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## **PROGRAM INFORMATION**

### **What is the Defense Senior Leader Development Program (DSLDP)?**

The Deputy Secretary of Defense has affirmed that DSLDP is the premier Department program for senior civilians, and a critical part of the leadership pipeline. As the senior-level component of our overall leader development strategy, it is designed to support continuity of leadership, one of the Department's top transformational priorities (see [DoD Instruction 1430.16, "Growing Civilian Leaders"](http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/143016p.pdf) <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/143016p.pdf>). The two-year cohort program provides the means to develop a cadre of world-class senior civilian leaders with the Enterprise-wide Perspective and the other critical competencies necessary to lead organizations, programs, and people, and to achieve results in the national security environment today and well into the future.

### **Why was this program created?**

DSLDP was created in response to an environment that is changing rapidly, profoundly, and in all dimensions – operationally, socially, economically, and politically. The world is much more complex. Very few issues at the national level can be resolved within a single agency, Component, or organization. Our mission to defend the nation...our strategic priorities... the term "joint"... all have changed dramatically in scope. No longer is it enough to just think across Components and within the Department. Coordination must occur with other agencies, governments, and even globally. Hence, leaders need considerably more diverse range of experiences to understand the broad issues and to make the critical, informed decisions that are needed. DSLDP charts a new and exciting path for developing enterprise leaders, who understand and can act strategically in this new and evolving environment.

### **Who is eligible for nomination to DSLDP?**

To be eligible to be nominated for admission to DSLDP, an individual must:

- Be a permanent, full-time civilian employee of the Department of Defense;
- Occupy, on a permanent basis, a position at grade GS-14 or 15, or equivalent. (Those in DCIPS and other broad-banding systems or on grade retention should check with their Human Resources advisors);
- Possess a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university, as required for admission to PME; and

- Possess a minimum of one year (preferably more) of significant experience in supervising or managing people in an official capacity that was acquired no more than five years ago. (Questions relating to this requirement are specified on the DSLDP Nomination Information Sheet.)

Refer to the “Nomination & Selection Process” section for additional information.

## **What are the benefits of participating in DSLDP?**

DSLDP is leadership in action. The program integrates: the world-class academic experience of senior-level JPME; Defense-unique leadership seminars focused on the critical issues facing the Department today; and required experiential, Enterprise-wide opportunities for individual development. It features unique opportunities, noted experts from top ranking universities and the private sector, new perspectives, and the involvement of current senior DoD and other public sector executives and appointees. Participants will work together and learn from each other as they tackle real-life challenges as a cohort. This combination of experiences and unparalleled networking opportunities will empower participants to think strategically, envision what is on the horizon, and formulate solutions that produce enduring results for DoD and the nation.

Given the emphasis that top senior leaders place on enterprise leadership, those seeking higher responsibility will need to think more broadly, open themselves to diverse experiences in different jobs in multiple environments and for a variety of organizations (see [DoD Directive 1403.03, “The Career Lifecycle Management of the Senior Executive Service Leaders Within the Department of Defense”](http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/140303p.pdf) <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/140303p.pdf>). DSLDP is the catalyst that will provide leaders the opportunity to gain the requisite enterprise-wide exposure necessary to lead the Department’s myriad missions, both now and in the future.

## **What will DSLDP entail?**

The three main program elements for DSLDP are:

- Senior-level Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) at one of five accredited schools. The approved JPME schools for DSLDP are the senior-level resident programs at:
  1. Air War College (AWC), Montgomery, AL;
  2. Army War College (USAWC), Carlisle, PA;
  3. College of Naval Warfare (CNW) at the Naval War College, Newport, RI;
  4. National War College at the National Defense University, Washington, DC; and
  5. Industrial College of the Armed Forces at the National Defense University, Washington, DC.

Each program is 10 months in length. (For those who completed JPME Level II more than five years ago, DSLDP arranges a JPME refresher course.)

- Defense-focused leadership seminars; and
- Individual development tailored to meet each participant's needs

Individual development plans will outline all developmental needs, and progress reviews by Talent Development Executives will provide honest and focused feedback on progress and recommended suggestions to sharpen competencies and challenge/stretch the individual in more diverse experiences.

## **How is DSLDP funded?**

Much of DSLDP, including PME and the Defense-focused seminars, will be centrally funded by DoD. DSLDP and Components will work together on funding the individual development. Participants will remain on the rolls of their Component throughout the two-year program; thus, salary and benefits continue to be paid by their employing activity. Nominees should refer to their Component contacts for additional guidance on Component funding.

## **NOMINATION & SELECTION PROCESS**

### **How many nominees will be selected for the Class of 2011?**

We plan to receive up to 120 nominees for the Class of 2011. Each Component received an allocation (quota).

### **Will all Component nominees be selected for DSLDP?**

The selection process is intended to be rigorous, to ensure we have the best possible senior civilian leaders in the program. As many as 120 nominees will be forwarded to DoD from the Components. Through the DoD selection process (assessment center and board), DoD will select up to 100 to enter the Class of 2011.

### **How do I apply for DSLDP?**

Individuals must be nominated through their Component. Each Component will establish its own nomination process and procedures. Interested individuals should contact their

Component for the application requirements, process and timeline. Component contacts are found at: [http://www.cpms.osd.mil/lpdd/DSLDP/DSLDP\\_Program.aspx](http://www.cpms.osd.mil/lpdd/DSLDP/DSLDP_Program.aspx), by clicking on [Component Contacts](#)

## **What forms are required for the application?**

All nominees are required to furnish a nomination package that includes the following items. All forms can be found on the DSLDP home page

([http://www.cpms.osd.mil/lpdd/DSLDP/DSLDP\\_Program.aspx](http://www.cpms.osd.mil/lpdd/DSLDP/DSLDP_Program.aspx)) and specifically at:

[DSLDP Nominee Application Instructions](#):

- DSLDP Nominee Information Sheet;
- Resume (three-page limit);
- Latest performance appraisal;
- Current SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action;
- Narrative Statement of Achievements, describing how the nominee meets the ECQs (provide a separate write-up for each of the 5 ECQs and the combined Fundamental Competencies; four-page total limit);
- Statement of Interest that includes mobility willingness;
- Supervisor's Assessment (including the Component's plan for post-DSLDP utilization);
- Official transcripts for baccalaureate or higher degree, from an accredited institution (which must be mailed directly to CPMS); and
- Additional information as may be required by nominating Component or organization. Check with your Component for specifics.

## **How does the selection process work?**

The selection process has two stages, a Component process and a DoD process. During the first stage, each Component establishes a nomination process and procedures, and applies the criteria (identified in the solicitation) in nominating a slate of candidates for consideration in the DoD process.

Once forwarded to DoD, nominees will participate in a centrally administered assessment center based on the ECQs, and must be available for this one-day exercise, to be scheduled in October 2010. Feedback from the assessment center will be part of the selection process and later used as a tool for building successful candidates' IDPs.

## **What does the centrally administered assessment center involve?**

The formal, hands-on assessment center exercise will mirror the “look and feel” of a day in the life of a typical senior leader. It will be interactive and require that each nominee make decisions as various pieces of information are made available. The nominees’ actions will be evaluated by trained assessors, and the results will be considered by the DoD Selection Board as one tool in the selection process. The exercise is aligned with OPM’s ECQs. The assessment tool has been validated and is merit-based. Competency results will be provided to each nominee and will be used to drive successful candidates’ IDPs.

### **How will nominees know when to take the assessment center exercise?**

DoD will contact those individuals who pass the initial DoD nominee screening in late September 2010 to schedule the 1-day exercise. For planning purposes, nominees should expect to attend the assessment center for 1 day in October, in the Washington, DC area. DSLDP pays for the TDY related to this session.

### **When will individuals get their assessment center results?**

The trained assessors will provide some limited verbal feedback to individuals after the session. A more detailed narrative report will follow several weeks after the assessment.

### **What is the DoD Selection Board? Who is on the DoD Selection Board?**

An executive-level Selection Board will review all nominations and recommend selections to the OSD leadership for final ratification. The board review will include the entire nomination package and assessment center results. The DoD Board will be comprised of DoD executives, both Senior Executive Service (SES) members and General/Flag Officers. The Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel & Readiness) approves the slate of nominees who are selected into DSLDP.

### **When will the final selections be known?**

DoD expects to hold the selection board in November 2010 and have selections finalized by December 2010.

## **When is the first event for those selected into DSLDP?**

The inaugural event for the DSLDP Class of 2011 will occur with Orientation and the first Defense-focused leadership seminar. Together, they will be held over a 10 day period in March 2011. For planning purposes, the Orientation & Seminar 1 will be held at the DoD Executive Management Training Center in Southbridge, MA.

Between the time when participants are notified of their selection into the DSLDP and Orientation/Seminar 1, they will:

- Engage in a 360 degree assessment;
- Register for the DSLDP Portal;
- Undergo pre-reading and other preparatory assignments for Seminar 1;
- Prepare application packages for the slated Joint PME Senior Service College;
- Enroll in the National Security Foundation course; and
- Make travel arrangements for Orientation/Seminar 1

## **PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION (PME)**

### **What is Joint PME?**

Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) is a critical element in both active duty and civilian leader development, and is the foundation of a joint learning continuum that ensures that DoD organizations and our Armed Forces are intrinsically learning organizations. All five senior-level JPME schools involved with DSLDP meet the criteria described below.

The legislative changes dictated in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2005 have expanded the opportunities to receive JPME and established a link between leader development and JPME. Our future leaders, whether civilian or active duty, must be knowledgeable, empowered, innovative, and decisive leaders capable of succeeding in fluid and perhaps chaotic operating environments with more comprehensive knowledge of interagency and multi-national cultures and capabilities.

The broad focus of the curriculum at each school is designed to prepare students for positions of strategic leadership; focusing on strategy, theater campaign planning, the art and science of developing, integrating and applying the instruments of national power (diplomatic, informational, military and economic) during peace and war.

The Secretary also requires that the curriculum for JPME at any school:



- Focus on developing joint operational expertise and perspectives and honing joint warfighting skills; and be structured—
  - so as to adequately prepare students to perform effectively in an assignment to a joint, multiservice organization; and
  - so that students progress from a basic knowledge of joint matters learned in Phase I instruction to the level of expertise necessary for successful performance in the joint arena.
- Shall include the following:
  - National security strategy;
  - Theater strategy and campaigning;
  - Joint planning processes and systems; and
  - Joint, interagency, and multinational capabilities and the integration of those capabilities.

## **What factors are taken into consideration for PME school slating?**

All DSLDP participants must attend a PME school outside one's Component. This requirement immerses the participant in a different culture, and is one way to build the Enterprise-wide Perspective necessary to lead in the national security environment today and into the future.

Participants will state their preference in rank order and explain the rationale in the Statement of Interest. Components will identify which school they recommend for each nominee on the Supervisory Assessment form. Once nomination packages are received at the DoD executive-level Selection Board, the participant's experience, background, and career aspirations are closely examined and aligned with the requirements of each of the Senior Service Colleges (SSCs) and their program objectives. Ultimately, the executive-level Selection Board makes the final slating recommendations for USD (P&R) approval, subject to acceptance by the SSC.

## **What are the eligible Senior Service Colleges for DSLDP?**

A brief description of each of the DSLDP eligible SSC requirements follows. (Note: SSCs are listed alphabetically.)

### **Air War College**

Candidates for the Air War College will have demonstrated depth and breadth of experience in one or more of the broad functional areas in which DoD employs managers and leaders:

- Evidence of ability or potential to complete the academic requirements of the program. Examples of such evidence would include successful completion of a

- baccalaureate degree; substantial undergraduate course work; military intermediate level schools, i.e., Naval, Army, and Air Command and Staff Colleges; the Defense Systems Management College Program Manager's Course; or other executive programs that involve academic rigor; and
- Meeting the U.S. OPM Executive Core Qualifications and Department of Defense criterion.

### **Army War College**

Candidates for the Army War College will have demonstrated depth and breadth of experience in one or more of the broad functional areas in which DoD employs managers and leaders:

- Evidence of ability or potential to complete the academic requirements of the program. Examples of such evidence would include successful completion of a baccalaureate degree; substantial undergraduate course work; military intermediate level schools, i.e., Naval, Army, and Air Command and Staff Colleges; the Defense Systems Management College Program Manager's Course; or other executive programs that involve academic rigor; and
- Meeting the U.S. OPM Executive Core Qualifications and Department of Defense criterion.

### **College of Naval Warfare**

Candidates for the College of Naval Warfare have demonstrated depth and breadth of experience in one or more of the broad functional areas in which DoD employs managers and leaders:

- Evidence of ability or potential to complete the academic requirements of the program. Examples of such evidence would include successful completion of a baccalaureate degree; substantial undergraduate course work; military intermediate level schools, i.e., Naval, Army, and Air Command and Staff Colleges; the Defense Systems Management College Program Manager's Course; or other executive programs that involve academic rigor; and
- Meeting the U.S. OPM Executive Core Qualifications and Department of Defense criterion.

### **Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF) - National Defense University**

Candidates for ICAF must have an extensive background in national strategy and resource management. A background in acquisition is helpful but is not required.

### **National War College - National Defense University**

Candidates for National War College must have an extensive background in national security policy and strategy. The National War College curriculum focus is grand strategy, the integration of all elements of national power that addresses national security policy, the theory and practice of war, the domestic and the international context of national security strategy and contemporary military strategy.

## **What if I am the perfect candidate, but I cannot attend PME in 2011?**

Individuals who cannot attend PME beginning in July/August 2011 should not be nominated for the Class of 2011. (Instead, their nominations should be deferred to a later Class.) Being nominated for the DSLDP Class of 2011 means that the nominee, if selected, will be slated to attend a 10-month resident program at a senior-level PME school starting in the late July/early August 2011 timeframe. As such, potential nominees and their management should work together to plan and commit to PME attendance before forwarding a nomination package.

## **What if I already attended PME? Can I still enter the program?**

Yes. Individuals who have already attended senior-level Joint PME may still be nominated by their Component. If selected, they will be assessed individually by the executive-level Selection Board to determine if they require a refresher (i.e., if they completed senior-level Joint PME more than 5 years ago), or if they need an alternate opportunity (e.g., if they would benefit from other experience outside their Component). Individuals who completed only a lower level (e.g., intermediate) PME must attend senior-level Joint PME as part of DSLDP.

## **What is the National Security Foundation (NSF) course?**

To prepare participants to commence senior-level Joint PME, everyone will be required to complete a National Security Foundation course. The course is a graduate-level, three-credit, online course offered by Troy University. It is primarily self-paced, and there are no prerequisites for enrollment. Upon successful completion, you should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the following issues and concepts:

- The major theoretical approaches of classical strategists;
- The major trends in the development of strategy in the 20th and 21st centuries;
- The ongoing debate as to what should be the critical elements of the post-Cold War strategy;
- Issues surrounding military strategy versus grand strategy; and
- The role of special operations in overall national strategy.

## **SEMINARS**

## **Do participants have to attend all Defense-focused seminars, or will they have a choice?**

DSLDP participants must attend all leadership seminars as a cohort. The seminars are designed with an academic framework of business management, public policy, public administration and international relations in order to equip participants with the most current knowledge to address “hot topic” issues of importance to the Department. Broadly aligned with the DoD Civilian Leader Development model and the Office of Personnel Management’s (OPM) Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs), the seminars facilitate application of the competencies in the Enterprise (joint and national security) environment. Attendance at all of the seminars is key to gaining the full benefit of the program.

## **INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **What kind of individual development will participants be able to pursue?**

Individual development will be determined by each participant’s assessment center results, a 360 degree assessment administered after selection into DSLDP, recommendations from the Component and/or senior advisors, as well as guidance from the DoD Talent Development Executives. The intent is to build on competency strengths and fill any identified competency gaps. Development may involve courses or training that builds specific competencies. In addition, all participants must engage in an experiential activity (e.g., developmental assignment, new enterprise position, action learning team project, joint task force) to demonstrate desired proficiency in the Enterprise-wide Perspective and its underlying competencies (joint perspective and national security).

### **Will each participant have a mentor?**

All participants would benefit from the sound advice, honest discussion and feedback of a mentor at the SES or General/Flag Officer level. Although DSLDP does not provide a mentor, DSLDP will provide resources to facilitate alignment with a suitable mentor. Participants will be expected to seek an executive-level mentor, ideally from another Component, in order to further strengthen the broad enterprise perspective.

## **How will my progress be reviewed?**

Periodic progress reviews by Talent Development Executives will ensure participants are on track and identify any needed course corrections. Participants will have their original Individual Development Plan (IDP) approved by the Component shortly after entry, and then participate in two formal progress reviews (one before and one after PME). Any need for further reviews will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

## **PROGRAM COMPLETION**

### **Will DSLDP place me in a joint position at the end of the program?**

DSLDP does not involve placement after completion, as this is the prerogative of the participant's current Component. As part of each nomination package, the Component will identify a meaningful plan for anticipated return on investment, to include planned utilization for each nominee and benefit to the Component/agency and DoD. Check with your Component for further information.

### **What is required for program completion?**

Participants who have completed PME, all leadership seminars, and all activities on their approved IDP will undergo a structured interview to determine whether they meet targeted proficiency levels of all leadership competencies. In addition to the structured interview, additional assessments may be administered to each participant that focus on competency needs and customized developmental objectives identified on the IDP. Participants will submit a learning portfolio that documents learning events, demonstrates comprehensive thinking about critical incidents of importance for senior leaders in the federal government, and provides evidence of attaining a level of experience and competency-based proficiency necessary for senior Enterprise leadership. Talent Development Executives will conduct the structured interview and will determine each participant's readiness for graduation.

### **Will everyone in the cohort graduate together?**

Most participants are expected to graduate with their cohort group within the two-year timeframe. However, each person's individual development will be unique, requiring some to extend the timeline for graduation. Talent Development Executives will determine when each participant is ready to graduate. DSLDP will host a formal

graduation ceremony, to recognize this significant professional milestone in the participant's career. For the Class of 2011, the graduation ceremony is planned to occur in the Spring 2013 timeframe.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES & GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **How can I get more information?**

DoD will conduct two Town Halls in the Pentagon Library and Conference Center as follows:

- June 10 from 0930-1130 hrs, Room B7
- June 23 from 1000-1200 hrs, Room M2

Attendees need not pre-register; space is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Information about the PLCC may be found at:

<http://www.pccmeetings.com/PCC-rules.html>

### **What does being a DSLDP graduate mean?**

Program elements are designed to enhance one's readiness for top leadership positions, to include those requiring enterprise (joint and national security) proficiency. DSLDP graduates will be acknowledged by senior DoD executives as having the requisite competencies and experiences for more responsible positions. As such, DSLDP graduates are highly competitive for senior-level and executive opportunities. DSLDP is not an SES Candidate Development Program (nor does DoD have one). Successful completion of the program does not imply eligibility for, or guarantee promotion to SES.

### **What role do executives play in DSLDP?**

Executives are involved in many aspects of DSLDP. This is a proven best practice in executive and leader development programs. Specifically, civilian and military DoD executives:

- Serve on the Selection Board, to decide on nominees who should be ratified for program selection;
- Serve as Talent Development Executives, who provide advice to participants, assess their progress through DSLDP and assess their readiness to graduate;
- Serve as sponsors for the Defense-focused leadership seminars;
- Serve as sponsors for experiential activities for DSLDP participants; and
- Serve as advisors who provide oversight of DSLDP.

Also, DSLDP includes executive coaching sessions for participants, which provide expert advice and guidance on developmental objectives.

## **What is a participant's commitment in the program?**

Participants are expected to:

- Balance work and quality of life with DSLDP responsibilities;
- Appreciate that DSLDP is a challenging, demanding, yet significantly rewarding program;
- Fully engage themselves in all program elements, to include all IDP activities;
- Challenge themselves to be open to new experiences, organizations, environments, locations, and honest feedback;
- Be motivated to take advantage of all opportunities to fill any competency weaknesses or gaps, and to hone existing talents;
- Demonstrate the professionalism of senior leaders as ambassadors of the civilian workforce and DSLDP;
- Be ready and able to return the investment made in them by taking on even more responsible senior leader positions across the enterprise;
- Meet continued service requirements after completion of PME, in accordance with DoD and Component policy; and
- Maximize their DSLDP experience.

## **As a manager/supervisor/Component within the Department, what are my responsibilities for DSLDP?**

Growing the leadership talent for the Department of Defense is a critical responsibility of each leader. Your role is to:

- Ensure nominations reflect the very best and brightest candidates in the Component;
- Provide opportunities for participants to gain varied experiences with increasing levels of responsibility;
- Help the participant balance mission priorities with DSLDP activities to help ensure success;
- Take time to provide meaningful and honest feedback to candidates on competency strengths and gaps;
- Demonstrate a commitment to leadership development by supporting each candidate's attendance at all DSLDP activities – this is absolutely essential, as DSLDP is a cohort-based program. DSLDP participants must attend all scheduled DSLDP activities;
- If SES or Flag Officer, serve as a mentor;

- Plan for appropriate resources to support participant's developmental needs and backfill while in long-term DSLDP activities;
- Plan for full utilization of participants after program completion to ensure the best use of their talents;
- Celebrate successes and share participant accomplishments with the entire organization; and
- Seek out DSLDP graduates and participants when filling leadership positions.