

Letter Regarding Naval Science Minor

March 24, 2003

To the Office of the Provost, Director of Military Affairs:

The Academic Affairs Committee of the Student Senate is concerned with the lack of academic recognition awarded to students of Naval Science. The Department of Naval Science at this University currently offers a comprehensive listing of academically challenging and useful courses. Consequently, we believe that an academic minor should be offered to recognize a successful and profitable completion of these studies. As with any minor, this would appropriately distinguish the student for his or her supplementary academic pursuit and subsequent expertise above and beyond other students of a similar degree program.

Through research conducted by this committee over the course of the semester, it has been found that this need is being met at a significant number of other universities. A sampling of these programs is attached as an Appendix B. Generally, the credit requirements for completion of such a minor ranged between 15 and 24 credit hours of Naval Science. The minor programs were often provided through the College of Arts and Letters, or the equivalent.

In the University of Notre Dame's College of Arts and Letters, "minors are five course sequences that can either be departmental or interdisciplinary."¹ Thus, a typical minor consists of 15 credit hours of course work. Our current students of Naval Science follow an eight-course "Navy Option" sequence, resulting in a total of 22 credit hours, or a six-course, 16-credit hour, "Marine Option" sequence. In this respect, the Navy Option course of study more closely resembled the College's requirements for a major, as "they usually consist of between eight and 12 courses."²

There is no doubt that completion of the Naval Science course progression "affords the student an opportunity to gain more specialized knowledge in a particular field or discipline."² This is readily apparent by reviewing a listing of the offered course descriptions, provided as Appendix A. The current Naval Science courses are as follows: Introduction to Naval Science, Sea Power and Maritime Affairs, Naval Ship Systems (I and II), Leadership and Management, Navigation, Naval Operations, Amphibious Warfare, Evolution of Warfare, and Leadership and Ethics. These classes firmly ground the student in the historical, contemporary, theoretical, practical, and ethical intricacies of Naval Science.

The study of Naval Science and military studies is a time-honored academic discipline, and current Notre Dame students specializing in and successfully mastering this

¹ University of Notre Dame, Bulletin of Information. Minors in the College of Arts and Letters. Pg. 91.

² University of Notre Dame, Bulletin of Information. Majors in the College of Arts and Letters. Pg. 90.

field of study deserve appropriate academic distinction. Therefore, the Academic Affairs Committee respectfully submits the following recommendations:

1. Institution of a Naval Science Minor to recognize successful completion of the eight course Navy Option sequence or the six course Marine Option sequence.
2. Investigation into the feasibility of minor offerings in the fields of Military Science and Aerospace Studies.

The Academic Affairs Committee of the Student Senate appreciates your consideration of this matter. We look forward to the opportunity to enter into further dialogue with you on this subject.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Academic Affairs Committee of the Student Senate
