

**OPINION** > **LETTERS** • Letters, Opinion

# While in town for USAFA graduation, Secretary Meink should rethink Air Force Academy cuts (Letters)

Plus: The proposed pedestrian walkway connecting Capitol complex and Lincoln Veterans Memorial Park



The Air Force Thunderbirds fly overhead as Air Force Academy cadets toss their caps and celebrate at Falcon Stadium in Colorado Springs, Colorado on Thursday, May 30, 2024. The United States Air Force Academy graduated nearly 1,000 cadets in its ceremony for the Class of 2024. Vice President Kamala Harris delivered the commencement address, saying, “I believe there’s no more noble that one can do than to serve our nation.” (Photo by Zachary Spindler-Krage/The Denver Post)

By **DP OPINION** | [openforum@denverpost.com](mailto:openforum@denverpost.com)

## Air Force Academy graduation chance to rethink cuts

Re: "Bauernfeind wants warriors from the Air Force Academy, so he's cutting 'education,'"

May 25 guest commentary

The academic heart of the U.S. Air Force Academy is under threat.



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On Thursday, we honor the USAFA graduating class of 2025. U.S. Secretary of the Air Force Troy Meink will be giving the keynote address, and the situation warrants his intervention to reverse the damage being done.

The ongoing, indiscriminate cuts of USAFA's experienced (and cost-effective) Ph.D. faculty are putting the academy's academic excellence — and its mission to forge leaders who think critically — at risk. These cuts are not strategic; they are politically motivated and overtly based on “anti-woke” notions that jeopardize the core of what makes USAFA a world-class educational institution, without increasing lethality.

The academy is not merely a military training camp with classrooms. Rather, it is a premier university where future Air and Space Force officers learn to think critically, act ethically, and lead decisively on complex problems in a rapidly changing, increasingly autonomous battlespace. Decimating academic departments by cutting 30% of their veteran faculty demoralizes both faculty and cadets, threatens even basic accreditations (not to mention academic excellence), and sends the wrong message about the kind of leaders we value.

There must be a reasoned reassessment, discussed openly by USAFA's many stakeholders, that protects the Academy's academic and research core, not as an afterthought, but as a central pillar of officer development.

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If we lose USAFA's academic strength, America loses a key part of its war-fighting and peace-keeping edge.

*Thomas Bewley, Colorado Springs*

**\$23 trillion new debt, not \$3 trillion**

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