



INSTITUTE FOR DEFENSE ANALYSES

**Review of the Roles, Selection, and
Evaluation of Superintendents of
Military Service Academies**

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Executive Summary

In support of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD P&R), the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) conducted research about the role of superintendents of the Military Service (hereafter Service) Academies (U.S. Air Force Academy, U.S. Military Academy, and U.S. Naval Academy), as directed by the Fiscal Year 2014 Department of Defense Appropriations Act. This legislation called for “an objective and comprehensive evaluation of the role of the modern service academy superintendent including the criteria to be used in selecting and evaluating the performance of a superintendent of a military service academy.” IDA’s research focused on three lines of query: the *role*, the *selection*, and the *evaluation* of a superintendent. This research was composed of a literature review and interviews of three cohorts directed by the sponsor: Service Secretaries and Chiefs, Service Academy superintendents, and university presidents. The research team employed a hybrid methodology, using qualitative and quantitative analysis that consisted of extensive review of documents, eighty-two formal interviews with the three interview cohorts, and many fact-finding discussions with military and civilian higher-education experts.

Roles of a Service Academy Superintendent

In examining the *role* of a Service Academy superintendent, the research’s first fundamental finding is that a superintendent has not one role, but many roles. In fact, superintendents perform multiple top-level tasks to advance the mission of their institutions. They lead institutions chartered to develop leaders of character for the Nation. This mission requires moral, mental, and physical development of 4,000 cadets/midshipmen in a four-year program using a 24 hour-a-day leadership laboratory. In accordance with the governing Department of Defense (DOD) directive, the academies are to produce leaders who are exemplars to their Service’s commissioned officer corps.

Superintendents perform their roles in the context of a wide variety of stakeholders. First are the internal constituencies: the cadets and midshipmen and the superintendent’s direct reports—the commandant, dean, and athletic director (AD) and the subordinate staff, faculty, and coaches. Second are many external constituencies such as the Service Secretary and Chief, the Academy Board of Visitors, graduates, donors, parents, media, local civic leaders and Members of Congress. Research participants described superintendent responsibilities as a continual balancing of internal and external focus.

One way to describe the superintendent's multiple roles is to use Peter F. Drucker's "top management" framework, which defines the multi-dimensional function of an organization's leader as six tasks. Consistent with this framework, the IDA research team found, first, that the superintendent conveys the vision and strategic direction of the academy, and ensures alignment with that of their Service. Second, the superintendent establishes the environment, sets the tone, and crafts the priorities for his or her subordinates. This task includes being a role model embodying the Service's values. Third, superintendents build their teams and shape their organizational environments. Fourth, superintendents build and nurture many external relationships. Fifth, they act in multiple ceremonial roles, internally and externally. Finally, superintendents must lead in crisis, often in the midst of national-level attention.

A superintendent's roles can also be described in light of each academy's mission statement. In developing leaders of character to serve the Nation, the superintendent relies on three key subordinates who are each directly responsible for a specific mission element—the commandant who is charged with leader development, the dean who is charged with intellectual development, and the AD who is charged with physical development. For a superintendent to successfully accomplish the academy mission requires him or her to synergize the efforts of those three mission elements, so as to achieve the greatest possible moral, mental, and physical development. This unique academy environment requires the superintendent to rely on teambuilding, empathy, persuasion, and authority of command to obtain a commitment to shared leadership across the three mission elements. In particular, to implement significant change, the superintendent must employ these leadership attributes to ensure all stakeholders are invested in his or her initiatives and the academy's strategic goals; in this regard, the long-term faculty is an especially challenging constituency.

Character development is a particularly important part of the superintendent's roles. It illustrates the superintendent's synchronizing role, as efforts to develop cadet/midshipman character cut across all three mission elements. The three elements must be mutually supporting to achieve character development, and every leader, faculty member, and coach has a role in this twenty-four hour a day mission. One challenge in this area is properly integrating the benefits of competitive athletics, in a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I setting, with the overall leadership and character development effort.

The superintendent's roles are distinct from those of similar counterparts. Compared to other three-star commanders who report to a four-star-led Major Command within DOD hierarchical structures, the superintendent has a far different organizational environment: he or she reports directly to Service leaders and relies on the teamwork and collaboration of diverse actors. Compared to university presidents, superintendents share multiple similarities in functions from which can be gleaned many important lessons. However, fundamental differences in their institutions' products and governance create a significant contrast between their roles. Lastly, compared to military training and education enterprise leaders, the superintendent's roles bear some similarity but are clearly distinct in terms of his or her unique development mission.

Research identified several constraints that impinge on the superintendent's ability to execute his or her roles. Prominent among these are funding challenges, length of tenure, and resistance to change by stakeholders. First, appropriated funding levels for the academies have declined, and superintendents increasingly rely on non-appropriated funds and philanthropic giving. Second, the complexities of a multi-faceted leadership development enterprise, the long-term impact of the academies, and the time it takes to modify culture lead the majority of respondents to conclude a three-year tour is insufficient. Third, a number of internal and external stakeholders tend to resist change undertaken by a superintendent.

The roles of superintendents are affected by a complex combination of changes in the national security environment and in society. In response, superintendents are adapting their programs to produce leaders suited for the uncertain, complex, and ambiguous security settings they will face as graduates, while still grounding them in unchangeable core values. Superintendents are adapting the academies to a more diverse military by striving to foster a culture of respect for all. Superintendents are also attempting to adjust their communication strategies to handle the increased velocity of information. In response to the necessary and increased attention being placed on sexual assault prevention and response, superintendents are setting the tone and, in many cases, assisting their Service in instituting change. To further their institution's adaptation to all these changes, superintendents are attempting to harness and synchronize all stakeholder groups. But responding to these changes can be constrained by their limited tour length, the need for Service leader support, and the influence of stakeholders.

Superintendents' roles also include a set of activities which appear to be expanding into new territory. Superintendents' efforts to ensure a *margin of excellence* to enhance the academy's mission via private resources; their response to growing fiscal challenges; and, an overall increase in external focus raise the need for the Services to consider the impact and implications of these expanding activities.

The superintendent's roles also include adapting programs to acknowledge and take advantage of the distinct characteristics of today's youth. Differences in styles of learning and communication, foundational values, and relations with others have led superintendents to fine tune the academy experience so that their product continues to meet the Nation's needs.

Selection of a Service Academy Superintendent

IDA's examination of the *selection* of superintendents revealed that selection factors are qualitative and often described as finding "the right fit" to meet the perceived needs of the academy at the time. Current Service leaders continually consider the importance and complexity of the superintendent's roles. Among all respondents, "demonstrated leadership" is the most fundamental factor in selection. Factors such as "professional credibility," "public persona," "ability to adapt to change," and "temperament" were also highly valued.

The selection process supports the Service leaders as the decision makers and is deliberative in nature, making use of multiple inputs from four-star leaders. The process is part of the overall talent management function of Service leaders, a daily executive chore, and an inexact human endeavor. Constraints in the selection process include current statutory stipulations; specifically, the requirement that superintendents retire at the end of their tour can cause Service leaders to pass by leaders with bona fide four-star potential, despite the views that the superintendent position has impact and degrees of difficulty surpassing those of the typical three-star role. Research also revealed constructive selection insights from an analysis of the career paths of superintendents who have served since the end of the Cold War.

Overall, although there is no finite set of criteria for perfect selection of a superintendent, there are factors which Service leaders can consider to help find the “right leader for the job.” The degree to which a candidate thinks at the executive level, has a long-term view, and is able to convey strategic vision is important. Ensuring that a candidate is a role model, an exemplar of character, is very important. A demonstrated ability to build a leadership team and synchronize the efforts of multiple actors, and an ability to be a persuasive advocate, to communicate to multiple stakeholders, appear to be important. A candidate needs to have a confident, articulate command presence. Service leaders need to have confidence that a candidate can lead the academy during times of crisis. Candidates ought to have demonstrated the ability to adapt to change while working with a diverse set of actors. Ideally they should have demonstrated an ability to connect with and appreciate the current generation of cadets/midshipmen. Since superintendents are “out there on their own,” a candidate ought to have a temperament and credibility, with clout and confidence, to provide a steady hand in the face of multiple, and sometimes competing, stakeholder voices.

Development and preparation of candidates for potential selection are being accomplished, though it is generally ad hoc in nature not specific to the superintendent role. However, a number of active steps could be taken by the Services to deliberately develop candidates and provide a nominee role-specific preparation, such as robust media training, attendance at Harvard’s Seminar for New University Presidents, and one-on-one discussions with former superintendents.

Evaluation of a Service Academy Superintendent

Evaluation of superintendents starts with expectations being set by Service leaders, currently accomplished via a variety of means, both verbal and written. Guidance and performance feedback is provided through formal recurring forums and frequent informal exchanges with Service leaders. Feedback also comes to superintendents from a range of external stakeholders such as the Academy Board of Visitors, operational commanders, graduates, alumni, parents, and the media. Recent history provides evidence of superintendents being held accountable for performance, as five of the twenty-three superintendents who have served since 1991 have been removed from their position as a result of a loss of confidence by Service

leaders. In general, recent superintendents and their Service leaders described multiple means to communicate expectations, provide guidance, and transmit performance feedback. The evaluation processes for university presidents offer ideas to consider as additional means.

Recommendations

IDA offers the following recommendations for action that are derived from the research team's findings:

- 1. Military Departments: Continue strong, vital superintendent-Service leader relationships.** The degree to which the superintendent and Service Chief build strong links and supportive interactions is the degree to which the Service will own, advocate for, and resource its academy. The importance of this bond requires continuing focus.
- 2. Military Departments: Proactively build a bench of superintendent candidates.** The Services must take active steps to ensure a rich pool of superintendent candidates is available on a continuous basis for Service leaders to consider.
- 3. Military Departments: Conduct a sophisticated selection process with full consideration of Chapter 4 Sections B and C of this report. Start early, gather many inputs, do deep vetting, look for specific experiences.**
The nature and impact of the superintendent's roles require thorough consideration and a deliberate selection process. Gathering and considering a wider array of inputs may take more time than is currently given by the Services to the selection task.
- 4. Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), Congress, Military Departments: Provide time for and then deliberately prepare the superintendent nominee.**
Research revealed a number of steps to consider as part of a deliberate preparatory period for a superintendent nominee. These steps require more time than is currently afforded; IDA recommends the Department of Defense work with the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) to provide a longer post-confirmation pre-command period, based on the nature of this leadership role.
- 5. Congress: Remove mandatory retirement stipulation for superintendents at the end of their tours.**
Consideration of potential superintendent candidates and efforts to identify the "right fit" to lead the academy should focus on those officers with maximum leadership potential, including those with potential for taking on demanding four-star assignments later. The mandatory retirement stipulation in law, then, can serve to limit the pool of leadership talent Service leaders develop and assess during selection, by practically causing them to pass by possibly the best officer available for the position.
- 6. Military Departments: Consider longer tour lengths for superintendents.**
Having found the right leader for the superintendent roles, the Service should consider

retaining him or her in that position for a period longer than three years. A tour length longer than three years is generally required to assess an academy's current challenges, to accomplish strategic planning, to introduce needed changes, to garner the support of various stakeholder groups, and to follow up on initiatives for lasting effect.

7. **Military Departments and superintendents: Assess the superintendent's growing external activities in the context of Service strategy for their academy.**

Superintendents are increasingly engaged in leadership activities external to the academy. The pressure of these growing undertakings—from sharing academy intellectual capital for Service-wide issues to efforts to field Division-I caliber athletic teams—bears consideration by superintendents and Service leaders, to seek a mission-driven balance between external and internal leadership focus.

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1. Introduction

The Institute of Defense Analyses (IDA), in support of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD P&R), conducted research about the role of the superintendents of the Military Service (hereafter Service) Academies (U.S. Air Force Academy, U.S. Military Academy, and U.S. Naval Academy). The research illustrates that superintendents of the three DOD Military Service Academies fulfill unique, significant roles in their range of responsibilities and long-term impact on the military. While superintendents require leadership skills similar to those required by other senior commanders, there are distinctive traits that qualify these positions as needing special consideration. This research reviews the roles of the superintendent and the considerations that contribute to selecting and evaluating the leaders who fill these roles. Based on the research, this report proposes recommendations for action.

The research was mandated by Congress in the Fiscal Year 2014 Department of Defense Appropriations Act, Pub. L. No. 113-76, Section 8108, which directs the DOD to

provide an objective and comprehensive evaluation of the role of a modern superintendent of a military service academy, including the criteria to be used in selecting and evaluating the performance of a superintendent of a military service academy.¹

Ancillary direction in the form of an *explanatory statement*² accompanying the Act helped elaborate on the task. In essence, the broad congressional guidance and the scope provided by USD (P&R) led IDA to focus its research on the *roles*, the *selection*, and the *evaluation* of a Service Academy superintendent.

This research consisted of a review of literature and broad-based interviews. The team used the findings of that research to comprehensively describe the roles of superintendents and current selection and evaluation criteria and means. Further, the research involved comparing and contrasting these roles with counterpart leadership positions. Synthesizing the results of the research also led to descriptions of how the superintendent's roles are changing, potential

¹ Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014, Pub. L. No. 113-76, 128 Stat. 131 (January 17, 2014).

² This explanatory language, documented in the *Congressional Record-House*, January 15, 2014, page H533, was to be considered as if it was coming from committee conference on the Appropriations Act, and stated, “. . .the review. . .shall examine. . . the actions necessary to ensure that the military is cultivating effective superintendents; the role diversity plays in the selection of a superintendent; the ability of superintendents to adapt and respond to changes in the military; and the extent to which the nature of the work of a superintendent is changing, including what skills are needed to adapt to an evolving leadership role.”

implications, and what the considerations should be for development, selection, preparation and evaluation of superintendents.

The agreement outlining the research objectives between USD (P&R) and IDA was finalized in early May, 2014, when the team began scoping and planning. Formal research began in June. Since the agreed-upon task recognized that a primary source of data collection would entail interviews with very senior leaders, one of the research team's biggest challenges (ultimately overcome) was limited time and calendar flexibility to plan and schedule interviews with a full cohort of three required respondent groups: Service Secretaries and Chiefs, Academy superintendents, and university presidents.³ Interviews began in July, and data collection was completed in early November.

Chapter Two outlines the methodology; Chapters Three, Four and Five are discussions of the insights gleaned from the interviews and literature review on the *roles, selection, and evaluation* respectively; Chapter Six contains IDA's recommendations for action.

³ For example, to schedule and conduct twenty-five interviews with university and college presidents, during the summer and early fall months, over seventy-five were contacted.

2. Methodology

Major dimensions of the research approach, which were specified in the project description issued by the USD (P&R) sponsor, included a detailed literature review, extensive broad-based interviews with three groups of experts, and reviews by a senior panel. These elements of the methodology, as well as supplemental research methods that evolved as the research progressed, are described in this chapter. Taken together, the IDA team employed a hybrid approach to its research methodology that included both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Due to the limited timeframe for research data collection, and sponsor interest in the contemporary aspects of the Service Academies, IDA focused the interview portion on knowledgeable research participants with relevant depth of experience over the past 20–25 years.

A. Literature Review

The literature review considered:

- Federal statutes and DOD policies governing the academies
- Academy Mission Statements
- Internal and external reports on various aspects of the academies
- Oral histories from past superintendents
- Board of Visitor minutes
- Congressional testimony and hearings
- Statistics on misconduct and honor cases adjudicated by superintendents
- Historical publications by former superintendents and Service Chiefs
- Additional archival information provided by the Services, their general/flag officer management offices, and by the academies
- Management studies
- Media information—Internet, magazines, newspapers

B. Interviews

To conduct data gathering interviews, IDA developed a standard set of questions tied to the primary research areas that IDA was asked to investigate—the *role*, the *selection*, and the

evaluation of a Service Academy superintendent. IDA then scoped the subject realm by conducting a *phase zero* that consisted of informal discussions with former Service chiefs, former senior civilian defense officials, current researchers, former superintendents and other academy officials, and former four-star commanders. Interview questions were systematically refined based on suggestions from these informal discussions, as well as from an IDA expert in cognition and survey design.

Data gathering required three respondent groups to be interviewed: Service Secretaries and Chiefs, Academy superintendents, and university presidents. Accordingly, three distinct, but similar, interview protocols were developed, tested by the IDA review panel, and then employed to record research participant responses regarding their perspectives and valuation associated with roles, selection and preparation, and evaluation/governance. This technique permitted IDA to compare responses within and between the three cohorts.

Research participants were pursued based on the need to gain a variety of perspectives within each cohort and the value of each participant's experience with Academy superintendents. Availability was also a factor. The interviews were conducted with two IDA researchers present at each session; one as the primary interviewer and the other as the primary note taker. Research participants recognized the importance of the project, were well prepared, and had much to share. Additionally, respondents presented thoughtful, well-developed personal perspectives on the research subject based on decades of past and present experience. The interview protocols, tailored for each cohort, served as a guide for the conduct of the interviews, but respondents were free to expand beyond the questions and most did. Questions flowed smoothly and the ensuing discussion generally permitted complete coverage of the material. Additionally, respondents could, and many did, focus more on certain subject areas of the interviews than on others.

Respondents were told in advance that while their comments were being documented (IDA notes, not recordings), all interviews would be conducted on a not-for-attribution basis; nothing would be attributed to any specific respondent unless he or she agreed. IDA conducted a total of eighty-two fact-finding interviews, ranging in length from one to two hours. Sixty of these were with the three respondent groups directed in the research project description and twenty-two with other leaders:

- Service Secretaries and Service Chiefs (20): includes three current and five former Secretaries, and four current and eight former Service Chiefs
- Academy superintendents (15): includes three current and nine former superintendents, as well as the current superintendents of both the Coast Guard and Merchant Marine Academies; in addition, the current commandant of the Australian Defense Academy (superintendent equivalent) was interviewed
- College and university presidents or chancellors (25) representing both large and small public, private, technical, and State military colleges, universities, and institutes: includes twenty-three current and two former presidents

- Additional interviews (22) included other Academy leadership (commandants, deans, faculty, athletic directors [ADs], directors of admissions), flag officer management offices, an executive search firm specializing in university leadership, academy alumni and foundation organization leaders, military training commands and War College leadership, and the Department of Defense (DOD) Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office

C. Review Panel

The IDA Review panel consisted of four individuals with extensive knowledge of both the processes and criteria for selection of a superintendent and the responsibilities of a superintendent or university president. They were The Honorable Peter Geren, former Secretary of the Army, Admiral Vernon Clark, former Chief of Naval Operations, General Larry D. Welch, former Air Force Chief of Staff and former IDA president, and Dr. Heather Wilson, president, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology and former Member of Congress. Dr. David S. C. Chu, president of IDA and former Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, also participated in the reviews. The panel convened at the beginning of the research process (minus Dr. Wilson), where the research methodology was vetted. Panel suggestions were incorporated into the research approach. Upon completion of the interviews, and during initial drafting of the paper, the full panel again engaged and was briefed on the tentative research findings and recommendations. Comments and suggestions were incorporated into the paper.

D. Analysis

The literature review and the interviews produced a vast amount of information focused on the questions of roles, selection, and evaluation of the superintendents. The literature review along with the phase zero preliminary discussions helped frame the questions and added historical context to them. The review also surfaced management studies, particularly by Peter Drucker, that proved useful in categorizing the different aspects, some unique, of a superintendent's job that are important to recognize. The interviews, structured around a set of carefully-framed questions, collectively provided the basis for assessments, judgments, and conclusions that are discussed in the following chapters. The research participants were not necessarily unanimous in their views and opinions, and in some cases did not address each question directly as asked, but the weight of opinion was generally clear and became more so as the interviews progressed. Overall, research findings and conclusions in the chapters that follow reflect a disciplined synthesis of a large number of expert insights.

To supplement the subjective analysis of the interviews, IDA utilized QSR International's data analysis software program, NVivo, to collect, organize, and code interview transcripts so their content could be readily compared. Nodes and sub-nodes of interview responses, and general comments, were created to guide the coding of each section of the transcript, including a Likert-like scale valuation of selection criteria for superintendents. "Likert-type or frequency

scales use fixed choice response formats and are designed to measure attitudes or opinions. These ordinal scales measure levels of agreement/disagreement.”⁴

In addition, the demographic details of each research participant were captured based on his or her cohort or title (e.g., former Service Chief, current superintendent, current college president, former dean, and current commandant of cadets). This facilitated comparison of responses within and across cohorts and other interviewees. Some responses did not make use of the standard terminology employed in the Likert-like scale; likewise, some did not conform to the order of the protocol, so judgments were made by the research team as to where these responses would be most appropriately binned. The overall synthesis of all research inputs was assisted by the coded data produced by NVivo.

⁴ A. Bowling, *Research Methods in Health* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1997); and N. Burns and S. K. Grove, *The Practice of Nursing Research Conduct, Critique, & Utilization* (Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders and Co., 1997), <http://www.simplypsychology.org/likert-scale.html>.

3. An Examination of the *Role* of a Modern Service Academy Superintendent

This chapter discusses the insights gleaned from the interviews and literature review on the role of Academy superintendents. It first examines what the research indicates: that a superintendent has, in fact, many roles. These roles fit neatly into a well-known framework of six top management tasks and associated leadership skills that are required in every organization. The roles are also discussed in terms of the mission statements for each academy and the special emphasis each academy places on character development. Then the roles are contrasted with other apparently similar positions, specifically three-star operational commands, university and college presidents, and senior commanders of military training and education commands. Constraints on the superintendent's roles are then described. Finally, the chapter offers a discussion of how the roles of the superintendent are changing, including factors that drive adaptation and expand certain activities for the superintendent. A summary of research findings about the superintendent's roles is listed at the conclusion.

A. What the Research Reveals: What Are the Roles?

1. Multiple Roles

IDA's first research finding is that a Service Academy superintendent has not one role, but many roles. This finding is fundamental to describing and understanding modern Service Academy superintendents, their selection, and their evaluation. That there are a multiplicity of roles was a unanimous initial response to the team's queries, from all respondent groups. Whether describing the superintendent as part Commander, part university president, and part chief executive officer (CEO), or listing the various hats a superintendent must wear, literature review and research respondents pointed to the challenges of fulfilling multiple roles. Peter Drucker, long considered an authority on management science and organizations, in describing the leadership of an organization (or "top management," as he calls it), said, "Its job is multidimensional. There is no top-management task; there are only top-management tasks."⁵ Drucker's finding was certainly supported by IDA's research. An Academy superintendent, much like other senior commanders or university presidents, performs a multitude of executive roles that consist of many activities.

⁵ Peter F. Drucker, *Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices* (New York, NY: Harper Business, 1973), 611.

Superintendents are in command of a military organization charged with developing leaders of character for their Service and the Nation from a selective group of approximately 4,000 young people chosen from across America. Their mission is clearly defined in Department of Defense and Service directives. The command of each superintendent consists of a few thousand service members, an installation of a few hundred to several thousand acres, and appropriated funding totaling several hundred million dollars per year. The mission of leader development requires developing cadets and midshipmen morally, mentally, and physically, ensuring that each graduate meets rigorous standards of academic achievement, physical fitness, and ethical conduct founded on the values of the profession of arms. This mission is undertaken in a 24-hour-a-day leadership laboratory. The four-year undertaking immerses cadets and midshipmen in a set of shared experiences designed to imbue the culture, ethos, and ethic necessary for leaders who will serve in warfighting roles in defense of their Nation and its interests. As stated in a governing DOD directive, the academies exist to develop leaders who will serve as exemplars to their Service's officer corps:

career-motivated officers and future leaders...immersed in the traditions and professional values essential to the institutional character of the Armed Forces...generating positive peer influence to convey these traditions and values, stimulating the entire force. . .to sustain professional attitudes, values, and beliefs essential to long-term readiness...⁶

As military commanders, the superintendents are directly accountable to their Service Chief and Secretary for all academy functions. Those functions include those associated with running a military base (force protection/security, logistics, financial management, human resource management, community relations, etc.). They are also responsible for the performance, good order, discipline, and morale of permanent party staff and faculty and their families and that of the corps/brigade/wing of cadets/midshipmen. They are the legal authority for the Federal jurisdiction associated with the installation. This installation command role also involves stewardship of iconic natural landscape and facilities, many of which hold historical importance, and all of which have State, regional, and national importance. In addition, the superintendent serves as the leader-mentor responsible for overseeing the professional military development of all uniformed subordinates. These roles of the superintendent include other specific functions, such as, attaining and maintaining accreditation of an undergraduate Bachelor of Science curriculum, ensuring the hiring and development of high quality faculty and staff, setting standards and guidelines for a four-year officer development program that includes building students' moral foundations, overseeing a robust nationwide admissions process required to attract a thoroughly diverse potential candidate pool of the highest quality, maintaining compliance with NCAA rules and regulations, overseeing the operation of an Academy Preparatory School, acting as General Courts Martial Convening Authority issuing

⁶ DOD, DOD Directive 1322.22, *Service Academies*, August 24, 1994, paragraph 4.

administrative and judicial punishment, and making dismissal recommendations to the Secretary of his or her Military Department. It is important to note that the superintendent's role of commander includes the responsibility for the lives and development of cadets or midshipmen 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, on and off the academy installation.

Superintendents fulfill their diverse responsibilities in the context of a large but well-defined group of stakeholders and constituencies. These groups include ones internal to the Academy as well as external groups. Internally, the superintendent's most important constituency is the body of cadets or midshipmen under his or her charge. Additionally, he or she interacts on a daily basis with his or her key subordinates who lead the academy's principal mission elements, the commandant, the dean, and the AD, as well as mission-support and installation-support staff. Externally, the superintendent reports up the chain of command to the Service Secretary and Service Chief, who set expectations, and ultimately evaluate his or her performance, and on whose staffs the superintendent depends for support. In addition, the superintendent receives advice from a statutorily-established Board of Visitors (BoV); engages with Members of Congress who appoint cadets and midshipmen, appropriate funds, and act on academy issues; receives advice and philanthropic support from academy graduates; responds to the concerns of parents; engages with and responds to local and national media; and nurtures relations with local, State and Federal government and civic leaders.⁷

In the context of these various stakeholders and constituencies, the superintendent's responsibilities were often characterized by respondents⁸ as connecting with and maintaining an appropriate balance among internal and external groups (what some term a balance between "down and in" and "up and out" leadership roles). The superintendent must carefully weigh (as must a university president) on a continuous basis the value of time spent engaging external stakeholder audiences versus the value of monitoring and providing influence and direction to those subordinates executing the academy's leadership development programs. Given the nature of the leadership laboratory for which the superintendent is responsible and the scrutiny under which the superintendent's institution operates, attention to the daily academy mission is an inherent requirement. Similarly, proactive engagement with important stakeholders is essential to the superintendent's successful mission accomplishment. One former Service leader noted that the superintendent must have a healthy understanding of his or her operating environment; he or she is, in essence, at a tactical level of awareness every day but must understand strategic consequences of day-to-day issues. Another former Service leader described the need for the superintendent to maintain a continuous scan across all mission elements, while remaining well-versed in day-to-day operations and administrative issues. Other respondents noted the need for a

⁷ One research participant noted these external constituencies include the American public, in whom the superintendent must build and sustain "a reservoir of trust," particularly in advance of crises.

⁸ Twenty-seven different respondents, representing all interview categories, commented on the balance required of a superintendent's or university leader's focus.

superintendent to be able to operate back and forth across the tactical-operational-strategic⁹ spectrum. Drucker points out that “top management”—the leader of an organization—must intermittently be involved in “operating” tasks, but he emphasizes that this delving down into “operations” must only be done as a result of thorough analysis of “the individual business,” or specific mission, of the organization.¹⁰ Superintendent respondents indicated, that over time, they were able to ascertain which aspects of operations they did and did not need to dip into. Some superintendent and university president respondents indicated that early in their tour they were proportionally more focused internally until they achieved confidence in their understanding of the key issues and the strengths and weaknesses of their team. As their tenure progressed, they sensed a greater freedom to engage externally to sustain support and garner necessary resources. Interestingly, superintendent and university president respondents overall judged their internal/external split closer to 50/50 than did their subordinates and external stakeholders, who cited the need for the superintendent to be more externally focused than internally focused. As will be discussed further in Chapter 3, Section B.2, the external focus has grown from very little during the pre-World War II era to today's fifty/fifty split. In a study of college presidents, Hendrickson noted that “Twenty-first century presidents...face far more demands than their predecessors did, including greater competition, increased accountability, and an expectation to be visibly connected to their constituencies, all of which complicates the role.”¹¹

2. The Drucker Framework—Top Management Tasks and Leadership Skills

All of these various roles, functions, and stakeholder groups conform to the top-management environment described by Peter Drucker. Drucker succinctly describes the distinct tasks of top management, the leadership function of any organization:

⁹ Note that this usage is military terminology and is different from how the terms strategic and strategy are used throughout the remainder of the paper.

¹⁰ Drucker, *Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices*, 613–615. (Note: One research participant noted that Drucker may downplay the day-to-day administration involvement required of a senior executive, particularly if there are areas of weakness or problems to be dealt with in the organization. This respondent also noted that most senior executives are intuitional thinkers and leaders not prone to accomplish the “thorough analysis” Drucker recommends. It is also important to note that superintendents and most senior leaders are constantly guiding operating tasks to achieve strategic objectives; they tend to continually consider which tasks ultimately require their focus. Drucker, however, warns that unless top managers subject their role to “a searching analysis of key activities,” they will do the wrong work.)

¹¹ Robert M. Hendrickson, Jason E. Lane, James T. Harris, and Richard H. Dorman, *Academic Leadership and Governance of Higher Education: A Guide for Trustees, Leaders and Aspiring Leaders of Two- and Four-Year Institutions* (Sterling, VA: Stylus, 2013), 247

1. Think through the mission of the business. Set objectives. Develop strategies¹² and plans.
2. Set standards; set the example. Provide a vision and articulate and defend organizational values.
3. Build and maintain the human organization.
4. Establish, nurture, and maintain external relations.
5. Preside at ceremonial functions.
6. Lead in crisis.¹³

Although Drucker acknowledges this list is not all-inclusive, he points out that these are the tasks of the leader of any large organization, as opposed to the particular management tasks of his or her subordinates.¹⁴ This short list reflects the fact that top management is concerned with both internal and external factors. These are top management tasks that require the ability to think and act strategically (i.e., in accordance with the plan or strategy), as opposed to more routine tasks that must be attended to daily. Many senior Service leaders the team interviewed recognized the strategic (i.e., top management) nature of the superintendent roles.

Considering the top-management tasks described by Drucker, the challenges superintendents have indicated they face, and the importance that both superintendents and Service leaders attached to various factors relevant to the selection of a superintendent, the team elaborates on Drucker's top-management tasks in the context of the Military Academies to describe the specific roles and associated leadership challenges for which each new superintendent must be prepared.

a. Think Through the Mission of the Business. Set Objectives. Develop Strategies and Plans

Fundamental to leading at the strategic level are the questions every leader asks: "Who are we, what are the goals we want to achieve, how are we going to achieve those goals, and what resources will we use in achieving the goals?" Drucker frames the first two questions as: "What

¹² Merriam Webster Online, s.v. "strategy," <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/strategy>, accessed December 23, 2014: the noun as used in this paper uses the common definition of the word: "a careful plan or method for achieving a particular goal usually over a long period of time." Strategic is the adjectival form of the word. Drucker's use of both is similar. He uses strategy as defined here but does not define it himself. However he states "Strategic planning is the continuous process of making present entrepreneurial (risk-taking) decisions systematically and with the greatest knowledge of their futurity: organizing systematically the efforts needed to carry out these decisions and measuring the results of these decisions against the expectations through organized, systematic feedback." Drucker, 125. This is consistent with the common definition.

¹³ Drucker, *Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices*, 611–612.

¹⁴ This list also points to the need for a leadership team who possesses a variety of talents and temperaments, because few individuals will be equipped to excel at every aspect of these tasks.

is our business and what should it be?”¹⁵ In the superintendent’s case, he or she is charged with executing the academy’s mission statement. In addition, a superintendent has an understanding of where his or her Service fits into American society and where his or her academy fits into its respective Service.

Drucker speaks further to the need to “balance objectives and the needs of today against the needs of tomorrow.”¹⁶ The superintendent, then, develops a strategic plan that recognizes that his institution must produce leaders who will be responsible for service to the Nation for the next thirty or forty years. Thus, a strategic plan for leadership and character development—and the role of the superintendent in overseeing execution of such a strategy—must embrace all the areas of endeavor represented by the superintendent’s three key subordinates: the dean, the commandant, and the AD. A former superintendent described this overarching plan as the “need to have a four-year development program to provide the proper foundation and total acculturation of future officers.”

Superintendents know when they take command that there is likely a strategy for the academy already in place. He or she will, in large measure, be carrying on the strategy of his or her predecessors and will expect subsequent superintendents to advance his or her own endeavors. It will be the superintendent’s responsibility to validate the strategy and update it, calling upon the advice of his or her three principal subordinates, and to obtain acknowledgment and support for it from the Service leadership, recognizing that they are the ones who will support how the superintendent goes about achieving the academy strategy’s goals and ensure that the strategy is properly resourced.

As an example of updating the strategic plan of an academy while recognizing the need to maintain balance across the three mission elements, one superintendent, based on recent experience in the field and concern about the degree to which the Honor Code/Concept guided behavior, observed that everyone at the academy said they were developing character, but there was no formal academy-wide plan. Knowing that what was needed was a modification to the strategy to put more focus on changing behavior, one that would develop an internal desire to live honorably, he directed the development of such a plan for an integrated approach by all mission elements across the academy. In enunciating this modification, this superintendent demonstrated the leadership required to align the academies’ product with the needs of the Military Services.

IDA’s interview results reinforced Drucker’s principal top management roles of an organization’s leader. Interviewees described the importance of the academy’s leader performing a command, an executive, and sometimes a transformational role by establishing a long-term vision and strategic direction for the institution that are aligned with the long-term direction of

¹⁵ Drucker, *Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices*, 611.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

the Service, the strategic guidance of Military Department leaders, and the mission of the institution. More than forty-five respondents indicated that the *doers* of the academy's mission, as well as the external stakeholders, must hear and see from their superintendent the vision, and the strategic plan and its goals they must all seek to achieve. Drucker reiterates this point by stating, "Top Management is the directing, vision-setting, standard-setting organ."¹⁷

b. Set Standards; Set the Example. Provide a Vision that Articulates Organizational Values

Drucker contends that top management must concern itself with "the gap—always a big one—between what the organization stands for and what it actually does."¹⁸ In other words, an academy, like any other organization, is always evolving, always trying to move from where it is today to where it would like to be, always trying to achieve a new level of excellence. Academies are committed to developing leaders of character who are prepared to fight and win the Nation's wars.¹⁹ Improving the development process to achieve that goal is an unending task.

To close Drucker's gap, the superintendent has the broad responsibility of providing a vision for continual growth and improvement in executing the academy mission. He or she must be actively involved in shaping the environment and setting the expectations. This necessitates him or her to be able to set a tone, perceive and articulate a vision for the future, and ensure the continuity of the vision by bringing everyone in line with that vision, including a large variety of stakeholders.

Though the superintendent relies on his or her subordinates to make the vision a reality, it is the superintendent who must articulate the long view, set the direction, and establish the priorities so as to keep his/her academy not only relevant but on the leading edge of what the Services need. A prominent sample of respondents²⁰ explicitly or implicitly noted that leading change at their institutions is a key part of superintendents' roles, and many others implied that such change efforts must be undertaken with a clear sense of "the terrain" of their academy. That is, superintendents must rely less on proclamation of change, customary of traditional hierarchical military organizations, and more on the utilization of leadership skills in listening, empathy, and persuasion to influence all stakeholders to buy into the change needed to keep abreast of Service needs. Since true change in direction or culture takes place only with full

¹⁷ Ibid., 604.

¹⁸ Ibid., 612.

¹⁹ One research participant noted that the superintendent can inspire cadets and midshipmen to invest in this goal by giving them a sense that they have been specially chosen for this responsibility.

²⁰ Regarding establishing "vision and strategy" as a top management task of a superintendent, forty-six respondents from across all interviewee groups opined. Of them, eighteen discussed leading change, and twelve of those eighteen noted that leading change is a key part of the superintendent roles (of those twelve, three were explicit about it; the rest clearly implied it).

investment by all mission elements and all stakeholders, such a leadership role requires a careful, deliberative, measured, and often time-consuming approach.

Whatever the scope of the superintendent's vision, development of leaders of character is at the forefront. In pursuing a vision focused on leadership development, the superintendent has to be an exemplar of professional leadership and a role model for what cadets and midshipmen are to become in values, in character, and in fitness. The superintendent was described by one Service's leaders as keeper of the ethical flame—the professional military ethic—for the Service.²¹ And beyond the Services, the public expects that all academy graduates will be leaders of competence and character.

Setting standards and setting the example with regard to character development is a central concern of every Service Chief, every Service Secretary, and every superintendent today. Character development begins with the superintendent, who is responsible for establishing the command climate and defining the academy culture. He or she is the one person responsible for ensuring all others understand that character development underlies everything else that goes on in academy life, and that character is grounded in values such as personal integrity and the imperative of genuine respect for every other member of the community. His or her challenge is to develop a sense of living honorably in every way, not simply complying with a set of regulations. More broadly, the superintendent is the person who must be capable of sustaining a commitment to the idea that character development is the fundamental responsibility of every member of the staff, every member of the faculty, and every athletic coach.

In setting standards for character and leadership development, the superintendent has a particular challenge in that he must ensure the development of not just a few leaders, but the development of every graduate as a leader. The superintendent must ensure that the leadership development program not only selects for leadership roles those cadets and midshipmen who exhibit strong character traits and a natural aptitude for leadership, but, in the *leadership laboratory* setting, must also ensure that those not naturally given to assuming leadership positions are also required to meet the challenges of leadership and given the opportunity to exhibit the strength of character they will be expected to model upon graduation. A recently commissioned officer addressing public revelations of misconduct by cadets/midshipmen observed that while leaders at every level bore responsibility, it was the leaders among the cadets/midshipmen involved who had failed the worst.

In the current environment and for the foreseeable future, setting standards and articulating and defending organization values will require superintendents to continue to focus particular attention on the subject of sexual assault. Dealing with sexual assault and related problems associated with excess drinking requires vigilance and perseverance on the part of

²¹ Other respondents' characterizations of this aspect of the superintendent's role were less expansive, stating that the superintendent is steward of the professional ethic for the academy, but probably not for the Service.

superintendents and all academy leaders. As with every aspect of character and ethical behavior, the superintendent must be prepared to set clear standards, make sure they are understood, and ensure there are no real or perceived sub-cultures that live under a different standard. And he or she must also appreciate that each new class will bring a new set of challenges and the requirement to begin the education and development process anew. That challenge will never go away. Today, superintendents across the Services are committed to ensuring that the cadets and midshipmen themselves take ownership of the challenge to live up to moral, ethical, and organizational standards. In sum, superintendents must embrace their personal responsibility for setting standards in every area of academy life, ensuring they are evenly enforced, and protecting against the creation of special privileges that enable unethical conduct, including sexual harassment and sexual assault.

c. Build and Maintain the Human Organization

An academy's organization rests on the superintendent's three key subordinates, the commandant, the dean, and the AD. Each of their three mission elements places demands on a cadet's or midshipman's time, and balancing those demands is essential to achieving each academy's overall mission. The overall demands on cadet and midshipman time has been an ongoing concern, and more than one interviewee described cadet or midshipman time as "the coin of the realm." Superintendents appreciate this challenge and act to ensure proper balance and collaborative efforts of academy mission elements in achieving the goal of producing leaders of character prepared to fight and win the Nation's wars. He or she is responsible, for instance, for maintaining an environment that balances the demands of a rigorous and focused undergraduate curriculum with the development of character and leadership skills.

As a first step, the superintendent must ensure that the three key subordinates are the right people for each of those jobs. Each superintendent has limited opportunities to choose even one of the three key leaders, but when the occasion arises, he or she seeks to obtain, with Service support, the right person in the right job at the right time. And if a superintendent does not get it right, he or she or his or her successor has to find a way to correct the situation.

Similarly, it is important for the superintendent to ensure high quality people are chosen for the faculty and staff. In particular, he or she needs to ensure the right role models, who will be in daily contact with the cadets and midshipmen (e.g., tactical officers, company officers, air officers commanding), are being hired. Each academy has realized varying degrees of success in its efforts to bring in talented faculty and staff. The impact of continual combat and differing philosophies among the Services with regard to what constitutes a career-enhancing assignment has played a role. Nonetheless, the superintendent needs to be a relentless advocate for—and Service leaders need to support—policies and processes that will ensure those assigned to

develop the next generation of military leaders are exemplary role models and highly qualified for academy positions.²²

In providing leadership for the three mission elements, the superintendent must be able to build consensus. He or she must be a strong communicator and a firm decision maker, but must often act more as an influencer than a decider. He or she must be able to build trust by and among his or her key leaders. He or she must also be able to win the support of regular members of the academy staff. They are the ones who ultimately are responsible for executing policy and who are in daily contact with the cadets and midshipmen. Nowhere is this more evident than with the faculty, particularly faculty with long tenure.

The presence of tenured faculty and the ratio of civilian to military faculty vary among the academies.²³ In all cases, however, the art of listening to long-term faculty and investing them in solutions, particularly the need for change, are important parts of a superintendent's roles. Faculties are organized according to their academic discipline and gain credibility, honors, and recognition via that discipline. By nature, academe is narrowly focused, or stovepiped, by tenure and by academic discipline; and the leaders of each stovepipe have to be gently led to incorporate new ways. As articulated by one academy dean, ultimately, the superintendent needs to be able to get faculty members to think that his or her ideas are their ideas. In the dean's words, a superintendent will be most successful when he or she approaches the faculty and says, "You tell me how we should deal with such and such an issue," and then asks them enough questions so that eventually they perceive what the superintendent wants to do as their own idea.

The challenge of dealing with the faculty is not new or peculiar to one academy. The challenge has also been posed by both military and civilian faculty. History offers a number of clear examples where superintendents have attempted changes in the academic environment with the best of intentions, but failed because they did not first of all engage with the faculty and gain its support. A 1927 Army memorandum quotes former Superintendent Douglas MacArthur:

No matter how brilliant these men [academy professors who were military officers] may be when first detailed, sooner or later they become provincial. They form a block which almost invariably opposes the Superintendent in any progressive ideas he may bring from the service at large. They are the last word in conservatism and reactionaryism...²⁴

²² One research participant noted that, to the extent they succeed in advocating for selective hiring processes, superintendents can partially offset the effect of the academies' higher faculty and staff turnover relative to civilian universities.

²³ The proportion of faculty who are civilian is at the U.S. Naval Academy (USNA), 50 percent; at the U.S. Military Academy (USMA), 30 percent; and, at the U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA), 29 percent.

²⁴ Lance Betros, *Carved from Granite: West Point Since 1902* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press 2012), 46-47.

Rear Admiral Draper Kaufman, who led the Naval Academy from 1965 to 1968, recounted in his oral history how he had made many mistakes the first year, the biggest was trying to influence faculty teaching techniques.²⁵ The team's interviews revealed more recent experiences where a superintendent failed in some of his initiatives because he had not worked to develop them with the faculty, and where strategic plans published by superintendents simply sat on the shelf because the faculty had not been involved in writing them.

Given the challenge of “building the human organization” at an academy, a key measure of a superintendent's leadership is his or her ability to build and synergize a team to accomplish leadership development.

d. Establish, Nurture, and Maintain External Relations

Drucker contends that establishing and maintaining external relations can only be accomplished by top management, the leader who represents, speaks for, stands for, and commits the organization.²⁶ Hendrickson, et al, citing Dr. David Riesman, noted sociologist and student of leaders at academic institutions, characterizes a university leader as “the living embodiment of the mission of the institution,” or what many university presidents term “the living logo.”²⁷ As described earlier, fundamental to the superintendent's roles is the continual leadership balance between external and internal focus. There are a variety of views on the proper balance, and various superintendents have struck the balance in different ways. At one end of the spectrum, leaders contend that a superintendent's most important or primary role is as spokesman to the outside world, and that in the future, he or she will need to have even more political skills to coordinate or conduct actions in a way that persuades and satisfies groups as diverse as the Congress, the Board of Visitors, alumni, parents, the media, community government officials, civic leaders, charitable organizations, zealous supporters of athletic programs, and his or her own Service chief (see Chapter 3, Sections D and F, for related discussion). But one former Service Secretary offered the opinion that the skill of dealing with “enveloping constituencies” will become neither more nor less important—it is simply a longstanding need.

e. Preside at Ceremonial Functions

The superintendent is the only person who can represent the academy in many ceremonial functions. Further, whether it is a ceremonial function or in another type of public venue, he or she is the *face of the Academy*. This is especially true in the most common setting, which is that of standing before the corps, the brigade, or the wing, where the superintendent personifies the *leader of character* the academy exists to produce. Beyond that, the life of a superintendent

²⁵ Draper L. Kauffmann, *The Reminiscences of Rear Admiral Draper L. Kauffman, U.S. Navy (Retired)* (Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute, 1983), 659–661.

²⁶ Drucker, *Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices*, 612.

²⁷ Hendrickson, et al., *Academic Leadership and Governance of Higher Education*, 7.

includes the many representational tasks inherent in the Academies being frequently visited by national and Service leaders.

f. Lead in Crisis

The superintendent's roles include taking charge with confidence and ensuring an effective response on the part of his or her entire leadership team in the event of a crisis or an unpleasant event that is contrary to the mission and values of the institution. Twenty-one research participants from groups one and two (current and former Service Chiefs and Secretaries; current and former superintendents) mentioned the role of the superintendent in crisis management. The team heard from one university president who had asked to be briefed on crisis management procedures immediately upon assuming her office. She was thus better prepared for two crises—a natural disaster and a suicide—that occurred within the first six months of her presidency. It is inevitable that a superintendent will be called upon to deal with a public issue or a scandal of some sort. With over 4,000 17–22 year-olds, something will go wrong. Honor code issues will not go away, excessive drinking and resultant bad behavior is bound to occur, and the superintendent cannot prevent every case of sexual assault. As for any commander, having plans to handle crises is an important responsibility of a superintendent.

Crisis management demands effective communications with both internal and external stakeholders, both in terms of a superintendent's actions and his or her statements. The superintendent's response to a crisis must both reinforce the values of the institution and demonstrate the behavior of a leader of character. During a crisis, the constituencies are also audiences, and their confidence in the superintendent and the institution will rise or fall as a result of their perceptions of his or her handling of the situation.

Worth noting here is that a superintendent oftentimes performs his or her command role (and its crisis management function) in the context of national-level attention. When this occurs, it is driven by the facts that the academies were created by Congress and are funded by taxpayer dollars, every Member of Congress plays a role in appointing constituents to the Academies, and the American public expects the Academies to uphold high professional and ethical standards.

B. Roles in Relation to the Academies' Mission Statements

Drucker's construct aptly frames the superintendent's roles, but a superintendent's roles can also be defined, much like any military command, by relying on "the unit mission description"—the Academy Mission Statement. Indeed, many respondents began their narrative description of the superintendent's roles by citing the Mission Statement as that which best, albeit simplistically, describes the role of a superintendent; in essence, "the superintendent's role is to fulfill the mission of the Academy." Though each of DOD's Service Academies is guided by slightly different words, each Service has chartered its academy with a similar mission:

For the Military Academy: “To educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate is a commissioned leader of character committed to the values of Duty, Honor, Country and prepared for a career of professional excellence and service to the Nation as an officer in the United States Army.”²⁸

For the Naval Academy: “To develop Midshipmen morally, mentally and physically and to imbue them with the highest ideals of duty, honor and loyalty in order to graduate leaders who are dedicated to a career of naval service and have potential for future development in mind and character to assume the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship and government.”²⁹

For the Air Force Academy: “To educate, train, and inspire men and women to become officers of character motivated to lead the United States Air Force in service to our nation.”³⁰

These statements provide for each academy a focus on the product—leaders prepared to serve—and each statement defines the quality of that product: committed leaders of character. Each academy, so chartered, is organized to produce such graduates along three fundamental lines: moral, mental, and physical. So how does the superintendent ensure that the academy develops leaders morally, mentally, and physically? As executives, superintendents draw extensively on the capabilities resident in their leadership teams to provide expertise, continuity, and oversight within each fundamental line of effort.

The superintendent is supported by an academic dean whose job is to deliver an accredited undergraduate education program that is rigorously designed for whole-person intellectual development. The curriculum is heavy on core requirements, but offers majors which range across the liberal arts, science, and engineering disciplines; it is designed to encourage lifelong learning, and produce “innovative, analytical, resourceful minds.”³¹ The balanced blend of basic sciences, engineering, social sciences, and humanities is intended to build quantitative and qualitative reasoning and foster intellectual curiosity. The dean must develop faculty who are responsible both for ensuring students gain the requisite knowledge in a given subject and for developing the students’ critical thinking skills.³² All indications are that cadets and midshipmen meet high standards in their particular fields of study, as reflected in their intellectual acumen in

²⁸ U.S. Military Academy, “The West Point Mission,” <http://www.usma.edu/about/SitePages/Mission.aspx>.

²⁹ U.S. Naval Academy, “Mission of USNA,” <http://www.usna.edu/About/mission.php>.

³⁰ U.S. Air Force Academy, “The Essence of USAFA,” <http://www.usafa.af.mil/information/factsheets/factsheet.asp?id=21533>.

³¹ U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA), *2014–2014 USAF Academy Catalog*, <http://usafa.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2014-2015/Catalog/Academics>.

³² It should be noted that cadets and midshipmen also receive some academic development throughout their four years via a military science program provided by the commandant and via a physical education program provided largely by the AD. However, the preponderance of intellectual development, by far, comes from the classroom activities overseen by the dean.

an operational environment, the post-graduate scholarships and fellowships awarded, and the post-graduate degrees subsequently obtained.

However, superintendents are constantly challenged in their top management roles to foster an academic environment that reflects excellence throughout the educational experience. For example, while the responsibility for developing critical thinking skills is frequently acknowledged by academics, observers even within the academic community³³ cite the lack of focus by faculties on the development of this important skill. In another example, faculties are responsible for developing the communications skills, writing and speaking, of their cadets and midshipmen. For many decades, the weak communication skills of graduates have been a matter of particular concern at the Naval Academy, for instance; but, in fact, they are a matter of concern with regard to college graduates across the country.³⁴ IDA's research found evidence of current superintendents addressing these and other academic issues by working with their deans in an effort to shape the curriculum to be better suited for the national security environment graduates will face. (The research team also found some evidence of previous superintendents not involving the dean and the faculty in the early stages of major curriculum initiatives.) But engagement by the superintendent in shaping the curriculum is nothing new; for instance, General Douglas MacArthur worked to revise the curriculum during his re-shaping of West Point post-World War I. In today's setting, one current university president commented: "You can't leave academics to the academics..."

The physical development of the cadets and midshipmen is accomplished via a combination of programs at each of the academies, programs that by and large are led by an Athletic Director (AD). Each academy and Service has physical fitness standards that all cadets/midshipmen must meet, and all complete undergraduate physical education courses and physical fitness testing during the entire four-year program. Beyond that, cadets and midshipmen develop habits of physical exercise, teamwork, and the competitive will to win in a variety of venues. First, there is a full array of National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) intercollegiate sports programs. Second, cadets and midshipmen can participate in club sports with competition outside the academies. Third, those not involved in inter-collegiate or club sports participate in intramural sports. All cadets also undergo physical conditioning, oftentimes led by upper-class cadets and midshipmen serving in a training role. Thus, in fulfilling his or her responsibility for the physical development of graduates, the superintendent is supported by physical education

³³ Derek Bok, *Our Under Achieving Colleges: A Candid Look at How Much Students Learn and Why They Should be Learning More* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006); William C. Miller, interview with William R. Burns, Jr., Annapolis, MD, May 5, 2006; and USNA Academic Program Executive Review Group (AERG), *Report to the Superintendent* (hereafter *USNA AERG Report*) (Annapolis, MD: April 2006), 19–20.

³⁴ Kauffman, *The Reminiscences of Rear Admiral Draper L. Kauffman, U.S. Navy (Retired)*; USNA AERG Report, 2006; and *Chronicle of Higher Education*, The Role of Higher Education in Career Development: Employer Perceptions December, 2012, <http://chronicle.com/items/biz/pdf/Employers%20Survey.pdf>.

coursework, an intramural program among the cadet and midshipmen units, competitive club sports, and NCAA intercollegiate athletics, all or parts of which are managed by the AD.

The day-to-day leadership of the Corps of Cadets/Brigade of Midshipmen/Cadet Wing is provided by a commandant, for whom support by the superintendent is crucial. It is the commandant who commands the daily leadership lab that pervades every aspect of daily academy life for cadets/midshipmen. The cadets/midshipmen are organized into and live within military units overseen, coached, and mentored by commissioned officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs) but operated by a cadet/midshipman chain of command. They receive military instruction in everything from customs and courtesies, to drill and ceremony, to Service organization and heritage. They are taught fundamental Service-specific combat skills in field tactics, seamanship, and airmanship. Their standards of performance and their conduct are governed by policies and regulations that direct everything from personal appearance to leave/liberty. Their activities are controlled by a daily schedule that calls for specific activities every hour of the day. Most importantly, inside this structure, the cadets and midshipmen progress along an iterative four-year system of officership development and are given, at every step and in every activity, opportunities to lead subordinate classes and peers at every echelon in the corps/brigade/wing. Such leadership development activities are part and parcel of each squadron or company's mission, for example, and include such activities as marching as a unit; conducting planning on unit issues and goals; providing military training and academic assistance; inspections and military knowledge tests; and fielding intramural sports teams and other competitions. This leadership production engine is led by the commandant and his/her staff who, as a result, have the most direct contact time with cadets and midshipmen of the three key subordinates. The execution of the daily training mission of transforming high school graduates into military officers falls largely on the shoulders of the commandant, overseen and monitored by the superintendent.

C. The Superintendent's Role in Character Development

As discussed earlier under top management tasks, the superintendent's vision must encompass the idea that leadership development stands at the forefront of everything that takes place at the academy; and the character part of leadership development is the most challenging. The superintendent's role in character development deserves further discussion.

First, as described earlier and affirmed by nine different respondents from all three interviewee groups, a foundational superintendent role is that of being a role model. Each and every word, action, and mannerism of a superintendent sets a tone and establishes "what's important." As one college president noted: "You can never 'not lead.'" For an institution charged with developing leaders of character, being of exemplary character and professionalism is fundamental to the roles of the superintendent.

Second, regarding the academy's mission, the research team has described how it is organized to support mental, physical, and military education and training. But where does

moral or character development take place? The standard answer is: “Everywhere”. . .in sum, in the challenges of first-year followership training, in meeting rigorous and challenging academic requirements, in the competition and team dynamics on the athletic field, in the leadership challenges within the Corps of Cadets, the Brigade of Midshipmen, and the Cadet Wing, in participation in a wide variety of extracurricular activities, in various voluntary religious activities, and in the everyday relations between the men and women of the corps/brigade/wing.

Who assists the superintendent in providing support for character development? Similarly, the answer is *everyone*. In most writing on leadership, military leadership in particular, character is highlighted up front as being the fundamental prerequisite. Such is the case in the writings of Dr. Edgar F. Puryear, Jr., a noted historian and student of military leadership. After over a decade of research and interviews with thousands of military leaders, he concluded: “From all my research, ...it is clear that there is absolutely nothing as important in successful leadership as character.”³⁵ In trying to define what is meant by “character” in military leadership, he relies on the study of America’s most prominent military leaders, such as General George Washington, General Robert E. Lee, General George C. Marshall, and General Dwight D. Eisenhower. When interviewed by Puryear concerning the question of character, Eisenhower said, “Character in many ways is everything in leadership. It is made up of many things, but I would say character is really integrity.”³⁶ Puryear’s search for a full definition of character, relying on evidence in the lives of these leaders, also resulted in the value of selflessness.³⁷ The finely-developed values of integrity and selflessness are certainly at the core of what the Services value and what the academies strive to develop in young leaders. Since the superintendent is responsible for developing leaders, developing the character of his or her charges is of primary importance to the entire leadership team. And since character development takes place during *tests* in every area of life as a cadet or midshipmen, leaders in every endeavor—faculty, company/tactical/air officers commanding and NCOs, coaches, officer representatives assigned to sports teams, and leaders within the corps, brigade, and wing—all have a role to play. Character is to be modeled in every venue and ethical conduct demanded everywhere and at all times.

Each academy teaches leadership and ethics in the classroom. Certainly this is important, but even those involved in the teaching are inclined to say there is a limit to what can be taught with regard to leadership and character. Rules can be taught, compliance enforced, and consequences realized. Service and Academy leaders made clear, however, that character is more about inculcating and absorbing the values of integrity and selflessness and seeking to live a life consistent with those values. That is a challenge to be addressed with each incoming class and throughout the academy.

³⁵ Edgar F. Puryear, Jr., *American Generalship; Character is Everything; the Art of Command* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2000), 1.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 5.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 8–24.

This role to produce the leaders the Service needs plays out not only in properly shaping the academic curriculum, but also in shaping the leadership experiences and character development of each cadet or midshipman. Superintendents do not formulate the coursework or teach in the classroom. They do not teach physical education or coach any of the numerous athletic teams. They are not in the barracks with the tactical officers, observing the everyday conduct of the cadets and midshipmen. Rather, they are responsible for ensuring that their direct reports and every leader in each of these areas of endeavor embrace character development, understand the strategy, and are working together cooperatively to execute it. One Academy commandant described the superintendent's function as the *synchronizer*. Superintendents are responsible for ensuring that the time available in each day and week of a forty-seven month program is balanced among all areas of endeavor and maximized to produce leaders of character. There are constant demands, and demanding suitors, for that cadet/midshipman time.

Thus, an Academy superintendent has this very real challenge of ensuring that all aspects of whole-person development are balanced on an everyday basis, so that young men and women are prepared to lead upon graduation and prepared to continue developing for positions of senior leadership.

Furthermore, the superintendent is not only responsible for ensuring that academy life balances moral, mental, and physical development, but also ensuring that the elements of the development process are mutually supporting. He or she must ensure that one area of development does not inhibit or constrain another area of development.

As one example of maintaining balance in the development process, it is important that a focus on the benefits of intercollegiate athletics is supportive of and adds strength to other efforts to inculcate values and enhance moral and character development. The academies' leadership development programs include instilling an intense will to win, while they also strive to produce leaders who are well-educated men and women of character.

The superintendent must ensure that athletics, including an NCAA Division I program, are part and parcel of the development of officers committed to leading in service to the Nation in the most physically and morally demanding situations. In 1919, MacArthur, author of the famous adage still adhered to, "On the field of friendly strife are sown the seeds that, upon other fields, on other days will bear the fruits of victory," argued thus, regarding competitive sports as integral to the academy's new development program he was instituting:

In the old course, athletics were a voluntary activity. But the war had shown the value of organized group athletics in creating and maintaining morale. The effect upon the army at large of an extensive system of competitive sports, controlled by competent and well-prepared officers cannot be overestimated. Troops in poor physical condition are worthless. Nothing brings out the qualities of leadership,

mental and muscular co-ordination, aggressiveness, and courage more quickly than this type of competition.³⁸

One former Service leader expressed this focus as training warfighters to do the Nation's most dangerous business out front.

In the area of athletics, the challenge to a superintendent, or even to a college president, can be significant. Of the research participants, four current and former Academy leaders and four college presidents the team interviewed expressed the idea that the challenge for which they were least prepared was dealing with the NCAA, an athletic conference, and their own intercollegiate athletic program. And it was not just lack of familiarity with the NCAA and athletic conferences that caused this to be a challenge, but also the burgeoning growth of college athletics at the national level, along with the high stakes involved in national attention and financial resources. In addition, there is pressure from alumni, some of whom want highly visible and winning teams and who argue that winning teams, seen in high-profile venues across the country, contribute substantially to the national stature of their institution and to recruiting high-caliber candidates, whether athletes or not. Thus, the prominence of college athletics, and the pressure to produce winning teams, can become a challenge to the superintendent in his or her efforts to maintain balance across the mission elements and maintain focus on developing leaders of character committed to a career of service.

The team's interviews with a variety of leaders where the subject of athletics and the role of the superintendent were addressed suggest that, when it comes to NCAA Division I athletics, the effort to maintain alignment with the academies' missions is not just an academy issue, but a Service issue and one that needs to be addressed across Service lines. The Services may also consider the degree to which intercollegiate sports participation leads to the need to obtain significant private funding to support the athletic program; the trend for Academy preparatory schools to function as sports-related recruiting venues; and, the need to combat tendencies for athletic teams to become subcultures.

D. Distinctive Roles of the Superintendent

The nature and scope of the roles of an Academy superintendent can also be examined through comparison with those of similar leadership positions, such as other three-star commands, university/college presidents, and training enterprise or Military Service school leaders.

1. Role Relative to Other Command Positions

Each Military Department has only one Service Academy superintendent position, and it stands out as distinct from other senior command roles. With regard to organizational structure,

³⁸ Kauffmann, *The Reminiscences of Rear Admiral Draper L. Kauffman*, 81, 82.

each superintendent reports directly to the Service Chief; there is no four-star command or headquarters between the superintendent and the Chief. Three-star field commanders in the Services typically report to a four-star Major Command Commander or Component Commander. Thus, superintendents are what many respondents termed, “out there on their own”—lacking field four-star oversight, coverage, and support. He or she relies directly on the Service leaders for support and advocacy.

The characterization of “being out there on their own” can be enhanced with an important caveat. Previous studies by IDA have contended that it is not individuals, but teams and teams of teams that accomplish the work of DOD.³⁹ One such team to be considered comprises the superintendent, the Chief and Vice Chief of the Service, the human resource or personnel chief (G/N/A-1), and the respective Secretary, Under Secretary, and Assistant Secretary (Manpower & Reserve Affairs (M&RA)). It is true that the superintendent is out there on his or her own in the sense of not having someone between him or her and the Service Chief, but if the superintendent cultivates strong working relationships with the various members of this team and their immediate subordinates, he or she has the opportunity to leverage a wealth of talent and resources that match or exceed that of any of his or her three-star peers.

With regard to the superintendent’s support staff at the academy, other three-star commanders have a general officer/flag officer (GO/FO) vice or deputy commander, normally a two-star, as well as subordinate line commanders and a traditional operationally-organized staff structure covering all functional areas from human resources, to intelligence, to operations, to planning, to programming. A superintendent does not have a true GO/FO vice or deputy, but has a small support staff and a colonel/captain-level chief of staff to manage day-to-day staff support, plus three co-equal mission element leads (the commandant, the dean, and the AD), each with a distinct portfolio. Superintendents also have a significant number of people within their organization who are long-term permanent party, both military and civilian, who serve as tenured faculty in lengthy tours of duty, often until they retire—in sum, a very different make-up of subordinates compared to the largely military staffs of three-star field commanders who serve two or three year tours.

The mission superintendents are charged with fulfilling is also distinct from the typical three-star commander: not warfighting, and not simply training nor limited to just education. Superintendents must lead a holistic development mission, which involves training, education, and character development of a challenging group of 17–22 year-olds growing up in a 24 hours a day/7 days a week military leadership laboratory of four years’ duration.

³⁹ John C. F. Tillson, Waldo D. Freeman, William R. Burns, John E. Michel, Jack A. LeCuyer, Robert H. Scales, and D. Robert Worley, *Learning to Adapt to Asymmetric Threats*, IDA Document D-3114 (Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analyses, August 2005), 55–57.

This distinct mission and unique organizational structure calls for leadership skills tailored for an inclusive, multi-actor setting rather than a downward-directed, hierarchical organization typical of three-star operational commands elsewhere in the Services. Superintendents find themselves relying on persuasion to gain consensus among a wide variety of internal and external actors with diverse (sometimes competing) agendas, mature judgment to balance and adjudicate among them, and influence to focus them all on mission accomplishment.

A few former Service leaders noted that the superintendent job demands, in scope and degree, more executive skills than the typical Service three-star operational command. For a superintendent, the need to remain focused on the strategy, establish tone, set direction, and sustain an environment for success, while remaining aware of day-to-day operations, and simultaneously operate as advocate and spokesperson engaging multiple audiences, seem to many respondents to be a broader set of requirements than for a typical numbered Army, Air Force, Fleet command, or Service functional leader role.

2. Role Relative to University/College President

The fundamental role of the Academy superintendent is also different from that of a university or college president. A superintendent is responsible for producing leaders for the profession of arms. More specifically, superintendents are commissioned officers of their armed Services who are charged with preparing and commissioning another generation of officers who will immediately become part of their Service's officer corps upon graduation. He or she is responsible for the mental, physical, and moral development of those leaders. Moreover, he or she is responsible for the lives and well-being of cadets and midshipmen 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. University presidents are responsible for providing the academic setting and the resources to educate. They are not formally responsible for the physical development of all students. They are not charged with the mission to prepare graduates for warfighting leadership roles. They are interested in ensuring integrity within the academic environment, the safety of the students, and the career placement of their graduates (along with acceptance into graduate programs), and while they are concerned with building honorable men and women, they are not singularly focused on character development. Unlike a university president, an Academy superintendent has the very real challenge of ensuring that all aspects of whole-person development are balanced day-to-day in a way that will ensure that academic, physical, and character development goals are consistently met, as described earlier in this chapter.

Superintendents can play a role in raising funds, to the extent that the law allows, but the basic resources for an academy are provided by Congressionally-appropriated funds from the

taxpayers. A typical university president must spend a significant portion of his or her time raising funds, and he or she may be selected based on his or her ability to do so.⁴⁰

Other differences pertain to governance and authorities. As previously described, superintendents report directly to the Chief and Secretary of their Service whereas university presidents report to a board of directors that governs their institution. As commanders, superintendents are the legal convening authority under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) for their commands and installations and are thus responsible for the justice system as it pertains to the military at the academy, including the cadets and midshipmen. This is very different than the role of university presidents, who can discipline students but lack legal jurisdiction to fully administer justice when crimes are committed. While university presidents work within an overall environment of shared governance with their academic and administrative internal stakeholders, superintendents, though they must exercise influence amid and across co-equal mission elements who share responsibilities for mission success, are, ultimately, military commanders.

Finally, while the role of university presidents can be defined as spanning a period of time from several years to a decade or more, that of Academy superintendents currently must be defined in a period of three to five years. Indeed, various eras in a university or college's history are often labeled with the president's name; not so in the case of the Service Academies.

Despite the differences in the roles associated with the two positions, there are many similar aspects of the roles of university president and superintendent. As mentioned earlier, many respondents mentioned "university president" along with "commander" (and sometimes "CEO") in characterizing the superintendent's roles. Both superintendent and university president roles share aspects of a collaborative governance setting, to a greater or lesser extent. They have a common requirement for academic accreditation. Both must lead a significant portion of their staff and faculty who are long-term academics with vested interests and a certain degree of academic freedom. Both must be stewards of physical plants and what some term "mayors of small cities." Both must plan, budget, and manage financial resources. Both are involved in generating private funding. Both play a role with regard to their institution's participation in NCAA athletics, and they both bear responsibility for compliance with NCAA rules. Overall, both must juggle commitments to both internal and external constituencies, with demands of the latter increasing over the past decade as requirements for fundraising or capital campaigns become more and more urgent (see Chapter 3, Sections E. and F. for a fuller discussion), compliance with association, State and Federal regulations become more complex (e.g., NCAA, Department of Education, Department of Labor, etc.), and interactions with political actors at the local, State, and Federal levels become more necessary. Finally, though the formal nature of their

⁴⁰ Eleven current university presidents indicated fundraising consumed a large part of their time—25–50 percent, in most cases, and 70 percent in one case.

supervision is different, both superintendents and presidents must build and nurture their relationship with their governing body or senior leaders.

Indeed, the list of features of the two roles that are similar is much longer than the list of those that are different (see Appendix D for a depiction). Most similarities are inherent in the distinct nature of higher educational institutions in America today. The differences between the two roles, however, are weighty, primarily due to the distinctly different nature of the required final product and the military command responsibilities of the superintendent. Nevertheless, the research team gained important insights relative to academy leadership over the course of dozens of interviews of university presidents, some of which are relevant to superintendents and will be examined in forthcoming sections.

3. Role Relative to Training Enterprise Commanders and Service School Leaders

Relative to senior leaders serving in the institutional enterprises of their Services as leaders of basic or specialty schoolhouses or professional military education (PME) programs, superintendents are leading a different sort of production line. Although some of these other military leaders take in similar raw material—American high school and college graduates—Academy superintendents must mold that raw material well beyond just basic military or discrete technical skills, and they must deliver an accredited degree-holding ethical leader fit in mind and body to employ warfighting tools and prepared to lead men and women in combat. Leaders of Service or joint advanced PME schools are dealing with a more mature incoming product than superintendents, one which has already been honed by years of military and leadership experiences. In general, leaders of Service training enterprises and schoolhouses have students in their charge for relatively brief periods of time.

Another distinction is in the reporting relationship. Depending on the Service, most training and education enterprise leaders in the Services report to the Service's training and education major command, which provides guidance, resources, and support. In contrast, each superintendent reports directly to the Service Chief and Secretary.

Clearly, functions such as curriculum development, defining desired learning objectives, crafting training programs, and management of training and education resources and programs are the responsibility of both superintendents and these training or education enterprise leaders. For this reason, there is a degree of commonality among these leaders' roles. But it is the holistic development task spanning four years and the holistic nature of the final product which distinguishes superintendents from these other leaders.

E. Constraints on the Superintendent's Roles

The research team found those respondents who described constraints on the superintendent's role oftentimes referred to constraints in the area of funding.⁴¹ This is for two reasons. First, they pointed to the fact that during the past several years, funding levels for the academy mission have declined. Since the focus on deficit reduction in the Federal government and the advent of the Budget Control Act and other appropriations uncertainties such as the reliance on Continuing Resolutions, the academies are not unlike every area of the DOD mission in having had to cut costs and carefully husband resources.⁴² Superintendents have had to find ways to increase efficiencies, mostly by reducing human capital costs and reducing programs.⁴³ Second, and more importantly, respondents pointed to the academies having to increase reliance on non-appropriated funds (NAF) and philanthropic giving to provide what each terms "the margin of excellence."⁴⁴ Such funds are needed for a full range of cadet and midshipman development programs intended to go beyond core academic, military training, and athletic programs to benefit the cadets and midshipmen, academy programs, and the Services: cadet research endeavors, overseas exchange programs, cultural immersion, cadet publications, cadet clubs, speaker series, leadership fora, equipment for leading-edge centers of excellence (e.g., the United States Naval Academy [USNA] Center for Cyber Security Studies; the United States Air Force Academy [USAFA] Center for Character and Leadership Development).

Independent fundraising arms have been established either within existing graduate associations or as separate, but related, endowment or foundation non-profits, to attract donations from alumni and sponsors. Legal restrictions prohibit superintendents, as leaders of Federal entities, from directly engaging these private non-profit organizations or their members to ask for financial support for academy programs. Currently, superintendents can make their academy's overall needs known in public settings, but must refrain from direct engagement with these groups with intent to garner their support. So, superintendents walk a fine line of building relationships and what they term "friend raising"—but they cannot "make the ask." Several current and former superintendents and Service leaders spoke to how such legal restrictions inhibit superintendents and make for awkward, time-consuming methods of advocacy, though

⁴¹ Of all respondents from all cohorts who spoke of 'constraints on the superintendent's role,' seven (four current university presidents, two former Service Chiefs, and one current superintendent) identified funding as a constraint. Three current or former superintendents pointed out that funding levels have declined for the academy. Four former superintendents noted increased reliance on nonappropriated funds (NAF) and philanthropic giving to maintain margin of excellence. Others mentioned awkward legal restrictions.

⁴² Budget Control Act of 2011, Pub.L. 112–25, 125 Stat. 240 (August 2, 2011).

⁴³ Alternatively, superintendents can address funding challenges by capitalizing on opportunities for additional appropriations. One superintendent, faced with both an urgent and a long-term need for refurbishment of the academy's physical plant, was successful in garnering Congressional backing for extensive infrastructure investment after a hurricane damaged the campus.

⁴⁴ As pointed out by four former superintendents.

others accept the existing situation and feel that superintendents have learned to live with it. Another research participant described how current rules cause superintendents to operate in a morally gray area, which can convey the wrong image for an institution that stands for upright character.

University and college presidents spoke of the importance of their fundraising role and expressed concern at what they perceive as an unnecessary constraint on superintendents. Indeed, both military and civilian leaders spoke of the very relevant and necessary nature of fundraising efforts, and the high stakes involved. As mentioned earlier, literature⁴⁵ and expert testimony spoke of how a university's leader serves as the embodiment of that institution's mission, the personification of the enterprise. This leader must personally form links, build trust, and foster confidence in wealthy donors' hearts and minds and then, in the case of the typical university president, make specific requests of those donors to meet the needs of the institution. Thus, respondents asserted that the vision-crafting, direction-setting, exemplar role of the university president and superintendent must be conveyed at a personal level, through personal interaction, to eligible donors who can then be made willing to give financially.⁴⁶

Current and former military and civilian leaders spoke of another constraint inherent in the current superintendent role: tour length, or tenure. Given the complexities of a multi-faceted higher education and leadership development enterprise, the long-term impact of the academies on the future leadership of each Service, and the time it takes to modify culture and institutionalize change, a number of leaders lamented the current three- or four-year tour. Of forty-three respondents who addressed this issue, 84 percent favor a longer tour than three years.⁴⁷ Overall, the team assesses the majority view as supportive of a longer tour with flexibility to extend at Service leadership discretion. Their comments were based on their own experience; their observations of previous superintendents; their understanding of the role of the academy in its Service; and the experience of other senior leaders leading civilian universities, colleges, and complex organizations. Their comments are supported by previous studies⁴⁸ of the

⁴⁵ Hendrickson, et al., *Academic Leadership and Governance of Higher Education*, 7.

⁴⁶ As indicated in the previous paragraph, the strictures on superintendents' conduct in this area attach to their status as senior military officers. Considering the purchasing power of the Department of Defense, a possible conflict of interest could arise should superintendents or other senior officers be assigned a direct fundraising role. Superintendents indirectly lend to such efforts by expressing the institution's needs in a general sense in approved venues.

⁴⁷ Of the thirty-six (84 percent) who favor a tour greater than three years, eight are Service Secretaries or Service Chiefs, ten are superintendents, and eight are university presidents. Of the three (7 percent) who favor a tour of three years, one is a Service Chief and one is a superintendent. Four respondents (9 percent), of whom one was a Service Secretary or Service chief and one was a superintendent, had no opinion.

⁴⁸ Panel to Review Sexual Misconduct Allegations at the United States Air Force Academy, "Report of the Panel to Review Sexual Misconduct Allegations at the U.S. Air Force Academy," September 23, 2003; Special Committee to the USNA Board of Visitors, *The Higher Standard: Assessing the United States Naval Academy*, June 1997; and USNA Board of Visitors, "Report of the Honor Review Committee to the Secretary of the Navy on Honor at the United States Naval Academy," December 22, 1993.

academies. The complexities of this human development endeavor and each institution's inherent inertia lead many to believe that three years is not enough time for a superintendent to effect change or to have a dynamic impact on the development process for the future leaders of the Services. Several respondents described the experience of other top managers and senior leaders who have needed several months to properly assess an institution's challenges and needed fixes, a year to properly craft a long-term strategic plan, and another year to marshal support, build a team, and garner resources. Many university presidents and a few former superintendents spoke of the reality of "hitting their stride" and beginning to see real impact and change during their fourth year; for university presidents, this was true despite having prior experience as an educational leader. In addition, the fact that the approximate duration of the superintendent's tour is known in advance can intensify inertia; by contrast, no university president labors under a similar "use by" date. This led some to argue for a longer fixed tour length, a tour with an indefinite end date, or a tour with a fixed end date but an acknowledged option to extend the superintendent as circumstances and Service leaders dictate. The latter two options provide the Services the opportunity to identify a successor and make a timely replacement should a superintendent's performance be less than desired.

With regard to both tour length and the background experience of superintendents, some statistics are informative. The American Council on Education has documented that the average university president's age has increased from fifty-two in 1986 to sixty-one in 2011. Over the same time period, the proportion of college presidents who previously served as president elsewhere increased from 40 percent to 54 percent. The increasing complexity of the university president's responsibilities and growing challenges were two of the reasons cited for these increases.⁴⁹ By contrast, there has been little to no change in the average age of superintendents. Furthermore, it remains the case that few superintendents have had prior experience leading educational institutions. It is not surprising that many current and former superintendents have developed relationships with university presidents to benefit from their experience dealing with common challenges, and to gain a deeper understanding of the modern university.

When commenting on the issue of tour length, a minority number of respondents made another important point, however. In light of the increasing complexity of the superintendent's roles, the constant scrutiny under which the superintendent operates, the continuous flow of distinguished visitors, and the growing demands on their time, a few respondents described natural limits on the energy level and stamina of a superintendent and his or her family; indeed, they pointed out that after four years a superintendent is likely to be "spent."⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Bryan J. Cook. "The American College President Study: Key Findings and Takeaways." *Presidency* no. Supp (May 2, 2012).

⁵⁰ One direct report to a superintendent described the nature of his boss' job: "Grueling job. Ready to fall over in 4th year."

Finally, a constraint which has always existed and will always exist is the resistance to change of various stakeholders, both internal and external. As one former Service Secretary noted,

There are a number of groups who feel like they should (and do) ‘own’ the Academy—and each group has worked out its current position of power. The new superintendent disturbs this equilibrium and thus generates resistance with any change. If the change is highly constructive, there is less resistance. For example, while there was support for adding a [new major to the Academy curriculum], the problem was what it would replace, and who would have to give something up. Managing these tensions is the constraint on the superintendent.

These tensions often arise when leaders aim to adapt their institutions as a response to changes in the environment, an element of the superintendent’s roles which will be developed next.

F. Roles of a Modern Superintendent

Examining the roles of Academy superintendents also includes a review of the dynamics in today’s environment that impact these leaders.

1. Emerging Environmental Changes to be Considered

Historically speaking, the Service Academies have continually adapted to change. Research respondents pointed, however, to significant changes in the environment in which the academies currently operate that have implications for the superintendent’s roles. Some observers contend that the greater number, speed, and scope of changes in today’s environment have had a major impact on both superintendents and university presidents. According to Judith Block McLaughlin, educational chair of the Harvard Seminar for New Presidents and the Harvard Seminar for Experienced Presidents, the roles of these educational leaders have become both more difficult and more complex. Dr. McLaughlin, who has been working with university presidents and superintendents for twenty-five years, cites several specific challenges, including ever-increasing fiduciary pressures, continual crisis management operations, growing external demands, and widespread skepticism about the ability of educational leaders to accomplish their missions. This view of the increasing difficulty and complexity of the educational environment was echoed by many other research participants, including Service leaders (one current Chief and one current Secretary), who view the superintendent’s roles as dynamic, or needing to adapt.

Many leaders interviewed for this research see adaptations of the superintendent’s roles as a necessary response to fundamental changes in the global security environment, in the military, and in society at large. The Department of Defense chartered its Service Academies for an enduring purpose—producing officers “immersed in the traditions and professional values

essential to the institutional character of the Armed Forces.”⁵¹ As cadets and midshipmen join the ranks of military officers, they will encounter a security environment that is growing more volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous. So in an era of increasing complexity, agility and adaptability are also valued competencies of military leaders. As the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff recently wrote:

To deliver the future force the Nation needs, we must develop leaders who can out-maneuver, out-think, and out-innovate our adversaries, while building trust, understanding, and cooperation with our partners. This demands leaders who can think through complexity, who are adaptable and agile, and who can build teams to accomplish missions. Our leaders must also be able to successfully navigate ethical gray zones where absolutes are elusive.⁵²

Thus, the modern superintendent’s roles include ensuring that graduates are both grounded in enduring core values (such as integrity) and prepared to deal with complexity and adapt in an uncertain environment. As officers, graduates will need to be lifelong learners, comfortable with today’s social networks and with tomorrow’s increasingly-distributed military organizations. They must be principled but open to new ideas, able to perform under increasingly stressful and rapidly changing circumstances.⁵³

Paralleling changes in the social environment, DOD’s leaders have also embraced diversity and inclusiveness, as reflected in the 2014 Department of Defense Human Goals statement, which noted, “We gain a strategic⁵⁴ advantage through the diversity of our total force and create a culture of inclusion, where individuals are drawn to serve, are valued, and actively contribute to mission success.”⁵⁵ The Military Service Academies have adopted these goals, not only by incorporating an increasingly diverse student population, but also by their efforts to inculcate respect for all as part of character development. In this environment, the superintendent’s roles include promoting and modeling respect for others. The inclusion of women, beginning in 1976, increased diversity in the Service Academies and led superintendents to reshape their institution’s culture and devise strategies to ensure diverse students succeed. Current superintendents and university presidents speak of the need to continue addressing diversity issues, including changes associated with the repeal of the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” law.⁵⁶ The superintendent’s role regarding diversity is illustrated by remarks of USMA Superintendent,

⁵¹ DOD, DOD Directive 1322.22, *Service Academies*, August 24, 1994, paragraph 4.

⁵² Martin E. Dempsey, “Investing in the Minds of Future Leaders,” *JFQ: Joint Force Quarterly* 74 (2014): 4–5.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Note that this use of the term is different than elsewhere in the report.

⁵⁵ Department of Defense (DOD), “Department of Defense Human Goals,” http://www.defense.gov/documents/DoD-HumanGoals_4-28-14.pdf.

⁵⁶ Policy Concerning Homosexuality in the Armed Forces, 10 U.S.C. §654 (1993). Repealed December 22, 2010.

Lieutenant General Robert L. Caslen, Jr., and the West Point Association of Graduates (WPAOG), recorded in the WPAOG's Fall 2014 publication:

'There is a divide between the military demographic and the American people,' Caslen says. Statistically speaking, non-Caucasians make up approximately 37 percent of the nation's population, but they comprise less than a quarter of the Corps of Cadets at West Point. In addition, women make up more than half of the US population, but the Corps is less than 20 percent female. 'The US Army and the Academy must reflect the diversity of the nation we serve,' says Caslen. 'West Point already has geographical representation through our admissions process; now it is imperative that it leverages all aspects of our nation's diversity to create and sustain an inclusive organization that attracts the best the United States has to offer.' Inclusion is the key. Not only does Caslen want to increase West Point's numbers when it comes to diversity, he wants to create an environment in which groups see themselves as neither part of a majority or minority, but rather as members of the same team. To that end, he has appointed the Academy's first Chief Diversity Officer, Dr Don Outing, former USMA professor of Mathematics and Director of the Center for Diversity and Leadership in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).⁵⁷

Another illustrative case relating to changes in the social environment is the involvement of senior leadership in changing the culture at the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA), which from 1998 to 2012 underwent a number of reviews and subsequent reforms regarding the treatment of women. In 2011, a high level government review resulted in several recommendations that affected the role of ADFA's commandant (equivalent to superintendent in the United States). The review called for greater engagement between the commandant and the Service chiefs; a greater role for the commandant in selecting staff, with increased emphasis on the representation of women; a minimum three-year tour for the commandant; and an increased reliance on residential advisors who are outside of the cadet structure and who report directly to the commandant regarding serious incidents.⁵⁸ According to the current commandant, implementation of these and other recommendations enabled his predecessor to select three outstanding officers who have become key drivers of change. The government review also recommended that ADFA train staff members on gender equality and supervision of mixed gender environments.⁵⁹ In response to this recommendation, all new staff members, who come from different communities within Australia's three military services, are given a two-week-long induction that builds on their service cultures and reinforces institutional values. The ADFA

⁵⁷ West Point Association of Graduates, *For Us All; the Campaign for West Point* (West Point, NY: West Point Association of Graduates, Fall 2014), 1.

⁵⁸ Australian Human Rights Commission, *Report on the Review into the Treatment of Women in the Australian Defence Force Academy* (Canberra: Australian Human Rights Commission, 2011), <https://defencereview.humanrights.gov.au/report-review-treatment-women-australian-defence-force-academy/table-recommendations>.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

experience, and its similarity with efforts at DOD Academies to change cultures and properly adapt to societal changes, is an insightful example, as today's superintendents continue shaping the culture of their leadership development programs.

For today's superintendents, another key environmental change is the increasing velocity of information and the widespread adoption of social media. Controlling the narrative and continually managing the message of the institution, both internally and externally—particularly during a crisis—is now a greater challenge due in part to the speed of information. Many participants emphasized the crucial need for today's superintendent to proactively implement a communication component of the academy strategy with key audiences (before a crisis) and to respond to public crises quickly and in accordance with the values of the Nation, the Service, and the academy. At the same time, it is important for the superintendent not to overreact, but to take a measured approach, remembering the importance of internal communications.

The previous discussion has highlighted environmental factors, such as changes in the character of warfare and changes in society, which require the academies to be adaptable institutions.⁶⁰ The superintendent's roles include the need to instigate and nurture such institutional adaptation. Although the research has highlighted the need to integrate numerous constituencies as a major challenge for superintendents, this challenge also presents an opportunity when change is needed. By presenting a clear, compelling, and consistent message to all stakeholders, the superintendent is simultaneously identified with a proposed change, and has the opportunity to synchronize its implementation across all stakeholder groups. By creating widespread awareness of a proposed change, the superintendent can provide his or her leadership teams, other constituencies, and most importantly, cadets and midshipmen with an opportunity to focus their collective energies toward achieving a common purpose. For example, a superintendent's advocacy for the need to adapt to the rise of cyber warfare has contributed to an environment in which significant private donations are equipping the Navy's projected new Center for Cyber Security Studies building at the Naval Academy.

Current superintendents, with Service leader direction and authority, are adapting to environmental changes by questioning the status quo and guiding institution responses. An example of such an adaptation was provided to the research team in the form of a white paper on honorable living authored by a current superintendent in response to changes in the profession of arms and in society. Today's battlefield requires military leaders to apply moral reasoning to make decisions in a complex, ambiguous environment. The post-September 11, 2001 operational environment has provided many examples of mission degradation by members of the military whose behavior did not comport with social norms and laws, whether by creating a hostile command climate, by responding inappropriately to sexual assault, or by ignoring violations of

⁶⁰ IDA has defined adaptability as “the operable capacity to bring about an effective response to an altered situation.” See Waldo D. Freeman and William R. Burns, Jr., *Developing an Adaptability Training Strategy and Policy for the Department of Defense (DOD)*, IDA Paper P-4591 (Alexandria, VA: IDA, August 2010), iii.

established rules of engagement in combat. With this experience as context, the superintendent became concerned that the Academy's Honor Code was more a compliance-based tool to control behavior than a systemic development program leading to internally-motivated honorable living. Therefore, the superintendent personally invested in defining honorable living and in developing a vision and a strategy update to sharpen the focus on changing behavior. The goal is to replace a mindset of simple compliance with a desire to live ethically. The superintendent further believes the overall strategy needs to deal with character and honor as part of and under the broader rubric of leadership development. Another superintendent was asked to author a white paper for his service on ethics prior to assuming his duties at his academy, and he is now guiding change based in part on that paper. Such adaptive efforts by these superintendents are also serving as sources for Service-wide changes.

One Service Chief pointed to an additional environmental factor: changes in his Service's military life, which is no longer as focused on the military base and its community activities as it was during the Cold War. This Service Chief noted that, since 2001, many military officers in his Service have been either deployed or living off base, which can make the transition from being cadets and midshipmen into the officer corps more pronounced. So the superintendent saw a need to adjust the way the academy prepares graduates to become junior officers, now that the environment they will encounter has changed.

A factor that has garnered greatly increased public awareness and that carries implications for the adaptability of universities, the Academies, and the Services is the issue of sexual assault prevention. There is strong agreement among Service leaders and university presidents that setting the tone at their level is vital. University presidents spoke of personally guiding implementation of new guidelines on sexual violence and sexual assault released by the Office for Civil Rights on April 29, 2014.⁶¹ At the academies, because violence—including sexual violence—within the ranks is antithetical to the purposes of their institutions and can lead to mission failure in the profession of arms, interviewees cited many instances of superintendents becoming deeply involved in this area. To set the proper tone he or she must understand the impact of sexual assault, including the problems and challenges subordinates face in their daily lives. Superintendents are uniquely able to address this issue due to their role overseeing a character development program for today's youth using the core values of the military profession. The decisions that the superintendent makes in this area are influential not just for the academy, but for each Service as a whole. The academies serve as indicators and learning laboratories that can be used to sense ongoing changes in the Nation's youth, and changing societal and generational norms will continue to place superintendents in a position of being on the leading edge in adapting to the next generation. In some cases, the academies have led their Services in instituting improvements to sexual assault prevention and response programs, and

⁶¹ U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, "Questions and Answers on Title IX and Sexual Violence," <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/qa-201404-title-ix.pdf>.

when superintendents are included in discussions among Service senior leaders about this and other readiness and cultural challenges, they can assist their Services in identifying areas where widespread change is needed.

a. Factors Affecting the Superintendent's Response to Environmental Change

As the previous examples illustrate, superintendents have employed a variety of resources to adapt their institutions to environmental changes in society and the profession of arms. However, several respondents drew attention to systemic factors that can affect superintendents as they seek to implement far-reaching or long-term change. First, as highlighted in Chapter 3, Section E, dozens of research respondents identified the superintendent's limited tour length as a major constraint in this area. A three-year tour gives superintendents a year to learn their jobs, a year to begin implementing change, and a year to begin assessing the effects of new strategic plans, programs, or initiatives. Since the academies are four-year leadership laboratories, the superintendent often retires before the result of his or her actions can be ascertained.

A second systemic factor is the superintendent's need for a clear charter and sustained support from the Service for enacting change. The Services' senior leaders often provide this vital support, but a wide range of other concerns can take these leaders' attention away from sponsoring change at the academies. In particular, maintaining long-term focus is a challenge, especially when the academies are not in the headlines. One mechanism employed to enact change in many public and private universities is the governing board. Several university presidents among the research participants provided vivid descriptions of how they forged partnerships with their boards in implementing a major change. Indeed, a recent study by the Association of Governing Boards concluded that "change will not happen if the board is not an active contributor."⁶² In some cases, boards give new presidents an express mandate for change and then publicly support the presidents' actions. (In other cases, boards have brought on change agents and then, when resistance was encountered, shifted course). Service Academies' advisory boards are not chartered to fulfill the same governance role as university boards and superintendents rely on Service leadership to endorse and reinforce their efforts to implement change. Research interviews indicated such support is currently strong; its importance speaks to the need for continued emphasis.⁶³

Thirdly, as noted earlier, the academies' environments are often sensitive to the influence of various stakeholders, which affects superintendents' efforts to increase institutional adaptability. A technique superintendents have successfully employed in this regard is to adapt their leadership styles by delegating advocacy for change to other members of the leadership team.

⁶² Terrence MacTaggart and Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, *Leading Change: How Boards and Presidents Build Exceptional Academic Institutions* (n.p.: Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, 2011), 17.

⁶³ Service leaders garnering the support of the BoV for a superintendent's effort to implement change could also add value.

For example, a superintendent who wanted to make a major change in the core curriculum chose to leverage the institutional credentials of the academic dean. In allowing the dean to lead the change, he avoided creating the perception that the curriculum change was a top-down initiative coming from a superintendent who disregarded faculty views.

The dynamic demands of today's educational environment may partially explain why superintendents' counterparts in universities are becoming relatively more practiced as leaders in higher education: more experience can give them greater credibility and confidence in promoting change agendas. This suggests the Military Services might seek ways of equipping superintendents specifically for these challenging and complex environments.

2. Expanding Activities at the Academies (Beyond Drucker)

The previous adaptations to the superintendent's roles in response to changes in the profession of arms and in society are necessary because they enable the academy's core mission of producing leaders of character. The research team's examination of the superintendent's roles so far, then, has remained aligned with both the Service Academies' missions and Drucker's construct of top management tasks.

Interviewees also pointed, however, to three interrelated activities that have resulted in expanding demands on a superintendent's time. While these activities can be construed to contribute to the academy mission and to fall within the scope of top management tasks framed by Drucker, they significantly broaden the traditional roles of the superintendent. These three activities are (1) ensuring a *margin of excellence*, often using donor funding, to enhance academy programs, including creating centers of excellence; (2) responding to fiscal challenges, particularly through greater "friend-raising" efforts, while continuing to refrain from actual financial appeals that are prohibited by law; and (3) spending increasingly more time focused on external stakeholders. Each of these activities was originally introduced in Chapter 3, Sections A and E, and will be explicitly considered here due to their implications for a superintendent's job responsibilities. The extent to which these growing activities are integrated into the superintendents' roles may require further consideration by the leadership of the Military Departments.

Ensuring a Margin of Excellence. All three Service Academies have ongoing efforts to advocate for resources needed to fund programs which bolster and enhance the academies' core development mission (mentioned also in Chapter 3, Sections D and E), such as out-of-classroom experiences for cadets and midshipmen, overseas immersions, athletic and academic-related clubs, guest speakers, equipping facilities, and academic or leadership centers of excellence. Such programs, termed the *margin of excellence*, not only aim to boost the academy's leadership development, but can increase the academy's stature and have a nationwide impact. West Point's Simon Center for the Professional Military Ethic trains cadets on ethics, reinforces the honor code, and hosts national ethics conferences. The founding of the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point in 2003 leveraged the leadership and intellectual capital of its Department of Social

Sciences and had far-reaching impact across DOD. The Naval Academy hosts an annual leadership conference attended by representatives from forty-five civilian and military universities. In addition, the Naval Academy's Center for Cyber Security Studies enables enhanced education for midshipmen and is being positioned to make a broader contribution to the Navy as the Service embraces cyber warfare as an integral part of all operations. Similarly, at the Air Force Academy, the superintendent is focusing on the Center for Character and Leadership Development (CCLD) as one element within a larger effort to inculcate a culture of commitment and climate of respect academy-wide. Moreover, the CCLD has the potential to become a center of excellence which will not only develop leaders at the academy, but also play a similar role across the service. Such margin of excellence efforts may even include forging cooperative learning alliances with civilian universities, both at home and abroad, with industry, and with government agencies. For example, the leaders of West Point and Vassar College have developed a regular program of exchanges "to help bridge the growing divide between civilians and the military."⁶⁴ Margin of excellence efforts also carry risks, as donors can exert influence or press for initiatives that may not comport with the academy's mission or priorities.

Responding to Fiscal Challenges. Superintendents and university presidents alike identified coping with fiscal pressures as an emerging and increasingly important part of their roles. More specifically, superintendents indicated that their advocacy for appropriated funds and their engagement in efforts to cultivate private donations are expanding activities. Superintendents stressed their determination to continue to provide quality education, athletic development, and character and leadership development, despite the reality of declining resources. As one superintendent wrote in a recent alumni publication, "We will become leaner and more streamlined; but we will not lose who we are in the process. While some individual programs will be modified, or even eliminated, the essence of the Academy will remain."⁶⁵

Superintendents are primarily dependent on appropriated funds and, thus, the Services' budget processes are particularly important to them as they consider how best to fulfill their mission. One superintendent found that the academy did not have a direct input into the Service's resource allocation process and has taken steps to correct this situation. However, in a tight budget climate, having a voice is often not enough—superintendents likely will need substantial assistance from their Service leaders as they strive to accomplish their mission with diminishing resources. The academy budgets, though not unsubstantial, comprise a very small part of a total Service budget. Service Chiefs in the past have recognized this and have acted to insure the budget process provided the academies adequate resources, as well as the stability needed to support planning. One former Service Chief described a superintendent coming to him to discuss the unpredictable nature of his funding. The Chief, who was previously unaware that

⁶⁴ Robert L. Caslen and Catharine Bond Hill, "A Different Kind of Diversity on Campus," *Wall Street Journal*, August 26, 2014, 1.

⁶⁵ Michelle Johnson, "From the Superintendent," *Checkpoints* (March 2014), 9.

there was an issue, responded by assuring him that the academy's future funding would be stable. Another Service Chief instructed his budget and program office that it could not tinker with academy funding without his permission. This is an excellent example of the need for a close working relationship between the superintendent and his or her Service Chief.

With regard to private funding, both university presidents and superintendents alike have become more involved in developing new financial sources, with an important caveat for the academies. While a university president may play a direct role in fundraising, a superintendent can only identify needs and articulate priorities for their programs and installations. University presidents report a marked increase in the proportion of their time spent in fundraising and budgeting, particularly leaders of public schools experiencing a precipitous decline in State funding. Superintendents have likewise become aware of the need to secure additional funding for costs as divergent as those associated with speaking fees for guests in various leadership programs and those associated with providing new or upgraded facilities. Two research participants identified fundraising as that part of the superintendent's roles they were least prepared for, and another identified fiscal pressures, in general, as an area where he or she lacked preparation.

In some cases, donations have enabled the academies to continue operating margin of excellence programs despite diminished Federal funding. One way this challenge plays out at the Service Academies is in their participation in NCAA Division I athletics. As noted in Chapter 3, Section C, this is an area for which superintendents and university presidents said they were least prepared. On the one hand, participation in athletics directly contributes to developing leaders of character. On the other, the athletic program entails underwriting the cost of Division I participation across all sports, while responding to pressure from alumni and donors to excel in a host of competitive venues. However, appropriated funding accounts for only a portion of the large amount of money needed to support the athletic program; the rest must come from private donations. This example illustrates how superintendents must reconcile the need to cut costs or identify new revenue streams with the imperative to ensure the ongoing health of a program that is central to their missions. In some cases, superintendents may lack the tools, including the legal freedom of action, to succeed in a college athletic environment that continues to evolve in significant ways; support and informed decision making from Service leadership may therefore be needed.

Increasing External Focus. Because they rely upon support from external stakeholders to accomplish their mission and to raise funds, superintendents must maintain strong relationships and good communications with outside organizations. The growing financial pressures on the Service Academies intensify the superintendent's role in educating a wide variety of stakeholders on the academies' mission, not least to justify their return on investment to taxpayers. Another external activity is engagement with issues surrounding intercollegiate athletics; superintendents increasingly find themselves involved in discussions about funding for athletics, athletic facilities, athletic associations, and NCAA requirements. In addition, the continuous 24-hour

news cycle drives superintendents to be engaged with media, in communicating academy and Service messages and in response to crises. One current superintendent is making deliberate efforts to build a relationship of trust with reliable reporters. Army leadership is seeking to leverage West Point and its superintendent to positively engage the New York City media market. As noted in Chapter 3, Section A.1, these growing interactions with an extensive list of external stakeholders are a factor in the demanding load of engagements placed on superintendents.⁶⁶ Of potential concern is whether the increasing external demands on the superintendents' time are unduly impacting the internal focus on the academies' core mission. As one former Service Chief noted, superintendents should operate primarily at the executive level, occasionally devoting their attention to more day-to-day operational activities. However, as demands at the executive level grow to include more external stakeholder engagements, superintendents' local awareness and interactions with cadets, staff, and faculty may be curtailed. Therefore, other members of the superintendent's leadership team may need to increase their activities in these areas.

Taken together, these three sets of expanding activities—various margin of excellence initiatives, the need to address fiscal challenges, and growing external focus—raise a question for the Services to consider: on balance, do they detract from the superintendents' ability to focus on the academies' core missions of developing leaders of character? If they are indeed needed and valued by the Services, a discussion may be in order on how best to support the superintendents in this expanded set of activities.

3. Dealing with Today's Generation of Entrants, and the Next

The academies have always dealt with the challenges that exist as a result of differences between generations. There are differing schools of thought regarding the degree to which the generational difference between entrants and superintendent affect the superintendent's roles. As a minimum, the modern superintendent should seek to understand the culture of the younger generation and convey sincere interest in leveraging this generation's strengths.

There are many sources, and opinions, about the key traits characteristic of the current generation; superintendents and university presidents demonstrated a healthy understanding of the type of entrants they are chartered to develop and educate. A 2010 report issued by the Federal Chief Information Officer Council examined trends that were expected to affect the Federal information technology workforce, many of which are also applicable to today's Service Academy cadets and midshipmen, as well as to university students. Chief among these trends is greater workforce diversity.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Several respondents described superintendents being engaged 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. A Navy official stated, for instance, that the superintendent's house is the most visited house in DOD.

⁶⁷ CIO Council, "Net Generation: Preparing for Change in the Federal Information Technology Workforce." (Washington, DC: CIO Council, 2010), <http://www.govexec.com/pdfs/042310ah1.pdf>, 44.

As leaders of increasingly diverse institutions developing young people, the superintendents and university presidents the team spoke with have tailored their methods to fit the needs of today's generation of entrants. For example, some participants have leveraged research findings on how adolescent brains develop by adopting new ways of approaching moral and values education. Further, the identification of a life stage occurring after adolescence, known as "emerging adulthood" extending well beyond age twenty, has given them an appreciation of the challenges faced by academy cadets and midshipmen, as well as university students.⁶⁸ Research participants and the team's literature review also highlighted several attributes that are relatively more pronounced in the current student cohort, including the following:

- A desire for flexibility and empowerment⁶⁹
- A preference for group social settings and for joining with others to serve the less fortunate
- Increasingly common friendships across genders, along with openness to social change
- The continuing influence of peer pressure
- A lack of resilience and a close relationship with parents, who, in turn, can have more influence on their young adult children's lives
- Different styles of learning and communication, as well as skepticism stemming from the availability of information, leading them to want to discover or confirm facts themselves

Today's young people tend to be service-oriented and collaborative.⁷⁰ In a recent Pew Research Center survey of the most important things in the lives of millennials, 52 percent of survey respondents listed being a good parent and 21 percent listed helping those in need.⁷¹ As one superintendent commented, these young people are highly altruistic and place importance on helping others, such as their peers at the academy as well as the needy in their community, their Service, and overseas. The academies, then, have an opportunity to build on this apparent outward focus on others, since the academies strive to prepare future leaders with a higher-order ability to elevate service to others ahead of their own interests especially in the face of great hardship, conflict, and combat, or in the face of an acute ethical challenge. As a former Service Chief stated, such finely-developed character is a required attribute in the officer corps.

⁶⁸ Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, "Emerging Adulthood: A Theory of Development from the Late Teens through the Twenties." *American Psychologist* 55, no. 5 (May 2000), 469–480, quoted in Hendrickson et al., 343.

⁶⁹ CIO Council, *Net Generation*, 45.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁷¹ Pew Research Center, *Millennials: A Portrait of Generation Next: Confident. Connected. Open to Change* (Pew Research Center, 2010), 2, <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/files/2010/10/millennials-confident-connected-open-to-change.pdf>.

This outward focus and concern attributed to this generation is also manifest in thoughtfulness demonstrated, as described by one university president, by ethical introspection and classroom discussion, such as weighing whether a particular technology should be developed based on its impact on society. One superintendent and one dean reported that the repeal of “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” was a non-event at their academies—another indicator of the ability of today’s young people to accommodate changes in society.

Millennials also tend to be very close to their parents. A university president described how millennials love adults and that many students say their mom is their best friend. This view is reciprocated in the well-known phenomenon of “helicopter parenting,” which many superintendents and university presidents confirmed to be a very real factor. A former university president noted that parents are students’ friends and cheerleaders. And a current superintendent stated that some have even moved to the local area to be near their children. This superintendent also pointed out how parents can become allies of the academy. For example, one commandant received a phone call from a first year cadet’s father alerting him that the cadet was considering disenrollment. In this case, the commandant chose to contact the cadet directly by visiting his room. In another case, a university president noted that parents called him personally because their child reported not receiving eight hours of sleep per night. While senior leaders are judicious in deciding to intervene, such information from parents can create opportunities to shape and support the young people in their charge.

Parent involvement creates challenges in that young people are less accustomed to fighting their own battles and are unwilling to accept “no” for an answer. A university president described the importance of convincing parents that students can benefit by learning to resolve issues on their own. This university president also emphasized the importance of meeting young people where they are today. For example, although they may be less mature than previous generations of students, they are also more moldable, giving universities the opportunity to help them build resilience and grit. As a result of this thinking, the president reported holding an internal conversation with university staff on strategies to help students build toughness.

The modern superintendent should also understand how the younger generation learns and communicates—both in the means it employs and the language it uses. These practices have changed with the proliferation of technology in an always-on culture, creating differing challenges for leaders of universities versus those of Service Academies. According to one Service Chief, universities can bring in young teaching assistants who are accustomed to working with the same technology as the students, whereas Service Academies do not have that option. Therefore, academies may need to find creative ways to enable junior officers to help their institutions adapt to cadets’ and midshipmen’s increasing use of technology to augment the learning process. In the classroom, millennials may not appear to be engaged, whereas in reality they are learning on their own terms. They may be using portable devices and computers to expand their knowledge of topics under discussion, verify a claim an instructor is making, or even to send texts to one another rather than verbalize an idea. There is a challenge in

understanding when the use of technology is furthering education and when it reflects poor manners and a breakdown in discipline. Regardless, these different patterns of communicating and absorbing knowledge may spur educators to adapt in response. They may spend more time encouraging their students to “think before they send,” and to learn to craft more complete arguments. In addition, educators will continue to face new and unexpected challenges. A research participant at one academy provided an example where an anonymous local social media application was found to contain posts that were derogatory towards certain groups and individuals and could undermine the academy’s mission and values. The leadership had to make a decision on whether to block the site. It chose instead to challenge cadets to respond online by rejecting others’ derogatory comments and, in so doing, publicly reinforce the academy’s values. The cadets’ positive response to this challenge illustrates the risks and rewards of understanding and adapting to young people’s patterns of communication and values.

The team’s research identified a range of views as to whether the ethical and moral outlook of entering cadets and midshipmen is compatible with Service core values. Some research participants⁷² expressed the notion that there was a growing gap between the values of each entering class and the values of the Services and their academies. In this view, the experience of today’s youth in society has led to values that are different and many entrants have not absorbed the values of integrity, service, and excellence. However, before carrying this view and the attendant response too far, it might be wise to recognize that the view is not a new one. A former superintendent, reflecting on his tenure during the 1960s, commented that “...the gap between our discipline and civilian permissiveness was, I believe, far greater than it had ever been in the history of the academy. This really worried us.”⁷³ Reflecting this view, a few respondents indicated that the fundamental nature of each incoming class has remained unchanged over the years: they are bright, socially immature, prone to take risks, and have raging hormones.

Regardless of whether the gap between the academies and society is growing, superintendents employ a variety of tools to ensure that the academies reorient the values and behavior of today’s entering classes to achieve the goal of producing officers of character. There is evidence at each academy of initiatives that recognize the attributes of today’s youth. The Australian Defense Force Academy, again, offers an instructive parallel case. The ADFA leadership team developed a long-term plan for enacting cultural change in the treatment of women, which eventually grew into a broad values-based approach to “ADFA Citizenship” incorporating a full range of behavioral change. The ADFA commander’s intent is “to deliver graduates prepared for their Single Service officer training, who embody the requisite values and attributes and possess a fundamental grounding in the profession of arms.”⁷⁴ The identification

⁷² Six current or former superintendents, three current or former university presidents, and three members of current Academy leadership explicitly or implicitly described their perception of a growing gap.

⁷³ Kaufmann, *The Reminiscences of Rear Admiral Draper L. Kauffman*, 765.

⁷⁴ Australian Defence Force, “ADFA Commanding Officer’s Direction to the Undergraduate Body,” (2014), 4.

of these required values and attributes stem from work done by Pat Dade of Cultural Dynamics Strategy & Marketing Ltd and from ADFA leaders' discussions on adolescent learning with Laurence Steinberg, a behavioral scientist. After extensive analysis of this and other current research, ADFA used defined values, attributes, and behaviors as the basis for their training program. ADFA also employs these concepts in a staff indoctrination program that emphasizes a firm and fair approach to building relationships with cadets and midshipmen.⁷⁵ The goal of this effort is to enable cadets and midshipmen an opportunity to talk over problems with the academy staff at an early stage, to prevent the problems from becoming unmanageable. In addition, the Australian Defense Force has established several avenues for confidentially reporting unethical behaviors. The relationship building and confidential reporting initiatives are reinforcing, in that the former is a public way of communicating senior leaders' commitment to cultural change, giving cadets and midshipmen greater confidence in the effectiveness of the latter.

Gaining an appreciation of generational differences in learning styles, communication patterns, and behavioral development takes time, but such an appreciation and understanding is essential in enabling superintendents to advocate for innovations that play to the strengths of the current generation. These innovations can be as simple as abandoning top-down training accomplished via slide presentations to large groups in favor of a more relational learning experience. For example, interview respondents at West Point, Annapolis, and Colorado Springs all cited their success in employing peer-group and small group settings as a new preferred venue to advance values training. As they discussed such topics as sexual assault prevention and honor and ethics lessons, current superintendents and commandants mentioned small group sessions, sometimes employing facilitators drawn from the corps of cadets and midshipmen, to enable peer group discussions of how Service values play out in their lives, and furthermore, how values development can be encouraged. A former senior officer described his experiences mentoring a small group of senior cadets who were presented with real-life ethical dilemmas as part of a capstone ethics course. The views varied, the discussion and debate was robust, and the cadets gained great benefits from wrestling with the issues together in a group setting. As superintendents and their staffs gain experience with programs like these, they can share their successes to benefit their Services' training and character development efforts.

G. Summary: Findings on Roles and How Roles Are Changing

The superintendent performs many roles. He or she is first and foremost a commander, but one who fulfills a multi-dimensional executive role; overall, the superintendent performs functions that exceed those of most commanders, university presidents and CEOs. (Chapter 3, Section A)

⁷⁵ Laurence Steinberg, "A Behavioral Scientist Looks at the Science of Adolescent Brain Development," *Brain and Cognition* 72, no. 1 (February 2010), 1.

The superintendent engages a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders continually. (Chapter 3, Section A)

The superintendent conveys the strategic vision and direction for the academy in line with Service strategy and direction; sets objectives; establishes the environment and tone; sets and enforces standards. (Chapter 3, Section A)

The superintendent leads change, and in doing so uses persuasion and influence to earn buy-in from all stakeholders in order to adapt the academy's development programs. (Chapter 3, Section A)

The superintendent performs as an important role model. (Chapter 3, Section A)

The superintendent's execution of his or her roles can garner nationwide attention, particularly during crises. (Chapter 3, Section A)

The superintendent is responsible and accountable for the mission to grow future leaders of character, which requires three fundamental lines of effort: moral, mental, and physical development. These three lines of effort must be guided strategically; they require continual integration and balance; in particular, character development requires special attention. (Chapter 3, Sections B and C)

Superintendents' roles have important distinctions from other, similar military and civilian roles. (Chapter 3, Section D)

Superintendents are "out there on their own," as direct reports to Service leaders and with no major command supervisor or advocate in between. (Chapter 3, Section D)

Superintendents sense constraints in resources. (Chapter 3, Section E)

A three-year tour for a superintendent is generally insufficient. (Chapter 3, Section E)

The roles of the superintendent are becoming potentially more complex as a result of changes in the profession of arms and in society. (Chapter 3, Section F)

Superintendents' expanding activities include ensuring a margin of excellence, responding to fiscal challenges, and increasing external focus. (Chapter 3, Section F)

Superintendents are conscious of the need to adapt their institutional programs and processes to leverage the characteristic strengths of the current generation of entrants. (Chapter 3, Section F)

4. An Examination of the Criteria for *Selection* of a Superintendent

This chapter discusses the insights gleaned from the interviews and literature review on the selection of Academy superintendents. First, it examines what the research indicates the current selection criteria are, and how the process actually works, including constraints that impact superintendent selection. It includes a retrospective look at career paths of actual selectees since 1991, highlighting significant factors. Next, it considers what the selection criteria should be in the context of the Drucker management framework introduced in Chapter 3. This is followed by a look at other selection considerations that are outside of Drucker's top management tasks. Finally, the research discovered considerable evidence that proactively preparing both potential and selected superintendents for the job is both important and feasible. Suggestions in this vein are offered. A summary of research findings about selection is listed at the conclusion.

A. What the Research Reveals: What Are the Selection Criteria?

1. Selection Factors, Qualifications, and Attributes

IDA's research found the factors considered during selection of superintendent nominees to lead the DOD's Service Academies are qualitative in nature. They are described by the Military Departments in the context of the selection processes used to fill all GO/FO positions. In general, the research team found that selection factors are based on the purpose and mission of the academy as it is understood by Service leaders, the needs of the Service, the needs of the academy, and the environment at the time. The factors are typically broadest during the early stages of selection consideration and then narrow over time as the selection process formalizes, in order to meet the needs of the Service and its academy at the time the job needs filling. The factors have not remained static over time, but in general are described by all involved in the selection process as "the right fit." Such could be said of all GO/FO assignment selections, but in the case of the superintendent such a "right fit" has recently been a matter of careful and deliberate consideration by the Military Departments.

There is clear evidence among current Army, Air Force, and Navy leaders that the superintendent job is considered unique, important, complex, and one requiring careful assessment of important subjective factors during the selection process. One Service leader testified as to how the selection of a superintendent is akin to the selection of a four-star, and others indicated it should be. Among all respondents who play or have played a role in the

selection of superintendents, all but two cited *leadership* as the overriding factor in making the selection decision. Similarly, among all respondents who opined on what factors are most important in future selections, 93 percent replied with “demonstrated leadership” as extremely important or very important (100 percent graded it as important or higher).

In general, consideration of selection factors follow predictable and similar patterns among all three Military Departments. All three Services are settled on the need for the superintendent role to be a three-star position. IDA’s research indicates that the entire inventory of eligible officers is assessed. The assignment history of these officers is screened for command and joint experience. Successful command at the two-star level is important. An assessment is made regarding the officer’s variety of assignments and breadth of leadership experience. Inputs are gathered from senior Service leaders (four-stars) as to the officers’ leadership ability, interpersonal skills, judgment, and intellectual prowess with the academy setting in mind. Experts familiar with selection considerations indicated that character, leadership style, and personality are taken into account: a candidate cannot be temperamental, but must be engaging, able to fulfill a public representational role, and have character that cannot be questioned; qualities such as *unflappable*, able to be a moral/ethical compass, and able to deal with faculty and staff and be focused on the leadership development process were used by respondents. Understanding the academy environment, the role the academy plays and its historical place in the Service’s culture is important; thus, a potential candidate’s having had a previous academy tour may be a factor. The selection practices of some Services indicate that being an academy graduate is essential. Installation command experience and some measure of academic credentials are desired, but not considered prerequisites. Consideration is given as to how the officer complements, or blends with, the existing academy senior leaders in place, the commandant, the dean, and the athletic director. During development of this pool of candidates, priority is placed on ensuring the pool is diverse. Those experts managing the selection process continually attempt to gain an understanding of what the Secretary and Chief believe is needed—the direction the academy needs to take and what kind of leader is needed to take it there. Indeed, several senior leaders and selection process experts spoke of a basic selection factor being the current environmental factors or issues impacting the academy (i.e., “what’s needed at the Academy at the time”). This might take the form of considering candidates who are particularly suited, based on the relevance of their previous experiences or education, to contend with an important issue currently being dealt with at the academy (e.g., sexual assault).

Fundamental to being the right fit at the right time is whether or not the officer has credibility, in particular, credibility as a leader. This factor is absolutely essential, and is subjectively measured throughout the selection process as credibility among peers, credibility in his or her specialty, credibility in an academic or training environment, credibility across the Service’s senior military and civilian leadership, and perceived credibility before cadets or midshipmen. Because of the importance of the role, the stature of the academy, and the fact that a superintendent must engage a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders (and receives a

lot of unsolicited help), credibility is viewed as key—92 percent of respondents, who addressed “professional credibility,” see it as an important, very important, or extremely important criterion.

Current Military Department leaders the team interviewed provided detailed descriptions of what criteria and attributes they look for in superintendent candidates, the range of which are summarized here. Some respondents described candidates who must be broad thinkers and able to grasp the political, social, and military aspects of today’s dynamic environment, and understand the relationships among those factors. Three different current Service leaders explicitly described the importance of having a variety of diverse leadership experiences, such as having operated in a joint and/or interagency or coalition environment; commanded at many different levels; and been associated with or familiar with all aspects of their Service—the combat/warfighting mission, mission support, and institutional functions. Given the military’s recent experience deployed and in combat, some Service leaders have wanted the superintendent to be a combat veteran; in particular, they put a premium on someone who commanded in combat, understands the role of women in combat, and who is well grounded in tactical and operational matters, but also understands strategy at the national level. Command, especially operational command, is viewed overall as especially important; in command, experience understanding the importance of diversity and the impact of integrating women and minorities are gained. One Service leader the team interviewed valued innovation in a candidate, evidence that a leader can adapt so as to lead in light of changes at the academy, in their Service, and in society. One current leader was specifically seeking a successful change agent. Some Service leaders also look for candidates who are well-rounded in all three mission elements of the academy (academic, military, athletic). Leaders recognize the need for superintendents to reach out and engage publicly with a wide variety of internal and external audiences, so ability to communicate is valued; even better is a dynamic leader with charisma who is able to communicate with many audiences. One current Service leader looks for previous training and experience dealing with the media and managing a crisis, to include social-media savvy. Some leaders value experience dealing with young people, seeking candidates with a proven feel for the younger generation, and/or a previous tour in the education or training enterprise of their Service. Service leaders also described their desire for candidates with strategic vision, able to see where their Service is headed and align the vision of the academy accordingly, take the academy along that course, and assess and adapt along the way.

Many respondents from the cohorts of Service Chiefs and Service Secretaries, both current and former, described, using a variety of terms, the importance of a broad, diverse menu of experiences in a candidate. They spoke of experiences serving in roles inside the functional or institutional arenas of their Service, or in roles requiring performance in settings with multiple actors and multiple agendas—policymaking, joint, interagency, allied, or coalition roles—where collaboration, deliberation, and consensus building was a premium and where influence and persuasion rather than hierarchical command direction was the operative tool. Of respondents

who opined on this subject, 32 percent scored this “diversity of experiences” as extremely or very important.

Differences among the three Military Departments as to selection criteria are few; they revolve around whether or not a candidate must be an academy graduate and the value of whether or not a candidate comes from a line operational/warfare specialty. Also, in practice, some Services have chosen slightly more experienced candidates to be superintendent than others. Finally, there are a variety of views regarding the current statutory stipulation requiring a superintendent to retire at the end of his/her tour, but many consider it a constraint on selection (see Chapter 4, Section A on “Constraints”).

As indicated previously, during IDA’s research interviews, the team asked virtually every respondent to apply a weight of importance to typical criteria used for selection.⁷⁶ By a large margin, the overwhelming overall weight of importance was applied to the criteria labeled “demonstrated leadership.” Indeed, several respondents described all other criteria as subordinate to “demonstrated leadership.” After “demonstrated leadership,” the heaviest weight of importance (having received a score of extremely important) was placed, in order from most scores to least, on “professional credibility,” “public persona,” “ability to adapt to change,” and “temperament.” Lesser and varying degrees of importance were placed on “diversity of experiences,” “Washington experience,” “academic credentials,” “training or education enterprise experience,” and “racial, ethnic, and gender diversity.” For the full results of this portion of specific research interview results, see Appendix C.

Of particular note are the unanimous, emphatic, and sometimes passionate inputs the team received related to the importance of “demonstrated leadership.” Several Service leaders, in fact, binned some other criteria (such as “professional credibility” and “temperament”) as simple subsets of “demonstrated leadership” and thus not able to be separately weighted. In general, although several respondents had some difficulty making distinctions in degree of importance for each selection factor, when all responses are consolidated, a relative sense of importance can be seen. Several respondents warned against an exact template for selection of a superintendent; they reject a checklist or a cookie-cutter approach, citing the many variables involved, the in-depth knowledge and insight the Service Chief has of his senior talent, and the temporal and environmental factors that are important in selecting the right fit... the person with the particular leadership strengths needed at the time. Respondents did not reject any of the factors as a consideration outright; all provided a relative weight of importance for each criterion either by a score or with words. Proven leadership—and confidence in that leadership to handle this important, complex role—is clearly the most prominent factor in selection.

⁷⁶ The research team developed this list of criteria as a result of research into current practices, trial interviews with senior leaders and academy experts, and inputs from cognitive experts during “phase zero” of the project. Respondents were asked, within the interview protocols, to apply a value to selection criteria using a Likert-like scale.

Regarding criteria that received less weight, it is important to highlight that “academic credentials” received the most scores in the not-very-important category. Those answers were based on the respondents’ seeing that criterion as meaning “a PhD,” which the large majority saw as not required of a superintendent. This view comports with the overall view that “demonstrated leadership” was the overriding factor, that most GO/FOs will possess some graduate degree at the Master’s level, and that each academy has a dean with superior academic credentials including a terminal degree. While not viewing a PhD as critical, many respondents pointed out, however, that a superintendent must possess an appreciation for higher education and be comfortable engaging with academics. Those few respondents who saw “academic credentials” as extremely or very important saw a PhD or overall academic background as important to the superintendent’s bona fides in academic circles, to his/her ability to engage with other leaders of institutions of higher education, and to the academy’s stature as a top-notch undergraduate institution with a national reputation. Refer to Chapter 4, Section A.4 for a brief discussion of this criterion in the context of career-path analysis of backgrounds of superintendents from recent history.

Regarding other criteria such as “Washington experience,” “training or education enterprise experience,” and “racial, ethnic, and gender diversity,” all told, responses indicated these criteria are valid considerations, but more in the nice-to-have category than the essential category. Understanding how Washington works was seen by many as an important benefit to a superintendent, as many academy issues reach national prominence. Although many did not score previous experience in the Service’s training or education enterprise high, many respondents view a previous tour at the academy as a younger officer as very important. Scores applied to the “racial, ethnic, and gender diversity” criterion were based on the frequently-voiced opinion that the selection goal is the best leader for the job at the time, that diversity should always be considered, and that the final choice should come from a diverse pool of candidates. Many Service leader respondents, during interview discussions, voiced confidence that the Services will continue to have a diverse pool to choose from and that a woman or a minority officer will be chosen in the near future, if not already in place. (Both USAFA and the U.S. Coast Guard Academy [USCGA] currently have superintendents who are women.)

IDA asked many respondents to quantify the relative size of the candidate pool who might meet the criteria to be a superintendent candidate. At least six different Service leaders who ventured to opine about this issue indicated that a relatively low percentage of the serving three-star and two-star cohorts of GO/FOs fulfill the criteria and are available to be a good candidate. Reasons cited include practical, fact-of-life factors such as timing, personal situations, and the low number of three-star opportunities, as well as insights that only certain backgrounds and leadership styles among that cohort fit the role of superintendent. In general, all Service leaders the team questioned indicated the need for a selective approach to choosing someone for this distinctive role, an approach with more selection factors and considerations than for a typical operational three-star role. Despite that, Service leaders responsible for the selection of

superintendent nominees voiced sound confidence—indeed, a unanimous view—that current GO/FO development paths produce a sufficient number of good candidates from which to choose. Those involved in recent choices for the superintendent role indicated there were sufficient candidates to choose from.

2. The Selection Process

The selection process for superintendent nominees follows the direction of and supports the central decision makers for all GO/FO assignments: the Service Chief and Secretary. The pool of potential selectees begins to develop as the result of Central Promotion Boards assigned and chartered by the Secretary which choose a list of one-star (O-7) and two-star (O-8) promotees annually to propose to the President for nomination to the Senate for confirmation. Appointment to three-star (O-9) grade is for the purpose of filling specific positions, and positions are filled one at a time, each requiring individual confirmation by the Senate. It is from the pool of existing GO/FOs serving as three-stars and two-stars, then, that the Service Chief and Secretary normally assess and evaluate candidates for the superintendent role.

The process of producing a *slate* of names to consider is a continuous one, and is an integral part of the day-to-day talent management accomplished by each Service Chief and Secretary.⁷⁷ Each Service Chief and Secretary is supported by a GO/FO Management staff, which manages the inventory of GO/FO billets, maintains depth of understanding of the GO/FOs, and supports the decision-making process. The number of GO/FO billets, their proportion and totals by grade, and specific named billets are all established in statute. Depending on the Military Department, total GO/FO inventories range from approximately 236 to 315 officers. A Military Department cannot exceed its statutorily-prescribed limits for GO/FOs. Managing each new entry to the GO/FO grades, each new GO/FO assignment, and each retirement from the GO/FO grades—using a one-in, one-out business rule—is the purview of each GO/FO Management staff. To garner Service Chief guidance for each GO/FO movement, the GO/FO Management staff leaders meet with the Service Chief and/or Secretary on a regular basis, typically weekly, but at a minimum bi-weekly. This human endeavor, to manage each Service’s military leadership talent, is all in support of the Chief and Secretary who are the Service decision makers for every three-star and four-star nomination to the Secretary of Defense (SecDef).

The selection process, then, is a daily executive chore of the Service’s leaders, which is supported by recurring decision-making fora and fed by continuous inputs. Fundamental to the process is the continuous assessments being done by the Service’s four-star leaders who have GO/FOs under their command or in their functional purview. These leaders provide frequent inputs to the GO/FO Management office leaders and to the Service Chief directly about the performance of their one-stars, two-stars, and three-stars in a wide variety of settings and crises.

⁷⁷ The description of the Selection process provided here relies on the comprehensive inputs from the Services’ GO/FO Management staffs and personal experience from members of the IDA research team.

Each one-star and two-star also receives a formal annual evaluation, which becomes part of their record and which is referred to during the continual assessment of the GO/FO corps. The close day-to-day relationship between four-star leaders and the three-stars directly subordinate to them, and the close-at-hand observations of three-star performance also inform this process. All of these inputs directly affect the formation of slates for each three-star position. Each Service also has recurring fora during which the four-star leaders gather in person with the Service Chief two, three, or four times per year (depending on the Service); they devote an entire executive session, normally a full day or more in length, to discuss the performance and qualities of each member of the GO/FO corps against all upcoming vacancies. These sessions are central to the selection process, and are prepared for ahead of time based on the continuous inputs coming in to the Chief and Secretary and the weekly or bi-weekly sessions each Service Chief has with his GO/FO Management leaders. From these executive sessions come either small slates of names to consider further, or specific decisions about names to be nominated for upcoming fills. This overall process is informed by the day-to-day management of the GO/FO corps. Such day-to-day efforts include continuous analysis of the corps' make-up and performance inputs. For instance, one Service's GO/FO staff makes use of a RAND-produced search tool, which pulls up specific experience and education factors on a cohort of GOs to help identify a pool for jobs with finite requirements. Although the tool does not capture subjective assessments, nor unique experience factors or diversity of experiences, nor does it do succession planning, it does provide the staffs a starting point to which is added individual record searches and queries for specific inputs.

Because of this continual process, and as a result of leading their Service through the day-to-day organize, train, and equip challenges of their Department, Service Chiefs develop a daily working understanding of their senior leadership and a particular foresight as to how to properly plan for succession of top leaders. For instance, two Service Chiefs indicated to the research team that within one year of current superintendents assuming command of their academies, they had developed in their mind, and for planning purposes, a *bench* of four to six superintendent candidates to succeed the current superintendent. That list of names for the bench is informed by and modified over time as a result of frequent input from four-star leaders and the recurring executive sessions described previously. Over time, names come off the list and new names go on the list. And such a list is often placed before the Service Chief on a recurring basis by the GO/FO Management staff for affirmation or modification. As time draws closer to the required nomination for fill, the list is winnowed down.

Depending on the Service, any time between eighteen months and six months from required fill date, such a list is then narrowed down to a short list requiring final assessment. One-on-one discussions between Chief and Secretary take place, interviews of candidates are conducted, and personal inputs and four-star discussions take place about the individuals on this short list. The research team also has evidence of Service Chiefs seeking inputs and advice from others with relevant insights, such as retired senior leaders.

A recent development in the selection process is a monthly personnel meeting conducted by the SecDef who, supported by the USD P&R and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), personally reviews and approves nominations put forward by the Military Departments for four-star and selected three-star billets, the superintendent billets being part of that review. These monthly sessions drive the timing of the efforts by each Service's GO/FO staff to garner inputs, manage decision fora, arrange interviews, and obtain Chief and Secretary decisions on nominees. Upon SecDef review, recommended nominees are forwarded to the White House for Presidential nomination and subsequent forwarding to the Senate for confirmation. The confirmation process run by the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) then takes over and is driven by the legislative calendar. The timeframes required for each phase of this process at the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) level, the White House level, and Senate level all drive each Service to properly plan their selection processes to culminate at the proper time with Service leader decisions so as to ensure incumbents are ultimately replaced without gaps and with sufficient overlap.

3. Constraints on Selection

The selection process contains inherent intangibles that prevent design of an exact, repeatable, no-fail system. First of all, the superintendent job is one of many important military leadership roles to fill at any given time. The fundamental senior leadership qualities needed by the Military Departments in a variety of positions may make a number of GO/FO candidates qualified to serve in both the superintendent role and in other roles. Another known limiter is the fact that this human endeavor of managing up to approximately 300 senior leaders involves the very personal challenges and opportunities of the individuals themselves, and at various times during the GO/FO development process an individual GO/FO (with somewhere between 27–35 years of service) may choose to retire to pursue other opportunities, or may encounter personal or family needs, both of which take them out of consideration. Further, each serving GO/FO, when faced with ever-changing and increasing roles and responsibilities, will display both strengths and weaknesses over time, which sometimes have not been previously observed. In sum, the Service Chief does not control all the levers to properly engineer an exact succession plan each and every time a requirement arises. Respondents tended to characterize these *constraints* as simply inherent in such a human endeavor.

More noteworthy among respondents noting true constraints were the two statutory stipulations related to the superintendent role. The law states (1) that a superintendent must serve a minimum of three years; and (2) that a superintendent, upon nomination, must agree that he or she retire at the end of his/her tour.⁷⁸ To some respondents these two requirements can serve to

⁷⁸ Mandatory Retirement: Superintendent of the United States Military Academy; Waiver Authority, 10 U.S.C. § 3921 (2014); Superintendent: condition for detail to position, 10 U.S.C. § 4333a (2014), Mandatory retirement: Superintendent of the United States Naval Academy; waiver authority, 10 U.S.C. § 6371(2014); Superintendent, 10 U.S.C. § 6951a (2014); Mandatory retirement: Superintendent of the United States Air Force Academy;

limit the choices available to a Service's leaders. First of all, the stipulation requiring a superintendent to retire at the end of his or her tour could force the Service Chief to set aside as candidates those officers he or she views as having strong four-star potential, an effect inconsistent with the long-term impact of the role and four-star-like importance of the selection process. In addition, some respondents indicated that if an officer has taken on the superintendent roles' unique challenges and excelled, "passing the test" with flying colors, that officer should not be constrained from moving to another three-star position or advancing to a four-star role. Other respondents described that, in reality, the tour-length stipulation and the mission need for a superintendent to serve at least three years serve to limit the competitiveness of any post-tour superintendent for further command or advancement; thus, these respondents minimize the constraining nature of the law. However, nine current and former Service leaders and superintendents explicitly voiced opposition to the mandatory retirement stipulation, based on the premise that Service leaders should feel unconstrained in surveying their very best talent when considering a superintendent selection. In general, those Services that have tended to choose slightly younger officers as superintendents and those respondents who have a well-argued view of the importance of the roles see the retirement stipulation as counterproductive. Further, they argue that if the original intent of this language was to help ensure a superintendent remains focused on his current role with boldness to make the right decisions, then such rationale is practically without basis, mainly because every GO/FO knows that his or her current job is the only one they can be assured of, and that accountability for their decisions is ensured, no matter the setting.

On the specific issue of a superintendent's tour length, as indicated earlier,⁷⁹ of respondents who addressed the issue, 84 percent favored a longer tour than three years. In addition, eight university and college presidents the team interviewed voiced the view, without prompting, that the current practice of 3–4 years for a superintendent is wholly insufficient: their view is 4–5 years is a bare minimum tenure. Several indicated that the challenge to lead change at an institution of higher education is not just daunting, but practically impossible in a three-year span.

To summarize the range of opinions voiced about these legal stipulations, overall, the legislative directives are viewed as not necessarily unreasonable but in practical effect unnecessary. In general, the Services believe that if the right GO/FO is chosen to lead their academy they believe he or she should serve a longer-than-normal tour and will likely have to retire when he or she completes it; and, in general, they desire increased flexibility to manage superintendent talent. A minority view counseled the research team not to venture into suggesting changes to legislation.

waiver authority, 10 U.S.C. § 8921 (2014); Superintendent: condition for detail to position, 10 U.S.C. § 9333a (2014).

⁷⁹ See related discussion and respondent breakdown in Chapter 3, Section E.

After selection and nomination of a superintendent candidate, the current confirmation process produces an inherent limiting factor. Under its current procedures, the SASC does not take up a nomination until the position is within 120 days of required fill, and current Committee practice normally produces a confirmed nominee between 90 and 30 days prior to fill.⁸⁰ First, a nominee may not take actions that presume confirmation, a Senate prerogative. Secondly, given the uncertainties of the legislative calendar, candidates are often left with a matter of weeks to prepare and physically move themselves and their families, sometimes from overseas assignments, to be in place in time to assume command as superintendent. As a result, a few former superintendents have had as little as a couple of hours with the incumbent they were replacing.

4. Selection Criteria Insights Reflected in Superintendents from 1991 to Present

To develop insights on selection, IDA reviewed detailed Service career assignment patterns for superintendents from 1991 to present.⁸¹ This start date coincided with the arrival of new superintendents at all three academies and the end of the Cold War. The review process analysis required development of assignment categories that allowed comparisons of experiences among Service GO/FOs (e.g., operational command vs. staff duty in Washington vs. duty in a PME institution). Eight categories sufficed to characterize career patterns before promotion to flag rank; four of them produced useful insights. Seven categories characterized flag rank assignments, five of which appeared to be most relevant. Table 1 shows the career path analysis of the superintendents since 1991 prior to their selection, as illuminated by the resulting nine assignment/experience categories. The table also shows the number of incumbents at each academy during this twenty-three year period and their average tenure as superintendent.

⁸⁰ Based on inputs received from Service GO/FO Management staffs.

⁸¹ See list at Appendix E.

Table 1. Career Paths at Selection

	USMA	USNA	USAFA
1 Number beginning 1991	6	8	8
2 Avg Tenure (completed tours)	4.4 yrs	3.3 yrs	3.1 yrs
3 Avg yrs of Service (Range)	33.5 (8)	32.9 (10)	31.3 (5)
4 Selection Rank (3- or 2- star)	LTG (83%)	RADM (87%)*	MG (75%)
5 Core Operational Specialty	6 (100%)	8 (100%)	6 (75%)
6 Flag Operational Command	3 (50%)	7 (87%)	5 (62%)
7 Flag in Washington	6 (100%)	5 (62%)	6 (75%)
8 Flag PME/Training Command	4 (67%)	3 (37%)	5 (62%)
9 Prior Academy Tour	5 (83%)	3 (37%)	3 (37%)
10 Advanced Degree	6 (100%)	5 (62%)	8 (100%)
11 Rhodes Scholar/White House Fellow/Other	3 (50%)	1 (12%)	2 (25%)

Notes: LTG=lieutenant general; MG=major general; PME=professional military education; RADM=rear admiral; USAFA=U.S. Air Force Academy; USMA=U.S. Military Academy; USNA=U.S. Naval Academy.

* Admiral Charles R. Larson is an outlier since he served a second tour as superintendent as a four-star during this period. He was a rear admiral when selected the first time, prior to the period covered by the table and so is counted as such

From Table 1, several insights can be drawn. First, rows two, three, and four reveal that U.S. Military Academy (USMA) superintendents have had longer tours by slightly more than a year, and that they were selected with higher average years of service and were chosen predominantly from serving Lieutenant Generals. In short, they were older, more senior when selected, and then stayed longer in their positions. In fact, three USMA superintendents served five years. Looking at the fifth row, USAFA is unusual in having had two superintendents who were not from traditionally-defined operational specialties. This does not imply that their selection was somehow flawed, but it runs counter to the preference among respondents that the superintendent should have a solid reputation in the operational or warfighting side of their Service. The sixth row indicates that strong operational experience at the flag level appeared to be of higher importance in the selection process for USNA than it was for either USMA or USAFA. As shown in the seventh row, Washington experience might have been a factor in selection in the majority of cases for two academies and in all cases for USMA. The eighth row indicates that during this period flag-level PME/Training Command experience may have been a prominent factor in selection for both USMA and USAFA. Row nine shows that USMA selectees were likely to have had a prior assignment at the academy. This was less common for selectees at the other two academies. Row ten shows that advanced degrees (defined as Master's or above) either were a factor in selection for USMA and USAFA or were so common among flag officers that they were essentially a given. This is not the case for USNA, where only five of eight superintendents during this period had a Master's degree. Row eleven is interesting because in all cases, but especially USMA, standout credentials are present in numbers much higher than in a typical pool of potential selectees.

B. Selection Criteria to be Considered

1. Analysis of Criteria

As emphasized earlier, much of what the team heard repeatedly in interviews with regard to the selection of superintendents can be summarized in the phrase, “the right leader for the job at the time.” In other words, from the available pool of flag or general officers, who has the combination of leadership skills, experience, personality, and other attributes best suited to dealing with the salient issue or issues at the particular time in question? However, nowhere did the team find, in law or in policy, a set of criteria to be used in selecting a superintendent...for determining who the *right* leader is, what the right experience, skills, and attributes might be.

In talking to past Service leaders, the team found, in most cases, they were well-pleased with the performance of the superintendents they had selected, but there also was recognition that at times, they “got it wrong.” In retrospect, they could see that a person they chose lacked the skills, personality, or experience necessary to do the job. The interviewees themselves indicated why better choices were not made: the perceived deficiency was not obvious at the time the selection was made; the leader was focused on criteria that were actually irrelevant; or there was simply a lack of detailed attention and focus in the selection process. It is also possible that the leader making the selection considered a set of criteria that was insufficient with regard to all the actual roles of the superintendent.

One past Service Chief expressed the idea that there is no more difficult job in leadership than getting the right person in the right job, at the right time. This raises the question of what criteria Service Chiefs and Service secretaries *should* be considering when they choose a superintendent in the future. What can they be thinking about that will help them “get it right?” What follows is a discussion intended to help a Service Secretary, a Service Chief, and those assisting such leaders as they attempt to answer that question. It is a discussion that posits certain known factors about relevant selection criteria, but one that also raises other questions that only the person choosing a nominee can answer.

In selecting a superintendent, the Service leadership must ask itself whether a candidate being considered is prepared to handle the top management tasks described in the discussion of roles in Chapter 3, and whether he or she has additional attributes seen as necessary to be successful in the job. Each skill and attribute discussed in this section is based on specific observations and recommendations of the senior leaders the team interviewed, and research into changes driving adaptations in the superintendent’s roles (Chapter 3, Section F).

2. Skills and Attributes Related to Drucker's Top Management Tasks

a. Think Through the Mission of the Business. Set Objectives. Develop Strategies and Plans

The Service Chief must be convinced the superintendent has the right perspective, a strategic view, and will drive the institution towards established goals. Is the candidate capable of continually scanning the academy's total environment and ensuring an appropriate level of attention is being given to the important work and key issues in every area...not given to being distracted by the detailed responsibilities of subordinates? Will he or she be able to look across the command and see where command emphasis is needed and then focus on that? Will he or she be able to establish priorities and stick with them? At the same time the superintendent must appreciate that effective strategic planning and the pursuit of long-term goals will require buy-in from the faculty and staff and from powerful alumni and senior active duty officers.

The candidate must be capable of conveying the strategic vision, one that did not necessarily originate with him or her. Will he or she recognize they are one of many successive superintendents and avoid the temptation to pursue pet projects? This, along with other demands on the superintendent, requires a certain amount of personal humility.

The superintendent must keep in view the long-term mission of the institution, reflecting the Service's long-term vision and culture. Does he or she understand the challenge of keeping the academy aligned with the Service, as well as the relative importance of technical competence and high-quality officership? Both competencies are important, but the balance in each Service is different and the emphasis will likely change with time and events. Where is the academy headed in relation to Service needs today?

One dean pointed out that the superintendent brings a perspective no one else brings: what the operating force needs both in terms of technical education and of character development. Is this something that the candidate has thoughtfully considered? For example, how should academies deal with the whole issue of cyber warfare? Does the candidate appreciate the importance, not just of change, but of the speed of change and the impact of new technologies, such as remotely piloted aircraft? Are students being prepared to deal with greater complexity and ambiguity in a system that often functions in a much less hierarchical manner than in the past? Will they (students) be prepared to grow in understanding of a complex world, including all elements of national power and the dynamics of the global environment? These types of questions require an interest in and the ability to think about curriculum development, while at the same time appreciating that control of the academic program needs to be in the hands of the academic staff. Can the candidate appreciate this difference?

All potential candidates would acknowledge the goal of enabling cadets and midshipmen to have the foundation to be future warfighting leaders in their Service, but does the candidate think the focus should be on developing new ensigns and second lieutenants or future flag and general

officers? Where is the balance? How does one achieve that balance? Has the candidate thought about this?

Of particular importance today, in the view of some, is the superintendent's concern with admissions. In many respects, the product of the academies will be determined by the results of the admission process. The Services have made diversity an institutional goal and tied it to the readiness of the force and mission success. Is a candidate able to appreciate the need to think beyond the current high school population to be able to attract quality cadets and midshipmen in the future who will reflect the Nation's changing demographics? One former Service Chief expressed his concern that if, in 2050, when whites will be the minority proportion of the country's demography, the senior leaders in the Services and academies are all still white, then the Services and their academies will not be representative of their own public, and the Services will drift away from the U.S. people—a potential disaster. Similarly, and for a variety of reasons, superintendents must be prepared to think about the proportionate numbers of men and women admitted to the academies. This affects academy life now and in the immediate future, and it will affect the character of Service leadership a generation from now.

A new major concern today involves the priorities and objectives for cultivating sources of private funds. Will the candidate be comfortable in what for all military officers is a non-traditional area of endeavor? Will he or she be aligned with the Service Chief in understanding the superintendent's roles, responsibilities, and limitations in this area?

b. Set Standards; Set the Example. Provide a Vision that Articulates Organizational Values

The superintendent must have an obvious focus on the development of ethics and character—on developing cadets and midshipmen so they embrace the core values of the Services, such as integrity and selflessness. One former Service Chief suggests that a superintendent's touch goes out 35–40 years—if the superintendent is not crystal clear in personally articulating standards or is inconsistent in his or her enforcement of standards, ethical performance throughout the Service will be hit-or-miss for the next thirty years. He or she must be prepared to think broadly and deeply about this responsibility, realizing that his or her own example and the standards he or she enforces will inform the performance of future senior leaders. Demonstration of moral courage may be a key marker. One authority on ethical decision making defines a leader with moral courage as “Someone who consistently strives to do the right thing, by drawing upon personal, professional, and organizational moral principles and, despite the potential threat to self, goes beyond compliance to achieve a moral action, engaging in a response that is based on virtuous motives.”⁸²

⁸² Leslie Sekerka, in Krista Bjorn, “Moral Courage: Building Ethical Strength in the Workplace,” *Character First The Magazine*, March 3, 2011, <http://cfthemagazine.com/2011-03/moral-courage-building-ethical-strength-in-the-workplace/>.

Two current superintendents have authored documents and initiated strategies relating to ethics and the development of character. Such vision setting epitomizes a key role of the superintendent.

c. Build and Maintain the Human Organization

Given the importance of building and sustaining the academy's leadership team, as described in Chapter 3, one might ask whether a candidate for superintendent has previously demonstrated the ability to build such a leadership team across a diverse set of roles and actors.

As discussed previously, superintendents only rarely have an opportunity to select one of their three key subordinates; but when an opportunity to make a selection does arise, he or she must get it right. On rare occasions, a superintendent may be required to replace a subordinate who has not lived up to expectations. Selecting the right person requires demonstrated sound judgment; knowing when to replace a leader also takes mature judgment, but it also requires self-confidence, a degree of moral courage, and the trust and support of the Service leadership.

More immediately, is a candidate for superintendent prepared to be the synchronizer across the academy's three mission elements? A candidate for superintendent will be better prepared if he or she has had experience working in a variety of leadership environments.

The research team found clear evidence that superintendents achieved success with their initiatives or were frustrated in their efforts to bring about change, depending on their ability to elicit faculty support. The faculty represents one of the academy's three mission elements, and the ability to deal with a civilian faculty and staff can be a particular challenge for military officers used to giving orders. Working with faculty, especially long-term or tenured faculty, is different than working with other staffs, including civilian staffs. First and foremost, a superintendent should truly value education. He or she should have an appreciation of academic freedom, as well as an understanding of the academic process and of the need for academic rigor. Importantly, succeeding as superintendent will require an acceptance of, and accommodation for, some who think differently than the norm in particular areas. Faculty relations are not a new issue, and senior Service leaders have recognized the importance of keeping peace with the faculty, the challenge of being able to deal with the faculty, and the fact that the faculty can make life miserable for the superintendent. A productive working relationship with the faculty is essential if the superintendent is going to be successful in executing the academy's mission.

Finally, in building and maintaining the human organization, the superintendent must be both empathetic and politically skilled. He or she must be a listener, must be inclusive, and must be understanding and given to show that he or she truly cares about each group and each individual. In the words of a former Service Secretary: "He or she must be able to interact effectively with a rape victim, a rich alumnus, or a Senator who is a graduate." The superintendent must be seen as a leader who treats people well and, in the words of a former Service Chief, values others ... "up, down, and sideways." These qualities were emphasized by

numerous leaders, and one former Service Secretary described these skills as “overwhelmingly the crucial signature and defining characteristic of a superintendent.” Being a committed listener, empathetic, and politically skilled are necessary attributes when dealing with both internal and external constituencies, and they are essential in building the leadership team, in relating effectively to staff and faculty, and in consensus building within and across various stakeholder groups.

d. Establish, Nurture, and Maintain External Relations

All leaders agree that the superintendent must be articulate, a persuasive advocate, and able to communicate with multiple stakeholders. He or she will be the face of the academy and must be proactive in building positive *message capital* by continuous engagement and ensuring good news stories are being told in the media, not just waiting for the next crisis. In time of crisis, the superintendent must be prepared to be out front, transparent, and not hunkered down with a bunker mentality. In short, the superintendent must be able to manage both public outreach and media scrutiny.

A superintendent may well be more successful in building external relations if, in past assignments, he or she has demonstrated the capacity to deal with external stimuli and the ability to build a network both inside and outside the Service. Several leaders suggested that experience in a complex position such as legislative liaison, defense attaché in a particularly demanding capital, staff member responsible for interagency coordination and policy making, or executive assistant to a senior DOD leader would be valuable (see Chapter 4, Section A.1 for more). Again, just as with building and sustaining the human organization, in nurturing external relations the superintendent must be both empathetic and politically skilled. Conflicting pressures will demand an effort to listen to, be sensitive to, and understand the perspectives of a variety of stakeholders and constituencies. The superintendent must see the importance of this and be comfortable in this role.

Of particular concern with regard to nurturing external relations and at a time when resources are becoming more constrained, a variety of leaders associated with the academy, past and present, see it as particularly important that the superintendent be able to advocate for the academy and to articulate academy personnel and resource requirements to the Service, to the Congress, and to donors. In particular, the ability to advocate for funding is essential to the superintendent in the role of overseeing the maintenance and resourcing of infrastructure—especially in light of the age of the facilities and restricted resources. Whether the issue is funding for personnel or for maintenance, leaders have noted that the ability to deal with civilian budgeteers on the Service staff can present a particular challenge; a diverse set of leaders have agreed that “Washington does not know how to run a university.” With the idea in mind that a superintendent may well be faced with proposals to cut the academy budget in ways that threaten the accomplishment of its mission, does the candidate have high-level experience dealing with

the Washington budget process? Will he or she be able to deal effectively with declining budgets and increasing demands?

e. Preside at Ceremonial Functions

This role demands certain characteristics and attributes of whoever holds the position. Some have suggested the superintendent must exhibit a certain charisma; regardless, the superintendent will inevitably be looked upon as a role model. To those at the academy, the superintendent must model leadership, character, and what cadets or midshipmen are to become. He or she must be a model of what they are striving so hard to achieve.

Before any audience, he or she must exhibit command presence. He or she must look professional, be confident, and appear comfortable in his or her own skin. Appearance and the first impression will inevitably be important. He or she must exhibit self-confidence, but not arrogance, and a positive attitude. This is essential in an organization that prides itself on its “can do” attitude.

The superintendent must be an effective public speaker. More than that, he or she must be a good communicator who is both comfortable and effective in addressing a variety of constituencies. The superintendent must inspire confidence and be respected in every context. In particular, he or she must come across as credible to cadets and midshipmen.

The requirement to be a comfortable and effective communicator extends beyond ceremonial functions for university presidents and academy superintendents alike. A superintendent must recognize the importance of simply being present, whether it is with the faculty, a group of cadets or midshipmen, or another group of stakeholders. Everything he or she does will be noticed and commented upon. This point was emphasized to the research team by more than one university president. The superintendent’s presence signals to others that they are important in his or her eyes. His or her presence tells others that he or she cares about what they are doing and that he or she considers what they are doing is important. Just as it is important for a superintendent to be able to project a command presence in ceremonial settings, it is important that he or she be able to communicate confidently and effectively in informal venues. Such informal interactions provide significant opportunities for the superintendent to advance his or her agenda, and he or she must clearly recognize this fact, be comfortable with it, and look for opportunities to act upon it regularly.

f. Lead in Crisis

Importantly, in choosing a superintendent and with the inevitability of crisis looming, one should consider what some Service leaders have concluded is the number one attribute—that Service leadership have confidence in the superintendent’s judgment. In this view, it is critical that both the Secretary and the Service Chief personally have confidence in and be comfortable with their superintendent. A good personal relationship between the Service leadership and the

superintendent and a high degree of mutual respect and trust will be necessary when it comes time to navigate the next unpredictable academy crisis.

Ideally, a potential superintendent should have demonstrated the ability to lead in a crisis, remaining calm under pressure. He or she must be able to react effectively and not overreact. The superintendent must recognize the importance of having the organization in place to respond, with subordinates who have plans in place for dealing with crisis. He or she must have the judgment that allows him or her to get out in front of a problem. The superintendent must be able to recognize the importance of communication with both internal and external groups in gaining understanding of all aspects of a crisis, and he or she must be willing to take the lead and address outside audiences directly, recognizing the importance of transparency, transmitting timely and factual information, and letting the chips fall where they may.

As discussed earlier in Chapter 3, Section A, the importance of the message that a superintendent sends, by both his or her words and actions, in a time of crisis cannot be overstated. This is true for both the internal audience, especially the cadets or midshipmen, and for external constituencies. A superintendent must have a strong appreciation of the impact of what he or she says and does upon the reputation of the academy and the broader Service leadership in a time of crisis, as well as the impact of the leadership lessons he or she inevitably conveys to the cadets, midshipmen, and junior officers at the academy. The superintendent must be particularly aware, not only of the extent to which he or she appears to be effective as a leader in dealing with the crisis, but also the degree to which his or her words and actions are consistent with and uphold the values of the academy and of the Service. The real-life lessons learned during a time of crisis, particularly when public attention is focused on an academy and issues of character are at stake, will remain with the cadets and midshipmen as they advance in leadership positions in their careers.

C. Beyond Drucker's Top Management Tasks

IDA's interviews and research uncovered additional skills and attributes considered highly important for anyone hoping for a successful tenure as superintendent. The Service leadership may well benefit from considering these additional factors when selecting from candidates to be superintendent:

1. Adaptable Leader

As described in Chapter 3, Section F, he or she must be prepared to deal with uncertainty and ambiguity. The world, the national security environment, technology, and the makeup of the corps, the brigade, and the wing are constantly changing. The academies must respond effectively to change, and that means that the academy leadership, especially the superintendent, must be prepared to adapt. The superintendent must be adaptable—even when some of the

academy's most powerful stakeholders seem highly resistant to the idea. A Service Chief commented that "Grads will scream if you try to change anything."⁸³ And a superintendent from a half-century ago reflected in his oral history that "Naval Academy alumni have a speed of progress, psychologically, about the Naval Academy, about the same as a glacier. Any change is bound to be suspect."⁸⁴

The superintendent must be prepared to adapt the academy to the changing character of the profession of arms and to technological change. Is there, for instance, as suggested by one former superintendent, a cyber war underway? He or she must see the necessity that the academy evolve with the Service, that as an institution it remain agile and open to new ways of thinking. He or she must ensure the academy is a learning institution, adapting to the Service's emerging requirements. He or she must also understand that being adaptable means knowing what to change and what not to change.

And not just warfighting is changing. The superintendent must also be prepared to adapt to the changing personalities of successive generations of today's youth. Understanding the younger generation will mean understanding and adjusting to the diverse demographics of each new entering class. He or she must acknowledge that in the future, some cadets and midshipmen will come from less traditional family settings and may be perceived as having a value system somewhat different from that of cadets and midshipmen a generation or two ago. As the make-up and formative experiences of new cohorts of entrants change, the academies will need to adapt so as to still produce officers of character, continuing to instill core values, such as integrity, service, and excellence.

These evolving demands on the institution will inevitably require initiatives and changes within the institution, the success of which will depend on the support of groups with competing interests and groups with a vested interest in the status quo. The superintendent must be able both to lead and to manage change that keeps the academy current. Powerful groups, including faculty, alumni, and senior active duty officers, will need to be persuaded to support such changes and not to actively oppose or simply wait out the superintendent in his or her efforts. Temperament and the ability to adapt go together. The superintendent will need to have the temperament to take a deliberate approach to change and the relational skills to garner buy-in of all constituency groups.

Senior leaders frequently speak of the importance of adaptability and being adaptable, but what exactly does this mean? How does one know if a leader is adaptable? In simplest terms, an adaptable leader is one who is able to respond effectively to a changed situation. The response of many military leaders at all levels to the changing character of warfare in Iraq and Afghanistan epitomizes adaptable performance in the current generation. It would be particularly

⁸³ Comment by research participant in respondent group 1 when reflecting on efforts at change by superintendents.

⁸⁴ Kauffman, *The Reminiscences of Rear Admiral Draper L. Kauffman*, 662.

valuable if a potential superintendent had demonstrated experience adapting in a coalition, multi-agency, or multi-cultural environment.

The basic questions to be asked are: Will he or she likely be prepared to perform successfully in a non-traditional environment, something much different from that of warfighting or operational military commands? Will he or she have the intuition, critical and creative thinking skills, self-awareness, and relational skills necessary to navigate with confidence in a constantly changing environment amongst a diverse set of constituencies? As one Service Chief commented, mental flexibility is key; the superintendent cannot be an old-time linear thinker and doer. A former superintendent described this key attribute broadly and succinctly in terms of *learning agility*—the ability to take all one has learned from his or her diverse set of previous leadership experiences and apply it in a new situation, shedding some things that worked in the past and tailoring other things for the current situation.

The range of skills and broad thinking required to be adaptable are most likely to have been gained through expanded educational opportunities and diversity of experience. Interviewees regularly cited the importance of having diverse experiences. Washington experience was often cited as being important—in the words of one four-star officer, “Everything that happens at the academy eventually becomes a Washington issue.” But diversity of experience was generally valued as equally important to Washington experience. Has the candidate for superintendent had such opportunities and demonstrated capability in a variety of jobs; does he or she have a broad perspective, including the ability to appreciate the roles of the Service chief, the Congress, the alumni, and others who feel a strong sense of ownership with regard to the academy?

Finally, and to reiterate something stressed repeatedly in IDA’s interviews, to be adaptable a superintendent must be a skilled listener, empathetic, and politically astute. He or she must be open to what is new and capable of effectively responding when the changing environment demands it, contending with the competing interests of a wide range of stakeholders in the process. One former superintendent described this very positively in terms of collaborative leadership: *boundary spanning leadership*... the ability to reach across stakeholder lines and reach out to the various audiences and constituencies in the academy setting and get them invested in solving the school’s problems.

2. Able to Inspire and Motivate the Younger Generation

He or she must look and act and sound like a leader, so that cadets or midshipmen want to be just like him or her. In his or her public persona, he or she must come across as a strong leader; and he or she must protect this leadership image always. The superintendent can never stop leading. In the words of one former superintendent: “They [the cadets and midshipmen] don’t need friends. The superintendent should not get wheeled around in a wheelbarrow at a pep rally.” A large part of being able to inspire and motivate will depend on the superintendent’s ability to communicate in a way that connects with the younger generation. It will mean being able to communicate in a way that shows an understanding and appreciation of where the cadets

and midshipmen are and how they think, and it will also mean being able to communicate in a way that encourages the aspirations of the cadets and midshipmen, gives them confidence that they too can become highly successful leaders, and challenges them to accomplish the things necessary to achieve their goals and dreams.

3. A Cross-generational Leader Who Understands the Younger Generation

He or she should have had experience dealing with young people (from 17–22 year-olds) and understand what drives them, how they think, and what their values are (see Chapter 3, Section H.3). Nowhere is this more true than in a superintendent's efforts to deal with issues related to sexual assault: to set the proper tone, he or she must understand the impact of sexual assault at the cadet and midshipman level, including the problems and challenges young people face daily in social interactions with their peers.

The superintendent requires a broad perspective and an understanding of the environment. Superintendents must have an understanding of the gap, to the extent it exists, between themselves and the youth they are committed to molding into leaders for the next generation. Some believe that social issues will continue to become more challenging and that developing the values basis for each class will be harder, so the superintendent must be attuned to current demographic and cultural trends. He or she must understand that millennials are skeptical and want to find things out for themselves, but that the succeeding generation, raised in the post-9/11 environment, may be characterized differently. As discussed in Chapter 3, Section F.3, today's superintendents and future superintendents must understand and be prepared to accommodate how younger people relate to their parents and how that affects their resilience, the degree to which they are service-oriented and skilled at collaborating with others, the extent to which they are given to ethical introspection, and especially how learning styles and communication patterns are evolving. In short and as expressed by a former Service Secretary and a former superintendent, a superintendent is more likely to be successful if he or she has a "passion for youth" and "really wants" the job of taking today's and tomorrow's high school seniors as they are and molding them into the next generation of leaders.

As discussed in Chapter 3, Section H.3, research indicates that the values of the current generation of entrants may differ from those of prior generations. Therefore, it is likely that a new superintendent would benefit from an exposure to findings on the impact of societal trends and the extent to which those trends are actually impacting the value structure of successive generations. What is important is an appreciation on the part of the superintendent of the relation between perceived trends in the larger society and the actual values resident in the highly talented and select group of young men and women admitted as cadets and midshipmen.

4. Requires a Certain Combination of Temperament, Character, and Credibility

There is no four-star intermediary between the superintendent and the Service Chief. Additionally, superintendents are coming under increasing media scrutiny and serve as a lightning rod in a way that is distinct among three-star officers.

The superintendent, then, must have professional credibility, inspire confidence, and be respected at all levels and in a variety of contexts. Within the academy such respect must be earned across all three key subordinates. Within the Service, the superintendent must be perceived as a highly capable leader who is doing an exceptional job meeting the challenges of the particularly demanding billet that he or she now occupies, a leader with four-star potential—clout up the chain of command, as described by one four-star officer. One former Service Chief observed that if he or she does not have this, when things go south they will “get killed.”

The superintendent requires an even temperament and the demonstrated capacity to provide stability, whether dealing with the day-to-day relations with multiple stakeholders or the exigencies of a crisis. Because a superintendent needs to get along with a wide range of people, he or she needs to present himself or herself as pleasant, a good communicator, and with a positive attitude. At the same time, he or she must possess a thick skin and be capable of withstanding the whiplash from alumni, media, and the faculty.

The unique position also requires a measured amount of boldness, self-confidence, and courage. The superintendent must be able to firmly articulate a position in front of the Secretary of Defense, the Service Secretary, or a Senator. He or she must be capable of and willing to be forthright, whether advocating for academy resource requirements, explaining the intricacies of a difficult situation that has garnered media attention, or defending actions that have been constrained by legal requirements or the unfortunate reality of the situation.

5. Must the Superintendent be an Academy Graduate?

There have been superintendents who were nonacademy graduates. However, there are many Service leaders, past and present, who feel that the superintendent should definitely be a graduate. A number of interviewees also emphasized the additional value of a previous assignment on the staff at the academy, as commandant, faculty member, or company/tactical officer or air officer commanding. The chief argument for selecting a graduate is that a nongraduate initially will have too steep a learning curve in his or her efforts to become acquainted with and gain an appreciation of the nature of academy life and stakeholder equities.

IDA’s research with the Military Services and their Academies did not produce a definitive answer to this question. However, the team’s inquiry did include a review of the leadership at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA). There has been considerable turmoil within the leadership there in the past several years; critics have attributed much of this turmoil to the fact that there has only infrequently been an academy graduate as superintendent. In this view, the problems have been compounded by the fact that leadership in the Department of Transportation

and the Maritime Administration (MARAD), both of which oversee the academy, have only occasionally had previous experience with the Merchant Marine. Critics also point out that academy graduates are absent from other key leadership roles at that academy. For the DOD academies, perhaps the real question is whether one wants to saddle a new superintendent, already faced with an assortment of unique challenges, with the additional requirement of learning about and gaining an appreciation of the academy's special culture and traditions. If the answer is "yes," then perhaps some additional time for preparation would be useful, as discussed in Chapter 4, Section D.

6. Prepared to Oversee an Athletic Program Including the Challenges of NCAA Division I Competition

When Academy superintendents of any period were asked what challenge they were least prepared for, it frequently was related to dealing with the NCAA or the academy's own AD. Eighteen respondents from all three interviewee groups made reference to these challenges. It is unlikely that any candidate will have had this sort of experience, and every interviewee who discussed this issue was in agreement that the process of overseeing NCAA intercollegiate athletics takes time to understand. The challenges in this area are only going to increase. The landscape of college athletics is shifting, and it will continue to shift. Academy participation at the Division I level may become more problematic. Yet TV and media money are very important, and how academy teams perform nationally is perceived as influencing stature, overall message to the public, admissions quality, and financial giving. Much of what is at issue here is a matter to be decided by Service leaders, but in the meantime, a new superintendent must be prepared to deal with the unfamiliar dynamics of the situation, recognizing his or her unpreparedness. He or she must anticipate the need to work with their academy's athletic association and, in particular, understand the flow of money. The specific name of the athletic association that supports the sports program at each academy is different, the legal context and underpinnings for each is dependent on its historical origins and development, and each association supports the academy and its range of sports programs and is intertwined with other academy activities in its own unique way. Because of the historical differences, each provides a different degree of support in terms of an academy's overall budget. In each case, it will be important for the superintendent to understand all aspects of the relationship, including financial, personnel, and legal.

D. Cultivating, Developing, and Preparing Superintendents

1. Development and Preparation Steps Currently Being Taken

Regarding current steps used to develop or prepare future superintendents, Service leader respondents cited the series of leadership challenges faced by GO/FOs as the best means to develop, hone, and make evident those leadership skills necessary to become a superintendent

candidate. Not dissimilar to other executive development, including that of civilian institutions of higher learning, senior leaders are successively tested and proven, during a series of assignments, to have or not have the leadership and management skills necessary to assume greater responsibility. In GO/FO development, this process is particularly intense, as officers are often moved from one set of leadership roles to the next in fairly rapid succession as wartime and contingency responsibilities, emerging military issues, or the uncertainties of human capital management at this level drive rapidly-developing requirements. It is common, for instance, for a general or flag officer to have four to five different assignments as a general officer before he or she is considered eligible to be part of a short list of superintendent candidates. Performance during those assignments is normally under the watchful eye of a four-star leader who is involved in the decision process to form a list of superintendent candidates. Such leadership development has value in cultivating candidates for superintendent; however, research respondents were not aware of extensive use of intentional developmental experiences specific to the role of superintendent.

IDA's research indicated that those GO/FOs who received at least informal notice they were being considered as a candidate to be superintendent took it upon themselves to pay closer attention to issues with which the academy was dealing and to remain informed to increase their understanding of academy challenges. One former superintendent indicated that as a colonel (O-6) he was mentored by a Service leader who indicated he would recommend him as an excellent candidate for superintendent. But such advance indication does not by itself allow for specific preparatory steps, and the typical experience of candidates does not allow for much advance notice.

Nevertheless, after confirmation, a variety of self-preparation steps were taken by confirmed nominees. In at least six cases during the past several years, superintendent nominees, based on advice from previous superintendents, took it upon themselves to schedule and enroll in Harvard's "Seminar for New University Presidents," a highly-touted annual one-week seminar taught by experts in the field of higher-education leadership. In addition, one former superintendent cited the single most-important preparatory action he took during his brief interim period between assignments was to speak face-to-face with as many previous superintendents as possible, from all the Services. Others cited books they read prior to taking command, appropriate to their new duties. Others cited executive leadership courses offered by their Service GO/FO Management office, such as "Leadership at the Peak," conducted by the Center for Creative Leadership, or courses on "strategic thinking" or "leading innovation" taught by prominent graduate schools. One current superintendent, afforded an atypical and lengthy period of preparation (approximately six months), outlined a focused and tailored set of preparatory actions prior to assuming command: two-day visits to each of the sister Academies and their superintendents, attendance at the Harvard Seminar for New University presidents, visits to Members of Congress in whose district the academy resides, visits to local government officials, discussions with former superintendents of other academies, reading books on the millennial

generation, and engagements with think tanks working on issues of higher education such as diversity and sexual assault. Other current and former superintendents offered additional practical suggestions of key just-in-time preparatory steps that would better arm a future superintendent (which informs further discussion on this matter in the next section). In sum, the team's research indicated that informal, self-initiated steps represented the lion's share of role-specific preparation for the superintendent assignment.

2. Development and Preparation Steps Needed to Enhance Selection and Job Performance

The descriptions of the superintendent's roles and how those roles are changing, as well as the descriptions of the selection criteria and what selection criteria might be for the modern superintendent (Chapter 3, Sections A, B, C, F, and Chapter 4, Sections A and B) all lend themselves to understanding what sort of development and preparation steps can be taken by the Services.

First, to be able to arrive at a slate of candidates to be considered for this role on a continual basis requires the Service take deliberate actions in their GO/FO talent management processes so that a definable number of one-star and two-star officers gain the requisite experiences and education required for their leadership skills to be honed, proven, and observed. Some respondents have indicated that Services could take a preliminary step to simply tag those officers among the colonel/captain (O-6) cohort who possess some of the basic qualifications, such as academy experience, a particular advanced degree, and experience teaching or leading in an academic or training environment. Most important to development of candidates, however, is observation of the leadership skills at the GO/FO and executive level that are most important to the selection process. The Services, then, must ensure that a defined number of one-stars and two-stars gain experience leading in settings in which there are multiple actors and multiple agendas, where teambuilding and collaborative skills are needed, where the officer is performing in an environment where consensus building is the standard. Moreover, these officers must be observed in settings where their strategic perspective is observed and where they are tested to maintain both current operational awareness and long-range vision. As mentioned earlier, executive or leadership roles in the joint, interagency, multi-national, allied, coalition environment or political-military advice-giving roles are all potential arenas where leadership talents suited for the superintendent role may be manifest. Some respondents indicated that leadership *tests* are important bellwethers; that is, they believe that potential candidates for the superintendent bench can be observed in jobs which create leadership challenges that involve making difficult, values-based decisions.⁸⁵ Further, in a wide variety of one- and two-star roles, officers can be observed dealing with cultural or social issues involving the younger generation.

⁸⁵ One research participant noted that industry searches for senior executives/CEOs look for scenarios where candidates' *moral courage* is developed or tested.

These leadership tests cannot all be deliberately planned, but they can be deliberately observed by the watchful eye of Service leaders who provide input to the Service Chief on GO/FO management.

Many respondents indicated that a traditional pattern of successive assignments to operational GO/FO tours, particularly in one specific warfare specialty, is not a suitable path for a potential superintendent candidate. Thus, Services must ensure that a defined number of junior GO/FOs are given leadership opportunities in what some may term nontraditional roles, such as those in functional or institutional areas of their Service and in complex interagency or multi-actor settings (see Chapter 4, Section A for more). Some respondents indicated that assignments leading Service schoolhouses, or tours as the Service legislative liaison, or as the Service Public Affairs Officer, or in the Service's human capital/personnel management arena may all be excellent development and proving grounds for superintendent candidates. Others mentioned jobs in the joint or interagency strategy and policy-making arenas, or in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), allied, or coalition partner arenas as excellent development opportunities for the leadership skills a future superintendent needs. Others mentioned tours serving as an Executive/Military Assistant to a senior DOD leader as valuable experiences where necessary maturity and diplomacy are developed.

Once a superintendent nominee is selected, many current and former superintendents indicated the need to have a preparation period longer than the typical one afforded a normal move to a three-star role. As noted earlier, IDA observed several excellent examples of self-initiated steps and best practices that current and previous superintendents have pursued to be postured for success upon assuming command. The following list of preparatory steps represents the results of the team's research; it benefits from ideas provided by both formal respondents and other academy and higher-education experts:

1. Attendance at the Harvard Seminar for New Presidents, similar courses offered by the American Council on Education (ACE), such as the ACE Institute for New Presidents, or The Presidential Initiative: Charting a Course for Successful Governance and related workshops offered by the Association of Governing Boards
2. Attendance at a top executive development course, such as "Leadership at the Peak" conducted by the Center For Creative Leadership
3. Robust media training, such as offered by the Services or the Defense Information School or by commercial providers, such as the Rendon Group
4. One-on-one visits with previous superintendents (from all academies, including USCGA and USMMA)
5. Review of previous reports of commissions and inquiries on the academies, both internal and external
6. Review of previous superintendents' oral histories

7. Visits to each of the DOD Academies that include one-on-one discussions with current Academy leaders (e.g., commandant, dean, athletic director)
8. One-on-one meetings with the members of the Board of Visitors
9. Attendance at the negotiation workshops offered by the Harvard Negotiation Institute and others
10. Meetings with Members of Congress representing the academy's State and district
11. Meetings with Service Headquarters functional principals, such as personnel (G/N/A-1), resourcing and budget (G/ N/ A -8), and OSD Principals, such as the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness [USD P&R]) in the Pentagon
12. Attendance at an NCAA and an athletic conference meeting
13. Meetings with leaders of association of graduates and academy endowment/foundation organizations
14. Meetings with members of Accreditation commissions
15. Reading books recommended by other superintendents and subject matter experts:
 - a. Dan Ariely, *The (Honest) Truth About Dishonesty: How We Lie To Everyone — Especially Ourselves* (New York, NY: Harper, 2012)
 - b. Lance Betros, *Carved from Granite: West Point Since 1902* (College Station, [TX]: Texas A&M University Press, 2012)
 - c. Laurence Steinberg, *Age of Opportunity: Lessons from the New Science of Adolescence* (Eamon Dolan/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014)
 - d. Stephen G. Pelletier and Paul E. Gray, *Renaissance at Rensselaer, a President, a Plan, a University Transformed* (Troy, NY: Rensselaer, 2011)
 - e. CIO Council, *Net Generation: Preparing for Change in the Federal Information Technology Workforce* (Washington, DC: CIO Council, 2010)
 - f. Roger Fisher and William Ury, *Getting to Yes, Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In* (New York, NY: Penguin, 2011)
 - g. Robert M. Hendrickson, Jason E. Lane, James T. Harris, and Richard H. Dorman, *Academic Leadership and Governance of Higher Education: A Guide for Trustees, Leaders and Aspiring Leaders of Two- and Four-Year Institutions* (Sterling, VA: Stylus, 2013)

Finally, another preparatory step for this complex role of superintendent is borrowed from the principles of “Mission Command,” the current model being used by some Services and Combatant Commands to train and develop leaders and their command structure for the operational level of war. Mission Command, applied to the role of superintendent, requires the

leader to conduct “sensing” (and “sensemaking”⁸⁶) of the command environment—gathering inputs regarding the *terrain* and the *stakeholders* and using those inputs to design a tailored leadership approach and command structure. The team’s research indicated that a few previous and current superintendents (those who were given more time to prepare) were able to accomplish this sensing step either prior to assuming command or during their transition. In one case, a superintendent, with his Service Chief’s support, assigned a small *transition* team of experienced senior officers (retired GO/FOs) who were given free rein to accomplish the sensing of the academy’s issues and trends by engaging the entire menu of stakeholders and then reporting back to the new superintendent their findings, which subsequently informed the new superintendent’s formation of strategic plans and objectives. Furthermore, this new superintendent synthesized these inputs, crafted his objectives, and read them back to his Service Chief, who then endorsed or slightly modified them so as to give the superintendent a clear understanding of direction for his command tour. This sort of *design* phase appeared to the research team to be ideal, especially for a role that can take a new superintendent into unfamiliar territory and complex challenges.

E. Summary: Findings on Selection of a Superintendent

1. Current Selection Procedures and Factors

The dominant criterion used in selection of a superintendent is demonstrated, credible leadership. (Chapter 4, Section A.1)

A basic factor in selection of a superintendent is “what is needed at the time.” (Chapter 4, Section A.1)

Recent selections and current selection processes manifest considerable consideration of the distinctive aspects of the superintendent’s roles. (Chapter 4, Section A.1)

Current officer development paths appear to have produced a suitable group of candidates from which to choose. (Chapter 4, Section A.1)

The selection process involves multiple iterative inputs and supports the Service leaders as the decision makers. (Chapter 4, Section A.2)

The selection process is a subset of overall executive talent management of all Service GO/FOs, which is an inexact human endeavor. (Chapter 4, Section A.2)

The current legislative stipulation on tour length is viewed as practically unnecessary and the current legislative stipulation on retirement is viewed as counterproductive (Chapter 4, Section A.3)

⁸⁶ Ryan E. Smerek, “Sensemaking and New College Presidents: A Conceptual Study of the Transition Process,” *The Review of Higher Education* 36, no. 3 (2013): 371–403.

Insights from the career paths and tenures of past superintendents since the end of the Cold War may inform current and future selection criteria and processes. (Chapter 4, Section A.4)

Preparation of a new superintendent is currently ad hoc but has employed some best practices. (Chapter 4, Section D.1)

2. What Selection Factors Should Be

IDA's research has shown that, over time, Service leadership has consistently been concerned with selecting "the right fit" at a particular time for the position of Academy superintendent. While more or less deliberation has gone into each selection process, there has never been a specific set of criteria used to define the right fit.

In carrying out the research, it became obvious that a specific set of criteria could not be used to define the selection process in every case, nor would one be accepted by Service leaders. By its nature, the process contains inherent intangibles. The position is unique in many respects, and the process of selection is deliberative and subjective. In the end, the most prominent considerations are a candidate's professional credibility and the trust and confidence that the Service Secretary and Service Chief have in the abilities and judgment of the person they select to be superintendent.

However, it is also true that more than eighty interviews the team conducted produced a consensus with regard to a finite number of skills and attributes that should be given prominence when considering the selection of a superintendent. Many of these skills and attributes have always been important to the success of a superintendent. Some have taken on greater importance in recent years, and some will take on additional prominence in the years ahead.

The superintendent must be a proven leader who is prepared to perform a well-defined set of top management tasks that no one else in the organization can perform. Success in the performance of these top management tasks will likely depend on the superintendent possessing a particular set of attributes. (See discussion in Chapter 4, Section B.2.) These include

- The ability to think strategically and to convey a strategic vision
- The ability to perceive and articulate a vision for the future
- The ability, by personal example and by influencing all other Academy leaders, to establish and maintain a command climate and academy culture that fosters strong character development
- The ability to build consensus and foster cooperative leadership through influence and persuasion in a collaborative environment
- The ability to communicate, advocate, and persuade with a diverse set of stakeholders, particularly as related to securing necessary resources in a time of declining budgets.

- The ability to exhibit self-confidence, command presence, and accomplishment as a public speaker
- The ability and judgment to remain calm and stay ahead of developments in responding to a crisis

Additionally, Service leadership must take into account the nature and requirements of the superintendent's job that requires skills and attributes beyond those necessary to perform the top management tasks common to all businesses and institutions. Many of these attributes relate to the mission of the academies: the requirement to build leaders of character who are prepared to fight and win the Nation's wars in an environment characterized by uncertainty, complexity, and rapid change. Many also relate to the challenge of providing leadership to a large number of young, diverse, and gifted individuals whose background and culture may differ in significant ways from those of senior leaders. Finally, some relate to the peculiar aspects associated with major colleges and universities today. IDA's study showed that

- The superintendent should be an adaptable leader. (Chapter 4, Section C.1)
- The superintendent should be able to inspire and motivate the younger generation. (Chapter 4, Section C.2)
- The superintendent should be a cross-generational leader who appreciates and seeks to understand the younger generation. (Chapter 4, Section C.3)
- The superintendent should possess a certain combination of temperament, character, and credibility because of the nature of the job and the fact that he or she is, to a large degree, out there on their own. (Chapter 4, Section C.4)
- The superintendent should be prepared to deal with the unfamiliar aspects of overseeing an athletic program that includes the challenges of NCAA Division I competition. (Chapter 4, Section C.6)

5. An Examination of the *Evaluation* of a Superintendent

In previous chapters, the team described the roles of the superintendent and the processes employed in the selection of superintendents, a central feature of which is the direct relationship that is established between the superintendent and the Service Secretary and Chief. They become a *team* and, together, part of a larger team in terms of the accomplishment of the academy mission. In this chapter, the analysis expands on that concept by describing how expectations are established for superintendents and how superintendents are currently evaluated. For comparison, this chapter also describes the different process by which most university presidents are guided and evaluated.

As discussed earlier, participants in this research were all thoroughly engaged and extremely forthcoming. However, whereas discussions of the roles of a superintendent and the selection criteria for superintendents tended to be lengthy, the discussions of how superintendents are evaluated were relatively abbreviated. In general, *Evaluation* was not described as a major concern. That is, current and former superintendents felt well-evaluated, with access to and guidance from their Service Chief and plenty of input from various stakeholders (including senior officer graduates, both active duty and retired). Moreover, current and former Service Chiefs and Secretaries generally felt well-informed, able to provide evaluation through frequent discussions or meetings, formal and informal; they made clear they were not reluctant to pick up the phone and call the superintendent whenever they became concerned or aware of an emerging issue.

A. What the Research Reveals: What Are the Evaluation Processes?

1. How Expectations Are Set

According to current and former Service Chiefs, Secretaries, and superintendents, when an officer is selected to be an Academy superintendent, initial guidance and expectations are conveyed to them by their Service leadership, based on what that leadership feels is needed at the time. Such guidance may focus on specific portions of the academy mission statement or specific issues that warrant attention. The guidance is typically given to the new superintendent during face-to-face meetings with the Service Secretary and Chief. In some cases, a Secretary and Chief have provided specific written guidance, to include deadlines for action, that

highlighted expectations discussed during the face-to-face meetings or during other conversations.⁸⁷

In memoirs and other publications, and during interviews, former superintendents have pointed out portions of the guidance that they were provided by their leadership, especially if such guidance involved the need to make changes:

“West Point is forty years behind the times.”⁸⁸

“The Air Force needs leaders, thinkers, and innovators far more than copiers, drivers, and followers.”⁸⁹

“Get us out of the press—off the front page.”⁹⁰

This process of setting expectations by the Service Secretary and Chief is not unique to those flag officers assuming superintendent roles. Research participants stated that senior flag officers typically receive some form of preliminary guidance. Whether provided with general or specific guidance and expectations, verbal or written, many new superintendents were told to assume their new duties and to report back after a period of time, when they had had an opportunity to assess the current state of the academy.⁹¹ In short, Service Secretaries and Chiefs provide their expectations to new superintendents in a variety of ways, and they do so during normally planned successions, as well as during successions occurring as a result of responding to a particular problem.

2. Current Evaluation Tools and Feedback Processes in Use

As is true for all three-star and four-star officers, Service Academy superintendents do not receive formal written evaluations. However, they are held accountable for providing successful leadership and for ensuring the academies meet their mission goals, and in that regard are closely evaluated throughout their tenure in many ways. If superintendents fail in their position, or lose the confidence of their Service Secretary and Chief, they are removed or their tour is shortened. In Chapter 4, IDA’s analysis of career paths and tenures of all superintendents since 1991 included evidence that five of those twenty-three superintendents (or 22 percent) were removed prior to the completion of what, at the time, would have been considered a normal tour of service

⁸⁷ According to the Army’s General Officer Management office, 19 November 2014, the Army Chief of Staff issues individually tailored letters to, and meets personally with, each general officer going into key two- and three-star positions to provide specific guidance relative to those positions.

⁸⁸ Douglas MacArthur, *Reminiscences*, quote attributed to General Peyton March, Army Chief of Staff, 1964.

⁸⁹ Vance O. Mitchell, *Air Force Officers: Personnel Policy Developments, 1944–1974* (Washington, DC: United States Air Force, 1996). Comments attributed to General Curtis LeMay, Air Force Chief of Staff, February 1963 in a letter to Lieutenant General Robert Warren, Superintendent.

⁹⁰ Interview response from research participant.

⁹¹ Interviews with research participants from cohorts 1 and 2.

because of Service leadership concern or lack of confidence based on investigative or other inputs.⁹²

Research participants highlighted a number of means by which Service leaders provide guidance or receive information on superintendent performance that can be used in providing informal or evaluative feedback. Visits and phone interactions, in some cases frequent, between the Service Secretary or Chief and the Academy superintendent provide opportunities to transmit guidance, receive evaluative feedback and provide updates. Superintendent interviewees described the benefit of these two-way communications. In general, e-mail or voice communications between Service Chiefs and superintendents are common; the frequency depends on both the closeness of their relationship and the nature of current issues. Superintendent respondents discussed how heavily they rely on interaction with their Service Chief. Superintendents and their Service leadership also meet at the Pentagon on a recurring basis.⁹³ During such meetings, superintendents and their staffs discuss academy issues, report on topics of recurring interest, and provide updates; Service leadership also transmits guidance. Additionally, there are annual reviews of academy budget requirements, during which Service leaders provide superintendents guidance and feedback. Of course, during times of crises, interaction between the superintendent and his or her Service Secretary and Chief takes place frequently.

Service leaders rely on informal and formal means to gain specific inputs on superintendent performance. Service Chiefs are in frequent communication with Service four-star commanders who provide inputs on three-star leader performance, including that of the Academy superintendent. Service leaders also call upon retired senior officers connected with the academies to provide their observations on academy climate and leadership performance. The Services have also recently experimented with new forms of feedback and evaluation for GO/FOs. One Service has employed *Letters of Input*, which are written by four-star commanders on subordinate GO/FOs and provided as an input on performance to the Service Chief, but are not part of the GO/FO's official record. One Service conducted a beta test in 2013 with 360-degree-like feedback instruments that involve a self-assessment and anonymous inputs from any other GO/FO. This program has now been expanded to include anonymous inputs from subordinates at the senior civilian (General Schedule, GS-15) level and up. In fact, all four Services are now either testing or employing new 360-degree instruments for their GO/FOs, intended as development aids and self-awareness tools.⁹⁴ The current design of these tools

⁹² One research participant pointed out that these removals often took place in the midst of crisis and that such measures taken in extremis are not evidence of deliberate, continual evaluation.

⁹³ All three Services have oversight bodies at the Service Headquarters, which typically meet quarterly and may include Service Chief and Secretary or Vice Chief and Undersecretary plus Service staff principals.

⁹⁴ "General and Flag Officer 360 Degree and 360-Like Assessments," correspondence from the office of the Senior Advisor to the Secretary of Defense for Military Professionalism, December 10, 2014.

provides an excellent opportunity to provide a GO/FO personalized feedback on many of the leadership attributes discussed in Chapter 4 as key to selection and successful performance of a superintendent. The Services are encouraging their GO/FOs to discuss their individual results with their superiors. These programs could provide another opportunity to bring a useful input into the selection process regarding some of the distinctive traits needed to fulfill the roles of an Academy superintendent. In addition, although some modifications may be needed, tools such as these may offer a Service Chief another input in evaluating the performance of a current superintendent or, as a minimum, act as a vehicle for superintendent-Service Chief conversations about a superintendent's progress. It is important to note that these tools are currently designed and intended only to give the GO/FO personal feedback and coaching and are not linked to promotion, assignment, or further development.

Research participants, who are or were superintendents, also described how superintendents receive performance feedback from external sources such as advisory boards commissioned by themselves; executive steering groups; education review boards; investigative commissions and boards established by Service Secretaries and Chiefs; Service commands; alumni organizations (and alumni in general); academic accreditation associations; presidents from universities in the same region or athletic conference; local, State, and Federal officials; the NCAA; the press; and parents and families of cadets and midshipmen. External feedback also comes from each Academy's Board of Visitors during formal sessions four times a year and during informal interactions with Board members, as well as from other congressional advisory and investigative sources. There are also internal sources of feedback that come to the superintendent via the staff, faculty, and coaches at the academies, and from leadership of the cadets and midshipmen. There are objective measures, such as attrition, discipline statistics, and cadet or midshipman performance that inform both the superintendent and the Service leadership with regard to the effectiveness of academy leadership. The academies also make use of a number of Service-wide survey instruments and longitudinal studies, which report on graduate performance and provide superintendents and Service leaders another source of input.

Overall, both current and former superintendents were unanimous in saying that they considered themselves closely and frequently evaluated. These perspectives mirror the comments made by current and former Service leaders, who indicated that they provided necessary recurring input and feedback to superintendents on academy issues and on their personal performance.

3. Evaluation of University Presidents

By way of contrast, university presidents operate in a very different organizational construct, one wherein expectations are set and guidance is provided through governing bodies. Overall, university and college president respondents described formal processes for their annual evaluation and frequent interactions with their governing board.

In the public university system, a chancellor, a regent, or the chair of a board vested with statutory authority in State law and appointed by the governor provides expectations and performance evaluation to the university president. For example, at the University System of Maryland (USM):

A 17-member Board of Regents, including one full-time student, governs the University System of Maryland. Appointed by the governor, the regents oversee the system's academic, administrative, and financial operations; formulate policy; and appoint the USM chancellor and the presidents of the system's 12 institutions.⁹⁵

The chancellor serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the entire system, with guidance provided by the chairperson of the board. The chancellor meets with each president to establish annual goals and metrics; then meets with the presidents monthly throughout the year. At the end of the year a formal written evaluation is provided by the chancellor to the presidents. This evaluation is provided to the board so that they can determine any changes to compensation.

Private universities typically assess a president's performance against the university strategic plan as a means for evaluation and then make determinations regarding compensation adjustment or term of office renewal. The research team heard from university presidents of a trend to shift to output metrics as a means of evaluation against strategic plans. Such metrics include matriculation rates, job placement, and graduate school acceptance (in contrast to input metrics such as incoming class demographics and qualifications).

At the three to five year point of tenure, many university presidents undergo a *360-degree assessment* conducted by an external organization that is led by a committee of out-of-state presidents.⁹⁶ For example, one university highlights that the purpose of their “standardized 360-degree web-based instrument is to assess a senior leader’s capabilities against leadership criteria and in so doing provide valuable developmental review feedback from individuals who have opportunity to observe and interact on a regular basis with the senior leader being reviewed.”⁹⁷ University president interviewees described this process as a means of obtaining inputs from a wide array of stakeholders, including constituencies that are oftentimes out of the normal view of the president's daily responsibilities. Results of the assessment are also provided to the governing boards, which helps them to assess the president’s leadership in executing the institution’s strategic plan. Some boards have experimented with internal 360-degree assessments, rather than bringing in an external organization to conduct the process for them. Research participants who had undergone these assessments found them useful as tools, a valuable source of feedback, and

⁹⁵ University System of Maryland, “Board of Regents,” <http://www.usmd.edu/regents/>.

⁹⁶ The Association of Governing Boards recommends university/college leaders receive a 360-degree assessment every five years as a minimum.

⁹⁷ University of Minnesota, “Assessing the Performance of Senior Leaders,” http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/hr/Performance/PAPERFORMANCE_PROC03.html.

a means of checking whether or not messages and guidance are getting across to all constituencies. Some university presidents also highlighted how 360-degree assessments are a business best practice that research has consistently shown are one of the most effective tools available for developing leaders.⁹⁸ They are trying to institute 360-degree assessments for all senior leaders, including academic leadership, at their colleges and universities.⁹⁹

B. Summary: Findings on the Evaluation of Superintendents

Superintendents receive initial guidance and have expectations set by their Service Secretary and Chief. In some cases, this is in writing. (Chapter 5, Section A.1)

If superintendents fail in their position, or lose the confidence of their Service Secretary and Chief, they are removed or their tour is shortened. (Chapter 5, Section A.2)

Superintendents, like other three- and four-star officers, do not receive written annual performance evaluations. They receive feedback on their performance from their respective Service Secretary and Chief, as well as by both internal and external stakeholders, during formal recurring forums and via frequent phone, electronic, and personal interactions. (Chapter 5, Section A.2)

Superintendents benefit from recurring two-way communications with their Service Chiefs. (Chapter 5, Section A.2)

Services are experimenting with or employing new forms of performance feedback for GO/FOs. Use of 360-degree-like tools for GO/FOs is now underway and is designed for individual self-awareness and leader development. (Chapter 5, Section A.2)

University presidents have a formal evaluation process that is tied to the governance structure of their institutions and that is used to determine compensation and extension of tenure past an original contract date. (Chapter 5, Section A.3)

In civilian institutions, 360-degree assessments have been found to provide valuable feedback from a wide number of stakeholders and are used in evaluating leadership. (Chapter 5, Section A.3)

⁹⁸ One research participant who is a college president, commenting on 360-degree assessments, questioned whether a president would receive honest input, as university staff can be reluctant to challenge their president.

⁹⁹ Russel Horwitz, "360-degree Feedback Best Practices" (Kwela Leadership and Talent Management), <http://www.leadership-vancouver.ca/documents/360BestPractices-Kwela.pdf>.

6. Recommendations

This chapter discusses the recommendations derived from the findings on the roles, the selection, and the evaluation of DOD Service Academy superintendents. The findings do not unveil surprises, but they do point to areas where improvements are possible, mainly by focusing additional attention on the distinctive aspects of the job and the selection and support of the individual who fills it. The seven recommendations that follow address key areas where improvements can be made; they should be viewed as an integrated set of steps which enhance the roles of a superintendent. Taken together they will help ensure that future DOD Service Academy superintendents are the “right fit,” are well prepared for the challenges of the job, have sufficient tenure to be effective, and are best postured for successful performance. The organization listed at the beginning of each section indicates the organization by which the recommendation is intended to be implemented. For example, Section A is intended to be implemented by the Military Departments. The seven recommended actions are listed together; a brief explanation of each follows the list:

- A. Military Departments: Continue Strong Superintendent-Service Leadership Relationships
- B. Military Departments: Proactively Build Bench of Superintendent Candidates
- C. Military Departments: Conduct a Sophisticated Selection Process
- D. OSD, Congress, Military Departments: Deliberately Prepare the Nominee
- E. Congress: Remove Current Mandatory Retirement Stipulation for Superintendents
- F. Military Departments: Consider Longer Tour Lengths for Superintendents
- G. Military Departments and Superintendents: Assess the Superintendent’s Growing External Activities

A. Military Departments: Continue Strong Superintendent-Service Leadership Relationships

IDA’s research into the roles, the selection, and the evaluation of a superintendent pointed to the importance of the link between superintendent and Service Chief and Secretary. First of all, a superintendent is a direct report, with no Major Command between him or her and the

Chief. Thus, the superintendent's resources, support, and advocacy flow from the Service Chief and Secretary, and this is how the superintendent is empowered to execute the mission of their academy. The team heard of several instances of Service Chiefs needing to deliberately intervene in their Service Headquarters programming and budgeting process to ensure the academy received its required budget dollars on an annual basis. The superintendent is leading the Service's and the Nation's academy, and the issues he or she is dealing with draw national attention. The team heard of the importance of timely conversations between superintendent and Service leaders with notifications of emerging problems at the academy that were likely destined for national or congressional audiences. The more the superintendent has worked thorny problems proactively in support of and in concert with the Service leadership, the better. Former superintendents spoke of the importance of opportunities to discuss with Service leaders proposed courses of action to solve academy issues, and Service Chiefs spoke of the importance of specifically granting superintendents authority to effect change or address open issues. Such teamwork and mutual support provide the basis for a strong Service response in the midst of crisis. The superintendent is also obliged to keep the academy aligned with Service strategies, priorities, and requirements, which requires continual dialogue with Service leadership. The team learned of several best practices in this area whereby superintendents, during the crafting of strategic plans for the academy, briefed Service leaders, adjusted these plans based on Service leader input, and then periodically updated Service leaders on progress toward agreed-upon objectives. The team also learned of Service leadership providing objectives to the superintendent in writing. This description of *commander's intent* became the source of the superintendent's focus and priorities, guided the superintendent's leadership approach, and thus provided the basis for continuing dialogue between superintendent and Service Chief. Lastly, to the degree the Service leaders desire to make use of the intellectual capital and the leadership development know-how resident at the academies, a close relationship with Service leaders allows the superintendent to provide timely advice and insight on Service-wide challenges.

The superintendent-Service Chief relationship is also important to enhance the feedback to and performance evaluation of a superintendent. Frequent updates and informal topic-specific briefs by the superintendent to the Chief will provide the Chief the situational awareness he or she needs to properly understand ongoing events and current issues at the academy, as well as to evaluate the superintendent's leadership. In addition, the Service Chief's evaluation of a superintendent can be enhanced by the Chief taking advantage of a wide array of inputs from informal dialogue with, for instance, "their Board of Directors," the Service four-star commanders; retired four-stars who remain closely engaged at the academy; members of the Board of Visitors; three-star peers of the superintendent; the superintendent's direct reports; as well as discussions with the superintendent about his or her 360-degree feedback results.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ This recommendation regarding gathering a wide array of inputs to inform the Service Chief's evaluation of the superintendent's performance reflects the majority view heard during the team's research. Research also found

Service leaders, however, are busy executives operating in a dynamic environment at the national level in Washington. Their time and available opportunity for personal engagement on academy issues in support of the superintendent can be limited. Therefore, frequent, but brief, interactions are helpful, in addition to the formal lengthy presentations on a quarterly basis all Service leaders utilize. The team also learned of the helpful role the vice chief and the Service Headquarters staff (e.g., the Deputy for Personnel [G-/N-/A-1] and their staffs) can provide on a continuing basis in support of a superintendent and his/her staff. The team learned of an initiative undertaken by a former Service Secretary whereby he continues to introduce every new superintendent to the Service's Assistant Secretary for Manpower and Reserve Affairs via informal social contact, another example of Service leaders linking superintendents to their key staffs.

In Chapter 3, the team discussed the idea that superintendents, by virtue of having no four-star superior between them and the Service leadership, are perceived to be "out there on their own." The team also discussed how the superintendent can be perceived as being part of a leadership team that includes the Service's most senior headquarters leaders. In this sense, the degree to which the superintendent and Service Chief build strong links and supportive interactions between themselves and with the other members of the senior leadership team is the degree to which the Service will own, advocate for, and resource its academy. The research found such links are currently strong, but also assessed the need for continuing focus on the importance of building strong working relationships between the superintendent, the Service Chief, and the other members of the Service senior leadership team.

B. Military Departments: Proactively Build Bench of Superintendent Candidates

In light of the unique and complex aspects of the roles of the superintendent as described in Chapter 3 and in light of the characteristics of a leader to be considered during selection as described in Chapter 4, the Services would be well served by taking active steps to ensure a rich pool of candidates is available on a continuous basis for Service leaders to consider. A rise solely through the operational ranks in one particular warfare specialty is not the ideal development path for this small group of candidates. Rather, steps must be taken to provide, during the colonel/captain to lieutenant general/vice admiral years, developmental experiences during which officers are tested in environments where many of the leadership skills described in Chapters 3 and 4 are essential and can be further honed. Those four-star leaders responsible for the development of these officers ought to be mindful of these traits as they observe the performance of their GO/FOs. In particular, a young GO/FO's performance in a crucible

little evidence to support instituting written evaluations. A minority view, expressed by two research participants, recommends Service Chiefs carefully consider formal, annual written evaluations of superintendents.

moment, dealing with a cultural or ethical dilemma, could be a key development marker. Moreover, Service four-star leaders can advocate for the type of broadening assignments in which such experience is gained. These include, in particular, joint and interagency roles, senior Military Assistant or Executive Assistant roles, NATO or coalition roles, legislative liaison roles, and roles that involve leadership in crisis situations and in environments involving multiple actors with divergent agendas. In addition, there are specific leadership development courses in which the sort of executive-level skills the superintendent position requires can be enhanced. There are a small number of recommended preparation steps IDA advocates for in Chapter 4, Section D.2 for superintendent nominees, which could also be taken for a bench (a small cohort of potential future superintendent candidates), such as attendance at a top executive development course, robust media training, an assignment to or exposure to an academic institution, and self-study of leadership case studies using previous reports of commissions and inquiries on the DOD Academies.

Clearly, these activities must commence well in advance of potential selection for superintendent and perhaps are best undertaken during the candidate's one- and two-star years. In the extreme, two examples illustrate relative success with early succession planning for senior officer assignments: preparation for the Navy's directors of the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program and of the Strategic Systems Programs begins when potential candidates are serving as captains (O-6). Though this model is not suited for planning successive superintendents, early planning (earlier than currently in practice) has merit. In addition, there is a connection between the need for early succession planning and longer tenure, as is the case for these two posts, whose tour lengths greatly exceed that of other three- and four-star assignments (IDA's recommendation on extending the tour lengths of superintendents is discussed next).

Such active management of a small group of potential three-star officers is the job of each Service GO/FO Management office in support of the Service Chief, with inputs from Service four-stars. Certainly, proactive steps to this end are already being taken. However, since the team learned that there are Service Chiefs who maintain and update a list of names of potential future superintendents, it would behoove the Services to ensure those officers receive the assignments necessary to provide the role-specific development which will posture them well for success. The team also learned of Service Chiefs in continuous receipt of performance inputs that allow them to adjust or reconsider their perceptions of the leadership strengths and weaknesses of their potential candidates. Thus, the research supports the need to continually consider both the sought-after traits for a successful superintendent and the development experiences that will maintain a strong bench, ready for assignment. A strong bench could help ensure a Service leader is able to select a superintendent who has the skills, attributes, and breadth of experience to adapt to an evolving environment, respond to the next crisis, develop and act on a long-range vision, and better meet the needs of the academy at a particular time. If an emerging issue at the academy portends a potential leadership change, it may also be advisable to first address the exigent needs through the skills of another member of the

academy's top management team (principally, the commandant or dean) who may possess the requisite competency. This approach would allow an adaptable, seasoned superintendent to guide the institution through a wide variety of challenges as they arise over time. However, the research team also recognizes that on rare occasions a particular crisis may drive Service leaders to seek a new superintendent candidate possessing particular skills or who is held in particularly high esteem and who is not on the current candidate bench. Such a choice might not take full advantage of the deliberate development discussed previously, but it may be the best alternative to handle an acute crisis.

C. Military Departments: Conduct a Sophisticated Selection Process

Selecting a well-developed leader to be a superintendent requires time to conduct a deliberate and thorough selection process. IDA's research found that to consider the skills and traits outlined in Chapter 4, which are needed in an executive of the nature described in Chapter 3, takes time and many inputs, probably more time than is currently being given to the task. That said, the current selection process which supports the Service leader as hiring authority certainly relies on continuous inputs from four-stars who have career-long knowledge of GO/FOs with thirty plus years of experience; current discussions about each potential candidate are robust.

But, due to the inherent intangibles in the process, the important nature of this role—which has impact on the development of leaders thirty years hence—and the complex set of tasks each superintendent must perform, a more sophisticated selection process is needed. The fact that five of the twenty-three superintendents since 1991 were relieved early or were removed under a cloud and the findings from the team's interviews that some former Service leaders now realize they made a wrong choice provide strong further support for the idea of developing a more comprehensive and purposeful approach to the selection process. Indeed, the *due course* process typical of choosing an operational Service component commander is probably inadequate. The team recommends a Service Chief, for instance, garner and consider inputs on superintendent candidates from key stakeholders, such as retired four-stars or former Secretaries with specific academy expertise, former successful superintendents, alumni group leaders, or Board of Visitors members. Taking a page from the practices of search firms who conduct university president and executive searches, inputs from former peers or subordinates (including those who were fired by potential candidates) can be important. Use of new leadership development tools now being tested and employed, such as Letters of Inputs from peers or 360-degree-like feedback, can be helpful. Furthermore and considering the challenges of dealing with intergenerational differences, inputs from four-stars who have observed potential candidates' performance in the spotlight of a contemporary cultural conundrum or ethical dilemma could be key signals of potential for the superintendent role. Although the Services currently employ a thoughtful and deliberative selection process, the gathering and considering of such an array of inputs takes time—probably more time than some Services currently plan for in the selection process.

This information gathering process offers several added benefits. First, feedback can be used to inform the longer term process of building a bench, and may even lead Service leaders to tweak their planned developmental assignments or experiences. Second, carefully listening to those who have worked with a candidate can help avoid, or fill in, blind spots about a leader. Lastly, an inclusive approach to generating information can promote acceptance of the new superintendent among key stakeholder groups.

IDA's research indicates that an important requirement of the selection process is ensuring Service leaders have a demographically diverse group of candidates from which to choose. This requirement must also be a key factor in the building of the bench, described above. The benefits of the changing demographics of the Services should be manifest in the group of candidates for all the leadership roles at the academies, so that DOD's Academies can present senior leaders to cadets and midshipmen who reflect the talent make-up of America.

The nature of the superintendent's roles as the research has described and the benefit to the Service and the DOD of strong academy leadership call for the Services to consider experienced candidates, preferably serving three-stars. Recent and historical experience indicate that a more senior executive may be more likely to have the range of managerial experience, the mature judgment, and the experience-based intuition the superintendent roles require. This is despite the fact that a superintendent commands and oversees a program less substantial in size and resources than most three-star commands. It is the long-term impact on military and national leadership and the national attention the academies rightly attract that drives the need for a seasoned leader.

IDA's research also indicated that the academy's unique operating environment by itself presents a new superintendent with a formidable leadership challenge; thus, previous experience at the academy is important to success. Particularly early in a superintendent's tour, having some knowledge of the academy culture and traditions, the academy's mission elements, the nature of a four-year development program, and the uniqueness of a 24-hour-a-day education and training enterprise is a benefit that can assist a new superintendent in becoming an engaged leader from the start. This recommendation is supported by responses from a significant number of Service leaders and superintendents.

D. OSD, Congress, Military Departments: Deliberately Prepare the Nominee

Chapter 4, Section D.2 describes a menu of actions to consider that IDA's research team recommends be part of a deliberate preparation process. The team's research developed this menu of successful actions from lessons of previous superintendents and recommendations by experts. To accomplish even the most important items requires more time than is typically provided between a new superintendent's confirmation and assumption of command. Since the confirmation process begins with a Service decision on a nominee and is then followed sequentially by Secretary of Defense approval and vetting and approval by the White House, the processes enabling these steps must take place well in advance of actual confirmation. However,

the SASC typically does not act on confirmations until between 90 and 30 days prior to the fill date (refer to Chapter 4, Section A). This relatively brief period of less than three months does not allow a newly confirmed superintendent to undertake unique preparation steps that would be beneficial. Additionally, providing a superintendent as much role-specific preparation as possible would help ensure maximum productivity and a minimum of turmoil during transition. The team's research indicates that a four-month period after confirmation and before taking command is the minimum needed to accomplish such preparation, and a longer period could be even more beneficial. The Department should work with the SASC to afford some increased flexibility in the confirmation process for superintendents so as to allow for a longer post-confirmation pre-command period, based on the unique nature of this leadership role. If pre-confirmation activities can take place that would assist in the preparation of superintendents, these should be pursued as well.

For a superintendent nominee to take the preparation steps the IDA research team believes should be considered, the Service GO/FO Management offices must deliberately pre-plan and program succession overlap timelines and fiscal resources to execute such preparation, especially since a unique preparation period for this role will ripple through the chain of GO/FO moves attendant to any change in superintendent. The team realizes this change represents a significant investment by the Services, but such role-specific preparation steps as outlined in Chapter 4 would enhance the potential for success of a new superintendent, particularly early in his or her tenure. This recommendation is supported by numerous current and former superintendents and Service leaders.

E. Congress: Remove Current Mandatory Retirement Stipulation for Superintendents

Based on IDA's analysis of the role of a superintendent and the team's assessment of the selection criteria and selection process, it appears evident the current requirement that a superintendent retire at the end of his or her tour unnecessarily constrains Service leaders in their efforts to identify the "right leader for the right job at the right time" and potentially deprives the Nation of the future service of an accomplished and proven leader. Historically, it should be noted that if the mandatory retirement requirement had existed earlier in the twentieth century, the Nation would never have known the senior leadership of former USMA superintendents Generals Douglas MacArthur (1919–1922), Maxwell D. Taylor (1945–1949), and William C. Westmoreland (1960–1963); USAFA superintendent General James R. Allen (1974–1977); or USNA superintendents Admirals James L. Holloway III (1947-1950), Kinnaird R. McKee (1975–1978) and Charles R. Larson (1983–1986, 1994–1998). Or, perhaps these leaders would not have been selected to be superintendent. Although the current law stipulating mandatory

retirement provides authority to the SecDef to waive for good cause,¹⁰¹ research found that the stipulation acts as an unproductive constraint (and the Services have not made use of the waiver provision). Retirement at the end of the tour as the assumed or default position, which requires a SecDef process to overcome, runs counter to the research's finding that the Service needs to develop, consider, and select based on best demonstrated leadership.

Service leaders need maximum flexibility in conducting a thorough and deliberate selection process for the right leader, a process that should include assessing the Service's best leaders most suited for the complex role of superintendent. One can argue that there are few more important three-star positions in any of the Services than those responsible for the foundational education and leadership development of the young men and women who will provide the nucleus of leadership for the Nation's military for the next thirty to forty years. Therefore, it is counterproductive to maintain a hindrance that can result in the Service leadership passing over the best person for the superintendent position, simply because of its desire not to forfeit the future availability of a superb and proven leader for additional demanding assignments as a three-star or four-star officer.

Consideration of potential superintendent candidates, then, to find the "right fit" to handle the needs of the academy at the time should include those officers with maximum leadership potential, including those with potential for taking on demanding four-star assignments later. And if the Service chooses the right leader and subsequently a Service or Joint need arises to make further use of that superintendent's executive and command leadership talent, then the Service should have the flexibility to meet the new requirement. More generally, if the Service chooses the right leader as described in Chapter 4 and if that leader passes the test of succeeding in the challenging and complex superintendent role, then the Service ought to be able to use that experienced officer in subsequent challenging leadership positions, including four-star roles. The mandatory retirement stipulation in law, then, can serve to limit the pool of leadership talent Service leaders develop and assess during selection for the superintendent role, by practically causing them to pass by not only those officers with clear four-star potential, but possibly the best officer available for the position of superintendent.

F. Military Departments: Consider Longer Tour Lengths for Superintendents

In general, IDA recommends that having found and prepared the right leader for the superintendent roles, the Service retain him or her in that position for an extended period—

¹⁰¹ Mandatory Retirement: Superintendent of the United States Military Academy; Waiver Authority, 10 U.S.C. § 3921 (2014); Superintendent: condition for detail to position, 10 U.S.C. § 4333a (2014), Mandatory retirement: Superintendent of the United States Naval Academy; waiver authority, 10 U.S.C. § 6371(2014); Superintendent, 10 U.S.C. § 6951a (2014); Mandatory retirement: Superintendent of the United States Air Force Academy; waiver authority, 10 U.S.C. § 8921 (2014); Superintendent: condition for detail to position, 10 U.S.C. § 9333a (2014).

longer than three years. In fact, historical and current practice by the Services, and the large majority of Service leader and superintendent respondents, all point to a required tour longer than three years. As observed in Chapter 3, this recommendation for a tour length greater than three years is supported by more than five out of six of the forty-three interviewees who addressed this issue. The team has pointed out in Chapter 3 that a tour length longer than three years is generally required to assess an academy's current environment and challenges, to accomplish strategic planning, to introduce needed changes as the academy is evolving, to develop constructive relationships with various stakeholder groups both inside and outside of the academy, to garner the support of these groups for any initiatives, and to measure the impact of initiatives and follow-up on them so as to allow the changes to have a lasting effect. Indeed, it is accepted in higher education circles that no leader of a university or college can provide a significant and lasting impact in less than five years. Overall, based on the team's research including the inputs and experiences of university presidents, it appears that the optimum tour length for a superintendent is likely in the four to five year range.

One might argue, considering the experience and opinions of university presidents, that an even longer tour would be better. Longer tours would be in concert with the tenure of college and university presidents, who currently have an average tenure of seven years.¹⁰² However, IDA's research also indicated that because of the demands of the position, some superintendents are exhausted by the end of four years. This is a result of the constant, seven-day-a-week demands placed upon them; their responsibility for the holistic development and 24 hour-a-day conduct of the future leaders under their command; their additional responsibilities as a military commander within their Services' leadership team; the need to entertain a continuous flow of distinguished visitors; and the fact that their institutions are in the national spotlight in a way that few colleges or universities are.

As IDA's research recommends tour lengths longer than three years, the evidence does not point to the need to change the current law requiring a minimum tour length of three years. As noted above, Service leaders generally agree on the advantages of longer tours and the current practices and trends are in that direction. At the same time, the situation at each academy is unique and evolving, and the leadership strengths and weaknesses and the personal and family situation of each superintendent are unique. There may well be a case where it would be wise on all accounts to replace a superintendent after three years. So whereas longer tour lengths for the superintendent are generally desirable for the institution and longer tours are the current practice, it does not appear necessary nor would it be wise to mandate a tour length of greater than three

¹⁰² The American Council on Education's 2006 survey of college and university presidents showed that presidents had served an average of eight and a half years in office at the time of the survey. This is the highest recorded average tenure in the history of this periodic survey of the American college presidency. Today's college presidents are serving notably shorter tenures. ACE reported the average went down to seven years in 2011. (American Council on Education, *The American College President 2012* [Washington, DC: American Council on Education, 2012]).

years, nor would it be wise to remove the current tour length stipulation as removing this requirement might tempt the Services to truncate tours thus lessening the impact of good leaders.

G. Military Departments and Superintendents: Assess the Superintendent's Growing External Activities

IDA's research has highlighted an increase in the external, or "up and out," activities of superintendents, driven by the expanding role of the Nation's academies both as innovators within the military, as nationally-ranked institutions of higher learning with top-tier athletic programs, and by perceived requirements for greater private financial support to supplement Congressionally appropriated funds. The pressure that these growing activities (as described in Chapter 3, Section F.2) places on superintendents leads to a larger question for the Services: what are the overarching strategic *ends* for their academies in the twenty-first century? While accomplishing their enduring mission to develop leaders of character, superintendents need a clear expression of how Service leaders value their additional undertakings that may go beyond academy core functions. Such activities include efforts to share lessons on sexual assault prevention, lessons on character and leadership development, as well as intellectual capital relevant to their Service's professional ethic, all of which serve purposes beyond the academy alone. Additional external functions include efforts necessary to field Division I-caliber athletic teams and stand up or sustain Centers of Excellence (e.g., Center for Cyber Security Studies, Center for Character and Leadership Development). The value judgments of Service leaders related to these additional undertakings will inform strategic choices that must be made regarding these lines of effort, in the context of diminishing resources. Choices will lead to an appropriate level of resources being provided to the academies in the years ahead; further, choices can help the Services draw funding for Centers of Excellence and other initiatives from the appropriate Service resource sponsor rather than from academy or donor funds. Making these choices could lead to other possible adjustments, such as providing greater staff support structure for superintendents, issuing clear direction as to which academy activities should be donor-funded, and delineating permissible actions for superintendents to take in securing such funding.

This consideration by the Services should include recognition of the unique and growing challenges placed on superintendents due to their academies' participation in Division I intercollegiate athletics. Superintendents and athletic directors face a significant compliance burden with respect to NCAA rules. More importantly, they face increasing pressures due to the trends associated with college sports becoming big businesses. In the context of the academies' missions, Service leaders should weigh the costs and benefits of Division I athletic participation. Such a review might also consider whether there may be a preferred alternative means of reaping the leadership development benefits of participating in intercollegiate athletics.

As the Services—together with their superintendents—craft strategies that address all these issues, a clearer and mission-driven balance between external and internal leadership focus for the superintendents will emerge.

Appendix A

Research Participants

This appendix provides a list of research participants from both the preliminary and the data collection phases of the research. Data collection participants are listed by cohort.

Phase 0 Participants

General (ret) Roger Brady, USAF

Admiral (ret) Hank Chiles, USN

General (ret) Michael Hagee, USMC

General (ret) HT Johnson, USAF

General (ret) James McCarthy, USAF

Dr. Bernard Rostker

Position

Former Commander, US Air Forces in Europe

Former Commander, US Strategic Command

Former Commandant, US Marine Corps

Former Acting Secretary of the Navy; former Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Installation and Environment); former Commander of US Transportation Command and Commander of Military Airlift Command

Former Deputy Commander in Chief, U.S. European Command

Former Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

Cohort 1: Service Chiefs and Secretaries

General Jim Amos, USMC

Mr. Louis Caldera

Admiral (ret) Vern Clark, USN

Mr. John Dalton

Mr. Richard Danzig

Mr. Pete Geren

Admiral Jonathan Greenert, USN

Ms. Deborah James

Admiral (ret) Jay Johnson, USN

General (ret) John Jumper, USAF

Mr. Ray Mabus

Mr. John McHugh

Position

Current Commandant, US Marine Corps

Former Secretary of the Army; former President, University of New Mexico

Former Chief of Naval Operations

Former Secretary of the Navy

Former Secretary of the Navy; former Undersecretary of the Navy

Former Secretary of the Air Force; former Secretary of the Army

Current Chief of Naval Operations

Current Secretary of the Air Force

Former Chief of Naval Operations

Former Air Force Chief of Staff

Current Secretary of the Navy

Current Secretary of the Army

Admiral (ret) Michael Mullen, USN

General Ray Odierno, USA

General (ret) Dennis Reimer, USA

General (ret) Norton Schwartz, USAF

General (ret) Eric Shinseki, USA

General (ret) Larry Welch, USAF

General Mark Welsh III, USAF

Dr. Sheila Widnall

Former Chief of Naval Operations; former
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Current Army Chief of Staff

Former Army Chief of Staff

Former Air Force Chief of Staff

Former Army Chief of Staff

Former Air Force Chief of Staff

Current Air Force Chief of Staff

Former Secretary of the Air Force

Cohort 2: Academy Superintendents

Vice Admiral Walter “Ted” Carter, USN

Lieutenant General Robert Caslen Jr, USA

Lieutenant General (ret) Daniel

Christman, USA

Air Commodore Alan Clements

Position

Current superintendent, USNA

Current superintendent, USMA

Former superintendent, USMA

Commandant, Australian Defence Force
Academy

Rear Admiral (ret) Phillip Greene, Jr,

USMS

Lieutenant General (ret) Michael Gould,

USAF

Lieutenant General (ret) Franklin

Hagenbeck, USA

Rear Admiral James Helis, USMS

Lieutenant General Michelle Johnson,

USAF

Lieutenant General (ret) William

Lennox, USA

Vice Admiral (ret) Michael Miller,

USN

Lieutenant General (ret) Tad Oelstrom,

USAF

Admiral (ret) John Ryan, USN

Rear Admiral Sandra Stosz, USCG

Former superintendent, USMMA

Former superintendent, USAFA

Former superintendent, USMA

Current superintendent, USMMA

Current superintendent, USAFA

Former superintendent, USMA

Former superintendent, USNA

Former superintendent, USAFA

Former superintendent, USNA

Current superintendent, US Coast Guard
Academy

Cohort 3: College/University

Presidents

Mr. Jonathan R. Alger

Dr. Juliette B. Bell

Mr. Bruce D. Benson

Mr. John Broderick

Mr. Ronald J. Daniels

Dr. John J. DeGioia

Dr. James Harris

Position

President, James Madison University

President, University of Maryland Eastern
Shore

President, University of Colorado

President, Old Dominion University

President, Johns Hopkins University

President, Georgetown University

President, Widener University

Dr. Freeman Hrabowski	President, University of Maryland Baltimore County
Dr. Shirley Jackson	President, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Dr. Cornelius M. (Neil) Kerwin	President, American University
Dr. Brit Kirwan	Chancellor, University System of Maryland
Dr. Gregg Kvistad	Provost/Executive Vice Chancellor; former Interim Chancellor, University of Denver
Mrs. Kay Norton	President, University of Northern Colorado
Mr. Taylor Reveley	President, College of William and Mary
Lieutenant General (ret) Erv Rokke, USAF	Former dean, US Air Force Academy; former president, National Defense University; former president, Moravian College and Theological Seminary; charter president, US Air Force Academy Endowment
Lieutenant General (ret) John Rosa, USAF	President, The Military College of South Carolina; former superintendent of the US Air Force Academy
Dr. Kenneth P. Ruscio	President, Washington and Lee University
General (ret) Binford Peay, USA	Superintendent, Virginia Military Institute; former Army Vice Chief of Staff and former Commander, U.S. Central Command
Dr. Bill Scoggins	President, Colorado School of Mines
Dr. Pamela S. Shockley-Zalabak	Chancellor, University of Colorado Colorado Springs
Dr. Teresa Sullivan	President, University of Virginia
Dr. Jill Tiefenthaler	President, Colorado College
Dr. Heather Wilson	President, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology; former member, US Air Force Academy Board of Visitors
Dr. Randy Woodson	President, North Carolina State University
Other Participants	Position
Brigadier General Andrew Armacost, USAF	Dean, US Air Force Academy
Ms. Jeanne Bankard	Deputy Director, Army General Officer Management Office
Captain William Byrne	Commandant of midshipmen, US Naval Academy
Ms. Constance L. Buhl	Chairman, USMMA Alumni Association and Foundation
Colonel Joseph Calloway, USA	Director, Army General Officer Management Office
Colonel Christopher E. Craige, USAF	Director, Air Force General Officer Management Office
Major General Sue Desjardins	Former Commandant of cadets, USAFA
Mr. Dave Dillensnyder	Director, Navy Flag Officer Distribution

Chet Gladchuk
Mr. Price Harding
Colonel Kathleen Harrington, USAF
Ms. Katrina “Kit” Jones

Larry Jones

Mr. Shashi N. Kumar
Rear Admiral (ret) Tony Kurta, USN

General (ret) Steve Lorenz

Mr. Robert McClure

Colonel Debra McDonald
Dr. Judith Block McLaughlin

Andrew Phillips
Major General William Rapp, USA

Captain (ret) George Sullivan, USN

Brigadier General JT Thomson, USA
Mr. William “T” Thompson

Colonel Bart Weiss, USAF
Brigadier General Stephen Williams, USAF

Director of Athletics, USNA
Managing partner, CarterBaldwin
Vice Dean, USAFA
Deputy Director, Air Force General Officer
Management Office
Deputy Director of Admissions and
Former commander, USAFA Preparatory
School
Current dean, USMMA
Director, Navy Flag Officer Management
and Development
Former Commandant, USAFA; former
Commander, Air University; former
Commander, Air Education and Training
Command; current President, USAFA
Endowment
President and CEO, West Point Association
of Graduates
Director of Admissions, USMA
Educational chair, Harvard Seminar for New
Presidents
Dean, USNA
Commandant, US Army War College;
former Commandant, USMA; former Chief
of Army Legislative Affairs
Founder, Honolulu Chapter, Alumni
Association of the USMMA
Commandant of cadets, USMA
President and CEO of USAFA
Association of Graduates
Vice Director of Athletics, USAFA
Commandant of cadets, USAFA

Appendix B

Interview Protocol

This appendix provides the protocols utilized during data collecting interviews of research participants from the various cohorts.

A. For Interview Cohort 1: Current and Former Service Chiefs and Secretaries

1. Roles:

1. How would you describe the superintendent's primary role?
 - a. Optionally, can wait and then ask, "is there anything else?," or be ready to ask, "Beyond leading the institution, how else might you describe the superintendent's role?," or, "Beyond that, what are the other roles that they need to perform?"
 - b. How is/has this this role (been) changing?
(for formers, can change this to "Considering your term in office and looking back, then going forward, how has this role been changing?")
 - c. Sexual assault has received great visibility during the past year. Describe the role that you expect the superintendent to have regarding this issue.
 - d. What are the constraints that most limit the superintendent in their roles?
(funding, duration of tenure, rank/grade, finite cadet time during the duty day, etc.)
 - e. What challenges do you think a new superintendent is most prepared for? Least prepared for?

2. Selection:

1. When you selected an individual to be superintendent, what criteria did you consider?
 - a. How would you rate the following factors with regards to importance in selection criteria for superintendents - from Extremely Important, to Important, to Not Very Important (omit any identified in the primary response)? (or, hand them a list, or cards, and let them state the relative importance.)

- 1) Demonstrated leadership
 - 2) Professional credibility (operational experience; technical competence)
 - 3) Public persona
 - 4) Washington DC experience
 - 5) Ability to adapt to change
 - 6) Academic credentials
 - 7) Diversity of experiences
 - 8) Training or education enterprise experience
 - 9) Racial, ethnic, and gender diversity
 - 10) Temperament
- b. Going forward, what other factors should be considered?
 - c. Of a typical 2-star and 3-star GO/FO population, what percentage of them did you or would you consider as meeting the criteria for an ideal superintendent? Do you see those criteria changing during the next 10 years?
 - d. To what extent do current development paths for GO/FOs prepare and develop some to be a future superintendent?

3. Evaluation:

1. What guidance and expectations did you provide to your superintendent(s)?
 - a. How did you evaluate how well he or she met those expectations?
 - b. What means, or forum, did you use to provide the superintendent feedback?
 - c. Are there other ways that superintendents should be evaluated?

4. Conclusion:

1. Looking ahead, to the next 10-year period, what challenges do superintendents need to be most prepared for?
2. What question regarding the role of the superintendent did we not ask?

5. Follow up/Additional Questions If Required:

1. How often did you expect your superintendent to communicate with you?
2. What were your constraints when selecting a superintendent?
3. What type of leader do you believe is needed at the academy now?

B. For Interview Cohort 2: Current and Former Service Academy Superintendents

1. Roles:

1. How would you describe the superintendent's primary role?
 - a. Optionally, can wait and then ask, "is there anything else?," or be ready to ask, "Beyond leading the institution, how else might you describe the superintendent's roles?," or, "Beyond that, what are the other roles that they need to perform?"
 - b. How are/have these roles (been) changing? (for formers, can change this to "considering your term in office and looking back, then going forward, how have these roles been changing?")
 - c. Sexual assault has received great visibility during the past year. How do/did you see your role regarding this issue?
 - d. What are the constraints that most limit the superintendent in their roles? (funding, duration of tenure, rank/grade, finite cadet time during the duty day, etc.)
 - e. What challenges were you most prepared for? Least prepared for?
 - f. *Think of a particularly difficult situation or challenge that you responded to; please elaborate on what skills that you employed, those that you wish that you had, and how you responded to this situation, and what you would now do differently.
 - g. What skills or preparation for your role have you found useful, or wanting, in dealing with the attributes and behavior of today's generation of cadets or midshipmen? What preparation would you recommend for future superintendents to address the attributes of future cadets or midshipmen?

*For former superintendents, and current, if we have time. Do not provide this question in advance.

2. Selection:

1. What criteria should be used when selecting a superintendent?
 - a. How would you rate the following factors with regards to importance in selection criteria for superintendents - from Extremely Important, to Important, to Not Very Important (omit any identified in the primary response)? (or, hand them a list and let them state the relative importance.)
 - 1) Demonstrated leadership

- 2) Professional credibility (operational experience; technical competence)
 - 3) Public persona
 - 4) Washington DC experience
 - 5) Ability to adapt to change
 - 6) Academic credentials
 - 7) Diversity of experiences
 - 8) Training or education enterprise experience
 - 9) Racial, ethnic, and gender diversity
 - 10) Temperament
- b. Going forward, what other factors should be considered?
 - c. To what extent do current development paths for GO/FOs prepare and develop one to be a future superintendent?
 - d. What assignment(s) best prepared you to be a superintendent?

3. Evaluation:

1. What guidance was provided and how were expectations set out for you as you began your tenure as superintendent?
 - a. How often and in what form did you interact with/receive feedback from your Boss?
 - b. How did (do) you define success, and how did (do) you measure your own degree of success?
 - c. How should a superintendent's performance be evaluated?

4. Conclusion:

1. Looking ahead, to the next 10-year period, what challenges do superintendents need to be most prepared for?
2. What question regarding the role of the superintendent did we not ask?

5. Follow up/Additional Questions If Required:

1. What type of leader do you believe is needed at the academy now (for former superintendents)?
2. Are there particular flag-level developmental assignments that would best prepare one for the superintendent position?

3. What adaptations have you undertaken at the academy as a result of the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell?
4. Describe the challenge of balancing the demands on cadet/midshipman time between academics, athletics, and leadership development.
5. How much of your focus was/has been on issues internal to the academy, versus focus on issues or audiences external to the institution?
6. What stakeholders did you, as superintendent, find the most challenging?

C. For Interview Cohort 3: University Presidents

1. Roles:

1. How would you describe the president's primary role?
 - a. Optionally, can wait and then ask, "is there anything else?"
 - b. or be ready to ask, "Beyond leading the institution, how else might you describe the president's role?" or, "Beyond that, what are the other roles that they need to perform?"
 - c. How is/has this role (been changing)? ("Looking ahead over the next 10 years, will the role need to change?" Or, "Looking ahead over the next 10 years, will the role need to change?")
 - d. Describe the principal challenges that you face daily.
 - e. Sexual assault has received great visibility during the past year. How do you see your role regarding this issue?
 - f. What constraints, would you say, limit the president in their roles? (funding, duration of tenure, etc.)
 - g. What challenges were you most prepared for? Least prepared for?
 - h. Based on your understanding and experience, how are the roles of a university president and a military academy superintendent similar? Different?

2. Selection:

1. Describe the process that you undertook that ultimately led you to the presidency?
2. What criteria should be used when selecting a university president?
 - a. How would you rate the following factors with regards to importance in selection criteria for university presidents - from Extremely Important, to

Important, to Not Very Important (omit any identified in the primary response)?
(Or, hand them a list and let them state the relative importance.)

- 1) Demonstrated leadership
 - 2) Professional credibility
 - 3) Public persona
 - 4) Political experience
 - 5) Ability to adapt to change
 - 6) Academic credentials
 - 7) Diversity of experiences
 - 8) Training or education enterprise experience
 - 9) Racial, ethnic, and gender diversity
 - 10) Temperament
- b. Going forward, what other factors should be considered?
- c. What previous positions and experiences would you say most prepared and developed you to assume your position as a president?

3. Governance and Evaluation:

1. What guidance was provided to you and how were expectations set out for you as you began your tenure as university president?
 - a. Who provided you with that guidance?
 - b. Describe the composition of your governing body and how often and in what form did you interact with/receive feedback from them (could be a chancellor, board, etc.)?
 - c. How do you define success, and how do you measure your own degree of success?
 - d. How are you evaluated as president? (Should a university president's performance be evaluated?)

4. Conclusion:

1. Looking ahead, to the next 10-year period, what challenges do superintendents need to be most prepared for?
2. What question regarding the role of the superintendent did we not ask?

5. Follow up/Additional Questions If Required:

1. How much of your focus was/has been on issues internal to the university, versus focus on issues or audiences external to the institution?
2. What stakeholders did you, as university president, find the most challenging?

Appendix C

Selection Criteria Rated in Interview

This appendix provides research participant responses regarding their valuation of selection criteria.

Table C-1. Participant Factors/Ratings

	Extremely or very important	Important	Not very important
Demonstrated leadership	39	3	0
Professional credibility	29	17	2
Temperament	28	12	0
Ability to adapt to change	20	9	1
Public persona	19	18	1
Washington, DC experience	14	23	6
Diversity of experiences	12	25	3
Academic credentials	10	16	23
Racial, ethnic, and gender diversity	7	19	8
Training/education enterprise experience	7	13	6

The IDA team asked research participants to rate the following factors with regard to importance as selection criteria for superintendents, along a scale from *Extremely Important*, to *Important*, to *Not Very Important*:

- Demonstrated leadership
- Professional credibility (operational experience; technical competence)
- Public persona
- Washington DC experience
- Ability to adapt to change
- Academic credentials
- Diversity of experiences
- Training or education enterprise experience

- Racial, ethnic, and gender diversity
- Temperament

However, not every participant rated each factor; in addition, some contributed ratings that did not make use of the standard terminology employed in the Likert-like scale.

The top five criteria research participants indicated were *Extremely Important* or *Very Important* were demonstrated leadership (39 respondents), professional credibility (29 respondents), temperament (28 respondents), ability to adapt to change (20 respondents), and public persona (19 respondents). Others were Washington, DC experience, diversity of experiences, academic credentials, racial, ethnic, and gender diversity, and training/education enterprise experience.

The top five criteria research participants indicated were *Important* were diversity of experiences (25 respondents), Washington, DC experience (23 respondents), racial, ethnic, and gender diversity (19 respondents), public persona (18 respondents), and professional credibility (17 respondents). Others were academic credentials, training/education enterprise experience, temperament, ability to adapt to change, and demonstrated leadership.

The top two criteria research participants indicated were *Not Very Important* were academic credentials (23 respondents) and racial, ethnic, and gender diversity (8 respondents). Six respondents each indicated that Washington, DC experience and training/education enterprise experience were *Not Very Important*. Others were diversity of experiences, professional credibility, public persona, and ability to adapt to change.

Appendix D

Roles Common to Superintendents and University Presidents and Roles Unique to Superintendents

Common Roles	Unique Roles
<p>Chief Executive Officer who oversees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic affairs • Finances • Enrollment • Student Life • International Initiatives • Infrastructure • Information Technology <p>National/international ambassador on behalf of institution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach to various constituencies • Face of the Institution <p>Sets vision, goals and directions</p> <p>Tone Setter</p> <p>Ensures student career assistance/placement</p> <p>Provides moral leadership</p> <p>Sustains honor code/concept</p> <p>Leads change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt to change within the culture and within the institution <p>Manages role of intercollegiate athletics</p> <p>Fosters diversity</p> <p>Establishes a culture and climate of mutual respect</p> <p>Manages crises</p> <p>Understands youth culture and how it communicates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures members of that culture adopt the core values of the institution <p>Advocates for resource needs</p>	<p>Provides the environment to develop military leaders for the profession of arms</p> <p>Responsible for lives of cadets/midshipmen 24/7/365</p> <p>General Courts Martial Convening Authority</p> <p>Installation Commander</p> <p>Immediate Superior of subordinate commanders</p> <p>Oversees universal physical training and athletic programs</p> <p>Recruits qualified students from 435 Congressional Districts</p> <p>Ensures proper balance in the management of cadet/midshipman time</p> <p>Sustains Service culture and traditions</p>

Appendix E

Academy Superintendents Since 1991

Table E-1. Military Academy Superintendents Since 1991

Tenure	U.S. Military Academy (USMA)	Class/Year Graduated
1991–1996	LTG Howard D. Graves	1961
1996–2001	LTG Daniel William Christman	1965
2001–2006	LTG William James Lennox, Jr.	1971
2006–2010	LTG Franklin Lee Hagenbeck	1971
2010–2013	LTG David H. Huntoon	1973
2013–present	LTG Robert L. Caslen	1975
Tenure	U.S. Naval Academy (USNA)	Class/Year Graduated
1991–1994	RADM Thomas C. Lynch	1964
1994–1998	ADM Charles R. Larson	1958
1998–2002	VADM John R. Ryan	1967
2002–2003	VADM Richard J. Naughton	1968
2003–2003	VADM Charles W. Moore (acting)	1968
2003–2007	VADM Rodney P. Rempt	1966
2007–2010	VADM Jeffrey Fowler	1978
2010–2014	VADM Michael H. Miller	1974
2014–present	VADM Walter E. Carter, Jr.	1981
Tenure	U.S. Air Force Academy (USAF)	Class/Year Graduated
1991–1994	Lt. Gen. Bradley C. Hosmer	1959
1994–1997	Lt. Gen. Paul E. Stein	1966
1997–2000	Lt. Gen. Tad J. Oelstrom	1965
2000–2003	Lt. Gen. John R. Dallager	1969
2003–2005	Lt. Gen. John W. Rosa	N/A
2005–2009	Lt. Gen. John F. Regni	1973
2009–2013	Lt. Gen. Michael C. Gould	1976
2013–present	Lt. Gen. Michelle D. Johnson	1981

Note: Lt.Gen. Rosa is not a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy.

Appendix F

NVivo

NVivo is a data-analysis software program for “qualitative and mixed methods research” that assists researchers in “organiz[ing] and analyz[ing] unstructured information,” from various sources, such as audio, video, interview transcripts, responses to a questionnaire, websites, notes, or memos.¹⁰³ It provides a “workspace to help...at every stage of [a] project – from organizing...material, through to analysis, and then sharing and reporting” the findings.¹⁰⁴ With NVivo, non-numeric data can be analyzed both qualitatively (via text queries) and quantitatively (via crosstabs) and presented in charts and tables. Responses can be broken down by user-defined and –assigned demographic categories, permitting cross-group comparisons; in addition, quotes can quickly be located and pulled from them in order to justify findings, assertions, and recommendations. Quantitative data on the number of sources addressing a particular topic, theme, or question (“node”) and in what amounts can be seen at a glance, as the program automatically keeps track of these during the coding process. In addition, researchers can query their data and quickly “uncover subtle connections in ways that [are not] possible manually.”¹⁰⁵ The following screenshots present examples of nodes, coding, source list, text query, and data visualization used in IDA’s research.

¹⁰³ QSR International, “An Overview of NVivo,” <http://download.qsrinternational.com/Resource/NVivo10/NVivo-10-Overview.pdf>, accessed November 13, 2014.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

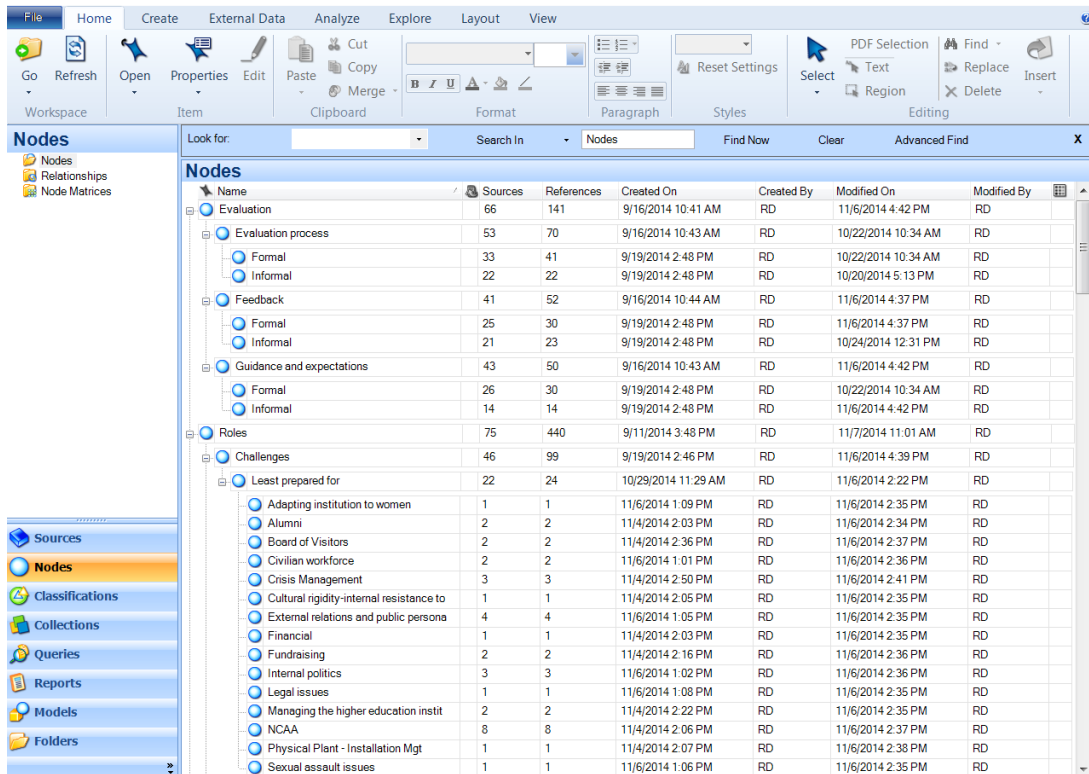


Figure F-1. A Constructed Node Tree in NVivo

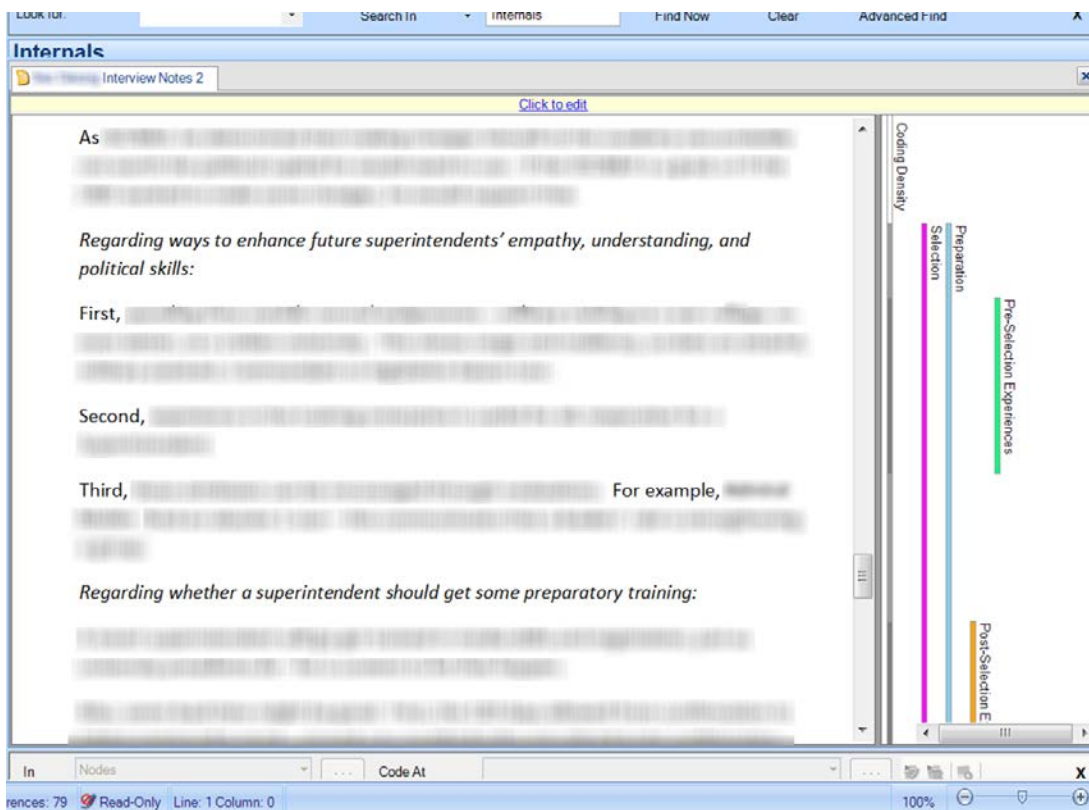


Figure F-2. Example of a Coded Interview Transcript

The screenshot shows the NVivo software interface with a table of sources. The table has columns for Name, Node, Reference, Created On, Created, Modified On, and Modified. The data is as follows:

Name	Node	Reference	Created On	Created	Modified On	Modified
	11	24	8/29/2014 11:10	RD	9/16/2014 11:28	RD
	12	23	9/9/2014 10:28 A	RD	9/16/2014 11:35	RD
	12	27	10/17/2014 1:22	RD	10/17/2014 1:22	RD
	13	29	11/3/2014 10:09	RD	11/3/2014 10:09	RD
	14	20	8/29/2014 11:10	RD	9/16/2014 11:54	RD
	16	49	9/26/2014 3:29 P	RD	9/26/2014 3:29 P	RD
	17	20	8/29/2014 11:10	RD	9/16/2014 11:54	RD
	19	45	10/7/2014 10:00	RD	10/7/2014 10:00	RD
	20	46	10/16/2014 10:44	RD	10/16/2014 11:16	RD
	20	42	10/24/2014 6:23	RD	10/24/2014 6:25	RD
	21	57	10/6/2014 2:18 P	RD	10/6/2014 2:19 P	RD
	22	58	10/15/2014 5:01	RD	10/15/2014 5:02	RD
	23	61	10/10/2014 11:52	RD	11/4/2014 10:27	RD
	24	49	8/29/2014 11:10	RD	9/26/2014 10:15	RD
	24	40	10/6/2014 10:03	RD	10/6/2014 2:44 P	RD
	25	50	10/14/2014 2:47	RD	10/14/2014 2:48	RD
	26	104	8/29/2014 11:10	RD	9/16/2014 11:28	RD
	27	46	8/29/2014 11:10	RD	9/16/2014 11:28	RD
	27	59	10/10/2014 4:05	RD	10/10/2014 4:05	RD
	28	54	11/6/2014 3:28 P	RD	11/6/2014 4:30 P	RD
	29	46	8/29/2014 11:10	RD	9/30/2014 1:19 P	RD
	29	46	8/29/2014 11:10	RD	9/16/2014 11:28	RD
	29	47	8/29/2014 11:10	RD	9/16/2014 11:54	RD
	29	51	10/14/2014 1:44	RD	10/22/2014 3:31	RD
	30	58	10/3/2014 10:04	RD	10/3/2014 11:10	RD
	31	78	10/6/2014 2:44 P	RD	10/6/2014 2:57 P	RD
	33	66	10/20/2014 4:50	RD	10/20/2014 4:50	RD
	34	69	10/14/2014 2:18	RD	10/14/2014 2:18	RD
	35	57	10/14/2014 1:32	RD	10/14/2014 1:32	RD
	37	63	10/10/2014 11:52	RD	10/10/2014 1:54	RD
	37	106	10/27/2014 10:18	RD	10/27/2014 10:18	RD

Figure F-3. Sources and Their Demographic Data

The screenshot shows the NVivo software interface with a text query result. The query is "Role model - Results Preview". The results are as follows:

Reference 1 - 0.10% Coverage

ii. Damon up there as a **role model**, etc.

b. Going forward, what other

<Internals\... > - § 1

reference coded [0.09% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.09% Coverage

operational credibility to be a **role model**. Credible to cadets and midshipmen

<Internals\... > - § 1 reference

coded [0.07% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.07% Coverage

of professional leadership and a **role model** for character. And the Supt

<Internals\... > - § 1 reference coded [0.11% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.11% Coverage

The Supt must be a **role model**; an example of what mids

Figure F-4. Example of Text Query

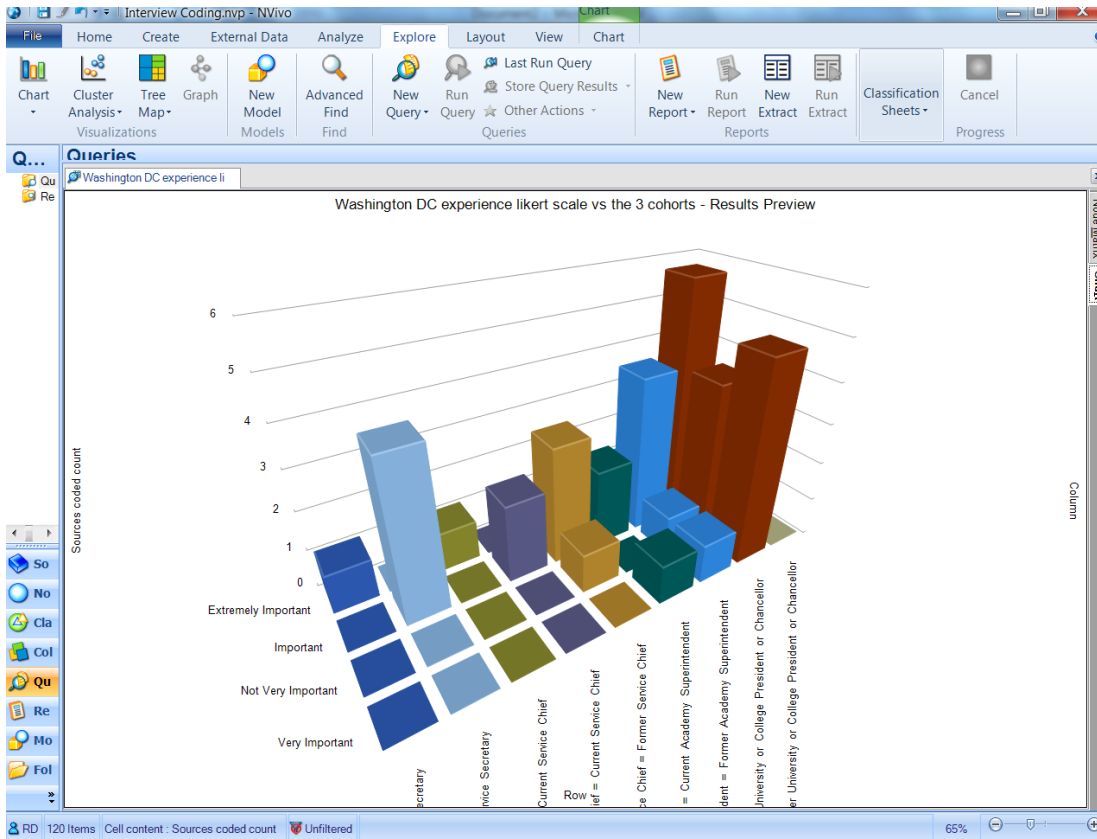


Figure F-5. Example of Data Visualization

Appendix G

Illustrations

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Appendix H

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Appendix I

Abbreviations

ACE	American Council on Education
AD	Athletic Director
ADFA	Australian Defence Force Academy
BoV	Board of Visitors
CCLD	Center for Character and Leadership Development
CCRP	Command and Control Research Program
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CJCS	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
DOD	Department of Defense
GO/FO	General Officer/Flag Officer
IDA	Institute for Defense Analyses
M&RA	Manpower & Reserve Affairs
MARAD	Maritime Administration
NAF	Non-appropriated funds
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCAA	National Collegiate Athletic Association
NCO	Noncommissioned officer
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
PME	Professional Military Education
SASC	Senate Armed Services Committee
SecDef	Secretary of Defense
U.S.	United States
USAFA	United States Air Force Academy
USCGA	United States Coast Guard Academy
USD (P&R)	Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness)
USM	University System of Maryland
USMA	United States Military Academy
USMMA	United States Merchant Marine Academy
USNA	United States Naval Academy

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14. ABSTRACT The Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA), in accordance with the Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 Department of Defense Appropriations Act, conducted a comprehensive review of the role of the modern DOD Service Academy superintendents (U.S. Military Academy, U.S. Air Force Academy and U.S. Naval Academy). The review followed three lines of query: Roles, Selection, and Evaluation; it combined archival data and interviews of Service Secretaries and Chiefs, superintendents, and university presidents. Superintendents perform many strategic roles, as commander, university president, and chief executive, and engage a wide variety of stakeholders. In accomplishing the academy's mission to develop leaders of character for their Service and Nation, the superintendent must synchronize all stakeholders to develop cadets and midshipmen morally, mentally, and physically. A superintendent's roles are distinct relative to comparable leadership positions, and must adapt to changes in the national security environment and society. Service leaders select superintendents based on many factors, with "demonstrated leadership" the primary. Evaluation of superintendents is based on expectations set by Service leaders; feedback is communicated via multiple venues. Recommended actions to enhance performance of superintendents' roles include ensuring a strong Service leader-superintendent relationship; proactively developing, selecting with sophistication, and deliberately preparing superintendents; increasing tour lengths; and removing the retirement stipulation from legislation.					
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