

National Security Policy Program introduces federal interagency decision-making environment

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Relationships matter. They can seem convoluted -- specifically federal interagency relationships and the processes by which these agencies interact. Yet, these relationships are the foundation by which national security policy for the National Security Council, the president and his key advisors.



There's a real need for senior leaders to understand relationships critical to national security policy, and that's why there's a



National
Security Policy
Program,
developing
military and
DoD civilian

students to navigate the interagency community and the national security policy and decision-making environment.

President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden meet with members of the National Security Council in the Situation Room of the White House. September 10, 2014. (Official White House Photo by Pete Souza)

“The goal is to take individuals that don’t really understand this process in this environment and make them familiar and comfortable with the environment and how it works,” said Col. Scott Sanborn, who directs the National Security Policy Program. “This program takes military professionals, whether they be senior military officers or DoD civilians, if they have served in Washington, or if they have not, and gives them insights into the Washington interagency process.”

Students who go through the program will be better prepared to hold critical planner positions, and will have a better understanding of why our government functions the way it does, but more importantly they will have a better appreciation for how to effectively operate in the interagency environment in order to achieve more meaningful outcomes.

The special program is available to 15 U.S. students each year, and is taken in lieu of the required electives credits. Students interested in the program can apply for the National Security Policy Program and be selected by the program’s staff and the School dean. Students can apply now via OASIS, and registration closes on Oct. 7.

The program includes agency visits to meet senior officials, an interagency fellowship during the year for firsthand experience, and a series of guest speakers some notables of past years have been former Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Richard Myers and former Deputy Director of National Intelligence David Gomper, who has served in every administration from President Nixon to President Obama.

"He was able to, in one hour, give us executional insights into the leadership styles of different

presidents, and their interactions with the National Security Council and the national security advisors who they had selected to run that National Security Council's staff," said Sanborn. "It was an intense one hour, with this one individual who had served on every administration, shared 35 years of experience in one hour. That was just priceless for the students."

Fifteen students meet at length with individuals whose unique and privileged experiences give first-hand insights about interagency policy development – and that's the power of this program, said Sanborn.

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