

INFORMATION PAPER

16 August 2017

Subj: DACOWITS RFI #1: GENDER INTEGRATION

1. Purpose. To provide a written response to the DACOWITS RFI regarding lessons learned from gender integration efforts at the Marine Corps Infantry Officer Course (IOC).

2. Background

- a. The mission of IOC is to train and educate newly selected infantry and ground intelligence officers in the leadership, skills, and character required to serve as infantry platoon commanders in the operating forces.
- b. Since the opening of all military occupational specialties (MOS) to women in 2016, four women have requested assignment as Infantry Officers (0302 MOS).

3. Key Points

- a. The Marine Corps is the only service that requires all officers, regardless of MOS or gender, to first attend a Basic Officer Course (BOC) for 26 weeks where they are trained in the high standards of professional knowledge, esprit-de-corps, and leadership required to prepare them for duty as a company grade officer in the operating forces, with an emphasis on the skills required of a rifle platoon commander.
- b. While at the BOC, student officers receive their MOS based upon their desires, aptitude, needs of the Marine Corps, and the Staff Platoon Commander's assessment of their propensity to succeed in their chosen MOS. To date, four female officers have chosen the infantry MOS as their first choice and have subsequently been assigned to IOC for training.
- c. Since the opening of all MOS to women, the Commanding Officer of The Basic School and the Director of IOC have conducted engagements with each BOC to garner interest, dispel myths, and answer questions in regards to the Infantry MOS, while encouraging all Marines to pursue a ground combat arms MOS, if that is their desire.
- d. After MOS Selection, IOC bound students participate in preparatory training during the last two months at the BOC with IOC's Marines Awaiting Training (MAT) Platoon. Particular emphasis is placed on lower body strength in preparation for hiking under load.

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- e. All students who attend both the BOC and IOC are provided access to certified athletic trainers to assist with training plans and education in preparation for success at IOC.
- f. At the beginning of IOC, the staff stresses the importance and best practices for injury prevention and nutrition education.
- g. Appropriate timing and order of physical events allows students to maximize performance & recovery.
- h. Additional time is allotted for tactical movements to mitigate increased weight and heat index in summer months.
- i. For all Marine Officers to be successful at IOC they must possess the drive, determination and will to mentally and physically persevere through the program of instruction.
- j. Women have proven that the Combat Endurance Test, given at the start of IOC, is not a barrier to entry.
- k. Tactical movements under load (a.k.a. "Hikes") remain a challenging portion of the IOC program of instruction for all Marine Officers.

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