

Meeting Minutes – Class Advisory Senate, 21 January 2025 - FINAL

1. Call to Order: Randy Helms '79, called the meeting to order at 1700.

2. Members in Attendance: See Attachment 1

3. Others in Attendance:

Lt Gen Tony Bauernfeind, '91, Superintendent, USAF Academy

Col Joel Brown, '00, Director, USAF Academy Center for Character and Leadership Development

Command CMSgt Alsvig, USAF Academy Command Chief

Maj Gen (ret) Brian Bishop, '83, Chair, USAFA AOG Board of Directors

Katie Willemark, Chief Financial Officer, USAFA AOG & AFAF

Wyatt Hornsby, Senior Vice President for Marketing and Communications, USAFA AOG & AFAF

Naviere Walkewicz, '99, Senior Vice President, USAFA AOG Alumni Relations and Business Development

Eli Alvarado, USAFA AOG IT Support

4. Previous Minutes:

<https://aog-websites.s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/usafa-org/documents/aog/governance/CAS/CAS+Minutes+-+24+October+2024+---+FINAL.pdf>

5. Randy Helms, '79, President Class Advisory Senate:

As the first order of business, Randy announced the newly elected Class Advisory Senate officers: Senate President, John Cinnamon, '91; Senate Vice President, AJ Ranft, '73, and Senate Secretary Tom Hayden, '74. He then turned the meeting over to the new President.

John made introductory comments and then introduced the guest speaker, LtGen Tony Bauernfeind. Gen Bauernfeind assumed command of the Air Force Academy in August 2024. He most recently served as the commander of Air Force Special Operations Command from 2022 to 2024. He served as vice commander of the United States Special Operations Command from 2020 to 2022; as vice commander, Bauernfeind was responsible for planning, coordinating, and executing actions with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, the services and other government agencies in the national capital region on behalf of the commander of United States Special Operations Command. He previously served as Special Operations Command's chief of staff and as commander of Special Operations Command Korea.

6. Lt Gen Tony Bauernfeind, '91 Superintendent, USAF Academy.

- LtGen Bauernfeind introduced himself as the 22nd USAFA Superintendent and stated that he is proud to be in the job. He also made it clear that he welcomes input from the graduate community - "55,000 strong." He started his presentation by showing a short video of all aspects of Cadet life.
- There was a big change in the USAFA staff this past year: the Vice Supt is now a two-star position (vs O6). MGen Thomas Sherman arrived in June 2024.
- He stated that he would speak today about Cadet Training: the "Why now?", mission and priorities, building blocks, and foundation importance.
- Why Now: some changes are needed now to the development of our Air and Space leaders because this is a "time of consequence". "The time is NOW". The China X statement got our attention. "We will be ready by 2027".
- Iran seeks to de-stabilize Israel; Russia has shown a desire to de-stabilize Europe; the US's adversaries present challenges that the US must meet every day.
- A bi-partisan commission has determined that the US needs to make sizeable changes to meet these challenges with a focus on military training.
- He stated that a large part of the USAFA mission is Cadet training.
 - LtGen Bauernfeind stated that he will strive hard to make this a 47-month training opportunity; Cadets didn't come to AFA because it is easy, they came because it is hard. "We want them to know that the AFA expects them to make it a "lifetime of service", in all forms, both in and out of the military and government.
 - "We must make it clear to our adversaries that we are the absolute finest military force, and make our enemies decide not to challenge us."
 - The AFA will develop warfighters – leaders of character and quality.
 - Training will be hard, and we will hold each of them accountable.
 - The goal is to create critical thinkers to adapt to any challenge, to whatever situation they find themselves in.
 - This training is underpinned by USAF and Space core values; they must do the easy things the right way, and that will provide them with a foundation to do the hard things. And they must uphold standards.
- USAFA will transition to a Four-Class system; the goal is to develop a culture of character and respect throughout four years. Much of it is already in place.
- LtGen Bauernfeind stated that they are currently assessing where they have gaps. They are looking at the building blocks of success in the Cadet experience and they need to fill the gaps in these building blocks.
- The foundation for these building blocks will be strict adherence to standards - on the battlefield, things get harder; if they don't adhere, they put their comrades at risk.

- They will develop their physical, mental, spiritual, family and readiness attributes.
- They will develop skills in warfighter training: shoot, move, communicate, mediate, and automate. They must understand challenges, crucibles, and teamwork; they must be able to lead through adversity and challenges when they graduate.
- LtGen Bauernfeind stated that they are working on a training program of “operational squadron training”. They will train in the field and learn how the USAF is using Agile Combat Employment. This will involve training exercises by Cadet Squadron.
- The new training program will focus on heritage, service, and service to the nation, and they will re-establish accountability.
- All operations will have a mission de-brief, and they will determine what they need to improve, and will establish accountability for exercise execution.
 - They will review perspectives, background and problem solving.
 - It will be demanding but not demeaning.
- The Academy has zero tolerance for sexual assault, honor violations, discrimination and demeaning behavior.
- LtGen Bauernfeind stated our priorities will be tied to our foundation, and our success in the future.
- Based on the accomplishments of our 55,000 graduates so far, our confidence in our Cadets is high. They are our future leaders.
- The Superintendent stated that he very much appreciates the Class Advisory Senate support. When asked “how can we help?” he stated he needs graduate advocacy support and feedback.
 - He needs more funding and personnel support, and real medical devices.
 - He would like to transform Jacks Valley into a 3,000-acre full-up training range (for squadron operational training).

7. Col Joel Brown, '00, Director, USAF Academy Center for Character and Leadership Development (CCLD).

Col Brown gave a brief summary description of the NCLS program.

- In the next two weeks, Cadets will get to interact one-on-one with the speakers. This year's focus will be “Warrior Ethos”.
- The NCLS is a Cadet-run program, with about 150 Cadets involved.

8. Maj Gen (ret) Brian Bishop, '83, Chair, USAFA AOG Board of Directors.

- MGen Bishop first stated that he very much appreciates the Class Advisory Senate. CAS Feedback is very valuable to the AOG Board.
- The AOG Board election will be held from 2 February 25 to 3 March 2025. The candidate bios are now posted on the AOG website. We have 17 candidates right now, although one may drop out, for five Board positions.

- He stated that traditionally, we have a low turnout on these elections, and asked “please encourage all your classmates to vote for the candidates that they feel will best represent them”.

9. Katie Willemark, Chief Financial Officer, USAFA AOG & AFAF.

- Katie provided the AOG and Foundation Update (See attached slides):
 - The Madera Cyber Innovation Center is approaching completion (April 2025).
 - Wecker Hall/Yost Plaza (AOG-Foundation Campus) completion scheduled for May 2025.
 - The Foundation now has 12 active projects.
 - The new Executive Vice President for AOG Alumni Relations has been selected. It is Col (Ret) Michael “Baja” Cornelius, ’00, former Commander, USAFA Preparatory School.
 - Their Engagement goals this year include: acquire new donors, increase graduate membership to the upper 80 percentiles.

10. Wyatt Hornsby, Senior Vice President for Marketing and Communications, USAFA AOG & AFAF.

- The AOG is launching a new publication, “Here’s A Toast: Gone But Not Forgotten”.
- It will launch in early Spring 2025; and be similar to West Point’s “Taps”.
- It will replace the *Gone But Not Forgotten* column currently in *Checkpoints*.
- Death *notices* (lists) will still run in *Checkpoints* and on the GBNF website.
- The AOG has recognized a “hard reality”.
 - USAFA has an aging graduate population; obituaries have doubled since 2012.
 - *Checkpoints* has limitations and costs are rising.
- GBNF will allow articles up to 400 words in Year #1 and up to 800 words in Year #2 for memorial tributes to grads, ATOs, Cadets and honorary members.
- The Digital copy will be free and there will be a printed copy for a nominal fee (\$25.00 will cover cost of production and a copy to all families who lost a loved one).
 - Shop.USAFA.org; copies will be available in March 2025.
- They are looking for ways to establish an endowment for this.
- There are four examples of write-up mock-ups shown in the slides.
- When asked if AOG Legacy members (lifetime members) will get a free copy of the new document, as the *Checkpoints’ Gone But Not Forgotten* article was a part of the original lifetime membership fee, the answer was that they will look at that.

11. Other Business / Round Table:

- Senators who made Round Table Comments:
 - John Borling, ’63
 - Derek Hess, ’80
 - Shayla Canty-Smith, ’04

- Tom Berry, '71

12. John Cinnamon, '91, CAS President, reminded everyone to encourage their classmates to vote in the upcoming election.

13. Next Meetings:

- AOG Board, 18 April 2025
- CAS Executive Committee, 18 March 2025
- CAS, 15 April 2025
- CAS Schedule:
<https://aog-websites.s3.amazonaws.com/usafaorg/documents/aog/governance/CAS/CAS+Schedule+Jan+2024.pdf>

14. Close/Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 1910.

Minutes submitted by: Tom Hayden '74, CAS Secretary

Minutes approved by: John Cinnamon '91, CAS President

Attachments:

1. Members in Attendance
2. AOG Alumni Relations Update slides

ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATES

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY



AS OF: 21 January 2025

Atch 1: Members in Attendance:

59
 60 Dick Sexton
 61 Patrick Buckley
 62 Dave Holt
 63 (Lou Matjasko - B)
 64 Doug Jenkins
 65 Jim Vick
 66
 67 Pete Knepell
 68 Hartsel Beckett
 69
 70 Gerry Shaw
 70 (Roger Hill – B)
 71 Tom Berry
 72 Ski Wagasky
 72 (Andi Gesner – B)
 73 A J Ranft – NEW Vice President
 74 Tom Hayden – NEW Secretary
 75 Bruce Mitchell
 76 Dan Beatty
 77 Joe Niemeyer
 78 Wayne Hermendorfer
 79 Randy Helms – President
 80 Derek Hess
 81
 82
 83
 84 DJ Johnson
 85 Scott Dumbald
 86
 87
 88
 89 Joe Matchette
 90 Oliver Washington
 91 John Cinnamon – NEW President
 92 Rick Bailey

93
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 95
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 97 Petey Arnold
 98 Casey Vile
 98 (Felecia Recker – G)
 99 Paul Ferguson
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 03 Heidi Schlagheck
 04 Shayla CantySmith
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 16 Zach He
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 20 Kristen McKenney
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[Names in () are non-senators]
 [“B” = Backup]
 [“G” = Guest]