

# Naval War College Special Program Information for June 2026 Graduates

Tim Schultz, Ph.D., Associate Dean of Academic Affairs

The Naval War College (NWC) offers an array of special programs integrated with the Core and Elective curriculum and available to students on a volunteer basis. Special programs require a careful interview/selection process for a limited number of openings. This document categorizes these programs into:

- Group Advanced Research Programs (Halsey Alfa, Halsey Bravo, Holloway Group, Deterrence Studies Institute Group, NSEC3)
- Directed Research Projects (Gravely Program, Individual Research, DEPSECDEF Academic Research Challenge)
- 13-Month Advanced Programs (Advanced Strategist Program, Maritime Advanced Warfighting School)
- Graduate Certificate Programs (Ethics and Emerging Military Technology, Maritime History, Stockdale Leader Development Concentration)

These programs are ***optional*** (exception: USN students detailed to MAWS, ASP, or as Halsey Fellows). *No student should feel pressured to commit to any particular program at the NWC.* Any perceived expectations of your professional community should not determine your freedom of choice at the Naval War College—this is *your* graduate school learning opportunity. To borrow from Thucydides, your NWC education will be “a possession for all time.” Chart the path that intrigues you and enhances your intellectual journey. About one third of U.S. students enter a special program while the others take a more flexible approach to their academic program. This document will aid your important decision.

You will receive formal briefings on each special program during New Student Orientation. Meanwhile, if you want to learn more about one of these programs feel free to contact the relevant professor(s) at any time. *Doing so places zero obligation on you.* If you would eventually like to interview for one or more programs, interviews commence on 29 July during New Student Orientation week.

## **Group Advanced Research Programs**

Group Advanced Research Programs (ARPs) enable a cohort of students to work together throughout the year and examine the tactical, operational, and strategic elements of current and near-future warfighting in key geographic areas. Students must interview for these programs, which are open to intermediate (ILC) and senior (SLC) U.S. students (exception: NSEC3 is SLC-only). If selected, students take ARPs in lieu of traditional electives. Also, students selected for a Halsey program substitute one of the traditional core courses for a full-time version of the Halsey program. Those Navy students detailed in as Halsey Fellows will take the traditional three core courses with Halsey as their elective, as well as the asynchronous version of the LPA course. Halsey Fellows remain with their Halsey program for one additional term full time after graduation.

## **Halsey Alfa**

Halsey Alfa is a collaborative faculty-student group Advanced Research Program (ARP) seeking to derive insights and recommendations for joint operations in increasingly challenging, maritime-relevant, real-world contingencies involving China. The Halsey Alfa student process includes group free-play war games, lectures (including guest speakers), individual and group research efforts, and group seminars. Halsey Alfa is focused on the tactical-operational level of warfighting within a realistic theater strategic framework. Insights and recommendations are provided to a broad range of commands and leaders in the United States Indo-Pacific Command Area of Responsibility, the Navy, and Department of Defense. Halsey Alfa is normally conducted at the SECRET/NOFORN level with weekly TS/SCI intelligence sessions. Navy Students receive AQD 271 upon graduation.

Note: ILC students take a full-time 8-credit version of Halsey Alfa in the spring trimester in lieu of the 8-credit JMO core course. ILC students also take the 2-credit LPA core course in the spring. SLC students take the full JMO core course in the fall trimester and Halsey Alfa as their 2-credit elective. SLC students will likely take a full-time 8-credit version of Halsey Alfa in the winter trimester in lieu of the 7-credit Strategy and Policy core course; for their 2-credit elective in the winter, they take a tailored elective provided by the Strategy and Policy Department to meet JPME requirements. Halsey SLC students also take a 1-credit asynchronous (online) version of the LPA course. SLC and ILC students will maintain their Halsey Alfa seminar group for the year-long, two-credit Perspectives on Modern War (PMW) course.

Halsey Alfa Director: [Professor James FitzSimonds](mailto:james.fitzsimonds@usnwc.edu)  
james.fitzsimonds@usnwc.edu; 401-856-6046 (W)  
Halsey Alfa Associate Director: [Professor Craig Koerner](mailto:koerner@usnwc.edu)  
koerner@usnwc.edu; 401-856-6048 (W)  
Halsey Alfa Associate Director: [Professor Paul Schmitt](mailto:paul.schmitt@usnwc.edu)  
paul.schmitt@usnwc.edu; 401-856-6054 (W)

## **Halsey Bravo**

Halsey Bravo is a collaborative faculty-student group Advanced Research Program (ARP) seeking to derive insights and recommendations for joint operations in increasingly challenging, maritime-relevant, real-world contingencies in the Middle East. The Halsey Bravo student process includes group free-play war games, lectures (including guest-speakers), individual and group research efforts, and group seminars. Halsey Bravo is focused on the tactical-operational level of warfighting within a realistic theater strategic framework and provides insights and recommendations to a broad range of commands and leaders in the United States Central Command Area of Responsibility, the Navy, and Department of Defense. Halsey Bravo is normally conducted at the SECRET/NOFORN level with weekly TS/SCI intelligence sessions. Navy Students receive AQD 272 upon graduation.

Note: ILC students take a full-time 8-credit version of Halsey Bravo in the spring trimester in lieu of the 8-credit JMO core course. ILC students also take the 2-credit LPA core course in the spring. SLC students take the full JMO core course in the fall trimester and Halsey Bravo as a 2-credit elective. SLC students will likely take a full-time 8-credit version of Halsey Bravo in the winter trimester in lieu of the 7-credit Strategy and Policy core course; for their 2-credit elective in the winter, they take a tailored

elective provided by the Strategy and Policy Department to meet JPME requirements. Halsey SLC students also take a 1-credit asynchronous (online) version of the LPA course. SLC and ILC students will maintain their Halsey Bravo seminar group for the year-long, two-credit Perspectives on Modern War (PMW) course.

Halsey Bravo Director: [Professor Bill Murray](#)

[william.murray@usnwc.edu](mailto:william.murray@usnwc.edu); 401-856-6057 (W)

Halsey Bravo Associate Director: [Associate Professor Steve Fuller](#)

[stephen.fuller@usnwc.edu](mailto:stephen.fuller@usnwc.edu); 401-856-6051 (W)

Halsey Bravo Military Faculty: CAPT Justin Harts, USN

[Justin.harts@usnwc.edu](mailto:Justin.harts@usnwc.edu); 401-856-6052

Halsey Bravo Research Analyst: Bill Adler

[William.adler.ctr@usnwc.edu](mailto:William.adler.ctr@usnwc.edu); 401-856-6008 (W)

### **Holloway Group**

The Holloway Group is an elective-based program that students take for three trimesters under the aegis of the NWC's Russia Maritime Studies Institute (RMSI). Working closely with faculty, joint U.S. students conduct wargaming, data collection, research, and analysis on Russian military challenges. Wargame scenarios involve a variety of access-denial challenges and joint-maritime high-intensity conflict at the operational and tactical levels of war. Students derive strategic insights from tactical/operational warfighting and provide recommendations directly to leadership of U.S. Naval Forces Europe, multiple numbered fleets, U.S. European Command (USEUCOM), Department of the Navy, and Department of Defense. Holloway is normally conducted at the SECRET/NOFORN level with optional, weekly TS/SCI intelligence sessions. Note: Holloway students do not take the 2-credit LPA core course in the fall, winter, or spring; instead, they take a 1-credit asynchronous (online) version of the LPA course.

Holloway Director: [CAPT Michael Holland](#), [Michael.Holland1@usnwc.edu](mailto:Michael.Holland1@usnwc.edu)

Holloway Technical Director: [Dr. Rick Moss](#), [richard.moss@usnwc.edu](mailto:richard.moss@usnwc.edu); 703-585-9226 (mobile)

### **Deterrence Studies Institute Group**

The Deterrence Studies Institute (DSI) Group is an elective-based program. Students take the fall term "Deterrence Theory" and winter term "Nuclear Deterrence and Coercion" elective courses. They work with DSI faculty to produce one long research paper or two shorter term papers on deterrence related topics. Students participate in a DSI field studies trip (AY2025-26 - visit to ICBM and B-52 Wings at Minot AFB, ND, 10-13 SEPT 2025), attend monthly DSI lectures of opportunity, and participate in STRATCOM's POWER wargame (POWER is a week-long wargame at Maxwell AFB, AL, date TBD but in previous years has occurred in Feb/March time frame). NOTE: DSI Group students must already have a TS/SCI clearance as several events require security clearances, including the TS/SCI POWER wargame. DSI Group students enroll in the spring term for the two-credit LPA course.

DSI Director: [Dr. Phil Haun](#), [phil.haun@usnwc.edu](mailto:phil.haun@usnwc.edu)

DSI Faculty: [Dr. Jonathan Hunt](#), [jonathan.hunt@usnwc.edu](mailto:jonathan.hunt@usnwc.edu) and [Dr. Tyler](#)

[Bowen](#), [tyler.bowen@usnwc.edu](mailto:tyler.bowen@usnwc.edu)

## **National Security Exercise of Crisis Competition and Conflict (NSEC3)**

NSEC3, formerly JCLASS, is a strategic-level experiential learning program conducted collaboratively by U.S. and international Senior Level War Colleges with focus on Strategic Planning and simulation of the interagency process. Planning and gameplay are based upon a fictional yet realistic scenario taking place 10 years in the future. U.S. Naval War College students roleplay as the USINDOPACOM commander and staff with other schools playing as the National Security Council, Joint Staff, and other Combatant Commands. Unlike the Halseys and Holloway programs which meet all three trimesters, NSEC3 constitutes a winter and spring elective and is for *SLC students only*. The winter elective is designed to give the NWC NSEC3 students a better understanding of the strategic issues and environment affecting security in the Indo-Pacific through the creation of a Theater Estimate and Campaign Plan. Students then shift to Crisis Action Planning in the spring trimester, collaborating with the other schools to develop and execute whole-of-government approaches that achieve National Security Objectives while balancing Global Force Management limitations. NSEC3 culminates with a week-long collaborative execution phase at the Army War College in Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania during the spring. U.S. Navy participants receive AQD-247 – “Theater/National Strategic Planner.” Note: since NSEC3 does not run in the fall trimester, students take the 8-credit JMO core course and the 2-credit LPA course in the fall.

NSEC3 Course Director: [CDR Robert Dirga](mailto:robert.dirga@usnwc.edu) (USN)  
[robert.dirga@usnwc.edu](mailto:robert.dirga@usnwc.edu); 401-856-5439, 808-398-5269 (mobile)

NSEC3 Course Developer: Associate Professor Keith Patton  
[Keith.Patton@usnwc.edu](mailto:Keith.Patton@usnwc.edu); 401-856-5842 (W)

## **Directed Research Projects**

A student may engage in a “Directed Research Project” which permits scholarly research on a focused subject under the direction of a NWC professor with relevant expertise. These opportunities are limited to academically oriented students with significant writing and research abilities and with the goal of formal publication. A DRP may be conducted in lieu of a 2-credit elective for one or—rarely—a maximum of two trimesters.

### **CIPi Gravely Program**

The Cyber & Innovation Policy Institute (CIPi) Vice Admiral Samuel L. Gravely, Jr., Program is a Directed Research Project. This graduate-level program guides advanced student research on cyber and information operations and the information environment as well as wargaming. In honor of this program's namesake, CIPi Gravely students do trailblazing work under demanding circumstances. Each student conducts research on cybersecurity and information-related capabilities, informed by rigorous social scientific theories and analytical methods. This work results in publication-quality writing to help shape operational and strategic thinking for the Navy and Joint Force. CIPi Gravely students are supervised by CIPi faculty, and research and wargaming are typically classified.

Note: CIPI Gravely students enroll in the program in the fall trimester as an elective. Students may repeat the elective for an additional trimester to continue their research and writing. The small number of students in Gravely should thus plan on taking the 2-credit LPA course in the spring trimester.

CIPI Co-Directors:

Dr. Nina Kollars, [Nina.Kollars@usnwc.edu](mailto:Nina.Kollars@usnwc.edu)

Professor Jason Vogt, [Jason.Vogt@usnwc.edu](mailto:Jason.Vogt@usnwc.edu)

### **Individual Directed Research**

While the CIPI Gravely program offers a relatively structured approach for a small cohort of student-researchers in the subjects of cyber and the information environment, an Individual Directed Research project outside of the CIPI Gravely program is also possible. These are rare. A student with a substantial graduate-level academic background, proven writing abilities, and a specific, feasible, and preferably unclassified area in which he or she would like to research and publish may be permitted to pursue this effort in lieu of one or—rarely—two traditional 2-credit electives. Interested students must contact the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for consideration. It is recommended an Individual Directed Research project not be pursued in a student's first trimester to permit time to informally develop a research agenda and connect with relevant NWC experts.

Primary POC: Associate Dean of Academic Affairs: Dr. Tim Schultz, [timothy.schultz@usnwc.edu](mailto:timothy.schultz@usnwc.edu)

### **Deputy Secretary of Defense & Vice Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Academic Research Challenge**

The Academic Research Challenge (ARC) was instituted in 2022 as an opportunity for Professional Military Education institutions “to develop and contribute groundbreaking solutions” for the DoD “by conducting applied research and learning focused on our most pressing challenges.” This year, the DoD identified five subject areas for research at PME institutions: Logistics Under Threat; The Indirect Approach (to conflict with China); Intelligence Collection in Great Power Competition; Russia and Ukraine in Retrospect; and Great Power Decision-Making. The ARC permits individual or small groups of students to focus on a subject and develop joint, insightful, and “actionable recommendations suitable for briefing to DoD senior leadership.” The ARC project includes a research paper, executive summary, and briefing to NWC senior leaders in April, and potentially a brief to DoD senior leaders in May.

In past years, multiple ARC efforts at the Naval War College have been selected to brief the DepSecDef. The ARC can be organic to a formal program such as Halsey Alfa, Halsey Bravo, and the Advanced Strategist Program, while other ARC projects stem from relevant electives or small groups of students. All types have been very successful. Small groups of students outside of formal programs are mentored by NWC professors, and much of the work takes place in the winter trimester and through most of the spring trimester. ARC students not affiliated with Halsey or ASP often take LPA in the fall trimester and perhaps an ARC-relevant elective in the winter trimester (or dedicate the winter trimester elective period to focused ARC research).

Interested students can learn more during New Student Orientation. A special ARC breakout room will also be designated in the Zoom-based Electives Fair on 29 July; this permits interested students to engage with professors about ARC topics and potential research. For more information, contact:

Dr. [J. Dancy](mailto:Jeremiah.Dancy@usnwc.edu), Associate Provost for Research, [Jeremiah.Dancy@usnwc.edu](mailto:Jeremiah.Dancy@usnwc.edu)  
Colonel [Elizabeth Hanson](mailto:elizabeth.hanson@usnwc.edu), USAF Senior Service Advisor, [elizabeth.hanson@usnwc.edu](mailto:elizabeth.hanson@usnwc.edu)  
Dr. [Tim Schultz](mailto:timothy.schultz@usnwc.edu), Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, [timothy.schultz@usnwc.edu](mailto:timothy.schultz@usnwc.edu)

## **13-Month Advanced Programs**

The NWC conducts two 13-month programs: the Advanced Strategist Program (ASP) and the Maritime Advanced Warfighting School (MAWS). Taken during the elective course timeframe, the ASP and MAWS curricula build significantly upon and beyond the core courses (note: MAWS students take full-time MAWS in the spring trimester in lieu of JMO). Students also take the 1-credit asynchronous (online) version of LPA. Both programs involve major capstone projects over the summer months.

### **Advanced Strategist Program (ASP)**

The Advanced Strategist Program is for students interested in formulating, developing, and executing strategy at various leadership levels in order to fill key billets in Navy, Joint, and high-level political staff. The curriculum, taught by specially selected professors across the NWC, includes interaction with nationally known academics and leaders and focuses on various topics intrinsic to strategy and grand strategy. ASP is the only NWC program that requires a Master's thesis; students choose a strategic topic and are guided by a principal academic adviser along with a military faculty member and ASP Director. Students may do an Economic Policy Trip to New York City and a Washington, D.C. Engagement Trip to interact with senior uniformed and civilian officials. ASP's 10-week summer capstone project includes a strategic planning practicum. USN students are selected for ASP prior to arrival at the NWC; sister service and interagency students may apply for the remaining slots. USN graduates earn the Naval Strategist Subspecialty Code (2300p); USAF officers earn Advanced Study Group credit; and Army officers qualify for the 6z Army Strategist skill identifier. For more information contact:

ASP Executive Director: [Professor Dave Brown](mailto:david.brown@usnwc.edu) (Col, USA, Ret.), [david.brown@usnwc.edu](mailto:david.brown@usnwc.edu)  
ASP Academic Director and Senior Mentor: [Dr. Tim Hoyt](mailto:hoytt@usnwc.edu) (Strategy & Policy Dept), [hoytt@usnwc.edu](mailto:hoytt@usnwc.edu)

### **Maritime Advanced Warfighting School (MAWS)**

Open exclusively to intermediate-level students, MAWS develops strategic and operational leaders with the cognitive and critical thinking skills required to plan, execute, and assess combined, joint, and naval operations. Students take MAWS, a classified program, as a twice-a-week elective in the fall and winter trimesters and then full-time in the spring trimester; they then extend through the summer with a Fleet- or Combatant Command-sponsored capstone planning project typically briefed in-person and by VTC to a four-star leader and staff. Courses include: operational art; operational planning; campaigns and major operations; Joint and fleet tactics; operational decision-making and leadership; strategic competition; as well as interaction with notable experts outside the NWC. Budget dependent, students will spend twelve days of interactive study in Italy on WWII campaigns and also several days at Revolutionary War sites in Saratoga Springs, NY. USN students are selected for MAWS prior to arrival at the NWC; sister service and interagency students may apply for the remaining slots. USN graduates receive a JP-1 Additional Qualification Designation (AQD), and sister service graduates earn their service's matching designators or Advanced Study Group credit since MAWS equates to the School of Advanced Air and



Space Studies (USAF), School of Advanced Military Studies (Army), and School of Advanced Warfighting (USMC). For more information contact:

MAWS Director: CAPT Blake Tornga (USN), [blake.tornga@usnwc.edu](mailto:blake.tornga@usnwc.edu)

## **Graduate Certificate Programs**

The NWC will offer three Graduate Certificate programs in Academic Year 2025-26: Ethics and Emerging Military Technology (EEMT), Maritime History (MH), and the Stockdale Leader Development Concentration (SLDC). Unique to the NWC among all other JPME I/II institutions, these programs invite a limited number of *highly motivated and academically oriented* students. Successful students are awarded a Graduate Certificate in addition to the NWC M.A. degree. International students who have been selected for the International Master of Arts Program (IMAP) are welcome to apply.

Students in a Graduate Certificate program complete four additional credits, including a two-credit, faculty-mentored, research-based professional paper of approximately 9,000+ words. Thus, instead of 30 credits (8 JMO, 7 S&P, 7 NSA, 2 LPA, 2 PMW, 4 Elective), Graduate Certificate students earn 34 credits (8 JMO, 7 S&P, 7 NSA, 2 PMW, 6 Elective, 2 professional paper, and 2 LPA [exception: see SLDC description below]).

EEMT, MH, and SLDC Graduate Certificate students have enrollment priority in relevant electives of their choice. In one trimester EEMT and MH students must “double up,” taking two electives or one elective plus LPA. EEMT, MH, and SLDC require interviews with program faculty. See below for amplifying details of each Graduate Certificate program.

### **Ethics and Emerging Military Technology (EEMT)**

The Naval War College’s Graduate Certificate in Ethics and Emerging Military Technology (EEMT) deepens expertise in the ethical complexities imposed by new technology. Students examine the ethical and military relevance of technologies such as artificial intelligence, genetic manipulation, neuro-enhancements, quantum computing, autonomous systems, hypersonic weapons, etc. They also develop the ability to apply ethics-based reasoning to the challenges and consequences of rapid technological change in the modern security environment. Recent student cohorts interacted with national thought leaders such as the DARPA Director and the Joint Artificial Intelligence Center Director. Integral to the program is the formulation of a professional paper on a student-chosen topic concerning current or potential technologies and their ethical implications for the profession of arms. EEMT students are required to take the “Ethics of Technology” elective in the fall, and they are given priority enrollment in choosing their remaining two electives in the EEMT concentration. They must also take the LPA course in one of their three trimesters. Selection is limited to a small number of highly motivated and academically oriented students. For more information contact:

EEMT Director: [Dr. Tom Creely](mailto:thomas.creely@usnwc.edu) (College of Leadership & Ethics), [thomas.creely@usnwc.edu](mailto:thomas.creely@usnwc.edu); 843-441-0153

Associate Dean of Academic Affairs: [Dr. Tim Schultz](mailto:timothy.schultz@usnwc.edu), [timothy.schultz@usnwc.edu](mailto:timothy.schultz@usnwc.edu)

## **Maritime History**

The Graduate Certificate in Maritime History (GCMH) is a specialized track for students seeking to deepen their expertise in maritime and naval history. Over the course of the year, students will write an article-length academic paper on a topic in maritime history. To choose their topic and develop their research, students work closely with a faculty supervisor from the Hattendorf Historical Center (HHC) or other Naval War College departments. Paper topics and research may draw from the unique resources of the Naval Historical Collection (the Naval War College's archives). Students are encouraged to submit shorter versions of their papers to the Chief of Naval Operations Naval History Essay Contest. Their research may also serve as the basis for applications to complete additional graduate studies with other academic institutions.

Students are required to take the “War at Sea in the Age of Sail” elective in the fall trimester, and they are given priority enrollment for their remaining two electives approved in the Maritime History concentration. They must also take the LPA course in one of their three trimesters. Selection is limited to a small number of highly motivated and academically oriented students. For more information contact the GCMH directors at [gcmh@usnwc.edu](mailto:gcmh@usnwc.edu). The GCMH directors are Dr. Evan Wilson (HHC) and Dr. Ryan Wadle (HHC).

## **Stockdale Leader Development Concentration**

Named for Vice Admiral James B. Stockdale, the Stockdale Leader Development Concentration (SLDC) focuses on increasing students’ capability and capacity for senior leadership. Participation is limited to a small number of students who demonstrate proven performance, desire, and the potential for promotion to senior leadership roles. During this year-long, immersive experience students will engage in the study of ethics, self-awareness, critical thinking, and mental complexity. SLDC uses self-assessment and executive coaching to enhance cognitive readiness and prompt vertical development. The faculty measures student progress through cognitive developmental assessment.

SLDC is a 10-credit, electives-based program in which students may earn a Graduate Certificate in Leadership and Ethics. SLDC students are required to take “EL 592 Foundations of Moral Obligation” in the fall trimester and “EL 649C Cognitive Decision-Making in Complex Roles” in the winter trimester. Additionally, they meet year-round as a cohort in weekly seminars to study advanced leadership concepts with College of Leadership and Ethics faculty and guest speakers. Students work together on a project to help advance a contemporary leadership or organizational challenge of interest to the Vice Chief of Naval Operations.

The “Leadership in the Profession of Arms” (LPA) core course is validated by SLDC participation.

SLDC Co-Director: [Dr. Liz Cavallaro](mailto:liz.cavallaro@usnwc.edu), College of Leadership and Ethics, [liz.cavallaro@usnwc.edu](mailto:liz.cavallaro@usnwc.edu); 401-856-5643; 845-661-9419 (mobile)

SLDC Co-Director: [Professor Scott Smith](mailto:scott.m.smith@usnwc.edu), CAPT, USN (Ret.), College of Leadership and Ethics; [scott.m.smith@usnwc.edu](mailto:scott.m.smith@usnwc.edu); 401-856 -5656; 571-318-8280 (mobile)



## **A NOTE FROM THE ASSOCIATE DEAN OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS:**

For information on the Electives Program in general, see <https://usnwc.edu/college-of-naval-warfare/Electives> or <https://usnwc.edu/college-of-naval-command-and-staff/Electives>. Please inform Dr. Schultz, [timothy.schultz@usnwc.edu](mailto:timothy.schultz@usnwc.edu), if there are any additional concepts or courses you would like to see represented in the NWC Electives program—your inputs are an important factor in shaping the future curriculum.