

**The 2012
Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
Essay Competitions**

Rules

1. **ELIGIBILITY:** Students from the following participating institutions may submit essay entries: the intermediate or senior PME/JPME schools including senior service colleges, intermediate and advanced schools, NDU colleges (National War College, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, College of International Security Affairs, Information Resources Management College, and Joint Forces Staff College); Naval Postgraduate School; and service research program fellows via their service colleges and universities.

Essays must be original, not previously published, and completed during the academic year (2011–2012). Entries cannot be submitted for publication to any other journal or academic press concurrent with these competitions. Two or more students may coauthor an entry. Foreign students enrolled in eligible institutions may compete. An individual student may submit more than one entry into the various categories of essays (see rule 3 below.) The same essay may not be submitted into more than one category.

2. **TOPICS:** Students may write on any aspect of U.S. Government national security strategy—addressing the coherent employment of the political, military, economic, and informational instruments of national power to achieve strategic objectives. Essays with a joint, interagency, or integrated operations emphasis, as well as those addressing nontraditional security issues, are encouraged.

3. **ESSAY CATEGORIES AND WORD COUNT:**

- a. The *Secretary of Defense National Strategy Essay* is a research paper with a maximum of 5,000 words, long enough to complete a thorough argument, but short enough to rivet the attention of a broad audience.
- b. The *Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff National Defense and Military Strategy Essay Competition* includes two essay options:
 - i. *Strategic Research Paper:* Maximum of 5,000 words. This traditional research essay has been the mainstay of past CJCS competitions and encourages in-depth research, analysis, and critical thinking on strategic security topics.
 - ii. *Strategy Article:* Maximum of 1,500 words. Similar in length to many current JPME course papers, the Strategy Article is a scholarly but tightly focused research paper.

4. **JUDGING PROCESS:** Students do not submit entries directly to NDU; entries must be submitted through their appropriate college/school. Each participating college/school is responsible for establishing and executing independent methodologies for selecting papers to nominate for the essay competitions. Once essays submitted to NDU Press, no editing or revision of them is allowed. The essays so nominated are designated *semifinalists*. Two rounds of joint judging then occur.

- a. Semifinalists are evaluated by judges via the Internet to determine the *finalists*. NDU Press determines judges' assignments based on a maximum number of reasonably achievable readings during the limited time period. To ensure fairness and achieve the maximum number of readings per paper, judges will not read papers from their own schools, nor will they read the same papers in the final round.
- b. Finalists are evaluated by the judges during the 2-day conference at Fort McNair, National Defense University headquarters, resulting in winners in each category.

- c. College coordinators should ensure that judges are prepared to evaluate approximately 20–25 essays during the first (Internet) round lasting 1–1/2 to 2 weeks, and then to travel to Fort McNair for the final round of judging (2 days). The same judges should participate in both rounds of judging.
5. **FORMAT:** An entry will consist of a title page, biography, abstract, and the text proper.
- a. The title page should contain the *title only*—no name, rank, service, or college affiliation.
 - b. The biography immediately follows the title page. It should be no more than 1 page and should include current college/school, as well as recent assignments, academic credentials, and (if known) future contact information. During judging, the biography is removed and a code is assigned to make papers completely anonymous.
 - c. The abstract page immediately follows the title page and summarizes the essay in a maximum of 200 words.
 - d. The essay proper begins after the abstract. The following word counts will be strictly enforced: *Secretary of Defense Essay*—maximum of 5,000 words; and *CJCS Essay* categories—maximum of 5,000 words for *Strategic Research Papers*, and 1,500 words for *Strategy Articles*. Entries submitted with word counts not meeting these requirements (determined by NDU Press) will be disqualified.
 - i. NDU Press will calculate word count upon receipt of essay entries, using the automatic word count feature provided in Microsoft Word Tools. Entries not meeting the word count requirements will be disqualified; the submitting college will be promptly informed of any disqualifications. If an entry is disqualified on the basis of word count, it may not be re-submitted. However, another entry may be submitted as long as it does not exceed the submitting college’s overall entry quota, meets all other requirements, and is submitted by the deadline.
 - ii. In calculating word counts, the following elements **will be included**: the basic text of the essay; epigraphs and any other quotations in the beginning, body, and end of text; bullet lists, text boxes, and the like; and headings or subheadings within the text.
 - iii. In calculating word counts, the following elements **will not be included**: title page, table of contents (if any), biography, abstract, tables, illustrations, endnotes/footnotes, appendices, and bibliographies.
 - iv. Endnotes are preferred but footnotes are acceptable. Although endnotes/footnotes will not count in the overall word count, discursive or explanatory endnotes/footnotes—as opposed to source endnotes/footnotes—are discouraged. Main points should be made in the text proper. Reliance on discursive or explanatory endnotes/footnotes will be considered bad form and judges may downgrade essays that make repeated use of such notes.
 - e. Appendices and bibliographies are discouraged. In lieu of an appendix, essential supplementary material can be quoted in the text and cited in an endnote/footnote. In evaluating use of sources, judges will focus on endnotes/footnotes, not bibliographies.
 - f. The text should follow the format of a scholarly research paper (not a bullet paper, talking paper, PowerPoint briefing, etc.):
 - i. If possible, use the *Chicago Manual of Style* (15th edition) or Turabian, *A Manual for Writers* (7th edition) for overall style and format including endnotes/footnotes. If these style guides are not available, use your college’s house style; in endnotes/footnotes, include complete facts of publication in a uniform format. In all cases, strive for consistency of style. No essays will be downgraded for style per se, but an inconsistent or unclear style can be distracting and detract from overall quality.
 - ii. Papers must be submitted by each school coordinator in electronic form in MS Word format. Files should not contain desktop-publishing embellishments. Please limit formatting to italics, bold, underline, bullet, or numbered lists.

6. **JUDGING CRITERIA:** Judges will evaluate essays using the standards of quality that they apply to traditional academic writing, with emphasis on the following:
 - a. Innovation—Does the essay inject new thinking into the collective governance of national security institutions? Does the essay demonstrate a unique approach and/or improve current initiatives? Does the essay take new lessons from history?
 - b. Feasibility—Is the concept practical? Does the essay propose a project or concept that could realistically be applied to government?
 - c. Clarity of Thought and Purpose—Does the essay clearly define a problem and present a solution? Does it show thoughtful analysis?
 - d. Persuasiveness—Is the essay logically organized, well written, and persuasive?
7. **SECURITY CLASSIFICATION:** Only unclassified essays are eligible. Each college is responsible to ensure that manuscripts do not contain classified information. Winning essays and other entries selected for NDU Press publication will undergo OSD security and policy review before publication and release.
8. **SUBMISSION OF ENTRIES:** Each school coordinator submits to NDU Press electronic copies of all nominated essays in each category not later than Wednesday, April 25, 2012. There is no requirement for schools to submit the maximum number of papers in each category.
9. **PUBLICATION RIGHTS:** NDU Press reserves first publication rights for all essays submitted to the competition. Winners and other selected essays will appear in both print and electronic editions of *Joint Force Quarterly* or other NDU Press publication.
 - a. Submission of an essay to this contest will be considered acceptance by the author of this publication policy.
 - b. Essays may not be entered in the competitions if they have previously been submitted for publication, accepted for publication, or published in another printed or electronic journal, book, or other publication.
 - c. *JFQ* will release rights for essays not selected for publication by *JFQ* to authors and their associated colleges/schools as soon as possible after the competition is concluded.
10. **COORDINATORS AND JUDGES:** Each college is requested to appoint a senior faculty coordinator and faculty representatives to act as contest judges at NDU. Coordinators may also be judges. NDU Press requests names and contact information for judges be provided no later than April 11, 2012. For the semifinal (Internet) and final (NDU) rounds, the intermediate and senior-level colleges appoint two judges each. Other colleges and advanced service schools and Joint Forces Staff College provide one representative each. Each Service will ensure an appropriate path for research fellows' submissions to be judged along with their peers from the equivalent level institution. NDU Press will establish contact and a network of coordinators/judges/POCs to exchange information and answer questions. The panel of judges evaluates semifinalist papers and returns scores via the Internet (email). At NDU, the judges conduct the final round of evaluation for each category of essay. Winners will be selected based on highest average scores of the semifinal and final rounds. Senior NDU Press staff will act as tie-breakers/arbiters, as required. The NDU President or designated representative will certify winners before official notification. NDU Press will notify college coordinators when the winners are confirmed. College coordinators are responsible for notifying their winners and facilitating the presentation of awards and certificates to winners and finalists.
11. **INTELLECTUAL INTEGRITY:** To ensure a fair and rigorous competition, colleges/schools are expected to be self-policing in the following areas:
 - a. Essays must be submitted by students. Faculty or staff cannot submit a student paper for the competitions without the student's knowledge.

- b. No editing is allowed once competition begins. Students are not permitted to edit their papers once each school begins its own internal judging for semifinalists (i.e., school nominees).
- c. Under no circumstances may a faculty member edit, correct, or change a paper once submitted by the student. However, during the college's/school's internal evaluation process, faculty may advise a student if an entry exceeds the word count and afford the student the opportunity to reduce the essay to meet limits. The student—not the faculty—must perform the necessary work to reduce the word count accordingly.

12. JUDGES & NUMBER OF ENTRIES PERMITTED FOR EACH COLLEGE/SCHOOL:

Judges	College/School	SecDef National	CJCS	CJCS Strategic
		Strategy Essay	Strategy Article	Research Paper
2	National WC	4	4	3
2	ICAF	4	4	3
2	IRMC	4	4	3
1	CISA	2	2	1
1	JFSC	2	2	1
1	JAWS	2	2	1
2	U.S. Army WC	4	4	3
2	CGSC	4	4	3
1	SAMS	2	2	1
2	MCWC	4	4	3
2	MCSC	4	4	3
1	SAW	2	2	1
2	Air WC	4	4	3
2	ACSC	4	4	3
1	SAASS	2	2	1
2	Naval Senior	4	4	3
2	Naval Junior	4	4	3