



**UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS**  
EDUCATION COMMAND  
MARINE CORPS UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF ADVANCED WARFIGHTING  
2044 SOUTH STREET  
QUANTICO, VA 22134-5067

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
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SAW  
1 Nov 18

From: Director, School of Advanced Warfighting (SAW)  
To: Students, SAW Class AY-20  
  
Subj: SAW WELCOME ABOARD

*"Dare to know!" (Sapere aude!), Kant exhorted his readers. Cast off the yoke of tutelage! Reject dogmas and formula - those "mechanical tools designed for reasonable use," but transformed by princes into "the fetters of an everlasting nonage." "Have the courage to use your own reason! This is the motto of the enlightenment."*

Charles Edward White, *The Enlightened Soldier*

1. Welcome aboard! Congratulations on your selection to attend the School of Advanced Warfighting. Selection to this course is an opportunity granted to a select few officers with superb records and superior potential. The time you spend at SAW will be an investment in your professional future. Throughout the course of the year, you will refine and enhance your ability to think, write, brief, and plan while earning a Master's Degree in Operational Studies. Most importantly, you will come to know the meaning of, and exemplify, the spirit of *Bildung*.

2. The School of Advanced Warfighting is a unique educational institution. The Class of 2020 is comprised of 26 students from across the Services and from Allied countries. The school's small size and low student-to-faculty ratio provide students with exceptional opportunities to engage the military faculty, civilian professors, guest lecturers, and senior military leaders. The small size of the school also allows students to participate in a world-class staff ride program, where students walk the ground that they have studied to gain operational insights; insights that books, maps, and photos alone can never fully convey.

3. The demanding eleven-month curriculum consists of three primary components:

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a. *Foundations of the Operational Art* employs case study methodology to examine the employment, arrangement, and synchronization of joint forces in time, space and purpose to achieve campaign goals.

b. *Operational Planning* consists of a series of seminars, war games, decision games, staff rides and planning problems to develop and practice doctrinally sound planning skills.

c. *Future Warfighting* addresses the inevitability of change and how readily institutions approach innovation and/or adapt their doctrine, organization, equipment and operational practice when confronted by new conditions.

The curriculum is designed to enhance the students' abilities to solve problems and make decisions. This educational process will prepare you to serve and thrive in high-impact service, joint, and combined planning, staff, and command billets.

4. During the academic year you will build a valuable network of professional contacts and form lasting friendships with your fellow students. There are a small number of scheduled social events throughout the year, but the overall level of social activity is determined by the students themselves.

5. I hope that you are excited about the unique and rewarding educational opportunity that awaits you. I urge you to use it to its fullest! I and the rest of the SAW faculty and staff look forward to helping make this a highly profitable year for each of you - *Sapere aude!*

J.R. FULLWOOD