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### AFIT 2007

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AIR FORCE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

2007

# D'ou venons-nous? Que sommes nous? Ou allons-nous?

I took command of AFIT on the 5th of July, 2005. Reflecting on the past year I'm reminded of the French impressionist Paul Gauguin's 1897 painting "D'ou venons-nous? Que sommes nous? Ou allons-nous?" which depicts the questions we all ask at some point: "Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?"

Identity and purpose are fundamental dilemmas that demand careful introspection. This document, AFIT 2007, lays out what

I believe to be the paths most deserving of our immediate attention. Its purpose is not to be prescriptive, but a definition of where we are and where, I believe, we need head next. Use it as a point of departure as we embark on what is shaping up as a challenging fiscal journey into 2007 and beyond.

As I will soon be leaving AFIT, let me also pass my admiration to what has proven itself an outstanding team. My best wishes for continued success in the future!

Brig Gen Mark Matthews  
Commandant  
July 5th, 2006



# “... ‘consumers’ view the system determining Air Force advanced education requirements...as lacking...”

The BRAC review in 2005 affirmed, again, the value the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT) provides not only the Air Force, but the entire Department of Defense. Nonetheless, the realities of a budget constrained by the cost of war and needed modernization have and will continue to place great pressure on AFIT to demonstrate the value of what we provide. Specifically, the question still remains “just how many people should the Air Force send to AFIT each year and what should AFIT teach them?”

Broadly, “consumers” view the system determining Air Force advanced education requirements—the Graduate Education Management System—as lacking in its ability to answer these questions. Additionally, by its nature, GEMS does not have the attributes required to anticipate future needs nor does it easily translate stated leadership priorities into sustainable requirements.

As an example, the vision of former SECAF Roche and CSAF Jumper which stimulated a 70% growth in AFIT’s graduate programs is, for the most part, not validated within GEMS’ billet-based requirements construct. Consequently, when faced with competing demands for our people and money, current Air Force policy makers have sought to cut AFIT production. As a result we have seen a 60% reduction in AFIT’s 2006 IDE student body as compared to the 2005 class. Additionally, projections for the fall of 2006 indicate approximately a 10% shortfall in new 18 month masters student entries. In net the AFIT 2006 fall enrollment will be 20% less than the 1000+ students enrolled in Sep 2005. Yet at the same time we see this decline in enrollment, we will soon break ground on a new academic building which will increase the institute’s student capacity to more than 1200, a capacity needed to meet the goals of our former Secretary and Chief. Obviously, we have a current disconnect.

Or do we?



# “Empirically much of our Air Force leadership senses the need for more—not less—advanced academic education.”

Both our current Secretary and Chief have issued policy letters affirming the critical importance of advanced academic education across a broad spectrum of disciplines. Indeed, it was by SECAF direction that, once again, completion of advanced academic programs will be shown on officer promotion records. Similarly, our leadership has stimulated new Air University Distance Learning initiatives which will award masters degrees for Air Command and Staff College; and to follow soon will be a construct by which individuals can receive academic credit for their practical experience, credit which they can then use to meet requirements for an advanced degree. Additionally, in recognition of the demands on our force to assume responsibilities inherent in expeditionary operations, congress and Air Force

leadership have directed increased competency in cultural as well as language studies.

Empirically much of our Air Force leadership senses the need for more—not less—advanced academic education. Our own heritage points to a similar conclusion. During the years of the Depression—the years leading to the onset of WWII—Army leadership grew its educational output despite a 54% reduction in their budget. It was their prescience that prepared the Air Corps for its successes on the battlefield just a few years later. Similarly, as the Air Force transforms itself to a leaner force postured to address an uncertain future, an imperative arises for educating those of whom we demand innovation and new ways of thinking. Simply, GEMS cannot respond to this need.



# AFIT.....should assume... ‘Champion’ role as...Air Force advocate for advanced education...under a process we call AADIMS”

Instead, we propose the Air Force revamp its educational requirements under a process we call the Advanced Academic Degree Inventory Management System (AADIMS.) This system would supplant the current bil-let-based system with a capabilities-based structure; one where corporate Air Force leadership would determine both the type and relative percentages of advanced degrees acquired by our airmen. Much like a CFACC’s apportionment recommendation, against this the Air Force would allocate available resources—people and money—to achieve the desired educational mix.

Under this system AFIT could and should assume the “Champion” role as the

Air Force advocate for advanced education. No Air Force element is better postured for such a job. AFIT not only executes graduate education in technical fields, but manages all Air Force graduate programs through its directorates. Additionally, AFIT’s inherent modeling capability can provide Air Force leadership quantitative as well as qualitative data to help support their decision process. Pursuit of AADIM should be AFIT’s top priority. AADIM will validate requirements; and it’s only with validated requirements that AFIT can achieve stability in its graduate education programs. As a goal, AFIT should pursue, by 31 Jul 06, formal tasking from A1 for its directorates to explore adoption of AADIM as a replacement for GEMS.



“...revamping AFIT...where a portion of the school becomes... ‘fee for service’...can offset AF cost...”

Even with a revamped requirements process, however, we must realize that the Air Force’s immediate AAD requirements may not fill AFIT’s full physical capacity given the competing demands of GWOT and modernization. Conversely, we must also realize that the current situation is ephemeral.

As the Air Force continues along the journey of AFSO 21, it is not improbable that Air Force leadership will see the need to increase, again, its graduate education production. Additionally, as advocated by the BRAC in 2005, AFIT may assume more prominence in serving the joint community.

Herein lays a win-win opportunity. By revamping AFIT’s business model from a fully appropriated activity to one where a portion of the school becomes “fee for service” we can offset AF cost in sustaining faculty and facilities at full-production capacity. This “strategic pause” in planned AF student growth would allow full use of the AFIT academic building expansion while continuing, unabated, planned fac-

ulty growth. Faculty growth is especially important as it is a long lead-time requirement. Without faculty in place, it would not be possible for AFIT to rapidly respond to emerging Air Force requirements.

This revamping of the AFIT business plan has many elements: regulatory relief as encoded in Title V and Title X; change or relief from FMRs and DoD guidance; favorable interpretation of tuition costing rules and criteria from SAF/FM; and agreements with civilian personnel, sister service and coalition partners for increased enrollments.

Rather than piecemeal this effort, AFIT should present a full business case with required actions to AU for forwarding to HQ AF by 1 Sep 06. Important in this effort, given the quite possible need for legislative changes, is working with our local community partners and congressional representatives to ensure a common vision and to solicit their support for needed changes. This engagement activity is ongoing and must continue even more vigorously in the future.



“...AFIT IDE,....we must invigorate it....by embracing sister-service, coalition and civilian students... expansion...through a hybrid Distance Learning.”

A key element of this revised model of AFIT production is our continued evolution of the AFIT IDE program. IDE, though a small portion of our student population, is important because these officers are stratified among the top 25% of their peers. They are our future Air Force leadership. Additionally, they represent a broad spectrum of career fields. Their achievement of AFIT degrees validates our programs as ones broadly applicable to the Air Force. This wide applicability is important to the future vitality of AFIT, especially in an environment of intensely competing demands. No doubt, past restrictions on AFIT attendance—significantly from the rated community—detracted from AFIT advocacy as less and less of our force in leadership positions had a direct knowledge of AFIT and its benefits to the Air Force and the DoD.

There are those who question, still, the need for AFIT IDE. No doubt, the efficacy of the AFIT IDE program will prove itself

as its graduates bring their education and experiences to bear in key staff and command positions. But this will take time; in fact, it will take years. While we continue to incubate AFIT IDE, we must invigorate it and make it more palatable to detractors by embracing sister-service, coalition and civilian students. Additionally, we should seek further expansion of AF participation through a hybrid Distance Learning program culminating with an in-residence TDY and awarding of in-residence credit. As a goal, these cumulative efforts should seek to raise AFIT IDE from its current 88 members to 180-200 AF, sister-service, coalition, civilian, resident and hybrid graduates in Jun 2010. As milestones, AFIT should seek entry of 20-30 sister service officers and civilians in May 2007 with that number growing to 50, including coalition officers, in May 2008. Additionally, AFIT should seek entry of 30-50 AFIT IDE DL students in May 2008 (Jun 2010 graduate.)



# “...increased focus on AFIT marketing...”

The advocacy needed to make this vision of AFIT successful requires a different focus in how AFIT promotes itself. Whereas in the past, under GEMS, AFIT relied on a structure to order people to it campus, in the future AFIT must competitively recruit people and their attendant resources. Consequently, we should change our Public Affairs office to a Strategic Communications office with an increased focus on AFIT marketing. The focus of this marketing will be on those decision makers responsible for determining the need of those they command/direct for the education AFIT provides. With AADIMS in place this, for example, would involve MAJCOM vice commanders and key HQ AF staff directorates. Potential students, especially IDE candidates and their senior raters, also become a focus for contact in addition to the Developmental Teams that guide officer growth.

Additionally, we must actively engage coalition partners, the agencies that guide their IMET and FMS expenditures, and those sister-service and civilian agencies that direct policy for advanced education. Also of importance is creating a greater understanding and appreciation of what AFIT provides to the broader AF and civilian community.

As a goal, AFIT should seek mention, if not ranking, in the annual USN&WR graduate school report. Other popular venues such as Scientific American or Popular Science, given their broad readership, would greatly add to AFIT's name recognition. In addition, over the next year AFIT should pursue stories in AF publications such as Airman Magazine and other broadly read publications that focus on the Air Force such as Air Force Magazine, The Air Force Times in addition to forums that reach the wider joint community such as Armed Forces Journal International and Joint Force Quarterly. Complementing such publications should be direct travel to the decision-makers mentioned earlier as well as to potential research sponsors (NRO, NSA, NGA etc.) as well as Combatant Commanders who are targeted as sponsors for the AFIT IDE Graduate Research Projects and consumers of the AFIT IDE program.

In meeting these goals we must restructure our Public Affairs office for success. To help guide the functions of this new office we will have a Strategic Communications Plan published by 21 Jul 06 with a goal of hiring a new Director of Strategic Communications by 15 Sep 06.



“...we are not remote to the fight, but part of the fight—both today and in the future battle ...”

This focus on broadening AFIT awareness and appeal also has an internal element. It's important for our student body and all of us that support the effort here to remain acutely aware that we are an integral part of the USAF; that we are not remote to the fight, but part of the fight—both today and in the future battle. It's only by firmly rooting ourselves in our history and culture—knowing “where do we come from”—that we can properly orient ourselves to where we're headed. The AFIT Heritage Room, informally known as “Doolittle's,” will become a rallying point for student and faculty, military and civilian, to join in a relaxed environment to celebrate our heritage and grow our camaraderie. This project is ready for execution and on track for a planned dedication in October 2006. But this effort is just a departure point for many elements

that will serve to cement the men and women of AFIT as members of the USAF.

In addition to AFIT Fest and Spring Fling, we will continue the re-founded tradition of a winter AFIT Dining Out in Jan 2007. The AFIT Spouse's Association continues to flourish and should make a special effort to more broadly encompass spouses of faculty and staff over the coming year. Opportunities abound to celebrate our heritage such as with retreat ceremonies and participation in community events over traditional holidays that recognize those who came before us, such as Veteran's Day, Memorial Day and the 4th of July. And we should aggressively seek a more prominent role in the community working in concert with the 88th ABW as the WPAFB “champion” for educational excellence in our community schools.



# “Of great importance...”

These are AFIT’s top priorities as I see them moving into 2007; but by no means are they the only ones. Also of great importance are the following:

**Refining the AU/AFIT relationship:** AFIT has a long and special relationship with Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, but has been a part of Air University since the Air Force’s inception in 1947. At times a question has arisen whether, more appropriately given AFIT’s technical focus, AFIT could better serve aligned under Air Force Materiel Command. Given the need defined earlier to broaden however, being narrowly aligned under AFMC does not seem appropriate. Nonetheless, changes at both AU and AFIT warrant a clarification of roles and responsibilities to ensure critical areas, such as accreditation, are not negatively impacted by the actions of the other. With a flag officer once again at the helm as AFIT Commandant, re-establishing a concomitant relationship reflecting an appropriate level of responsibility with more autonomy in directing the actions of AFIT fits well with AFISO 21’s drive for greater efficiencies.

**Fostering growth in AFIT Research:** AFIT already has a tremendous reputation in research, but has the potential for much more. Important is to continue to grow relationships with potential sponsors, as well as promote our research successes. Specifically, AFRL and through it, AFOSR, are agencies from which AFIT could receive more direct research funding.

**Distance Learning:** The Air Force’s current Ops Tempo demands more distance learning than in the past. AFIT will be part of this DL effort; but our potential is stymied without attendant resources. Pursuit of these resources must be a priority; however, it’s important we do not let a rush to need unnecessarily detract from AFIT’s core competency of world class education in its resident programs.

**AFIT-NPS Alliance:** We must pursue a more equitable relationship to address the 6:1 asymmetry in AF vs Naval Services officer attendance at our respective schools. Additionally, with NPS we must create a follow-on structure that will actively meet the goals of the alliance for more efficient joint education.

**AFIT Campus:** It might seem strange that we pursue facilities growth when we face a current issue of how best to use new space. However, this short term issue should not deter us from developing a grand vision for a true AFIT campus with an alumni building, research center, expanded library, enclosed heritage quad and attendant grounds—in short, an institute worthy of the world’s best Air Force and an emblem of pride for citizens. As a goal we should present plans for such a project to the AU Foundation by 30 Sep 2006.



Commander  
Steven Lindsey  
1990 AFIT Graduate



Mission specialist  
Michael Fossum  
1981 AFIT Graduate





# AFIT

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While this document does not address many areas such as maintaining our excellence in continuing education, it's not for lack of regard. Rather, by focusing on our core capabilities in graduate education, as an institution, AFIT can better sustain its full spectrum of graduate and professional continuing education.

And by no means is this document exclu-

sive or fixed. Indeed, to succeed, the men and women of AFIT must continually adapt this snapshot in time to the realities of their current environment.

AFIT 2007 is a launching pad for the future; a future that holds as much excitement as it does challenges. Join in this challenge to make this vision of AFIT a reality!





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