Milestones in NDU's Journey (2012 – 2020)

(as of December 11, 2020)

Introduction: This document covers NDU's institutional journey from 2012 to 2020. It is intended to provide a high-level view of the environmental factors, leadership decisions, challenges and accomplishments that shaped the University and its programs during this period.

2012

NDU's budget was reduced by 15% to support OSD Efficiency Initiatives; in response, NDU reduced support staff, electing to take risk on the support side in order to protect student throughput. NDU was unable to identify all necessary reductions, so the Joint Staff J-7 and Director of the Joint Staff (DJS) determined them.

The NDU President (NDU-P) billet was downgraded from a three-star to a two-star and DJ-7 was changed from a one-star to a three-star, with the NDU-P reporting to DJ-7 instead of reporting to CJCS.

The NDU mission statement was revised to focus on Joint Professional Military Education.

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) issued an accreditation warning due to poor resource allocation practices, demonstrated by lack of funding for IT sustainment, renovation, and modernization (SRM).

Academic Affairs:

A Joint Education Review was conducted across JPME. Findings illuminated a need for NDU graduates to improve writing skills. CJCS promulgated Desired Leader Attributes to be included in all JPME curriculum; these were incorporated into all JPME curricula in 2013.

NDU established the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness and the follow-on Institutional Research Council to focus research in support of NDU's academic mission and external stakeholder needs.

The College of International Security Affairs' (CISA) JPME program earned Joint accreditation through the Process for Accreditation of Joint Education (PAJE).

Business Operations:

NDU's Management Internal Controls Program (MICP) Review and Cyber Readiness Inspection were both rated as Unsatisfactory.

The Joint Staff withdrew NDU's authority for Management Control Reviews, Travel and Conference Approvals, and other management responsibilities. Joint Staff conducted a

comprehensive Management Control Review of NDU, which identified many significant areas of concern.

2013

NDU demonstrated to MSCHE both process and resourcing improvements to address 20 years of underfunding IT SRM. MSCHE removed the accreditation warning and reaffirmed NDU's academic accreditation for 10 years.

Academic Affairs:

NDU began to standardize academic requirements across programs by establishing a university wide Strategic Leader Foundation course for all 10-month JPME students, Individual Student Research Paper requirements, and Capstone curricula events:

The requirement that every Master's degree student must complete an individual strategic research project was instituted in order to improve writing skills and to develop critical thinking skills through the back-and-forth dialectic of student and advisor.

A new End-of-Year capstone phase was established for all students in the 10-month Master's degree programs. The purpose was to conduct final counseling and work with students on their individual leader development and promotion of career-long learning as they prepare for their next assignments. Another goal of the phase is for each college to conduct a capstone activity to wrap up the academic year in a coherent manner that enables faculty to ensure, through formal assessments, that each student has met or exceeded the standards associated with the college's academic goals and objectives.

A common academic calendar was established.

Business Operations:

Joint Staff conducted a follow-up Management Control Review, which showed improvement in many areas of compliance.

2014

Academic Affairs:

The University established a pilot program for an NDU Scholars program to align student research with Joint Force research requirements, beginning with US Pacific Command.

NDU published its first-ever annual research plan to ensure NDU faculty research supports the Joint Warfighter.

NDU published the first Provost-approved Planning Guidance centered on operationalizing the Strategic Plan.

Business Operations:

NDU-P established the first NDU Chief Operating Officer (COO) position, which was later re-designated as Vice President for Administration (VP-AA)/Chief Operating Officer.

2015

NDU's budget was reduced by 17% to support the Budget Control Act and other cuts that were shared across DOD and the Joint Staff; in response, NDU reduced more support staff and student travel.

SECDEF delegated authority over NDU to the CJCS in a "Funding Realignment for the National Defense University" memorandum. This aligned both mission tasking and resource sponsorship under the CJCS and led to the NDU Charter and Chairman's Controlled Activity designation in 2017.

Academic Affairs:

At the direction of J-7, the Information Resources Management College (IRMC; now the College of Information and Cyberspace) launches a JPME program.

The NDU Scholars program was expanded due to success of the Pilot Program with PACOM; the expansion added research opportunities that supported the EUCOM and CENTCOM missions.

Business Operations:

In an effort to determine the resource requirements and costs for every program, NDU conducted a comprehensive Program Review. This review identified and validated enduring Budget shortfalls in Information Technology, Curriculum Delivery/Relevance and Civilian Pay. This data-driven approach resulted in the Joint Staff providing an additional $3.3M in FY15, $5.5M in FY16, and $4.9M in FY17 to sustain faculty retention and hiring. The Program Review process resulted in a shift of Planning and Programming from an Organizational construct to a Program-centered construct based on 44 Academic Mission, Academic Support, and Enterprise Business programs.

In order to resolve a significant funding shortfall for international students, NDU coordinated a new tuition pricing model with the Army's Security Assistance Training Field Activity; this enabled full ($1.5M) reimbursable funding for the faculty required to support the international student programs.

NDU successfully completed both a Management Internal Controls Program review and a Cyber Readiness Inspection. As a result, the Joint Staff granted NDU the authority to resume responsibility for Management Control Reviews, Travel and Conference Approvals, and other management responsibilities that had been assumed by the Joint Staff in 2012/2013.

The COO drafted and submitted the first IT Issue Paper seeking additional funding to support IT SRM. The paper was not supported by the Joint Staff.

NDU hired the first civilian CIO in order to professionalize the management of the IT enterprise.

NDU was awarded the Joint Meritorious Unit Award for exceptionally meritorious service during the period of 6 February 2012 to 15 September 2015. During this period, NDU graduated more than 14,000 mid- and senior-level professionals; conducted a robust program of research, publication, and outreach that resulted in more than 200 scholarly publications; and "made tremendous advancements in education, international relations, infrastructure, and technology during an increasingly challenging fiscal environment."

2016

A contracted study on NDU Academic Technology Systems and Capabilities Strategy Guidance and NDU Academic Technology Change Management Considerations and Recommendations offered a framework for improving academic technology across the University.

Academic Affairs:

Provost established overarching performance goals for all Deans of Faculty to steer their efforts to achieve both component and university mission requirements and goals.

NDU scholars program continued expansion to additional stakeholders.

Business Operations:

NDU developed its first comprehensive, balanced Future Year (FY) Program Objective Memorandum (POM is DOD's six-year program) decision set, which included an analysis of missions, objectives, and allocation of resources. This was codified in an FY18-22 POM decision memo.

2017

SECDEF approved the NDU Charter, establishing NDU as a Chairman's Controlled Activity under the CJCS.

The NDU-P billet was restored to a three-star position and the NDU-P reporting relation restored as a direct-report to CJCS.

NDU-P approved NDU Directive 5100.01 "National Defense University Organization and Functions," which codified significant changes in governance and organizational alignment. This culminated a series of annual adjustments to the NDU senior leader framework and performance management.

Academic Affairs:

IRMC became the College of Information and Cyberspace (CIC). CIC's JPME program earns PAJE accreditation.

The Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) charter was signed.

Major curriculum changes were required to support the new National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy.

Business Operations:

The COO chartered the Business Transformation Working Group to improve and streamline the University's 23 most-important business processes.

2018

The strategic plan concept was finalized and focused on three key questions: What Are We To Teach In This Dynamic Environment, How Do We Teach to Ensure Effective Learning Outcomes, and How Do We Organize and Support to Meet the Challenge of Delivering Professional Military Education. This construct became known as the NDU Strategy for the Future.

Academic Affairs:

In transforming the university's libraries, NDU stood up the Leadership and Technology Center to provide resources and services to maximize the potential of faculty, create the foundation for programs that can evolve into the future, and meet students' evolving expectations. This new capability included writing specialists and instructional design specialists within the Center.

Business Operations:

The NDU IT Issue Paper received full funding for one year; DoD directed the Joint Staff to provide funding across the five-year Future Years Defense Program (FYDP). In addition, Congress appropriated slightly less funding ($5.7M) than requested.

The Joint Staff awarded NDU the Authority to Operate its network under a new Risk Management Framework. NDU was the first education-affiliated organization to earn ".mil" level accreditation on a ".edu" IT system.

2019

The FY20 Program and Budget Review (PBR) included a 5% budget reduction, which translated to the loss of 14 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) positions in FY20, plus 6 more FTEs in FY21, in order to source OSD higher priorities.

The Staff Advisory Council (SAC) charter was signed.

CJCS approved a new mission statement for NDU aligned to the new National Defense Strategy.

Roof and HVAC system failures in Eisenhower Hall resulted in moisture and mold that required the building to be vacated, with students, faculty, and staff relocated to Marshall and Lincoln Halls.

As part of the SECDEF-initiated Defense Wide Review (DWR), NDU received specific SECDEF/CJCS DWR tasks to focus on the core mission and propose plans to divest or consolidate programs. These tasks resulted in the NDU Transformation recommendations that were further matured under the Strategy for the Future construct. DWR informed a $10.3M budget reduction for NDU, which was subsequently reduced to a cut of "only" $7.8M per year and 38 FTEs over the FYDP.

Academic Affairs:

Provost established a performance-based faculty assessment system that is aligned to a Teaching, Research, Engagement, Service, and Accountability (TRESA) model.

NDU established a Faculty and Staff Professional Ethics policy.

All incoming NDU faculty members participated in the University's first-ever new faculty orientation and development program. This was enhanced by University faculty development sessions that were offered throughout the academic year.

NDU implemented a Faculty Titling and Promotion policy that was based on recommendations from a comprehensive review by Deans, the Faculty Advisory Committee, and Faculty across the University.

Provost led NDU's first-ever University wide Faculty Promotion and Sabbatical boards.

NDU successfully completes MSCHE accreditation Midpoint Peer Review.

Business Operations:

The COO established working groups to review NDU's Force Structure, Performance Management and Compensation models. This work led to significant changes in all three models, including adoption of a new compensation model and pay table.

NDU dedicated significant effort over the year to more thoroughly develop a cogent and detailed plan to bring the University's IT program into compliance with security, MSCHE accreditation, and mission requirements. This supporting analysis revealed additional requirements not included in the previous issue submission. The next iteration of an IT Issue Paper reflected the results of NDU's analysis to (1) ensure academic accreditation, (2) execute the Risk Management Framework (RMF) Plan of Action and Milestones (POAM) upon which NDU's

ATO is predicated, and (3) reach industry standards for cyber security and academic technology to ensure NDU meets academic mission requirements. As a result, NDU's IT Issue Paper received full FYDP funding of $78M.

Over NDU's objections, the Joint Staff had previously characterized NDU as a Management Headquarters Activity (MHA) and the majority of NDU billets as MHA-related, which would have increased the University's vulnerability to future personnel cuts; this characterization was adjusted down to 40 MHA and 362 Non-MHA for FY20.

CJCS Instruction 1801.01E "NDU Policy" was signed; it codified new responsibilities for NDU-P and defined a research relationship between NDU and the new Joint Staff J7 Joint Force Design and Development Center.

2020

The CJCS Instruction 1800.01F "Officer Professional Military Education Policy" (OPMEP) was signed, informed by work led by NDU for the first-ever outcomes-based OPMEP.

The inaugural Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) Vision and Implementation Guidance for PME and Talent Management was finished; initial drafting of this seminal document began at NDU.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, NDU rapidly and successfully shifted to distance delivery of academic mission and mission support; NDU was able to deliver its academic mission to all students and stakeholders, while protecting the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff.

The NDU Transformation recommendations that had been directed by the DWR lacked the necessary congressional support to be enacted. As a result, all prudent planning for transformation ceased, though the anticipated cost savings had already been harvested by OSD. The Joint Staff does not support NDU's appeal of the DWR budget reduction.

NDU recruited and onboarded both a new Provost and a new COO.

Academic Affairs:

For AY20-21:
- Instruction remains primarily virtual, due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Provost instituted Institutional Learning Outcomes and a new, more integrated curriculum that addresses the "What does every NDU graduate need to know?" question, along with a new curriculum framework of core and electives
- Provost implemented the SECDEF's guidance to focus 50% of curriculum on strategic competitors; this was completed one year in advance of the goal
- NDU hosts a record number of international students, with 128 students from 65 countries; the University is on track to achieve SECDEF's goal to increase international students by 10% per year across the FYDP

Business Operations:

NDU-P signed the University's first Compensation Implementation Plan to operationalize the NDU Compensation Philosophy and corresponding new Grade and Step Pay Table.

The COO executed a realignment of Deans of Administration.

NDU successfully transitioned to the new Defense Agency Initiative (DAI) financial management (FM) system, which includes Oracle Time and Attendance (OTL) for timekeeping for all employees, along with support for other Financial Management processes.