

DCN 8045
P.O. Box 33646 Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, OH 45433-0646

AFIT FOUNDATION

15 August 2005

BRAC Commission

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi – Chairman
2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, Virginia 22202

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Received

Sir:

I am writing on behalf of the AFIT Foundation, a private, not-for-profit corporation, chartered by the State of Ohio for the purpose of providing support to the Air Force Institute of Technology and to provide oversight of the Institute's alumni association, the Association of Graduates.

The advantages of an AFIT education were clearly demonstrated in the studies conducted at the time of AFIT's near closure in the years 1996-1998. Studies conducted at that time showed that attempts to replicate AFIT programs in civilian institutions would be very difficult. Further, the retention of the expectation that students conduct the research required for the graduate degrees on problems of Air Force interest would necessitate Air Force funded research at the universities that would negate any possible cost savings. As a consequence of these studies, the decision to close AFIT was reversed. A similar study, if conducted today, would in all likelihood show AFIT at an even greater advantage, as the cost of research and education at civilian universities has increased faster than the cost of operating AFIT.

I would like to summarize for you ten good reasons why the Institute is in its present location and configuration, with the mission of providing defense-focused graduate and continuing education, research and consultation to improve Air Force and joint operational capability.

1. AFIT provides graduate programs in science, engineering, and management specifically tailored to meet Air Force requirements. Each program is aligned with a specific Air Force Educational Code and is subjected to periodic program reviews by users and senior Air Force leadership.
2. AFIT provides rapid and flexible response through the creation, approval and implementation of new courses and curriculum on time scales of weeks or months, rather than years.

3. Approximately 50% of the faculty of AFIT are PhD holding Air Force officers. This unique attribute of the institution exposes its graduate students to a knowledge and experience base unequaled anywhere.
4. Virtually all faculty and student research is in support of a current Air Force or Department of Defense requirement.
5. The results of AFIT student research are evaluated annually by Air Force and Department of Defense sponsors. The total cost-avoidance through this work is greater than the cost of operating the graduate programs.
6. The convenient access to the laboratories and offices of Wright-Patterson AFB enables students to perform their required research with Air Force engineers and scientists, and to apply Air Force facilities to the solution of problems of current Air Force interest.
7. The AFIT faculty is the largest component of the three full-member institutions in the Dayton Area Graduate Studies Institute, a consortium that provides access for civilian students to AFIT courses and degrees. This activity, funded by the State of Ohio at over \$50 million in the past 8 years, is critical to the economic development of the region.
8. AFIT students and staff receive outstanding support from the Wright-Patterson community. The technical library of Wright Patterson has been merged with the AFIT collection, base housing is available, and the Wright-Patterson Hospitals are among the largest, best equipped, and best staffed in the Air Force.
9. The cost of living in the Wright-Patterson area is relatively low, and AFIT is within convenient driving distance of suitable housing for young officers. Relocation or disbursal of AFIT to higher cost areas would cost the DOD significantly through increased housing allowances.
10. AFIT symbolizes the commitment, present from the creation of the United States Air Force, to the technically educated officer corps that is necessary to develop, acquire, maintain, and operate the most technically advanced weapons systems upon which the Air Force mission depends.

Thank your for your consideration, and for your service on this commission.



Peter W. Odgers, Major General, USAF (Ret)
Chairman, Board of Trustees
AFIT Foundation