



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

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

NDU-BOV

**JUN 20 2019**

General Joseph F. Dunford, Jr.  
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff  
Room 2E872, The Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-5000

Dear General Dunford,

I am pleased to inform you of our National Defense University (NDU) Board of Visitors (BOV) meeting held on 21-22 May, 2019. The meeting was productive and provided the board with ample relevant information on the NDU's success and challenges. Our focus remains the mission critical success of educating joint warfighters who can think strategically and apply military power creatively through globally integrated operations in support of the National Defense Strategy in order to conduct and win war.

The May 2019 meeting was held at the Joint Forces Staff College on the South Campus of NDU in Norfolk VA. This was the first opportunity for the Board to hold its meeting there and it was an important location for a number of reasons. First, it reinforces the need for a unified curriculum and university community that addresses your priorities and mission. Second, it is important to tie the two NDU campuses together and recognize its importance to JPME and the regional community; and, third, it provided insight into the unique elements of the JFSC program. We encourage you and your successor to visit and engage with this important NDU College.

We offer you the following recommendations and observations:

1. The Board continues to be impressed with the maturity of the NDU curricula in terms of delivering joint professional military education concepts, and developing effective leaders for their future assignments. We want to emphasize the importance of enabling faculty members' abilities to bring together the vision of the National Defense Strategy and the mission of the institution. With the change in the strategic environment, every aspect of the joint force needs to be critical and self-reflective. So, a key theme that continues in all of our deliberations is the focus on advancing the vision of what it takes to operate in an all-domain environment. We must back NDU's efforts to prepare its students to lead twenty-first century deterrence that integrates all our capabilities (air, land, maritime, space, cyber, and the electromagnetic spectrum) in synchronized operations across all domains that are orchestrated to achieve the objective of influencing our adversaries when and where we choose.

We recognized the following twin themes across the breadth of the University: one theme focused on the relevance of outcomes for students and the other focused on the nurturing of faculty so that both students and faculty can succeed and respond to the changing demands of the new strategic environment. University curricula require both an aggressive awareness of external drivers and conditions along with a stable base that supports rigor and depth-of-

knowledge in teaching. This is a difficult mission necessitating constant assessment and evaluation of learning outcomes, instructional resources, and leadership engagement.

2. The Board clearly recognizes and is grateful for the impact the Chairman had on NDU's budget requirements. As recommended by the BOV from our deliberations in December 2018, NDU has experienced relief as a result of your continued engagement. We now have a forecast that ensures optimal outcomes and priority for funding approved by OSD for FY19 & FY20: a fully funded baseline across the FYDP (~\$78M).

Information transfer and Educational Technology continue to be primary concerns of the Board and in this respect, your continued clear focus on the need for out-years funding decisions from the Joint Staff will be important. The Board sees the future of the joint force and, by direct result, NDU being intricately and intimately tied to the developing ".edu" domain. The Board strongly supports creative opportunities for both faculty and students that result from broader perspectives of the ".edu" domain. It is important that NDU is a direct participant as one of the four co-chairs of the DoD ".edu" Consortium working to provide the PME community direction.

3. As NDU begins implementing its Strategy for the Future, it is developing an internal assessment of how to balance costs to understand the necessary trades needed to have a balanced and coherent program to deliver to students. There are three pieces to the new model: financial review, curriculum review, and faculty review. NDU's leadership and faculty are currently engaged in all three. We see this as an important and responsible approach to the long-term management of the institution.

4. DoD educational institutions have a readiness function as do our training centers. Addressing facility needs, building cost models, looking at value to the end state, and reassessing how facilities are rated and how they're viewed in the budgeting process are the primary elements of a readiness self-assessment. We encourage the Chairman to engage with the Chief of Staff of the Army and the Chief of Naval Operations to establish awareness of the need to keep our facilities properly maintained. The degraded condition of campus infrastructure has driven NDU to relocate the Eisenhower School and address student/faculty health issues. NDU needs the full commitment of Army and Navy base support. We cannot drive new learning outcomes without healthy, appealing learning environments for the future.

5. The Board of Visitors deeply appreciates your considered attention and support for the institution and its mission. The next scheduled BOV meeting is being planned for the fall 2019 to be held at the Ft. McNair campus.

Sincerely,



Patrick Walsh, Admiral USN (ret.)  
Chairman (acting)