



UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY

WEST POINT®



Academic Program
Strategic Plan
2013-2018

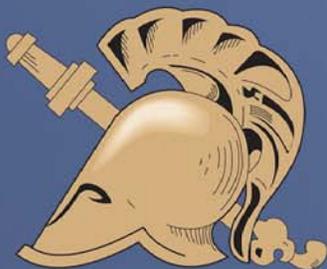


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Introduction

No time in history has demanded more from West Point graduates. Army missions are as diverse and complex as ever. They will remain so. Yet both the speed and scope of change and the potential for decisions of Army leaders at *all* levels to produce *strategic consequences*—good or ill—are essentially new. A self-reinforcing cycle of breakdown in longstanding world orders and growth of worldwide communications—quicker, thicker, and flatter than ever before—is driving people to alter their ways of perceiving the world and seeking to influence it. Social, economic, and political systems are evolving at astonishing rates to adapt as their foundations shift, even while the innate characteristics of people and cultures remain as anchors.

Against this backdrop, our graduates are called to serve as Army leaders. Where young officers of an earlier generation might well expect a clear mission, with a mandate merely to determine *how* to best perform it, today's junior leaders are more likely to receive an expected outcome and only rough boundaries wherein it must be achieved. Their work often starts with deciding *what* to do, formerly the province of more senior leaders. Yet at each level of leadership, the step up in complexity is comparable. Exceptionally volatile, ambiguous situations predominate. Success depends on deep insight, nuanced analysis, and well-reasoned decisions taken in very short time periods. Since the definition of success itself is often unclear, the best way forward is seldom obvious.

Enter the role of West Point education. As expectations of our graduates have shifted to this higher plane of uncertainty, our strategy is to produce leaders competent and comfortable notwithstanding. We call them *scholar-warriors*. They have two overarching attributes. First is a foundation of enduring knowledge—a body of principles, concepts, and cognitive skills that will be valid far into the future. For cadets, this foundation begins with a principled understanding of people, our Nation, and their place in both. This is hardly new thinking. At the very roots of democracy, we find in Plato's *Republic* the following thought, originally due to Socrates:

What other people would you compel to become guardians of the city rather than those who have the best knowledge of the principles that make for the best knowledge of the government of the city? Our guardian must be both a warrior and a philosopher.

The "best knowledge" of today's rapidly evolving global "city" consists in the broad liberal arts foundation of our curriculum, which concerns itself with *all* human endeavors because military decisions have ultimate potential to influence and be influenced by those endeavors. John Milton, observer-participant at another seminal point in our country's ancestry—the birth of the English Commonwealth and republican government—echoed with a practical note on the role of education,

I call...a complete and generous education that which fits a person to perform justly, skillfully, and magnanimously all the offices, both public and private, of peace and war.

“Performing skillfully” in peace and war in our time demands innate understanding and ability to affect the physical world. The math, science, technology, and engineering components of our curriculum provide this. Of a piece with the liberal arts, our cadets receive a knowledge foundation that is “complete and generous” in the full sense of Milton’s meaning.

Beyond this foundation of enduring knowledge, a scholar-warrior also *applies knowledge throughout a lifetime of service*. A West Point education instills in our graduates certain *habits of mind*: inspiration to seek out knowledge, to value creativity, to look below the surface of events—to explore, analyze, discover, envision alternative futures, evaluate them, and systematically choose and follow through with the best actions, consistent always with Army ethical values and the information at hand. They skillfully impart thoughts as effective communication. We help cadets achieve all these habits of mind by providing the best possible opportunities to exercise and reinforce them. We lead them to take responsibility for their learning while at West Point and to feel morally committed to a lifetime of the same. When we succeed, our graduates depart on a trajectory that leads naturally to success.

The remainder of this document is our strategy for the academic program to produce the graduates depicted above. It amplifies the Academic Program Mission and Vision. Faculty members should view it as a license to run and a broad axis of advance to follow. Our faculty team has the full trust of our entire institution to carry out this strategy, achieving tremendous results together that no individual can imagine.

- Section 1: The Environment in which we operate
- Section 2: Assessment of our environment: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
- Section 3: The Academic Program’s Purpose and Vision
- Section 4: Strategic Goals and Objectives
- Section 5: Assessment of Strategic Plan
- Section 6: The Strategic Planning Process

Definition of terms

Vision: A description of the ideal state of the Academic program.

Mission: Defines the fundamental purpose of the academic program: why it exists and what it does to achieve its vision.

Goals: Broadly defined strategic positions or conditions that the Academic program is designed to reach. Goals close the gap between the Dean's vision and its current situation.

Objectives: Measurable statements of achievement that lead to the accomplishment of a goal.

Actions: Projects and Initiatives the Dean will use to accomplish specific objectives. These actions may include tasks, and short and long term studies.

Indicators: Specific measurements, both qualitative and quantitative, used to determine the Academic Program's progress in achieving the goals and objectives.

High impact practices: Techniques and experiences designed to significantly enhance the learning and development of the student's character, depth of knowledge, interpersonal skills, and ability to apply knowledge and skills in the real world.

Blend of Excellence: The mix of the military and civilian faculty that provides an environment rich in intellectual depth and breadth. The blend of faculty capitalizes on the knowledge and experience of all the faculty members to create a robust learning environment for both the cadets and the faculty. Not only are all faculty members dedicated to teaching their respective disciplines, they are also committed to developing the well-rounded leaders of character.

Tier I institutions: According to U.S. News and World Report tier I institutions are determined based on peer assessments, retention (graduation rate and freshman retention rate), Faculty resources, student selectivity, financial resources, graduation rate performances (predicted versus actual graduation rate), and alumni giving rate. Although West Point is typically not listed as a Tier I university because of our financial environment, we are at the forefront of those aspects of higher education embodied by a tier-1 research university, and our graduates performance is comparable to that of tier-1 universities.

Mission Command: The conduct of military operations through decentralized execution based upon mission-type orders. Successful mission command demands that subordinate leaders at all echelons exercise disciplined initiative and act aggressively and independently to accomplish the mission.

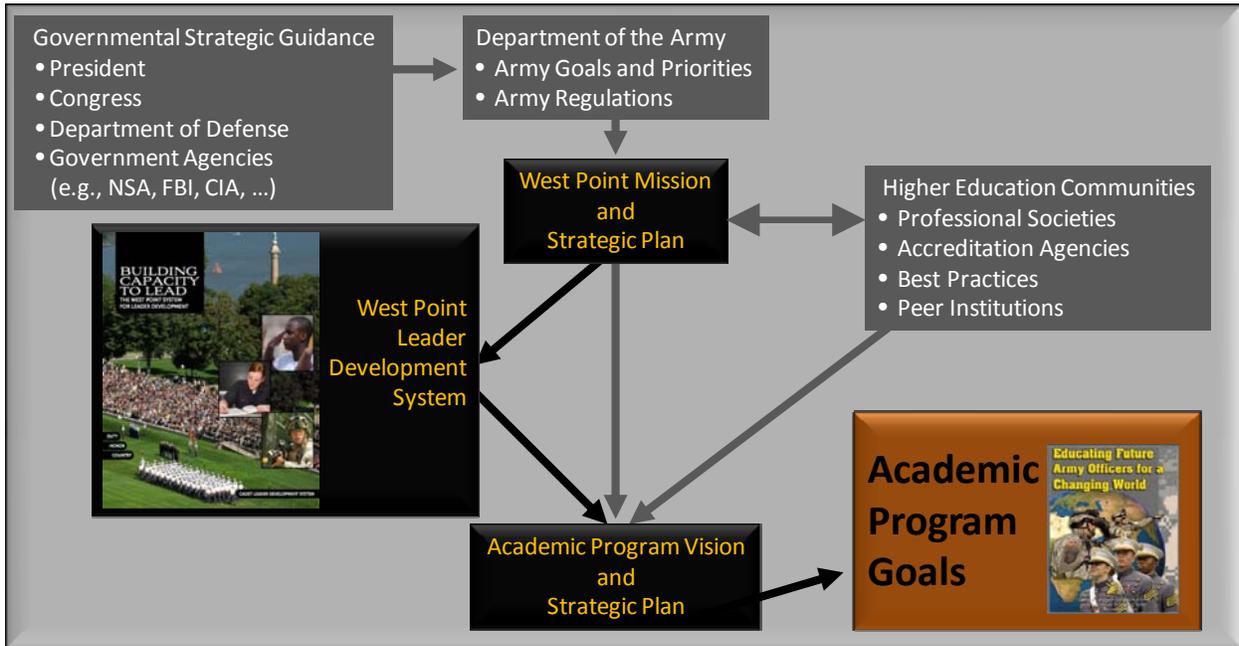
Operational Adaptability: This concept refers to the ability of an Army unit to hone its ability to adjust to rapidly changing situations. It requires a mindset based on flexibility of thought calling for leaders at all levels who are comfortable with collaborative planning and decentralized execution, have a tolerance for ambiguity, and possess the ability and willingness to make rapid adjustments according to the situation.

Section 1: The Environment in Which We Operate

USMA is a unique institution of higher education. West Point is responsible for providing newly commissioned Second Lieutenants to the U.S. Army each year and Intellectual development is an essential part of the program. According to Department of the Army regulation 210-26, “USMA is under the immediate supervision and control of the Department of the Army” (Section 4334(a), Title 10, United States Code (10 USC 4334(a)). USMA operates under the jurisdiction of the Chief of Staff, United States Army (Department of the Army, General Order No. 3, 10 February 1977; see fig 1-1). Therefore, the Secretary of the Army, through the Chief of Staff of the Army, holds the USMA Superintendent responsible for transforming our cadets into commissioned officers. Another part of the guidance to West Point is outlined in Department of the Army regulation 10-87, which outlines the Superintendent’s responsibility to maintain accreditation through appropriate agencies. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET), and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) are the primary agencies responsible for accrediting West Point; therefore, the guidance these organizations provide also forms a critical component in developing the missions and visions of the Academic Program and of West Point as a whole.

One of the key components of any higher education institution is the concept of shared governance. MSCHE expects all higher education institutions to have a shared governance system in which all stakeholders who are involved with carrying out the institution’s mission and goals participate in the governance function in a manner appropriate to that institution (MSCHE, 11). West Point is a higher education system under the direction of the Department of Defense, in particular the Army. The term used for shared governance in the Army is called Mission Command, which is commander centric. As such, the Superintendent sets the high level vision, mission, and intent for the Academy, which is the first principle of mission command. Subordinate staff, faculty, and cadets execute his intent via the two other principles of mission command – understanding and trust. Through understanding, they are able to aggressively and adaptively accomplish the mission whether they are in the classroom, in the cadet company, on the athletic field, or working collaboratively as a member of a standing or ad hoc committee. West Point has a variety of structures and processes that attempt to provide a means to strike an appropriate balance between the chain of command’s authority and the influence and trust awarded to its governing boards and committees. In general, processes involve the committees, boards, and councils developing recommendations in their specific areas of responsibility. Recommendations are submitted to appropriate decision making bodies and/or individuals. The degree to which West Point embraces shared governance is reflected by two mutually dependent influences: the extent to which recommendations reflect the prevailing wisdom of the faculty as a whole, and the extent to which the recommendations are considered, accepted, and approved by decision making bodies or individuals. This entire process reflects the reciprocal trust between the decision making bodies and the individuals and committees at all levels throughout the Academy.

Strategic Influences



Institution

The United States Military Academy's mission is to educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate is a commissioned leader of character committed to the values of "Duty-Honor-Country" and prepared for career of professional excellence and service to the Nation as an officer in the United States Army.

The Superintendent's vision is for West Point to be recognized as a preeminent leader development institution whose graduates—a major source of commissioned officers for the U.S. Army—are leaders of character, the bedrock of our professional military ethic, and a principal source of intellectual capital for the Nation.

West Point Leader Development System

West Point Leader Development System (WPLDS) is the component of USMA's strategic plan that outlines our goals in developing cadets into graduates and U.S. Army Second Lieutenants. A detailed description of the theoretical framework guiding the system can be found in the West Point document, *Building the Capacity to Lead*. Influenced by the strategic environment in which our graduates serve and the diverse backgrounds from which our cadets are drawn, and incorporating accreditation standards and practices common to higher education, WPLDS seeks to provide a leadership evaluation tool that is holistic, easily comprehensible and grounded in the tenets of both the Army and West Point. As such, it is designed around four key dimensions, each of them encompassing qualities essential to the career of a successful Army officer. WPLDS aims to build in cadets the officer's identity: as warrior, as member of a profession, as servant of the nation, and as a leader of character. The dimensions form the foundation of an officer's skill sets, knowledge and competencies. They are the Intellectual, Military, Physical and Moral-Ethical dimensions. Understood as components of an integrated philosophy, these dimensions serve as the ideological underpinning of WPLDS, guiding its lessons and informing its goals.

The goal of WPLDS is to prepare West Point graduates who will:

- Lead and inspire their units to accomplish the mission.
- Embrace their roles as United States Army officers.
- Demonstrate a broad perspective that is open to new ideas and experiences.
- Understand ambiguous situations and solve complex problems.
- Make sound and timely decisions under stress.
- Communicate effectively with all audiences.
- Demonstrate proficiency in military and physical skills required to succeed in combat.
- Demonstrate mental and physical toughness with the strength of spirit to win.
- Demonstrate respect for others and work effectively with different cultures and people.
- Live the Army values.

Accreditation Agencies

The Army recognizes the importance of higher education in the development of its future leaders. Army Regulation 10-87 designates that in addition to providing officers for the Army, two functions of the Academy are:

- Establishment and maintenance of a 4-year course of instruction that qualifies cadets for award of a bachelor of science degree and commissioning as a Second Lieutenant, subject to the approval of the Secretary of the Army and consistent with Department of the Army policy.
- Establishment and maintenance of formal academic and athletic accreditations through the appropriate accreditation agencies.

West Point's Academic Program is essential to the academy's ability to meet these requirements. In order to fulfill its role, the Academic Program must also follow guidance from accreditation sources capable of validating the academy's Bachelor of Science degree. The program does this by maintaining its accreditation with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) and supporting the academic departments as they establish and maintain accreditation in their specific subject areas.

MSCHE affiliation requires an institutional plan for the integration of academic, personnel, information and technologies, learning resources, and financial development. The MSCHE's core values include the promotion of continuous self-evaluation and institutional improvement among its members. This strategic plan, along with the continued effort to assess the Academic Program's ability to meet its objectives, directly supports this core value in addition to serving as the guide for Academic Program initiatives. MSCHE accreditation also requires USMA to meet the following criteria:

- Has a mission appropriate to higher education
- Guided by well-defined and appropriate goals, including goals for student learning
- Has established conditions and procedures under which its mission and goals can be realized
- Assesses both institutional effectiveness and student learning outcomes, and uses the results for improvement
- Accomplishes its mission and goals substantially
- Organized, staffed, and supported to accomplish its mission and goals
- Meets the eligibility requirements and the standards for accreditation of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

The structure of a West Point education – a strong liberal arts foundation with a core engineering sequence – also supports the Association of American Colleges and Universities' Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) campaign goals, including the goal to

“Challenge the widespread belief that students must choose either a practical education or a liberal education, by building widespread support for educational changes that already are producing a new synthesis of liberal and practical education” (AAC&U’s LEAP website).

In addition to MSCHE, seven of the Academy’s Engineering Programs and the Computer Science program are accredited by their respective accreditation commissions from ABET, the most highly regarded international accreditation organization in these fields. This strategic plan provides guidance for program planning and outlines the Academic Program’s part in guiding these engineering programs’ efforts to maintain their accredited status.

Section 2: Assessment of Our Environment: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

Developing the strategic plan required an internal evaluation of the Academic Program to identify how we should allocate scarce resources—time, effort, money, and personnel—over the next five years. Increasing awareness of the program’s strengths will enhance West Point’s prominence in the academic arena and will provide positive reinforcement to the cadets, staff, and faculty who have worked hard to develop those strengths, affirming their efforts to keep USMA at the forefront of tier I schools in higher education. Identifying our weaknesses provided areas for the Dean to apply additional attention and resources to improve them and eventually develop them into new program strengths. Understanding the opportunities available for the Academic Program provides fresh ideas and potentially new resources for capitalizing on strengths or ameliorating weaknesses. Addressing threats to the Academic Program is essential to continued success. Competing demands for resources throughout the Army could cause the program to lose ground and lessen its ability to maximize its opportunities.

Strengths

West Point is highly regarded throughout the academic community and has been ranked as one of the top colleges in America. The quality of the incoming cadets, their academic performance while at the academy, and their contributions to the Army and the nation after graduation are evidence of the strengths of the Academic Program at USMA. Cadets study a diverse core curriculum and are able to select from a wide variety of academic majors, many of which are accredited and ranked amongst the best in their field. The programs earn their high marks because the faculty members come from some of the best graduate programs in the world and consider teaching cadets to be their highest priority. In addition, the faculty contributes to the Army and nation by conducting high-quality research and serving as subject-matter experts in areas such as counterterrorism, personnel management, systems engineering, and ethics.

Weaknesses

The Academic Program must work to improve in areas to maintain its current status as a top-ranked learning institution and to adapt to the changing academic environment. West Point’s history, legacy, and traditions contribute to its appeal as an institution, but it must regularly update facilities, administrative systems, and the structure and delivery of education to provide a high-quality learning environment and keep up with advances in technology. This will be difficult because the economic environment suggests future reductions in resources and faculty at West Point. Increasing transparency for decisions on policies and resource allocation will be critical to maintaining the collegial environment and getting faculty support for necessary changes. Since military readiness is enhanced by diversity of all cultures and nationalities, there is an need for an appreciation of cultural differences. West Point should seek ways to diversify the faculty and the corps of cadets to create an environment where cadets can gain an

increasing understanding of the multicultural aspects of the Army and world in which they are expected to succeed.

Opportunities

Over the next five years, there are many opportunities that exist that will help the Academic program maintain excellence. First, we need to actively engage all of our stakeholders in order to expand the recognition and support of West Point across the Nation. The Academic program has only just begun to leverage alumni and outside organizations as potential funding sources. West Point can seek new ways to augment existing funds by showcasing the intellectual capital of its faculty and cadets. Many outside agencies have started to see the benefit of using West Point as a “think-tank” for the Army, and we need to continue to capitalize on the opportunities for outreach. As a creative and innovative force – as the space in the Army potentially most conducive to intellectual risk-taking – West Point’s faculty and cadets can significantly contribute to the service and to the Department of Defense by shaping major policy issues.

Threats

The worldwide financial crisis that has occurred over the last five years presents significant challenges to institutions of higher education. West Point is especially affected since the operating budget is entirely funded by the federal government. The costs of operation continue to rise, and the future federal funding stream is not predictable. In fact, the possibility of future financial resource constraints is very high. In addition, the end of the extended conflicts in the Middle East has resulted in the downsizing of the Army. As this downsizing occurs, the number of military faculty assigned to West Point is likely to decrease. Consequently, USMA must constantly be seeking new ways to become more efficient with fewer resources. Some of the solutions to these challenges will push the limits of the existing bureaucratic rules. We must ensure that innovative ideas are not stifled when rules governing other military installations are applied to West Point without recognition of the uniqueness of our mission within the Army. Administrative structures and personnel working within these structures need to be flexible and open to changes. There may also be impasses that demand revision to existing regulations and laws.

Section 3: Purpose and Vision of the Academic Program

Purpose of the Academic Program

The purpose of the Academic Program is to provide our students the intellectual foundation for service as a well-educated commissioned officer who possesses the knowledge and skills necessary for continued growth as a U.S. Army officer. In coordination with the Military and Physical Programs, the Academic Program develops in cadets a professional self-concept as an officer and nurtures their competence, character, and confidence to act decisively on matters of concern to the nation. The structure, content, and process of education and development enables cadets to understand the interrelated roles of a commissioned officer: soldier, servant of the Nation, military professional and leader of character, the leader development process compels cadets to incorporate these roles into their own emerging professional identities.

Vision for the Academic Program

The vision of the academic program is to educate and inspire adaptive leaders of character to build the Army and the Nation's future.

This means West Point will offer an academic program that is challenging and distinctive, with the capacity to prepare graduates to meet challenges, problems, opportunities, and military threats with confidence in their abilities to accomplish their assigned missions.

Recognizing that we cannot possibly train cadets the appropriate responses in every situation they will encounter, we must educate them broadly for a career of service. Providing a broad liberal education designed to develop versatile, creative, and critical thinkers will help our graduates anticipate and respond effectively to the uncertainties of a changing technological, social, political, and economic world. We expect that our graduates will examine and assess the increasingly complex environment to identify new ideas and trends and imagine possible outcomes. Toward this end, the curriculum is structured to ensure a shared learning responsibility that provides our students a foundation for continued intellectual development.

Academic Program Goals

The overarching Academic Program goal is graduates integrate knowledge and skills from a variety of disciplines to anticipate and respond appropriately to opportunities and challenges in a changing world. . The seven Academic Program goals are as follows:

Communication: Graduates communicate effectively with all audiences.

Critical Thinking and Creativity: Graduates think critically and creatively.

Lifelong Learning: Graduates demonstrate the capability and desire to pursue progressive and continued intellectual development.

Ethical Reasoning: Graduates recognize ethical issues and apply ethical perspectives and concepts in decision making.

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics: Graduates apply science, technology, engineering, and mathematics concepts and processes to solve complex problems.

Humanities and Social Sciences: Graduates apply concepts from the humanities and social sciences to understand and analyze the human condition.

Disciplinary Depth: Graduates integrate and apply knowledge and methodological approaches gained through in-depth study of an academic discipline.

Section 4: Strategic Goals and Objectives

The Dean's vision of providing an academic program that educates and inspires adaptive leaders of character for the Army and Nation yielded six strategic goals that address specific academic program needs. This plan develops a series of specific goals and objectives to enhance excellence in six domains: Cadets, Education and Enrichment Opportunities, Faculty and Staff, Professional and Collegial Environment, Innovative and Responsive Capital, and Operations and Infrastructure. The strategic goals build upon the academic program's historic strengths to achieve even higher levels of quality and excellence for West Point. The narrative that follows presents six strategic program goals, rationales, and objectives. The key to West Point's academic program success is a sustained focus on, and commitment to, these strategic goals.

Strategic Goal 1: Cadet Excellence

To attract, admit, develop and graduate cadets who become leaders of character and meet the needs of the Army and the Nation for the next generation.

Rationale

This goal highlights our fundamental mission at the Academy: developing leaders of character. The academic program will measure its success, first and foremost by the success of its students. We strive to empower all cadets for success. This goal is accomplished by first attracting high-quality candidates and subsequently mentoring cadets throughout the leader-development process.

Objectives

1. Attract and admit a diverse population of high-quality applicants who will fulfill the mission of the Academy and have the potential to become leaders of character for the Army and Nation.
2. Ensure cadet candidates are prepared for the academic rigors at USMA by shaping the academic developmental processes at the United States Military Academy Preparatory School.
3. Develop and graduate cadets who are prepared to become the Army's and the Nation's leaders of character.
4. Promote cadet development in all areas by actively engaging with the other directorates in the West Point Leader Development System.

Strategic Goal 2: Excellence in Education and Enrichment Opportunities

Sustain and improve a vibrant curriculum that includes broadening enrichment activities designed to develop graduates who integrate knowledge and skills from a variety of disciplines to anticipate and respond effectively to opportunities and challenges in a changing world.

Rationale

By creating this goal, we are reaffirming the centrality of the academic mission: to develop versatile, creative, and critical thinkers who will become the Nation's future strategic leaders. Our academic program is designed to provide both a wide range of courses and experience in depth in a particular discipline. The breadth and the depth in the curriculum complement each other and provide for a true liberal arts education. West Point is faced with growing and often competing demands and expectations. The future is uncertain, and we must ensure our graduates are prepared to lead in any environment. This goal cites the need for more field-based or international activities in which cadets "engage the world" in their academic work under faculty supervision.

Objectives

1. Leverage liberal education to achieve the overarching academic program goal.
2. Maintain academic program goals that describe the desired intellectual knowledge, skills, and characteristics graduates need to achieve WPLDS Outcomes.
3. Offer diverse curricular and enrichment activities that support the academic program goals, are competitive with tier I institutions, are commensurate with institutional and program accreditation standards, stimulate the imagination, and enable graduates to be lifelong learners.
4. Offer a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary majors and other programs of specialized study that foster intellectual passion and curiosity; enable study in-depth; and provide useful diverse skills, knowledge, and abilities for the Army.
5. Sustain and improve a learning environment characterized by engaging intellectual interaction between and among faculty and cadets in a respectful and collegial atmosphere that facilitates a desire by all to achieve academic excellence.

Strategic Goal 3: Faculty and Staff Excellence

Attract, retain, and develop a diverse, high-quality faculty and academic staff, engaged with the international community of scholars, and committed to excellence in teaching, mentoring, and role modeling.

Rationale

The faculty and staff are central to the fulfillment of the academic mission. Our faculty members have responsibilities that differ from those of their peers at other institutions. Like all comparable academic institutions, West Point's faculty members are deeply involved in teaching, scholarship and service. However, a major difference in responsibilities is that our faculty and staff are required to play an integral role in WPLDS. As such, they are continuously striving to create opportunities for one-on-one mentorship through activities inside and outside the classroom. In addition to developing leaders of character, the faculty is committed to making substantive contributions to the Army and their respective discipline; a faculty that makes significant contributions is more fulfilled and fosters a culture of excellence that helps perpetuate the talent and commitment required. A robust professional development program is crucial to preserving the vitality of our faculty and staff. Maintaining a diverse faculty is important in principle given values of the Army and the Academy and also because it provides significant educational value to cadets and our programs.

Objectives

1. Attract and retain a diverse, high-quality faculty and academic staff that reflect a blend of military and civilian professionals from all backgrounds at both the junior and senior ranks.
2. Advance excellence through a robust program of professional development in the context of WPLDS.
3. Promote high-quality reciprocal engagement with the global community of scholars, to include formal collaborations.
4. Promote continued excellence in teaching.
5. Promote excellence in mentoring and role-modeling of cadets and colleagues.

Strategic Goal 4: Professional and Collegial Environment

To promote a climate in which all are valued and trusted members of a team dedicated to the pursuit of excellence.

Rationale

The Dean recognizes that a healthy and vibrant organization is continually monitoring the working environment of its faculty and staff. Individuals must believe that they are valued members of the team. In addition, they want to contribute to the overall success of the institution. A healthy and vibrant organization must always be alert to professional development opportunities to ensure that faculty and staff members maintain their expertise. Additionally, the Dean is committed to promoting a healthy “work-life” balance by encouraging the faculty and staff members to pursue activities outside the workplace.

Objectives

1. Value the capabilities and contributions of each individual.
2. Build effective teams that capitalize on diverse perspectives
3. Encourage intellectual curiosity and promote innovation and an entrepreneurial spirit.
4. Foster academic freedom in accordance with the USMA faculty manual.
5. Promote and support an appropriate “work-life” balance that benefits both the individual and the Academy. Enhanced work performance typically results when individuals engage in personal life activities that rejuvenate them.

Strategic Goal 5: Innovative and Responsive Intellectual Capital

To promote development of new knowledge and to seek opportunities to make the significant intellectual contributions to the Army and the Nation that are essential to educating and inspiring creative thinkers and adaptive leaders.

Rationale

Research & Outreach has long been an integral component of the academic program of West Point. Research provides context to the classroom; is central to a vibrant and current faculty; and is one way West Point connects to the Army and the Nation. Our students are bright and motivated to learn, our faculty members are committed, and the Army applies that combination to its hardest problems. We are constantly seeking research efforts (including projects, publications, and conferences). We must continue to evolve our disciplines while building our capacity to serve the Army in this unique role. We strive to continue building internal capacity and forging external partnerships so that our intellectual capital can reach beyond our gates. We are driven to integrate our classrooms with real-world problems and issues that inspire our future leaders to be creative thinkers and adaptive leaders.

Objectives

1. Promote a culture of research and scholarship that incorporates varied faculty expertise, maximizes diversity of intellectual capital, and leverages research and scholarship to renew curriculum and deepen cadet educational experiences.
2. Advance external collaboration and a culture of outreach in areas that leverage the distinctive intellectual capital of West Point.
3. Provide an innovative, interdisciplinary and integrated approach to cadet and faculty scholarly development.
4. Communicate externally the relevant, innovative, and responsive intellectual capital available at West Point (Branding)

Strategic Goal 6: Effective Operations and Infrastructure

To develop and enhance policies, processes, and structures that manage, allocate, and monitor the resources that are crucial to fulfilling the Dean's mission.

Rationale

This goal encompasses three distinct areas: Governance, Administration, and Infrastructure. These three areas are the enabling conditions for achieving the primary academic goals and strategic initiatives of the plan. In order to be an effective organization, there must be a clear delineation of responsibilities with respect to institutional governance. Policies and procedures must be in place to properly manage, allocate, and monitor personnel and resources. Finally, the physical and technological infrastructure must keep pace with the changing environment. The efficiency of operations will be more important than ever over the next five years.

I. Governance

Consistent with principles of mission command practice and promote shared and transparent processes to support sound decision making, guide the formulation of effective policies and leverage the expertise of the faculty to achieve the mission.

Objectives

1. Foster two way communication plan to ensure cadets, staff and faculty clearly understand Dean's vision and intent as embodied by Academic program goals and strategic plan
2. Organize efficiently and effectively to maintain operational adaptability
3. Ensure the Dean's Plan supports the USMA mission, fosters and informs institutional planning, and facilitates resource allocation.
4. Ensure assessment feeds decision making and resource allocation.

II. Administration

To operate with clear, effective, and efficient internal processes and procedures in consonance with Army and Department of Defense regulations, while accounting for our unique status as both a military unit and a public institution of higher education.

Objectives

1. Standardize, enhance the efficiency, and raise awareness, of staff processes and communications in the directorate
2. Establish reliable, predictable and thorough personnel policies and procedures that meet the manpower requirements of the directorate.
3. Improve processes for management and tracking of funding in support of directorate activities.

III. Educational Infrastructure

To plan, build, maintain, and utilize educational infrastructure that is essential to developing intellectual excellence.

Objectives

1. Pursue and provide academic facilities comparable to those at peer institutions.
2. Discover, develop, and deploy a digital infrastructure that is agile in supporting intellectual excellence.
3. Increase energy efficiency and promote sustainability.

Section 5: Assessment of Strategic Plan

This section proposes a general approach, set of assumptions, and overview of the assessment plan that will inform the leaders on the progress on plan goals and objectives. This assessment plan serves as a broad framework that uses existing data to assess and track progress on plan objectives and actions. This proposed plan is a first step, intended to be a starting point for faculty and staff development and further refinement of the appropriate ways to assess our progress.

General Approach

1. Organize indicators around goals and objectives.
2. Include both quantitative and qualitative indicators.
3. If possible, have multiple indicators for each objective, given the complexity of the assessment, but as few as possible to enhance focus.
4. Make the indicators flexible and adaptable to be useful across a wide range of academic areas or units.
5. Make every attempt to refine and exploit existing sources of data and information.

Assumptions

1. No particular set of indicators will be sufficient, rather some sets or combinations will be used for tracking progress
2. Indicators help to promote progress and improvement by holding departments and the Dean's directorate accountable for working toward goals or objectives, but they also can do harm if action is focused on moving particular numbers or indicators rather than the larger purposes for which they are created.

Assessment Plan

The assessment of the strategic plan will take place throughout the academic year. At the beginning of the year, the Dean will publish the annual guidance report, which will include the list of initiatives and actions for that academic year. These actions and initiatives represent the Dean's annual priorities. By the end of the fall semester, the Dean's staff departments will request certain topics to be discussed during their annual Review and Analysis (R&A) briefing to the Dean. Additionally, the Dean's staff will ask for specific data that will assist in the assessment of certain goals. Once all of the departments have conducted their R&As, the Dean's staff will compile the data from all of the departments and a draft strategic assessment report. In addition to the data received from the R&As, the report will include an executive summary from the Assessment Steering committee on the assessment of the academic program. This strategic assessment report, which will be published by the end of the spring term, will be staffed with the departments and the Dean's staff, and will serve as the basis for the development of the annual guidance report for the following academic year.

The figure below summarizes this annual assessment of the strategic plan. The cycle is a continuous process that occurs each year.

Section 6: Strategic Planning Process

The strategic planning process for the academic program began in the summer of 2010. BG Trainor formed a tiger team consisting of seven senior military and civilian faculty and staff. The tiger team was given the following guidance:

- Listen: Interview individual and group stakeholders, both inside and outside the Dean's directorate.
- Analyze the emerging issues; identify a handful of the most pressing concerns that seem conducive to solution with focused effort.
- Prioritize those concerns.

After conducting numerous interviews and focus groups and analyzing existing policies and guidance documents, the tiger team identified nine focus areas.

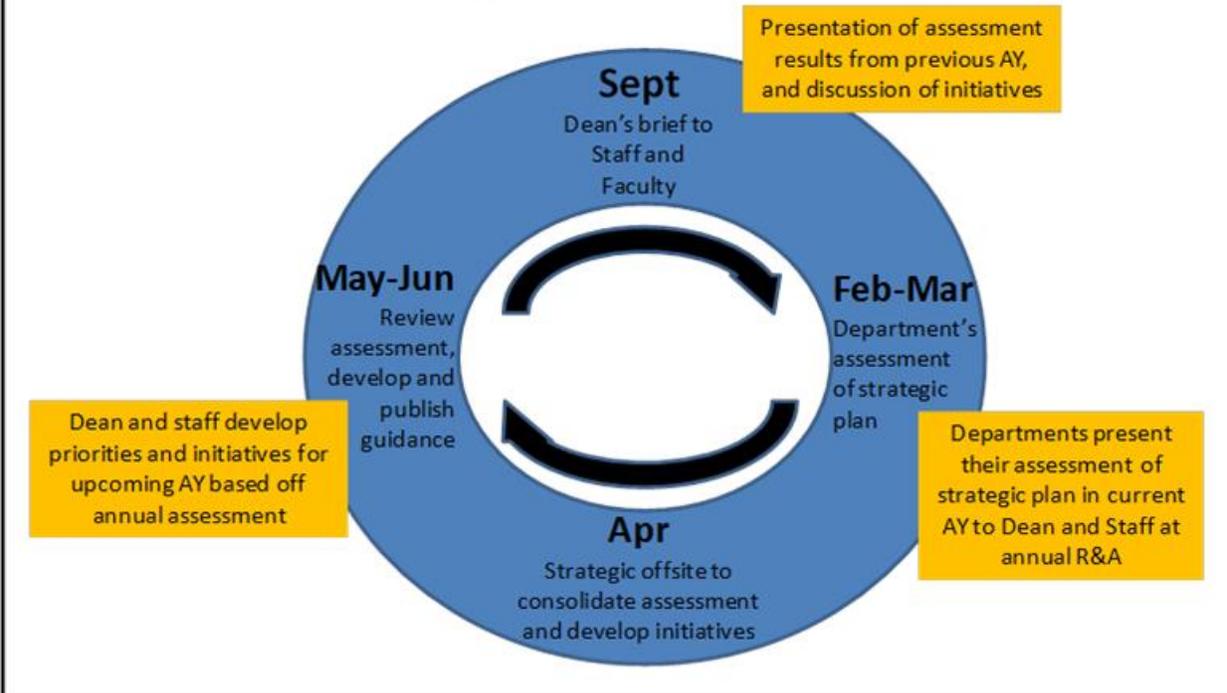
The next step in the planning process was conducting an offsite meeting with 47 faculty and staff members representing the 13 academic departments and all of the divisions of the Dean's staff. At this all-day meeting in Jefferson Hall the group developed a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threat (SWOT) analysis for the Dean's directorate. In addition, the participants were divided into nine sub-groups representing the nine focus areas identified by the tiger team. The sub-groups worked on developing goals and objectives for these areas.

Throughout the spring semester, members on the Dean's staff met to revise the goal statements wording. During this process, it was decided that the Infrastructure, Governance, and Administration goals could be combined into one goal with three main objectives. Additionally, during these meetings, the names of the goals were changed to capture their visionary aspect.

During the fall of 2011, another offsite meeting was conducted to continue work on the strategic plan. 44 faculty and staff members representing all 13 departments participated in this meeting. Again, the participants were divided into sub-groups, each of which focused on one goal. The sub-groups were asked to validate the goal statements, revise the objectives, and develop actions and indicators of success for each objective. At the end of the day each sub-group presented its results to the group at large.

During the months of November and December, the Dean's staff met six times to revise the goals, objectives, actions, and indicators. The draft of the strategic plan was sent out to all faculty and staff members in March 2012. A website was established for individuals to provide feedback to the plan. Once reviewing and incorporating the feedback, the final strategic plan was published in spring of 2012.

Annual Strategic Assessment process



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