

Naval War College Special Program Information for June 2027 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, Halsey Charlie, Deterrence Studies Institute Group, NSEC3, CIPI Gravely Program)
- Directed Research Projects (Individual Research, DEPSECWAR Academic Research Challenge)
- 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 or as Halsey Fellows). *No student should feel pressured to commit to any voluntary 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. Do not pursue one of these programs to glamorize your resume; instead, your motivation should reflect genuine interest. About one third of U.S. students enter a special program while the majority takes 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 28 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 Halsey Alfa or Halsey Bravo (*not* Halsey Charlie) 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 LDPA 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 LDPA 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 LDPA course. SLC and ILC students will maintain their Halsey Alfa seminar for the year-long 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 Alfa Military Faculty: [CDR Adam Pace](mailto:adam.pace@usnwc.edu)
adam.pace@usnwc.edu; 401-856-6049 (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 LDPA 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 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 LDPA course. SLC and ILC students will maintain their Halsey Bravo seminar for the year-long Perspectives on Modern War (PMW) course.

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

william.murray@usnwc.edu; 401-856-6057 (W)

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

stephen.fuller@usnwc.edu; 401-856-6051 (W)

Halsey Bravo Research Analyst: Bill Adler

William.adler.ctr@usnwc.edu; 401-856-6008 (W)

Halsey Charlie

Halsey Charlie, formally known as 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. Halsey Charlie is normally conducted at the SECRET/NOFORN level with optional, weekly TS/SCI intelligence sessions. Note: Halsey Charlie students do not take the 2-credit LDPA core course in the fall, winter, or spring; instead, they take a 1-credit asynchronous (online) version of the LDPA course.

Halsey Charlie Director: [CAPT Michael Holland](#), Michael.Holland1@usnwc.edu, 401-856-6041

Halsey Charlie Technical Director: [Dr. Rick Moss](#), richard.moss@usnwc.edu, 401-856-6037

Halsey Charlie Associate Director: Professor Dan Leonard, daniel.leonard@usnwc.edu, 401-856-6042

Halsey Charlie Research Analyst: Steve Ilteris, Stephen.ilteris1.ctr@usnwc.edu, 401-856-6045

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. Students participate in a DSI field studies trip (this September to Los Alamos and Sandia Labs), 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: U.S. DSI Group students must already have a TS/SCI clearance as several events require security clearances, including the TS/SCI POWER wargame. U.S. DSI Group students take PMW along with the CIPI Gravely students and enroll in the spring term for the two-credit LDPA course.

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

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

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

National Security Simulation Exercise of Competition, Crisis, 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 USPACOM commander and staff with other schools playing as the National Security Council, Joint Staff, and other Combatant Commands. Unlike the Halsey 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 LDPA course in the fall.

NSEC3 Course Director: [CDR Robert Dirga](#) (USN)
robert.dirga@usnwc.edu; 401-856-5439, 808-398-5269 (mobile)
NSEC3 Course Developer: Associate Professor Keith Patton
Keith.Patton@usnwc.edu; 401-856-5842 (W)

CIPi Gravely Program

Students in the Cyber Innovation Policy Institute (CIPi) Gravely Group pursue thematically linked research projects related to cyber, intelligence, information warfare, and their associated technologies. Students entering into the program will take part in a tailored research seminar designed to give them background in a specific topic area that is of high interest to the defense community. This year students will take part in CIPi research project focused on “Data Center Warfare.” CIPi-Gravely students will explore data center technologies and emerging warfighting concepts related to them. They will also help create a new wargame designed to explore these concepts in a scenario involving China. The AY 26/27 CIPi-Gravely Program takes place during the Winter-Spring trimesters. Students selected for the program will complete their LDPA requirement during the Fall trimester. CIPi-Gravely students will also be enrolled in the CIPi/DSI core Perspectives on Modern War (PMW) seminar, allowing them to remain a cohesive cohort throughout the academic year.

CIPi Director: Professor Jason Vogt, Jason.Vogt@usnwc.edu

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 displace a 2-credit elective for one or—rarely—two trimesters.

Individual Directed Research

A student with a *substantial graduate-level academic background, proven writing abilities*, and a specific, feasible, and preferably unclassified area which he or she would like to explore may be permitted to pursue an individual research project in lieu of one or—rarely—two traditional 2-credit electives. These are rare, require focused commitment to a pertinent topic, and should have the goal of publication as a journal article or chapter in an edited volume. 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

Deputy Secretary of War & 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 DoW “by conducting applied research and learning focused on our most pressing challenges.” The ARC project includes a research paper, executive summary, and briefing to NWC senior leaders in April, and potentially a brief to DoW senior leaders in May. The ARC topics will be released in August; interested students will have the opportunity to consider formal participation for the winter and spring trimesters.

In past years, multiple ARC efforts at the Naval War College have been selected to brief the DepSecWar. The ARC can be organic to a formal program such as Halsey Alfa or Halsey Bravo, while other ARC projects stem from relevant electives or small groups of students. 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 a formal program often take an ARC-relevant elective in the winter trimester.

Interested students can learn more once the ARC topics are released in August. For details, contact: Dr. [J. Dancy](mailto:Jeremiah.Dancy@usnwc.edu), Associate Provost for Research, Jeremiah.Dancy@usnwc.edu
Colonel [Elizabeth Hanson](mailto:elizabeth.hanson@usnwc.edu), USAF Senior Service Advisor, elizabeth.hanson@usnwc.edu
Dr. [Tim Schultz](mailto:timothy.schultz@usnwc.edu), Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, timothy.schultz@usnwc.edu

Maritime Advanced Warfighting School (MAWS)

Open exclusively to intermediate-level students, the thirteen-month MAWS program develops strategic and operational leaders with the cognitive and critical thinking skills required to plan, execute, and assess combined, joint, and naval operations. The MAWS program requires security clearance and is taught primarily during electives periods twice-a-week during the fall and winter trimesters and full-time in the spring trimester. The class spends the summer trimester working 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. 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. MAWS students also take a 1-credit asynchronous version of LDPA. 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

MAWS Deputy Director: Prof. John M. Sappenfield, john.sappenfield@nwc.navy.smil.mil

Graduate Certificate Programs

The NWC will offer three Graduate Certificate programs in Academic Year 2026-27: 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 LDPA, 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 LDPA [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 LDPA. 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, the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Office, Office of the Undersecretary of War for Research and Engineering, National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology, and NATO. 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 LDPA 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](#) (College of Leadership & Ethics), thomas.creely@usnwc.edu; 843-441-0153

EEMT Co-Director: Associate Dean of Academic Affairs: [Dr. Tim Schultz](#), 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 naval history of relevance to stakeholders in OPNAV and the Secretariat's office. 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, "War at Sea in the Age of Steam" in the winter trimester, and "The Influence of History on Sea Power Today" in the spring trimester. They must also take the LDPA 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. 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 “Leader Development in the Profession of Arms” (LDPA) core course is validated by SLDC participation.

SLDC Director: [Professor Scott Smith](#), CAPT, USN (Ret.), College of Leadership and Ethics; 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, 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.