

W&L ROTC May Change To Two Years

Proposed sweeping changes in the college Reserve Officer Training Corps program, almost certain to draw strong opposition in the new Congress, could result in reduction of the present four-year program at Washington and Lee to a two-year program.

As reported by Senate sources in Washington, the legislation to be sought by Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara would call for:

An end to ROTC programs in high schools; elimination of the present compulsory ROTC programs in all land grant colleges; and reduction of the four-year ROTC courses in most colleges and universities to two years.

Such traditional military colleges as VMI, Virginia Tech, Texas A&M and The Citadel would be exempted from the changes, it is understood. These schools and others have supplied many of the career officers for the military service for generations.

Washington and Lee has an Army ROTC unit that has been in operation for about a decade. Between 50 to 55 students receive commissions each year. In the 335-man ROTC unit, there are 109 contract students.

If the reduction from a four-year program to a two-year plan is optional, it is expected that W&L would want to retain its four-year set-up. If the cutback to two years is mandatory, the program offered at W&L would probably be patterned closely after the present schedule for juniors and seniors.

W&L ROTC department head, Lt. Col. Jack Burch declined to comment on the matter.