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INFORMATION PAPER

Subj: USMC PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION “WAY FORWARD”

BLUF: The future of Professional Military Education (PME) at Marine Corps University (MCU) will include: 1) increased exposure to STEM subjects combined with the study of military art; 2) increased collaboration across the Naval PME enterprise; 3) increased educational opportunities for enlisted Marines in under-graduate and graduate-level education programs; and 4) increased use of warfighting case studies.

1. Purpose: To provide the J-7 with MCU’s vision for PME in preparation for the Military Education Coordination Council (MECC) October 2018 meeting.

2. Context: The *mission* of MCU is to develop and deliver PME and training through resident and distance learning programs, while also preserving and presenting the history of the Marine Corps, in order to prepare leaders to meet current and future security challenges and inform the public of the Service’s role in national defense. Our *vision* is for MCU to be the idea and innovation hub of the Marine Corps.

An MCU education develops future military and strategic leaders in three ways: (1) we emphasize our Corps’ ethos and values that define *who we are* as Marines; (2) we expand how our students think and write about naval expeditionary operations in a dynamic, complex, and multi-domain security environment, which is *where we will fight*; and (3) we develop in our students a deeper understanding of our philosophy of maneuver warfare as applied through a 21st Century Marine Air Ground Task Force, which is *how we fight*. Our main effort is to continually develop our students’ critical thinking skills and creative application of military power. To this end, we refine our curriculum annually to account for strategic changes and disruptive technology. Accordingly, everything we do supports these four lines of effort, to:

- (1) Deeply imprint our Corps’ ethos and values into our students.
- (2) Expand how we think and write about employing naval expeditionary power in the future operating environment.
- (3) Personally and professionally develop leaders of character.
- (4) Improve our Corps’ operational capability and warfighting effectiveness.

Through engaged leadership across MCU, we will remain responsive to the needs of the Marine Corps by emphasizing Operations in the Information Environment (OIE) and expanding our competitive space in a new era of great power competition – while still meeting requirements for joint and master’s degree accreditation.

3. PME Initiatives

MCU’s higher headquarters, Training and Education Command (TECOM), has a number of ongoing initiatives across the training and education continuum. Specific initiatives impacting MCU include:

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- Conducting formal review of Fellowships, Scholarships, and SEP programs to ensure the Marine Corps invests in the right education and is using that education in the right billets.
- Developing a non-commissioned officer and commissioned officer career length PME continuum to assist Marines and unit commanders with filling the gaps between resident PME opportunities and to develop a culture of continuous learning. An MCU-led OPT has recently developed a problem-framing brief; COA development will begin shortly.
- Develop entrance exams for Marines attending resident ILS and TLS, emphasizing what the Marine should know upon arrival and help reinforce the self-study portion of PME.
- Assessing feasibility of resident EWS for all captains – we’re exploring a model where all company-grade officers can engage in a progressive EWS experience beginning with online instruction, followed by seminar, culminating with resident attendance.
- Supporting Training Command’s review of the feasibility of re-aligning The Basic School under MCU in order to “set the hook” early for the expectation of what it means to be a professional Marine officer, and align the PME continuum described above.
- Supporting TECOM’s Future Learning Group’s development and draft of a proposed Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication on *Learning*.

4. Goals for Academic Year 2018-2019

- Broaden educational opportunities for enlisted Marines and implement changes to nest enlisted PME with USMC doctrine and strategic planning documents.
- Increase lethality and resilience of the Marine Corps in the cyber domain by instituting an agreement with NPS for enlisted attendance at the following programs:
 - Master of Science in Applied Cyber Operations (pilot in 2018)
 - Master of Science in Information Strategy and Political Warfare (Summer 2019)
 - Master of Science in Special Operations and Irregular Warfare (Summer 2019)
 - Certificate Program in Additive Manufacturing (starting Spring 2019)
- Increase exposure to Marine-machine teams, artificial intelligence, and STEM through collaboration with other PME schools, NPS, civilian universities, think tanks, Marine Corps Warfighting Lab, DC& I, and others.
- Link the Brute Krulak Center for Innovation and Creativity at MCU with NPS to increase onsite educational opportunities for our Marines in areas where we lack equipment to conduct technical research.
- Operationalize the Quality Enhancement Plan:
 - Achieve full operational capability in the Krulak Center.
 - Continue to expand integration of OIE throughout MCU.
 - Increase the use of war-gaming and case studies throughout MCU.
- Execute and support our higher headquarters’ PME initiatives.
- Increase MCU outreach:
 - Develop three new warfighting case studies and publish them on the Lejeune Leadership Institute website in addition to the current library of case studies.
 - Offer continuing education courses on Moodle taught by MCU faculty and chairs.
- Leverage Distinguished Lectures to Focus on Naval Integration and Leadership Development (this year’s theme is “Reinvigorating Maritime Strategic Thought”):
 - Pair an eminent Marine Corps leader with an equally distinguished Navy leader to

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- deliver “team lectures” on the next era of naval power projection.
- Implement a Distinguished Speaker Series emphasizing leadership development for enlisted Marines leveraging our enlisted PME program and the College of Enlisted Military Education.

5. Great Power Competition

Within MCU PME schools, significant attention has been and will continue to be brought to bear on ensuring the curriculums are responsive to the *2018 National Defense Strategy*, and the overall professional development requirements of students. At every level, as appropriate, progress is being made to address multi-domain operations, study strategic competitors (Russia and China), and enhance communication, particularly writing skills. Of particular note:

Officer PME. EWS, CSC (JPME I), SAW, and MCWAR (JPME II) have all introduced additional lectures, seminars, wargames, case studies, and practical applications on China and Russia, and the integration of OIE into operational planning and campaigns. Our College of Distance Education and Training (CDET) has adapted these subjects to the distance education environment, while at the same time is modernizing MarineNet to serve as the eLearning ecosystem across the entire USMC - active, reserve, and civilian. CDET also piloted a continuing education course for providing life-long learning opportunities for PME, opportunities for creative and critical thinking, and problem solving. We see this as a way to expand enrollment of MCU students. MCU’s objective is to develop a series of online, facilitated, scholarly electives on topics currently being taught through the electives programs.

Enlisted PME. CMC has identified the intellectual potential of our enlisted Marines as “the unexplored gold mine of our PME system.” Key elements of our enlisted PME modernization plan include: Renaming EPME as the College of Enlisted Military Education to align with civilian institutions of higher learning and facilitate the award of college level credits by civilian partner colleges and universities; creating a contemporary learning environment at the staff non-commissioned officer (SNCO) academies in order to exploit 21st Century educational technology and connect with Marines in ways they are used to learning; and contracting communications specialists to improve the professional communications curricula at each SNCO academy in order to improve the written and verbal communications skills of enlisted Marines.

6. Conclusion. General Al Gray in his 1989 memo to the Commanding General, Marine Corps Combat Development Command said, “My intent in PME is to teach military judgement rather than knowledge.” MCU will continue to enable our students to gain military judgement through the rigorous study of history -- not to build historians, but to improve our students’ military judgment and pattern recognition. By teaching and modeling how to do the art and science of war well, and exposing our students to trends in the latest technologies, MCU will enable our students to “win in combat by out-thinking as well as out-fighting our opponent” – true to the legacy of MCU’s Founder, General Al Gray.

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