

Updated December 21, 2018

Maritime Staff Operators Course (MSOC) Syllabus

<https://usnwc.edu/college-of-maritime-operational-warfare/Professional-Military-Education/Maritime-Staff-Operators-Course>

Welcome to the Maritime Staff Operators Course (MSOC). This syllabus is provided for reference and guidance throughout the course.

The Maritime Staff Operators Course (MSOC) provides resident education in the application of the Maritime Operations Center (MOC) concept, organization and processes; maritime operational level of warfare concepts, terminology and processes; and the Navy Planning Process (NPP) IOT produce graduates capable of immediately supporting the commander's decision cycle at the operational level of warfare in a dynamic and complex environment.

This course examines both the art and science associated with military activities across the range of military operations. It includes recently developed MOC concepts and substantial application of the Navy Planning Process (NPP). MSOC incorporates seminars, lectures, and practical exercises using a realistic maritime scenario. It culminates with a synthesizing Battle Lab exercise designed to replicate the organization, processes, procedures, and command and control tools of a nominal MOC.

The focus of this course is on maritime operations at the operational level of war. The construct is inherently joint, and uses both Navy and joint doctrine as standard references. Accordingly, it emphasizes the application of maritime capabilities through a combined/joint force maritime component commander (C/JFMCC) and its relevance and value to the joint force commander (JFC). Students apply planning skills and maritime staff processes and procedures across numerous maritime lines of operation (LOOs) which include, but are not limited to, freedom of navigation (FON), maritime interception operations (MIO), noncombatant evacuation operations (NEOs), and multi-Service/interagency/multinational operations. This is accomplished through a regimen which uses a dynamic contemporary scenario set in 2020.

A practitioner's approach is applied requiring hands-on student participation. Student-produced deliverables include military briefings and mission-type orders (e.g., operation orders (OPORDs), fragmentary orders (FRAGORDs), and daily intentions messages (DIMs).

Course Outcomes. The course builds on fundamentals and culminates with the planning of multiple LOOs during the execution phase of MSOC. This course is designed to produce personnel who are capable of performing in a high-tempo, fluid operational environment. Specifically, course graduates will be able to:

- Apply the MOC concept, processes, procedures, terminology and support commander's decision cycle as part of a functional center or cross functional team;
- Execute the Naval Planning Process (NPP) as a member of an operational planning team (OPT) within a MOC across the range of military operations and develop plans and orders at the operational level of warfare;
- Apply the concepts of operational art and operational functions in planning and execution of naval, joint, interagency, and multinational maritime operations;
- Understand Information Management within a MOC battle rhythm and among subordinate commands or activities, adjacent components, and higher headquarters staffs in a collaborative information environment;
- Demonstrate the ability to employ naval capabilities, maritime C2, and operational warfare at sea concepts and terminology in the context of planning and executing naval, joint, interagency and multinational maritime operations

MSOC Lines of Effort.

The curriculum is comprised of *four interconnected LOEs*:

1. **Strategy, Operational Art, and Operational Functions**
2. **Maritime Command and Control**
3. **Planning and Preparation**
4. **Execution**

Holistically, the LOEs are designed to meet the following objectives:

- Comprehend the strategic context, fundamentals of naval and joint operations, operational art/design and relationship of operational art to strategy and tactics.
- Analyze the organization and functions of a maritime component staff in order to command and control maritime, joint, and multinational forces across the range of military operations.
- Apply and analyze the NPP and how to use that process to create plans and orders at the operational level of war.
- Synthesize course fundamentals as a member of a MOC during execution in a realistic scenario.

1. Strategy, Operational Art, and Operational Functions

In the first LOE, students are introduced to the fundamental aspects of joint warfare, to include familiarization with:

- National and maritime strategies
- Operational art and design concepts
- Joint and Service references and doctrinal publications
- Levels of command and levels of war
- Theater geometry
- Operational warfare at sea
- Operational factors of space-time-force
- Principles of joint operations/principles of war
- Center-of-gravity identification and deconstruction
- Joint functions of C2, intelligence, sustainment, movement and maneuver, fires, and protection (with detailed discussions of each function)
- Joint planning guidance and execution systems

The initial LOE culminates in a comprehensive discussion of the Battle of Leyte Gulf which synthesizes the key aspects of operational art. The foundational aspects are then carried forward and used extensively throughout the remainder of the course.

2. Maritime Command and Control

The second LOE focuses on the core aspect of operational-level warfare – C2 of maritime forces, the employment of maritime capabilities, and how the Navy executes operational C2 via the MOC construct. Students are instructed in the fundamentals of:

- The Navy Leadership Development Strategy
- The commander's decision cycle
- COCOM, OPCON, and TACON authorities
- Supported and supporting command relationships
- Information operations (IO)
- Cyberspace operations (CO)
- Operational law and rules of engagement (ROE)
- Joint Service capabilities (USN, USA, USMC, USAF, USCG, SOF)
- Maritime security operations, including MIO and operations to support FON
- Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA)/Maritime Operational Threat Response (MOTR)

- HA/DR and NEOs
- Information management and knowledge management (IM/KM)
- Universal Joint Task List and Universal Naval Task List applications
- Operational assessment methodology

Students are also introduced to the organizational construct of a MOC and the associated processes and concepts. They are also shown the organization and missions of the individual Navy MOCs (USFF, CPF, C3F, C4F, C5F, C6F, C7F, and C10F). They explore how a C/JFMCC is formed and how a staff operates within a disciplined battle rhythm to support the decision cycle.

3. Planning and Preparation

The students then transition into the Planning and Preparation LOE that uses operational art and MOC processes as its foundation. In this LOE, the students engage in practical exercises using a contemporary scenario that reinforces class lectures and uses a “learn then do” methodology. Focus areas include:

- The six-step NPP
- Staff estimates
- Operational planning team (OPT) organization and utilization
- Risk assessment
- Commander’s intent and guidance
- Intelligence support, including the joint intelligence preparation of the operational environment (JIPOE)

The students then employ the NPP, with emphasis on key techniques, supporting concepts, and doctrine. Students use the doctrine in NWP-5-01 to perform the six steps of the NPP:

- Mission Analysis
- Course of Action (COA) Development
- COA Analysis (Wargaming)
- COA Comparison and Decision
- Plan or Order Development
- Transition

4. Execution

The Execution LOE is the synthesizing event of MSOC, where the class functions as a MOC staff and applies joint and Service concepts, fundamentals, doctrine and knowledge of the NPP within the context of a realistic scenario. The class executes the CFMCC operation order that they developed in the Planning and Preparation LOE. A Control Group role-plays the HHQ, adjacent components, coalition partners and subordinate task forces in the execution portion of the scenario.

The intent is to demonstrate how internal and external activities support the commander’s decision cycle. It is a week-long command post exercise where students are assigned (and later rotated) among various cross functional teams. Execution begins with a systems and applications session that effectively replicates real-world MOC C2 systems and functionality. These systems are relied on extensively during the Battle Lab week.

Students work in the Current Operations (COPS) cell, Future Operations (FOPS) cell, Future Plans Cell (FPC), and the Operational Assessment Cell (OAC), and are supported by the Control Group.

COPS will:

- Analyze, fuse, and disseminate information for shared situational awareness
- Develop and release daily intentions messages (DIMs)
- Coordinate, produce, and deliver Commander’s Update Briefs (CUBs)

- Manage the common operational picture (COP)
- Coordinate and monitor execution of current directives
- Publish fragmentary orders (FRAGORDs) as required
- Release immediate messages per reporting requirements
- Develop, manage, and promulgate C/JFMCC battle rhythm
- Maintain the Significant Events Log
- Manage requests for information (RFIs)
- Communicate with higher, adjacent, and maritime subordinate commands
- Track the readiness of forces assigned to the C/JFMCC
- Coordinate operations with other joint force components
- Direct subordinates in achieving C/JFMCC objectives
- Form crisis action teams (CATs) in emergent circumstances
- Monitor, assess, and report commander's critical information requirements (CCIRs)

FOPS will:

- Draft commander's intent to include purpose, method, end state, and risk
- Develop COAs to modify maritime operations to achieve the commander's intent
- Phase and synchronize tactical concepts of operations (CONOPS)
- Conduct branch planning
- Produce CONOPS by phase with COA narratives and sketches
- Identify decision points
- Develop synchronization matrices
- Coordinate and draft requests for forces (RFFs)/requests for capabilities (RFCs)
- Present transition briefs to COPS
- Recommend CCIRs and modifications as required
- Coordinate internal staff actions as they relate to planning
- Propose targeting priorities for consideration in the targeting process

FPC will:

- Conduct analysis and coordination of future operations during execution
- Coordinate internal and external planning
- Conduct sequel planning; present transition briefs to FOPS
- Assist FOPS in crisis action planning as required
- Draft commander's intent to include purpose, method, end state, and risk

OAC will:

- Develop measures of effectiveness (MOEs)
- Develop measures of performance (MOPs)
- Develop MOE indicators (MOE-Is)
- Consolidate and assess task accomplishment
- Conduct analysis and determine trends
- Identify the operational impact of events on the LOOs
- Assess progress of each phase toward (or away from) C/JFMCC's objectives
- Provide assessment inputs to appropriate cross functional team activities
- Recommend whether or not C/JFMCC should execute branch or sequel plans
- Inform plans development (ends and means) and modify plans (ways)

Oral and Written Requirements.

Students are required to develop and deliver products, including military briefings throughout the course; most will be associated with planning and execution.

Readings.

Required readings will be assigned by course faculty. Most readings can be found on the IPAD provided to the students on the first day of class. The IPAD also contains additional documents for future reference. "Read ahead" assignments for the first day of class may be accessed via the MSOC web page: <https://usnwc.edu/college-of-maritime-operational-warfare/Professional-Military-Education/Maritime-Staff-Operators-Course>, under the in the "Read Ahead Documents" section.

The Joint Doctrine, Education and Training Electronic Information System (JDEIS) Web Portal contains the entire Joint Electronic Library: <https://jdeis.js.mil/jdeis/generic.jsp> (or .smil for classified portions of the JEL). For Navy references, the Navy Warfare Development Command's Navy Doctrine Library System (NDLS) can be found at: <https://portal.nwdc.navy.mil/ndls> / or <http://ndls.nwdc.navy.smil.mil>.