

PRESIDENT'S FORUM



The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you.

MAX DE PREE

REALITY—THE NAVAL WAR COLLEGE is over 127 years old, and since its establishment it has made a powerful difference in America's wars, in the prevention of wars, and in those cherished but too-infrequent periods of peace. For as long as the United States has a navy, the Naval War College will continue to make a powerful difference while remaining the Navy's home of thought.

Thank you—We just updated our Missions, Functions, and Tasks Statement. I want to lay out the four missions of the Naval War College and link them to the four incredible deans primarily responsible for accomplishing those missions—and to say thank you.

Before I get to the missions and deans, I want to say thank you as well to the two people who lead the Naval War College. First is our provost and our Chief Operating Officer, Ambassador (Ret.) Mary Ann Peters. Second is my deputy and our Chief of Staff, Captain Russ Knight, USN. Ambassador Peters has served three Presidents here, after a distinguished career in the State Department, spanning from assignment in Moscow at the height of the Cold War to service as ambassador to the world's seventh-most-populous country, Bangladesh. Captain Knight began his distinguished naval aviation career flying the original "war-horse," the A-6 Intruder, before commanding an F/A-18 Hornet squadron. He also commanded Naval Air Station Meridian, Mississippi, where he taught, flew, led, and perfected his skills in maintaining a complex installation.

Mission 1: Educate and Develop Leaders. The College shall provide current, rigorous and relevant professional military education programs supporting the Navy's Professional Military Education (PME) Continuum. The Dean of Academic Affairs, who accomplishes this mission, is Dr. John Garofano. The College's

“smokestack industry” is to produce graduates who know military history, how our national security policy is formulated, and how joint military operations are executed.

***Mission 2: Help CNO Define the Future Navy and Its Roles and Missions.** The College shall conduct research, analysis, and gaming to support the requirements of the Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations, the combatant commanders, the Navy component commanders, the Navy’s numbered fleet commanders, other Navy and Marine Corps commanders, the U.S. intelligence community, and other departments/agencies of the U.S. government.* The Dean, Center for Naval Warfare Studies, who accomplishes this mission, is Professor Robert C. “Barney” Rubel. The College’s “venture capitalist of ideas,” from war gaming to strategic research, the center has a long history of thinking hard about the future, innovating, writing, and making a difference.

***Mission 3: Support Combat Readiness.** The College shall conduct Operational Level of War education, leadership and professional ethics training, education, and assessment activities to support the ability of the Navy’s Joint Force Maritime Component Commanders (JFMCCs) and Navy component commanders to function effectively as operational commanders.* The Dean, College of Operational and Strategic Leadership, who accomplishes this mission, is Rear Admiral Jamie Kelly (Ret.). This college—the part of our institution to which the salt water flows most directly from the fleet, and then back—imbues in all our students knowledge of leadership and ethics, as well as meets the fleet’s demand for confident, competent planners at the operational level of war.

***Mission 4: Strengthen Maritime Security Cooperation.** The College shall bring together flag, senior and intermediate level naval leaders from other countries to develop them for high command in their navies; promote an open exchange of views between international security professionals which encourages friendship and cooperation and builds trust and confidence; and study operational planning methods and common maritime security challenges.* The Dean, International Programs and Maritime Security Cooperation, who accomplishes this mission, is Professor Tom Mangold. One of every six students here at the Naval War College is an international officer. This program truly embodies the spirit of the Navy’s “Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower.” It has built, year by year, a network of thousands of graduates, officers who have established deep and mutual trust and confidence through their shared experiences in the classroom and in travel, in Newport and as far as the Golden Gate Bridge.

Supported firmly by the Navy, we nevertheless benefit every day from the generous support of the Naval War College Foundation, led by its distinguished chairman, Mr. Peter Pelletier.

Finally, we must thank our Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Jonathan Greenert, who has kept up the impressive record of his predecessor, Admiral Gary Roughead, of frequent trips to Newport. Uniquely among the services, as President of the Naval War College, I report directly to the CNO, with all the enormous benefit that brings.

Four important missions, incredible leadership in Newport and Washington, and friends around the world—to all of you, I say again, thank you.

JOHN N. CHRISTENSON

Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
President, Naval War College