



International Maritime Staff Operators Course (IMSOC)

IMSOC MASL P179622

IMSOC@usnwc.edu

Version 0.3 – 20 April 2022

OVERVIEW

The International Maritime Staff Operators Course (IMSOC) prepares mid-grade international maritime officers to support the planning and execution of complex maritime operations in a coalition environment. The 12-week unclassified course is taught at the Naval War College in Newport, RI and utilizes the U.S. Navy Planning Process (NPP) and Maritime Operations Center (MOC) construct. IMSOC was established in response to maritime partners' demands for a course similar to the U.S. only Maritime Staff Operators Course (MSOC).

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

IMSOC is designed for mid-grade maritime officers (LCDR), but is open to all uniformed military officers in the rank/paygrade of O-2 to O-5 (NATO OF-1 to OF-4). IMSOC is taught in English and attendees must obtain a minimum score of 80 on the English Comprehension Level (ECL) Test.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- UNDERSTAND the art and science of multinational operations;
- UNDERSTAND the impact of the maritime domain on multinational operations;
- UNDERSTAND the operational level planning processes as exemplified by the U.S. Navy Planning Process (NPP);
- UNDERSTAND the organization and functions of an operational level of warfare maritime headquarters as typified by the U.S. Maritime Operations Center (MOC);
- UNDERSTAND the similarities and differences between the U.S. NPP and other planning processes;
- APPRECIATE the complexities of operating in a multinational staff;
- APPLY the NPP to solve complex maritime problems in a simulated scenario;
- BUILD enduring professional and personal relationships within the international community.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE GRADUATE

On completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- Perform as a staff officer on a national or multinational/combined maritime staff;
- Apply the fundamental concepts of operational art in developing plans and conducting operations in a multinational maritime environment;
- Perform as a member of an Operational Planning Team (OPT).

APPROACH

Orientation

Orientation welcomes new students to the Naval War College and includes a tour of the campus, the Newport Naval Station, and city of Newport. The orientation also includes lectures on the history of the Naval War College, U.S. government, American society, and U.S. Military culture.

Regional Maritime Capabilities/Challenges

Students from each country will brief the unique capabilities of their nation's maritime forces, multinational relationships that influence operations in their region, and cultural considerations.

CORE CURRICULUM

Foundation

The foundational section comprises the biggest portion of the course. Students will receive approximately 45 lectures on topics ranging from "Introduction to Combined Maritime Operations" to "Operational Law." U.S. doctrine is the predominant focus for the class; however, students will also be exposed to other multinational concepts and planning processes (U.N., NATO, and Interagency). Many of these lectures will include a practical exercise. For example, following a one-hour lecture of Command and Control (C2), the students will participate in a two-hour practical exercise in which they will relate those C2 principles to actual events during Operation Neptune (the World War II Normandy landing). Most lectures are delivered by faculty from the Naval War College who also teach MSOC. The course is aided and assisted by international officers on the faculty who help broaden the scope and perspective of the course. Additionally, several retired, international admirals (all Naval War College alumni and former chief/head of Navy) interact with students during leadership panels. Initial sessions are a review of key operational art and fundamental concepts of the operational level of warfare.

Navy Planning Process (NPP)

This portion of the course, which is five weeks long, requires students to work through the steps of the Navy Planning Process developing the same products required for real operations. The faculty mentors the student-led Operational Planning Teams through each phase of the planning process.

Execution Phase

During the one-week execution portion of the course, students will rotate between typical Maritime Operations Center (MOC) cells. This rotation helps reinforce the knowledge gained in the foundational and NPP portion of the course.

Current Operations (COPS)

COPS primarily focuses on monitoring and assessing on-going operations and execution of the Commander's intentions. It is the central point for all planning cells to forward key events and receive information related to the execution of operations.

Future Operations (FOPS)

FOPS conducts operational level planning for near-term operations and branch plans. FOPS serves as a continuity linkage for transition planning from Future Plans to COPS.

Future Plans (FUPLANS)

FUPLANS is responsible for operational planning in support of assigned missions and the Command's involvement in the Theater Security Cooperation Plan (TSCP). It conducts analysis and coordination for future operations, Phase 0 and beyond.

Assessments

Assessments facilitates the Commander's ability to adapt to changing circumstances and to exploit opportunities, respond to developing problems or modify schemes of maneuver. Assessment enables the Commander to estimate the overall progress of an operation as it unfolds.

The Field Studies Program (FSP)

The FSP is designed to ensure students gain an understanding of the responsibilities of governments, militaries, and citizens to protect, preserve, and respect the rights of every individual.

Operational Capability Workshops (OCW)

The OCW consists of a visit to the Naval Station/Joint Expeditionary Base, Norfolk, Virginia, where students will tour a major naval ship and receive briefs on operational planning. This trip includes a visit to the NATO Allied Command Transformation, Combined Joint Operations from the Sea Centre of Excellence, and U.S. Fleet Forces Command MOC.

Other Venues

Students will visit other venues, on an opportunity basis, that support the curriculum.

CONTACTS

Professor Ray Tortorelli (Course Director), raymond.tortorelli@usnwc.edu, (401) 841-1494
Andrew Elvin (Program Support), andrew.elvin.ctr@usnwc.edu, (401) 841-6534
Dionne Horrabin (IMSO), dionne.horrabin@usnwc.edu, (401) 841-2010