



Chief Master Sergeant Darin LaCour, 149th Fighter Wing command chief, speaks to enlisted Airmen of importance of professional military education, at Joint Base San Antonio–Lackland, Texas, November 2, 2019 (Air National Guard/Derek Davis)

Strategic Leader Research

Answering the Call

By Larry D. Miller and Laura A. Wackwitz

Senior Service colleges (SSCs), as premier providers of joint professional military education (JPME), are well positioned to produce the range of thought and scholarship required to sustain national security during uncertain times. JPME nevertheless struggles to meet the needs and expectations of the two primary audiences for senior

leader research: professional military and academic civilian. All too often, efforts to advance strategic thought are hampered by this conflict of constituencies.¹ Yet centering strategic leader research and writing within JPME could make possible the bridging of these worlds to establish SSCs as innovative centers capable of marshalling warrior experi-

ence while inspiring intellectual creativity. With students and faculty as active participants in problem-solving and idea generation, SSCs can establish a culture wherein ideas are valued for their ability to positively impact both policy and the larger strategic community. From the position of strength engendered by producing senior leaders able to communicate innovative ideas, SSCs will not only address the criticisms leveled against JPME, but they will also sharpen the cutting edge of strategic progress.

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A Conflict of Constituencies

SSCs are populated by military professionals, many of whom have modest preparation and reluctant motivation for rigorous engagement with graduate-level education. Most officers are selected to attend by virtue of prior accomplishments and future promise with little regard for academic preparation. Tapped from within a system in which “traditional military skills are rightly valued . . . but cognitive skills are largely dismissed,”² matriculating officers are mature, highly experienced, and professionally accomplished, yet their facility with the conventional tools of graduate education may be lacking. Thus, entering classes do not necessarily have consistency among students to successfully employ the techniques of close reading, careful research, critical thinking, and effective writing.

Because of these challenges, some proponents of JPME maintain that “ivory tower” tools are overrated; writing and research will neither build nor defend the Nation’s house.³ Other proponents completely eschew pursuing schoolhouse inquiries of any kind. Too much thought, as one extremist argues, “clouds a senior officer’s judgment, inhibits his instincts, and slows his decision-making.”⁴ The most vehement critics, on the other hand, believe that neither SSC students nor JPME institutions measure up. To them, “no admission standards plus no selectivity (a term civilian universities use) equals remedial education.”⁵ The logical extension of that argument is to simply disband, dismember, or reconfigure SSCs, as some have suggested.⁶ So what is the solution?

At first glance, the situation appears untenable: one institution, or even a group of institutions, cannot possibly satisfy two disparate camps anchored by extreme positions. History supports this conclusion. But the importance of the mission must supersede the impulse to continue the practice of dodging professional bullets with academic arguments and academic bullets with professional ones. Though traditional academics and most professionals involved with JPME would argue that thoughtful inquiry

enhances judgment, refines instincts, and improves decisionmaking, opinion is divided regarding the vitality of JPME as a vehicle for inspiring the habits of mind required to thoughtfully engage complex materials.⁷

From a JPME perspective, SSCs are professional military institutions, and as such each schoolhouse requirement constitutes a task to be negotiated or tolerated en route to higher levels of responsibility. The impulse is high for faculty to satisfy both senior leadership and student expectations by delivering instruction as systematically, efficiently, and conveniently as possible. Because SSC students are successful, well-paid military professionals, the operant mentality is that if research is necessary, topics to be addressed should be of particular importance to senior leadership. Lists of topics, issues, and questions provide a smorgasbord of opportunities to align research efforts with a specific concern or tasking.⁸ When asked to conduct research, students are to select a strategic issue, analyze extant information, and offer recommendations in writing to one or more designated points of contact (POCs)—possibly even in the absence of high-quality analysis essential to actionable recommendations.

From an academic perspective, SSCs are professional military institutions granting accredited graduate degrees funded by the American public and, as such, should step up to the intellectual plate. Viewed as public servants, SSC students have a golden opportunity to expand their capabilities while contributing to national security—an opportunity not available to the majority of the population. Consequently, those who fail to make the most of that opportunity are regarded as little more than well-paid freeloaders and exploiters of the public trust. Military emphasis on “training” and “guidance” alienates most academicians who view education as a progressively unfolding inquiry requiring guided exploration more than authoritarian direction. To academics, lists at the graduate level should be reading lists, not topic lists. POCs should be between experience and ideas, practice

and theory, not people and offices. Senior Service colleges, therefore, are readily criticized for lack of rigor,⁹ subordination of intellectual opportunity, minimization if not rejection of genuine inquiry, and questionable commitment to academic freedom.

A more integrated approach is in order—one that challenges conventional wisdom on both sides without succumbing to Derridean-style deconstruction. By capitalizing on the talent and strengths at hand, JPME can effectively maneuver away from the box into which it has been placed. Embracing a 21st-century education requires SSCs to directly engage students in meaningful explorations of complex ideas made clear through research and writing. This must be accomplished with the understanding that in an academic world populated by accomplished military professionals, word-one is not square-one, and success is measured not primarily by rank or the next assignment but by contributions.

Harnessing the Power of JPME

The opportunity for JPME to embrace the development of warrior-scholars comes at a time when the uncertainty of the future has given way to the uncertainty of now.¹⁰ Senior U.S. military leadership continues to lack consistent abilities to connect war to policy in ways that impact the national strategic posture.¹¹ Information absent analysis and thoughtful interpretation is of little use to those charged with protecting our citizens, maintaining our sovereignty, and advancing national interests. Warrior-scholars can bridge the information-interpretation gap only if SSCs better educate students to utilize research, writing, critical thinking, logic, and reason to develop, implement, and/or recommend responsive strategic options to dynamic national security issues. This requires a fundamental shift in perspective among JPME institutions and the commitment to engage in an unprecedented embrace of research and writing as essential leader capabilities and valued forms of national service.¹²

Today’s senior military officers are some of the most experienced and



Marine with Headquarters Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, talks about World War II beach landing on Iwo Jima during professional military education brief, Iwo Jima, Japan, November 26, 2019 (U.S Marine Corps/Esgar Rojas)

knowledgeable advocates for national security in the history of the United States, yet SSCs consistently fail to bring student expertise to the fore, opting instead to serve as networking centers for career professionals with a soft introduction to strategy on the side (faculty efforts to stimulate intellectual growth notwithstanding). To better facilitate the development of an effective future force built on the ideas and insights of JPME's rising strategic leaders, SSCs must combine the best of two worlds to unite academic inquiry and skill sets with highly experienced military professionals invested in our national future.

As General Martin Dempsey, USA (Ret.), former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, observed, the call to arms and the quest for knowledge are united through individual and collective effort: "Every member of the force should seek to be a scholar of the Profession of

Arms in their own right and a teacher to those coming along behind."¹³ Rather than allowing JPME to remain lost in the quagmire of the civilian-academic versus professional-military critique, faculty, students, and administration must together embrace a better, more sustainable reality—one in which the combined knowledge of JPME students and SSC graduates can be communicated effectively by warriors equipped and inspired to become scholars well armed with ideas, information, and the transformative power of words.¹⁴

Although the steps to a successful transformation could take many forms, four are recommended here. First, abandon the mindset that writing is and should remain the province of the intellectual elite, Ivy League-educated academics, professional researchers, and think tank scholars. Though some have argued that JPME develops leaders,

not researchers, strategists, not writers,¹⁵ the importance of effective written communication cannot be understated. Without quality writing and attendant critical thought, knowledge and valuable experience are lost. Without research and perceptive interpretation of experience, insight is debilitated. JPME must, therefore, recognize all SSC students—regardless of their prior writing experiences—as scholars in the making, individuals whose potential and promise for the future must not be overlooked or left undeveloped. SSCs routinely cultivate the abilities of senior leaders to respond to evolving conditions, employ critical thinking skills, and exercise solid judgment through sound leadership. The logical, indeed appropriate, extension of those activities is to simultaneously develop student research and writing skills such that they will be better able to manage, if not solve, strategic challenges. If,

as Charles Murray has argued, the “process of writing is the dominant source of intellectual creativity,”¹⁶ it invariably contributes to the types of “refined thinking” so often sought from strategic leaders.¹⁷ As John T. Gage argues:

*Writing is thinking-made-tangible, thinking that can be examined because it is “on the page” and not all “in the head,” invisibly floating around. Writing is thinking that can be stopped and tinkered with. It is a way of making thought hold still long enough to examine its structures, its possibilities, its flaws. The road to a clearer understanding of one’s own thoughts is travelled on paper. It is through the attempt to find words for ourselves, and to find patterns for ourselves in which to express related ideas, that we often come to discover exactly what we think.*¹⁸

Warriors who rise to the level of senior leaders, whether they realize it or not, are in many ways well primed for thoughtful scholarship. They are experienced at gathering information, assessing sources, advocating informed choices, considering arguments, making decisions, and transforming words into actions. Their training, education, and field experiences, however, do not routinely involve close engagement with the conventional tools for developing reasoned discourse: library research, critical reading, argument construction, and professional writing. JPME must fill the gap by abandoning the “good to go, keep the troops moving” mentality wherein the expectation for original thought is reserved for elite students, while others are permitted to advance with marginal competencies routinely associated with parroting existing ideas, tweaking stock point papers, and crafting visually impressive PowerPoint briefings. Long-term gain must not be sacrificed for short-term convenience and institutional expedience.

Second, integrate research and writing across the curriculum and steadfastly refuse to allow SSC students to bypass the hard work of learning to research important issues and pen effective documents. JPME cannot continue to be defined either by officers who “treat ‘schooling’ as

something distinct from serving”¹⁹ or by the presumption that military professionals are properly committed to action, not contemplation.²⁰ For many students and faculty alike, the idea persists that subject matter expertise earned through experience, untiring effort, and often grueling service should *excuse* SSC students from becoming effective communicators of ably researched and well-reasoned ideas. This assumption, however, could not be further from the truth. Untiring and often grueling service should *entitle* SSC students to the best education possible so that they may continue the path of excellence, dedicate themselves to leadership at the highest levels, and skillfully contribute to senior leader discourse as duty commands and opportunity allows.

Though SSC graduates are expected to “write well,”²¹ for many, the ability to prepare original high-quality documents that are well researched, thoughtfully analyzed, articulate, persuasive, and appropriately sourced remains elusive. Student facility with the written word, as General David Petraeus, USA (Ret.), aptly noted, may be the “one area” that PME students “need to improve across the board.”²² At first glance, the writing challenges that haunt many senior officers are a consequence of demanding professional requirements on the one hand and antecedent conditions that lie outside SSC control on the other.²³ That SSCs do not rely on conventional academic admission standards has been cited, as evidence that it may be structurally impossible to assemble what war colleges desire: a student body primed for intellectual success in a condensed graduate-level environment.²⁴ Yet this lament over admission standards serves to obfuscate the reality that, in many ways, SSCs have simply failed to provide students with the tools and inspiration to become knowledgeable, articulate, and facile with the written word. With an exceedingly low student-faculty ratio, abundant library support, qualified faculty, and an invested student body uninhibited by financial obligations, the suggestion that the majority of career military professionals—many with prior advanced degrees—cannot be taught to write at the professional graduate level

is absurd. Senior Service colleges would do well to follow the advice of Alfred M. Gray, who stated simply, “Take what you get, make it what you want.”²⁵

By adopting a developmental approach with progressively elevated expectations for written communication, JPME students can become engaged in the refined thinking necessary to respond effectively to an evolving and highly dynamic strategic landscape. Research and writing skills, like critical thinking skills, do not thrive in isolation. Their development must occur in the pursuit of strategic-level understanding, subject matter expertise, and leadership excellence. Absent perceptive faculty guidance and engaged coaching, many SSC students produce relatively uninspired research reports that, while technically satisfying institutional requirements, fall well short of delivering meaningful utility with visionary impact. The motivation to write is far greater when the task is perceived as an opportunity for communicating essential information and important ideas from an informed perspective. Mundane writing tasks that are received as little more than artificial exercises absent clear purpose and meaningful utility are unlikely to produce interesting thought, let alone good writing. Inspire the desire to communicate interesting ideas and the language to do so will follow, especially under the close guidance of committed faculty well armed with subject matter expertise. Likewise, revisioning writing as an extension of reasoning and professional knowledge will help generate a culture in which fewer faculty avoid close engagement with the ideas and linguistic competencies of their charges.

Third, stop perpetuating the false notion that in order to have something meaningful to say, colonels and lieutenant colonels must first focus on fundamental grammar and punctuation. Language mechanics are important but at this level should flow from considered ideas. Suppose, for example, that an officer has extensive experience with nuclear submarines. She wants to explore the relationship between nuclear energy and climate security but lacks linguistic



National Defense University's President's Lecture Series hosted Dr. Peter Singer, coauthor of *LikeWar: The Weaponization of Social Media*, on October 23, 2019, in Lincoln Hall auditorium (NDU/Katie Persons Lewis)

sophistication. To develop the skills and confidence to communicate her ideas effectively in writing, she does not need remediation. She needs a coach who values her ideas for what they are and helps her to find the means to express them. A shift in focus—away from SSC students' lack of academic preparation and toward their vast knowledge and ideas gained throughout a lifetime of service—provides JPME institutions with an incredible opportunity to meet students at their current skill level and help them develop ideas into written products. Traditional methodologies, however, are untenable. Nothing squashes the desire to learn new skills more fully than a corrective approach to writing or institutional reliance on numerous diagnostics (to study the problem), technological interventions (to avoid the problem), and editorial drop-off services (to fix the problem). SSCs must instead provide

sufficient opportunities for students to become confident senior leaders who use research and writing skills to generate ideas, help manage problems, and communicate effectively. Rather than simply adding more writing assignments into the preexisting mix, SSCs must foster collaborative interaction between students and faculty with meaningful feedback as the norm and warrior-scholarship as the common goal.²⁶ If guided with flexibility and grace, SSC students can themselves bridge the gap between the academic and professional military worlds by joining the community of researchers dedicated to embracing research of multiple types at all levels of investigation. It takes, in fact, all kinds of research to build understanding about all kinds of questions/topics and to meet the needs and expectations of demanding audiences. Some will write for military audiences, some for civilian; some will address professional questions,

some academic. Some questions will be directed, others chosen. All approaches can be honored and utilized for what they are and for the type of contribution they make. Full embrace of this dual role will engender institutions capable of sustaining diverse perspectives and furthering the process of inquiry in its many forms.

SSCs, therefore, must find ways to provide high-quality, JPME-specific support for emerging writers and the faculty who guide them. Writing centers must be placed front and center, well integrated into the educational mission, and supported by strategically grounded faculty who write. Though calls sound across the Services for greater written communication skills among senior officers, all too often the response is positioned near the institutional margin as an office staffed by a small cadre of competent support personnel (writing professionals and



Marines with Advanced Infantry Training Battalion, School of Infantry—East, explore Aisne-Marne American Cemetery and Memorial during professional military education trip to Belleau, Aisne, June 12, 2014 (U.S. Marine Corps/Nicholas J. Trager)

coaches).²⁷ Such offices are typically modeled as undergraduate writing centers with a largely remedial task: to spruce up fundamental writing conventions, including voice, grammar, mechanics, and punctuation. One can argue the merits of a corrective approach for college undergraduates, but not for mature college graduates who commonly hold one or more advanced degrees in addition to exceptional credentials in their professional areas of expertise.

Fourth, actively cultivate faculty investment in a revisioning writing process that encourages student-faculty collaboration. Advocating a research team mentality will enhance knowledge contributions while laying the foundation for enduring professional relationships grounded by a learner-centric environment. Networking by any other means

(for example, softball, family outings, social events) is far less effective for creating meaningful connections with subject matter relevance. By encouraging students to affiliate with faculty research initiatives, productivity will increase, knowledge will advance, and the prospect for adopting a warrior-scholar mentality will be optimized.

The congressionally mandated SSC student-faculty ratio of 3.5 to 1 affords an exceptional opportunity for student-faculty engagement.²⁸ Many faculty members work closely with students and are committed to developing student research and writing expertise. Others, however, are less invested. Just as General Robert Scales, USA (Ret.), has suggested, some students may be too busy to learn; so, too, some faculty may be too busy to teach.²⁹ Faculty who have compelling

research interests or little graduate-level teaching experience may feel overloaded by the array of activities and obligations associated with professional education at the graduate level.³⁰ Integrating faculty scholarship initiatives with student research and writing expectations can maximize time and labor efficiencies that seldom exist when working alone. As subject matter experts, faculty members are expected to maintain currency in their primary fields. Opting for a student-faculty relationship built around mentoring rather than simply “advising” will help reach this goal.³¹ With the mentor serving as an experienced guide (as opposed to primarily an arbiter of student work products), the student-mentor team can together invest in a strategic journey to explore current literature, seek connections between ideas, and develop

fresh insights. Neither the student nor the mentor should become subservient or ancillary. Students must be encouraged to find their own voices, conduct independent research, and return to the mentor for vigorous discussion about findings, controversies, and actionable ideas. A combination of genuine inquiry and close collaboration will strengthen the work product of students and faculty while simultaneously reducing academic malfeasance by those who feel isolated and/or overwhelmed by a seemingly complex milieu of unclear expectations.³² Adopting a partnership approach will support student efforts to strengthen their investigatory, analytical, and communication facility by engaging them in a process well known, understood, and valued in the military—teamwork.

Although most SSC graduates will not be expected to routinely create research documents at their next assignment, the process of having conducted research, especially within the context of a mentoring relationship, will serve them well. As Richard Kohn argues, intellectual engagement with a challenging strategic task that requires research and writing remains the “best way to prepare senior officers to recognize mistaken assumptions, inadequate research, sloppy thinking, weak analysis, imprecise writing, and unpersuasive argumentation.”³³ Research projects—when approached as an opportunity for professional development and collaborative interaction with a subject matter expert—sharpen critical thinking and articulate expression while emphasizing the role writing plays at the strategic level. Addressing these issues through apt faculty development initiatives will help empower SSCs to more fully realize their potential for becoming vibrant communities where students enter as they will and exit as well-informed strategic leaders capable of writing effectively.

The Way Ahead

The integration of research and writing skills into the professional lives of current and future senior leaders enables SSCs to better address both the needs of strategic leadership and the

conflicts of perspective that so often plague JPME. Within this construction, strategic research is at once academic and professional, military and civilian, theoretical and practical, emerging and established. The development of critical thinking, writing, and research competencies is, after all, inexorably tied to the promise of a more secure nation capable of “provid[ing] for the common defence . . . and secur[ing] the Blessings of Liberty.”³⁴ The Nation needs those being groomed for the highest levels of military leadership to transition from experienced warrior to invested warrior-scholar. One might rightly predict that our national stature and possibly our very survival in a world characterized by the “broad diffusion of all forms of power” may well depend on that transformation.³⁵ We must, as former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Dempsey observed in his consideration of JPME, learn to maneuver “outside our intellectual comfort zone” and “embrace change or risk irrelevance.”³⁶

In part, these goals have yet to be fully realized because they are but a smaller component of the larger task to which JPME must turn: valuing student scholarship in its own right and developing and advancing that scholarship for what it is and what it can become.³⁷ Clearly signaling to students and constituencies alike that SSCs must recognize, value, and promote high-quality student research and writing would enable JPME to solidify senior leader insights as contributory to strategic discourse. Mission command, regionally aligned forces, conflict prevention, bad actors, national disasters, humanitarian crises, and concern with the human elements of military operations all point to the importance of establishing a culture of articulate leadership that permeates the Joint Force—not one overly restricted by top-down leadership-as-usual, but revised leadership emerging from within and practiced at all levels. If JPME is to answer the call, SSCs must embrace a similar stance regarding student scholarship.

SSCs educate the best and brightest military professionals. The task now is to give voice to those studying among

us—to bring forth and encourage their candor, intellectual development, and ability to speak truth to power. SSC students have unique perspectives—borne out of experience and the simple act of seeing from different vantage points—insights that may well be overlooked by higher authority and elite think tank scholars if those perspectives are not communicated with professional elegance and persuasive clarity. JFQ

Notes

¹ For an in-depth overview of professional military education (PME) criticism, shortcomings, and challenges, see Joan Johnson-Freese, “Why War Colleges?” in *Educating America’s Military* (London: Routledge, 2013).

² Jaron Wharton et al., “Looking Beyond Professional Military Education to Evaluating Officers,” *War on the Rocks*, August 18, 2018, available at <<https://warontherocks.com/2018/08/looking-beyond-professional-military-education-to-evaluating-officers/>>.

³ Paula Thornhill, “To Produce Strategists, Focus on Staffing Senior Leaders,” *War on the Rocks*, July 20, 2018, available at <<https://warontherocks.com/2018/07/to-produce-strategists-focus-on-staffing-senior-leaders/>>.

⁴ Ralph Peters, “Learning to Lose,” *The American Interest* 2, no. 6 (July 2007), 25, available at <www.the-american-interest.com/2007/07/01/learning-to-lose/>.

⁵ Anonymous reviewer comment, *Joint Force Quarterly* e-mail message to authors, August 25, 2019.

⁶ Thomas E. Ricks, “Need Budget Cuts? We Probably Can Start by Shutting the Air War College,” *Foreign Policy*, April 11, 2011, available at <<https://foreignpolicy.com/2011/04/11/need-budget-cuts-we-probably-can-start-by-shutting-the-air-war-college/>>.

⁷ Jennifer Mittelstadt, “Too Much War, Not Enough College,” *War Room*, June 20, 2018, available at <<https://warroom.armywarcollege.edu/articles/too-much-war-not-enough-college/>>.

⁸ See *Key Strategic Issues List (KSIL) 2018–2020* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College Press, 2018), available at <<https://publications.armywarcollege.edu/pubs/3551.pdf>>. Each Service prepares and distributes a list of approved or recommended topics for research.

⁹ See Nicholas Murray, “Rigor in Joint Professional Military Education,” *War on the Rocks*, February 19, 2018, available at <<https://warontherocks.com/2016/02/rigor-in-joint-professional-military-education/>>; and James Joyner, “Professional Military Education and

the Rigor Problem,” *War on the Rocks*, March 15, 2016, available at <<https://warontherocks.com/2016/03/professional-military-education-and-the-rigor-problem/>>.

¹⁰ Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., “The Character of War and the Strategic Landscape Have Changed,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 89 (2nd Quarter 2018), 2–3.

¹¹ Richard H. Kohn, “Tarnished Brass: Is the U.S. Military Profession in Decline?” *World Affairs* 171, no. 4 (Spring 2009), 73–83, available at <www.jstor.org/stable/20671412?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents>.

¹² The concept “warrior-scholar” may derive from a statement commonly misattributed to Thucydides that the “nation that will insist upon drawing a broad line of demarcation between the fighting man and the thinking man is liable to find its fighting done by fools and its thinking by cowards.” The source is William F. Butler, *Charles George Gordon* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1889), 85. The idea that warriors/soldiers can or should be scholars surfaces irregularly in military writing. For example, see Scott Efflandt and Brian Reed, “Developing the Warrior-Scholar,” *Military Review* (July–August 2001), 82–89; and Robert H. Scales, “Too Busy to Learn,” *Naval Institute Proceedings* 136, no. 2 (February 2010), available at <www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2010-02/too-busy-learn>.

¹³ Martin E. Dempsey, *Joint Education White Paper* (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, July 16, 2012) 5, available at <www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/concepts/cjcs_wp_education.pdf?ver=2017-12-28-162044-527>.

¹⁴ Robert B. Brown commented that the “Army University will also empower students to write, debate, and improve the Army profession by actively working to publish their professional research in the broader national security dialogue. See “The Army University Educating Leaders to Win in a Complex World,” *Military Review* 95, no. 1 (July–August 2015), 27.

¹⁵ George E. Reed, “The Pen and the Sword,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 72 (1st Quarter 2014), 18, states, “War colleges are not much interested in research or scholarship.” He is not alone in that view. Nicholas Murray, writing in the same issue (“The Role of Professional Military Education in Mission Command,” 13), maintains that “teaching is the main focus of the [PME] institutions, and that should remain the case.”

¹⁶ Charles Murray, *The Curmudgeon’s Guide to Getting Ahead* (New York: Crown, 2014), 55.

¹⁷ Stephen King, *On Writing* (New York: Pocket Books, 2000), 131. For the argument that writing both directly reflects and structures thought, see Trent J. Lythgoe, “Flight Simulation for the Brain: Why Army Officers Must Write,” *Military Review* 91, no. 6 (November–December 2011), 51.

¹⁸ John T. Gage, “Why Write?” in *The Teaching of Writing*, ed. Anthony Petrosky and David Bartholomae (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 24.

¹⁹ Kohn, “Tarnished Brass.”

²⁰ See Christopher J. Lamb and Brittany Porro, “Next Steps in Transforming Education at National Defense University,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 76 (1st Quarter 2015), 41, who comment that military culture is anti-intellectual and devalues education.

²¹ John W. Yeager, *Provost Concept for Learning and Technology Center White Paper* (Washington, DC: National Defense University, July 21, 2016), 2, available at <www.ndu.edu/Portals/59/Documents/BOV_Documents/2016/Sept/Learning%20and%20Technology%20Center%20White%20Paper.pdf?ver=2016-09-21-164304-757>.

²² David H. Petraeus, “Beyond the Cloister: Civilian Graduate Programs Broaden a Soldier’s Horizon,” *The American Interest* 2, no. 6 (July 2007), available at <www.the-american-interest.com/2007/07/01/beyond-the-cloisters>. Thomas Ricks, *The Generals: American Military Command from World War II to Today* (New York: Penguin, 2012), 458, makes a similar observation: the thinking and writing skills of senior officers are deficient.

²³ U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command Pamphlet (TRADOC) 525-8-2, *The U.S. Army Learning Concept for 2015* (Washington, DC: TRADOC, June 6, 2011), 14.

²⁴ Joan Johnson-Freese and Kevin P. Kelley, “Meaningful Metrics for Professional Military Education,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 84 (1st Quarter 2017), 67; and Joan Johnson-Freese, “Educating the U.S. Military: Is Real Change Possible?” *War on the Rocks*, May 7, 2015, available at <<https://warontherocks.com/2015/05/educating-the-u-s-military-is-real-change-possible>>.

²⁵ Alfred M. Gray, Jr., 29th Commandant, U.S. Marine Corps. See Paul Otte, comp., *Grayisms* (Arlington, VA: Potomac Institute Press, 2015), 20.

²⁶ Murray, “The Role of Professional Military Education,” 13, recommends students write regularly, possibly on a weekly basis; and Desirae Gieseman, “Effective Writing for Army Leaders,” *Military Review* 95, no. 5 (September–October 2015), 113, emphasizes the necessity for detailed feedback if writing is to improve.

²⁷ See Christopher M. Ford, “Army Leadership and the Communication Paradox,” *Military Review* 95, no. 4 (July–August 2015), 69, 72, who argues that with regard to developing communicative competence, policy and doctrine do not translate into action.

²⁸ Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 1800.01E, *Officer Professional Military Education Policy* (Washington, DC: The Joint Staff, May 29, 2015), B-4, para. (4), available at <www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/education/cjcsi1800_01e

>. The lowest student-faculty ratio among liberal arts colleges, including the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, is 7:1. See Jordan Friedman, “Twenty-One Liberal Arts Colleges with Lowest Student-Faculty Ratios,” *U.S. News and World Report*, April 19, 2016, available at <www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/the-short-list-college/articles/2016-04-19/21-liberal-arts-colleges-with-the-lowest-student-faculty-ratios>.

²⁹ Scales, “Too Busy to Learn.”

³⁰ Yeager, *Provost Concept for Learning and Technology Center White Paper*.

³¹ An “advisor” may serve as a “mentor,” but the roles are not the same. An advisor oversees student work, monitors progress, and verifies compliance with program requirements. A mentor provides advisory guidance while also serving as an established scholar invested in enhancing the competencies and professional standing of a mentee who is viewed as a scholar in development. See Angela Mays, “The Difference Between ‘Advisors’ and ‘Mentors,’” American Society of Animal Science Web site, August 31, 2011, available at <www.asas.org/taking-stock/blog-post/taking-stock/2011/08/31/the-differences-between-advisors-and-mentors>; and Tina M. Harris and Celeste N. Lee, “Wicked Problems Forum: Mentoring in Higher Education,” *Communication Education* 68, no. 1 (January 2019), 103–113.

³² See Larry D. Miller and Laura A. Wackwitz, “Writing, Integrity, and National Security,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 79 (4th Quarter 2015), 57–62.

³³ Richard H. Kohn, “Letter to the Editor,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 74 (3rd Quarter 2014), 2.

³⁴ U.S. Constitution, preamble, available at <www.usconstitution.net/xconst_preamble.html>.

³⁵ See Harlan K. Ullman, *A Handful of Bullets: How the Murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand Still Menaces the Peace* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2014), 11–30.

³⁶ Martin E. Dempsey, “Investing in the Minds of Future Leaders,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 74 (3rd Quarter 2014), 4–5.

³⁷ Ricks, *The Generals*, 458, notes that American military culture “take[s] a dim view of writing for professional journals.” The elective titled Writing for Publication is no longer offered at the U.S. Army War College (USAWC), and *The Army War College Review*, a refereed online journal of award-winning student research and writing, was recently deleted from the USAWC Press product line.