

USSOCOM Research Topics 2011



Joint Special Operations University
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Joint Special Operations University and the Strategic Studies Department

The Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) provides its publications to contribute toward expanding the body of knowledge about joint special operations. JSOU publications advance the insights and recommendations of national security professionals and the Special Operations Forces (SOF) students and leaders for consideration by the SOF community and defense leadership.

JSOU is the educational component of the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. The JSOU mission is to educate SOF executive, senior, and intermediate leaders and selected other national and international security decision makers, both military and civilian, through teaching, outreach, and research in the science and art of joint special operations. JSOU provides education to the men and women of SOF and to those who enable the SOF mission in a joint and interagency environment.

JSOU conducts research through its Strategic Studies Department where effort centers upon the USSOCOM mission and the commander's priorities.

Mission. Provide fully capable special operations forces to defend the United States and its interests. Plan and synchronize operations against terrorist networks.

Priorities.

- Deter, disrupt, and defeat terrorist threats.
- Develop and support our people and their families.
- Sustain and modernize the force.

The Strategic Studies Department also provides teaching and curriculum support to Professional Military Education institutions—the staff colleges and war colleges. It advances SOF strategic influence by its interaction in academic, interagency, and United States military communities.

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On the cover

Top left. Night training mission, two CV-22 Osprey aircraft, assigned to the 58th Special Operations Wing, at Kirtland AFB.

Top right. A U.S. Army Special Operations soldier scans for insurgents during an engagement in the Sangin District area, Helmand Province, Southern Afghanistan.

Bottom left. Marines from the 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion discuss their imminent jump 2,500 feet above Camp Pendleton, California.

Bottom right. Naval Special Warfare combatant-craft crewmen operate a Rigid Inflatable Boat from a forward location.

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The Strategic Studies Department, JSOU is currently accepting written works relevant to special operations for potential publication. For more information please contact Mr. Jim Anderson, JSOU Director of Research, at 850-884-1569, DSN 579-1569, james.d.anderson@hurlburt.af.mil. Thank you for your interest in the JSOU Press.

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Foreword

The United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) 2011 Research Topics list is intended to guide research projects for Professional Military Education (PME) students, JSOU faculty, research fellows, and others writing about special operations during this academic year. Research is one of the cornerstones of JSOU's academic mission as we strive to produce publications to meet joint Special Operations Forces (SOF) operational and planning needs. Each year representatives from USSOCOM, the Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs), SOF chairs from the war colleges, and JSOU senior fellows develop a list of salient issues confronting SOF in the near term. The list is vetted through the components and TSOCs to ensure that research will advance SOF missions and support SOF interests. The final recommendations for research topics are approved by the USSOCOM commander.

These topics, concepts, and processes reflect the challenges of winning the current conflicts and meeting the needs for the conflicts most likely to face us in the foreseeable future. This alone speaks to the need for more debate, research, and study. If you have any questions about this document, JSOU Press in general, or how JSOU can assist you in your academic research, contact the director of Research, jsou.research@hurlburt.af.mil.

Kenneth H. Poole
Director, JSOU Strategic Studies Department

Preface

This list represents an effort to list and categorize special operations-related research topics presented to PME students, JSOU part-time senior fellows, and other SOF researchers. The commander of the USSOCOM places high emphasis on SOF students writing on timely, relevant, SOF-related topics. This list is a guide to stimulate ideas; topics may be narrowed, broadened, or otherwise modified as deemed necessary (e.g., to suit school writing requirements or individual experiences).

Sections A through F contain new topic categories with major ideas/concepts for 2011 from which topics can be derived, depending on the interest/experience of the researcher and the desired level of detail. Section A (Priority Topics) identifies those topics of particular importance that the commander, USSOCOM has selected for special emphasis. Each of these seeks to expand SOF understanding of specific challenges and to suggest techniques and procedures to increase SOF efficiency in addressing them. The Priority Topics reflect a consensus of those participating in the topics project as being particularly useful in addressing immediate SOF needs and in building future capabilities. Topics focus on the following:

- a. Achieving greater understanding of the structure and functioning of terrorist networks through social networking tools and other initiatives
- b. Employing social marketing techniques and other best practices to address terrorist networks
- c. Developing assessment protocols to determine effectiveness of effort against those networks.

Other topics solicit fresh insights into combating terrorism through direct and indirect approaches; developing new intelligence architectures; countering radicalization by working through local indigenous persons; and exploring the role for SOF in political warfare, coercive diplomacy, and active security campaigns.

Section G is a list of topics retained from previous years.

Limited TDY funding will be available from JSOU for researchers (e.g., PME students) to support their projects (e.g., to conduct interviews or visit USSOCOM or component headquarters). These research “grants” are subject to approval by the director, JSOU Strategic Studies Department depending on the topic selected and the value added to the project. Share this reference with fellow researchers, thesis advisors, and other colleagues and feel free to submit additional topics for inclusion in updated editions.

JSOU Press has released several publications that may relate to your topic of interest; see the complete list at <http://jsoupublic.socom.mil>.

A. Priority Topics

Topic Titles

- A1. Combating terrorist networks (CbTNs) in law enforcement and military contexts
- A2. Preparing SOF for interface with host-nation governments, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in foreign internal defense (FID)
- A3. Winning the battle of the narratives
- A4. Preparing SOF for future irregular warfare crises
- A5. Cultural motivators for insurgent actions
- A6. Measuring progress and effects in an irregular warfare environment
- A7. Educating “3D” operators
- A8. SOF efforts to develop networks for combating terrorism
- A9. SOF leveraging of existing CbTNs within partner countries
- A10. Drawing on law enforcement “displacement” tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) for irregular warfare operations

Topic Descriptions

A1. **Combating terrorist networks (CbTNs) in law enforcement and military contexts**

There are significant differences in the approaches followed by law enforcement/justice officers in their confrontations with criminal elements and by the military in their operations against terrorists and their networks. There are also situations where the boundaries between crime and terrorism become blurred, and it is unclear who has the lead authority. In fact, terrorists, depending on circumstances, can be considered either as criminal or military threats. What should be the relationship between CbTNs in a justice and law enforcement context, and CbTNs as a military operation governed by the law of land warfare and directed by national command authorities as a warfighting activity? Should law enforcement/justice and military counterterrorist activities be segregated and pursued separately or should they be addressed as an integrated whole? Identify the overlaps and gaps in the legal authorities that affect law

enforcement/justice and military collaboration. How can SOF assist U.S., bilateral, and international law enforcement bodies in pursuing terrorist networks in ways that are consistent with the rule of law and that do not compromise subsequent criminal prosecutions?

A2. Preparing SOF for interface with host-nation governments, inter-governmental organizations (IGOs), and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in foreign internal defense (FID)

SOF needs to develop and exercise the capability to build relationships with and, when appropriate, advise host-nation governments, IGOs, and NGOs. SOF are skilled in Defense issues; Diplomatic and Development skills can be developed through education and experience.

How must SOF education change to provide its “3D” (Diplomacy, Defense, Development) operators with the skills to interface with host-nation governments, IGOs, and NGOs in the course of conducting persistent-engagement FID? Because of the complexity of the skill sets to be developed and the tasks to be performed, this study should clarify the differences between training and education and address how each must be addressed through the PME systems.

A3. Winning the battle of the narratives

Crafting a credible narrative is a central requirement to countering the influences of irregular threats. Our adversaries exploit their knowledge of local history, culture, and religion to affect perceptions by framing their actions positively. Any area of operations is filled with supportive, conflicting, complementary, and distracting narratives about what is going on. How do we win the battle of the narrative while conducting irregular warfare? What steps are necessary to establish and sustain the most credible and visible narrative of what is going on and why? This study should also address the development of counternarratives designed to undermine and discredit those of our adversaries, a particularly difficult task as emotional scenes of violence and destruction move quickly from mobile phones to the news media.

A4. Preparing SOF for future irregular warfare crises

Irregular warfare covers a broad spectrum of international engagement from indirect military peacetime support to combat operations. How will or can SOF develop a sufficient number of trained and educated “Lawrences of Arabia” to address crises that lurk beyond our contemporary awareness? Discuss the right mix of

cultural awareness that is necessary for SOF units. Is a multitiered approach necessary to develop cultural awareness? Provide recommendations for an effective balance among language training (does everyone need advanced language skills?) and the “softer” skills such as sociology, anthropology, and psychology. How might preparation protocols affect SOF unit size, structure, and employment options?

A5. Cultural motivators for insurgent actions

Drawing on the admonition to “know your enemy,” what cultural factors motivate an insurgent to fight? This study should pursue an anthropological approach to study the insurgent as he sees him/herself. What are the roles of the family, village, tribe, province, and state in shaping that self image? How does the concept of honor affect motivation? How do traditions such as Pashtunwali assist in determining the tribe’s response to the presence of foreigners? Examine the role of local, regional, and international news media in influencing insurgent motivation, especially in the coverage of issues and incidents.

A6. Measuring progress and effects in an irregular warfare environment

How should we define and measure progress and effects from activities conducted within an irregular warfare environment? Distinguish between measures of performance and measures of effectiveness in assessing progress and success. This study should attempt to describe what success looks like when working against a violent extremist organization. Once we define success, what is our “theory of victory” to achieve it?

A7. Educating “3D” operators

The development of an extensive body of 3D (Diplomacy, Defense, Development) warriors requires that all operators, not just leaders, receive the necessary education and experience. How do we educate SOF senior NCOs and warrant officers to become the effective 3D operators required by the challenges of contemporary and future irregular warfare environments? How can USSOCOM best develop special operators with a broad working knowledge of stakeholders, capabilities, and partner agendas in the diplomacy and development functional areas? Discuss how such educational initiatives can make important contributions to the transition of SOF senior NCOs from tactical experts into interagency-savvy operators.

A8. SOF efforts to develop networks for combating terrorism

The complexity of contemporary international security challenges has made it apparent that the U.S. is not able to absorb unilaterally the resource costs of conducting sustained operations in multiple regions. One solution could be for the U.S. to achieve its national security objectives by building the capacity of other forces from countries that pursue similar objectives. How can SOF activities to assist in building partner-nation security capacity be specifically targeted to support the development of local and regional networks for combating terrorism?

A9. SOF leveraging of existing CbTNs within partner countries

As with most military organizations, SOF understandably interpret most challenges, at least in the short term, from their national and cultural perspectives. Experience teaches, however, that other countries can field capabilities that, while perhaps not as developed as our own, are well suited to address conditions on the ground and simultaneously contribute to the achievement of both their own and U.S. security objectives. How can USSOCOM best take advantage of existing CbTNs that are already functioning within partner countries? What can be done to attract the collaboration of partner, regional, and other countries to contribute to a common effort?

A10. Drawing on law enforcement “displacement” tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) for irregular warfare operations

Displacement of criminal activity is well understood in law enforcement circles. It describes the phenomenon whereby eliminating a form of criminal activity in one area means that the activity will move elsewhere, change form, or become replaced by another form. How can the law enforcement TTPs developed to confront displacement contribute to USSOCOM, SOF, and TSOC strategies and operations to address the global dispersion of terrorist organizations and the networks that support them? Consider the fact that within the contemporary irregular warfare environment, organized crime characteristics frequently find expression in the activities of the insurgents. Though their specific goals are likely to vary, the close cooperation and reinforcement that takes place between terrorists/insurgents and criminals mean that similarities emerge in organization, resourcing, and operations. This study should look at case studies such as Mexico and suggest ways that a comprehensive “whole-of-government” approach, working through the U.S.

Government interagency process, can be applied to the phenomenon of displacement, no matter the irregular warfare or criminal context in which it is encountered.

B. Combating Terrorist Networks (CbTNs)

Topic Titles

- B1. Balancing combating-terrorist activities with other irregular warfare missions
- B2. Targeting and manipulating subnetworks to combat terrorist networks
- B3. Combating-terrorist lessons learned from the war on drugs
- B4. Distinguishing between terrorist and criminal groups and networks
- B5. Optimizing SOF organization and C2 for CbTNs
- B6. Making the USSOCOM case for combating terrorist resources to the U.S. Government interagency community
- B7. “Out-of branch” and interagency community opportunities for SOF advancement
- B8. SOF efforts to undermine terror network TTPs
- B9. Terrorist networks as formal structures
- B10. SOF combating-terrorist roles within the United States

Topic Descriptions

B1. Balancing combating-terrorist activities with other irregular warfare missions

Currently USSOCOM is focusing considerable effort on counterterrorism as contrasted with other components of irregular warfare. How do counterterrorism practices need to be reshaped to support more effectively—or at least not to undermine—other irregular warfare and balanced approaches? This study should identify specific SOF capabilities, doctrinal elements, and TTP that are uniquely applicable to the combating-terrorist mission set. Consider whether perceived points of friction among irregular warfare missions are merely a consequence of designating a priority of one mission over another.

B2. Targeting and manipulating subnetworks to combat terrorist networks

The ability to gather intelligence and locate indications and warnings of potential terrorist attacks are central to defending the U.S. and its allies against transnational terrorist attacks. How can SOF better influence and manipulate lower level networks with both direct and indirect links to transnational terrorist organizations? How can the targeting and manipulation of subnetworks operated by transnational criminal groups, gangs, and warlords work from the bottom up to disrupt transnational terrorist organizations? This study will examine policies and TTP for such interventions. How does SOF coordinate its actions with the U.S. Government interagency community, law enforcement/justice officers, partner nations, allies, IGOs, and NGOs?

B3. Combating-terrorist lessons learned from the war on drugs

U.S. operations targeting narcoterrorists in Colombia and elsewhere have resulted in robust partnerships among military operations, Department of Justice-directed law enforcement and justice programs, other members of the U.S. Government interagency community, and host-nation organizations. This study will assess whether those relationships and the paradigm they represent can be replicated in efforts to combat terrorist networks. What lessons can be drawn from the U.S. experiences in the war on drugs and, particularly, from the successes achieved by “Plan Colombia” and applied to CbTNs?

B4. Distinguishing between terrorist and criminal groups and networks

Tactical operators generally focus on a narrow range of issues—such as rules of engagement, resourcing, population engagement, and end states—that do not necessarily require the differentiation between terrorist and criminal networks. However, transnational terrorist and transnational criminal organizations pose different and significant legal, political, and diplomatic challenges at the operational and strategic levels. How do both the intelligence and operational communities distinguish between terrorists and organized crime groups and their supporting networks? Discuss how such analysis assists in the pursuit of both types of security threats.

B5. Optimizing SOF organization and C2 for CbTNs

It is recognized that the flexibility of terrorist networks makes it essential that SOF organizations and C2 capacities display the agility to adapt to current and future challenges. How can U.S. SOF organizational and C2 structures be optimized to produce maximum effects when engaged in CbTNs? Besides improving interactions within the U.S. Government interagency environment, assess the consequences of building relationships with the private sector, academia, and other governmental and NGOs. Also examine the pros and cons of employing reach-back capabilities to include identifying both sources and content.

B6. Making the USSOCOM case for combating-terrorist resources to the U.S. Government interagency community

A persistent drag on USSOCOM's ability to obtain the necessary resources for CbTNs is a lack of understanding about what SOF need to conduct such operations. How does USSOCOM make the case with other agencies, including those from the non-Department of Defense (DoD) members of the U.S. Government interagency community, for obtaining those resources required by SOF for combating counterterrorism? This study will provide specific recommendations for building strong lines of communication with DoD laboratories to ensure they understand SOF missions, capabilities, technology needs, and resource requirements.

B7. Out-of branch and interagency community opportunities for SOF advancement

Broader interaction with the U.S. Government interagency community and NGOs is essential for developing skilled SOF. As part of the effort to develop the most qualified SOF warriors for combating terrorists, should out-of-branch internships or tours of duty with non-DoD members of the U.S. Government interagency community and/or non-U.S. Government organizations become options for career-progression opportunities? Recommend where in the career development pipeline such assignments should be available and identify the opportunity costs for accepting such assignments. Discuss the kinds of policies necessary to make sure that individuals pursuing such options are not penalized professionally through career stagnation.

B8. SOF efforts to undermine terror network TTPs

While there is understandably a great deal of public focus on the terrorist use of improvised explosive devices, it is important for SOF to have a detailed understanding of the full range of TTPs that are available to terrorists and their networks. What specific policies and strategies should SOF develop to interdict, usurp, corrupt, or prevent a terrorist network from executing the range of options available to them. This study will use historical case studies to identify and analyze in detail the factors involved with each terrorist tactic to include required resources, financial support, training, TTPs, and personnel. Based on these assessments, identify vulnerabilities inherent in each terror network tactic.

B9. Terrorist networks as formal structures

A familiar observation is that “it takes a network to defeat a network.” Other views contend that the notion of a terrorist organization or network is overstated. Do terrorists consciously employ networks to support their activities? Is the concept of a *network* a contrivance that merely explains observed behavior in familiar terms while minimizing the complexity of the challenges of combating terrorists? Assess the extent to which the emphasis on networks creates tunnel vision at the planning and execution levels. The study should explore the operational perspectives of terrorist groups and suggest how they might regard their support systems. What are the indispensable components of an efficient and effective terrorist group? Suggest ways that SOF can successfully counter terrorist groups that lack central direction and consist of small, distributed cells operating quasi-independently in a self-directing fashion.

B10. SOF combating-terrorist roles within the United States

Because of legal constraints (*Posse Comitatus*), policy, and tradition, lead combating-terrorist responsibility within the borders of the United States rests outside the DoD. Given the complexity of the combating-terrorist challenges and the evolving relationships within the U.S. Government interagency community, it is possible to anticipate situations in which SOF intervention may become a necessary combating-terrorist option. DoD U.S. SOF have a role to play in combating terrorists within the territory of the United States? The study will identify those situations during which a SOF response might be appropriate, what sort of SOF organization and TTPs would be involved, and what modifications to *Posse Comitatus* would be required.

C. Irregular Warfare Strategy and Operations

Topic Titles

- C1. Maximizing SOF influence operations during irregular warfare
- C2. Obtaining enablers, sustainment, and support from conventional forces
- C3. Creating baseline DoD-wide irregular warfare understanding and operational competence
- C4. Avoiding the creation of destabilizing and adversarial organizations
- C5. SOF role in stability operations
- C6. Providing nontraditional logistics support for SOF
- C7. Establishing local relationships for strategic irregular warfare success
- C8. Sustaining career development while building regional expertise
- C9. Helping the partner nation build government legitimacy
- C10. The “American way” of irregular warfare
- C11. Characteristics of future warfare

Topic Descriptions

- C1. Maximizing SOF influence operations during irregular warfare**

The understanding and support—or at least the neutrality—of a variety of audiences is necessary for the successful prosecution of irregular warfare operations. Target audiences include the populations of the host nation and the contiguous region, the populations of the U.S. and its partner nations, and the intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations whose collective endorsement is essential. How can U.S. SOF optimize their influence operations to obtain maximum effects in the achievement of irregular warfare strategic objectives? The study will take a fresh look at how to synchronize the interagency community capabilities of public affairs, public diplomacy, psychological operations (PSYOPs), and strategic communications under the umbrella of information operations. How are desired end states defined? How do practitioners in each

discipline coordinate their activities to ensure consistency in their messaging that is perceived as credible by each target audience? How can the U.S. harmonize communication programs fielded by host nations, partner nations, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations? What metrics should be established to accurately assess effectiveness?

C2. Obtaining enablers, sustainment, and support (ESS) from conventional forces

Currently, support of SOF provided by General Purpose Forces (GPF) is ad hoc and within Service-specific rotational schedules. As GPF and SOF units become more distributed, ESS becomes more of a critical issue. SOF requires dedicated Service support to ensure long-term sustainment for mission-specific equipment and personnel. What must the combatant commands and Services provide ESS to enable SOF to engage in irregular warfare operations in pursuit of irregular warfare strategic objectives? Identify those authorities for training, manning, and equipping SOF that reside in the Services and the combatant commands and inhibit essential ESS for SOF pursuing long-term, persistent engagement strategies. Present recommendations to eliminate or mitigate those points of friction.

C3. Creating baseline DoD-wide irregular warfare understanding and operational competence

The officer and pending enlisted PME policies establish irregular warfare as a learning objective for Joint PME. Currently there is no standardized structure guiding how irregular warfare is to be taught. Additionally, irregular warfare has not achieved a core competency level of importance and is usually offered only as an elective. How can the DoD institutionalize irregular warfare instruction throughout Service and Joint PME programs so as to establish a baseline of irregular warfare understanding and operational competence? The study should assess if it is sufficient to prepare a single package of instruction for all Services or if individual packages, tailored for specific services, would be more effective. What can be done to ensure the expandability of the initial program?

C4. Avoiding the creation of destabilizing and adversarial organizations

Experience teaches that the creation of foreign military and law enforcement capacity has, from time to time, created situations in which units have been used by the host-nation government against

internal groups or have shifted their loyalties and have become adversaries of the central government and/or the U.S. What steps can be taken to reduce the likelihood that SOF assistance to the development of partner-nation security capacity does not result in forces that are employed to suppress internal dissent? The study will consider specific cases in which SOF-trained organizations transfer their loyalties to individual criminals, warlords, or other leaders who then employ them for their own uses as destabilizing or adversarial organizations.

C5. SOF role in stability operations

Stability operations have emerged as a priority mission that diverges functionally from the activities traditionally forming the core tasks of irregular warfare. What role should SOF play in the conduct of the stability operations component of irregular warfare? Examine whether and how SOF should develop forces and capabilities that address reform of governance, civil security and control, rule of law, and economic development components of stability operations.

C6. Providing nontraditional logistics support for SOF

SOF require equipment solutions and sustainment packages that typically rely on less logistical support than General Purpose Forces (GPF). What nontraditional means for support should be considered to meet the unique requirements of enabling small, dispersed SOF to operate in austere environments? Could *nontraditional* include acquiring support and resources from NGOs, partner countries, regional neighbors, and/or the host nation? Develop recommendations for how SOF resourcing requirements can be included within the GPF deployment planning process. Who determines the rules and priorities for support allocations?

C7. Establishing local relationships for strategic irregular warfare success

Because of manpower shortfalls, a counterinsurgent effort may include establishing local paramilitary or militia forces to maintain security in isolated areas. How do SOF establish relationships and work with local militias, paramilitary, civilian forces, and other non-state actors to achieve success within an irregular warfare environment? Consider how SOF organize, train, and employ such forces in a counterinsurgency setting. How does the U.S. or coalition influence and control these militias to further U.S. national security interests without derailing the current strategy? Include a survey

of successful case studies in which militias acted as a legitimate military force providing security and promoting the rule of law on behalf of the local government as well as those cases where reliance on such forces failed.

C8. Sustaining career development while building regional expertise

Experience teaches that the development of regional experts is central to the success of persistent irregular warfare engagement. How can SOF recruit, train, employ, and retain regionally focused experts—that is, the new Lawrences—for long-term engagement within crisis areas conducting irregular warfare campaigns without doing irreparable harm to their professional careers? This study will explore ways to absorb nonmainstream career paths in ways that continue to grow leadership within the DoD while sustaining the required culturally focused relationships and language proficiency. Identify regional locations, including tribes and clans, in which long-term engagement is possible and necessary within the context of U.S. Government policy. What training opportunities within the U.S. Government interagency community exist to develop such regional expertise? What are the concrete professional and personal benefits to developing and maintaining regional expertise? Discuss ways to mitigate the risk of regional experts “going native” and of managing individuals if their regions of expertise no longer remain a U.S. Government priority.

C9. Helping the partner nation build government legitimacy

The transition to host nation or international civilian responsibility is a critical enabler for a political decision to redeploy U.S. forces from an area of operations. Thus the recognition and acceptance of credible local governance by the population is absolutely essential. How can SOF improve their ability to influence the population to acknowledge the legitimacy of local government authority and thus achieve U.S. strategic objectives? Discuss the necessary balance between narrative and action to ensure that what is said and heard matches as closely as possible with what is actually happening on the ground. Additionally, explore ways that SOF can assist in the achievement of strategic goals without being perceived by the population as the agent of that success while ensuring that the local government receives credit earned for effective governance.

C10. The “American way” of irregular warfare

To what extent does an “American way” of irregular warfare exist and what adaptations are necessary to ensure future success? Should there be a “Grand strategy” of irregular warfare that commits the entire U.S. Government to a specific irregular warfare effort? Compare and contrast American IW with other successful and unsuccessful IW efforts (British, French, Russian, Israeli, South American—several examples are possible, even American efforts in Vietnam). This study should examine the interagency process implications of developing an irregular warfare strategy that employs a “whole-of-government” approach. Identify the opportunities offered by the engagement of the U.S. Government interagency community while noting possible political and economic limitations on the development of the next generation of irregular warfare strategy. What is a truly interagency paradigm? How does USSOCOM assist with the education of all potential partners about irregular warfare requirements and make known its requirements?

C11. Characteristics of future warfare

It has been stated that armed forces generally mistakenly prepare for the last war and not the next war. A classic example is France preparing to refight World War I and being unprepared for innovative German tactics in World War II. Can we determine what the characteristics of the next war or significant conflict will be? While we are still acclimating to a COIN fight against a nonstate actor, and while we anticipate some sort of cyber attack (a cyber version of Pearl Harbor or otherwise cyber-heavy war), are these truly the characteristics of future conflicts or developments in ongoing conflicts? What developments or breakthroughs are other nations (or nonstate actors) making? How do developing trends (reference the joint operating environment or other observational and/or predictive documents) such as microtechnology, social networking technologies and phenomena, and biomedical research (i.e., these areas may not necessarily be the definitive ones determined for study) affect either the future of warfare or the future environment? Although this question may not be SOF-specific, SOF may have a better perspective (at least in the SOF-related aspects of this), and there may be SOF portions of the larger answer.

D. Interagency Operations

Topic Titles

- D1. Building on existing USSOCOM relationships within the inter-agency community
- D2. Improving message quality to achieve greater communication effects
- D3. Improving USSOCOM contributions to theater security cooperation activities
- D4. Improving relations with Department of State (DoS) and other inter-agency partners for irregular warfare
- D5. Modifying interagency policies and authorities to meet combating-terrorist concerns, irregular warfare, and other challenges
- D6. USSOCOM support to the interagency management system during crises
- D7. Improving SOF operational and tactical understanding of the inter-agency community
- D8. Removing barriers to interagency information sharing and operational effectiveness
- D9. Operationalizing the whole-of-government approach to combating terrorists for irregular warfare
- D10. Eliminating friction points and barriers within the country team

Topic Descriptions

D1. Building on existing USSOCOM relationships within the inter-agency community

What is the current state of cooperation, coordination, and collaboration between USSOCOM and the relevant components of the U.S. Government interagency community? What can USSOCOM do to improve the effectiveness of those relationships? Examine how institutional culture and biases are contributing both positively and negatively to interagency efforts toward a unified effort on irregular warfare issues. What are non-DoD U.S. Government interagency partners doing to confront the irregular warfare problem set? Suggest steps that USSOCOM can take to gain a clearer understanding of the perspectives and objectives of U.S. Government interagency

partners. What role can best practices and lessons learned from the USSOCOM Interagency Task Force play in improving USSOCOM functioning within the broader U.S. Government interagency environment?

D2. Improving message quality to achieve greater communication effects

A basic principle of effective communications has always been to “speak with one voice.” This challenge becomes more difficult as messaging migrates from the parent organization into the broader U.S. Government interagency community. To what extent is the consistency and control of messages possible within the complex environment of the U.S. Government interagency community? The study will identify the organizational issues that must be addressed to improve the communication effects of external strategic communications and public diplomacy, suggest ways for the interagency community to capture and incorporate the communication and messaging best practices from individual U.S. Government agencies, and state how the interagency community can apply new technologies and techniques to the challenges of competing with other messaging agendas and narratives.

D3. Improving USSOCOM contributions to theater security cooperation activities

Geographic unified commands are the primary vehicles for planning and implementing U.S. military theater security cooperation activities. How can USSOCOM more effectively partner with the Department of State country teams and Geographic Unified Commands to improve the quality of Theater Security Cooperation Planning and Implementation? Examine how TSOs can involve themselves more extensively in long-term planning efforts, especially multiyear funding and authorities, to allow for persistent engagement. Assess how effectively FID and Internal Defense and Development (IDAD) programs are integrated as elements of security cooperation activities and contingency operations. How can FID and IDAD initiatives gain greater inclusion with increased effectiveness? Through the use of case studies, suggest ways that relationships and trust established with indigenous peoples can be sustained through the handoff to follow-on forces.

D4. Improving relations with Department of State (DoS) and other interagency community partners for irregular warfare

As with the entire U.S. Government interagency community, the USSOCOM and the DoS reflect quite different organizational cultures. What specific initiatives are necessary to generate understanding, build relationships, and improve the cooperation between USSOCOM, DoS, and the rest of the U.S. Government interagency community to achieve strategic success in irregular warfare operations? Examine the implications for interagency cooperation within an area of operations to include ways to gain access to the appropriate expertise present within the embassy's country team and an understanding of the complex bureaucratic structures within the host-nation government. What can be done to increase mutual understanding and cooperation between SOF and the country team? What organizational structures and networks are available to SOF to pursue collaborative relationships with host-nation civilian agencies and nonmilitary security forces? Assess whether provincial reconstruction teams in some form are the appropriate venues for such interaction.

D5. Modifying interagency policies, and authorities to meet combat-terrorist concerns, irregular warfare, and other challenges

The complex structure of the U.S. Government interagency environment frequently makes it confusing for the SOF warrior to understand the terms of interaction with diplomatic counterparts within the DoS, other U.S. Government partners, and the host nation and with development partners within the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), IGOs, and NGOs. This challenge becomes particularly acute as USSOCOM develops future capabilities, tries to make current ones more relevant, and expands its relationships within and outside the U.S. Government. What policies and authorities exist within the U.S. Government interagency community to guide interagency workings? If necessary, how can those be modified to meet emerging requirements? More specifically, what initiatives within the U.S. Government interagency community are necessary to streamline the process of defining or changing authorities and policies to allow for the effective employment of a whole-of-government approach to counterterrorism, irregular warfare, and other security challenges?

D6. USSOCOM support to the interagency management system during crises

The interagency planning teams established under the International Management System (IMS) have become the primary venues for interagency planning and implementation at the national, regional, and country team levels. USSOCOM retains unique capabilities and operational roles that require close collaboration with non-DoD members of the U.S. Government interagency community, especially with the Departments of State and Justice. How can USSOCOM best support the IMS when the Country Reconstruction Team and Stabilization Group (CRSG), Integration Planning Cell (IPC), and Advance Civilian Team (ACT) planning teams are established for a specific crisis? How can USSOCOM best gain entry to the IMS planning venues, especially at the strategic level?

D7. Improving SOF operational and tactical understanding of the interagency environment

It is increasingly clear that SOF will be employed as critical components of the whole-of-government approach to confronting national security threats. Thus SOF warriors will increasingly find themselves interacting with representatives of the diverse mix of organizations that make up the U.S. Government interagency community. What can be done—perhaps beginning with the development of a clear concept of what the interagency community is and does—to make the U.S. Government interagency environment accessible to SOF, particularly at the operational and tactical levels? Identify existing protocols for guiding the functioning of the interagency process and, where appropriate, suggest new initiatives for achieving greater interagency efficiency and effectiveness. What specific steps are necessary to improve SOF understanding of the process?

D8. Removing barriers to interagency information sharing and operational effectiveness

How do we remove the barriers that restrict the exchange of information and inhibit the operational effectiveness of the U.S. Government interagency community as it seeks to achieve strategic national security objectives? This study will identify the points of friction and incompatibility within the interagency process and suggest ways that USSOCOM's capabilities can be integrated to synchronize desired end states, strategy development, and the planning and execution of presidential decisions.

D9. Operationalizing the whole-of-government approach to combating terrorists for irregular warfare

Significant improvements have been made in coordination, cooperation, and collaboration across the Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, and Multinational (JIIM) force in support of combating terrorist and irregular warfare objectives. However, there remain impediments to leveraging the unique capabilities of the various actors across the diplomatic, information, military, economic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement (DIMEFIL) spectrum to ultimately defeat the irregular threat. What specific initiatives are necessary to operationalize the whole-of-government approach to combating terrorism and conducting irregular warfare? What are the root causes of the impediments to real change? Beyond considerations of policy and authority, how do we best position and structure the U.S. Government interagency environment to eliminate unnecessary bureaucratic drag, flatten the C2 structure, and enhance the effectiveness of the whole-of-government approach?

D10. Eliminating friction points and barriers within the country team

As with the U.S. Government interagency community in Washington, D.C., there are friction points and barriers to cooperation that inevitably exist within the country team structures on the ground. Identify and examine those friction points and barriers. What can be done to eliminate them to improve efficiency and advance the achievement of national security objectives? What role can USSOCOM play in optimizing country team functioning? Drawing on specific case studies from high threat countries or regions, identify what measures have both succeeded and failed and suggest specific initiatives for improvement in country team structure, interface, and functioning.

E. Regional and Cultural Studies

Topic Titles

- E1. Best practices for developing regional expertise
- E2. Developing strong relationships with partner nations, IGOs, and NGOs
- E3. Tailored educational and training preparation for SOF missions
- E4. Developing SOF language skills to engage multilingual populations
- E5. Understanding different and contradictory international perspectives
- E6. Preparing SOF for encountering tribal and sectarian traditions
- E7. SOF's role in emerging areas of instability
- E8. Recruiting cultural and regional expertise
- E9. Professional development paths for regional experts
- E10. Determining wider applicability for the Korean Augmentation to the U.S. Army (KATUSA) Program
- E11. Targeting methodologies, lethal and nonlethal

Topic Descriptions

E1. Best Practices for developing regional expertise

SOF traditionally rely heavily on operating within unfamiliar cultures. How do different SOF components prepare their personnel to establish and sustain relationships with indigenous peoples? Identify which SOF organizations require a regional orientation and determine specific recommendations for training, education, and force generation to develop and sustain necessary expertise for both individuals and organizations. What best practices are available to assist in developing the essential regional expertise necessary to conduct sustained SOF activities in a wide variety of complex environments? This study will survey the education programs conducted by IGOs, NGOs, and other international players to discern whether they might be helpful in assessing and improving SOF cultural education.

E2. Developing strong relationships with partner nations, IGOs, and NGOs

Frequently we create tension with the host nation, allies, and other partners because we compartmentalize or withhold information that should be shared. Sharing intelligence, meshing capabilities, and providing operational support for shared efforts require SOF to coordinate with a variety of organizations beyond the scope of the U.S. Government interagency environment. How can the Special Operations Community develop stronger partnerships and more collaborative relationships with international partners to include IGOs and NGOs? Identify the essential cross-cultural communications skills sets and recommend how they can be developed and sustained among the Special Operations Community. Which skills are necessary to develop general competencies that transcend diverse cultural and regional lines? Which skills are unique to a specific situation or mission?

E3. Tailored educational and training preparation for SOF missions

This study will examine the challenges of balancing general cultural awareness with the requirement to develop regional expertise targeted on a specific area of interest. Do all SOF warriors need to receive the same levels of education and training and to achieve the same degrees of competence to be effective? Determine whether cultural training should focus on recognizing universal cultural attributes or emphasizing specific regions and cultures. What role might SOF units play in building upon general cultural awareness to provide an additional layer of specialized regional education and training? Identify the educational and training experiences that are necessary to prepare for specific SOF missions. Discuss how these educational and training requirements can be managed within the timeframe of a SOF career-development path.

E4. Developing SOF language skills to engage multilingual populations

SOF have long recognized the benefits of speaking with indigenous forces and local citizenry in their native tongues. Experience teaches that there is no more effective way to build a local relationship than by leveraging language skills as a bridge to cultural assimilation. How do we provide SOF the language capabilities to engage the multilingual citizenry they encounter within the cultures in which they operate? This study will explore alternatives for developing language

skills and creating incentives for sustaining proficiency. Might the payment of incentive pay, patterned after flight and other proficiency pay, be a practical motivator? Consider payments based on levels of proficiency and assignment to a language-required position. How might the availability of increased global immersion opportunities meet the goals of language proficiency without creating career friction by keeping an individual away from necessary operational assignments?

E5. Understanding different and contradictory international perspectives

How can the special operations training and education system best enable special operators to understand non-U.S. perspectives and to engage effectively even when those perspectives differ from our own? This study will go beyond the substantive information that is available about a region to discussing ways to immerse SOF within the process of developing, sustaining, and modifying perspectives consistent with the cultural principles and assumptions of the region. For example, when does an indigenous statement reflect a strongly held cultural value rather than merely an effort to test the SOF warrior to ascertain cultural awareness? Assess the effectiveness and practicality of engaging foreign military officers and NCOs to build long-term relationships and networks within their regions of specialization. Should USSOCOM consider the establishment of a special operations center for strategic studies (such as the Africa Center for Strategic Studies) to ensure persistent engagement with the complex workings of culture rather than merely with its general expressions?

E6. Preparing SOF for encountering tribal and sectarian traditions

How do we prepare SOF to gain a functional understanding of the complex historical and cultural environments regularly encountered within the tribal and sectarian traditions of the Middle East, Africa, and Asia? Discuss methods employed by operators in the field to deal with the diversity they experience with host-nation officials, opinion leaders, indigenous populations, and various internal and external stakeholders. The presentation of contemporary case studies, country and regional analyses, and regional policy initiatives are especially appropriate for this topic. Assess the relevance of existing, older studies of specific areas of interest that lack relevance because of their reliance on outdated information that does not capture

current conditions. Determine at what point we should commission fresh studies.

E7. SOF's role in emerging areas of instability

Where are the emerging areas of instability that will threaten U.S. interests within the next 5 to 10 years, and what roles might SOF play in addressing those threats? This study will define *instability* and *threat*, identify their relevance to emerging U.S. security concerns, and isolate those unstable areas that do not necessarily pose concerns to the U.S. or its interests in the targeted timeframe. Examine factors such as ungoverned spaces and the consequences of unexpected destabilizing events such as the earthquake in Haiti. Do some areas of instability demand greater attention than others? What are the implications of such prioritization for the realignment of U.S. Special Forces Groups? Examine whether areas of highest instability and threat require the development of subregional alignments in terms of cultural awareness and language preparations.

E8. Recruiting cultural and regional expertise

During World War II the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) was able to scrub the first and second generation immigrants and others with extensive direct experience with culture and language (e.g., missionaries, journalists) to identify potential recruits. For instance, the OSS was able to distinguish between native speakers and those with school-boy proficiency, a luxury that rarely exists today. In today's environment, which would be the most effective: to recruit individuals from a region with direct knowledge of culture, custom, and language and then teach them SOF skills or to select SOF personnel from the normal recruiting stream and train them to some agreed level of cultural and language awareness? Also consider whether such individuals need to be SOF trained or whether it is sufficient to employ them as guides to navigate the cultural terrain. What implications would this option have for funding and current authorities? Identify the risks and benefits of recruiting from indigenous and immigrant populations and suggest ways to mitigate the negative and amplify the positive effects. Address what ages and education levels should be targeted for indigenous and immigrant recruitment.

E9. Professional development paths for regional experts

There is considerable and understandable concern that the development of skilled and responsive regional expertise presents a risk if such specialization creates a career cap on promotion and a limit on

assignment opportunities. What can be done to create a professional development path that allows the SOF warrior to acquire and utilize region-focused skills for the purpose of serving long-term and repetitive assignments without jeopardizing career advancement? Examine how the individual Services regard and implement existing regional programs such as the Afghanistan Pakistan (AFPAK) Hands Program as a guide to assessing acceptance of additional specialization. Who and how can incentivize participation in such programs, and what quality control measures must be in place to ensure they are properly managed?

E10. Determining wider applicability for the Korean Augmentation to the U.S. Army (KATUSA) Program

Since July 1950, the KATUSA Program has provided opportunities for sustained relationship building and cultural interaction within the structure of U.S. forces. Would expanding the KATUSA Program to include other countries make a significant contribution to increased regional expertise? This study will provide an historical overview of the KATUSA Program as well as other historical cases where similar initiatives were attempted. Could an Afghan augmentation to the U.S. Army Program (AATUSA) generate sufficient positive effects in the areas of organizational language skills, regional expertise, local knowledge, and relationship sustainment. How might a pilot program for integrating host-nation soldiers into U.S. military units be developed and implemented? Identify the benefits and risks of such an innovation. Discuss the personnel management, funding, and training issues associated with KATUSA Programs transplanted to elsewhere in the world.

E11. Targeting methodologies, lethal and nonlethal

This study is a compilation and summary of multiple targeting techniques, tactics, and procedures. It would be used to familiarize troops with the processes and procedures as well as the informational needs in conducting targeting. While not a final authoritative text, it would be a starting point to inspire the forces to creatively pursue targets while ensuring the pertinent points of information are covered so that commanding officers can know that all has been done in accordance with doctrine and law.

F. USSOCOM and SOF Issues

Topic Titles

- F1. TSOC modifications to meet mid- and long-term requirements
- F2. Security Force Assistance (SFA) synchronization within the inter-agency environment and regional/country level
- F3. Leadership understanding of international complexity
- F4. Effectiveness of USSOCOM international engagement programs
- F5. Exploitation of technology and information for irregular warfare engagement
- F6. External assistance for closing SOF capability gaps
- F7. Preparing SOF advisors
- F8. Transitioning to broader international engagement
- F9. Providing legal understanding and legal support for SOF
- F10. Effectiveness of programming authority transfers
- F11. SOF roles in preparing advisory teams for conventional forces
- F12. Identifying best practices within high reliability organizations
- F13. Education tools for SOF
- F14. SOF characteristics
- F15. SOCEUR-NATO SOF Headquarters (NSHQ) relationships

Topic Descriptions

F1. TSOC modifications to meet mid- and long-term requirements

What are the mid- and long-term capability requirements for TSOCs and what modifications to TSOC organizational structure, personnel qualifications, and assignment policies may become necessary to address those requirements? Examine what training personnel should receive prior to TSOC assignment (not just qualifications as stated)—for example, regional, strategic/operational planning, inter-agency, basic SOF knowledge (for non-SOF personnel), and staff procedures. Conclusions should focus on the relationships with other TSOCs, USSOCOM, and the geographic combatant commands. How might these linkages differ in the future given the trends identified in the Strategic Appreciation USSOCOM? The study will also

consider the importance of TSOC relationships with the non-DoD U.S. Government interagency environment, private sector, academia, and intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations as sources of best practices to address a full range of management challenges. What will be the relationships between TSOCs and Combined Joint Special Operations Task Forces, Joint Special Operations Task Forces, and Special Operations Task Forces during drawdowns of General Purpose Forces and realignments of SOF?

F2. Security Force Assistance (SFA) synchronization within the interagency environment and regional/country level

USSOCOM proponency for SFA involves considerable coordination and collaboration within DoD, the non-DoD U.S. Government interagency community, and numerous external players in the process. How does USSOCOM ensure synchronization of SFA mechanisms and processes to include, among other issues, education, training, and relationship building within the U.S. Government interagency community and beyond? Address the capacity to synchronize regional and country-level planning, SFA plans to connect regional efforts to desired strategic effects, and potential venues for addressing SFA-related activities that could be employed by all geographic combatant commands and unified combatant commands. Operationally, how can SFA integration support all aspects of GCC partner-building activities from the tactical through the ministerial levels? Discuss how SFA integration would guide the development of host-nation capacity across all Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, and Facilities (DOT-MLPF) domains in support of GCCs and country teams. What legal authorities must be addressed and, if necessary, adjusted to enable such SFA integration?

F3. Leadership understanding of international complexity

It is essential that USSOCOM leadership possess sufficient academic and cultural awareness to understand and respond to the perspectives and viewpoints of both our coalition partners and our adversaries. What types of academic and cultural knowledge, skills, and abilities are needed by USSOCOM leadership to develop and implement a balanced strategy? How can any gaps be addressed to develop a comprehensive program of preparation? This study will suggest the necessary levels of preparation required and identify the appropriate leadership knowledge, skills, and abilities at ascending levels

of responsibility. At what point along the career-progression path should the preparation begin? What role can the commissioning sources such as the Service academies and ROTC play in introducing the academic and cultural awareness program? How can necessary education and training be incorporated into the existing PME system?

F4. Effectiveness of USSSOCOM international engagement education programs

This study has a two-fold purpose:

- a. Evaluate the effectiveness of existing USSSOCOM international engagement education programs that are designed to develop capabilities within foreign government ministries
- b. Present specific recommendations on how to upgrade, expand, and support such programs as essential tools for building expertise at the strategic and operational levels to complement the training efforts targeted at the tactical level.

How effective are current educational programs in serving as instruments of USSSOCOM international engagement programs? What expansions and modifications are necessary to support PME programs that are targeted at the operational and strategic levels within foreign militaries and their associated governmental agencies? The research should consider a range of options, many if not most of which already exist in some form and that can be incorporated into a fresh initiative. What are the target audiences for such education? Consider the impact of restrictions placed on the transfer of military information to partner nations without reimbursement.

F5. Exploitation of technology and information for irregular warfare engagement

The rapid advances in technology and its management present a variety of challenges for SOF warriors operating on the ground. How can technology and the information revolution be exploited to enhance the availability of state-of-the art equipment for SOF? Discuss how the introduction of new technology can enhance SOF responses to security threats such as hybrid conflict. Similarly, what can be done to enhance SOF access to timely and accurate knowledge databases tailored to the requirements of irregular warfare within environments of persistent conflict? Because responsibility for managing both technology and information resides in various agencies, examine how USSSOCOM can enhance its U.S.

Government interagency community relationships to sustain a high level information-sharing capacity.

F6. External assistance for closing SOF capability gaps

How can USSOCOM draw on the expertise and resources contained within U.S. Government agency laboratories, industry, and academia to assist in identifying and addressing gaps in SOF capabilities? Discuss how relationships with those organizations can provide SOF operators the information and technology they require in a timely manner. Recommend ways to ensure that such organizations are aware of and understand the specific SOF needs in the field. How can the model of the interagency Special Operations Support Teams (SOSTs) be expanded and adapted to establish structures for the exchange of requirements and solutions? Examine the legal implications of such relationship building both within and without the U.S. Government interagency environment to preclude both real and perceived conflicts of interest. How can it be assured that SOF-contracted projects, equipment, and services include operator integration during the development process?

F7. Preparing SOF advisors

Selecting and preparing SOF advisors present several complex challenges, especially when confronting the human terrain issues of our own cultural perspectives, biases, and tendencies. What educational and training programs are necessary to develop the skill sets to prepare SOF to serve in the complex role of *advisor* to indigenous populations and institutions? Discuss the development of an evaluation program to assess and select those best suited for an advisory role. Would the pool of eligible candidates include Rangers? Examine lessons learned from past advisory missions to identify which specific skills must be developed within those SOF assigned to contemporary and future advisory positions. How should those skills be taught, by whom, and where?

F8. Transitioning to broader international engagement

USSOCOM presently focuses as much as 75 percent of its activities within the USCENTCOM area of operations. As new operational requirements dictate shifts in orientation, what steps must USSOCOM take to prepare SOF to transition their focus to allow for persistent engagement within the other unified combatant commands? Explore how cultural reorientation and language skill development can be accomplished by SOF for their respective regions.

How can SOF balance their shifts in focus while sustaining their engagement with General Purpose Forces designated to support irregular warfare in various environments?

F9. Providing legal understanding and legal support for SOF

SOF are involved with apprehending, safeguarding, and transferring terrorist suspects to the custody of other organizations. Consequently, they need to be aware of the basics of U.S. domestic and international law to steer clear of needless legal entanglements and to avoid running afoul of laws and jeopardizing the success of the overall mission. How can USSSOCOM provide SOF with a working knowledge of the local, tribal, and host-nation laws of the regions in which they operate? This study will examine the feasibility of developing a legal support structure to provide basic legal education, intervention, and advice in the complexities of law related to counterterrorism and other related activities. How do we identify and make available subject matter experts on local, tribal, and host-nation law as a way to preempt violations caused by an innocent lack of awareness? Similarly, how can expertise in governance, policing, and legal procedures support SOF operations? Examine how SOF can develop sufficient practical legal knowledge without being weighed down by the complexity of an increasingly legalistic operational environment.

F10. Effectiveness of programming authority transfers

As with any organization, programming and expenditures perform as critical enablers for the achievement of operational goals. Recent shifts in programming authorities from USSSOCOM to the components were intended to maximize the effects of expenditures to meet specific mission requirements. How successful has the transfer of programming authority been from USSSOCOM to the individual components in enabling the intended technology and TTP transitions from SOCs to the TSOCs? Based on that assessment, how might the Program Objective Memorandum (POM) process be adjusted to gain maximum positive effects? Identify the relevant measures of effectiveness and suggest what modifications may be necessary. How do such initiatives balance the broader USSSOCOM requirements with the needs of the individual components?

F11. SOF Roles in preparing advisory teams for conventional forces

All the military services have deployed advisory teams in support of global contingency missions. Some of these include military

transition teams, Air Force advisors, stability transition teams, and modular brigades augmented for SFA. Drawing on the long tradition of SOF engagement in FID operations, what role can SOF play in the training and preparation of advisory teams from the conventional forces of all the military services who are assuming expanded responsibilities for such missions?

F12. Identifying best practices within high reliability organizations

Much can be learned from exploring the structures and TTPs of high reliability organizations such as aircraft carriers, hospital emergency rooms and wildfire-fighting teams. What best practices might SOF derive from them to improve their own operations? Consider shared areas of interest to include redundancies, mindfulness, avoidance of failure, complexity reduction, and cultural and leadership development.

F13. Education tools for SOF

How do we educate SOF warriors in the range of USSOCOM critical documents—that is, USSOCOM Strategy, Strategic Appreciation, USSOCOM Pub 1, Systemic Operational Design, and other tools? How do we translate these from strategy into operational art? How does DOTMLPF apply, and is it even transferable to another culture? Since the strategies are designed for the U.S., what is required to educate SOF personnel to make the conversion to help other nations to develop a national strategy?

F14. SOF characteristics

SOF has been heavily emphasizing DA, with the possibility/perception that it comes at the expense of other requisite SOF skills. This may be an unintended result of, or perpetuate itself in, SOF selection (training) and/or the type of service member drawn to SOF. If SOF is emphasizing DA to the detriment of other skills, what are those skills (likely they are the same UW/IW/COIN/FID/SA skills classically developed and practiced by SOF), how can we best reassert them in SOF, and how can we apply them in current and future conflicts (addressing the causes of terrorism/insurgency and not just “whacking moles”)? Although this question seems oriented against Army SF, how does it apply to Navy SEALs, 6 SOS or other Air Force advisors, or other Air Force SOF, MARSOC, etc. (even General Purpose Forces?) as they engage in UW/IW/COIN/FID/SA?

F.15 SOCEUR-NATO SOF Headquarters (NSHQ) relationships

Examine current relationship (formal and informal) and recommend methods to better synchronize/coordinate efforts. How can the efforts of each be maximized in the USEUCOM area of responsibility to achieve U.S. and USEUCOM strategic objectives? Will or should these relationships (formal/informal) change when NSHQ is a separate U.S. command? Will/should it change when the NSHQ is FOC and capable of deploying as a NATO SOF HQs? Identify possible friction/flash points and recommend solutions.

G. Topics Retained from Previous Years

Topic Titles

- G1. What initiatives are necessary to improve SOF capabilities to understand local, global, and regional terrorist networks?
- G2. Operationalizing combating terrorism: Direct and indirect approaches
- G3. Countering radicalization: How do we identify and recruit the appropriate indigenous persons and leverage them to improve SOF understanding and effectiveness at the local level?
- G4. How to build capabilities to conduct local, regional, and global assessments of counterterrorist network effectiveness
- G5. How to expand capabilities to identify, locate, target, and disrupt key components of terrorist networks
- G6. SOF contributions to a new intelligence architecture for counterterrorism
- G7. Phase 0, SOFt power: Role for SOF in political warfare, coercive diplomacy, and active security campaigns
- G8. Integrating General Purpose Forces (GPF) and SOF operations in irregular warfare
- G9. Building an irregular warfare force for the future
- G10. Retooling Special Forces for the 21st century counterterrorism effort
- G11. What capabilities can and should be developed to provide support to the interagency, multinational, and nongovernmental counterterrorist network?
- G12. Turning the hot war cold: Suggestions for the increased emphasis on the indirect lines of operation to combat terrorist networks
- G13. Engaging the constructive, credible Muslim Ummah to counter violent extremist ideology
- G14. Capability to synchronize DoD/DoS networks to counter terrorist networks
- G15. How can Islamic religious tenets be employed to counter terrorist activities and slow the recruitment of new extremists?

- G16. What are the appropriate metrics for DoD to assess irregular warfare operations?
- G17. Hearts and minds: Human influence operations in irregular warfare
- G18. Refining the indirect approach, irregular warfare strategy and operations
- G19. Game theory and the warrior diplomat: Understanding competitive and cooperative decision making and their applications to inter-agency interaction
- G20. Impact of organizational (agency) cultures on effective interagency interaction
- G21. Analyze interagency C2, planning, and operational mechanisms employed during contingency operations where the interagency community leads
- G22. What steps can the DoD take to encourage the engagement of the whole of government in the counterterrorism effort, thus maximizing best practices while reducing redundancy and costly overlap with other U.S. Government agencies, partner and cooperative countries, and multinational organizations?
- G23. Interagency community turf battles
- G24. Best practices of providing cultural education in preparation for SOF operations
- G25. Supporting U.S. southwest border stability in a crisis period: Potential SOF assistance to struggling Mexican security institutions and U.S. CONUS defense
- G26. Leveraging academic support for special operations
- G27. Strategic culture analysis: Predictive capacity for current and future threats
- G28. Natural resources battlefield
- G29. SOF intellectual capital
- G30. Law and legal institutions
- G31. U.S. SOF training of foreign military/security forces “to enhance their capacity” in counterterrorism, COIN, and FID is a major strategy of the U.S. and USSOCOM overseas contingency operations, but have those efforts generated the desired results?
- G32. Diplomatic agreements to support rapid SOF support for other nations

- G33. Security Force Assistance (SFA)
- G34. SOF interaction with host-nation Ministry of Interior (MoI) resources
- G35. Influence and relationship between USSOCOM and the military services
- G36. Training systems for USSOCOM and its components
- G37. SOF aviation: Use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UASs)
- G38. Use of Unmanned Ground Vehicle (UGV) systems
- G39. Use of Unmanned Underwater Vehicle (UUV) and Unmanned Surface Vehicle (USV) systems
- G40. Planning for Joint special operations for the indirect approach
- G41. Developing regional counterterrorism strategy—enabling partners
- G42. Getting beyond Al Qaeda and looking to the future of counterterrorism policy and operations
- G43. Counterterrorism partnerships between SOF and law enforcement agencies (LEAs)
- G44. How does cultural awareness contribute to effective activities in combating terrorism?
- G45. Intelligence for counterterrorism operations: Best practices, future requirements, possible synergies among USSOCOM and other U.S. agencies—for example, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)—allies, and other less savory options
- G46. What are the funding relationships between terrorist organizations and organized crime?
- G47. When counterterrorism is counterproductive: Case studies and theories of the misapplication of counterterrorism
- G48. Poverty is a pawn: The myth of poverty as genesis of terrorism and how poverty is used by terrorist leaders
- G49. Terrorist safe havens/sanctuaries/ungoverned areas
- G50. What strategy should the U.S. pursue to break the power jihadist terrorist hold over third world population and what is the role of SOF in this strategy?
- G51. Lessons not learned in irregular warfare to date
- G52. Organizing interagency community for irregular warfare campaigns

- G53. Strategic theories on irregular warfare
- G54. Operational art design for irregular warfare-centric campaigns
- G55. Building Internal Defense and Development (IDAD) plans for key partner nations
- G56. Case studies of SOF creating strategic effects in irregular warfare
- G57. How to advise host nations engaged in irregular warfare
- G58. Conventional/SOF cooperation
- G59. Embassy role in U.S. Government irregular warfare effort
- G60. Legislative requirements for effective interagency campaigns
- G61. Country team approach
- G62. Cultural awareness
- G63. Are culture, religion, and worldview factors in motivating irregular warfare?
- G64. Cultural knowledge in irregular warfare campaign planning
- G65. Regional studies
- G66. How is strategy developed for special operations and what is the framework for such development?
- G67. Why is Phase 0 important and how can SOF support the geographic combatant commander strategy: Informing the joint conventional community
- G68. Develop SOF internships with Fortune 500 companies in order to develop irregular warfare skill sets (marketing; influence, investigations, strategic communications)
- G69. Impact of crossing borders to conduct military operations
- G70. Roles of SOF and NGOs in complex humanitarian emergencies
- G71. Oral histories of SOF leaders for publication/professional development
- G72. SOF senior leader competencies for joint warfare: Preparing for joint SOF combat command
- G73. Cross area-of-responsibility operations
- G74. U.S. national security initiatives in Africa and the counterterrorism effort
- G75. Effective PSYOP in a mostly illiterate population

Topic Descriptions

G1. What initiatives are necessary to improve SOF capabilities to understand local, global, and regional terrorist networks?

For SOF to be successful in defeating and deterring terrorist networks, we must first understand our operational environment, whether physical or virtual. To do this, we need the cognitive skill sets to provide SOF with local, global, and regional understandings of those environments. Historical context is essential for understanding current conditions and to avoid becoming trapped in the centuries-old role of under informed westerners confronting radical Islamic forces. What is a “network”? How do they find strength in their cultural surroundings? What outcomes against terrorist networks are truly possible and acceptable? This study examines current SOF capabilities to learn about and share awareness of terrorist network structures, strengths, and vulnerabilities. It then moves forward to propose steps to improve current capabilities while seeking initiatives to fill existing gaps.

G2. Operationalizing combating terrorism: Direct and indirect approaches

Experience teaches that fighting and winning within the counterterrorism effort are separate, though complementary, endeavors. Fighting requires *direct* action to kill or capture terrorists and destroy their support networks. However, is reliance on such quick, decisive, and measurable missions reflective of a winning strategy? How does such a mindset hinder or help win a war when the ultimate effects of such operations may not be apparent for months or even years? Thus, is the reliance on Direct Action missions to attrit terrorists effective beyond force protection or the defense of strategic interests within the broader war on terror? Winning must ultimately be about *indirect* actions intended to eliminate the environment that enables terrorists to flourish and operate. Winning is also about eliminating sanctuaries, an effort inevitably requiring a mix of direct and indirect actions. This study proposes a “right mix” of direct and indirect actions to assure the achievement of U.S. strategic objectives. What is the correct force structure to win and win decisively? What does “operationalizing intelligence” mean to collectors, analysts, planners, and operators? How does the process of *operationalizing* look when successfully implemented?

G3. Countering radicalization: How do we identify and recruit the appropriate indigenous persons and leverage them to improve SOF understanding and effectiveness at the local level?

One of the lessons of the counterterrorism effort is that “radical” Islamic thought and practice represent a very complex and diverse mix of groups and agendas. However, by simply labeling terrorists and their networks as “Al Qaeda” or some other shorthand reference without a more detailed understanding of their nature runs the risk of missing important characteristics that are essential to the successful engagement of these networks. Such generalizations also tend to assign credit and prestige to Al Qaeda, even when the group and its proxies may have nothing to do with a specific situation. SOF need to become far more sophisticated in their understanding of Islam in general and in categorization of Islam’s radical elements. This study surveys the relevant Islamic groups, their belief structures, and their agendas. For example, what are the differences between an Iraqi Jaysh al-Mahdi follower who adheres to Wilayat al-Fiqh as a political philosophy and an Iranian who espouses similar beliefs? Once the differences are identified and understood, what can be done to leverage them to achieve success in the counterterrorism effort? How do we counter radicalization by identifying, recruiting, and working with indigenous assets with special emphasis on parents and relatives?

G4. How to build capabilities to conduct local, regional, and global assessments of counterterrorist network effectiveness

Credible assessments of counterterrorist network effectiveness are essential to sustained and successful counterterrorism operations. This study explores the purpose of such assessments, USSOCOM’s authorities to conduct assessments, the assumptions and components that drive the assumption process, and the complex interactions required with other combatant commands and the wider interagency community to ensure the most complete assessment products. Assessments allow the joint force to determine the effects associated with counterterrorist network operations: the impact upon the terrorist network, the effect upon the targeted populace and other actors, the effect upon other elements within the operational environment, and the requirements for future joint force contributions to counterterrorist network operations. This study also includes an overview of planning assumptions to include the understanding of the terrorist network, emerging effects, and the changing

conditions within the operational environment to determine the accuracy of understanding, effectiveness of operations, and the course corrections required for future operations.

G5. How to expand capabilities to identify, locate, target, and disrupt key components of terrorist networks

Central to any counterterrorism effort is the capability to engage the full spectrum of a terrorist network and to render the network unable or unwilling to continue to function. This study examines techniques by which parallel organizations can be established to compete with and neutralize components of existing terrorist networks. Engagement of such networks can be either led or enabled by the DoD functioning by, with, and through interagency, multi-national, and/or nongovernmental partners. Activities may involve direct actions focused on specific nodes or links of interest; they may also employ indirect methods addressing some aspect of the operating environment and thus rendering ineffective the node or link of interest.

G6. SOF contributions to a new intelligence architecture for counterterrorism

In the late summer of 2008, the Defense Science Board (DSB) identified key security issues that, if not addressed, could lead to future military failure. One of these was a lack of deep penetration capabilities needed for developing actionable intelligence against individual terrorists and terrorist groups. More broadly, the DSB underscored the need for a new architecture that no longer focused on mainly fixed installations, but on people and activities “hiding in plain sight” and collection that would be “close-in, intrusive, and must achieve deep penetration.” The DSB pointed to SOF as one of the “enduring pockets of innovation, agility, and prudent risk-taking” within DoD. Using the DSB findings as a point of departure, this study will address specific steps that SOF can take to enhance new counterterrorism intelligence collection efforts in appropriate and feasible ways. Overview reading: *Defense Imperatives for the New Administration*, Defense Science Board, August 2008.

G7. Phase 0, SOFT power: Role for SOF in political warfare, coercive diplomacy, and active security campaigns

There is a need to assist the DoD and the interagency community to understand and integrate Phase 0 operations into the preparation of the environment in support of irregular warfare. This study

explores the strategic utility of SOF to achieve U.S. policy objectives in nonwar and preventive-war scenarios. It is relevant to theater and SOF strategists, campaign planners, the irregular warfare community, and the interagency community. The discussion should include the achievement of strategic effects in periods of political warfare (e.g., secret warfare, ideological warfare, and flexible deterrent options)—also known as “Grey” SOF—during coercive diplomacy and as part of COCOM persistent and adaptive Phase 0 theater campaigns. The research should explore the ways and means SOF achieves high levels of strategic performance in pursuit of national political goals; identify the optimal cooperation and team arrangements among SOF, DoD, and the wider U.S. Government interagency environment to achieve both military and political objectives; identify the best war-prevention measures SOF can perform; and recommend any necessary changes to the current security assistance environment to develop strategically sound, long-term, adaptable campaign lines of operation.

G8. Integrating General Purpose Forces (GPF) and SOF operations in irregular warfare

The integration of GPF and SOF operations in irregular warfare environments raises many familiar questions. This study identifies the most persistent of these and proposes answers that seek to formalize the relationship between the complementary efforts. What lines of authority delineate SOF and GPF-controlled portions of an area of operation? When is one component the supported and the other the supporting within a specific operation? What are the mechanisms for the deconfliction of GPF and SOF rules of engagement? What are the mechanisms for ensuring the resolution of other interoperability issues that may arise? How does SOF gain equitable access to GPF-controlled sustainment and mission enablers such as transportation, communication, intelligence resources, and UAV support?

G9. Building an irregular warfare force for the future

Emerging thought contends that SOF may not be adequately prepared to interact with indigenous populations in the variety of operational environments in which the irregular warfare counterterrorism effort will be fought and won. Do such shortcomings exist? If so, how can SOF better prepare itself for its global missions by addressing these shortcomings through employment of proxies,

irregulars, or surrogates? Propose procedures to identify those with particular aptitudes for cultural awareness, intercultural communication, and language proficiency. What indicators in secondary school curricula can assist in alerting recruiters to individuals with appropriate skill sets? Increasing numbers of school systems offer and sometimes require Spanish language proficiency. Are similar mandates available for Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Russian, and so on? What is cultural awareness? How should proficiency levels in cultural awareness be introduced and managed? Should training be focused on individual soldiers, units, or force-wide capabilities? How should cultural awareness training be tailored for different Military Occupational Specialties (MOSs), duty positions, and grades? Is cultural awareness sufficient for SOF to meet mission requirements? Should standards for specific cross-cultural capabilities be introduced to expand individual and unit SOF proficiencies across multiple geographical areas?

G10. Retooling Special Forces for the 21st century counterterrorism effort

This research topic focuses on U.S. Army Special Forces and potential changes in how they operate to address the counterterrorism effort and related threats. How practical is it to have U.S. Army Special Forces prepare themselves primarily for unconventional warfare and FID missions while retaining the capabilities for support of remaining core SOF missions? With a narrower lane to travel, how can the training of language and cultural skills be upgraded to address the specific requirements of unconventional warfare and FID? What initiatives are available to establish and sustain stronger and more credible relationships with host-nation personnel? Is there utility in forward deploying Special Forces units to draw on improved infrastructures and opportunities for immersion in local and regional cultures? Consider historical examples and outline potential benefits and drawbacks to these approaches. Shifting to the future, how might such initiatives better prepare Special Forces units to identify, understand, prepare for, and confront emerging threats? Conduct assessments of the ODAs, ODBs, and Groups with an eye toward suggesting changes in their structures and skill sets. Is a 12-man ODA too large, too small or just right? Are its skill sets in need of a fresh assessment? Might the communication sergeant become the “Computer Surveillance/Attack Sergeant”? Is the Special Forces education and training system outdated? Are we getting the

maximum benefit from the “brainpower” of ODA members? What specific steps are necessary to field the most efficient and effective Special Forces capability for the future?

G11. What capabilities can and should be developed to provide support to the interagency, multinational, and nongovernmental counterterrorist network?

Joint Forces possess a variety of direct and indirect services, products, and resources to enable counterterrorist network disruption operations as well as programs to encourage local development, governance, and security. This study identifies possible Joint Force contributions that are both appropriate and acceptable to partners in the interagency, multinational, and nongovernmental counterterrorist network. The resulting program may include training, security assistance, education, command and control, logistics, ISR, funding, support to civil authority, information operations, and direct action missions.

G12. Turning the *hot war cold*: Suggestions for the increased emphasis on the indirect lines of operation to combat terrorist networks

It is commonly accepted that *indirect action* and *lines of operation* are central to the efforts to defeat terrorists and their networks. Even so, it would appear that direct action missions are the preferred choice. This study surveys historical examples, lessons learned, and best practices to provide a comprehensive overview of the strategic, long-term nature of the indirect process. Examples such as the Marshall Plan and case studies from the Cold War serve as support for indirect thinking. What do SOF operators and leaders need to relearn about indirect planning and operations? Suggestions to improve the quality of indirect efforts should focus on preparing the irregular-warfare operational environment through the use of information operations, population influence, strategic communication, and civil-military operations.

G13. Engaging the constructive, credible Muslim Ummah to counter violent extremist ideology

This topic continues to be one of growing interest among members of the Intelligence community who are seeking strategies for countering radicalization or changing the attitudes of those who are already extremists. Focusing primarily on Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Yemen, Algeria, Pakistan, and Europe, what can the U.S. Government do to reduce information barriers among 10–40 year-old

Muslims? Which U.S. policies should be either increased or reduced to enhance positive engagement of the constructive Muslim Ummah organization? Also, how does the U.S. support or encourage credible Muslim voices without discrediting them through our endorsement or support? Identify avenues and methodologies to positively engage the constructive Muslim Ummah to counter violent extremist ideology. Further, look to other nations such as India (home to more Muslims than Pakistan), Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Nigeria, Senegal, and Mali as venues for similar initiatives. For instance, are the techniques that are appropriate in Egypt also appropriate in Indonesia or elsewhere?

G14. Capability to synchronize DoD/DoS networks to counter terrorist networks

The complexities of terrorist networks require the establishment and synchronization of counterterrorism networks that field the necessary capabilities from the DoD, DoS, and throughout the wider U.S. Government interagency community. Such arrangements remain elusive as stovepipe relationships and legislation prohibiting collaboration among various agencies limit network functioning. This study looks at how terrorist groups form their social networks and in what areas of interest they operate. As we consider the emerging concept of “communities of interest” built around social networking, is network the best way to conceptualize both terrorist and counterterrorist structures? What specific steps are necessary to synchronize DoD/DoS counterterrorist structures so they more efficiently bridge organizational boundaries? How do we construct counterterrorist structures that mirror those of our adversaries? How do we ensure that the emerging counterterrorism structures reach down to the operational level and are not blocked by the temptation to over-classify the flow of essential information?

G15. How can Islamic religious tenets be employed to counter terrorist activities and slow the recruitment of new extremists?

Islamic extremists justify their behavior by invoking religious principles and elements of faith. This study turns the tables by challenging these claims and suggesting alternative Islamic interpretations that discredit terrorist behavior. Survey re-education programs such as in Singapore and other countries that use religious teachers to meet with captured extremists or terrorists to challenge their interpretation of Islamic teachings, discredit their justifications

for violent conduct, and reframe Islamic teachings as condemning violent acts rather than endorsing them. Instead of relying on imprecise terminology and labels, what Islamic words and verses exist that reject the violence committed and “justified” by religion? For instance, the often-used terms such as *jihadist* and *mujahedeen* are, in fact, positive terms that bolster the prestige and morale of the Islamic extremist. What Islamic words convey negative judgment on a *terrorist* or *evil doer*? How can we carefully use Islamic beliefs against the extremists? What is the true meaning of *fatwas* and their role in Islamic culture? Propose approaches that originate with credible Islamic voices, not with non-Islamic, noncleric, nonreligious scholars. What primary source secular materials exist that highlight the hypocrisy and internal contradictions contained in the writings and actions of Al Qaeda and other terrorist groups. Pointing out that such groups are opportunistic as much as they are ideological or religious can serve as an effective way to undermine their propaganda and presumed righteousness.

G16. What are the appropriate metrics for DoD to assess irregular warfare operations?

The measurement of success in irregular warfare operations is extremely difficult because of the absence of “cookie-cutter” solutions to address any given situation and the need to develop specific metrics on a case-by-case basis. This study tackles the challenge of determining how irregular warfare operations can be viewed as effects-based when existing measurements of success are so rudimentary. Active engagement with academia and the application of assessment and analysis tools already used by social scientists can greatly assist in irregular warfare evaluation efforts. Contrast the need for an “inside out” assessment model that considers people, adversaries, and environmental perspectives with the traditional U.S. “outside in” approach. How do we arrive at data baselines against which to measure effectiveness? How do we measure the impact of irregular warfare activities (beyond killing the terrorists) in achieving geographic combatant command, DoD, and national strategic goals? What is the measurement of effect(s) for FID in terms of partner preparedness vs. SOF relationship building? What are the lines of operation for other SOF activities, and how can those measurements be captured? How do we define success, and how do we measure it? How do we measure *good enough*? How do we assess when no action is better than action that, though successful, may

result in huge strategic costs? What are the time horizons across which we should measure?

G17. Hearts and minds: Human influence operations in irregular warfare

At the core of U.S. counterinsurgency doctrine and the indirect approach lies the concept of *hearts and minds*. SOF is deeply engaged in both counterinsurgency (COIN) and the indirect approach; therefore, the winning of the hearts and minds of indigenous peoples is central to their missions. Despite the significance of hearts and minds to SOF, the concept is often treated as a buzzword—a phrase that is taken at face value with little analysis, historical grounding, or precise understanding of what it entails. Its application also differs in recent history and in different theaters. This study looks at the concept of *hearts and minds* from a fresh perspective with the goal of deepening understanding of the concept and its relevance to the struggle against terrorism. Is winning the compliance and cooperation of the population a more relevant understanding of the task? After all, populations need to see good reasons to support government efforts, though not necessarily to like their government. Has the emphasis on kinetic operations produced negative consequences for hearts-and-minds efforts because of friendly fire/collateral damage incidents or because SOF are seen as supporting an unpopular government? How do we address religion (hearts and souls) as a component of the hearts-and-minds challenge? This research should capture the techniques and best practices as we know them from irregular warfare experiences. Are we changing minds/opinions, or are we simply seeking common ground where interests match? What steps do we need to take to at least keep the population neutral? Are hearts-and-minds efforts a method or line of operation rather than an objective?

G18. Refining the indirect approach, irregular warfare strategy and operations

The proper coordination and application of effort in the areas of governance, development, security, economics, and social structures can result in the unbalancing of our adversaries and/or the alteration of environmental conditions. Such indirect approaches normally require a long-term commitment and challenge the patience of politicians and publics. Based on lessons learned, this study reviews the essential issues of indirect action with an idea of refining

the paradigm to account for inevitable long-duration involvement. Attention must be paid to the various leverage points so as to gain maximum effect. These include goals/desired end states, levels of operational risk, access of U.S. forces and resources, U.S. “anti-bodies,” preconflict vs. conflict roles, security vs. nonsecurity threats, regional players (e.g., EU, AU, ASEAN, OAS), and independent players (e.g., UN, ICRC, business/industry). What are the indirect action lessons learned? How do we prioritize various indirect approaches? How do we prepare domestic, partner, and host-nation publics to understand and accept the long-term nature of indirect action? The study recognizes the theoretical influence of rhetorical studies and strategic communication theory such as inoculation theory, cultivation theory, and the two-step communication process.

G19. Game theory and the warrior diplomat: Understanding competitive and cooperative decision making and their applications to interagency interaction

When conducting interagency collaboration or negotiations, most participants are trained to approach the bargaining table as if they are engaged in a *zero-sum game*—that is, if another agency *wins*, my agency loses. This approach reflects classic competitive decision making. How can the introduction of *game theory* shift the negotiation paradigm from competitive to cooperative decision making? Drawing on the assumption that it is in the best interests of each participant to cooperate with the others, what techniques are available to teach that all participants benefit from cooperative decision making models? How might game theory assist in developing lasting interagency decision models that can also be further applied to state-to-state negotiations?

G20. Impact of organizational (agency) cultures on effective interagency interaction

Understanding different organizational cultures is essential in seeking to reconcile different approaches for dealing with interagency issues. The goal is to achieve a unity of action by identifying complementary approaches in framing and addressing a specific challenge. Unique organizational cultures determine such things as decision-making models, communication styles, goal expectations, operational structures, and resource flows. This study explores these dimensions within the DoD, DoS, and other key participants in the interagency process. How do these differences affect both

positive and negative interagency interaction? How might best practices in different agencies be documented and adapted throughout the interagency community? Part of the design of the interagency community, especially the respective Intelligence nodes within the Intelligence community, was to foster competition. The organizational culture within the DoS is very different from that within the DoD or CIA, leading in part to differing Intelligence estimates. This competition was intended to ensure that decision makers had different opinions to weigh against one another. Does the creation of the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) run the risk of undermining this competition in favor of consensus assessments? What procedures can be developed to ensure that decision makers in all functional areas have different opinions to weigh against one another?

G21. Analyze interagency C2, planning, and operational mechanisms employed during contingency operations where the interagency community leads

The interagency community has successfully led contingency-based operations, many with irregular warfare parameters. Around the globe, the interagency community leads on a daily basis the U.S. Government efforts in combating terrorism, counter-finance, counter-criminal business enterprise, counter-drug, and other security missions. During the secret war in Laos (Vietnam War era), the covert and paramilitary efforts of the U.S. Government, in conjunction with SOF, were led by the U.S. ambassador and his country team with operational control over both U.S. military and civil assets. Successful COIN cases exist where DoS-led efforts, enabled by U.S. SOF and other military forces, advanced U.S. interests and achieved strategic political objectives (e.g., El Salvador, Operation Enduring Freedom, Philippines, and security assistance to Greece after World War II). Efforts to win the drug war and assist Plan Columbia are interagency community-led, specifically by the U.S. ambassador and his military group (MILGRP). However, important differences in approach persist. This study analyzes the various methods that different agencies employ. For example, the military uses a very structured planning process (MDMP), but the DoS utilize a different method. How does each department's planning processes differ, and what we can do to fill the gaps resulting from these differences? Should we plan on using similar processes, and if not, how do we bridge gaps that might result? Study and analyze interagency community-led contingency-size task force operations to

identify and synthesize best practices in strategic and operational planning, C2, and implementation. Identify the vital role SOF can play in these indirect applications of military power. Identify best uses of GPF to facilitate these operations. Recommend a 21st century task organization for the country team. This would include the MILGRP, which would optimize contingency operations when led by the interagency community. What are the risks? What challenges and strategic opportunities will dictate the use of interagency task forces? Consider the use of an interagency task force to accomplish soft-power campaigns over extended periods. What are the implications of having non-DoD departments (e.g., DoS/DoJ/DoE) in charge of DoD elements? Is the DoD prepared to place DoD assets under the control of OGA *commanders*?

G22. What steps can the DoD take to encourage the engagement of the *whole of government* in the counterterrorism effort, thus maximizing best practices while reducing redundancy and costly overlap with other U.S. Government agencies, partner and cooperative countries, and multinational organizations?

The skill sets and resources necessary for the successful prosecution of the counterterrorism effort reside throughout the U.S. Government. One of the weaknesses of the interagency process is the absence of a clear mandate for who is authorized to contribute to the requirements generated by the counterterrorism effort. What specific steps are necessary to identify and engage the full range of U.S. Government capabilities? One of the recurring problems is that of information sharing. What can be done within the interagency community to break down stovepipes and flatten the dynamic process of information exchange? How can DoD improve its capabilities to share information with the U.S. Government interagency community, partner and cooperative countries, and multinational organizations?

G23. Interagency community turf battles

As experiences in Afghanistan and elsewhere have taught, the military frequently finds itself in the position of performing tasks normally performed by DoS or other U.S. Government agencies because the magnitude of the work precluded those normally responsible from doing it. This reality raises important political/social theory questions about the tension among organizations that have been given formal mandates/charters to perform while resources have

been given to another organization, and capabilities perhaps reside with yet a third. What examples of both success and failure exist in such complex situations? How can objective after-action reports prepared by external reviewers (and not intended merely to assess blame) assist in identifying best practices in interagency relationships? What are the underlying obstacles to creating a synchronized interagency process to execute the counterterrorism effort and other theater missions and objectives? How can we convince others within the U.S. Government to muster resources towards a common goal when no individual and independent agency is subordinate to another? How do interagency players overcome the restrictions of their legal responsibilities, capabilities, and capacities and yet provide the fullest support to a whole-of-government effort? Do we need an interagency commission with representatives from the DoS, DoD, DNI, DoJ, and other agencies to run the counterterrorism effort? Does such management-by-consensus stifle real leadership? Examine various options or approaches, taking into account the human factors involved, with recommendations of how to better run the whole-of-government machinery without creating another cumbersome layer of bureaucracy. How do we manage/resolve conflicting agency missions to achieve true interagency solutions? How do we develop practical *nonhierarchical C-2 structures* to enable SOF, GPF, and other government agencies to work together on the battlefield?

G24. Best practices of providing cultural education in preparation for SOF operations

SOF traditionally place a heavy reliance on operating within unfamiliar cultures. Cultural awareness and language proficiency are the building blocks of cultural education. How do different SOF components prepare their personnel to conduct operations with indigenous populations? Do specific education methods work better for certain missions? How does language proficiency assist with cultural education? Which elements of culture are essential to prepare SOF for down-range experiences? Do NGOs, international governmental organizations, and other international players conduct education programs that may be helpful in assessing and improving SOF cultural education? How might cultural immersion programs assist SOF preparations? Identify standards for determining how much education is sufficient in a given situation.

G25. Supporting U.S. southwest border stability in a crisis period: Potential SOF assistance to struggling Mexican security institutions and U.S. CONUS defense

The U.S. Joint Forces Command (JFCOM) recent articulation of the U.S. Joint Operational Environment (JOE) highlights a real potential for Mexico becoming a failed state. Sustained pressures from organized crime- and gang-fed violence increasingly point to weakening Mexican military and security institutions, while at the same time entrenched government corruption undermines the most serious reform efforts. JFCOM—in a judgment that may have been characterized as excessive just a few years ago—highlights Mexico’s weakening institutions as a threat to Western Hemispheric security generally, and especially as a U.S. Homeland Security problem of “immense proportions.” Visible increases in Mexican cross-border violence immediately following the JFCOM report’s release were underscored by Phoenix, Arizona being named the top U.S. kidnaping center and the second highest in the world as a consequence of Mexican gang and paramilitary violence. Individual U.S. states, in response, have begun to formulate their own plans for border crisis. The possibility of a sudden catastrophic collapse with ensuing mass border crossings, humanitarian crises all point to the broadest U.S. support requirements being implemented, and anticipatory planning or actions undertaken ahead of time. The U.S. State Department’s *FY 2009 Strategic Mission Plan: U.S. Mission to Mexico* has declared four major policy goals. These potentially benefit from the direct or indirect support of U.S. SOF to appropriate Mexican institutions and to CONUS military, law enforcement, and interagency organizations: enhancing common border security, increasing security of a shared North American homeland, strengthening Mexican law enforcement and judicial capabilities, and helping Mexico consolidate and strengthen its governmental institutions and the rule of law. Research under this topic examines the ways in which U.S. special operations components—and especially the roles of U.S. NORTHCOM and the interagency community—can effectively support such U.S. policy goals in today’s operational environment that blurs distinctions between U.S. and Mexican requirements.

G26. Leveraging academic support for special operations

The SOF community, in the form of Office of Strategic Services (OSS), was an innovator in the recruiting and use of academic specialists—for example, anthropologists, political scientists, historians,

and linguists—to advance irregular warfare initiatives. Support in the early days was typically enthusiastic. While productive relationships have continued to some extent, recent years have seen far less enthusiasm in academia for defense and security interaction. Sometimes the response is outright rejection and hostility. In a 2008 effort to reinvigorate what decades earlier had been productive relationships, U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates oversaw the development of what was called the Minerva Consortia. This initiative included academic outreach and a number of programs that included the creation and deployment of Human Terrain Teams (HTTs), document exploitation for key areas of interest to both scholars and military planners, religious and ideological studies, and other applications of history, anthropology, sociology, and evolutionary psychology expertise residing in U.S. universities. Some of these programs, however, particularly the HTTs under U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) management, have proven controversial in academia and in reviews of implementation and effectiveness. While SOF has its own priorities and approaches, concepts for leveraging academic support for special operations should be considered in light of such controversies and problem areas. This study addresses how SOF can most productively use expertise found in U.S. universities and academic research centers to advance SOF knowledge, skills, initiatives, and operations. It will consider concepts, approaches, specific activities and programs, and the overall nature, appropriateness, and potential of academic/university relationships.

Overview readings are Speech to the Association of American Universities (Washington, D.C.) as delivered by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, Washington, D.C., 14 April 2008 and Robin Winks, *Cloak and Gown: Scholars in the Secret War, 1939–1961* (Yale University Press, 1996).

G27. Strategic culture analysis: Predictive capacity for current and future threats

Many feel that *strategic culture* analysis holds significant promise for interpreting and understanding how different states approach matters of war, peace, strategy, and the use of military force. Strategic culture analysis emerged from Cold War requirements to understand and possibly predict Soviet nuclear behavior. Strategic culture fell out of favor as a concept after the fall of the Soviet Union. More sophisticated than its Cold War construct, strategic culture now

explores belief systems, values, climate, resources, geography, classical text, defense concepts, military doctrine, economic resources, and a country's technological base. Given their structures and purposes, are Al Qaeda and other transnational, nonstate terrorist, and criminal groups appropriate candidates for strategic cultural analysis? Consider state-like attributes such as military forces, an international economic base, a sophisticated communication network, a system of social services, and clearly articulated international security objectives. Can strategic culture analysis of transnational, nonstate actors identify strategic personalities, define strategic perspectives, and ultimately predict strategic behavior? Is strategic culture analysis a viable tool for understanding current and predicting future terrorist threats?

G28. Natural resources battlefield

Competition for natural resources such as oil, water, food, and wood has led to conflict throughout history. Research is necessary to identify contemporary vulnerabilities, security measures, and the location of any seams. Second-order effects on population, land use, and economic activity are also of immediate concern. More specifically, the study identifies potential natural resource battlefields and their roles in future acts of terrorism and wider aspects of irregular warfare. Examples include oil and natural gas reserves sited amidst Iran, Russia, and China. What are the implications of U.S. petroleum security commitments to the Gulf states? Discuss the use of oil (controlling supply/artificial price manipulation) by oil-producing nations to blackmail/damage western economic systems. Analyze historical trends from the creation of the OPEC cartel to the present to determine if there is precedent to attempt long-term damage through cartel policies. What roles might SOF play in such security scenarios? Examine the current structure of indigenous internal security and military forces as they relate to petroleum infrastructure security (oil refineries, wells, pipelines, and offshore facilities). What are some emerging security threats to natural resources? What integrated security operational concepts will be required? How would those concepts integrate local MoD, MoI, and commercial resources into a comprehensive security infrastructure for petroleum and other natural resources? How can SOF integrate with local Special Security Forces (SSF), typically under the direction of the MoI? How do proposed security concepts enhance coordination among MoIs, MoDs and SOF?

G29. SOF intellectual capital

Develop a framework for selection and assessment for the next generation of SOF leaders based on understanding of the strategic level of security policy. Discuss how to build a requisite academic body of knowledge to support this framework and explain how it might be integrated into the existing military education system as pertains to SOF leaders.

G30. Law and legal institutions

Analyze perspectives from senior lawyers coming out of Iraq and Afghanistan on developing rule of *law and legal institutions*. Discuss obstacles to this development, akin to a lessons-learned analysis. Collect and examine viewpoints of Staff Judge Advocate personnel who have served on Joint Special Operations Task Forces, capturing unique issues in providing legal and rules of engagement advice to SOF.

G31. U.S. SOF training of foreign military/security forces “to enhance their capacity” in counterterrorism, COIN, and FID is a major strategy of the U.S. and USSOCOM overseas contingency operations, but have those efforts generated the desired results?

For more than 50 years, SOF has taken the lead role in DoD for training indigenous forces in counterterrorism, FID and COIN skills. Because of the capacity-building requirements of the effort, this strategy has become a major component of DoD’s efforts in North Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Latin America. After all these years, is there sufficient evidence that the U.S. commitment of personnel and material resources been successful in developing the intended capacity in local security forces? Furthermore, does the development of capacity even matter if the host-nation government is not willing to employ those forces as we intended, or at all? This study looks at the track record of SOF training and answers the question, “How do we know if it is working?” What are specific cases of both success and failure? Why do the outcomes vary? Is the mission truly to “build capacity,” or is it merely to establish a sustained presence on the ground? SOF has operated in places like the Philippines and Colombia for many decades. Should we keep doing it, or should we dramatically change how we do it? What are the standards for success? What steps should be in place to increase the likelihood of success? To what level and extent should

host-nation forces be trained and what technologies/resources should the U.S. provide them?

G32. Diplomatic agreements to support rapid SOF support for other nations

U.S. SOF possess training, equipment, and mobility capabilities that far surpass those of many nations' police and military forces. In the event of a crisis, particularly those involving U.S. persons and interests, the employment of U.S. SOF could be the most effective and credible response. Recent and ongoing concerns over weapons of mass destruction, piracy, and transnational terrorists are relevant examples. However, most sovereign governments are adverse to the employment of another nation's military forces within their state boundaries. Despite many cases of extensive training and coordination between U.S. and host-nation militaries, the host-nation government still may not be well informed about the shortcomings of their own forces, the capabilities of U.S. SOF, and the capabilities of U.S. SOF to respond to an immediate threat. Should the U.S. establish diplomatic agreements with other countries prior to a crisis to formalize U.S. response options and streamline diplomatic decisions in the event of a time-sensitive crisis? Understanding that decisions in crisis situations are of a political nature, who should participate in the discussions leading to such agreements? What provisions should such agreements contain? To what extent should such agreements commit the U.S. to supporting a particular government against internal threats? What can be done to minimize friction between the ambassador/country team and the SOF deployed to the area? What provisions with the host nation are necessary for testing the response system?

G33. Security Force Assistance (SFA)

This study examines the nature of SFA missions within the context of complementary operations and multiple participants. How do we determine if a SFA mission set is a SOF or General Purpose Force requirement? How do we clearly define SFA? How can USSOCOM best organize itself to accomplish the mission of SFA proponentry? How can the U.S. Government seamlessly integrate DoS, DoD, and other members of the interagency community into SFA programs? How can IGOs and NGOs make contributions consistent with their capabilities and agendas? What needs to be done to gain IGO and NGO investment in the process? Examine the issues, similarities,

and differences among SFA, Security Assistance, and FID missions. What makes them similar? What makes them different? Are those differences merely semantic? FID is supposed to be a non-combat operation. When threat conditions introduce the need for combat, FID is more rightly categorized as COIN or support to COIN. Should SFA be categorized as combat or noncombat? Could it be both? If SFA is a noncombat activity, what approaches become appropriate in combat?

G34. SOF interaction with host-nation Ministry of Interior (MoI) resources

In the Middle East and other regions, MoIs normally have internal security forces that resemble special operations organizations in their structure and functions. They may be called *Special Security Forces* or *Paramilitary Forces*, but they operate as an arm of the police. Frequently they are larger than the special operations components of the host-nation military assisted by U.S. SOF. This study examines the structure and functioning of such organizations. How are they used to protect the ruling government and provide stability both within the country and the region? How can U.S. SOF interface with these units to improve internal security conditions and build counterterrorism capacity? If necessary, how can SOF counterbalance these MoI units within the internal security context?

G35. Influence and relationship between USSOCOM and the military services

The USSOCOM commander is tasked with conducting SOF core activities across a spectrum of missions. To do so, USSOCOM relies on the military services for the recruitment, training, development, retention, and assignment of SOF personnel. This relationship is central to USSOCOM's abilities to accomplish the assigned missions. This study surveys the current relationships and influences between USSOCOM and the military services, with particular emphasis on issues concerning SOF personnel. Determine whether and where there are gaps in these relationships. What can be done to close these gaps? What influence does the USSOCOM commander require over military service management of SOF personnel, their incentives and retention, Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) development, assignments, and promotion/career management opportunities to effectively accomplish the USSOCOM mission? What steps can

be taken to improve the required coordination and cooperation between USSOCOM and the military services?

G36. Training systems for USSOCOM and its components

The rapid procurement and fielding of new equipment and evolving technologies present a variety of training challenges. At the same time, the standardized training of common tasks remains a familiar requirement. This study takes a comprehensive look at ways to provide timely and effective training on new equipment and other systems as fresh initiatives come on line and become forward deployed. Who is responsible for developing training programs and ensuring that they remain current and relevant? Identify the best ways to train the end users in such fast-moving environments. Which media are most effective in providing that training? How useful is a simulation system that is networked for all receiving components and organizations to access and/or download, especially when deployed? What roles can Web-based applications play? Survey ongoing and future innovations to address training program development, delivery, assessment, and sustainability. Are the Joint Training System (JTS) and the Joint Training Information Management System (JTIMS) useful tools to users in the field? Is feeding the system more resource intensive than originally envisioned? If it needs improvement, how can we make it better? Consider also efficiencies to be gained for current training approaches. For instance, resources, throughput capacity, and practicality have driven USSOCOM components to establish multiple training venues for the same skill set (e.g., military free-fall, combat dive, and snipers). What is the best process for USSOCOM to establish a baseline SOF standard for a particular skill set? How should those baselines be evaluated and sustained at required proficiency levels? What potential advantages accrue to the establishment of a SOF Training Center of Excellence (SOFTCOE) for the standardization and consolidation of SOF common skills training? Might a USSOCOM "Training and Education Command" represent a more comprehensive approach to training, standardization, and innovation? Review the Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF) mission set and make a recommendation on the best training a unit can do to prepare for the JSOTF mission. Should USSOCOM certify units for the JSOTF mission? If so, what are the standards and procedures for awarding such a certification?

G37. SOF aviation: Use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UASs)

UASs have provided enhanced capabilities to address a variety of operational requirements. The purpose of this study is to explore the utility of employing UAS assets to support irregular warfare operations. How can multimission UASs assist in nontraditional environments? What specific capabilities can UASs bring to irregular warfare activities? Which irregular warfare strategies and tasks are appropriate for UASs? Identify specific employment profiles for using UASs in irregular warfare situations. Consider such missions as humanitarian relief operations, civil affairs, disaster response and the resulting hybrid threats they may impose on COIN and irregular warfare operations.

G38. Use of Unmanned Ground Vehicle (UGV) systems

Unmanned Ground Systems (UGVs) have provided enhanced capabilities to address a variety of operational requirements. The purpose of this study is to explore the utility of employing UGV assets to support irregular warfare operations. How can UGVs assist in nontraditional environments? What specific capabilities can UGVs bring to irregular warfare activities? Which irregular warfare strategies and tasks are appropriate for UGVs? Identify specific employment profiles for using UGVs in irregular warfare situations. Consider such missions as humanitarian relief operations, civil affairs, disaster response, and the resulting hybrid threats they may impose on COIN and irregular warfare operations.

G39. Use of Unmanned Underwater Vehicle (UUV) and Unmanned Surface Vehicle (USV) systems

Maritime unmanned systems have provided enhanced capabilities to address a variety of operational requirements. The purpose of this study is to explore the utility of employing UUV and USV assets to support irregular warfare operations. How can UUV/USVs assist in nontraditional environments? What specific capabilities can UUV/USVs bring to irregular warfare activities? Which irregular warfare strategies and tasks are appropriate for UUV/USVs? Identify specific employment profiles for using UUV/USVs in irregular warfare situations. Consider such missions as humanitarian relief operations, civil affairs, disaster response, and the resulting hybrid threats they may impose on COIN and irregular warfare operations.

G40. Planning for joint special operations for the indirect approach

This study focuses on planning approaches for JSOTF strategic and operational missions in current and future environments. It would particularly focus on SOF core activities that typically involve indirect approaches to achieving strategic objectives, such as unconventional warfare, SFA, and FID. The study should identify classic campaign planning constructs and investigate how SOF joint headquarters (TSOC, JSOTF) conduct campaign planning in the current environment. Consideration should include planning for future SOF organizations such as expeditionary task forces that incorporate service combat multipliers as inherent parts of the force. Conclusions and recommendations should be provided that confirm or advance changes to SOF planning procedures.

G41. Developing regional counterterrorism strategy: Enabling partners

Our partners and allies do not view the counterterrorism effort as a global problem and often have a problem with preemptive strategies. Counterterrorism is often viewed from the perspective of the host nation and its relations with its bordering states. Gather, analyze, and consolidate best practices in combating-terrorism strategy that could be useful at a regional level—similar to a counterterrorism Internal Defense and Development (IDAD) plan. What are some important regional factors and issues with combating terrorism? What are some useful policy, strategy, and operational techniques for consideration when developing a host-nation's counterterrorism IDAD plan? This study should be a regional specialist topic—analyze selected partner nation(s) facing common problems to determine U.S. priorities and appropriate methods of assistance.

G42. Getting beyond Al Qaeda and looking to the future of counterterrorism policy and operations

Analyses of groups using terrorist activities have resulted in typologies of different sorts (e.g., groups with political aspirations, ideological/religious motivations, financial/criminal basis; and Rapoport's four historical "waves"). Review these typologies, looking for differences and commonalities. Assess our experience with Al Qaeda against them and assess the utility of each. Apply the results of these analyses to the current geopolitical climate to discuss possible future terrorist activities. This effort may support strategic and perhaps operational planning.

G43. Counterterrorism partnerships between SOF and law enforcement agencies (LEAs)

The focus is how to make LEAs work complementary with SOF. At least 75 percent of successful counterterrorism operations are as a result of law enforcement or other internal security forces (nonmilitary); in combat, much intelligence to run down terrorists can come from police access to population. SOF will never achieve effectiveness and strategic utility in combating terrorism if it disregards coordination, cooperation, and combined operations with LEAs. Ascertain roles for SOF to operate in conjunction with LEAs, both international and host nation when operating abroad; identify policy and regulatory changes, including budget, needed for SOF to operate in this domain. Recommend unique training and equipping requirements for SOF to perform this function. Illustrate the role of community policing and international law enforcement in combating terrorism, then explain why SOF is failing to operate in this medium, hamstringing our efforts to fully prosecute counterterrorism plans designed by USSOCOM. This project could describe a successful indirect strategy for overseas contingency operations and one which SOF could perform well.

G44. How does cultural awareness contribute to effective activities in combating terrorism?

A lack of understanding in how people in a given society see things—you cannot influence them, neither with your message nor your largesse. Acquaintance with language, culture, and local customs is only the first step in entering into a foreign environment. This study would provide analyses of specific terrorist or insurgent organizations highlighting how their cultural background has influenced their choices and actions. Show how cultural values determine the correctness or rationality of specific terrorist actions. Objective is to raise awareness in this area and lead to additional studies of specific terrorist organizations focused on the culture that shapes their operational planning, decisions, actions, and reactions.

G45. Intelligence for counterterrorism operations: Best practices, future requirements, possible synergies among USSOCOM and other U.S. agencies—for example, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and

Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)—allies, and other less savory options

Discuss and analyze the following statements: The intelligence community is moving beyond *need to know* to *need to share*. Counterterrorism operations need to be in the share business, and lessons observed from Iraq show success in this area. Agencies, tactical to national, need to share information because target sets are illusive; and the most current information/intelligence supports operations. The counterterrorism mission is global in scale, and the ability to have the most current intelligence, at all levels, predictive in nature (as applicable), is available to planners at any possible time. Each day this topic is more relevant. U.S. SOF must acknowledge that HUMINT is essential in this business.

G46. What are the funding relationships between terrorist organizations and organized crime?

Consider one of two approaches:

- a. The global operating environment is changing to where transnational criminals and transnational terrorist organizations are “cooperating” to replace the state-sponsored system with a new system of business enterprise to raise funding. As this threat becomes larger, it will work to delegitimize international regulatory control over business and trading. Study this phenomenon as it relates to national security interests and threats to the U.S.; ascertain what requirements and capabilities SOF needs to thwart this threat. Describe current nexus, identify costs to national interests, predict trends, and provide solutions using SOF.
- b. Treasury officials in many countries, with a U.S. lead, have been successful in interdicting the flow of terrorist and drug networks through transnational cooperation, particularly since 9/11. Establish a compendium of best practices and lessons learned from the most successful of those rooting out terrorist financing.

G47. When counterterrorism is counterproductive: Case studies and theories of the misapplication of counterterrorism

Discuss and analyze the current U.S. Government strategy for counterterrorism through this lens, with recommendations for adjustments. The Shining Path in Peru is a great case study for excessive governmental response to terrorism. Another approach is to reexamine USSOCOM CONPLAN 7500; using the unclassified threat

model, campaign framework, and method, determine if the strategy is sufficient to achieve U.S. goals and which aspects are necessary to reach U.S. goals. What is missing? What is unnecessary or insufficient and why?

G48. Poverty is a pawn: The myth of poverty as genesis of terrorism and how poverty is used by terrorist leaders

Terrorist leaders prey on the poor as a pool for foot soldiers, suicide bombers, and both witting and unwitting supporters through various means of exploitation. However, the vast majority of terrorist leaders do not come from poverty, but rather from the middle (Zarqawi) and even upper classes (bin Laden). How can governments mitigate this exploitation of the poor, knowing that poverty cannot be extinguished? Discuss the mix of conditions that serve to create fertile territory for developing terrorist actors. Establish a list of conditions (e.g., poverty, religious fervor, education levels, distribution of wealth) that when existing concurrently, create an environment for growing terrorist actors. Will SOF need to prepare for contingencies in Asia, Africa, and Latin America?

G49. Terrorist safe havens/sanctuaries/ungoverned spaces

The intelligence apparatus of the U.S. Government has fairly precise locations for terrorist safe havens throughout the world. Moreover, U.S. SOF, coupled with interagency partners, arguably has the capability to *terrorize* the terrorist in selected locations such as training camps and marshaling areas. Examine needed changes in policy, force structure, and legalities for the U.S. Government, with or without host-nation cooperation/approval, to affect these strikes against terrorists in their safe havens—that is, no longer make them safe. History is replete with examples of rear-area attacks destroying critical nodes of command and control, demoralizing the enemy, and degrading his ability to go on the offensive. Determine which are the most problematic of current and future safe havens—that is, which provide most succor and protection to terrorists and fellow travelers.

G50. What strategy should the U.S. pursue to break the power jihadist terrorist hold over third world population and what is the role of SOF in this strategy?

Despite all the effort U.S. policy makers and media pundits have contributed to talking about the problem, no one has produced a satisfactory answer. Because this question has not been properly examined and appropriately answered, the U.S. largely plays a game

of “whack a mole” in a global landscape where the moles look like everyone else. If insights to an answer were developed and successfully advocated, the potential for success in the counterterrorism effort would increase exponentially. Obviously, such a strategy would involve multiple instruments and might even change the classical way in which some instruments like to view themselves. What will be the SOF role?

G51. Lessons not learned in irregular warfare to date

The counterterrorism effort has occurred for 5 years in Iraq and 6 years in Afghanistan. Since their respective beginnings, much experience has been garnered in both countries. While many lessons have been learned, much has yet to be realized. These unlearned lessons need to be explored to determine if they are of value for learning and if so, what lessons are we missing or failing to understand? Information operations do not seem to be effective, campaign planning continues to be conducted in the absence of the host nations, and operations are still being run without complete integration. Who needs to learn these lessons and why they are important may help in the successful desired outcomes to these current conflicts.

G52. Organizing interagency community for irregular warfare campaigns

The current efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan illustrate the struggle in interagency coordination, cooperation, and unity of effort. As these events blur into the long war, the U.S. needs to review whether an organizational structure exists to fight irregular warfare from an interagency design. Who has the lead, when do they lead, and why is an agency/organization in the leadership role? What is the process used to make the interagency design function properly? How does USSOCOM fit into the interagency design?

G53. Strategic theories on irregular warfare

What approaches can be considered for the study of irregular warfare as a traditional (nationalistic) or nontraditional underdog. Like unconventional study, Is there merit in approaching irregular warfare from the position of the insurgent/terrorist? This writing could begin with a review of current unconventional-warfare doctrine and experience to determine if they need to be revalidated or require rethinking.

G54. Operational art design for irregular warfare-centric campaigns

This study should focus on the development of a format of campaign designs for SOF planners specifically and conventional planners generally. The design would be meant to ensure the proper application of SOF in the fight. This view is important because little exists to help planners, SOF, or otherwise.

G55. Building Internal Defense and Development (IDAD) plans for key partner nations

This topic is one that is undefined, except for a planning guide in Appendix B of Joint Publication 3-07.1 written several years ago. A methodology for framing the situation faced by a host nation to determine an IDAD strategy is absolutely necessary. The Civil Affairs course provides a political-social analysis guide as an initial starting point. However, it is not widely known, disseminated, or understood by the conventional military. Case studies (such as El Salvador, Iraq, and Afghanistan) to highlight success and failure in this endeavor are a good study vehicle.

G56. Case studies of SOF creating strategic effects in irregular warfare

This topic could be a basis for strategic special operations theory and/or serve as a primer for geographic combatant command planners. If we do not understand how to create strategic effects, SOF becomes less effective. To better understand, identify what is the range of strategic effects that might be of use to SOF—that is, how SOF produces each of those types of strategic effects, looking at case studies with effective and ineffective creation of strategic effects.

G57. How to advise host nations engaged in irregular warfare

Advising host-nation counterparts is a slow process (requires time). We suffer with time conditions that cause pushing rather than guiding counterparts to a resolution of a problem. A need exists to teach the art of advising, much like what was done during the Vietnam era, yet no time goes to adequately train advisors. The other condition of time is length of service “in the box” by the respective services. These vary from 4 to 6 months to a year. Nothing effective can be achieved in 4 to 6 months. Advising/mentoring tours need to be at least 18 months, and an effective handoff to the incoming advisor is necessary. Finding and interviewing Vietnam-era advisors would greatly benefit this study. Examine conventional SOF cooperation to include the impact on both U.S. SOF and NATO/partner SOF. As conventional forces drawdown in Iraq and Afghanistan the

general assumption is that the SOF role will increase. What impact will this increased requirement have on U.S. SOF? If NATO SOF support dwindles or ceases, what impact will that have on the future U.S. SOF requirement in Afghanistan? What should their focus be? What impact will this long-term requirement have on U.S. SOF (individual, collective, global)?

G58. Conventional/SOF cooperation

Conventional forces and SOF have coordinated and cooperated to an unprecedented degree in Afghanistan and Iraq. Additionally, SOF have developed a reliance on conventional forces for certain battle-field operating systems (e.g., maintenance, logistics, and quick reaction forces). Discuss the impact of the potential drawdown of GPF in theater on this reliance on SOF units in the CENTCOM area of responsibility.

G59. Embassy role in U.S. Government irregular warfare effort

This topic would explore initiatives for restructuring the DoS—Do they go far enough to address the requirements for the long war/persistent conflict of the 21st century? Should more of a regional hierarchy exist to DoS than independent embassies that can report directly to the President of the U.S.? How can/should SOF better work with embassies in pursuit of U.S. interests in the long war? How can interagency-SOF synergy at the embassy level better achieve U.S. interests?

G60. Legislative requirements for effective interagency campaigns

This topic would review current and pending legislation required to establish organizations and authorities to effectively conduct irregular warfare and large-scale FID for combating terrorism. It could also suggest who should write this interagency campaign.

G61. Country team approach

In an era of irregular warfare, SOF may find itself deployed in a number of countries and supporting the ambassador's country team. Does SOF need specific representation on the country team or is the normal representation sufficient? In either case, how would this work? What interaction is appropriate or required? Who is in charge of what? How are disputes resolved? How can this support be revived, updated, or replaced to ensure that U.S. players in a given country are working for common causes?

G62. Cultural awareness

Understanding of culture will assist in finding an enemy's weakness, especially in irregular warfare where the enemy will resort to any action to achieve objectives. The need is to understand what is acceptable to that enemy, what is not, what his cultural constraints are, and what does not constraint his actions. This information will permit development of successful courses of action. Population's trust/will is culturally based, and the effective understanding of it is critical to a successful outcome. Three areas of potential study follow: a) regional specific information for a culture and population, b) generic information on awareness, and c) tools to rapidly get specific information on a culture to operators.

G63. Are culture, religion, and worldview factors in motivating irregular warfare?

Cultural education must include orientation on comparative analysis of religions of the world. Americans have a secular culture; some estimates put 80 percent of the rest of the world as more faith based. Many of the conflicts throughout world history have been motivated by religion. Warrior culture is the way in which violence is valued and managed by the collectivity, and it varies from culture to culture. Research how each group handles violence and threats against the collectivity; three example questions follow:

- a. Is fighting a recognized road to high status?
- b. Are fighters separated from the group in some formal way—as we do with our military—or are they integrated and interspersed?
- c. Are there forms of warfare/fighting seen as higher status than others?

G64. Cultural knowledge in irregular warfare campaign planning

This lack of cultural understanding also has led to confusion. Because some cultures do not like to be confrontational, their acknowledgement is believed to be agreement. The fact, however, is they are only agreeing that they *understand* a position or proposal vs. *accept* it. The lack of cultural understanding is a handicap in achieved outcomes by set time schedules. Examine the need to understand the actors in the environments that the campaign will be conducted. How can this lead to some understanding of the motivations of these actors? How can this better prepare planners to tailor

the campaign plan toward influencing those actors in accordance with the commander's intent?

G65. Regional studies

Review regional studies to better meet the needs of the combatant commanders. Courses that look at the regions from a strategic and operational perspective are desired, illustrating the linkage between the countries within a given commander's area of responsibility as well as the adjacent countries. Many of the countries currently engaged in the conflict were drawn in Europe and do not reflect what is occurring in either the country or the region. Ethnic groups straddle those borders and are unrecognized by the people, and the numbers of languages further complicate the region. This writing is an opportunity to leverage the revamped discipline of geography, which is now more than maps and physical terrain. Geography is now a multidisciplinary study area involving traditional geography as well as aspects of sociology, geology, political science, and economics (and some cultural anthropology may also exist).

G66. How is strategy developed for special operations and what is the framework for such development?

This question should consider the operational role of SOF in each of the phases (0-V) and assess the effectiveness of their employment in those phases. Afghanistan and Iraq could serve as case studies. The unconventional warfare operations in Afghanistan are excellent examples of pre-phase III operations. They lead into two questions:

- a. How does the U.S. Government as well as DoD consider SOF use
a. in all campaign phases?
- b. What are effective employment techniques in terms of strategy
b. and operational art for SOF/interagency synchronization to include measures of effectiveness?

G67. Why is Phase 0 important and how can SOF support the geographic combatant commander strategy: Informing the joint conventional community

Phase 0 can be described in terms of anti-insurgency, in the same manner that the Army delineates between antiterrorism and counterterrorism. Phase 0 is rapidly becoming an outdated term.

G68. Develop SOF internships with Fortune 500 companies in order to develop irregular warfare skill sets (marketing; influence, investigations, strategic communications)

This topic would study the value of creating internships for SOF in successful companies or organizations to develop a knowledge base of nonmilitary functions (e.g., power-economic and diplomatic). Strategic communication could be explored from a marketing point of view. Strategic thinking at the multinational should also be considered. Computer operation and electronic transfer of funds could be examined because are often the terrorist's means of moving illegal money around the world. Also respond to the question, what academic credit should be granted from the internship (M.A. or Ph.D.)?

G69. Impact of crossing borders to conduct military operations

Assess the actual impact of arresting religious leaders and/or entering into mosques/madrassas as a tactic against Islamic extremists. The thesis posed via this topic is that when we are oversensitive and overstate Middle East sensitivities, we hamstring our efforts. Costs and benefits are associated with this type of approach. Can the real protagonists of terror be stopped using this method? Consider U.S. public opinion, reprisals against the U.S., reaction of coalition partners, and other factors.

G70. Roles of SOF and NGOs in complex humanitarian emergencies

SOF has played an increasingly critical role in the international response to complex humanitarian emergencies. The liaison between these two elements requires that SOF understand the diversity of nongovernmental organization (NGO) objectives and organizational cultures. This topic could take an approach of the division of labor involved or education of SOF (e.g., on NGO capabilities, limitations). Give advantages and disadvantages of "collaborating" with NGOs. Include a discussion of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other international organizations. The relationships between SOF and other U.S. contractors could also be explored.

G71. Oral histories of SOF leaders for publication/professional development

Provide a collection of personal SOF accounts throughout recent history. While this perspective has been done (e.g., in support of briefings and courses), a research-paper-length compendium will

yield not only lessons learned but aspects of strategy, revolutionary thinking, and command-and-control issues for future planners and commanders from interviews with senior SOF leaders. The finished product will benefit SOF leaders as a handbook on relationships with interagency community and coalition partners and furnish a range of considerations for SOF noncommissioned officers and officers. Some travel may be involved, or the collection could be gleaned from individuals living near the respective PME schools; this topic is ideal for a U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (USACGSC) or School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) student because of access to a wide range of distinguished SOF senior leaders supporting the SOF elective at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

G72. SOF senior leader competencies for joint warfare: Preparing for joint SOF combat command

Explore organizing Joint Special Operations Task Forces (JSOTFs) at the O6 level of command and the associated leader competencies required, based on actual experiences of recent commanders of combined JSOTFs. Offer solutions of successful wartime leadership techniques for ongoing and near-future senior SOF leaders, anticipating wartime commands during counterterrorism efforts. Derive key lessons learned from the research for possible incorporation into current leader development methodologies.

G73. Cross area-of-responsibility operations

At the operational level, command and control as well as support relationships need to be well-defined early on in the operation. Examine the supported/supporting relationships between USSOCOM and conventional forces belonging to the regional combatant commander and/or Joint Task Force commander. This topic could be discussed in the context of tactical operations, then at the operational level.

G74. U.S. national security initiatives in Africa and the counterterrorism effort

Address the question of creating an African unified command or a U.S. subunified command within Africa in order to protect U.S. national interests. Analyze a proposal to establish a political-military organization, such as an African regional Joint Task Force/Special Operations Command within Africa, to promote democratic initiatives and influence regional stability. Discuss roles and capabilities for Civil Affairs/Civil-Military Operations (CA/CMO) and

interagency partners, framing operational preparation of environment throughout Africa, FID opportunities in the region, and the rising U.S. national interests in Africa.

G75. Effective PSYOP in a mostly illiterate population

Determine the effectiveness of a full PSYOP campaign in an area where most of the intended audience is illiterate. Using detailed analysis, develop possible operations—taking in account the literacy and technology of targeted audiences—for future PSYOPs in these environments. How do we reach and educate such audiences?

