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Lieutenant General Richard M. Clark  
Superintendent of the United States Air Force Academy  
2304 Cadet Drive, Suite 3100  
USAF Academy, CO 80840-5002

Dear Lieutenant General Clark,

I write today to express my concerns regarding the increasing politicization of the education provided to U.S. Air Force Academy cadets. I understand that in a Diversity and Inclusion briefing that all USAFA cadets received at the beginning of this school year, cadets were instructed to tell each other personal, confidential details about themselves and share their ‘pronouns,’ with briefers being instructed to encourage vulnerability “for best effect”. Presumably the motivation behind these required briefings is to introduce the Academy’s new minor in Diversity and Inclusion. It will cause some to question whether they even want to enter into a military that puts wokeism on par with traditional military training.

The notion that there must be a new curriculum for USAFA to develop leaders who understand how to “attract, recruit, retain, and leverage the diverse talent needed to enable the success of the United States Air and Space Forces” is a mere assertion.<sup>1</sup> For seventy-five years, USAFA has successfully produced Airmen and Guardians that comprise the highest caliber of military officers. Propelled forward by the words passed down from Air and Space Force leadership, cadets can aspire to “fly, fight and win” and remain “always above.” These mission statements, formulated in consultation with of Airmen and Guardians, are intended to ensure that every servicemember sees and feels that they belong and are recognized.<sup>2</sup> While the Diversity and Inclusion minor may be well intentioned, it will, I believe, undermine USAFA’s core values and renowned legacy.

The superficial diversity and inclusion judgments offered by USAFA’s curriculum will do nothing but undermine the core values that USAFA upholds: “Integrity First. Service Before Self. Excellence in All We Do.”<sup>3</sup> The briefing provided even cites the USAFA Strategic Plan from 2015 defining service as a core value that makes cadets “realize that professional duties take precedence over personal desires” and “exhibited through rule following, discipline, respect, and self-

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.usafa.edu/academic/diversity-inclusion-studies-minor/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/2565837/air-force-unveils-new-mission-statement/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.usafa.edu/about/mission/#:~:text=To%20educate%2C%20train%20and%20inspire,for%20developing%20leaders%20of%20character.>

control.”<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately, the content of the briefing itself is a litany of divisive, derivative, and damaging rhetoric that is designed to undermine cadet’s beliefs and replace it with a compulsory concept of morality.

In a slide proclaiming to explain “‘Why?’ Diversity & Inclusion is Important to the USAF/USSF,” instructors are directed to share examples of innovation from a diverse workforce. Unfortunately, these examples are simply a list of stereotypes. One example explains that female Airmen overseas can connect with local women in ways men cannot. A second tells the story of an Airman of Korean descent who enhanced mission effectiveness in two deployments to Korea because of the cultural expertise he possessed. Rather than promoting the values of respect and cohesion put forward by USAFA’s own strategic plan, this lesson tells cadets that regardless of how many Diversity & Inclusion courses you take you will never be able to understand someone else unless you are the same as them – the exact opposite lesson the course purports to advance.

Furthermore, to imply that coursework requiring cadets to “identify and critically assess explanations for construction of specific categories/groups” is equally as important to military readiness as other offered minors such as Global Logistics Management, Robotics, and Space Warfighting is perplexing, to say the least.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, a line in the briefing slide taught to all USAFA cadets discourages them from using the term ‘terrorist.’ It’s hard to contemplate how a military academy can claim to develop warfighters while discouraging them from using a term to define a very real threat they will directly confront.

Lieutenant General, the purpose of your institution is to make our future Airmen and Guardians more lethal, not more politically correct. This is exactly the kind of woke virtue signaling that has undermined public confidence by millions of Americans in our Armed Forces. Military effectiveness depends on cohesion – not division. I ask that you seriously reconsider the military education you are conferring onto our future servicemembers, and vigilantly protect those under your watch from being subjected to exaggerated diversity indoctrination and woke political agendas.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



Doug Lamborn  
Member of Congress

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<sup>4</sup><https://www.usafa.af.mil/Portals/21/documents/Leadership/PlansAndPrograms/USAFA%20Strategic%20Plan.pdf?ver=2015-12-02-094313-880>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.usafa.edu/academics/majors-minors/>