



The National Defense University
Board of Visitors
Washington, DC 20319-5066

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

NDU-BOV

General Martin E. Dempsey, USA
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
Room 2E872, The Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-5000

Dear General Dempsey,

The National Defense University (NDU) Board of Visitors (BOV), convened at Fort Lesley J. McNair on December 10-11, 2012 for our bi-annual meeting. The BOV had not met in over a year but we have a new charter, an active and engaged membership, and we are ready to get to work to face the many challenges that lie ahead. The Board recently asked me to serve as their Chair and along with the Co-Chair, VADM Vivien Crea (ret), and the entire BOV; we look forward to working with you, Lieutenant General Flynn, and the NDU President to advance the mission of NDU and joint education in our advisory capacity.

We remain greatly inspired by the enormous value NDU provides our nation as the foundation of joint education and collaboration, both interagency and international. We have read your *Capstone for Joint Operations* publication, the *NDU Way Ahead* and *One University* Memos and the *Middle States Report* from March 2012. We understand your guidance and see the tremendous opportunity for change and transition in this resource constrained environment. We were enormously pleased to have General Flynn come over and share his thoughts with us. It is clear that he and General Martin are aligned and we are strongly behind them. We believe that the University is headed in the right direction and that Major General Martin is the kind of leader needed right now. His enthusiasm, openness, and inclusiveness will provide a collegial environment that will allow robust and productive discussions to create a culture of community at the University.

Based on our two days of briefings and discussions as well as conversations with students, faculty, and staff, we offer the following recommendations for you to consider and support as you deem appropriate:

1. We are greatly pleased that NDU has a new strategic plan with clear goals and objectives tied to their mission. With the strategic plan in place, priorities identified, and measures for success and decision making implemented, we recommend that NDU review and create the necessary organizational structures and processes for governance in both academic and resourcing arenas.
2. Another issue that ties directly into organizational structures and processes is to have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and accountability in place. The NDU academic structure does not currently mirror what one would find in a civilian University. The Colleges have commandants and academic deans as well as deans of students. NDU needs one Chief Academic Officer with clear authority across the

colleges and components. We also found that the Executive Council is making most of the personnel and funding decisions at their level. We fear that the time it takes to work through every issue at the top level will create a lag in decisions being implemented and will eventually affect the superior education that NDU offers to its students.

3. We appreciate the action you took to retain the military commandants at the three Joint Professional Military Education Colleges at NDU. We believe this will benefit the students and further the mission of NDU. When selecting the next commandants as one stars, we recommend these individuals be carefully vetted and chosen based on suitability to serve as leaders of an academic institution and that they be promotable officers. One of the specific recommendations from the 1989 *Congressional Report of the Panel on Military Education* (the Skelton Report) was to have commandants with promotion potential. This ensures a careful balance to retain continuity of leadership above churn, while the civilian Deans and key NDU staff will provide important stability.

We will convene again in the spring of 2013. We hope you will consider coming to the National Defense University campus at Ft McNair to speak to us at our next meeting. A member of General Martin's staff will coordinate with your staff to examine possibilities. We look forward to having a full board for our next meeting.

Finally, the Board is pleased to announce that it unanimously chose General Colin Powell to receive the honorary Doctoral Degree from NDU at an appropriate planned ceremony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lloyd Fig Newton". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized script.

Lloyd "Fig" Newton, General, USAF (ret)
Chair