



INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

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July 20, 2005

BRAC Commission

Mr. Anthony J. Principi
Chairman
Defense Base Closure and Readiness Commission
2521 South Clark Street
Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

JUL 22 2005

Received

Dear Mister Chairman,

Enclosed herewith please find a letter sent by me to the Secretary of the Navy earlier this year regarding the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California. My views expressed there remain the same: NPS is an excellent, efficient, and essential organization to the Navy as it enters an ever more operational and technically demanding decade.

If I can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to call (512-232-4448)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert R. Fossum".

Robert R. Fossum, PhD
Senior Research Scientist



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May 4, 2005

JUL 22 2005

Received

Honorable Gordon R. England
The Secretary of the Navy
1000 Navy Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350-1000

Dear Mr. Secretary,

I also want to thank you for visiting the Institute for Advanced Technology. I have heard many favorable comments on your talk to the Army fellowship students. Especially interesting was the emphasis on the "Principles of Leadership."

And please add my personal thanks for my recent appointment to the Board of Advisors of the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS). I attended my first Board meeting two weeks ago and I am quite impressed with the students, faculty and laboratories. Dean Frederick E. Terman (Stanford), one of the greats in engineering education, once told me, those are the three essential components of excellence in educational. Add to that, the compelling military focus, and you have my general impressions of NPS.

Three specific impressions are important,

First, there seems to be a tendency in present day analyses to compare costs at NPS with costs at civilian graduate schools on the basis of normalized metrics, such as cost per credit hour. In my opinion, such comparisons are too simplistic and may lead to erroneous conclusions. Clearly NPS has fixed costs (faculty and staff salaries, facilities costs, etc.) which are paid by the Department of the Navy. While civilian institutions have similar costs, only a fractional part of those costs are paid by the Navy (in tuition) and the remainder are paid by state appropriations or by private endowments. However, assuming a fixed educational content, curriculum completion in a civilian institution will take longer to complete. This added time is due to the efficiency of the year around program at NPS when compared to the academic scheduling in civilian institutions. And since the officer salaries dominate the total costs to the Department of the Navy, the longer time spent to complete the fixed requirements is more expensive in civilian institutions.

A second issue overlooked by the usual analyses, is the actual content of the curriculum. At NPS, the Curricula Sponsor is the driver of the educational content. In my opinion, the content of all curricula at NPS is carefully crafted and highly focused on military issues and technology. Needless to say, this would not be the case in civilian institutions. I have

taken the time to read some recent of the thesis work, especially by the Unrestricted Line Officers working in a team effort. It was very good and could only have been that good if done at NPS.

My final impression relates to institutional uniqueness. Recall that I was at one time Director of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) After a few years in that position it was clear to me that DARPA was unique. Should it ever happen that its mission was substantially changed or closed out, then the institution probably could never be reconstituted. The landscape of the Executive Branch has several examples of failed attempts to emulate DARPA. The process of such radical change is not reversible. I have much the same view of the uniqueness of NPS. I am convinced that should naval officer graduate education be transferred away from NPS, the relevance of that education will be substantially weakened and that NPS itself could never be reconstituted.

Again, thank you for visiting IAT. Best wishes for success in your new position in the Department of Defense.

Sincerely,
Robert Fossum