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How long has the ROTC program been at SNC?

Jay DeCleene '94

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May 2013

Question:

Dear Abbot Pennings,

How long has the ROTC program been at SNC?

Jay DeCleene '94

Answer:

My dearest Jay,

Thank you kindly for your question. Many of my readers may be unaware of the longevity of this program.

It was in the year 1926 in which the first military organizations, known as the Blue Jacket Club and the Caisson Club, became active under the Rev. Anselm Keefe, O.Praem., '16.

Father Keefe envisioned an ROTC program established at our beloved college. In 1928, he wrote to the 6th Corps in Chicago requesting a unit. Although it was denied due to a lack of funds, in 1935 a proposal to expand ROTC throughout eastern Wisconsin was discussed during a meeting of the State Reserve Officers Association – and one suggested location was St. Norbert College.

That very year, Len Liebmann '36, along with other area business professionals, wrote to the Pentagon requesting an inspection to see if St. Norbert College was qualified for an ROTC program. As a result of this review, it was made known that the college would be supported with an infantry ROTC detachment. During the semester break in 1936, the War



Ask the Abbot

As the founder of St. Norbert College, and having a prime seat in the center of campus throughout the years, I, Abbot Bernard Pennings, hold the answers to many of your burning questions about the college.

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Department formally approved St. Norbert College and stated that a professor of military science would arrive later that winter.

Today, St. Norbert College's Green Knight Company is a member of the Fox Valley Battalion, headquartered at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. The battalion also includes companies from the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Lawrence University, Marian University and Ripon College.

I am exceedingly proud to state that 980 students have graduated from our ROTC program. It is a remarkable achievement that 12 of the graduates have attained the rank of general during their military careers. Our living generals will be honored during this month's Commencement. I'm also delighted to acknowledge that 33 have attained the rank of colonel. A listing of these outstanding alumni can be found on the [Military Science website](#).

Responses to "Ask the Abbot" questions are penned by St. Norbert College staff in the name of Abbot Bernard Pennings, O.Praem., who founded St. Norbert College in 1898.

St. Norbert College

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