

College of the Ozarks Debuts Military Science Class

Freshmen students at College of the Ozarks marched in formation Monday to debut a new military science class.

Patriotic Education/Military Science is a four-credit course and is designed “to encourage an understanding of American heritage, civic responsibilities, love of country, and willingness to defend it.”

Last year, the college had a pilot program. The class is now required for all freshmen. During the Monday event, C of O President Jerry Davis spoke about the program.

“This is quite an unusual thing, to have a military science requirement at a non-military



institution,” Davis said. “This is about understanding the military. We will require everyone to take the class, and everyone will benefit from their exposure to military science, in and out of the classroom.”

Gen. Terry Dake, college trustee chairman, talked about being a 1964 graduate.

“When I joined the United State Marine Corps, I entered as an officer because I had a degree,” Dake said. “I was given a leg up in life and a running start because I was able to come here to College of the Ozarks and get a degree that I

would not otherwise have had. So value your degree. It’s something that will forever be of value to you and serve you the rest of your life.”

The class is about young people getting involved with patriotism, learning about physical fitness and getting “an appreciation for some services other people perform in a nation like America,” Dake said after the event.

“There’s no commitment on their part to go into the military, but some of them may choose to, but we don’t expect a majority of them to, by any means,” Dake said. “But it does give them an appreciation for the work that the military does.”

The students will learn many things besides “marching,” Dake said. They will be taught marksmanship, physical fitness and more. Dake said this class will help create a “political base.” “I’m hopeful that this will be something they will carry with them for the rest of their lives — not just the physical fitness part of it, but the patriotic part of it,” Dake said. “Our vision is that this is a beginning that will grow.



“Really, what we hope is they’ll leave this college with that patriotic fervor in them.” Director of Patriotic Activities Bryan Cizek said there are 278 students enrolled in the Patriotic Education/Military Science class.

There’s still much to do for the rest of the semester.

“We’ve looked at government formation, we’ll dive a little bit deeper into the Constitution,” Cizek said. “As far as our labs are concerned, we still have to do rifle marksmanship, still have to finish up half the class to do rappelling — half the class has done that already — and then also looking at rank structure and military task organization.”

Cizek added: “We’re just blessed and privileged to be able to go to this school and to be able to take a leadership role in important things like this.

The class is structured to meet three requirements for students: an academic requirement for the first year of the Army ROTC Basic Course curriculum, one physical education requirement, and the freshman Patriotic Education requirement, according to a press release. For the physical training portion of the class, students run in formation and complete basic calisthenic exercises including push-ups, sit-ups, etc. Students are graded on their participation and their own personal improvement.