



U.S. NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
Est. 1884
NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

CSF

Current Strategy Forum

United States Naval War College | Newport, Rhode Island
June 8th-9th, 2026

This year marks the 75th Annual Current Strategy Forum (CSF) at the Naval War College in Newport, hosted by the Secretary of the Navy. The first CSF took place on 9 May 1949 under the title “Round Table Talks.” This event offers an opportunity for the Nation’s public servants, scholars, and senior military officers to join the College faculty and students to discuss the future strategy of the United States. Over the years, the CSF has expanded to include a cross section of America’s civilian and military leadership to encourage a wide-ranging discussion on national and international security. This year’s theme:

The Navy, Maritime Strategy, and National Security

This year’s CSF will examine the ways and means by which the United States can meet the dangers of our era, marked by great-power competition, asymmetric threats, and rapid technological change. The *National Security Strategy* emphasizes that the United States is committed to preserving peace by maintaining the world’s most lethal military and robust nuclear deterrent to discourage aggression. The foundation for a robust national defense is a dynamic, innovative, and advanced economy, with strong industrial, agricultural, energy, science, and technology sectors.

The naval services have a vital role to play in providing for the country’s security and defending American interests around the globe. The Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable John Phelan, has underscored the urgent need to rebuild the fleet with the most capable ships, revitalize the maritime industrial base, and change how the Department of the Navy operates. To achieve these objectives, the Navy will contract for the construction of the most tonnage undertaken by the country since World War II. Building the future force will require sustained investment in reviving the country’s defense industrial base by increasing shipyard construction capacity. To steer the Navy in the years ahead, Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Daryl Caudle advocates a hedge strategy to create an adaptive force, mitigate uncertainty, manage risk, guide investments in future force structure, and conduct operations at sea.

This call to revitalize the country’s maritime industries harkens back to the teachings of Alfred Thayer Mahan who aimed to educate the officers studying in Newport as well as the American public about the importance of sea power in determining the rise and fall of great nations.

Agenda
As of 14 May 2026

Day One, Monday, June 8th

- 0800 Welcome and Introduction: Rear Admiral Darryl Walker
U.S. Navy, President, U.S. Naval War College
- 0805 Keynote Address: The Honorable Hung Cao
Acting Secretary of the Navy
- 0845 Keynote Address: Admiral Daryl Caudle, U.S. Navy
Chief of Naval Operations
- 0930 Break
- 0945 Keynote Address: Francis J. Gavin, Giovanni Agnelli Distinguished Professor and
Director of the Henry A. Kissinger Center for Global Affairs at Johns Hopkins School
of Advanced International Studies
- 1100 Panel 1: International Strategic Environment and Challenges
Moderator: John H. Maurer, U.S. Naval War College
Michael Doran, Hudson Institute
Eyck Freymann, Hoover Institution
Emily Goldman, National Security Agency
Stephen Peter Rosen, Harvard University
- 1230 Adjourn for Day One

Day Two, Tuesday, June 9th

- 0830 Administrative announcements
- 0840 Keynote Address: Toshi Yoshihara, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments
- 0915 Break
- 0930 Panel 2: Maritime Strategy and the Future Navy
Moderator: Kathleen Walsh, U.S. Naval War College
Bryan Clark, Hudson Institute
Andrew Erickson, U.S. Naval War College
Sarah Kirchberger, Kiel University
Eric Labs, Congressional Budget Office
- 1100 Break
- 1115 Keynote Address: General Eric M. Smith, USMC
Commandant of the United States Marine Corps
- 1200 Current Strategy Forum Adjourns

Break and Transition to PMW Seminars

- 1330 PMW seminars in assigned PMW Classrooms
Students will discuss CSF content as well as provide feedback on the PMW course.
- 1530 PMW seminars complete, students depart.