

**EDUCATIONAL SKILL REQUIREMENTS/UPDATED for 2011-2013**  
**SPEC OPS**  
**2500**  
**699**

1. Curriculum Number: 699
2. Curriculum taught at NPS
3. Students are fully funded
4. Curriculum Length in Months: 18
5. APC required: NA
6. List of ESRs:

**A. Strategy and Policy:** Graduates will develop an ability to think strategically, analyze past operations, and apply historical lessons to future joint, interagency and coalition operations, in order to discern the relationship between a nation's political interests and goals and the ways military and other instruments of national power may be used to achieve them. Partially fulfilled by completing the first of four Naval War College courses leading to Service Intermediate-level Professional Military Education (PME) and Phase I Joint PME credit.“

**B. The Dynamics of Inter-State and Intra-State Conflict:** An understanding of the political, ethnic, and cultural dynamics to include global and regional influences that explain the outbreak of war between and within modern states. Particular attention should be given to the issues of intra-state conflict, unconventional forms of inter-state military rivalry, the integrated role of force and diplomacy in crisis management operations short of war, problems of escalation in a crisis environment, military alliance behavior, the dynamic differences between zero sum and nonzero sum conflicts, the special problems associated with suppressing and resolving zero sum engagements, military and nonmilitary approaches to conflict resolution. Students must have a close understanding of the prevailing analytical literature on these and related subjects and be able to apply this literature to a broad range of contemporary and historical cases.

**C. Asymmetrical and Irregular Aspects of Warfare:** A detailed understanding of the problems of domestic and international terrorism, social revolution, and other forms of irregular conflict. Close attention must be given to problems of both threat and response. The student must have a close knowledge of the prominent contending theoretical perspectives on the problems of terrorism and social revolution, a detailed knowledge of the operational and organizational dynamics underlying each of these forms of conflict, and a strong working understanding of the ways in which these and similar forms of irregular conflict have been countered historically. Where appropriate, the courses designed to satisfy this requirement should survey the U.S. experience in irregular warfare (the importance of by, with, and through

as evidenced in our involvement in the Philippines and Colombia) as well as that of other states that have been prominently engaged in such actions in the past, such as Great Britain, France, Israel, and the former Soviet Union.

**D. Historical and Comparative Perspectives on Special Operations:** A close understanding of the historical use of special operations forces, to include how these and similar forces have been organized, trained, equipped, directed, and employed. Attention should be given not only to the U.S. experience but to other national experiences as well, such as those of Great Britain, Germany, Italy, and other European countries with more recent SOF experience along with Canada and Australia, and the former Soviet Union. Also address the role of women in special operations (e.g., their role in the OSS during WWII). Similarly, this examination should not be restricted to contemporary history alone, but should extend back into the historical record to examine the ways in which special operations and related forces have been employed creatively to support state objectives in the more distant past. Throughout this inquiry attention should be given to the contemporary lessons that can be drawn from historic experience.

**E. Special Operations Doctrine, Concepts, and Institutions:** A detailed and conception understanding of the development of doctrine for special operations. Work in this area should focus, first, on the defining events and experiences that have stimulated doctrinal and institutional innovations in SO and, second, on the forms these innovations have taken. This examination should cover the period from the end of World War II through the Cold War, and into the post-9/11 era. These and related issues should be explored creatively in an effort to uncover the appropriate roles and missions and strengths and limitations of military power in the global security environment.

**F. Crisis Management and the Contingent Use of Military Power:** An understanding of the political role played by military power, both direct and indirect, in operations short of war, the problem of military crisis management, and the contingent use of force in support of local U.S. policy objectives. Attention should be given to the "signaling" role that can be played by military force, the special problems of deterrence and coercion in a crisis environment, and the military consequences of deterrence failure. The student should have a close knowledge of the historical record of "armed diplomacy" throughout the post-war period to include the role of SOF. This should include a knowledge of the individual cases of U.S. military intervention in the Third World, from Lebanon (1958) to Bosnia (1995). Attention should be given to both the theoretical and empirical literature on these subjects to provide the student with an understanding of the special political and operational issues associated with operating in a crisis environment. In particular, students need to understand both the positive and negative roles modern information networks and communications platforms play in crisis management today.

**H. Comparative Cases of and Responses to Regional Conflict:** A close knowledge of historical and contemporary "small wars" and other forms of low intensity conflict in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. The courses that satisfy this requirement should

examine the pertinent theoretical literature on political violence in the region in question, review the recent history of regionally-based terrorism, insurgency, and communal conflict, the regional and transnational implications of these conflicts, and any functional issues that are of particular interest or concern in the particular area under investigation, such as, the religious or communal sources of political violence or the relationship between narcotics, transnational criminal organizations, and insurgency/terrorism.

**I. Special Operations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:** An understanding of the ways in which the proliferation of new and emerging technologies is changing the shape of modern warfare. An important aspect of this requirement is to examine the likely impact of these developments on the dynamics and characteristics of 21st century warfare within both the inter-state and intra-state arena. The student must have a working knowledge of the major technological developments and trends in this area (both lethal and non lethal) and their conflict implications. Armed with this knowledge, students will be better advocates for the special operations community's future technological needs and the necessity to rapidly deliver these technologies to the battlefield. One avenue for demonstrating this requirement is participation in the quarterly *NPS/SOCOM Capability Based Experimentation* venue.

**J. Special Operations and Information Warfare:** An understanding of the likely and potential implications of information warfare on future special operations to include not only the rapid advances in technology, but the growing importance of the human/social dimension from HUMINT to cultural awareness. An important aspect of this requirement is to examine the principles of information warfare and examine the ways in which SOF can contribute to U.S. information dominance on the 21st century battlefield. This examination should address the problem of information dominance at the inter-state and intra-state level of war, and the importance of fusing social intelligence with technical intelligence.

**K. Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Proliferation and Counter-proliferation:** Students will have an understanding of the problem of WMD proliferation. Students may have a technical or operational perspective on WMD. The student must have an understanding of the political dynamics of WMD proliferation and an understanding of recent and possible future trends in this area to include (1) *transnational issues of trafficking in WMD materiel / components, humans, drugs, small arms, money, goods, etc.*; (2) *black / gray markets, cut-out financial fronts, and money laundering*; and (3) *avenues that various criminal, terrorist, or other shadow networks utilize to collaborate, unite, and/or compete with each other to serve their goals*. Close attention should also be given to the problem of counter-proliferation and the ways in which SOF might approach this task. Students having a technical focus should have a working knowledge of nuclear and non-nuclear WMD technologies.

**L. Analytical Methods and Applications:** Each student will receive a grounding in analytical methods and their application to military modeling, simulations, and gaming. Close attention will be given to the ways in which such analytical techniques can be used as heuristic

and decision-making tools for strategic and operational planning. Attention will be given to both historical and contemporary military applications with particular focus on the ways in which such techniques can be used to address issues of interest to the special operations community.

**M. Strategic and Operational Complexity:** Special Operations (SO) is a style of warfare. No traditional single academic discipline can adequately address the educational requirements of the special operations community, so an interdisciplinary approach is required. Each student will develop a course of study that permits he or she to pursue a disciplinary orientation that best suits their particular academic background and interests within the substantive limits of the other ESRs.

APPROVED: RICHARD W. SISE, USN   
[ Sponsor Name/Signature]

DATE: 11/9/11

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