DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
NAVAL SERVICE TRAINING COMMAND
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NSTCINST 5370.1
RLSO
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NSTC INSTRUCTION 5370.1

From: Commander, Naval Service Training Command

Subj: COMMANDER, NAVAL SERVICE TRAINING COMMAND FRATERNIZATION POLICY

Ref: (a) U.S. Navy Regulations (1990), Art. 1165
(b) OPNAVINST 5370.2C

1. Purpose. To promulgate policy regarding fraternization for Commander, Naval Service Training Command.

2. Cancellation. COMNAVSERVTRACOM/COMNAVREGMIDWESTINST 5370.1.

3. Applicability. The provisions of this instruction are applicable to all military members of NSTC and its activities. Fraternization does not require the members to be from the same chain of command because the purpose of the prohibition against fraternization is to maintain good order and discipline. This instruction is gender-neutral (i.e., fraternization covers inappropriate and unduly familiar relationships between men, women and combinations of both).

4. Policy

a. "Fraternization", as discussed in references (a) and (b), is the traditional term used to identify personal relationships which contravene the customary bounds of acceptable senior-subordinate relationships. Although it has most commonly been applied to officer-enlisted relationships, fraternization also includes improper relationships and social interactions occurring solely between officers, and solely between enlisted personnel. As discussed in reference (b), within Navy training commands, fraternization includes personal relationships that are unduly familiar between staff and student personnel that do not respect customary differences in grade or rank, or the staff and student relationship. Such relationships are prejudicial to good order and discipline and are prohibited even in cases where the members are from different commands.

b. Effective naval education and training is necessary to ensure the readiness of the Navy's fleet, air, and shore establishments. All staff personnel are entrusted with the leadership, management and training of students. In order for the training to be most effective, all personnel involved in that training must meet the highest standards of professionalism. Professionalism requires that there be a clear distinction between staff and students, regardless of rank or grade, or command relationships. This distinction will ensure that staff members receive due respect and will enhance their ability to act as appropriate role models for students. Staff personnel, as role models, must teach correct standards of military courtesy and decorum through unfailing professional example. Students must understand and respect the position, experience, and authority of staff members of all component and tenant commands. Appropriate and professional relationships among staff and students ensure both the actual and perceived integrity of the educational process by avoiding even the appearance of favoritism or improper influence. Staff members must, therefore, maintain an appropriate training environment at all times and under all conditions. Effective training is a 24-hour per day activity involving all staff members and extending beyond the classroom. In many cases, this requirement for avoiding improper influence also requires extending the prohibited interactions and relationships even after the staff and student relationship is severed.

5. Definitions. The following definitions are applicable for interpretation of this instruction.

a. Student Personnel. Student personnel (with the exception of Instructor Training School students and Recruit Division Commander School students), regardless of paygrade, who are stationed or assigned within Naval Service Training Command for training purposes, in any course of instruction, are considered students until actually executing follow-on PCS orders. Out of Great Lakes area students also include those undergoing instruction in a TAD status. The term "student" includes recruits, Basic Underwater Demolition School (BUDS) students, Navy Veterans, other service Veterans, non-prior service Naval Reserve personnel, Naval Sea Cadets and Naval Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps personnel.

b. Staff Personnel. All personnel, military or civilian, who are assigned within Naval Service Training Command as instructors or in support of mission operations are designated staff personnel. This term includes personnel assigned to Instructor Training School and Recruit Division Commander School. This term also includes civilians, whether Department of Defense Government Service Employees or Navy contract employees.

c. Fraternization. Fraternization consists of personal relationships between officers and enlisted members; between officer members; or between enlisted members, that are unduly familiar, that do not respect differences in grade or rank or the staff and student relationship, and that are prejudicial to good order and discipline or service discrediting. Conduct that is unduly familiar includes, but is not limited to, the following specific activities:

(1) Dating, sharing living quarters, intimate or sexual relations, and other similar socializing including inappropriate displays of affection;

(2) Attempting to arrange personal social engagements;

(3) Engaging in private business activities;

(4) Any non-professional social relationship of a personal nature; and

(5) Gambling or borrowing money.

6. Responsibilities and Prohibitions

a. Personal relationships between officer and enlisted members that are unduly familiar, are prejudicial to good order and discipline and are therefore prohibited.

b. Unduly familiar officer-officer relationships or enlisted-enlisted relationships, when prejudicial to good order and discipline or of a nature to bring discredit on the naval service, are prohibited. Prejudice to good order and discipline or discredit to the naval service may result from, but is not limited to, circumstances or conduct which:

(1) Call into question the senior's objectivity;

(2) Results in actual or apparent preferential treatment;

(3) Undermines the authority of the senior; or

(4) Compromises the chain of command.

c. Chief Petty Officers (E-7 to E-9) have a unique leadership responsibility such that unduly familiar relationships between Chief Petty Officers and junior personnel (E-1 to E-6), when they are in the same command, are prohibited. Due to the heightened status, obligations, and responsibilities of Chief Petty Officers, unduly familiar relationships with junior personnel, even when in different commands, may be deemed prejudicial to good order and discipline and should be avoided.

d. All unduly familiar relationships between staff and student, whether in the same or different commands and regardless of rank or grade, are prejudicial to good order and discipline and are prohibited.

e. All members are expected to observe proper standards of behavior and to enforce those standards. All personnel will avoid, terminate, or otherwise control situations, which may lead to or involve fraternization. Although the responsibility for prevention of fraternization rests primarily with the senior, both members are accountable for their conduct.

f. Service members who are married or otherwise related i.e., (father and son), to other service members must maintain the requisite respect and decorum attending the official relationship while either is on duty or in uniform and in public.

g. All members have an affirmative duty to report violations of this instruction to the chain of command and, if in a position of authority, to take immediate and appropriate corrective action.

h. Dealing with questionable situations should be handled at the lowest level first and clarification of remaining

questions should be sought through the chain of command immediately.

7. Exceptions

a. This instruction will not restrict normal marital relationships that precede an otherwise improper relationship; however, a marriage subsequent to fraternization neither excuses nor mitigates the original misconduct.

b. This instruction does not prohibit social activity of family members.

8. Action

a. All commands will brief incoming personnel on this policy at their indoctrination sessions and ensure that all members of the command are aware of the policy and receive, at a minimum, annual training which includes examples of appropriate and prohibited personal relationships.

b. This instruction is punitive. Conduct violating this instruction is punishable under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) and may result in disciplinary or administrative action.

A. O. LOTRING

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