

*2017–2021* U.S. Naval War College

# STRATEGIC PLAN












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A photograph of a building with a green copper dome and a grey shingled roof, with pink cherry blossoms in the foreground. The building has a stone base and several windows. The sky is blue with white clouds.

*"The War College is a place of original research  
on all questions relating to war and to statesmanship  
connected with war, or the prevention of war."*

*—Admiral Stephen B. Luce*





## OVERVIEW


The U.S. Naval War College operates today in keeping with the traditions and vision first established by our founding President, Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce, USN, who in 1884 founded the U.S. Naval War College to serve as “a place of original research on all questions relating to war and to statesmanship connected with war, or the prevention of war.” Vice Admiral Stansfield Turner, USN, the College’s thirty-seventh President, added focus and specificity to that description of the character of the institution with the following injunction: “Any new improvement in the College’s courses of instruction must support the objective of the U.S. Naval War College, which is to enhance the capability of naval officers to make sound decisions in both command and management positions. To do this the College will emphasize intellectual development and academic excellence.” Although much about the world’s international challenges has changed, the essence of the U.S. Naval War College’s mission remains the same.



## VISION: EDUCATING AND DEVELOPING FUTURE LEADERS

The main priority of the College will always be to educate and develop future leaders through the development of strategic perspective, critical thinking, and cultural awareness, as well as enhancing the capability to advise senior leaders and policy makers. Our other missions in support of educating and developing leaders are helping to define the future Navy and its roles and missions; supporting combat readiness; strengthening global maritime partnerships; promoting ethics and leadership throughout the force; contributing knowledge to shape effective decisions through our Maritime History Center expertise; and, through the Stockton Center for the Study of International Law, providing expertise and advice to the international legal community. To accomplish these missions, the College must preserve a current and relevant curriculum, a world-class faculty and staff, and the best and brightest joint student body educated both during time spent at the College and through a robust alumni program of lifelong learning afterward.

To anticipate and respond to changes in our strategic environment and best fulfill our mission, the College will do the following:



⚙ The College will continue to *operationalize* our educational and research efforts to maximize near-term support to the Fleet. In particular, the College will provide greater focus on understanding today's threats, while further enhancing combat readiness through expanded teaching of maritime warfare. In his "Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority," the Chief of Naval Operations charged the Navy with testing and refining naval power concepts "through focused wargaming, modeling, and simulations" that will connect directly to Fleet exercises and training. Implicit in this charge is the challenge that operations research and analysis across the Navy enterprise must be conducted in a cohesive or holistic man-



ner that is sufficient for Navy leadership to make fully informed decisions.

- To that end, the College is committed to increasing the connections between experimentation, campaign analysis, and wargaming.
- Warfighting initiatives in the College of Operational and Strategic Leadership will expand focus on emerging technologies and changes within the strategic environment.
- In addition to our mature and dynamic China Maritime Studies Institute, the College will continue to expand its Russia Maritime Studies Institute. This institute occupies a unique space at the nexus of the academic, policy, and operational communities and will follow the proven methodologies of all of our College institutes.
  - ▶ Recognizing the importance of enabling the United States and its partners to develop a clear understanding of the strategic and operational factors that shape Russia's approach to maritime issues and that drive Russian military and foreign policy decision making, the Russia Maritime Studies Institute will develop and execute a broad research agenda. Included will be a wide variety of issues, such as naval policy, strategy, and operations; maritime technologies; shipbuilding; maritime law; deterrence; and naval diplomacy. It will widely disseminate finished research to Navy leadership and the Fleet.
- The College will continue to study the importance of warfare, to include the important dialogue on irregular warfare and the prevention of conflict.



- ▶ The College will work to normalize funding streams for the Center on Irregular Warfare and Armed Groups so that the College is better able to meet current and future maritime challenges in irregular warfare.
- ▶ The College will explore mechanisms to expand the study of conflict prevention in line with the vision established by Admiral Luce.

⚙ In addition to ensuring an education founded on joint requirements, the College will expand the navalization of our curriculum to best maximize understanding of sea control. The strategic environment of today presents access challenges that make sea control more critical than ever before.

⚙ The College will align parts of our curricula to teach through a maritime and sea power lens. Future warfighting will no doubt be conducted as joint and combined operations, but the U.S. Naval War College's legacy and recognized role as the Navy's intellectual center for considering issues related to maritime-focused warfare at and from the sea must be the sine qua non of our educational and research efforts. To understand how sea control can be contested, and best assured, a serious study of history is required.

⚙ Through myriad futurization initiatives, the College will inculcate an understanding of future operating environments, technologies, and operational concepts to continue to prepare our students for the ever-increasing scope and pace of change.

- Key elements of our core course offerings and our wide-ranging electives and directed research programs will be “future focused” in content and in the analytical case studies used to generate thoughtful consideration of alternatives.
- The growing importance of unmanned and robotic systems, space security, information/cyber operations, directed energy weapons, and man-machine interaction will be addressed campus-wide and will be prioritized and resourced as necessary to ensure that students are knowledgeable on these topics.





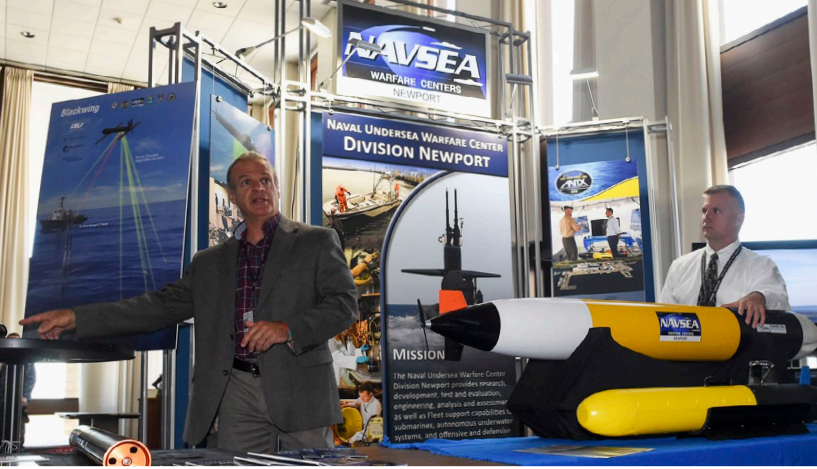


- The College will critically assess cutting-edge advancements and innovations in higher education theory and practice and rapidly adopt those that show promise for our students.

⚙ Accelerating a process that was begun over forty years ago when the First International Seapower Symposium convened in Newport, the College will strive to further internationalize itself so that it becomes the veritable locus of international maritime cooperation. The participation of topflight international officers and senior enlisted personnel in the classroom greatly broadens and enhances the educational experience of all U.S. students. A series of initiatives will increase the capability and capacity of the College to turn episodic engagement events into a purposeful program that leverages its reputation for neutrality and inclusiveness to build a network of reliable partnerships. Key steps include these:

- Implement a pathway to enable select, highly qualified international students to receive a master of arts degree.
- Expand the Presidential Fellows Program to four former heads of Navy. In addition to writing, teaching, and mentoring students, they will advise the President of the College and, in coordination with the dean of International Programs, develop and execute a plan that maintains policy momentum between the regularly scheduled International Seapower Symposia.
- Expand the College's alumni engagement efforts with an emphasis on increasing U.S. alumni engagement with international alumni.
- Institutionalize student military-to-military exchange efforts with China and other nations.





- Bring the International Maritime Staff Operators Course to full output by 2020.
- Normalize funding streams for the International Seapower Symposium series so that the College is better able to meet the challenges of the Navy's premier engagement event.
- Increase the frequency of Regional Alumni Symposia and the effectiveness of the Regional Alumni Symposia Program.

✿ The fifth component of the College's vision for the future is to attract and retain talented and expert faculty and staff through a rational and incremental approach to normalizing the conditions under which our professional faculty and staff are enabled to conduct their teaching and research efforts. This series of initiatives recognizes the fundamental differences that currently exist between the rules, regulations, and norms that apply to educators in the nongovernmental sector and those that apply to Navy Title 10 faculty.

- This effort is vitally important since the U.S. Naval War College must recruit from the same pool of qualified applicants as civilian academia, and must create a work environment that is conducive to retaining a world-class faculty. While there are likely to be some unalterable and counterproductive policies and procedures inherent in service as federal government employees, we will seek to minimize such instances and seek to make duty at the Naval War College as similar to work in other top-tier graduate institutions as possible.

## HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE THE PLAN

The vision outlined above should animate and inform the agendas of all departments within the College. To this end, deans, chairs, directors, faculty, and staff are charged with understanding this plan and implementing the vision it expounds by developing supporting objectives and monitoring progress toward their achievement. Periodic assessment of our tangible results will play a critical role in prioritizing future endeavors.





Progress toward accomplishment of the missions and plans identified in this document will be monitored and periodically assessed. The assessment of our progress in meeting our strategic objectives will be promulgated to the faculty and staff and resources adjusted as necessary to ensure successful completion of each element of the vision.

In the years covered by this Strategic Plan, the College will be required to navigate through a web of competing demands, emerging requirements, and uncertain resources. Hard choices and tough decisions lie ahead. To guide our judgment, we will follow these three priorities:

- In all actions we take, we will protect the academic integrity of our educational and research programs.
- We will maintain our relevancy to the needs of the Navy and the Department of Defense.
- We will respect the worth of every individual on our College team, and we will demand the highest levels of ethical behavior from all.

Since 1884, the U.S. Naval War College has played a key role in the professional development of the men and women who have served with distinction in support of the nation in peace and in war. We are firmly committed to steering a steady course that will provide value to the Navy and to the national security establishment at large. This is difficult and challenging work, but we welcome the task and seek the rewards such efforts will generate for future generations.

JEFFREY A. HARLEY  
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy







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