

NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS (NSA) GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Education that Meets Today's Security Challenges

By

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Regional Security Studies Program

Why have ethnic conflicts erupted around the world, and why do they seem so intractable?

What can be done to impose a lasting peace that will strengthen the regional stability in these war-torn areas?

What are the strategic implications of NATO expansion, how and what can we predict for the future viability of NATO?

These and other questions occupy military and civilians alike in countries from Azerbaijan to Zimbabwe. Today's world demands that military and civilian officials be able to deal with a wide range of security issues, and educational programs that provide the tools necessary to respond to the changing environments.

What is the Regional Security Program?

Our comprehensive Masters Degree program is tailored to the needs of the U.S. armed forces, related federal agencies and departments, and international military and international civilians in defense-related ministries.

Students enroll in one of four general curricula offered by the regional studies program. Each of these curricula contains sub-tracks that focus on specific areas of the world:

- Middle East, Africa, and South Asia
- Far East, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific
- Europe, Russia, and Central Asia
- Western Hemisphere

Each of these curricula has a set of core classes that all students must take, complemented by a set of curricular electives that enable students to tailor their coursework to their individual interests and needs. The typical degree program lasts between 12 and 18 months.

What Will Students Learn?

Courses are taught by world-class faculty--from Harvard, Columbia, Berkeley, Stanford, MIT, and similar institutions. Students will also learn from faculty members who have been advisors to the National Security Council, the U.S. Congress, analysts with the CIA, retired military, and leaders of non-governmental organizations.

Students will gain a variety of skills during their coursework. They will be able to clearly summarize large quantities of information and persuasively present recommended policy positions and courses of action using a broad range of verbal and written communications formats, whether short oral arguments or written summaries.

They will learn the origins and development of diplomatic relations between the countries of the world, including negotiations of peace settlements, military alliances, arms limitation agreements, economic arrangements, and human rights accords. Graduates will proceed to their next assignments with an in-depth understanding of the cultural, religious, political, security, and military situation of a specific world region.

"I am a U.S. student. Having international students in one of the Southeast Asia counter-terrorism discussion groups helped me gain insight into the perspective of the Muslim world...."

Bayani C. Dilag, Capt, USAF

"The most valuable experiences here are the possibilities to share and exchange different point of views with our US colleagues, as well as with other international students."

LT. Marcin Bielewicz. Polish Army

While at NPS, students encounter colleagues from a wide variety of services and countries. They form friendships that last well beyond their time at NPS, and which often prove integral in creating positive relationships and even diplomatic cooperation.

When U.S. military and civilians travel to foreign countries, they often can call upon friendships created while at NPS to assist in their missions. International students in particular form strong ties to their fellow countrymen while they are here that cross the traditional lines between different military branches, which help them to improve service coordination once they return home.

Our Students

Our international graduates have met with great success after they leave NPS. Recent examples include.

Estonia: A recent graduate became the civilian policy advisor in the Department of International Co-operation in the Ministry of Defense.

Chile: A graduate is now the Senior Advisor to the Minister of National Defense. His NPS colleague is now the lead speechwriter on international issues in the MOD.

Georgia: A June graduate currently leads the Georgian Defense Resources Agency and is also tasked to help Georgia prepare for joining NATO.

Recent U.S. graduates have assumed integral positions in the joint combatant

commands (CENTCOM, SOUTHCOM, EUCOM and PACOM) and have become Defense Attaches in many countries (such as Russia, Senegal, and Brazil). They are chief counter-terrorism intelligence analysts (SOUTHCOM), interpreters, and advisors to battlefield commanders in Iraq. Several have gone on to teach at the Air Force Academy.

Security Studies Program

Our world has become increasing more complex, with new security challenges developing on a daily basis--counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, multilateral peacekeeping and reconstruction operations. What's more, new coalition structures, transformation in fighting technologies, and economic globalization are affecting our strategy, military planning and defense oversight capabilities. To face these new challenges, today's military officers and policy makers will need a broad knowledge and skills base in civil-military, interagency and multinational environments.

What is the Security Studies Program?

It is education that meets contemporary defense challenges. The Master of Arts in Security Studies Program offers three specialized tracks:

- 1) Stabilization and Reconstruction;
- 2) Defense Decision-Making and Planning; and
- 3) Civil-Military Relations.

Stabilization and Reconstruction - Curriculum (698B)

My experience with UN humanitarian operations in Northern Iraq in 1991 was validated by my learning experience at NPS, especially on matters of application of coherent strategy in post-conflict situations.

--Filipino officer



Photo:NSA

The first graduating class from the “Stabilization and Reconstruction” Program–December 2003

This is a 15-month graduate education program that develops a cadre of professionals that can plan and manage stabilization and reconstruction operations. To accomplish this, students will learn the requirements of stabilization and reconstruction - security, governance, transitional justice, and economic development involve multiple disciplines.

Students will also reflect the real-life post-conflict environment, where the military, Non-governmental organizations (NGO’s), state operated agencies, and civilian agencies must work together. Participants will be engaged in a forum where various agencies involved in reconstruction and stabilization negotiate differences, roles and responsibilities, and build synergy to work effectively together in post-conflict environments.

Additionally, practical skills, such as negotiation and problem solving in multi-organizational contexts are addressed, as are issues in international humanitarian law, challenges of military operations in urban environments, and media issues in stability operations.

Defense Decision-Making and Planning -- Curriculum (689C)

(For U.S. students only). This is an interdisciplinary curriculum developed for the U.S. Air Force to provide future

strategists with an understanding of domestic and international variables that must be considered in national security policy.

[The experience of studying at NPS] helped me understand better the American way of thinking and the motivations and rationales behind major decisions.

-- Civilian Romanian official

Civil-Military Relations -- Curriculum (689A)

This 15-month education program is tailored for U.S. and international officers, civilians from governmental agencies, and the U.S. National Guard. The program is designed to meet three related needs. First, the program gives students the skills they need to resolve the security problems confronting their own democracies. Second, the program offers an in-depth understanding of civil-military relations. Finally, the program prepares students to resolve the civil-military issues raised by participation in U.N. peacekeeping operations, membership in the Partnership for Peace and other alliances, and security cooperation between other nations and the U.S.

Our Students:

Our students all state that the multinational environment in the classroom is one of the most memorable features of their experiences at NPS. Our international graduates have gone on to very successful careers, including the following:

Ukraine: A recent graduate became the Director of the Euro-Atlantic Integration Centre, Ministry of Defense.

Hungary: A graduate is now the Military Advisor to President.

About the Authors:

For questions about program, please direct to:

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