

Zach Nelsen

LTX Leadership Training Exercise

Every Semester Army ROTC cadets from all of Dauntless Battalion, West Chester, Widener, Villanova, and Penn State Abington all attend a Leadership Training exercise at Fort Dix in New Jersey. LTX is a training exercise in which cadets are put through a series of different training events in order to develop the future leaders in the United States Army. The training event begins with cadets leaving their individual Universities early Saturday morning and assembling as a Battalion at Fort Dix. The battalion is then broken into two platoons and the MSIII's (juniors) are put into leadership roles. As MSIII's they are being evaluated by the Battalion leadership (MSIV's). LTX is meant to test the MSIII's leadership abilities and develop them into better leaders. They are to show their abilities to lead other cadets, MSI's and II's, and get the greatest possible result for their tasks while developing the younger cadets.

LTX is broken into 4 main events: Land Navigation, FLRC lanes (Future Leaders Reaction Course), Asymmetric Warfare, and the Confidence course. In Land Navigation, cadets are broken into groups of two to four. They are given a map, protractor, compass, and a set of points to find. Cadets use these items in order to graph and then find their points located in the woods. Cadets return from Land Navigation and begin a road march to the FLRC course. In this event, cadets engage in different obstacles as squads, led by their squad leader (an MSIII). Obstacles are a variety of different missions with different objectives and obstacles. Following the FLRC course cadets are fed dinner (usually simply MREs) and then form up in their respective platoons before beginning a road march and setting up their platoons patrol bases in remote locations in the woods. While in the patrol base cadets are pulling security in order to train for when they are in an actual patrol bases. While in their patrol bases, the platoon leader in each platoon is briefed his orders for asymmetric warfare the following morning. This is a platoon on platoon attack in which cadets are armed with M4 paintball guns. The platoon leader utilizes his squad leaders in order to give the entire platoon an overview of what will happen the next morning. The following morning, cadets conduct a platoon on platoon attack. The platoons continuously try to out maneuver one another until the battle was called. Following Asymmetric warfare cadets march back to their respective patrol bases and begin to prepare for the confidence course. The confidence course is an obstacle course meant to test physical strength, balance, and teamwork over the obstacles. Cadets compete in squads in order to be the fastest squad to finish the obstacle course.

LTX is a great experience for all cadets. Even for those not in leadership roles, LTX helps develop leaders and teaches cadets basic aspects of the United States Army. Cadets are given the opportunity to work with other cadets in their battalion that do not attend their direct school. The training event helps develop leadership styles and provides hands on learning experience for cadets in order to help shape them into the best leaders they can be. The long cold nights in the patrol base are all worth it once you get the opportunity in Asymmetric warfare to get into a platoon on platoon battle. That hour makes any suffering from the weekend work it. LTX provides great opportunities to learn and develop as a leader as well as build comradery between the companies through all of Dauntless Battalion.