Heather Stevenson* (ah2093@usma.edu), Department of Math Sciences, Thayer Hall, Room 227B, West Point, NY. A Freshman Introduction to Operations Research. Preliminary report.

Students at the United States Military Academy take Mathematical Modeling and Introduction to Calculus during their freshmen year of study. During the course, each student completes a capstone course project. The course project this year exposes students to Operations Research by having them perform a decision analysis. Specifically, students are asked to determine which retirement strategy a junior military officer should pursue among several potential options in order to maximize income during retirement. Students must formulate a model incorporating constraints on the problem (e.g. risk vs. return), perform a comparison of retirement strategies using a mathematical programming language, and analyze the validity of their findings. (Received September 27, 2006)