
Center for Civilian and Military Relations, Forging the Link Between Academic Excellence and Program Development and Delivery

By

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There is a common perception in mainstream academia that research and teaching on topics of current relevance are often characterized by conceptual poverty and mediocrity. On the other hand, policy makers frequently criticize the research and publications of academics as irrelevant, as all too often captive in the proverbial “ivory tower.” The Center for Civil-Military Relations (CCMR) at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) seeks in all of its programs to combine scholarly rigor with real-world relevance in a wide spectrum of programs focused on civil–military relations and national security and defense. The faculty at NPS consists of approximately 200 tenure track faculty, 30 military faculty, and a varying number of other non-tenure track faculty who support the teaching and research programs. Among the tenure track faculty, virtually all hold doctorates.

Most CCMR programs, whether conducted in residence or abroad, are led by faculty members at NPS, and for team members draw upon the tenured and tenure–track faculty in the Department of National Security Affairs, Defense Resources Management Institute, and the Graduate School of Business and Public Policy. These faculty members, who are recruited from the premier research universities in the United States (U.S.) and abroad, are active in their disciplines, conduct research, and publish books and articles. In the NPS graduate degree courses they are teaching highly motivated young officers from all of the U.S. military services and officers and civilians from more than fifty other countries. The emphasis at NPS is on graduate–level teaching, analytical rigor, and original research in that NPS follows the same “publish or perish” orientation that keeps the U.S. at the top of the international graduate education hierarchy.

These tenured and tenure–track faculty bring to the CCMR one-week and two-week courses their conceptual and empirical background and insights, not to mention language skills and in–depth familiarity of different countries and regions. In this manner, virtually all CCMR programs are conceived, developed, and delivered with a graduate–level education perspective and analytical standard in mind.

The NPS faculty members benefit from their integration in CCMR short courses in three main ways.

- First, CCMR delivers programs throughout the world and to select groups of middle–to upper–level policy makers, both officers and civilians. NPS faculty members, through their participation in the CCMR team, travel to countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, and North Africa and the Middle East, thereby updating their contacts and information, or in some cases developing new research interests and contacts. While CCMR programs are supported by the U.S. embassy in country, and thus the threat to personal security is minimized in what are often very dangerous places, the team members often meet not only the participants of the seminar but also local academics and members of think tanks and non-government organizations. The NPS faculty member can thus gather data with which to update their research, for subsequent publication.

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- Second, the NPS faculty also benefit in that the American officer students at NPS are very likely to go to assignments abroad, in the combatant commands (COCOMs), or in the Pentagon dealing with the areas and the issues they have studied while at NPS. The international students, officers and civilians, will return to their countries and frequently assume very important positions. The faculty member returning from a CCMR seminar in one of these countries is thus able to bring back fresh data and insights, as well as contacts that will be of real and vital interest to NPS students. Very frequently graduates, both U.S. officers and internationals, will remain in touch with NPS faculty, and their U.S. and international colleagues long after they have departed.
 - Third, the CCMR teams routinely include as instructors retired flag and general officers, members of the U.S. Congress, retired ambassadors, staffers from Congress and executives in positions on the National Security Council and Office of the Secretary of Defense, as well as international experts. Through participation on the team during an intense week or so, the NPS faculty member learns a tremendous amount about how civil–military relations really work in the U.S. and other countries. Participation in a team is a very intense learning experience. In short, taking part on a CCMR team increases the breadth and depth of NPS faculty research and teaching, and directly benefiting NPS graduate students.

Institutionally, CCMR is finally, after ten years of developing and delivering unique programs, able to collect the insights and data from conducting programs abroad and in Monterey to produce book–length manuscripts for publication. Until recently, the CCMR faculty and staff were so busy developing and delivering programs, in response to exponentially increasing demand from other countries, the Department of State (DoS), the Department of Defense (DoD), and the COCOMs, that they were unable to collect and document the knowledge acquired through these programs. Now, however, with the support from the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) sponsoring to develop new course content for the seminars in residence and abroad, CCMR has been able to go beyond creating and updating course material, and writing edited books for publication by a prestigious academic publisher.

The first book, *Who Guards the Guardians and How: Democratic and Civil-Military Relations*, edited by Thomas Bruneau and Scott Tollefson, was published by the University of Texas Press in 2006. It contains chapters on such key civil–military issues as:

- “The Military as a Profession”
- “Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces”
- “The Role of the Legislature and Legislative Control of the Budget”
- “Professional Military Education”

It has been proclaimed as one of the most useful books published on civil-military relations in the last fifty years, and is something of a manual for practitioners throughout the world seeking to reform the defense sector.

The second book, resulting from CCMR seminars in residence and abroad, and specifically from an international roundtable held in Monterey in August 2004, *Reforming Intelligence: Obstacles to Democratic Control and Effectiveness*, was edited by Thomas Bruneau and Steven Boraz. This book, published by the University of Texas Press in 2007, contains chapters on the efforts to reform the intelligence services not only in the so-called new democracies in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Central and Eastern Europe, but also in the United States, Great Britain, France, and Israel. This book is unique in the field of intelligence studies for the approach and the case studies, all based on original

research. This book, like all CCMR programs, seeks to combine the goals of democratic civilian control with military effectiveness and efficiency.

CCMR is unique in focusing on and developing multiple links between premier graduate-level education, research, and publishing and practical applications in a broad spectrum of programs on civil–military relations and defense planning and restructuring. On one hand the CCMR programs are pushed to graduate level analytical and empirical research standards by the integration of premier NPS faculty in the seminars. On the other hand, faculty benefit from their participation in the global CCMR programs which expose them to middle-level and upper-level policy makers in real and concrete contexts. In this manner, there is a powerful synergy that benefits all involved, including the international participants and their countries.

About the Author

Dr. Thomas Bruneau is a tenured faculty member in the Department of National Security Affairs, School of International Graduate Studies.