Morale and cohesion are essential for mission success within all branches of the United States military. However, many people question whether females within the service could have an effect on morale and cohesion within integrated units of the military. For over sixty years now, females have been legally recognized in the U.S. Army. However, they have been limited to what occupations they can work within the service. The Department of Defense has a deadline of January 2016 as to whether or not females can enter combat arms occupations such as infantry, armor, and field artillery to name a few.

Within the U.S. Army, morale and cohesion are essential for mission success and productivity. Gender integration does affect male bonding within groups but also has negative effects of females too. Probably one of the most concerning factors for integrating females are the possibilities of increase sexual harassment and double standards which both are found to affect morale.

With this being said, I want to focus my research on the affects females have on the morale and cohesion within integrated units. Researchers have proven that females have a negative effect on motivation and male bonding. Sexual harassment increases when females are integrated into units, causing morale and cohesion to decrease. Double standards, such as females having lower physical fitness standards they need to meet compared to males also has a negative impact within integrated units. I anticipate that my primary contribution of my research will be to improve morale and cohesion within integrated units. By providing more opportunities and limiting discrimination, morale and cohesion within integrated units will improve. This can also help reduce or even eliminate double standards and fraternization, and most importantly sexual harassment.
I have conducted a pilot study in my honors research methods class with Army ROTC cadets at UNC Charlotte. I predicted that morale and cohesion will decrease when females are integrated into male units and the data I collected supported my hypothesis. I want to further this research in order to get a better understanding of the affects females have on morale and cohesion. I believe this research could continue on to researching females in the infantry and other combat arms units in the future, if approved by the Department of Defense. Having a better understanding of why this negativity occurs could help reduce or even eliminate the source and further progress the U.S. Army to the ultimate goal, mission success.