

# **A Short History of the Corps of Cadets**

## **The University of Texas at Arlington**

The military tradition at The University of Texas at Arlington began in 1902 with the founding of Carlisle Military Academy. From its earliest days, discipline, leadership, and preparation for service formed the backbone of campus life. By 1912, formal military training was firmly established, embedding a culture of structured development that would shape generations of cadets.

In 1917, as the United States entered the First World War, the institution joined the Texas A&M System and became Grubbs Vocational College. The global conflict marked the first great test of its military preparation. The Reserve Officers' Training Corps took recognizable form during this period, and military instruction—then mandatory for non-veteran male students—became a direct pathway to commissioned service. The trenches of Europe became the proving ground for the institution's earliest officer graduates.

Renamed North Texas Agricultural College in 1923, the school matured academically while preserving its military identity. In 1941, the attack on Pearl Harbor drew the nation fully into the Second World War. Alumni of the Corps served in every theater of combat—from the beaches of Normandy to the islands of the Pacific. World War II transformed warfare through mechanization, armor, aviation, and global logistics, yet the fundamental qualities forged on campus—discipline, adaptability, and leadership under pressure—remained unchanged.

In 1949, the institution became Arlington State College. The Cold War soon demanded new forms of readiness. During the Korean War, alumni served in harsh terrain and unforgiving conditions, defending contested ground under the banner of collective security. A decade later, the Vietnam War tested another generation of officers in unconventional warfare, counterinsurgency operations, and protracted conflict far from home. Even during periods of national turbulence, the Corps remained intertwined with campus life. Though ROTC participation was removed from the core curriculum in 1954, commitment to service endured.

The fall of 1959 marked a pivotal transformation when the ROTC curriculum expanded to four years. In the spring of 1961, seven officers received their commissions—the first of more than one thousand commissioned through the Arlington program in the decades that followed.

In October 1965, the institution transferred to the University of Texas System and, by 1967, became The University of Texas at Arlington. On May 17, 1968, Department of the Army General Order Number 20 formally established the UTA ROTC unit as a separate Army ROTC organization. The Maverick Battalion entered a new era of professional officer development.

In 1990–1991, during Operation Desert Storm, alumni once again answered the call—leading soldiers in high-intensity maneuver warfare across the deserts of Kuwait and Iraq. The swift campaign reaffirmed the importance of disciplined leadership in modern combined-arms operations.

On September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in New York City and at the Pentagon altered the course of the nation’s history. In the aftermath of 9/11, the United States entered a prolonged era of conflict that would span more than two decades. During Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq, the Maverick Battalion continued its steady mission of commissioning leaders prepared for immediate service in a world defined by asymmetric warfare, counterterrorism operations, stability campaigns, and repeated deployments.

Former Mavericks served across the full spectrum of commissioned rank—from newly commissioned Second Lieutenants leading platoons in combat to Colonels commanding brigades and General Officers entrusted with positions of significant operational and strategic responsibility within the Army and joint force. They led formations ranging from small-unit maneuver elements to brigade combat teams and larger operational structures across complex and demanding theaters of war. In the mountains of Afghanistan and the cities of Iraq, these officers adapted to evolving threats, advised coalition and partner forces, coordinated joint operations, and carried the burden of sustained combat rotations over many years.

For more than twenty years, the Maverick Battalion provided leaders who bore that responsibility—continuing a lineage of service established at the dawn of the twentieth century.

Today, the Corps of Cadets at The University of Texas at Arlington stands as a living testament to more than a century of service. From the trenches of World War I to the battlefields of World War II, from the hills of Korea and jungles of Vietnam to the deserts of the Middle East and the mountains of Afghanistan, generations of cadets have carried forward the institution’s legacy.

Names have changed. Campuses have grown. Curricula have evolved. Yet the enduring mission remains unchanged: to develop leaders of character prepared to serve in peace

and in war. The Corps is not merely a chapter in the university's history—it is a continuous echo of duty, honor, sacrifice, and guardianship of liberty.