

MILPER Message Number**19-149****Proponent****AOJK-DTD****Title****Academic Year (AY) 20 National Defense University Joint Special Operations Master of Arts Program****...Issued:[5/14/2019 12:43:03 PM]...**

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1. This message will expire NLT 14 May 2020.

 2. This message announces the procedures to apply for the AY 20 National Defense University (NDU) Joint Special Operations Master of Arts (JSOMA) program at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USAJFKSWCS), Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

 3. Program Description.
 - a. USAJFKSWCS has partnered with NDU to offer a fully accredited, ten-month Master of Arts in Strategic Security Studies at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The NDU JSOMA program at USAJFKSWC mirrors the JSOMA program offered by NDU's College of International Security Affairs. The JSOMA program offers a curriculum that incorporates strategic perspectives on the global threat environment including transregional joint warfighting; strategic deterrence in the 21st century; non-traditional threats to security and stability; the rise of newly empowered and politicized ideological movements; the relationships among political objectives, strategy, and all instruments of national power; and the roles of power and ideology in the strategic environment. Degree candidates complete a combination of theoretical and practical learning including seminar participation, independent study, research, and writing of a thesis. The program prepares professionals to develop and implement national and international security strategies for conditions of peace, crisis, and war.

b. Students who complete the Master of Arts In Strategic Security Studies will be able to meet the following learning objectives:

(1) Analyze the 21st century geopolitical environment characterized by the rise of non-state armed groups, the uneven erosion of state sovereignty, and transregional multi-domain threats;

(2) Evaluate the roles of power and ideology, the rise of newly empowered and politicized ideological movements, and the basis for authority and legitimacy;

(3) Understand the relationships among political objectives, strategy, and all instruments of national power;

(4) Think critically and strategically, differentiate between policy and analysis, and apply knowledge to practice in collaborative and complex circumstances with diverse partners.

4. Course Dates:

a. Report Date – 3 August 2020.

b. Graduation Date – 28 May 2021.

5. ILE AOC Credentialing: Be advised that Intermediate Level Education (ILE) is conducted in two phases: Phase I is Common Core and Phase II is the Advanced Operations Course (AOC). The NDU JSOMA Program AOC credentialing is currently under decision and there is a potential that selectees may require to couple with Satellite ILE and/or Distance Learning to receive full ILE credit. Officers must also complete ILE-Common Core to be fully Military Education Level (MEL)-4 qualified. Coordinate with your respective Branch's assignment officer (career coaches) to ensure this is completed.

6. Selection Process: A Selection Panel will convene on 18 – 19 September 2019 to select applicants for the AY20 JSOMA program.

7. Application Dates:

a. Applications Due to USAJFKSWCS – COB 08 August 2019.

b. Panel Convenes – 18 – 19 September 2018.

c. Selectee Notification – NLT 1 week after the release of the FY19 (CY2020 and 2021) Army Competitive Category (ACC) Intermediate Level Education (ILE) board results in late January 2020.

8. Prerequisites:

a. Common to all:

- (1) Must be on assignment to and/or slated to return to a Special Operations organization.
- (2) Must not have a graduate degree paid for by the U.S. Army (excluding Tuition Assistance).
- (3) Must have extraordinary potential for future Army service.
- (4) Must have an undergraduate degree from a REGIONALLY accredited college or university with a minimum 2.5 GPA. It is the applicant's responsibility to verify institution's regional accreditation at the time of degree conferral. Candidates lacking a 2.5 GPA may pursue a waiver - see 10.g.
- (5) Must meet Army height and weight standards.
- (6) Must be able to complete program without interruption.
- (7) Must not be pending any adverse actions at any time during this process.

b. Officers that previously attended an ILE Common Core Course but did not receive a master's degree are eligible to apply. Officers participating in programs approved in lieu of AOC may only compete for a Satellite or DL opportunity. Officers selected by the FY 19 ILE Selection Board for attendance at a 10-Month Resident or 14-week Satellite course are expected to attend ILE IAW their selected venue. The goal of optimized ILE is to provide this educational foundation early for new Majors. Therefore, deferments are highly discouraged. In requesting a deferment, you will be formally declining your offer for that academic year and will need to re-apply to next year's panel.

c. Army Special Operations Forces Officers (18A, 37A, OR 38A): YG 2010 is the target year group, as they are in the primary zone for promotion to MAJ. YG 2011 may apply, though attendance is contingent upon promotion below the zone to MAJ and meeting all other criteria. YG 2009 Officers not selected for promotion and competing above the zone for MAJ may apply. YG 2008 Officers that were twice passed over for promotion to MAJ, and approved by the FY19 Selective Continuation (SELCON) Board to remain on active duty, may apply.

(1) Special Forces: (18A) and Psychological Operations (37A): YG 2010, YG 2011, and select members of YG 2008 and YG 2009 may apply. All other year groups require an exception to policy to attend.

(2) Civil Affairs (38A) –YG 2004-2011 (YG04-08 Officers must be KD complete). FY19 MAJ PSB Selectees that are selected for Resident ILE can still attend NDU.

(3) Officers may request deferments or a change of venue using a DA4187 routed through the first General Officer in the chain of command, through HRC, for approval by the VCSA. Officers may only change venue from Resident to Distance Learning or from Satellite to Distance Learning.

d. Special Forces Warrant Officers (180A) - Must be in the pay grade of CW2 (P) to CW4 with less than 2 years TIG when classes begin. Must have a minimum 36 months of documented service on an ODA and possess the requisite operational experience to serve in assignments at BN levels and above. Must be recommended by their group CDR/DPT GRP CDR (if in a TDA assignment, Officers must also be recommended by their first O-6 in their current Chain of Command). Officers must have successfully completed the Special Forces Warrant Officer Advance Course (SFWOAC).

e. Army Special Operations Forces Non-Commissioned Officers (CMF 18, 37, OR 38):

(1) Must have completed appropriate non-commissioned officer educational programs for grade and years of service.

(2) Must not have more than 22 years of active federal service as of report date to the academic institution.

(3) Must be indefinite or have sufficient enlistment remaining equal to or greater than the three times the length of requested schooling.

(4) Must be in the grade of E6 or above.

(5) 37F2O can apply if they meet pre-requisites listed in paragraph 8.e., have 2 years' time-in-grade, and at least 24 months assigned to an operational unit.

(6) Upon graduation of the NDU program, all follow-on assignments for CMF-18 NCO's will be determined by 1st SFC (A) based on current and future requirements.

f. Special Operations Aviation and Ranger Regiment Applicant Prerequisites:

(1) Must meet pre-requisites listed in paragraph 8.a.

(2) Must have completed all appropriate professional education programs commensurate with grade and years of service.

(3) Special Operations Aviators must be 15/150 series and possess a K4, 5, 6 Additional Skill Identifier (ASI).

g. Joint Service Applicant Prerequisites:

(1) Must meet pre-requisites listed in paragraph 8.a.

(2) Must have completed all appropriate professional education programs

commensurate with grade and years of service.

(3) All permanent change of station costs, wages, and allowances are funded by the parent service.

h. Obligations Incurred: All students incur a three-for-one Active Duty Service Obligation (ADSO) upon graduation.

9. Application Process Requirements. Eligible Officers, Warrant Officers, and Non-Commissioned Officers must submit their application requirements either by email to keytel.munoz.ctr@socom.mil or in person to room B110 – Clay Hall, 3855 Ardennes St. BLDG # D-2104 FBNC no later than COB 08 AUG 2019. All documents must be legible copies or originals. The Education Department will coordinate with Branch Assignment Officers and Branch Managers at HQ, U.S. Army Human Resources Command, Fort Knox, KY to ensure that all applicants meet eligibility requirements. Packets will not be accepted through any other channels.

10. Application Packet Requirements:

a. Updated ORB/ERB – must include a current DA photo or service equivalent.

b. All available Officer/Non-Commissioned Officer evaluation reports that cover the period from 01 January 2016 to 30 June 2019.

c. DA FORM 1618 – Endorsed by the first O6 in the applicant's Chain Of Command. Joint Special Operations Command and all Sister Services require endorsement by respective service Assignment Officer/Manager.

d. HRC Branch Approval Memo signed by the applicant's Assignments Officer (example can be found at the following hyperlink: <http://www.soc.mil/swcs/sweg/graduate.html>).

e. Statement of Purpose that includes your name (minimum of 250 words, not to exceed 500 words). The statement of purpose should include the following: 1) the experiences and qualifications that make the applicant competitive for admission; 2) an explanation of the applicant's academic preparation and research interest; 3) the contribution the applicant's research will make to the Joint SOF Enterprise; 4) any other distinguishing merits the applicant would like the committee to take into consideration.

f. NDU Admissions Application (applications can be found at the following hyperlink: <http://www.soc.mil/swcs/sweg/graduate.html>).

g. A GPA waiver request (if required) should include 1) undergraduate GPA and discipline; 2) the explanation of the circumstances; 3) description of any academic work undertaken since receipt of the bachelor's degree; and 4) an explanation as to why the admissions committee should not consider the undergraduate GPA to reflect

the applicant's ability to complete a demanding graduate degree program.

h. Signed Research Agreement (agreement can be found at the following hyperlink: <http://www.soc.mil/swcs/sweg/graduate.html>).

i. Signed and initialed Student Acknowledgment of Responsibilities (Memo can be found at the following hyperlink: <http://www.soc.mil/swcs/sweg/graduate.html>).

j. Official Transcript(s). NOTE: All undergraduate requirements for degree conferral must be complete by the end of CY 2019. If your degree has not been conferred by the application deadline, you must include your most current academic transcript as well as an official memo, on letterhead, from your institution's registrar stating that you will meet all of the requirements for degree conferral at the conclusion of the fall/winter term (NLT 31 December 2019) with your packet. Transcripts can be emailed directly from the institution to keytel.munoz.ctr@socom.mil; sealed and delivered in person to room B110 Clay Hall, 3855 Ardennes St BLDG # D-2104 FBNC; or mailed (please provide tracking information to Ms. Keytel Munoz) to:

USAJFKSWCS; AOJK – DTD
ATTN: Keytel Munoz (Ed Dept)
3004 Ardennes Street Stop A
Fort Bragg, North Carolina 28310

11. It is your responsibility to inquire about the status of your application packet. Please wait at least 48 hours after submitting your packet before submitting any inquiries.

12. Any application packet that is not complete as directed in paragraph 10, or does not meet the suspense outlined in paragraph 7, will not be considered for this program. Any application packets submitted through a channel not in accordance with paragraphs 9 and 10 will not be accepted.

13. There will be no waivers or exception to policy requests processed for missed deadlines.

14. Specific questions about the USAJFKSWCS NDU JSOMA program should be addressed to the attention of the ARSOF Advanced Education Program Manager, Ms. Keytel Munoz; keytel.munoz.ctr@socom.mil 910-908-1517.