we do have student life and Cura you could say we have more resources as being an army organization, [but] said.

"These cadets inside and out," Adams other cadets, because they know all struggling.

"Describe the cadets as the ‘first line of defense’ is the army is heavily relied on, as they completing.”

"They need to stop the cycle from effect that individual’s friends the individual who has the problems, said. “It’s not so much to effect others to recognize when someone has the problems, it’s the other way around.”

"The conversation,” he said. The army’s culture, he says, is a way of life that has changed, he says, once maybe described as a ‘macho’ environment.

"It’s not to much [to effect] others,” Adams says. "We encourage people to go see themself and [the] ask them about it. Whether it’s work or school or someone is going through a divorce. [And] we try to find people that always had resources,” Adams said.

"We’re more expressive,” Westfield describes as a positive climate where the unit is a team, a family and people taking care of one another, it’s a mark of strong command said Adams. "The chain of command working, this is in direct contrast to what one cadre member is not..

"We’re coming a long way since, and there’s a lot of it is due to things like informing soldiers or what their options are and we’ve got a lot more mental health resources than when we first came in. Though we’ve always had resources,” Adams said. “There hasn’t really ever been anything said to the cadets — [it]. We encourage people to go see themself and [the] ask them about it. Whether it’s work or school or someone is going through a divorce, it’s been like that since the very beginning," Adams said.

"We’re more expressive,” Westfield says, "and societal changes. Along the way, the institution and the cadre have undergone changes. There are more people taking care of one another, it’s a mark of strong command said Adams. "The chain of command working, this is in direct contrast to what one cadre member is not.

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Medical qualifications and disqualifications

Described as the first line of defense, cadre members rely on their cadets to inform the cadre when one of the students is not doing well. This plan, though well-intended, is a failing one according to the cadet. This is because of one caveat that heavily dictates the conversation around seeking mental health services. This caveat, is that any medical diagnosis must be declared to the Department of Defense and any ongoing condition could be reason for medical disqualification.

“If I went to someone in our program and said, ‘hey, so-and-so is really struggling with their mental health right now, I’m really worried about them,’ and they launch an investigation and that person get diagnosed with something and they get medically disqualified then that’s on me and now they might not be able to [to GU] and the career they were planning on having in the army is gone,” he said.

Medical qualifications by the army are there to protect the individual, unit, army as a whole and taxpayer money. Therefore, in order to continue to serve in the army, individuals must abide by physician requirement, these requirements are mainly physical and do not mention any mental health restrictions.

According to Adams, cadre members and enlisting soldiers can apply for a waiver for any medical hindrance. Waivers can be granted for anything, as long as it does not impact the service of the soldier.

“Anything that is a current condition, anything that you are currently suffering from generally you won’t get a waiver for,” Adams said.

However, if an individual is diagnosed with a condition like Attention Deficit Disorder, but does not take any medication for the condition, then they can be granted a waiver. The key is that they are not limited by whatever condition they may have and they are not dependent on medication.

“No limitations, you’re not going to put yourself or others at risk and taxpayers don’t have to worry about picking up the tab on a preexisting condition,” Westfield said.

“[Medical disqualification] happens for people who blow out their knee skiing or what have you, so it makes sense that a severe enough mental health disorder would also be a medical disqualification,” the cadet said.

The main reason soldiers cannot be dependent on medication is because of the possibility of deployment.

“Say that you need blood pressure medicine or something like that,” Adams said. “The army has to think to itself, ‘if this person is an infantry officer and they’re in the middle of the woods in some foreign country, how are we going to get him his blood pressure medication?’

So, how does this impact ROTC students? Because they are not considered active duty, if they were to be medically disqualified before commissioning then they would be required to pay back their ROTC scholarships. Therefore, the cadet says this is why many people don’t seek out help during time of struggle.

Even Adams realizes that fear of removal from the program can deter cadets from seeking help.

“Every single one of our cadets has it in their hearts that they want to serve their nation, they want to be an army officer, and this is something that they’re passionate about,” Adams said. “You do not get through this program if you’re sort of passingly interested in, this has to be something you’re passionate about.”

Personally, he too has been in a position of needing a mental health diagnosis for the depression-like symptoms he was experiencing. Although there are physical reasons for depression-like symptoms, like thyroid issues or vitamin deficiencies, he ultimately decided not to get help incase he walked away with a diagnosis.

“I legally can’t hide that from the DOD,” he said. “I had to sit there and do a cost-benefit analysis and just found as many other ways to try and get through it in a healthy-ish manner. I mean, I did it, I’m still here. It’s gotten better, but I wouldn’t say it’s over.”

Katie Kales is a news editor. Follow her on Twitter @katakales