

Educating for Joint Warfighting



The Joint Chiefs of Staff Vision and Guidance for Joint Professional Military Education & Talent Management

4 July 2024

Foreword

Effective military leadership requires ongoing and rigorous education. The National Defense Strategy emphasizes the need to cultivate critical thinking and adaptability among our military leaders. To fulfill these requirements, Joint Professional Military Education must focus on nurturing intellectual agility and strategic insight, essential for navigating complex global operations and emerging technological challenges.

This document provides the shared vision of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for the outcomes we should strive for and lays out guidance to obtain them. By consistently evolving our JPME programs and talent management systems, we can develop warfighters who excel in strategy, operational planning, and ethically applying military power. This approach ensures that we maintain our competitive advantage in a rapidly changing global environment.



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Introduction

In 1914, Europe's armies went to war led by a core of general officers with decades of combat experience in colonial wars fought around the globe. Almost all this experience proved irrelevant when they confronted the brutal maelstrom of war between great powers. By contrast, the senior American officers who led the Allies to victory in the Second World War possessed little and sometimes no combat experience. What they did have, however, was a dedication to educating themselves on the realities of war between powerful opponents. How General Fox Conner mentored a young Dwight Eisenhower by selecting his reading material and taking him aside to discuss historic battles and campaigns is well known. But Eisenhower's dedication to the study of warfare, far from being a singular case, was typical of the officers who led American forces in World War II. Of the thirty-four Army officers who achieved corps command, all but one had served as instructors within the interwar Professional Military Education (PME) system. Two-thirds of them spent over a decade in the classroom. Similarly, in the Navy, Admiral William S. Sims was leading another education revolution that prepared a generation of Sailors for the trials of a global war. Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz later said that because of his education at Newport, "nothing that happened during the [Pacific] war was a surprise—absolutely nothing except the kamikaze tactics."

In the 2022 National Defense Strategy, the Secretary of Defense reemphasized the standing PME requirement to foster the critical thinking and analytical skills foundational to the art and science of warfighting.

To accomplish this mandate, we must work to gain and sustain warfighting skill over our potential foes. We cannot accept risk in developing future joint warfighting leaders. Our Joint PME graduates must possess the knowledge and intellectual capacity to successfully deter, fight, and win against capable and committed adversaries who study our methods and prepare themselves to offset our longstanding military superiority. We cannot succeed without enhancing the cognitive abilities of joint warfighters to conceive, design, resource, and implement military strategies and campaigns that integrate joint capabilities across multiple areas of responsibilities in all domains to defeat adversaries in contests we have not yet imagined.

Twenty first century warfare demands American officers be better educated in the art and science of directing and integrating the Nation's military instrument than at any time in our history. With a rigorous and effective professional development approach, the intellectual capabilities future leaders require will accumulate intentionally over a career, not only during episodic educational opportunities. Future leaders hone their capabilities over thousands of hours of deliberate practice, pushing each leader's cognitive limits and intellectual performance. We must design an officer's career to continually develop, refine, and exercise new intellectual skills, especially up to and including the most senior ranks.

Achieving our leader development aim requires a new trajectory for our JPME that must include associated talent management systems. Our vision is for a fully aligned JPME and talent management system that identifies, develops, and uses strategically minded, critically thinking, and creative joint warfighters skilled in the art of war and the practical and ethical application of lethal military power.

The Security Environment and Globally Integrated Operations

Our JPME programs have produced officers who served the joint force and our country admirably. Yet, the National Defense Strategy and the National Military Strategy clearly make the case that our security environment is changing. The return of competition between powerful states raises the stakes for readiness and for innovation. While change is inherent to our

understanding of war's character, the accelerating pace and convergence of new technologies portends dramatic changes in how opponents will wage armed conflict. This pace, and emerging technologies, require profound change in how we plan for and execute joint operations. To succeed in deterring or winning the conflicts of the future, we must similarly adapt our leader development enterprise and not shy away from fundamental change where appropriate. Our country requires warfighting leaders and staff officers capable of waging war and leading in a dynamic, globally integrated environment. We cannot simply rely upon mass or the best technology. In the future, that technology may be in the hands of our opponents. Our job is to learn how to apply our capabilities better and more creatively. For the joint force, changes in the character and conduct of war and operations demand:

- Continuous integration of national instruments of power and influence in support of national objectives.
- Critical strategic thinking across the Joint Staff and other joint headquarters.
- An unprecedented degree of global integration of the all-domain resources available from our Combatant Commands to generate advantage for ourselves and dilemmas for our competitors.
- Creative approaches to joint warfighting and sustaining momentum in our campaigns.
- Highly effective coalition, allied, international partner and U.S. coordination and integration.
- Deeper understanding of the implications of disruptive and future technologies for adversaries and ourselves.

These emerging intellectual requirements are becoming the focus of our current leader development enterprise. Still, we can do better at linking the selection of our students, the school they attend and what they learn there, and their future assignments. We must consistently prioritize critical and creative thinking, continuous learning and professional development, and the pursuit of transregional and cross-domain excellence in the development and assignment of joint warfighters. We must collectively identify officer assignments that most urgently require the new intellectual capital created through JPME.

These requirements increase the demands on our leadership development continuum that we are not yet meeting. Put plainly, we require leaders at all levels who can anticipate, think, and act quicker and more effectively than our adversaries in every aspect of warfighting. To achieve this, we must continue to adapt and innovate throughout our JPME programs and talent management efforts to shift our policies, behaviors, and cultures to keep pace with the changing character of war. The cognitive capabilities these leaders bring to globally integrated operations are not solely the output of episodic education; they are the product of a deliberate career-long professional development ethos and learning continuum.

Desired Learning Continuum Objectives

The development of leaders requires an enterprise-wide and comprehensive approach. Joint leader development for the 21st century is the product of a learning continuum composed of training, staff and operational experience, education, exercises, and self-development/improvement. To achieve a warfighting advantage against adversaries, we must produce the most professionally competent, strategically minded, warfighting focused, and critically thinking officers possible. Our established Desired Leader Attributes, guideposts for long-term leader development, steer us toward this. The following is our vision for learning continuum objectives for JPME and Talent Management.

Requisite Joint PME Objectives. JPME programs must provide graduates the initial knowledge and skills to prepare them for service as warfighting joint leaders and senior staff officers who:

- Discern the military dimensions of a challenge affecting national interest, frame the issue at the policy level, and recommend viable military options within the overarching frameworks of globally integrated operations.
- Anticipate and lead rapid adaptation and innovation during a dynamic period of acceleration in the rate of change in warfare under the conditions of competition and disruptive technology.
- Conduct joint warfighting, at the operational to strategic levels,

as all- domain, globally integrated warfare, including the ability to integrate allied and partner contributions.

- Are strategically minded warfighters who can execute and adapt military strategy through campaigns and operations to attain national strategic goals.
- Demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills, emotional intelligence, and effective written, verbal, and visual communications skills to support the development and implementation of military strategies and complex operations.

Requisite Talent Management Objectives. Service talent management systems must provide officers opportunities to refine their existing knowledge and develop increasingly agile intellectual skills. Toward this end, these systems should:

- Reward continuous intellectual development and growth.
- Record in an officer's permanent record the complete academic performance as compared with peers.
- Target officers who have performed well for follow-on assignments that hone newly acquired skills or broadening opportunities to apply their skills in different ways.
- Consider past academic performance when determining future assignments and PME opportunities.

Critical Tasks

The following outlines fundamental changes we need for modern leader development.

Adapt and Innovate JPME. Our PME enterprise must continuously assess, adapt, and innovate. We cannot afford to be complacent, nor can we afford to shortchange JPME institutions and students with barriers to effective learning or inadequate resources. Our first task continues to be a reorientation of the JPME enterprise to prepare officers to operate globally, across all domains, and lead decisively throughout the remainder of their careers. We are shifting our JPME curricula from a predominately topic-based model to an outcomes-based approach to emphasize ingenuity, intellectual application, and military professionalism in the art and science of warfighting, while deepening knowledge of history. Staying current requires

an enduring effort as the work is never complete. Warfare, geopolitics, technology, and instructional methods will continue to change, and our JPME systems must keep pace.

Infuse Joint Context throughout Officer Careers. We must continue to assess our current JPME framework in the context of demonstrated experience from the past 40 years to ensure we are evolving requirements for the 21st century. Because the need for jointness is broader and deeper in an officer's career than our traditional Service-based career models envisioned, we must infuse jointness earlier and deeper throughout an officer's career. PME and leader development, not just intermediate and senior-level programs, require infusion of the joint context. At intermediate and higher levels, this entails the ability to synthesize capabilities across the joint force and in all domains. This wider synthesis must include the broader joint context that includes the interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational arena as they influence and support the military strategy and operations. Our JPME programs must ensure they provide the practical preparation for their graduates to serve effectively as joint staff officers to prepare them to support and coordinate military operations on a theater and global scale. We cannot afford to treat jointness as an afterthought that we can provide at the time of need.

Develop Joint Warfighting Leaders. The driving mindset behind our reforms must be that we are preparing for war. As military professionals charged with the defense of the nation, joint leaders must be experts in the conduct of warfare. Therefore, the top priority and responsibility of leaders of JPME institutions and programs is the development of joint warfighting leaders at the operational and strategic levels. Leaders of JPME institutions will build joint warfighting expertise. Additionally, JPME programs will develop officers who can contribute to the formulation of strategy as well as operational and campaign planning.

Accomplishing our educational goals requires a huge adjustment in how we educate tomorrow's warfighters in the application of military force to deter and defeat a peer enemy, who will often employ asymmetric approaches to any future conflict. This change will ensure that all JPME curricula leverages live, virtual, constructive, and gaming methodologies with wargames and exercises involving multiple sets and repetitions to develop deeper insight and ingenuity into the future of war. Learning will include future technology and warfighting concepts as they continue to evolve and mature. We must also resource and develop a library of historical war-focused case studies,

colloquia, wargames, and exercises for use across the PME enterprise, while also incentivizing collaboration and synergy between schools. To achieve deeper education on critical thinking, strategy development, and warfighting, JPME programs will relentlessly and ruthlessly reduce coverage of less important topics.

Adapt and Innovate Talent Management. Our collective talent management enterprise, based on individual Service personnel processes, must likewise continuously assess, adapt, and innovate. The positive benefits of adaptation and innovation in our JPME enterprise are suboptimized if we do not wisely identify and nurture the development of the human talent in the joint force. We must identify our best officers, assign to schooling, and employ them in a way that maximizes both their potential and the benefit to the joint force. Careful selection of who goes to school and when, who teaches them, assessments of cognitive abilities, and purposeful post-JPME assignments require adaptation and innovation to realize this vision.

Identify the Right Students. Services must align the best talent to the right JPME venue and then sequence that talent toward the most critical assignments. Senior-level JPME attendance must be based on talent, potential for strategic responsibilities, and return on investment, rather than a fair share or mechanistic allocation of all occupational specialties across a particular Service. Officers with the highest potential to be the warfighting generals and admirals of the future should attend a resident 10-month JPME program, so that they receive an in-depth warfighter education. Services also must ensure prospective students have the attributes and professional competencies to contribute to peer learning and succeed in the course by refining screen criteria and using other tools such as applications, assessments, examinations, or recommendations.

Demand and Reward Academic Excellence. In-residence JPME is an invaluable period of intense reflection and application to prepare for assignments of greater responsibility. We must reinforce a culture across our Armed Forces that enables professionals to apply themselves and grow to their potential in challenging JPME programs to build upon and enhance their operational experience. We must foster an environment where JPME programs inspire students to master the fundamentals of the art and science of war in an atmosphere and culture that encourages intellectual curiosity, stimulates critical thinking, rewards creativity and risk-taking, and understands the value of multiculturalism and allied perspectives. To move

to a higher trajectory, we must remove constraints on student learning by supporting various learning styles, behaviors, and individual desires. Schools should capture student performance and potential in academic evaluation reports that include research, writing, and analytic achievements and proven leader attributes. We should ensure JPME performance links to the promotion and assignment processes.

Foster Professional Faculty. A highly professional faculty is the core of success. A world-class educational program is not an accident, nor does it come cheap; it is the product of deliberate design, founded upon a top-notch faculty. Every JPME institution must make sure its military and civilian faculty are qualified instructors and current in the fields they are teaching. The selection, development, and management of civilian and military PME instructors demands great emphasis.

- We must incentivize the right officers to pursue a faculty assignment and the Services to facilitate such assignments. As such, Services should implement the full array of talent management programs to incentivize faculty assignments. A faculty assignment should be competitive, career enhancing, highlighted during promotion boards, and tracked to ensure follow-on assignments capitalize on skills gained. A cultural change of this magnitude requires leaders, at all levels, to corporately value faculty assignments, remove roadblocks impeding progress, and remove any stigma devaluing the importance of educating our future senior leaders.
- We must reward teaching excellence; attract, develop, and retain high-quality professional faculty in our learning institutions; and leverage professional civilian faculty with the credentials to teach at the requisite levels. Because JPME curricula must be as dynamic as the environment, our faculties must be fully resourced for experiential learning, research, and course design, and for continuous curriculum assessment, improvement, and integration.
- Success also requires that we fully invest in our academic support architecture. In addition to our facilities, we must resource, sustain, and protect academic support functions, to include education and information technology, and the organizational activities needed to empower faculty and enable students to achieve learning outcomes.

Regard JPME as a Combat Multiplier. We must innovatively leverage PME programs and curricula as an essential asset to build trust and cognitive interoperability across the Joint Force and to integrate allies and key U.S. and international partners. To further this element:

- Our PME institutions must be an agile and adaptable enterprise. Collaboration across our JPME network enhances our programs, builds synergy and deeper understanding, and enables us to focus on key problems. In the process, the education enterprise can serve our joint warfighters with rigorous studies and research, concept development, and exercise design.
- Our PME enterprise must be dynamic. To remain relevant, our programs should have the option of consulting with outside experts to help validate missions and focus, as well as determine gaps and new programs requirements.
- We should strive to make our JPME enterprise accessible to the force that is not in residence by better supporting distance education, self-development, and unit professional development programs, recognizing that these extend the core mission.
- We must continue to incorporate allied and partner students within our JPME system to better prepare our own officers for global operations. Strong relationships between institutions are also important to support allied and partner PME programs as we innovate, creating opportunities for closer ties and deeper collaboration, and for greater U.S. student participation.
- We must include both the Total Force and select Defense Department civil servants into senior-level development programs and JPME to ensure they remain integral members of our staffs and operations. In addition, we must strengthen our interagency and intergovernmental perspectives.

Align Education and Utilization of Talent. The deliberate, purposeful use of JPME graduates is an essential task directly linked to better campaign outcomes. We require effective processes for the assignment and utilization of in-resident JPME graduates to ensure future assignments capitalize on

academic achievements and learning. We must leverage the academic experience, research, and experiential learning of JPME graduates to a much greater extent. We must ensure academic evaluations capture officer performance relative to their peers and their improved expertise aids the talent management processes. To achieve the vision, we must reward officers who exhibit intellectual excellence with appropriate assignments and the potential to remain competitive in their careers.

Leverage Joint Exercises. The use of exercises is a key part of the continuum of learning as well. We must place exercise participants into situations of uncertainty and complexity where creativity, adaptability, critical thinking, and initiative are key. The planning and application of all-domain capabilities should be a key part of these exercises, to reinforce the developing cognitive capacity, to recognize problems and opportunities, and to initiate rapid decision-making as an essential aspect of joint integrated operations. Our joint exercises should leverage feedback that links issues and lessons back into our leadership development and JPME system. Conversely, our scholars and practitioners in JPME can contribute their educational research to support our combatant commanders.

We need a select cadre of officers who can meaningfully contribute to the formulation of military strategies. The joint community requires processes to identify and develop warfighters that can contribute to strategy, not just operational and campaign planning. We have created many officers who are expert planners but fewer who truly grasp operational art or formulation of military strategy. Told the objective, our planners are unmatched; however, clear objectives are elusive and rare. The realities of planning for competition and armed conflict are intellectually demanding and JPME must educate our joint warfighters on how to determine the right operational and strategic objectives.

General and Admiral Joint Professional Military Education

Overview. In the face of substantial changes across nearly all domains of warfighting, developing innovative and creative senior military leaders is our paramount responsibility. The vision for General and Admiral joint professional military education guides and ensures that our senior officers are

prepared to meet the challenges of a potential conflict between great powers. Currently, educational opportunities for senior flag officers are limited, creating an inverse relationship between continuing intellectual development and strategic responsibility. As senior leaders ascend, they grow more distant from their educational groundings, and they must increasingly rely on experience, self-study, and personal relationships to develop their strategic acumen. Without aggressive innovation, this discontinuity may undermine efforts to meet demands for strategic leadership in a complex and uncertain security environment, particularly during any potential conflict. See the roadmap on page 22 for planning general and admiral education.

Background. As quoted earlier, Admiral Nimitz said nothing occurring in the Pacific Theater was a surprise during World War II other than the kamikaze tactics. That he could make such a statement is a credit to the PME of the era. Alternatively, in 1940 the French Army was surprised by everything surrounding the German way of war. In the years leading up to the conflict, many experts concluded the French were ahead of the Germans, or nearly so, in almost every category of military power. They had more tanks, more artillery, more men under arms, and about the same number of combat airplanes. The French pursued modernization and conducted training and military education but they did so within the context of a system that drew the wrong lessons from past wars. According to Marc Bloch author of *Strange Defeat*, the French military's system of education was off target if not "wholly wrong" and dominated by those who expected the next war to mirror their experiences in the Great War. They did not anticipate correctly how technology would impact future warfare much less recognize how it would expand the operational environment (OE), empower joint combined arms maneuver, shrink distance, and compress time. All the combatants of World War II had access to similar technology, but the Germans were the first to exploit it by coupling new technologies with doctrine and leadership. What followed ranks as one of the most crushing defeats in the history of warfare. The Germans invaded Western Europe in May 1940, shocking the allies, and sometimes even themselves with the speed of their success. The well-armed French, hampered by obsolete doctrine, and led by generals who no longer understood the realities of warfare, crumbled under the shock of the German assault. Unable to match the Germans' tempo or make meaningful decisions in a timely manner, the senior commands of the French military collapsed. In just six weeks it was all over, and on 22 June 1940, the French signed a humiliating armistice and accepted occupation.

How could that have happened? Students of history recognize that events of this scale and complexity do not have a singular cause. Regardless, the French military education system arguably played a role. Before the war, French generals failed to visualize the future and adapt their forces and doctrine to new realities. French generals proved themselves, either unwilling or incapable of thinking in terms of fighting the next war. The Germans embraced the idea that the conduct of contemporary warfare centered around mobility and speed, while the French thought only of the slower-paced conflicts of earlier wars. Worse, when called upon to face Germany's new methods, French generals had no context in which to comprehend what had changed or how to help them adapt to these changes. According to Bloch, "Our own (French) rate of progress was too slow and our minds too inelastic for us to ever admit the possibility that the enemy might move with the speed which he actually achieved."

Today's Context. Today, the joint force is experiencing fundamental change in the character of war—changes in how, where, and with what weapons and technologies opposing sides fight. According to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, such fundamental change is rare, but it is happening now, and it is influencing, accelerating, and expanding the next OE to the degree that future joint warfighting will require a new way of war fought and led by leaders that we need to develop now. The future OE will be highly lethal and characterized by the ability to see and sense like never before.

As the U.S. military looks to the future, we cannot discount the immediate possibility of armed conflict with a capable enemy. If such a conflict erupts, our military will enter it with generals who have experienced a decade or more at war. But like the generals of 1914, little of this experience will apply to fighting a war with another great power. Like the interwar years, (between World War I and World War II), our PME institutions must fill the experience gap with knowledge. Thus, JPME institutions must increasingly focus on warfighting. Just as crucially, General and Admiral education programs must instruct our senior officers to anticipate the future of war at the operational and strategic levels.

Generals and Admirals in the military represent the pinnacle of leadership and responsibility. The Department trusts these senior leaders to make critical strategic and operational decisions that will have a profound impact on national security. To equip them for these complex roles, it is imperative that they receive specialized education tailored to their unique needs. **This Vision for General and Admiral JPME presents the broad educational requirements**

and objectives for military officers at the rank of O-7 and above, emphasizing the importance of continuous learning in the pursuit of effectiveness in the profession of arms. It recognizes that senior officers must possess a broad knowledge base. Thus, ongoing education will encompass a range of disciplines, including strategic studies, policy, international relations, ethics, technology, and joint warfighting, to produce highly capable warfighting leaders.

Educational Requirements and Objectives

Joint and Multinational Warfighting. *Our senior officers will excel in joint and multinational operations, ensuring seamless cooperation between different military services and international partners, mastering the art of joint warfighting.*

This education must include the employment of historical, contemporary, and futuristic case studies to help inform senior leaders on crucial aspects of future armed conflict. Moreover, it must significantly increase the use of experiential learning, such as staff rides, practical exercises, and, most importantly, wargaming. General and Admiral education must also make room for the serious discussion of future conflicts by those we expect to lead our forces in these potential conflicts. To facilitate such discussions, this education will examine the Joint Warfighting Concept (JWC) disruptive technology, the changing character of warfare, threat doctrine & way of war, lessons from recent and current concepts, operationalizing the JWC, integrating new technology within current doctrine and war plans.

Senior officers often work in joint and multinational environments. Education should emphasize joint and coalition operations, fostering collaboration with different military services and international partners. Courses should focus on interoperability, alliance building, and the challenges of multinational command. A full understanding of military history and evolving warfighting concepts is necessary for success. Officers should know something about a lot of wars and a great deal about a few, to develop an instinct about what things in war will go well and which poorly, what one can anticipate and what one cannot. A profound emphasis on military history is necessary. Military leaders should delve into a wide range of historical conflicts to develop an instinct for anticipating outcomes in warfare. Furthermore, a transparent evaluation process should be in place to dissect and learn from military judgment errors.

Strategic Diagnosis. *Generals and Admirals develop and make decisions by fully understanding the perspective of the adversary, reasons for their actions,*

and comprehensive recognition of all their capabilities.

A complete analysis requires identifying the root causes, incentives, and aspirations behind an adversary's actions. This comprehension provides insight and appreciation for the adversary's decision making. To be effective, General's and Admiral's diagnoses must serve to influence an adversary's perceptions and decisions while narrowing their choices. Considering and knowing the adversary's political, philosophical, religious, social, and cultural systemic drivers along with linguistic and psychological factors is essential to understand the adversary's actions, recognize their signaling, and avoid mirroring—the mistaken assumption adversaries share our experiences, perceptions, and analysis—to understand an adversary's actual perspective and its perception of U.S. and allied capabilities and resolve.

The Civilian-Military Dialogue. *Campaigning is the result of strategic discussion, policy, and operational-level planning and execution.*

An effective and continual civilian-military dialogue guides the process, develops trust and credibility, ensures integration between military operations within DOD, and aligns efforts with other U.S. government departments and agencies. Senior military leaders have important roles in the dialogue. This includes participating in the discussion leading up to a Presidential or Secretary of Defense decision. In executing a civilian leader's decision, senior military leaders continue to provide advice when adapting the policy as the environment unfolds. General and Admiral JPME provides this context and practical exercises to develop skill and familiarity. At the start of the civil-military dialogue, military commanders work with their civilian counterparts to gain a shared understanding to begin to identify the problem or problems they are facing. Commanders learn to express or explain their understanding of the problem and articulate the assumptions they are making. Students learn to clearly articulate what actions military capabilities can perform, the objectives these options can achieve, the costs and risks associated with each option, and how those options address the problem or problems. As the civil-military dialogue matures, the specificity of civilian leadership guidance will typically increase.

Strategic Leadership. *Our senior officers must be masters of leading at the strategic level, capable of developing and executing comprehensive military strategies.*

At the senior ranks, military officers should receive advanced education in strategic leadership. This education should focus on honing the ability to

employ military forces in the support of the formulation and executions of military strategies. Courses should cover topics such as strategic planning, policy development, and the integration of military capabilities into broader national security objectives. Specialized education for senior officers will also enhance their leadership skills, ensuring they can guide their organizations effectively, inspire their subordinates, and make informed decisions aligned with national objectives.

Innovation and Technology. *Through cutting-edge education, our officers will excel in innovative decision-making, leveraging technology and data to drive military operations.*

As technology rapidly evolves, senior officers must stay informed about cutting-edge innovations and their military applications. Education in this area should include emerging technologies, cyber warfare, and the integration of artificial intelligence into military operations. Continuous learning enables senior officers to stay ahead of emerging threats and technologies and anticipate the impact on future warfighting.

Critical Thinking and Decision-Making. *Senior military leaders must develop the confidence to decide and act in ambiguous situations and under conditions where clear direction from above may be lacking or overcome by changing conditions.*

Advanced education should refine the critical thinking and decision-making skills of senior officers. This includes scenario-based exercises, case studies, the history of warfare, and simulations that simulate real-world challenges. Officers should be prepared to make high-stakes decisions under pressure.

National Defense and Security Policy. *Senior officers will have a deep understanding of national defense and security policy. This includes knowledge of the legislative process, defense budgeting, and the interplay of military strategy with political objectives.*

National policy represents the decision by senior leaders to pursue a specific approach or strategy regarding U.S. interests. As such, policy is usually the result of deliberation among policymakers. National policy articulates U.S. strategic objectives and the degree of effort envisioned to pursue those objectives. Senior military leaders must be attentive to policy, as it guides joint force development and employment. Policy also guides assumptions, available resources, permissions, and limits of action. Policy can vary widely; therefore, the employment of military forces is particular to a specific situation. Military

advice to policymakers is effective when it includes a realistic appraisal of both current and future capabilities, as well as the risks and potential consequences of military action.

International Relations and Diplomacy. *We will produce globally oriented leaders familiar with diplomacy and international relations, capable of building and sustaining alliances in a dynamic world.*

Diplomatic and international relations education is crucial for senior officers who often engage in international negotiations and cooperation. Courses should cover diplomatic protocols and negotiation techniques. A strong foundation in practical diplomacy enhances officers' ability to build partnerships and alliances.

Ethics and Moral Leadership. *Our leaders will demonstrate unwavering ethical resilience, fostering a culture of integrity and accountability within the military.*

Senior officers bear significant ethical and moral responsibilities. These officers must master the tools to navigate the kind ethical dilemmas that manifest themselves only at the highest levels of strategy and policy. Education in this area will help senior officers recognize, account for, and address these high-level dilemmas where there are no easy choices.

Criticality. The goal in this new philosophy and direction in General and Admiral joint education is to promote a culture of continued learning for senior officers focused on how they will direct and command the joint force in armed conflict. The fast pace of future warfare will challenge unprepared leaders and organizations to adapt in time to keep up with the tempo. As Marc Bloch pointed out in a similar era years ago, "The new elements of the strategic problem should have been taken to heart before the outbreak of hostilities...early mistakes only become tragic when the men in charge are incapable of putting them right."

Education for senior military officers is a critical investment in the future of national security. By providing advanced education in strategic leadership, policy, international relations, ethics, innovation, warfighting, and decision-making, the military ensures that its senior officers are well-prepared to lead effectively in an ever-evolving global security landscape. This commitment to learning not only benefits the individual officers but also contributes to the overall strength and adaptability of the armed forces.

Senior leaders and commanders know that on every occasion the U.S. has

engaged in sustained armed conflict against a peer enemy, the joint force has had to change warfighting methods, organizations, and capabilities to succeed in the new environment. Until this adaptation occurred, the military could not bring effective force to bear against the enemy. Senior joint education tests individuals' assumptions about the future and challenges previous conclusions and certainties of the past. Finally, senior joint education must build elasticity and agility of the mind.

In adhering to this visionary framework, we commit to the continuous development of our senior military officers and the pathways required to prepare them as junior and mid-level officers. By embracing the principles of strategic excellence, innovation, ethics, global engagement, and expertise in joint warfighting, we will empower our leaders to excel in their roles and ensure the security and prosperity of our nation in an ever-changing world. This vision is not only a commitment to the individuals who serve but also a pledge to the enduring strength and adaptability of the U.S. military. Failing to seize this moment to revitalize the education of these officers would be a missed opportunity to make long-term and necessary changes. Tomorrow's military leaders must effectively lead the defense enterprise and be able to fight and win the nation's future wars. This unalterable standard demands the very best system to develop and educate today's senior officer corps.

Senior Enlisted Leader Joint Education

As we conclude our discussion on the criticality of continuous learning and strategic adaptation for senior military officers, it becomes clear that effective leadership development must extend beyond the commissioned officer corps. Senior enlisted joint education is equally crucial, ensuring that Service Senior Enlisted Advisors (SSEA) and Command Senior Enlisted Leaders (CSEL) are prepared to complement generals and admirals in ensuring joint force readiness. By fostering strategic thinking and operational agility, Senior Leader (SEL) joint education enhances the overall effectiveness of joint forces, bridging the gap between high-level strategy and frontline execution, and ensuring cohesive, adaptable leadership across all levels of the military.

The role of the SEL in multi-service and multinational, joint, and coalition force organizations is indispensable, given the expanding scope and intricacy of

modern operations. The SEL's role in organize, train, and equip is instrumental in achieving mission success, drawing from relatable experiences that resonate with a significant portion of the force. CSELs provide solution-oriented guidance, advising generals and admirals by addressing blind spots and bridging the gap between strategic objectives and tactical execution.

Command Senior Enlisted Leaders must maintain a dual focus, simultaneously understanding strategic imperatives while tackling operational and organizational hurdles. They must anticipate and adapt to unforeseen challenges, embodying the fundamental tenets of mission command and making ethical decisions grounded in shared values.

In today's dynamic operational landscape, characterized by global integration and multifaceted security challenges, CSELs must possess a deep understanding of trans-regional, all-domain issues and grasp the strategic implications of their actions. They are pivotal in fostering joint, interagency, and multinational collaboration by promoting unity of effort.

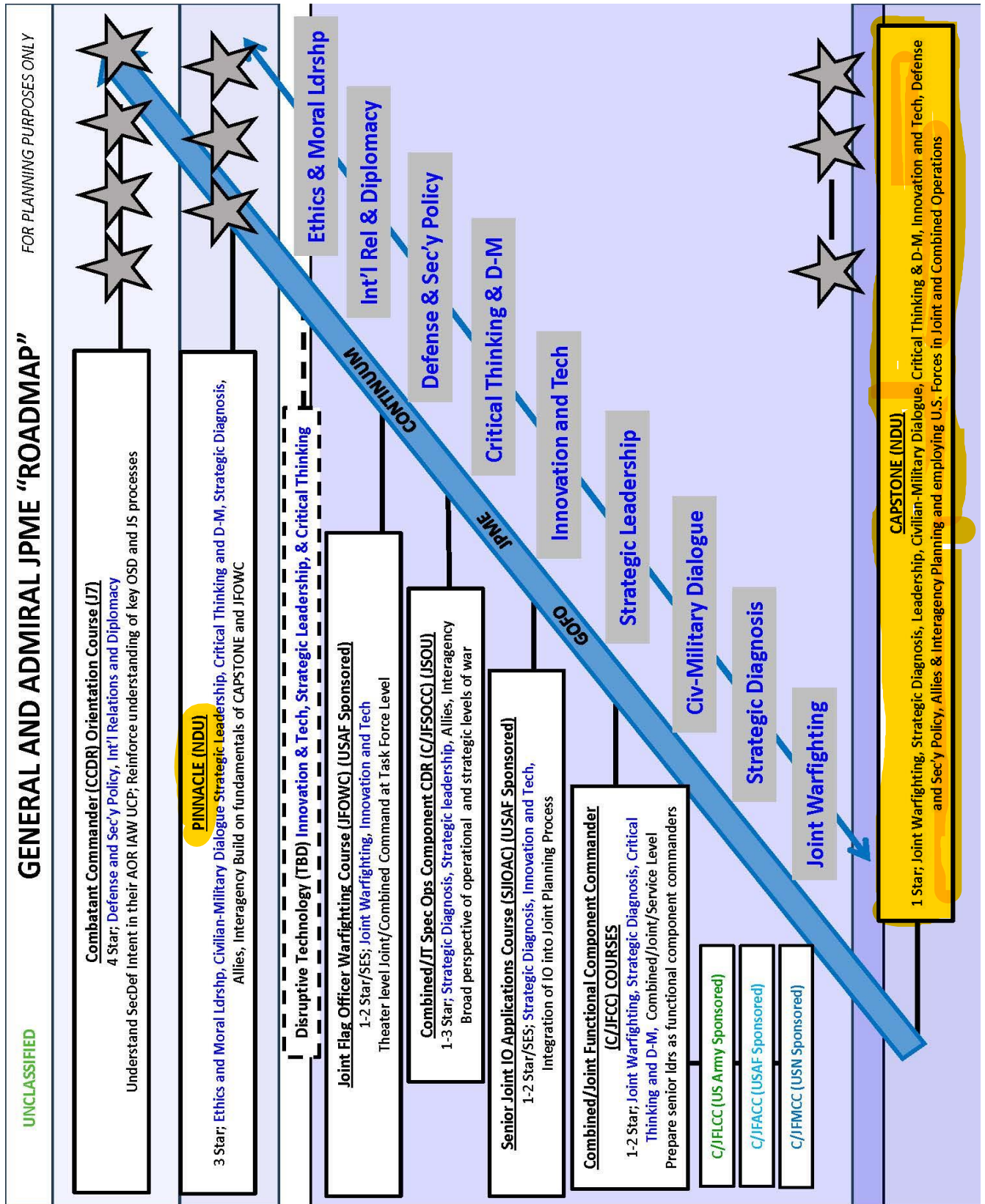
To prepare CSELs effectively, their education must elevate Joint Professional Military Education learning outcomes beyond those of more junior ranks. This advanced education should enable CSELs to:

- Operate and lead within Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational environments.
- Understand the interactions between all instruments of national power: Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic.
- Maintain a dual focus, looking “up and out” while staying focused “down and in,” and communicate effectively through all command levels.
- Anticipate and adapt to surprise and uncertainty, recognize change, assist in transitions, and exemplify mission command attributes: understanding, intent, and trust.

Career long education prepares CSELs to be able to address readiness challenges within their organizations and empower fellow leaders through inclusivity, transparency, and constructive feedback. Focused joint education will provide CSELs a thorough understanding of global security challenges and joint doctrine to successfully advise and support senior joint leaders.

Conclusion

We face a future that demands a change in emphasis and urgency. We must identify and select officers who display an intellectual edge and can outthink our adversaries in war amidst uncertainty and disruptive change. We cannot create the warfighting advantage, intellectual overmatch, and mental agility future leaders require through intermittent education or leveraging only past experiences. Warfighting is a function of the purposeful combination of education, training, rigorous exercises, and their studied application in the real world. To meet this imperative, we have set the trajectory for a continuous transformation. We require a concerted effort across the joint force to establish the foundation to implement this vision. The result will be a cultural and intellectual shift in the joint force and the Services.



General and Admiral JPME Roadmap.

