54	11.2	46.7	23.4	14.0	4.7
	Senior	2.48	13.4	48.0	19.7	15.0	3.9
Q4. News media training for cadets would be an important part of their professional development.	Junior	3.19	5.6	24.3	29.0	28.0	13.1
	Senior	3.23	3.1	32.3	15.0	37.8	11.8
Q10. News media education should be a part of an officer's education at all levels of development.	Junior	2.68	3.7	46.7	30.8	15.0	3.7
	Senior	2.72	11.8	38.6	19.7	25.2	4.7

*-Means were computed using a scale from 1 for "strongly agree" to 5 for "strongly disagree."*

When comparing frequencies and percentages for differences between population proportions using data from the two independent group samples no questions yielded a statistically significant difference between junior and senior responses. Table 6 is a comparison of positive responses to the three non-hypothesis questions.



**TABLE 6.**  
*Comparison of percentage responses tested for proportional significance  
for Non-Hypotheses Questions*

<i>Survey Questions</i>	<i>Percentage of Jr. Positive Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Sr. Positive Responses</i>	<i>z-score</i>
Q3. Dealing with the news media is an important aspect of an officer's responsibility.	57.9	61.4	.55
Q4. News media training for cadets would be an important part of their professional development.	29.9	35.4	.86
Q10. News media education should be a part of an officer's education at all levels of development.	50.4	50.4	.02

*- z - scores yield no statistically significant differences between groups*

**Question 3.** *Dealing with the news media is an important aspect of an officer's responsibility.*

The answer to this question was yes. Both junior and senior ROTC instructors agreed dealing with the news media is an important aspect of an officer's responsibility. Results from Table 6 show 57.9% of junior instructors agreed or strongly agreed with the statement while 61.4% of the senior instructors agreed or strongly agreed. A comparison of the groups' responses shows no statistically significant differences between the junior and senior instructor samples.

**Question 4.** *News media training for cadets would be an important part of their professional development.*

The answer to this question was no. Junior and senior ROTC instructors responded similarly by disagreeing news media training is an important part of cadet development. Results from Table 6 show 29.9% of junior instructors agree or strongly agree with the statement while 35.4% of the senior instructors agree or strongly agree. A comparison of

the groups' responses shows no statistically significant differences between the junior and senior instructor samples.

**Question 10.** *News media education should be a part of an officer's education at all levels of development.*

Junior and senior ROTC instructors responded similarly by slightly agreeing that news media education is important for officers at all levels. Results from Table 6 show that 50.4% of both junior and senior instructors agree or strongly agree with the statement. A comparison of the groups' responses shows no statistically significant differences between the junior and senior instructor samples.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Discussion and Recommendations**

#### **Demographics**

The sample survey population for this research was consistent with the demographic population found in ROTC departments across the country. Because the study's hypotheses examine differences in responses between junior and senior ROTC instructors, demographic summaries are provided by group.

Respondents were divided into two groups. The junior instructor group consisted of instructors with 10 years of military service or less. This group of 107 officers represented 46.0% of the total respondent population. The senior instructor group consisted of instructors with 10 or more years of military service. This group of 127 officers represented 54.0% of the total respondent population.

The results from the junior group can be summarized by saying that the typical respondent was a 30-year-old, male captain who had about seven years of military experience.

The results from the senior group can be summarized by saying that the typical respondent was a 40-year-old, male major who had about seventeen years of military experience.

The rank, age and time in service results appropriately reflect the Army ROTC instructor population. Captains were the largest group of respondents representing 50.9% of the sample population. Lieutenant colonels were the second largest group representing

23.1% of the sample population. This pattern is consistent throughout all Army ROTC departments.

Overall, the population surveyed was an excellent representation of ROTC instructors across the country. Lack of unusual demographic findings eliminated the need to weight any particular demographic variable more heavily than any other.

### **Hypotheses**

Hypothesis one, *Junior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe media training should be an important part of a modern military officer's professional education* was supported. Results from Table 2 show that well over half of the junior ROTC instructors agree or strongly agree with all four questions that support hypothesis one with responses ranging from 56.1% to 81.3%.

The positive responses to the questions supporting hypothesis one were expected and were consistent with several of the studies reviewed in chapter two. In addition, these results may be a factor of the generation of younger officers who are more attuned to the uses and capabilities of mass media in general.

Hypothesis two, *Senior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe media training should be an important part of a modern military officer's professional education* was supported. Results from Table 2 also show that well over half of the senior ROTC instructors agree or strongly agree with all four questions that support hypothesis two with a response range higher than the junior group (63.0% to 82.7%).

The positive responses to the questions supporting hypothesis two were expected and were consistent with the recognized importance of news media training in the studies

reviewed in chapter two. In all six questions senior instructors reported a higher level of agreement than did junior instructors. In one instance (question eight) senior instructors agreed or strongly agreed at a level so high above the junior instructors that it became statistically significant. Although statistics show that a significant difference exists between group responses with regard to question eight, both hypotheses are still supported. This is because the difference experienced is between two group positive responses, which support their respective hypothesis as stated.

These results show that senior instructors are well aware and agree with the importance of news media education being an important part of a modern officer's professional education. These results may be a factor of the generation of older officers who have witnessed or experienced first hand the impact of the news media and the increased interaction between the military and the news media.

Hypothesis three, *Junior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe there is adequate room in the current curriculum for the addition of media training* was rejected. Results from Table 3 show that fewer than half of the junior ROTC instructors agree or strongly agree with all seven questions that support hypothesis three with response ranging from 27.1% to 43.4%.

The low percentage of positive responses to the questions supporting hypothesis three was not expected. It was hypothesized that junior instructors would perceive the importance of news media training for modern military officers (supported in hypothesis one) as important enough to be inserted into the curriculum.

These results were not consistent with research conducted prior to this study. According to Aukofer and Lawrence (chapter 2), news media training can be easily inserted into existing curriculums through simple modifications that do not increase the demands on already heavily taxed cadets. Junior instructors do not agree with the aspects of simple modifications, ease of insertion and not overtaxing portions of the questions supporting the hypothesis.

Hypothesis four, *Senior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe there is little room in the current curriculum for the addition of media training* was supported. Results from Table 3 show that fewer than half of the senior ROTC instructors agree or strongly agree with all four questions that support hypothesis four with response ranging from 15.0% to 48.8%.

In one instance (question 19) senior instructors agreed or strongly agreed at a level so far below the junior instructors that it became statistically significant. However, the statistically significant difference that exists between group responses with regard to question 19 are between the two groups' negative responses (29.0% of juniors agreeing or strongly agreeing and 15.0% of seniors agreeing or strongly agreeing). Hypothesis three is still rejected while hypothesis four is supported.

Hypothesis four was developed in response to studies (chapter 2) reporting that news media training can be easily integrated into existing ROTC classes through simple modifications that will not overtax the current curriculum. It was hypothesized that senior instructors would not agree with the recommendations of this prior research. The hypothesis was based on the concept that senior instructors would believe that there is

little room for the addition or integration of news media training in the current curriculum without jeopardizing training perceived to be more critical to the cadet's development. Senior instructor results support this hypothesis.

An explanation of these responses may be that senior instructors have a better understanding of the prioritized critical leadership tasks and combat skills that a cadet must master before being commissioned. The number of tasks and skills must be tailored to the cadet's comprehension levels. However, all cadets must achieve a certain level of mastery before being commissioned.

Senior instructors agree with junior instructors that media training is important (hypotheses one and two) and also report here that media training should not be allowed to detract from learning how to be an officer, but should be provided later in an officer's professional education.

Hypothesis five, *Junior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe media training should be provided at precommissioning stages of an officer's formal military education*, was rejected. Results from Table 4 show that fewer than half of the junior ROTC instructors agree or strongly agree with the four questions that support hypothesis five with response ranging from 13.1% to 28.0%.

The low percentage of positive responses to the questions supporting hypothesis five was not expected. It was hypothesized that junior instructors' responses would be consistent with the recommendations of Aukofer and Lawrence's prior research (chapter 2). Aukofer and Lawrence report that the major role of cadet programs is to establish attitudinal foundations on which future military officers build throughout their careers. It

is in this area of cadet training where Aukofer and Lawrence say news media training should receive the greatest emphasis. However, junior instructors do not agree with the recommendations that media training was that vital at this early stage of an officer's career in the questions supporting the hypothesis.

Hypothesis six, *Senior military science instructors at ROTC departments believe media training should be provided at later stages of an officer's formal military education*, was supported. Results from Table 4 show that fewer than half of the senior ROTC instructors agree or strongly agree with the four questions that support hypothesis six with responses ranging from 29.1% to 35.4%.

In one instance (question seven) junior instructors agreed or strongly agreed at a level so far below the senior instructors that it became statistically significant. However, the statistically significant difference that exists between group responses with regard to question seven is between the two groups' negative responses (13.1% of juniors agreeing or strongly agreeing and 29.1% of seniors agreeing or strongly agreeing). Hypothesis five is still rejected while hypothesis six is supported.

Hypothesis six was developed in response to studies (chapter 2) reporting that cadet training is where news media training should receive the greatest emphasis in an officer's professional education. It was hypothesized that senior instructors would not agree with the recommendations of Aukofer and Lawrence's prior research reports that cadet training is the best place for officers to receive formal news media instruction.

Comparing responses between groups reveals that despite the responses from the senior group supportive of hypothesis six, junior instructors answered with less



agreement than their senior counterparts on all counts. This could be an indicator that not only rejects hypothesis five but that junior instructors, who may have more recently completed officers training, report there is little time for cadets to concern themselves with media training with so many other critical leadership and combat critical tasks to master.

### **Non-hypothesis**

Questions 3, 4 and 10 were not used in the analysis of the hypotheses because they were poorly worded and did not specifically answer any of the hypotheses. The responses to these questions are presented below.

Both junior and senior instructors agreed with Question 3: *Dealing with the news media is an important aspect of an officer's responsibility*. Results from Table 6 show more than half of both junior and senior instructors believed this is an important officer responsibility. Results generally support the concept that instructors believe that the news media are important enough to merit the attention of professional officers.

Both junior and senior instructors did not agree with Question 4: *News media training for cadets would be an important part of their professional development*. Results from Table 6 show less than half of both junior and senior instructors believed media training was important enough to be part of cadet education programs. Results give support to the concept that media training should not be offered or is inappropriate for implementation at cadet levels.

Both junior and senior instructors reported the same level of agreement with Question 10: *News media education should be a part of an officer's education at all levels of*

*development.* Results from Table 6 show slightly more than half of both junior and senior instructors agreed this education should be provided at all levels. Results generally support media instruction at all levels. However, no conclusion can be drawn on the level of agreement with training at cadet levels.

### **Conclusion**

The concept behind hypotheses one and two was to examine if instructors believed news media education to be an important enough topic that it should merit consideration as part of a military officer's professional education. A high level of agreement of the importance of news media training for professional officers was expected and realized from both junior and senior instructors. Although responses may be a result of different influences on the two generations of officers, the ultimate implication is that the majority of professional officers involved in this study believe modern professional military officers need to study the news media.

The concept behind hypotheses three and four was to examine if instructors agreed with the findings of prior studies reporting that news media training could be easily inserted into existing ROTC classes through simple modifications that would not overtax the current curriculum. A high level of support for the recommendations of prior studies was expected from junior instructors but not from senior instructors. The presumption was that senior instructors would believe that there is little room for the addition or integration of news media training in the current curriculum without jeopardizing training perceived to be more critical to the cadet's development while junior instructors would have a more open receptive attitude toward incorporating news media training.

This concept was based on observations made by the researcher during 10 years of personal military experience. Results of this survey show junior and senior instructors report similarly disagreeing with the concepts of simple modifications and ease of insertion of media training to the current curriculum. An explanation of these responses may be that most junior and senior instructors feel the implementation of media training would be difficult and may detract from the cadets' mastery of more critical leadership and combat skills.

The concept behind hypotheses five and six was to examine at what stage instructors believed media training should be provided to professional military officers. This concept was also based on the researcher's personal observations as well as results from previous studies reporting the need for news media training at cadet levels. Therefore, a high level of support for the recommendations of these prior studies was expected from junior instructors but not from senior instructors. The concept was that senior instructors would believe that there is little time for cadets to concern themselves with media training when there are so many other critical leadership and combat critical tasks to master while junior instructors would perceive media training as an important enough task to be taught along with critical combat tasks. Results of this survey show that junior and senior instructors report similarly, both disagreeing with the prior research recommendations that media training should be taught at cadet levels.

### **Recommendations**

The focus of this study was simply to establish an attitudinal base of the Army ROTC instructor population. The results of this survey coupled with the results and

recommendations of previous research reviewed in Chapter 2 indicate a difference in opinion as to the need for and the ease of implementation of news media training at the cadet level.

There are programs being designed by the Department of the Army that will implement news media training at all levels of an officer's professional education. It is yet to be determined as to what extent these changes will affect the precommissioning curriculum of the armed service.

Possibly the most important recommendation resulting from this research is that the Department of the Army and ROTC Cadet Command understand that the results from this survey are contradictory to the results of previous studies stating the importance of media training at cadet levels. This contradiction is significant because it shows a concern on the part of ROTC instructors, who must implement all training, that news media training is not an important enough task to be included as part of the cadet curriculum. More importantly, this survey indicates that implementation of media training in the cadet curriculum would come at the expense of leadership and more combat critical tasks. To deprive cadets of the opportunity to master leadership and more combat critical skills in order to implement news media training may not only cause the cadet to suffer, but, ultimately may be detrimental to the military mission.

Finally, further research of value to this study would be a replication of this study to obtain the views of instructors from other commissioning sources and from sister services of the armed forces. This would help give balance to the findings of this survey.

**APPENDIX A**

**Survey Cover Letter**

Dear Mr. [Name]:

Thank you for your interest in the [Project Name] survey.

The purpose of this survey is to gather information about [Project Description]. Your participation is essential to the success of this project. The survey will take approximately [Time] to complete. Your responses will be kept confidential and used only for the purposes of the survey.

The survey is being conducted by [Organization Name]. The information gathered will be used to [Purpose of Survey]. Your participation is voluntary and your responses will be kept confidential.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact [Contact Information]. We appreciate your time and contribution to this project.

Sincerely,  
[Name]  
[Title]

[Organization Name]  
[Address]  
[City, State, Zip]

[Signature]  
[Name]  
[Title]

Thank you.

**Marshall University**  
**W. Page Pitt School of Journalism and Mass Communications**  
**320 Smith Hall, Huntington, West Virginia 25755**

June 11, 1997

Dear ROTC Instructor:

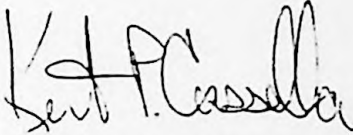
This is the news media training questionnaire you received advanced e-mail notification of a few days ago. I am an active-duty Army captain and graduate student at Marshall University conducting a nationwide research project of which this questionnaire is a crucial part.

The attached questionnaire is part of a comprehensive review of news media training as an element of the Professional Military Education process. Department of the Army will receive the results of the review upon completion.

This same questionnaire is being sent to all 247 ROTC programs across the nation for their input. Your participation is critical since it will be the only opportunity your organization has to present its unique perspective to this comprehensive review.

An ROTC instructor of any rank can complete this survey. I encourage you to respond thoughtfully and candidly to each question. In no instance will responses of individuals be reported. Your responses are completely anonymous and cannot be tied to you in any way.

The questionnaire will take less than 15 minutes of your time. Please take an opportunity to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the self-addressed stamped envelope by July 12, 1997. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

  
KENT P. CASSELLA  
CPT, AV  
Project Officer

Enclosure

# APPENDIX B

## Survey Instrument

Directions:  
Please print your name and title on the line below.  
Please indicate the frequency with which you use the instrument.  
Use the following:  
1 - Never  
2 - Rarely  
3 - Sometimes  
4 - Often  
5 - Always

1. I use this instrument to assess the following:	1	2	3	4	5
2. I use this instrument to assess the following:	1	2	3	4	5
3. I use this instrument to assess the following:	1	2	3	4	5
4. I use this instrument to assess the following:	1	2	3	4	5
5. I use this instrument to assess the following:	1	2	3	4	5
6. I use this instrument to assess the following:	1	2	3	4	5
7. I use this instrument to assess the following:	1	2	3	4	5
8. I use this instrument to assess the following:	1	2	3	4	5
9. I use this instrument to assess the following:	1	2	3	4	5
10. I use this instrument to assess the following:	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for your participation.

**Directions:**

Please **DO NOT** put your name on this survey.

Please answer the following questions by circling the letter corresponding to the scale below:

**SA = Strongly Agree. You agree strongly with the statement.**

**A = Agree. You agree more than you disagree with the statement.**

**N = Neutral. You neither agree nor disagree with the statement.**

**D = Disagree. You disagree more than you agree with the statement.**

**SD = Strongly Disagree. You strongly disagree with the statement.**

- |  |    |   |   |   |    |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Modern officers should be trained to work with the news media.  | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 2. Officers should work hard to understand the news media.   | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 3. Dealing with the news media is an important aspect of an officer's responsibility.                              | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 4. News media training for cadets would be an important part of their professional development.                    | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 5. Officers should have a working knowledge of news media processes.   | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 6. An understanding of the news media is the responsibility of all officers, not just the public affairs officers. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 7. News media training should be a concern at all cadet training programs.   | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 8. Officers should study the relationship between the military and the news media.                                 | SA | A | N | D | SD |

**Please go to next page.**



STRONGLY AGREE (SA)	AGREE (A)	NEUTRAL (N)	DISAGREE (D)	STRONGLY DISAGREE (SD)
------------------------	--------------	----------------	-----------------	---------------------------

9. In modern military operations, an officer's understanding of the news media is critical. SA A N D SD
10. News media education should be a part of an officer's education at all levels of development. SA A N D SD
11. Learning about the news media needs to begin at the cadet level. SA A N D SD
12. Implementation of news media training can be accomplished through simple modifications to the current ROTC curriculum. SA A N D SD
13. Decisions to drop some courses will have to be made in order to make room for news media training. SA A N D SD
14. News media training should be part of the ROTC curriculum. SA A N D SD
15. The current curriculum has space in which news media training could be inserted. SA A N D SD
16. News media training could easily be incorporated into related blocks of currently required ROTC instruction. SA A N D SD
17. Adding the requirement for news media training to the current curriculum will not be overtaxing the ROTC program. SA A N D SD
18. Learning about the news media needs to begin after an officer is commissioned. SA A N D SD
19. Some courses could be dropped to make room for news media training. SA A N D SD

**Please go to next page.**

STRONGLY AGREE (SA)	AGREE (A)	NEUTRAL (N)	DISAGREE (D)	STRONGLY DISAGREE (SD)
------------------------	--------------	----------------	-----------------	---------------------------

20. Simple modifications to the current curriculum for news media training will not increase demands on the ROTC program.

SA A N D SD

21. I welcome the implementation of news media training at cadet levels.

SA A N D SD

**Background Information:**  
**Please answer the following questions by either circling the appropriate response or by filling in the blank.**

22. Are you male or female?  
(Please circle one). 1. Male 2. Female

23. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

24. What is your grade or rank? \_\_\_\_\_

25. What are your branch and primary MOS? \_\_\_\_\_

26. What is your current position or title? \_\_\_\_\_

27. How many years active federal commissioned service do you currently have?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**STOP**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND YOUR INPUT**

## APPENDIX C

### **E-mail Advanced Notification Message**

*[The following text is extremely faint and largely illegible. It appears to be a template for an e-mail advanced notification message, containing several paragraphs of text and possibly a signature block at the bottom.]*

Dear ROTC Instructor:

I am an active-duty Army captain and graduate student at Marshall University, Huntington, West Virginia, asking for your help in a nationwide research project.

In a few days you will receive a simple questionnaire. It will take but a short time to fill out -- and your answers will be of the greatest importance to the success of the project.

The questionnaire is being sent to all 247 ROTC host universities as part of a comprehensive review of news media training as part of the Professional Military Education process.

Your participation is critical since it will be the only opportunity your program will have to provide input to this comprehensive review.

I would greatly appreciate your cooperation.

Kent P. Cassella  
CPT, AV  
Project Officer  
Marshall University

**APPENDIX D**

**E-mail Reminder Message**

[Faint, illegible text, likely a template for an email reminder message]

Dear ROTC Instructor:

This is a follow-up to the survey you received a few days ago asking for your help in a nationwide research project. I am an active-duty Army captain conducting this research at Marshall University, Huntington, West Virginia.

The survey you received is a simple questionnaire. It will take but a short time to fill out -- and your answers are of great importance to the success of the project.

The questionnaire has been sent to all 247 ROTC host universities as part of a comprehensive review of news media training as part of the Professional Military Education process.

Your participation is critical since it will be the only opportunity your program will have to provide input to this comprehensive review.

If you have already completed and returned the survey, thank you for your time and input. If you have not completed your survey yet, please take a few minutes to do so. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Kent P. Cassella  
CPT, AV  
Project Officer  
Marshall University

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