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Regional rivalry brings national audience to Greenville

By Nathan Summers
The Daily Reflector

Wednesday, November 04, 2009

A rivalry isn’t possible unless both sides of it manage to compete, to win occasionally and to get under the skin of the other.

East Carolina reminded Virginia Tech last season that although the history of the series of football games between the two schools is tilted decidedly in favor of the Hokies, the non-conference clash is still a rivalry game in the Mid-Atlantic region.

The No. 22 Hokies (5-3) return to Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium at 7:30 tonight to resume their rekindled rivalry with the 5-3 Pirates in Greenville for the first time since 2000. A sellout crowd is expected, and the game is being broadcast nationally on ESPN.

“The last couple of years that this has gone on, I think it's turned into more of a rivalry for both teams,” said fifth-year East Carolina head coach Skip Holtz, 1-1 against the Hokies. "I've always said that in a rivalry game, both teams have to have a chance to win. That hasn't been the case until last year."

On the minds of the two teams tonight, at least until the ball leaves the tee, will be last season's opener for both.

They met in the equidistant locale of Charlotte to kick off the 2008 campaign, and East Carolina stole the show when T.J. Lee blocked a punt late in the fourth quarter and returned it 27 yards to the end zone for a 27-22 ECU upset. That win jump-started ECU to a 3-0 start to the season.

“That's throwing some fuel on the fire,” Holtz said of the win. “It's kind of nice."

It was the first Pirate win in the series in 17 years, and just their fifth all-time against the Hokies.

In 2007, the Pirates faced Tech for the first time with Holtz on the sideline, and did so amid emotional circumstances. The game was the first in Blacksburg, Va., since the campus was rocked by the student shooting rampage of the previous April. Almost fittingly, the Hokies won, 17-7.

Tech leads 9-5 all-time, dating back to a 37-2 Hokie win in Blacksburg in September of 1956.

Tonight is the sixth confrontation between in the teams in Greenville. ECU is 2-3 at home against Tech, winning in 1989 and 1992.

For the last 23 years, head coach Frank Beamer has been the face of Virginia Tech football and, in his tenure, he's seen plenty of the Pirates. In fact, Beamer has been on the sideline for all but that first meeting between the teams.

In the early days of the rivalry, Beamer saw the Pirates take four of the first six meetings under his watch, including Pirate wins in 1987, ’89, ’91 and ’92. But from ’93 to 2007, it was all Tech, six straight wins until Lee stormed into the end zone in Charlotte last year.

“Twenty years ago, we were on a very level playing field and there was a great rivalry between the two schools,” Holtz said. “You look at where Coach Beamer has taken that program and the things that he's done with it, it's
where we want to go, where we aspire to be. I think this will be a great measuring stick for where we are right now.”

The series has also seen its stars. Former Pirate and current Tennessee Titan Chris Johnson struggled to churn out 29 rush yards and a touchdown in the 2007 tilt. In the same game, current Philadelphia Eagle Macho Harris picked off a Brett Clay pass and returned it for a key VT touchdown.

In the last game in Greenville, ECU quarterback David Garrard (Jacksonville Jaguars) was topped by Tech’s Michael Vick (Atlanta Falcons/Philadelphia Eagles) in a 45-28 shelling for the visiting Hokies. That win came despite Garrard out-passing Vick, 296 yards to 106.

The Pirates’ most convincing win in the series was their first, a 32-23 decision in Blacksburg in ’87.

Beamer is 182-92-2 at Virginia Tech. Because of that, Holtz knows his team has no advantage based on last season’s result.

“Coach Beamer is a great coach, and he’s taken teams in after losses and he’s taken teams in after wins,” Holtz said. “He gets his teams ready to play every week. I’m sure they’re talking about last year, the things that happened last year and studying that film.”

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Thursday's game poses restrictions on traffic, parking

The Daily Reflector

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Traffic is expected to be heavy around Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium on Thursday as the Pirates take on Virginia Tech, according to police, particularly on Charles Boulevard and East 14th Street before and after the 7:30 p.m. game time.

ECU parking lots will open at 4 p.m. and motorists not traveling to the game should avoid streets around the stadium including 14th Street, Elm Street, Charles and Greenville boulevards, the Greenville Police Department said.

A parking lots adjacent to the stadium will be reserved for fans with permits. Public parking will be available at the Brody School of Medicine. Shuttles will run between the stadium and the Brody lots on West Fifth Street.

Private parking lots in residential areas may be subject to towing. Pirate's Place Townhomes off Charles Boulevard has experienced continued problems with illegal parking, a manager there said. Non-residents will be towed from complex.

The Greenville Police Department and the State Highway Patrol will manage traffic. Beginning two hours prior to the game and one and a half hours after. 14th Street will be closed from Charles Boulevard to College Hill Drive and Berkeley Road during game times.

Parking on both sides of West 14th Street from Elm Street to Berkley Road will be by visible permit only, and no traffic will allowed on West 14th between those two streets without a parking pass.

After the game, motorists will find the following restrictions:

- No through traffic will be allowed on West 14th Street from Elm Street. Traffic exiting the C.M. Eppes parking lot will be diverted west in a lane on 14th Street and turn right on College Hill Drive to 10th Street.
- All traffic exiting Berkley Road will be diverted east onto 14th Street and all three lanes will be eastbound; the left lane will turn left (north) at Elm Street, the center lane will flow east on 14th and cross Elm Street to Greenville Boulevard and the right lane will turn right (south) at Elm Street.
- No traffic will be allowed west on 14th Street from Charles Boulevard.
- Charles Boulevard will be closed to southbound traffic at 14th Street and diverted west on 14th Street toward Evans Street.
- No traffic will be allowed north on Charles Boulevard from Greenville Boulevard. Traffic from Red Banks Road will be diverted right from Charles onto Greenville Boulevard.

Public parking will be available at the Brody School parking lot, with shuttle bus service available to and from Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium for a $5 charge.

Construction of a new softball field next to Clark-LeClair Stadium will put an end to parking and tailgating on the grass field at that location for the entire season.

In addition, public parking at the Carol Belk Building across from the baseball/softball complex is now be reserved for Pirate Club members only.

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ACC missed on ECU

All these years later, we know that then-Virginia governor Mark Warner had a better vision for ACC expansion than almost everyone else during the controversial spring and summer of 2003.

It's just too bad for all parties, including the ACC, that Warner didn't incorporate East Carolina into his strategy.

Warner's decision to force-feed Virginia Tech on the ACC has turned out to be the bright spot in the move from nine to 12 teams. Miami and Boston College, although excellent schools with impressive athletic traditions, haven't been good fits.

For interest, rivalry and territorial security, ECU, which plays Virginia Tech today at 7:30 p.m., would have been a much more exciting option for the ACC.

Imagine tonight's matchup as an ACC league game. Or how much fun it would be if the Pirates played N.C. State or North Carolina as a fellow member of the ACC.

Regionalism was the argument Warner used to impose his political influence on Virginia president John Casteen. In effect, Casteen was instructed to inform other ACC members that he would not be able to support an expansion that excluded the Hokies. A UVa vote against expansion, combined with "no" votes already cast by Duke and North Carolina, would have been enough to maintain membership at nine schools.

Warner's strong-arm antics didn't go over well with many parties within the ACC. Now, the ACC owes Warner a thank-you note for a dose of strong medicine.

Were it not for Virginia Tech's infusion of football fan interest and success, expansion almost certainly would qualify as a catastrophe.

Expansion was all about adding enough helmets to qualify for a conference football championship game that has been virtually meaningless and roundly unpopular, and increasing the regional television inventory.

The return has been a good, solid Boston College team that has a loyal but small private-school fan base in a market where college athletics will never be a television hit, and a Miami program that's running on fumes.

None of this is to suggest that the Pirates are Prince Charming in a purple robe. Like most schools, ECU comes with a give-take equation.

Like Virginia Tech, there's not a big ready-made TV market to tap. And like Virginia Tech, basketball success will always be problematic. But ECU could help solidify the boundaries, expand the football fan base and intensify the emotion - all of the things Virginia Tech has done and what the Southeastern Conference has used to become the television contract gold standard.

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Iconic feminist Gloria Steinem speaking at ECU on Friday

By Josh Humphries
The Daily Reflector

Wednesday, November 04, 2009

Gloria Steinem will join a list of historic female icons to visit East Carolina University when she arrives to give a lecture Friday.

Steinem will deliver “Reflections on Feminism” as the premiere lecture in the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences Voyages of Discovery Lecture Series at 7 p.m. at Wright Auditorium.

“ECU has, since its beginning, had a succession of highly distinguished and internationally known women come to campus to speak,” said John Tucker, history professor and director of the lecture series at ECU.

“This is an important historic moment in the intellectual development and the intellectual identity of our institution.”

Steinem, who is known primarily for her work on gender rights and human rights, joins a list of prominent women to visit ECU that includes Helen Keller, Amelia Earhart and Eleanor Roosevelt.

Keller addressed East Carolina Teacher’s Training School in 1916. Earhart visited in 1936 to deliver “Aviation Adventures” to an audience of more than 1,500 at East Carolina Teachers College, as ECU was known at the time.

Roosevelt visited ECTC in November 1941.

Tucker said Steinem is likely to discuss the history of female advancement in this country during a talk that may include mentions of Keller, Earhart and Roosevelt, each of whom pushed the view of a woman’s place in American society.

“She will talk about where things stand with feminism and where the future and the past stand,” Tucker said.

Steinem co-founded Ms. magazine in 1972 and was one of its editors for 15 years. She also helped found the National Women’s Political Caucus in 1971.

“We are proud to welcome Gloria Steinem to East Carolina University to deliver the premier lecture in this year’s Voyages of Discovery Lecture Series,” said Alan White, dean of the Harriot College of Arts and Sciences.

“Steinem’s work for gender equality has significantly shaped the world in which we live. Her passion for positive social change has also led her on a most meaningful personal voyage of discovery about which we are very excited to learn.”

Steinem’s visit is made possible by contributions from the Ledonia Wright Cultural Center, the Student Activities Board, the ECU chapter of Phi Kappa Phi, the ECU Department of English and the ECU Women’s Studies program.

“To have Gloria Steinem on campus affirms ECU’s commitment to issues of equality and service,” said Cheryl Dudasik-Wiggs, director of ECU’s Women’s Studies Program, who played a large part in getting Steinem to visit the campus.

Tucker is expecting more than 1,000 people to attend the lecture.
Tickets are still available at the ECU Central Ticket Office, 328-4788. Tickets are $10 for the public.
Each member of ECU's faculty and student body can get one free ticket.

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State rallies against H1N1

As more H1N1 flu vaccine is shipped, North Carolina's battle with the pandemic strain seems to be easing, state health officials reported Wednesday.

Where we stand

540: People who had flu infections last week, as reported through a statewide monitoring system; five people died. In the previous week, 647 people were reported with infections and six people died.

797,000: Doses of H1N1 vaccine allocated to North Carolina.

355,800: Doses expected to be delivered this week.

32: People who have died of flu complications in North Carolina since Sept. 27, when the nation began counting both seasonal and H1N1 cases. (Thirteen North Carolinians died of confirmed H1N1 infections before Sept. 27.)

H1N1 flu shot clinics

Durham: 560-7882 or http://www.durhamcountync.gov/flu

Orange: 245-2479 or http://www.co.orange.nc.us/health/H1N1.asp

Wake: 212-7000 or http://www.wakegov.com/flu

Johnston: 989-5200 or http://www.johnstonnc.com/health

SOURCE: N.C. DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH
Flu outrunning vaccine, experts say
Shots may not be widely available until December or January

By David Brown
Washington Post Staff Writer
Thursday, November 5, 2009

Two state and city public health officials briefing Congress on Wednesday said they don't expect to have enough pandemic-flu vaccine to meet the needs of their high-priority population groups until well into December, and possibly not until January.

The officials said that their predictions are a result of maddening vaccine shortages throughout the fall but that they amount to little more than guesses.

Federal health officials at the same briefing refused to endorse the gloomy timetable -- or any other one -- although they acknowledged that the current wave of H1N1 influenza may be mostly over by the time the vaccine is abundant.

"Current projections show that 62 percent of Alabama's vaccine will not be available until after December 1," Donald E. Williamson, the state's health officer, told a House Appropriations subcommittee. Offering flu shots to people outside the five priority recipient groups "may not be possible until late December or January."

The director of the public health department in St. Paul, Minn., said he thinks it will be "sometime between Christmas and mid-January" before there is enough vaccine to fully immunize the high-risk groups -- pregnant women, health workers, parents caring for newborns, people 6 months through 24 years old and chronically ill people ages 25 through 64.

"I don't think we'll have enough before then," said Rob Fulton, adding that what's true for St. Paul is probably true for all of Minnesota.

The federal government has ordered 250 million doses of pandemic H1N1 influenza vaccine. It has said that will be more than enough to satisfy demand among the country's 308 million residents. The high-priority groups include 159 million people.

As of this week, 32.3 million doses of pandemic vaccine had been made available to states and cities by the federal government, which is controlling the entire U.S. supply.

Members of the House Appropriations subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies repeatedly queried the federal officials about timelines for future supplies. While five weeks ago they were still predicting that there would be more than 100 million doses by now, none of the officials would hazard a guess.
"We have been working extremely hard with each manufacturer to make sure all of the stumbling blocks are out of the way," Nicole Lurie, assistant secretary for preparedness and response at the Department of Health and Human Services, told Rep. David R. Obey (D-Wis.), chairman of the subcommittee. "Flu is really unpredictable. We're pretty hesitant about projecting ahead more than week to week."

Thomas R. Frieden, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, also declined to look ahead, saying, "We have been burned, quite frankly, by predictions that have not come to pass." Under later questioning, he did say that "it is quite likely that the current wave of influenza will peak, crest and begin to decline before there are ample supplies" of vaccine.

Pandemic influenza -- defined as a highly contagious strain to which virtually everyone in the world is susceptible -- tends to move through populations in waves, sometimes over several years. For example, the Asian flu of 1957, which bears many similarities to the current pandemic, was responsible for about 60,000 "excess deaths" in the United States. About 40,000 occurred in the summer and fall of 1957, and 20,000 in the late winter and early spring of 1958.

The chief reason there is so little flu vaccine is that the novel H1N1 grows slowly in fertilized chicken eggs, the medium where it is made in industrial quantities.

Normally, vaccine-makers expect to get two to three doses of vaccine out of each egg injected. At the start of production in the summer, the yield was 0.2 to 0.5 doses per egg, said Robin Robinson, director of the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority, which is part of HHS. After tinkering with growth conditions and other variables, it is now 1.3 to 2 doses per egg.

"If we had been getting 2.5 doses per egg [throughout the summer and fall], we wouldn't be having this hearing now," he said.

The vaccine shortage is the consequence of the virus's biology, not human laziness or incompetence, the officials told the lawmakers many times.

"I don't want people to get the impression that it is the drug companies' fault in not getting this delivered," said Anthony S. Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

Government officials have asked the four makers of injectable vaccine to put most of their current production into multi-dose vials, which can be filled about five times more quickly than single-dose vials or pre-filled syringes and may save a little time.

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November 1, 2009

The R.O.T.C. Dilemma

By MICHAEL WINERIP

IN a speech last year, Drew Faust, the president of Harvard, congratulated seniors who had gone the extra mile to get their R.O.T.C. training. She meant it literally, and the extra miles they had gone were the least of it.

Harvard has not had a Reserve Officers Training Corps program on campus since antiwar protests in the 1960s shut it down. The handful of Harvard students determined enough to join R.O.T.C. must travel to Boston University and across Cambridge to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for their training, under a system developed by the military that allows host universities to serve nearby campuses.

For the last four school years, several times a week, Daniel West, Joe Kristol and Dom Pellegrini, all training to become United States Marine Corps officers, had to get to M.I.T. or B.U. by 5:45 a.m. It was so early the subway wasn’t running yet.

“I’d be up at 4:45 to shave first,” Mr. Kristol said.

Sometimes, when they had the energy and the weather wasn’t too frigid, the three ran the half-hour to B.U. in the predawn darkness. Some days, Mr. Kristol drove them — he says that was the only reason he kept a car, which cost him $250 to $300 a month to park and maintain.

Mr. West, the student executive officer of his Marine R.O.T.C. chapter, had to be at M.I.T. or B.U. six days a week. "I'd try to schedule my Harvard classes around it," said Mr. West, an economics major who graduated in June. His first year at Harvard, seven freshmen were in the Navy R.O.T.C. group, which includes the Marines. But that year four dropped out.

"Some quit because it wasn't right for them," Mr. Kristol said. "But some couldn't take the logistics."

It’s worse at Yale, which also banned R.O.T.C. in the '60s. Students must drive an hour and a half to Storrs to train at the University of Connecticut.

Anthony Runco, a Yale junior, typically leaves New Haven at noon on Thursdays for Air Force training and doesn’t get back until 7:30 p.m. Freshman year he missed a Spanish class every Thursday and had to get notes from a friend; sophomore year it was an electrical engineering class.

Most years one or two graduating seniors in R.O.T.C. are commissioned as officers, according to Jerry Hill, a Yale administrator who oversees the program. Next spring there will be none. At Harvard in June, eight graduates were commissioned, in all three military branches. The year before, there were five.

These modest numbers come even though, in the last five years, the Army has nearly tripled the amount of
money it has put into R.O.T.C. scholarships, to $263 million, and increased enrollment nationwide by 26 percent, to 30,721 students, to fill vacancies in its officer corps. It has been a time when military recruiters in all branches, working in a depressed economy, are aching their quotas. At Texas A&M, 115 freshmen in 2008 received Army R.O.T.C. scholarships, compared with 35 the year before. The military has a lot at stake: 60 percent of all new Army officers each year come from R.O.T.C. programs.

R.O.T.C. students at Harvard and Yale are not the only ones campus-hopping. Harvard is one of eight colleges served by M.I.T., the Army R.O.T.C. host school. Five of these satellite colleges — Wellesley, Tufts, Gordon, Endicott and Salem State — have arranged for transportation for their cadets to get to M.I.T. Several colleges in the consortium have the R.O.T.C. staff travel to their campuses to conduct military classes and physical training, making it easier on their students.

Harvard, with its campus ban, does neither.

One of the featured speakers at the 2009 Harvard commissioning ceremony, Darnell Whitt II, a retired naval captain, noted that the year he graduated from Harvard — 1959 — 121 seniors were commissioned as officers. He told the R.O.T.C. students that he was sorry their numbers were so few and that he hoped that by the time they returned for their 50th reunion, “the current issues about military matters at Harvard will have been resolved and there will be a closer connection between the great university and those in uniform.”

THIS is the 40th anniversary of the antiwar protests that led to the ban of R.O.T.C. at some of the nation’s most elite universities — Harvard, Yale, Brown, Columbia, Stanford, the University of Chicago, Tufts. And yet, the attitude on these campuses today is hardly antimilitary. There are numerous signs of genuine respect for the soldiers who serve. An editorial last May in the student newspaper, The Harvard Crimson, which for decades attacked R.O.T.C., praised classmates who had joined the program. “They demonstrate a commitment to service that should be admired and followed by the rest of the student body,” The Crimson said. The Yale, Columbia and Brown student papers have all published editorials in the recent past calling for the return of R.O.T.C. to their campuses.

R.O.T.C. members interviewed at Harvard, M.I.T. and Yale said they rarely if ever heard negative comments around campus, and a few said they had experienced the opposite problem.

“People stop me and thank me for serving,” said Gregory Wellman, an Army R.O.T.C. cadet at M.I.T. “It’s a little awkward because at this point I’m just a student and haven’t done anything.”

Last spring, the Republican club at Harvard sent e-mail messages asking all undergraduates about the ban on R.O.T.C. Of the 1,700 students who answered, 62 percent favored returning it to campus.

At Harvard, the attitude toward the military began to shift after the 9/11 attacks, which was about the time that Lawrence Summers became president. That November, as part of the university’s Veterans Day commemoration, he had letters hand-delivered to all students in the R.O.T.C. program, thanking them for their “commitment to national service.” For years, students could not list R.O.T.C. as an activity in the yearbook because it wasn’t an official program, but that changed after Dr. Summers met with the yearbook staff.

By 2008, under President Faust, Harvard was allowing the Army to land two Black Hawk helicopters on
campus to transport Army R.O.T.C. members to Fort Devens, Mass., for weekend training.

During a campaign visit to Columbia University, Barack Obama, a favorite on the Ivy campuses, called the R.O.T.C. ban there wrong. (R.O.T.C. students at Columbia, in Manhattan, go to Fordham University or Manhattan College, both in the Bronx, for training). “The notion that young people here at Columbia, or anywhere, in any university, aren't offered the choice, the option of participating in military service, I think is a mistake,” Mr. Obama said.

Not long after that, in an editorial citing Mr. Obama, The Brown Daily Herald reversed its longtime opposition. “R.O.T.C. deserves its day on College Hill,” the editorial concluded. (Currently, Brown R.O.T.C. students are trained at Providence College.)

Despite the small number of graduates commissioned in June, Harvard officials estimated the crowd at the ceremony in the Yard at 2,000, the largest turnout in years, and said they believed it was because Gen. David Petraeus was the featured speaker. He drew the longest, most enthusiastic standing ovation of any speaker that day.

There was just one protestor, a white-haired woman in a wheelchair holding an 8-by-11-inch, hand-lettered sign against her chest that read, “Bring the National Guard Home Now.”

If it's not antimilitary sentiment, why is R.O.T.C. still banned at these campuses? Four words: “Don’t ask, don’t tell.” The law, adopted during the Clinton administration, excludes gay men and lesbians who are open about their sexual orientation from military service. Last month, President Obama renewed a promise to get Congress to overturn the law, but set no timetable.

While the Supreme Court ruled in 2006 that colleges accepting federal money could not restrict military recruiters on campus because of the exclusion of gays, the decision did not address R.O.T.C.

President Faust of Harvard, a historian, says that as much as she admires the military — and during her June commissioning speech, she went out of her way to mention an interest she and General Petraeus shared in Ulysses S. Grant — she cannot have a student group on campus that is closed to one part of the student body. The student handbook says that the federal law is “inconsistent with Harvard’s values as stated in its policy on discrimination.”

“Harvard commits itself to training leaders of all kinds, and we should be training leaders for the military,” Dr. Faust said in an interview. “We want to have students in R.O.T.C. I am the president of Harvard and I am their president and Harvard is their university. But we also have gay and lesbian students and I am their president and Harvard is their university.”

R.O.T.C. supporters complain that Harvard’s policy is full of contradictions.

Harvard will not pay the $150,000-a-year cross-registration fee that M.I.T. charges to have Harvard students take military science courses there. But university staff members are used to raise that money from wealthy alumni sympathetic to R.O.T.C. And Harvard accepts about $1 million a year from the military in the form of scholarships that cover the cost of tuition for cadets and midshipmen.

Further, while banning R.O.T.C., Harvard is a host to other military-oriented programs. The Kennedy
School of Government there runs a yearlong National Security Fellows program for 20 men and women, a large percentage of them midcareer military officers.

During the interview, Dr. Faust started to address each of these issues, then stopped herself. "Trying to maintain two values — nondiscrimination and national service — is very complicated," she said. "It has us all tied in knots. There are contradictions. We make these sometimes awkward arguments that are less than pure consistency. Why do we do x and not y? Why do we have the helicopters? Why do I appear at the commissioning? There are enormous complexities and contradictions. We wind up creating compromises that are not philosophically consistent."

"The way to resolve these inconsistencies," she said, "is to permit gays and lesbians to serve in the military."

Harvard, of course is not the only place tied up in knots over this. Despite the ban at Yale, the university provides free rental cars to its R.O.T.C. students so they can make the three-hour round trip for training at UConn. "We try to support these young men and women as much as we can," Mr. Hill said.

RUTH R. WISSE, a Harvard professor of comparative literature, has criticized the R.O.T.C. ban publicly. She calls the "don’t ask, don’t tell" argument a smokescreen for antimilitary bias and says these universities were so cowed by the antiwar protests of the '60s that they would do anything not to stir up the same issues again. She thinks President Faust was hypocritical during the 2008 ceremony when she told the five R.O.T.C. students being commissioned, "I wish there were more of you."

"I find this funny," Dr. Wisse said. "Nobody has more authority to create more cadets than the president of the university."

Dr. Michael Segal, a neurologist and 1976 Harvard graduate who is a leader of Advocates for R.O.T.C., disagrees. He characterizes the mood at Harvard these days as "mildly pro-military," and the concern about gay rights sincere. He thinks the university should welcome R.O.T.C. despite its misgivings about "don’t ask, don’t tell."

Those who worry about excluding gays from the military are split over the best means of bringing about change. The Harvard Crimson editorial supports Dr. Faust, saying that first, President Obama should end "don’t ask, don’t tell," and then Harvard should "embrace R.O.T.C. "The Brown Daily Herald says that R.O.T.C. should be brought back immediately; then students from Brown’s "overwhelmingly liberal campus" who join the military could "provide gay soldiers with valuable allies in the ranks."

As for the R.O.T.C. members, they have been trained not to answer political questions from reporters. None of the 15 interviewed would discuss their feelings about "don’t ask, don’t tell."

"I have no personal opinion," said Vanessa Esch, 21, a naval R.O.T.C. midshipman who graduated from M.I.T. in June. "I was politically active in high school but as I got closer to serve, I got away from the nitty-gritty of these issues. My professionalism as an officer depends on not giving answers to those kinds of questions. The commander-in-chief does that."

Roxanne Bras, 22, an Army cadet from Harvard’s class of 2009, called the R.O.T.C. ban just plain sad. "It’s a bad feeling when an institution you love doesn’t support the other institution you love."
At Harvard, an Army R.O.T.C. scholarship covering full tuition is worth about $40,000 a year. In return, students typically take a military science course each semester, do physical training three times a week, spend a weekend of field training in the fall and spring at Fort Devens and a month between junior and senior year at a leadership program. When they graduate, they become second lieutenants (or ensigns in the Navy) and must serve four years of active duty followed by four years in the Reserves.

The military brass has tried to prod the Ivies by showing support for R.O.T.C. members at these campuses. When Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, spoke at Yale in 2007, he took an hour out of a busy schedule to meet with R.O.T.C. students. Gen. Richard Myers, a former chairman, did the same at Harvard.

During a baccalaureate address last May at Princeton, which has campus Army and Air Force R.O.T.C., General Petraeus made a subtle jab at universities that banned their programs: “Let me just say thank you to this Ivy League school for proudly supporting its R.O.T.C. program.”

Yet even if the Harvarads and Yales decided tomorrow that they wanted R.O.T.C. back, it’s not clear that would happen anytime soon. Army R.O.T.C. has 273 host campuses, serving an additional 1,256 colleges; Navy R.O.T.C. has 72 hosts serving 86 additional colleges. Whether the military would welcome the holdouts as host campuses or keep them as satellites might have to be battled out politically one day.

The challenge of getting from Harvard and Yale to the host campuses has undoubtedly helped keep R.O.T.C. numbers low, but it is not the only factor at play. While polls show that neither the Iraq war nor the Afghan war is popular with the American people, they are most likely even less popular at these liberal campuses.

R.O.T.C.’s scholarships may also look less enticing at elite universities. Since the 1990s, as endowments ballooned, the Harvars, Yales and M.I.T.’s have greatly expanded their financial aid packages to reach more middle-class families. At M.I.T., 60 percent of undergraduates now receive need-based scholarships. A middle-class student can qualify for substantial aid directly from the university without having to take on the extra demands of R.O.T.C. and committing to military service after graduating.

But the economy could change that. Students from families that were hurt by the downturn but still do not qualify for financial aid could be drawn to the R.O.T.C. scholarship, which is one of the few substantial grants that are not need-based.

Indeed, there are indications that it’s beginning to happen at Cornell. Lt. Col. Steven Alexander, who runs Army R.O.T.C. there, says the economy has had a noticeable impact on interest in the program. Cornell is the only Ivy land-grant university, and part of its founding mission was training military leaders. Today, it is the only Ivy that hosts Army, Navy and Air Force R.O.T.C.

At Cornell, there are 40 cadets enrolled in the Army R.O.T.C. program; 13 will be commissioned in May, the highest number in decades.

M.I.T.’s Army consortium of eight colleges grew to 84 cadets this year, from 49 in 2006. In contrast, the number of Harvard students in Army R.O.T.C. has not changed; it was 16 in 2006 and is 16 today.

AT the Harvard commissioning ceremony, General Petraeus did not bring up the campus ban. It fell to Mr. Whitt, the former naval captain, to make the case for bringing back R.O.T.C.
Mr. Whitt quoted a Harvard president from another era, Abbott Lawrence Lowell. R.O.T.C. was established during World War I, and in 1916, President Lowell spoke about why it was important for Harvard and other universities to do their share: “The aim of a country which desires to remain at peace, but must be ready to defend itself, should be to train a large body of junior officers who can look forward to no career in the Army, and can have no wish for war, yet who will be able to take their places in the field when needed.”

To be in R.O.T.C. often requires marching to a different drummer. As Mr. Wellman headed out for early morning R.O.T.C. workouts at M.I.T., he said, he often passed students coming back to the dorm after a long night out.

The R.O.T.C. students interviewed felt there was a better understanding of the military at M.I.T. than at Harvard or Yale. On the Wednesdays that Boston University midshipmen join the M.I.T., Harvard and Tufts students there, 135 R.O.T.C. members are in uniform on the campus. Two Fridays a month, there are 84 cadets in Army uniforms.

There is more mixing going on at M.I.T. between R.O.T.C. and non-R.O.T.C. students, said Thomas Schaefer, an ensign who graduated from M.I.T. in June. “It allows members of the campus community who would not interact with the military to get a sense of what’s going on with our lives. We understand them better, they understand us better.”

At Harvard and Yale there are so few R.O.T.C. students that on days they wear uniforms, they are mainly a curiosity. Their classmates can’t seem to conceive that a student at an elite college would be preparing to go to war. Mr. West said that after explaining that he was training to be an officer, “they’d say, ‘But someone like you wouldn’t be sent to Iraq or Afghanistan?’ They just didn’t get it.”

Said Taylor Giffen, a Yale Air Force R.O.T.C. cadet who graduated in June, “They’d see me in uniform, and ask, ‘Hey, are you in a play?’”

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An earlier version of this article misstated the month when Gen. David Petraeus delivered a baccalaureate address at Princeton this year. It was in May, not March.