

Preparing Senior Staff Officers for Joint Strategic Assignments (FINAL)

1. **POC:** COL Abigail Linnington, CSR, INSS, a.linnington.mil@ndu.edu
2. **Location:** Day One: Lincoln Hall Auditorium, Day Two: see classroom assignments on course webpage
3. **Course Purpose:** This course is designed to prepare officers for their transition to a joint assignment at the strategic level of command and staff. The goal is to help students synthesize their classroom experience and understand where their future assignment sits in relation to the DoD Enterprise and interagency policy process. Students will be introduced to a problem solving methodology, complementary to joint military decision making, to develop expertise in framing the military dimension of policy issues when preparing senior leaders for national security decisions and engagements. Students will have an opportunity to review executive writing guidance and complete an executive writing assignment on a current policy question with strategic military implications.
4. **Course Lessons (4)**

Course Introduction, 30 May 0900-0915 with Provost Dr. John Yaeger

DAY ONE Lesson 1: DOD Structure, Key Actors, and Functions, 30 May 0915-1000

Description: Lesson 1 provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities of the following key DoD actors: SecDef and OSD; CJCS and Joint Staff; Combatant Commanders; and the Services. Lesson materials and the lecture will review the key DoD Functions, including strategic documents and processes, and provide a brief overview of how they are integrated in practice and who plays a role in:

- Strategy, Planning, and Risk Assessment
- Requirements (JROC/JCIDS)
- Globally Integrated Operations
- Resourcing (Personnel and PPBE)
- Acquisition

Discussion Questions:

What are the statutory responsibilities of the Secretary of Defense and how does OSD support him?

What are the statutory responsibilities of the Chairman, the JCS, and the Joint Staff? Combatant Commanders? and the Military Services?

In your next assignment, what greater DoD function(s) will your work support? What is the annual schedule of that work? Which actors in the DoD enterprise own pieces of the same portfolio and how will your office communicate and integrate with them?

What is the organizational and/or service culture of the organization you will be assigned to? How is that culture manifested in stories of origin, historical analogies of choice, and how it sets priorities and resources those priorities?

Readings:

Carl H. Builder *The Masks of War: American Military Styles in Strategy and Analysis*, Baltimore: Rand Corporation, 1989, pp. 3-31.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction (CJCSI) 3100.01D, "Joint Strategic Planning System," 20 July 2018.

Kathleen J. McInnis, "Goldwater-Nichols at 30: Defense Reform and Issues for Congress," Congressional Research Service, No. R44474, June 2, 2016, pp. 1-34.

Michael Meese et al., *American National Security*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018, Ch. 8, "The Role of the Military in the Policy Process" and Ch. 9, "Planning, Budgeting, and Management."

DAY ONE Lesson 2: DOD in the Interagency System, 30 May 1000-1050

Description: Lesson 2 details the U.S. national security decision making structure, participants, and processes. We will discuss the functions of the NSC Staff and how DoD, SecDef, and the Chairman provide advice to the President, Cabinet, and Congress in support of the decision making process. Lesson 2 will also bring together previous lessons in international relations theory and strategy to explain how the basic methodology followed in the policy process reflects the rational choice model of decision making.

Discussion Questions:

What is the military's participation in the policy process today? What is the "proper" role of the military in the policy process? Are problems in policy more likely the result from too little or too much military influence?

Should military officers limit professional advice strictly to military matters or provide a full evaluation, including considerations of diplomatic, political, economic, and other factors?

In your next assignment, what will be your principal's role in informing or participating in the policy process? What products and process will you participate in to support senior leader preparation for and participation in interagency decision making? Which actors in the interagency own pieces of the same portfolio and how will your office communicate and integrate with them?

Readings:

Michele Flournoy, "Nine Lessons for Navigating National Security," Center for New American Security, February 2016.

Richard Hooker, "The NSC Staff: New Choices for a New Administration," INSS Strategic Monograph, November 2016.

Nikolas K. Gvosdev, Jessica D. Blankshain, and David A. Cooper, *Decision-Making in American Foreign Policy: Translating Theory into Practice*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019, pp. 3-9, 52-59, 71-87 (Chs. 1, 3 excerpts).

Michael Meese et al., *American National Security*, Ch. 10, "Putting the Pieces Together: National Security Decision Making."

Alan G. Whittaker et al, "The National Security Policy Process: The National Security Council and Interagency System," National Defense University, 15 August 2011, pp. 1-65.

DAY ONE Lesson 3: Problem Framing and Executive Writing, 30 May 1100-1200

Description: “A problem well put is half solved,” John Dewey

Lesson 3 provides an overview of executive writing for senior leaders. We will discuss internal DoD writing guidance as well as writer Amitava Kumar’s recommendations on how to write well, paying particular attention to the DoD Executive Secretariat’s guidance on how to write for Secretary Mattis (on webpage see the link to the DoD Guidance, pg 2 “Habits” and “Style”).

From the Brest/Krieger reading, “If the core of problem solving is sizing up the situation in terms of the interests and objectives at stake and mapping out possible solutions, then decision making involves identifying the tradeoffs among solutions and choosing the best alternative.” The authors lay out a deliberative decision making model that is complementary to defense analysis.

Finally, we will review a methodology for writing an options memo that is derived from the instructors’ experiences in OSD-Policy and the Joint Staff.

Students should review *a subset of the Iran readings* to familiarize themselves with the current state of relations between the United States and Iran. For example, the U.S. Institute of Peace “Iran Primer” will be updated with the latest headlines as well as in depth analysis of key issues.

Discussion Questions:

Consider the first two “Habits” cited in ExecSec’s guidance for preparing correspondence for Secretary Mattis, “Take mental responsibility *for the outcome* associated with the read ahead” and “Help the Secretary think and lead.”

Compare and contrast the Brest/Krieger deliberative model with the Joint Military Decision Making Process.

Readings:

Amitava Kumar, “Ten Rules of Writing,” *Literary Hub* at <https://lithub.com/ten-rules-of-writing/>.

DOD Executive Secretariat, OSD-Policy, and Joint Staff guidance to the staff on how to write for Secretary Mattis and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

Paul Brest and Linda Hamilton Krieger, *Problem Solving, Decision Making, and Professional Judgment*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2010, pp. 1-60 (Chs. 1-2, with emphasis on pgs.11-15).

DAY ONE HOMEWORK:

Students will prepare a 3-page options memo for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the Secretary of Defense to support an upcoming NSC Principals meeting. Recommend you spend no more than three hours on this assignment. On Friday, bring two hard copies to the seminar – turn one into the instructor and use the second for peer reviews. Be sure to include your name, war college, and seminar number. Further instructions will be given during the lecture and will be posted to the course website at 1200 hours on Thursday, 30 May.

DAY TWO Lesson 4: Options Memo review and discussion, 31 May
0900-1000 Peer Review
1000-1100 Classroom Discussion

On Friday, 31 May 0900-1000, students will pair up and discuss their solution in two-30 minute sessions. At 1000, students will come together in their seminars to review each step of the memo analysis and consider how this methodology can be used to inform senior leader decision making.

Case Study Readings and Websites:

- “The Iran Primer” The United States Institute for Peace, <http://iranprimer.usip.org/>.
- Director of National Intelligence, Daniel R. Coats, "Worldwide Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community," 29 January 2019, pp. 29-31, at <https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/2019-ATA-SFR---SSCI.pdf>. [3 pages]
- Kenneth Katzman, Paul K. Kerr, and Valerie Heitshusen, "U.S. Decision to Cease Implementing the Iran Nuclear Agreement," Congressional Research Service, 9 May 2018, at <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R44942>. [14 pages]
- Kenneth Katzman, "Iran’s Foreign and Defense Policies," Congressional Research Service, 8 May 2019, pp. 5-23, at <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R44017>. [18 pages]
- Michael R. Pompeo, "Confronting Iran: The Trump Administration's Strategy," Foreign Affairs, November/December 2018, at <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/middle-east/2018-10-15/michael-pompeo-secretary-of-state-on-confronting-iran?cid=soc-tw-rdr>. [6 pages]
- Colin H. Kahl, "Pompeo’s Dangerous Delusions," Foreign Affairs, 24 October 2018, at <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/iran/2018-10-24/pompeos-dangerous-delusions?cid=int-lea&pgtype=hpg>. [5 pages]
- Naysan Rafati and Ali Vaez, "A New Trade Vehicle Could Preserve the Nuclear Deal’s Core Bargain," Foreign Affairs, 4 February 2019, at <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/iran/2019-02-04/europe-tests-boundaries-iran>. [3 pages]
- Steven Simon and Richard Sokolsky, “How to Prevent an Accidental War with Iran,” Foreign Policy, 21 May 2019, at <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/05/21/how-to-prevent-an-accidental-war-with-iran/>. [3 pages]
- Kathy Gilsinanskrishnadev Calamur, “The Many Ways Iran Could Target the United States,” The Atlantic, 6 May 2019, at <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/05/iran-could-hit-back-bolton-us-carrier-move/588826/>. [3 pages]
- Haleh Esfandiari, “Reform or Revolution? Iran’s Path to Democracy,” Foreign Affairs (January/February 2018), at <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/reviews/review-essay/2017-12-12/reform-or-revolution?cid=int-lea&pgtype=hpg>. [7 pages]
- Alex Vatanka, "Iran and the United States Can be Friends," Foreign Policy, 28 November 2018, at <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/11/28/iran-and-the-united-states-can-be-friends/>. [5 pages]
- Mahsa Rouhi, "From Rogue to Regular: What will it take for Washington to accept Iran as a “normal” state?" Foreign Policy, 4 February 2019, at <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/02/04/from-rogue-state-to-regular-iran-trump-sanctions-bolton-pompeo-normal-state/>. [5 pages]
- International Crisis Group, "The Illogic of the U.S. Sanctions Snapback on Iran," Briefing No. 64, 2 November 2018, at <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/gulf-and-arabian-peninsula/iran/b64-illogic-us-sanctions-snapback-iran>. [7 pages]