



## DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

CHIEF OF NAVAL AIR TRAINING  
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CNATRAINST 5351.1B  
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Subj: NAVAL AIR TRAINING CLASS ADVISOR PROGRAM (NATCAP)

Ref: (a) Navy Regulations

Encl: (1) Class Advisor Program  
(2) Mentoring Guidelines

1. Purpose. This instruction is designed to provide policy, guidance, and procedures for administration of the Naval Air Training Class Advisor Program (NATCAP) and implementation of Navy Regulation guidance regarding the advising of junior officers.
2. Cancellation. CNATRAINST 5351.1A.
3. Scope. This instruction is applicable to all officer students assigned for flight training to the Naval Air Training Command (NATRACOM).
4. Discussion. This instruction has been substantially revised and needs to be read in its entirety. The intent of this revision is to recognize the change in best advising practices inherent in The NATRACOM's return to a class-flow system. The goal of the NATCAP is to provide a structured process for students to receive the assistance required to more effectively complete training in the NATRACOM and continue to develop into professional officers and Naval Aviators. During each phase of training, each class shall be assigned a class advisor. The class advisor's role is to mentor students by resolving training difficulties, expanding students' awareness of the culture that exists in Naval aviation, increasing students' sense of belonging to Naval aviation, and ensuring students are provided the best possible training environment.
5. Action. Training Air Wing (TRAWING) commanders will develop programs to implement policy in accordance with enclosure (1) and (2). Administration of this program will be a "special interest" item during Chief of Naval Air Training (CNATRA) Training Assessment/Policy Reviews.

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CLASS ADVISOR PROGRAMGeneral Guidelines

The following is a discussion of the key elements in the NATCAP. Elements discussed are roles of the Commanding Officer, NATCAP officer, Class Advisor, and students as well as the need for documentation and the counseling process.

1. General Administration. Commanding Officers are responsible for the designation of officers to act as advisors to junior officers per guidance in reference (a), paragraph 821(e). Officers appointed as advisors "shall assist junior officers to a proper understanding of their responsibilities and duties, and shall endeavor to cultivate in them officer-like qualities, a sense of loyalty and honor, and an appreciation of naval customs and duties."

2. Role of NATCAP Officer. Given the prevailing practices of student control and administration, it is recommended that the command's student control officer be designated as the NATCAP officer. The Commanding Officer, acting through the NATCAP Officer, shall supervise the class advisor program and ensure performance of the following specific duties:

a. Assign an instructor as an advisor to each incoming class. To the maximum extent possible, each advisor should be assigned responsibility for only one class at any given time. Instructors with less than four months of experience in the current command, SERGRADS, and instructors with less than six months remaining on active duty should not be assigned as class advisors.

b. Ensure that class advisors are informed on matters pertaining to their students (e.g., marginal or unsatisfactory performance, setbacks, graduation dates).

c. Explain the command's class advisor program and provide a copy of advisor and student roles to each instructor at check-in.

d. Explain the command's class advisor program and provide a copy of student and advisor roles to each student at check-in.

e. Provide adequate documentation of the level of advisor/class/student interaction. Commands may use memoranda or, for ATJ documentation if required, CNATRA-GEN 1542/16. The following items will be included:

(1) Number of class advisor/student meetings.

(2) Significant professional or personal problems that may affect the student's completion of the flight program. (Information contained in these documents is covered under the Privacy Act.)

Enclosure (1)

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f. Assign the senior U.S. military officer student in a class as the class leader.

3. Role of Class Advisor. Instructors should be assigned as advisors and charged with the responsibility to students similar to that of division officers to their division. The class advisor shall perform the following specific tasks:

a. Discuss all potentially significant issues and establish good communication with the students. Be familiar with the personal history of each student in the class including educational background, marital status, previous military or flight experience, and hometown. Students should be made fully aware of their responsibility to meet performance standards and that failure to do so may result in attrition.

b. Coordinate with the student class leader regarding establishment of study groups. All students shall be encouraged to participate in study groups on a continuing basis. Class advisors shall monitor inclusiveness to insure participation by all students in the class.

c. Attempt to resolve interpersonal difficulties within the command such as miscommunications and provide advice on dealing with the rank structure in an appropriate manner.

d. Act as mentor and role model in resolving training related difficulties. A discussion of mentoring "best practices" is provided in enclosure (2.)

e. Conduct weekly reviews to monitor class and student progress. Such reviews shall be documented to establish a record of trends in overall class performance.

f. Counsel students experiencing training or personal difficulties.

g. Conduct weekly Aviation Training Jacket (ATJ) reviews to monitor progress and ensure ATJ correctness and completeness.

h. Conduct ATJ reviews and counseling with those students identified as having marginal or unsatisfactory performance. Provide recommendations for remediation to the Student Control Officer.

i. Counsel any student who is considering leaving the flight training program, i.e., "drop on request" (DOR). Students making a request to "drop" from training will be removed from the training environment and referred IAW command policies.

j. Provide a leadership role model for students to emulate as part of the continuing development of officer qualities with emphasis on service core values.

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k. Interview students whose progress results in an unsatisfactory event or an initial progress check. The advisor should attempt to determine the reason for the student's problem, counsel, and provide guidance to the student to correct the problem and recommend a remediation program, if necessary. If an advisor feels additional counseling or remediation is necessary, the advisor shall refer the student to the Student Control Officer with a recommendation for further counseling or remediation. In these cases, the Student Control officer must be made aware of student problems early enough to permit initiating corrective action in a timely manner.

l. Inform Student Control of potential student problems that could impact successful completion and inform students of potential alternative training tracks.

m. Encourage class cohesiveness and camaraderie through inclusive, militarily appropriate events, i.e., community service, athletics, social activities, class flight suit patch.

n. Inform the Student Control Officer should conditions preclude performance of any or all advisor duties.

4. Student Responsibilities. Since the class advisor program is for the students' benefit, it is the responsibility of each student to use this program to aid in the completion of the flight program. The class advisor is the first link in the chain of command and should be the first person contacted when trying to resolve problems or difficulties that arise either on or off base. The following areas are the student's responsibility:

a. All students should expect to meet with their class advisor within one week of the date the class is formed. The primary function of this meeting is for the advisor to obtain data relating to the students' residence, to discuss the student's flight record and service record, and to make the class advisor aware of problems that may detract from the students' attention to duties.

b. Students are responsible to initiate an interview with their class advisor as a result of a personal problem, such as emergency leave or illness. If a student's training is or has been affected by a personal problem, a counseling session shall be held with the class advisor. It is the student's responsibility to inform the class advisor of any personal problem that may affect flight training progress.

5. Counseling Process. Given the nature of counseling no two counseling sessions will be exactly alike. However, there are some general guidelines the advisor should consider:

a. The first requirement of any counseling session is to establish a good student-advisor relationship. Students must feel their advisor is genuinely interested in their progress and must feel that they can freely discuss problems.

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b. Most student problems are not new. The advisor, particularly the experienced instructor, has probably encountered students with the same problems in the past. They should use personal, accumulated experience in dealing with such problems and their corrective actions must treat each case individually.

c. Advisors should try to get the students to work out their own solutions to problem areas. If the solution is the student's own idea, it is likely to be more successful.

d. For a student experiencing academic difficulty, counseling should lead to academic corrective action.

e. In the normal course of the flight program, procedures and techniques for pursuing qualification are published. The advisor role is to supplement these formal methods with advice based on personal experience.

f. Since counseling involves personnel who may think and act differently, senior training department members must be alert to problems that may develop as a result of these personal encounters and must be prepared to intercede or to assign the student to a new class with a new advisor.

g. The advisor should make it clear to the student that corrective action as a result of an academic or flight problem is not disciplinary action.

h. For problems outside the scope of the advisor's personal training and experience, the advisor should refer the student to proper authorities for help. This is especially true in areas where professional help may be needed. "Professional help" may include, but is not limited to, flight surgeons and/or clinical psychologists, legal officers, lawyers, marriage counselors, and clergy.

i. At the conclusion of the interview, the advisor should ensure that the student clearly understands the actions required, and any corrective actions that are to be taken by others. This may involve a written schedule of specific items to be accomplished by the student.

6. Conclusion. The advisor program is not solely for the student's benefit. Naval Aviation as a whole benefits from the results. Therefore, it is important to use this program to aid students in their completion of the flight training program. Through the class advisor's added support, the student should resolve personal problems and concentrate on the task of successfully completing the course of instruction and obtaining designation as a Naval Aviator or Naval Flight Officer.

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Mentoring Guidelines for Class Advisors1. General Guidance

a. As an instructor pilot or instructor military flight officer, teaching the skills and knowledge to fly and tactically employ the aircraft is extremely important. However, there is certainly more than just flying skill that is represented by the designated military aviator. While there may be different wings worn on uniforms, there is a culture that is military aviation. By every definition, the military aviator is unique from his ship-sailing or ground-hugging counterparts. Our students come to us not appreciating the differences.

b. It's up to us to encourage our students to think about what it means to be a military aviator and to help them start to develop the tools that they will need to be successful as a military aviator. Remember that the long-term success of Naval aviation and the success of our students are inseparable.

2. Mentoring in General. Mentoring requires a conscious desire to meet the challenge of working with a student, through good and bad. Many of our students will present us with unexpected, even unique, challenges. Some challenges will be unsolvable. There will also be those that you just can't reach, but the demands of starting students into military aviation is a challenge for the class advisor.

a. In your role as a class advisor it is anticipated that you will act as a mentor to the students in your class. While the role may seem foreign, as a military officer, mentoring isn't something you're unfamiliar with. You've participated in the process with a "sea daddy" or as a nugget who has been assigned to a senior officer in your squadron. Or possibly had a department head sit down for periodic "how goes it?" chats coupled with advice about duty stations, Eval bullets, flying skills, or dealing with a personal problem.

b. Our students face these challenges as they learn about the military aviation culture; specifically Naval or Marine Corps aviation. Having an advisor and mentor expedites the transition to the military aviation team.

3. How Do I Mentor a Class of Students? Mentoring involves more than just following a set of highly detailed instructions. As the class advisor you will need to monitor the performance of your class and insure that all students are gaining the benefit of being challenged. Special concerns to be considered are: formation of class study groups, class activities to build cohesion, and early identification of at-risk students.

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### Mentoring Tips

The following list of mentoring tips is adapted from mentoring principles developed by the Gallup organization for a large men's organization and is representative of successful mentoring practices and strategies. For the class advisor these tips represent a starting point for consideration. It is not an all-inclusive list, but a supplement for the skills in leadership developed in the class advisor's previous military training and experience.

1. Believe that mentoring is building a relationship. Remember that the students are the future of military aviation. The relationships they learn from you represents a major portion of their experience to date with military aviation.
2. Act as a role model officer aviator for the students in your class.
3. Talk to your students about what is right and wrong. Share with them the Navy core values and their role in military aviation.
4. Project wholesome values. As the class advisor you should demonstrate, through your actions, that you live by these core values. "Walk the walk".
5. Take satisfaction from mentoring because you believe that you have something important to offer to your class.
6. Do everything you can to develop mutual trust with your class. The Navy's core values demand that we keep the trust. The notion of mutual trust and confidence is an important concept which is critical to those in military aviation.
7. In an appropriate way and time, tell each student in your class, that you care about them. Sometimes our role as military officers makes it difficult to express emotions of this type. Our students need to see that part of being a leader is taking care of one's subordinates. Whether it's a positive comment after a jacket review or a quick phone call after hearing of a ready room "down", let the student know your concern.
8. Point out the right behavior in certain situations. As our students learn about being military aviators, they should learn more than just flying skills. Be quick to praise away-from-the-cockpit examples of good headwork.
9. Help students to develop goals. Work with students to help them see the "big picture" and where they fit. Studies with college students show much higher drop out tendencies when a student does not have clear goals to result from their study.
10. When your students want to talk, you need to listen. For many students, the perception of our culture is that we're very

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rigid and don't deal well with problems. Yet our training as aviators has prepared us superbly to deal with problems. Listening to a student may provide you a window of opportunity to find out what a student's real issue is. As a class advisor you can then provide focus.

As a class advisor, remember, "What they see is what they'll be". Being a class advisor and mentor offers a phenomenal opportunity to contribute to the future of military aviation. Meet the challenge with enthusiasm and recognize that being a successful leader involves being a mentor.

Adapted from: "The Miracles of Mentoring" © 2000 Thomas W. Dortch, Jr.

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