



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY
WEST POINT, NEW YORK 10996

10 May 2018

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Academic Board, United States Military Academy, West Point, New York

Subject: Academic Study Day Policy

The move to the new academic schedule is a watershed moment for the Academy. It is long overdue, and, based on years of assessment, we know it is the right thing to do for our cadets. The *Study Day* is a key component of the new schedule. I want to make very clear that Study Day is designed for academic purposes. It ensures that we are abiding by our accreditors and the Department of Education in providing cadets with the proper amount of time required to do their academic work. As USMA Reg 1-1 states clearly, "The Dean owns this time." Study Days count toward the academic contact time needed to fulfill requirements as an institution of higher education. Study Days are reserved for study, homework, preparation of academic requirements, and intellectual reflection. No other formal activities may be scheduled, except as noted in the regulation, unless specifically approved by the Dean.

This schedule change represents a culture change, and, therefore, it is imperative that leaders set the right climate to ensure the success of the Study Day. Just as water will find and fill every crack in the sidewalk, such are good intentions of leaders who hone in on every appearance of "white space" for leadership and developmental opportunities. We must guard against these intrusions into the academic intent of the day. Because of the more open schedule, it will seem easy to assemble groups of cadets for "voluntary activities" like Sandhurst practice, character discussions, or practices with an athletic team, whether it be Corps Squad, club, or intramural. This is not what this day is designed for, and as leaders, we have the obligation to protect this time for academics and to set cadets up for success. I also encourage faculty to utilize this time for their academic pursuits in addition to being available for AI. We must be role models for the cadets and demonstrate that we value academic preparation and intellectual reflection as essential for cadet development as they learn to manage unstructured time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "R. Caslen, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Robert L. Caslen, Jr.
Lieutenant General
Superintendent, United States Military Academy

Approved
by Academic Board
180510

USMA Reg 1-1, para 4-3.r., p. 16:

r. Study Days (Select Days throughout the term, 0730-1600): The intent of the Study Day is to provide maximum opportunity for cadets, staff, and faculty to prepare for excellence, to inculcate sound professional habits in the use of unstructured time, and to provide extended periods of uninterrupted time for academic work **for intellectual development**. Cadets and faculty should have maximum freedom to determine how to schedule academic work throughout Study Days.

The Dean owns this time (except lunch formation and lunch, which are Commandant's time). Study Days are academic days, like regular class days (1- and 2-days), and count toward the academic contact time each semester that USMA requires in order to fulfill our obligations as an accredited institution of higher learning. These days are reserved for study, homework, preparation of academic requirements, **and intellectual reflection**. **No other formal activities may be scheduled, except as noted below, unless specifically approved by the Dean.**

(1) Permitted Activities

- Cadets may schedule Additional Instruction (AI) with faculty on a voluntary basis.
- Cadets may use this time to work on cadet-driven group projects and to participate in voluntary study groups.
- Cadets may use this time to attend to personal voluntary activities, including exercise, in accordance with Cadet Time (para 4-1.c.) and class privileges for academic days.
- Afternoon Corps Squad practices IAW USMA Reg 350-12.
- DPE classes as required.
- Tactical Officers may schedule cadet counseling when it does not conflict with academic activity.
- Cadet Honor Board hearings as required.

(2) Prohibited Activities

- Trip sections.
- Mandatory guest lectures.
- Mandatory training.
- Mandatory details or taskings (other than those permitted in Annex A, para 1).
- Morning Corps Squad practices (after 0730).
- **Club team, company athletic team, or Sandhurst practices.**

(3) Leaders must be cognizant of the potential for optional activities to be interpreted by Cadets as mandatory ("volun-told"). All leaders down to the lowest level must preserve the intent of Study Day, ensuring that there is no perception of repercussions for Cadets not attending voluntary activities.

(4) Exam Period (0730-0845): Cadets may be required to take a course exam during the designated exam period. These exams will be scheduled in advance.

(5) Evening Study Period (ESP) on Study Days (1930-2330): ESP on Study Days is the same as ESP on other academic days (para 4-3.o. above).

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(6) **Faculty and Staff on Study Days.** Study Days are envisioned as time for cadets to focus on academics, and this model should also be applied to faculty (and staff, as appropriate).

(7) **Scheduling Study Days.** The Dean is responsible for scheduling Study Days as part of the annual Academic Schedule (Buff Card). There will be 10 Study Days during a semester, distributed throughout the semester, usually on a Wednesday.