

2024

## President's Forum

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*The U.S. Naval War College*

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### Recommended Citation

Garvin, Peter A. Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy, President, Naval War College (2024) "President's Forum," *Naval War College Review*. Vol. 77: No. 2, Article 3.

Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol77/iss2/3>

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*Rear Admiral Pete Garvin is the fifty-eighth President of the U.S. Naval War College and a career patrol and reconnaissance pilot. He graduated, with merit, from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1989, with a bachelor of science in aerospace engineering. Garvin attended the National War College, graduating in 2005 with a master of science in national security strategy. He is also a 2015 alumnus of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Seminar XXI. His previous commands include the "Fighting Tigers" of VP-8, Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing (CPRW) 10, Navy Recruiting Command, Patrol and Reconnaissance Group, and, most recently, Naval Education and Training Command.*

## PRESIDENT'S FORUM

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### *Preparing for the Future*

AS THIS ISSUE of the *Naval War College Review* hits the streets, we look back with pride on our June 2024 graduation ceremony in which nearly eight hundred resident and nonresident students earned degrees or diplomas documenting the completion of their rigorous Professional Military Education programs. These students, representing our Navy and joint and interagency partners, as well as the maritime services of more than sixty other nations, challenged their experiences and preconceived notions and are leaving Newport as better leaders and warfighters for it.

This fall, we will pause to recognize the 140th anniversary of our College, and I would like to take this opportunity to share our recently sharpened mission statement:

The mission of the U.S. Naval War College is to *educate* tomorrow's leaders, *inform* today's decision makers, and *engage* with allies and partners on all matters of naval power in order to preserve the peace, respond in crisis, and win decisively in war.

We will achieve this mission by delivering an education that integrates rigorous and relevant curricula with world-class research; engaging in cutting-edge analysis of concepts, plans, and mature and emerging technologies; and conducting outreach and engagement with naval, joint, interagency, and international partners and other stakeholders to enhance interoperability, build partner capability and capacity, and foster a network of enduring relationships.

During my tenure as President, I have come to more fully appreciate the degree to which this institution is an adaptive organization, constantly evolving to best serve our students and the national-security enterprise as a whole. Over many decades, we have validated the efficacy of our three core courses:

Strategy and Policy, National Security Affairs, and Joint Military Operations. These curricula are revised and incrementally refined to incorporate topics reflecting current affairs and trends in the national and global military environments—all while maintaining a focus on the enduring nature and changing character of war. These core courses, in conjunction with our outstanding electives program, are the *foundation* for what we do here in Newport. But more is required.

We also convene two other mandatory courses that round out and enrich the educational experience our students engage in during their ten-month academic year. Our *Leadership in the Profession of Arms* course, launched in 2018, provides students with the opportunity to focus internally as leaders, reflect on past performance, examine personal strengths and weaknesses, develop new competencies, and strengthen their personal character to enhance their ability to lead in complex and dynamic environments. The course takes students through a self-learning journey that combines educational rigor and professional relevance. In so doing, it enhances their ability to self-assess their knowledge, skills, and abilities, improves their ability to apply critical thinking to the problems that they encounter, and strengthens the character traits needed by our nation's future military and national-security leaders.

Launching this coming academic year, our new *Perspectives on Modern War* course will ask our students to analyze the issues that joint, combined, and interagency leaders face. They will take lessons from the core curriculum and apply them to emerging challenges in the international security environment. Content from lectures, guest speakers, symposia, seminars, reading assignments, and wargaming results will be synthesized to enable students to answer the most critical war-fighting questions of the day. The course is structured such that students participate in a learning community or cohort that will stay together through the whole academic year rather than change groups every trimester, as happens in their other courses. This will strengthen the relationships built among the students and serve as another intersection for the sharing of ideas and experiences.

Our education initiatives are only part of what we do here at the College. In April 2024, we traveled to Goa, India, for a regional alumni symposium. Along with the Indian Naval War College, we co-hosted a first-of-its-kind Indo-U.S. Naval War College Conference. In May, the College hosted the tenth annual Women, Peace, and Security symposium, followed by the Andrew C. Cushing International Law Conference. Then in June we conducted the seventy-third Current Strategy Forum, with the theme “America’s Seapower and Maritime Statecraft.” Additionally, our Center on Irregular Warfare and Armed Groups

hosted a timely and relevant conference entitled “Exploring Our Maritime Strategies—II,” which fostered enhanced collaboration among military educational institutions, civilian academics, and battlefield practitioners. These conferences and symposia are critical to our ability to educate, inform, and engage as outlined in our mission statement.

Though we have accomplished much, we have more to do. Looking forward, we have several more initiatives on the horizon. As the result of an extremely generous donation to the College from the Naval War College Foundation, we will soon achieve initial operational capability of a new deterrence studies institute. Scholars working for this institute will expand our deterrence research, addressing the changing landscape of nuclear deterrence and strategic escalation control. As part of the institute’s mandate, we envision the creation of an interdisciplinary fellowship program that harnesses the fresh perspectives of young academic researchers as well as notables in the field. We have already hired two new scholars in the Center for Naval Warfare Studies, and we plan to hire two additional scholars in the new fiscal year. Upon his return from sabbatical in the fall, Dr. Phil Haun, our previous dean of academics, will serve as the institute’s first director.

As some of you may know, we are well into a multiyear, once-in-a-generation infrastructure revitalization effort that will set us up for continued success for decades to come. Hooper and Schonland Halls are slated for demolition in fiscal year 2025 and fiscal year 2026, respectively, providing new space for future endeavors. We will soon begin the transition of office and classroom spaces in support of renovations to Conolly and Hewitt Halls. We have also received the results of a feasibility study that we commissioned as part of a broader campus revitalization effort. The effort includes a proposal for an updated research and wargaming building, notionally called the Future Warfighting Center, that will have the size and technical capacity to meet the growing fleet demand for war gaming across all levels of classification. The feasibility study also included a planned Museum, Archives, and International Forum to be placed along the base fence line for greater public access. The feasibility study concluded that these spaces are viable, and we will now begin the effort to secure funding to make this vision a reality.

I must now close this President’s Forum with some bittersweet news. I am departing the College for a new assignment as president of the National Defense University in Washington, DC. My wife and I are sad to leave our many friends and colleagues, but we will always recall with fondness this amazing tour, and we are both excited about the future of the Naval War College.

It somewhat softens the blow to know that the College will be in good hands under the leadership of Rear Admiral Darryl “D-Day” Walker, a fantastic officer who will bring his immense passion, energy, and drive to the presidency. As an

alumnus, he knows the importance of all that we do. I am certain that the entire extended family of the College will welcome D-Day back to Newport.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Garvin', with a horizontal line extending to the right and a small dot at the end.

PETER A. GARVIN

*Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy*  
*President, U.S. Naval War College*

