



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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We are aware of the allegations made against Philip Crane, a graduate of the VMI Class of 2016 and a visiting professor at VMI, by a self-described activist group. Based on our investigation, we believe the allegations about Crane are false.

Crane is a decorated combat veteran, VMI alumnus, and Peay Endowment fellow. The vetting process for Peay fellows, like all faculty members, is thorough, and includes criminal background checks, reference checks, and multiple interviews. Crane's classroom instruction complies with VMI faculty expectations, and the VMI administration, the dean, and leaders of the Peay Endowment judge Crane to be a positive contributor to the Peay Fellowship program. There have been no complaints about him or his teaching by cadets, faculty, or staff.

The accusations refer to a situation that occurred over a year ago when Crane was a graduate student at Columbia University and a member of an official university club, the Palestine Working Group (PWG). A review of facts found no evidence to support the allegations that he is a "radical anti-American antisemite." Importantly, Crane complied with the law and adhered to the rules of university conduct and first amendment standards of peaceful protest. In addition, a letter the PWG and 20+ other university clubs signed and made public did not suggest a moral justification for the civilian casualties on 7 October 2023.

While the group accusing Crane is free to exercise its first amendment rights, making misleading statements and illustrating them with a photo of a veteran in his military uniform is an insult to him and the brave men and women who serve this country proudly.

Virginia Military Institute is committed to providing an environment that emphasizes the dignity and self-worth of every member of our community. We do not tolerate discrimination, hate speech, or speech that would incite violence or racism of any kind. VMI is a place of leadership and honor, rigorous academic exploration, spirited debate, and civil discourse. VMI does not prevent faculty, staff, and cadets from having difficult debates on controversial topics relevant to the contemporary climate. In fact, we encourage it as a fundamental principle necessary in providing cadets a wide range of ideas and concepts while teaching them to critically examine and evaluate information. Our cadets at this institute are preparing for a lifetime of leadership and service to the nation. Learning about, discussing, and debating worldwide issues is a necessary component in their preparation.