



Dear Student:

Congratulations on your selection to the Marine Corps War College (MCWAR) Class of 2025. Selection to a resident top-level school is a distinct privilege achieved by a select few who have demonstrated both superb past performance and superior future potential. Your classmates will include representatives from all branches of the US armed forces, various US government agencies, and foreign militaries. You will be guided in your education by a team of military and civilian professors, each an expert in their field of study.

The professional education you experience at MCWAR is a significant investment toward your future. You can expect to be challenged by our rigorous curriculum that combines a graduate program in Strategic Studies with Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) Level II requirements. As such, the demands of the course are significant and require substantial effort from you.

In addition to classroom work and local field studies, the MCWAR curriculum includes a robust travel program to include:

- Constitution Field Study (Philadelphia, PA)
- The Pentagon site visit
- US State Department site visit
- US Congress site visit
- National Security Council site visits
- Gettysburg Battle Staff Ride
- OCONUS field study for US students
- CONUS field study for international students

MCWAR's mission is to educate selected military and civilian professionals in order to develop strategic leaders, critical and creative thinkers, military strategists, and joint warfighters who are prepared to meet the challenges of a complex and dynamic security environment. MCWAR graduates students who will be:

1. Prepared to perform as strategic advisors to senior military and civilian leaders.
 - a. Evaluate national security strategies, policies, decision making, and joint warfighting.
 - b. Demonstrate effective reading, thinking, and oral and written presentation of complex issues in uncertain environments at the strategic level.
2. Able to perform as critical and creative thinkers.
 - a. Evaluate information and arguments by methods including assessing risk and potential consequences, challenging assumptions, and utilizing different analytical lenses.
 - b. Apply these methods in the creation and evaluation of national security strategies, national military strategies, and campaign plans.

3. Prepared to perform as military strategists.
 - a. Apply the framework of ends, ways, means, and risk.
 - b. Evaluate the integration of all instruments of national power.
 - c. Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of employing force or the threat of force in the pursuit of political objectives.
4. Prepared to perform as senior joint warfighters across all domains.
 - a. Evaluate the changing character and enduring nature of war and apply historical lessons to current and future competition and conflicts.
 - b. Apply the art and science of planning and conducting campaigns and major operations in an all-domain, joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational environment.
 - c. Demonstrate an understanding of essential leadership and decision-making attributes, and the ethical grounding necessary to succeed in senior positions within the joint force, service, or agency.

You will be supported by the faculty and staff who will:

- Challenge you intellectually
- Assist you in how to think, not what to think
- Provide you meaningful evaluation and feedback

All MCWAR students will take a writing and critical thinking diagnostic shortly after checking-in. This diagnostic will be based upon the book *Fighting Talk: Forty Maxims of War, Peace, and Strategy* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2009), by Colin S. Gray. The Library of the Marine Corps will provide a link to the eBook, but you can purchase your own copy of the book if you want to get a head start. Additionally, it is important to take care of personal matters and get settled no later than 17 June 2023 for international students, and 3 July 2023 for US students, so that you are ready to hit the deck running.

Throughout the academic year, you will need your entire inventory of uniforms or appropriate civilian business attire. There are some occasions when all students will be expected to be in business attire.

MCWAR uses an .edu domain, which is where you will do your work for the academic year. During your onboarding you will receive an .edu email account. There is a “bring your own device” policy at Marine Corps University so you are encouraged to use your personal computer, tablet, smartphone, etc., for class work. If you do not have the means or access to a personal computer, a government computer will be issued for your use.

You will receive more detailed information regarding MCWAR, our curriculum, and the academic calendar during your formal in-processing in July. In the meantime, if you need additional information or assistance, contact us at (703) 432-4545/4637 (DSN: 378-4545/4637) or via email at mcwar@usmcu.edu. Your point of contact is Ms. Carol-Anne Parker, MCWAR’s Program Manager.

Semper Fidelis and Welcome Aboard,



Colonel Brian P. Sharp, USMC
Director, Marine Corps War College