CURRICULUM 255 GREAT POWER COMPETITION CERTIFICATE PROGRAM
Updated January 12, 2022

OVERVIEW
The Naval Postgraduate School’s (NPS) Department of National Security Affairs (NSA) is soliciting applications for a distance learning (DL) cohort in Curriculum 255 – Great Power Competition (GPC) certificate program. Target applicants are active-duty officers in pay grades O-1 to O-6 whose career path might not otherwise accommodate resident graduate programs at NPS. The certificate consists of four courses covering 13 credit-units over a nine-month period from July 2022 to March 2023 and is designed to be applied toward a future 12-month resident MA in Curriculum 688 – Strategic Studies. The certificate is 100% DL with a mix of synchronous and asynchronous requirements. Students should expect to devote two hours each Friday to synchronous class seminars using Zoom for Government in addition to 8-10 hours per week on assignments outside of class. Applicants should note that graduate education requires a time commitment to complete reading assignments, write papers, and participate in synchronous class discussions. Applicants are encouraged to discuss operational and training schedules with their commanding officers to ensure that time is available for program requirements. Commanding officers are encouraged to afford time whenever possible. Applicants in a sea-duty/deployable status will be considered with careful attention given to possible time constraints.

ELIGIBILITY
Applicants must have an undergraduate degree from a regionally accredited four-year college or university with a 2.6 GPA or higher on a 4.0-scale and meet one of the following criteria:

- Active-duty USN/USMC
- Active-duty officers (commissioned and warrant) from other US Armed Forces with a unit-funded tuition support agreement
- GS civilians with a unit-funded tuition support agreement

Reserve personnel, contractors, and international students are not eligible for Curriculum 255.

*NOTE: Per OPNAV Instruction 1520.23C, Naval officers participating in this program must agree to remain on active duty for a period of one year following completion of the certificate program. This obligation is discharged concurrently with any other service obligation already incurred. This agreement does not obligate the Navy to retain the officer on active duty.

SELECTION CRITERIA
Selection is accomplished by a panel of military officers and academic faculty within the NSA Department. Qualified students will be considered based on the following criteria:

- Strength of academic record (eligibility requirements include an undergraduate degree from a regionally accredited four-year college or university with a 2.6 GPA or higher on a 4.0-scale)**
- Strength of one-page personal statement
- Balance among warfare communities, designators, and service
  - 18-20 Navy/Marine Corps (target O-1 to O-6)
  - 10-12 Army/Air Force (target O-1 to O-6)
- Deployment status/duty location
  - CONUS-based shore-duty/non-deployment status preferred
  - Student’s physical location is limited to an area from roughly Hawaii east to Germany due to synchronous seminar timing requirements
- Projected rotation date/PCS date does not fall within the period of the program
- Service/sponsor inputs
Both the potential to return to NPS and complete a full degree in the future and possible lack of access to traditional resident programs due to career timing limitations

**NOTE:** Applicants with significant prior graduate education in Security Studies or related fields are encouraged to apply but may be overqualified for this certificate program. A limited number of seats is available in each cohort. Selections are made with careful consideration for an applicant's potential lack of access to traditional resident programs at NPS due to career timing limitations.

**COURSE OF STUDY**

The certificate consists of four required courses covering 13 credit-units:

- NS4000 GPC: Current Policy and Strategy (July-September 2022 / 1 credit-unit)
- NS3005 GPC in Modern History (July-September 2022 / 4 credit-units)
- NS4642 Chinese Foreign Policy (October-December 2022 / 4 credit-units)
- NS4425 Russian Foreign Policy (January-March 2023 / 4 credit-units)

Learning Outcomes:

- To understand the nature of great power competition historically and its current manifestations.
- To understand the core motivations behind Chinese and Russian political, economic, and military policies, as well as the challenges they pose to the United States.
- To understand the tools China and Russia use to further their interests in various regions of the world outside their borders and in critical competitive domains, such as cyberspace.
- To understand the range of possible U.S. and allied responses to Chinese and Russian behavior.

**APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

A complete application consists of 1) an NPS Admissions online application with official transcripts, 2) a participation agreement signed by your commanding officer or supervisor, and 3) a one-page personal statement.

- Go to [https://nps.edu/web/admissions](https://nps.edu/web/admissions). Once registered, select GPC Certificate Program (Curriculum #255) with start date 2022/4 (4th quarter of 2022). When prompted for a tuition POC, refer to the tuition section below. Upon application submission, applicants must send official transcripts to the NPS Admissions Office for each undergraduate and graduate institution attended.
- Admissions also requires a participation agreement signed by your commanding officer or supervisor, which is embedded into the admissions website, and a one-page personal statement including the applicant's name, rank/grade, service, designator/MOS, current billet/duty assignment, duty station, and projected rotation date (see format example on the final page of this document). The statement will describe the applicant's purpose, preparation, motivation, and interest in the topic of GPC with emphasis on its relevance in your career field or duty assignment. Statements should be sent by email to admissions@nps.edu.
- Complete applications with transcripts, participation agreement, and personal statement must be submitted NLT March 28, 2022. Delayed receipt of official transcripts, participation agreement, or personal statement will result in delay or rejection of the application.

**TUITION**

NPS is mission-funded to provide tuition-free graduate education to active-duty USN and USMC personnel. USN and USMC personnel will indicate “N/A” when asked for a tuition POC in the online application. Applicants from other services and GS civilians must provide a unit/directorate tuition POC in the online application. Tuition of $7300 is payable upon enrollment. NPS cannot accept personal funds or tuition assistance. Contact tuition@nps.edu with questions.
POINTS OF CONTACT
NPS Admissions: admissions@nps.edu
NPS Tuition: tuition@nps.edu
NSA Program Officer: nsaprogramofficer@nps.edu

NPS Admissions online application: https://nps.edu/web/admissions
Department of National Security Affairs GPC webpage: https://www.nps.edu/web/nsa/gpc

IMPORTANT DATES
Online application due with transcripts, participation agreement, and personal statement: March 28, 2022
Period of instruction: July 5, 2022 – March 24, 2023
SAMPLE PERSONAL STATEMENT FORMAT

FROM: Applicant’s name, rank/grade, and service (ex. First M. Last, LT/USN)
SUBJ: Personal Statement ISO Application to Curriculum 255, Summer Cohort 2022

Designator/MOS: provide number/code and full title (ex. 1110, Surface Warfare Officer)
Billet and Unit:
Duty Station:
Projected Rotation Date:

In this space, provide a one-page personal statement describing your purpose in applying to the certificate program, motivation, preparation, and interest in the topic of GPC. Describe how GPC is relevant in your career field or current duty assignment. We recommend Times New Roman, 10 or 12-point font, single-spaced. Do not italicize. Other formats can be used if the statement provides all the requested information and presents a consistent and professional appearance. Command/unit letterhead is not required. If you have special circumstances for consideration by the selection committee (ex. currently on sea-duty but assigned to a unit that will not deploy or travel during the course of instruction), please include as much information as possible in the statement.