



Institute for National Strategic Studies Research Work Plan FY2017

This document summarizes the INSS research work plan for FY2017. INSS research is carried out by the institute's five research centers: the Center for Strategic Research (CSR), the Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction (CSWMD), the Center for Technology and National Security Policy (CTNSP), the Center for Complex Operations (CCO), and the Center for the Study of Chinese Military Affairs (CSCMA). The NDU Press, a component part of INSS, publishes and disseminates INSS research.

The mission of INSS is to conduct research in support of the academic and leader development programs at the National Defense University, to provide strategic support to the Secretary of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and unified combatant commands, and to interact with other U.S. Government agencies and the broader national security community. The FY2017 research work plan is based on priorities provided by senior Pentagon and University leadership. The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and senior leaders at National Defense University have reiterated that senior leader development / joint professional military education is the first and most important responsibility for the research component at the university. Accordingly, our first priority is supporting the university's *academic programs*. This past year most full-time senior researchers lectured in support of JPME, provided publications in support of NDU courses, served as student mentors, and/or taught core or elective courses. INSS also continues to play a leading role in implementing the NDU Scholars program, pioneered by the Center for the Study of Chinese Military Affairs in collaboration with PACOM, and expanded last year to include EUCOM, NORTHCOM, and STRATCOM. This work will continue in the coming academic year.

Our second priority is *directed research* in support of senior Department of Defense (DoD) leaders. INSS conducts directed research within its capabilities when approved by the NDU-P and when the requested work supports Joint Education and Strategic Leader Development. Early in FY2016, INSS published a CJCS-directed assessment of the campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, *Lessons Encountered: Learning from the Long War*, a 500-page scholarly analysis provided to all general and flag officers in the armed forces as well as all war college students throughout JPME. Also in FY2016, a substantial portion of the research component's effort was devoted to a scholarly, high-level assessment of the strategic security environment that will be encountered by the next Presidential administration. This 17-chapter volume will be published in early FY2017. Other INSS research activities contribute directly to existing Joint Staff management processes and activities (e.g. joint doctrine and concept development). Additional projects requested by sponsors are prioritized consistent with the level of senior leader interest. The Institute gives priority to the Joint Staff, OSD, and the Combatant Commanders, while also responding to requests from other national security stakeholders, including defense agencies, and in selective cases, interagency partners. The majority of INSS projects are reimbursable research

efforts, funded primarily by DoD. Recent stakeholders or sponsors of INSS research include the Joint Staff, EOP, OSD Policy, OSD AT&L, the Service Staffs, and Combatant Commands, among others.

A significant innovation this year is the National Security Technology Accelerator (NSTA), nested in our Center for Technology and National Security Policy. Launched in 2016, the NSTA is sponsored by OSD Acquisition, Technology and Logistics (AT&L) and funded through appropriations in the 2016 and 2017 National Defense Appropriations Act (NDAA). Using existing NDU spaces and at no cost to the University, the NSTA supports collaboration with other academic institutions and research organizations, including private industry, to help link technology innovation to the defense enterprise. NSTA programs leverage NDU's unique position at the intersection of government and academia and help infuse cutting edge science and technology into NDU academic programs, informing and preparing tomorrow's national security leaders.

The third priority used to shape the annual research plan is *non-directed research*, based primarily on key strategic documents such as the 2015 National Security Strategy, the 2016 National Military Strategy, and the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review. INSS researchers are also in regular contact with Joint Staff, OSD, and Combatant Command leaders and their staffs in their areas of expertise, which ensures that directed and non-directed research is relevant to the concerns of defense policymakers and other senior leaders. All research projects projected for FY2017 are linked to one of the Institute's ten strategic themes, listed below. Research linked to senior leader concerns will be relevant and will provide a high return on invested resources.

INSS guides its research efforts with ten core strategic themes derived from strategic guidance documents. All support NDU academic programs and Joint Leader Development. This year we revisited the 2015 National Security Strategy, the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review, and the 2016 National Military Strategy. Our review also takes into account the major strategic events that have taken place since those documents were published, such as the Russian intervention in Syria and China's activity in the East and South China Sea.

This review also incorporates the Chairman's key focus areas (Restore Joint Readiness, Develop Leaders for Joint Forces Next, and Improve Joint Warfighting Capability) and the Chairman's Four plus One construct: addressing growing threats from Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, and violent extremism.

Chairman's Four-plus-One Construct

Russia remains the foremost threat to the United States, armed with thousands of nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them via ballistic missiles and manned bombers. Russia has been increasingly bellicose, both in the words of its leader and in the actions of its military: interventions and hybrid warfare in the Crimea, Ukraine, and Syria; cyberwarfare including apparent hacking of American political parties' servers; and possibly attempts to influence American elections with timed releases of hacked information via WikiLeaks. Russia has also been flexing its military muscle with an uptick in aircraft and ships breaching NATO airspace and naval boundaries, the public display of new weapon systems such as the

RS-28 Sarmat ICBM, nicknamed "Satan 2," and the deployment of SA-300 and SA-400 air defense systems to Iran and Syria. Perhaps most worrisome, all this is taking place against the backdrop of the withering of long-standing arms control regimens. Russia is addressed in themes 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10.

China is less bellicose at the political level than Russia, and it is less capable militarily. Nonetheless, its military capacity is significant and it has acted in increasingly provocative ways, particularly in the South China Sea. In 2013, China began land reclamation projects in the South China Sea on several low-tide elevations. The Philippines, Malaysia, Taiwan and Vietnam have all engaged in such projects since the 1980s, but China's land reclamation activities dwarf those of other claimants. By June 2015, China's land reclamation projects totaled more than 2,900 acres, or 17 times more land in 20 months than the other claimants combined over the past 40 years. More worrisome, China is not just "reclaiming" the land – it is constructing runways and military bases on it. China is addressed in themes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, and 10.

Iran has made a partial reentry into the community of nations with the signing of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, aka, the "Iran Nuclear Deal." Yet it continues to challenge US interests in Syria, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, and against Israel by supporting Hezbollah and Hamas. Iran is addressed in themes 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10.

North Korea has been a menace to its neighbors for years. However, the increased rhetoric of the Hermit Kingdom combined with a spate of nuclear weapons and ballistic missile tests have unnerved US allies in the region. Especially problematic are the erratic actions of "Young Leader" Kim Jong-un and his cult-of-personality totalitarianism. North Korea is addressed in themes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, and 10.

Violent Extremism is today most prominently exemplified in the forms of ISIL and Al Qaida, but it manifests itself through an untold number of groups that vary from political dissidents to criminal organizations. The proliferation of knowledge about improvised weapons manufacture via the internet enables disgruntled nonconformists to become serious threats to soft civilian targets. Violent extremism is addressed in themes 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10.

FY2017 INSS Strategic Themes

1. Balance strategic objectives, joint force readiness, and risks in an era of reduced resources (focused on force posture, joint force design, creative operating concepts, and disruptive technologies)
2. Develop and employ comprehensive national and coalition power in a time of scarce resources
3. Mitigate global WMD and cyber threats
4. Engage key allies and strategic partners in **Asia** and Europe
5. Inform U.S. policies toward **Russia, China, Iran, North Korea** and **violent extremist organizations**
6. Propose effective solutions to strategic challenges in the **Middle East**

7. Secure the global commons and meet cross-domain challenges
8. Strengthen homeland defense support to homeland security (focused on transnational threats such as **terrorism** and organized crime)
9. Improve organizational performance in full spectrum military and interagency operations
10. Understand the strategic and operational effects of emerging science and technology and support defense innovation and acquisition reform

These themes are linked to the three strategy pillars identified in the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review and the CJCS Key Focus Areas published in October, 2015 as the following chart indicates:

Strategy Pillars & CJCS Focus Areas	Summary of INSS Strategic Themes
1. Protect the homeland, to deter and defeat attacks on the United States and to support civil authorities in mitigating the effects of potential attacks and natural disasters. • Restore Joint Readiness	• Mitigate global WMD and cyber threats (R, C, I, NK, VE) • Improve organizational performance in full spectrum military and interagency operations (R, C, I, NK, VE) • Strengthen homeland defense (VE)
2. Build security globally, in order to preserve regional stability, deter adversaries, support allies and partners, and cooperate with others to address common security challenges. • Develop Leaders for Joint Forces Next	• Engage key allies and strategic partners in Asia and Europe (R, C, I, NK, VE) • Inform U.S. policies toward Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, and violent extremist organizations (R, C, I, NK, VE) • Propose effective solutions to strategic challenges in the Middle East (R, I, VE) • Balance strategic objectives, joint force readiness, and risks in an era of reduced resources (R, C, I, NK, VE)
3. Project power and win decisively, to defeat aggression, disrupt and destroy terrorist networks, and provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. • Improve Joint Warfighting Capability	• Understand the strategic and operational effects of emerging science and technology and support defense innovation and acquisition reform (R, C, I, NK, VE) • Secure the global commons and meet cross-domain challenges (R, C, I, NK, VE) • Develop and employ comprehensive national power, including alongside allies and partners (R, C, I, NK, VE)

The annual research plan provides a framework to guide our efforts through the coming year, but we acknowledge the requirement to remain flexible and highly responsive to customer needs. NDU research leaders maintain an ongoing dialogue with University and Department senior leaders in order to continually reassess how best to meet evolving requirements. INSS considers this research plan a living document and will review and update as needed based on current events and higher level guidance. With this as overview, current and projected research activities for FY2017 are portrayed in the attached brief, organized by research center.

Appendices

A – Research Approaches

B – Current and Projected Research Projects (aka, “The Holistic Brief”)

Appendix A

Research Approaches: This appendix summarizes the INSS approach to research that helps INSS ensure consistently high quality research products. Given the finite resources available to INSS, it is more important than ever to employ the best research practices consistent with our mission. These principles will continue to guide our research activity:

Selectivity: INSS will not have the resources to cover all major regional and functional issues. In order to make the greatest impact, we will have to select issues that play to our particular strengths and decline projects with marginal returns even if they are otherwise interesting. Current INSS strengths include regional expertise, particularly on China and the Middle East, and functional expertise in technology assessment, defense strategy, planning, defense economics, and interagency operations. INSS also has functional expertise in countering WMD and deterrence.

Quality: INSS will emphasize quality over quantity. Given reduced resources and the priority accorded to supporting JPME, it is critical that every INSS product be notable for its quality. Our track record in this regard is excellent, and with careful attention we can probably even improve the quantity of our output. Our goal is to produce quality products that are of strategic import, non-partisan, non-ideological, timely and tailored for senior leaders.

Multidisciplinary: If the problems senior leaders confront are increasingly complex, it follows that they need correspondingly rich solution sets. Problem-solving in a complex environment is almost always multifunctional, and INSS is well-placed to provide multifunctional research. We are compensating for capacity lost in previous years by greater collaboration across research centers and more use of low-cost adjunct and visiting research faculty.

Collaborative: Multidisciplinary research usually is collaborative research. Collaboration can be between INSS personnel and outside partners, between INSS research centers, or between personnel within centers. Since collaboration can be time-consuming and expensive, it is important to choose partners carefully and ensure agreement on the research problem and approach. We should maximize the advantages of different research entities. When we partner with outside organizations (particularly within DoD) it is important to clarify desired output and roles and responsibilities for providing resources, data, products, and for assessing results.

Methodologically rigorous. As part of our commitment to quality, we must give those using our research a reason to be confident in our conclusions. We must demonstrate a deep understanding of the problem we are researching and its import; familiarity with the

extant body of literature on the subject and alternative schools of thought on how to address the issue; and pursue a clear method for assessing evidence and arguments relevant to the problem under investigation. We also must identify any implicit assumptions and anticipate and address rejoinders to our conclusions.