

NDU'S JOINT EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVE

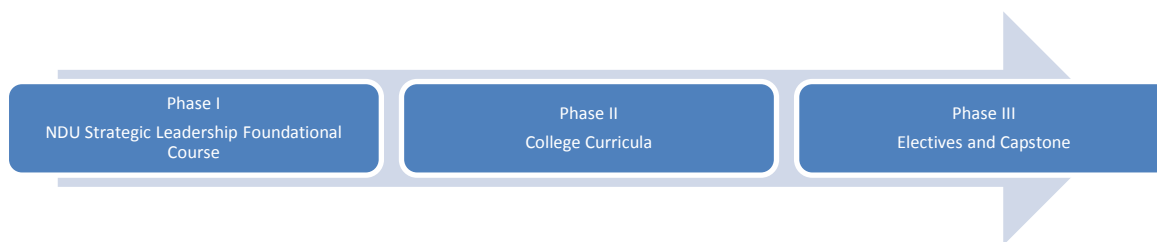
Purpose. Describe how National Defense University's transformation/evolution of professional education will improve the student's educational experience, advance Joint Education, Leader Development, scholarship, and resource use through collaboration across the University.

Background. There were several indicators for the need to change. NDU Colleges independently develop curriculum and teach common statutory requirements. We have a new requirement to incorporate Desired Leader Attributes and lessons learned from the Decade of War Study by next academic year. The ultimate new constraint is to develop effective leaders to operate in a more complex national security environment with our decreasing resources. "Business as usual" is no longer an option.

What will be different? There will be two assessments to better integrate the student's educational experience with their past achievements. Initially, faculty advisors will work one-on-one with students to plan their year. They will take into account the student's previous operational and training experiences. Throughout the year, faculty will continue to plan for the student's future and develop a continuing education plan. The University will have a common academic calendar – with common start and end dates, standardized requirements for the master's degree, a common "block" system of academic terms, and a standard daily "battle rhythm." Phase I consists of a collaboratively developed, six-week NDU Strategic Leadership Foundational Course and will be administered to all students at Ft. McNair. Content will include statutory JPME subjects in 10 USC, Ethics and the Profession of Arms, the Desired Leader Attributes for Joint Force 2020, lessons learned from a Decade of War, strategic analysis and critical thinking, resiliency, and an introduction to research.

Following the Foundational Course, students will transition to a 27-week Phase II, focused on the core curricula of each college. Each College's core will build upon ethics, lessons learned from War, and all Desired Leader Attributes, as they will be addressed in greater depth during this phase. This phase will allow the various Colleges to be the best in the world in their core competency.

Phase III, which is eight weeks in length, will allow students to tailor their professional development by choosing electives and/or research projects. In the past, students chose electives very early in the academic year. By moving electives to the end of the academic year, students will have the opportunity to select electives in a way to enhance and enrich their applied research focus with an eye towards optional preparation for their future.



Our senior leaders have been working for months to build this framework, and now our talented staff and faculty are refining the concept and building a detailed implementation plan. This is a collaborative effort in which we welcome, seek and need the best input we can get.

Benefits. Collaboration---we have a wealth of talent across the University but there have been too many stove pipes. Lack of a common academic calendar has been a barrier. Moving foundational material to common course will free time for Colleges to focus on their mission, move together as a "Whole of NDU", and better integrate NDU's Joint Education into the leader continuum.