



A Message to The Long Gray Line

11 March 2024

To the Long Gray Line and all USMA Supporters:

Duty, Honor, Country is foundational to the United States Military Academy's culture and will always remain our motto. It defines who we are as an institution and as graduates of West Point. These three hallowed words are the hallmark of the cadet experience and bind the Long Gray Line together across our great history.

Our responsibility to produce leaders to fight and win our nation's wars requires us to assess ourselves regularly. Thus, over the past year and a half, working with leaders from across West Point and external stakeholders, we reviewed our vision, mission, and strategy to serve this purpose. We believe our mission binds the Academy to the Army - the Army in which our cadets will serve. As a result of this assessment, we recommended the following mission statement to our senior Army leadership:

To build, educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets to be commissioned leaders of character committed to the Army Values and ready for a lifetime of service to the Army and Nation.

Both the Secretary of the Army and Army Chief of Staff approved this recommendation.

Our updated mission statement focuses on the mission essential tasks of Build, Educate, Train, and Inspire the Corps of Cadets to be commissioned leaders of character, with the explicit purpose of being committed to the Army Values and Ready for a lifetime of service. [The Army Values](#) include Duty and Honor, and Country is reflected in Loyalty, bearing true faith and allegiance to the U.S. Constitution, the Army, your unit, and other Soldiers. In the past century, West Point's mission has changed nine times. Many graduates will recall the mission statement they learned as new cadets did not include the motto, as Duty, Honor, Country was first added to the mission statement in 1998.

Our absolute focus on developing leaders of character ready to lead our Army's Soldiers on increasingly lethal battlefields remains unchanged.

Go Army!
Duty Honor Country!



LTG Steve Gilland
61st Superintendent

Time Period	USMA Mission	Essential Task Change	Purpose Change	Source
1925-40	"To provide a four year course of instruction and training for the Corps of Cadets which will prepare its graduates for commission in the Regular Army.			Army Regulation 350-5, 1 August 1925 "Military Education"
1940-65	"To instruct and train the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate will have the qualities and attributes essential to his progressive and continued development throughout a lifetime career as an officer of the Regular Army.	X	X	War Department Circular No. 109,3 Oct 1940 Regs, USMA, 26 Dec 1947AR 350-5, 19523 Oct 1940
1965-76	Same as above except that the word "lifetime" was deleted.		X	Army Regulation 350-5, 21 Nov 1963 Change 1 to Regs, USMA of 26 Jul 1965.
1977	"To educate, train, and motivate the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate shall have the character, leadership, and other attributes essential to progressive and continuing development throughout a career of exemplary service to the Nation as an officer of the Regular Army."	X	X	MG Sidney Berry, USMA Superintendent, and an ad hoc committee under COL Lough (D/Law) prepared;Academic Board modified and approved;ultimately approved by DA and appearedin Regs, USMA of 19 Sep 1977.
1978-1987	"To educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate shall have the character, leadership, intellectual foundation, and other attributes essential to progressive and continuing development throughout a career of exemplary service to the Nation as an officer of the Regular Army."	X		During the review of the Final Report of the West Point Study Group, the Superintendent and Chief of Staff of the Army agreed that the mission of USMA should be stated as in the report, except that the word "through" should remain"throughout" as in the previous version.Regs, USMA 5 Jan 1979.
1987-1992	"To educate and train the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate shall have the attributes essential to professional growth as an officer of the Regular Army, and to inspire each to a lifetime of service to the Nation."	X		Mission Statement signed by GEN John Wickham, Jr., CSA, and LTG Dave R.Palmer, USMA Superintendent on 27 May 1987.
1992-1998	"To educate and train the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate shall have the attributes essential to professional growth throughout a career as an officer of the Regular Army and to inspire each to alifetime of service to the Nation."		X	CSA approved, in a 25 Nov 1992 Memo,a request by LTG Graves, Superintendent,to revise mission statement. It restored reference to a career in the Army by adding "throughout a career."
1998-2005	"To educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate is a commissioned leader of character committed to the values of Duty, Honor, Country; professional growth throughout a career as an officer in the United States Army; and a lifetime of selfless service to the Nation."	X	X	Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army(M&RA) Spiegel approved, on 29 April 1998, a request by LTG Christman, Superintendent, for a new mission statement. This revision added the phrase"commissioned leader of character" as well as the Academy's motto, "Duty, Honor, Country." It also omitted"Regular" from Army in accordance with Congressional action ending the issuing of Regular Army Commissions to USMA graduates and characterized the service to the nation as "selfless."
2005-Present	" To educate, train and inspire the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate is a commissioned leader of character committed to the values of Duty, Honor, Country and prepared for a career of professional excellence and service to the Nation as an officer in the United States Army."		X	The Army Chief of Staff's approval of a mission statement requested by LTG Lennox, Superintendent, was noted in an e-mail message of 30 May 2005. There vision added "prepared for" since the Academy's focus is on the preparation of officers. It replaced "professional growth" with "professional excellence"and replaced "lifetime of selfless service to the Nation" with "service to the Nation as an officer in the United States Army" to focus on the Academy's essential task.