
FEATURE ARTICLES

The Joint Forces Staff College

By

**Major General Byron S. Bagby, USA
Commandant Joint Forces Staff College**

For sixty-one years, the Joint Forces Staff College (JFSC) has educated officers from all military services in the art and profession of warfighting. JFSC is the Norfolk, Virginia component of the National Defense University, our nation's premier joint professional military education (JPME) institution. For most of its history, JFSC offered one course of instruction primarily for intermediate level officers. Today, there are nine different courses, some targeting senior U.S. military officers and others incorporating interagency and international officer participation. The affective learning process practiced at JFSC sets the conditions to prepare graduates to effectively apply joint doctrine and succeed in a joint environment. They are equipped to lead the joint planning, operations, and coordination efforts that are accomplished by a wide variety of U.S. and international military services and agencies. The comprehensive and diverse curricula taught in an affective learning environment is relevant, timely, and particularly rooted in an ever changing global context. Additionally, JFSC emphasizes international security within all of its programs, focusing efforts on developing even greater responsiveness to the complex and dynamic contemporary operating environment. It is with great pride and pleasure that I provide the following overview of our programs of study to the readers of the *DISAM Journal*.

Why Joint Forces Staff College?

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Service Chiefs, Combatant Commanders (COCOMs), and various other governmental organizations require staff officers who are knowledgeable and proficient in joint planning, and are able to efficiently and effectively resolve joint challenges. JFSC prepares its graduates to do just that. It is the JFSC mission to educate national security leaders in joint, multinational, and interagency operational-level planning and warfighting, to instill a primary commitment to joint, multinational, and interagency teamwork, attitudes, and perspectives.

How We Do Business

The JFSC offers the following resident and non-resident programs of study:

- Joint Advanced Warfighting School: envisioned to populate the Joint Staff and COCOMs with senior officers who are expert in joint campaign planning and strategy. Graduates are awarded a Master of Science in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy.
- Joint and Combined Warfighting School: the legacy course, Phase II JPME educates students in joint planning and operations, and prepares them for the challenges that Joint Qualified Officers can expect in a joint duty assignment.
- Joint Command, Control, and Information Operations School: designed to prepare students for joint duty in the command, control, communications, and computers (C4I) and Information Operations communities.

-
-
- Joint Continuing and Distance Education School: conducts the Advanced Joint Professional Military Education Program that provides Reserve Component officers with the means to achieve JPME requirements. This program is based on a blended learning approach where students conduct 37 weeks online via Blackboard and three weeks in residence.

Responding to emergent issues facing the military and various government agencies, JFSC developed short duration programs such as: the Joint, Interagency, and Multinational Planners Course; Homeland Security Planners Course; Russian-United States Colonels Program; and Pakistan-United States Senior Officers Program. These programs are offered throughout the academic year and are well attended by government entities with which the military cooperates in humanitarian and peacekeeping operations throughout the world.

As JFSC's Commandant, I have focused on increasing the representation of international officers as well as members of the interagency community in our diverse curricula. I am pleased that our programs have been able to accommodate the educational requirements and expectations of our many international students. In the past year alone, our international student population has included representatives from Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Croatia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Korea, Kuwait, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Tanzania, Thailand, Tonga, Turkey, United Kingdom, and Zambia. We offer these students the opportunity to join U.S. active duty and reserve component officers, and members of interagency communities in a collaborative partnership. Partnerships initiated at JFSC continue throughout the years and contribute significantly to successful multinational efforts across the full spectrum of operations. Our goal is to continue to forge a truly joint, multinational, and interagency educational environment that reaches beyond U.S. uniformed services.

JFSC is an accredited and certified institution. Since its inception in 1946, JFSC has graduated over 75,000 students, including more than 1,400 students from the international community. This is a legacy that continues to grow and pay dividends in the relevance and complexity of joint professional military education. In a global environment where unpredictability trumps the expected and where multinational and interagency cooperation are mandated, I am especially proud of the capability of the JFSC faculty and staff to ensure JFSC graduates are educated and prepared to lead in the joint operations and planning environment. Collectively, we directly influence and positively enrich joint, interagency and multinational cooperation efforts around the world.

Byron S. Bagby
Major General, U.S. Army
Commandant

About the Author

Major General Byron S. Bagby, USA, October 2006 became the Commandant of the Joint Forces Staff College. He is a native of Fulton, Montana, and was commissioned through the Army ROTC Program at Westminster College in 1978. He has earned a Master's in Education Administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.