

2021-2022 Academic Year Command Analytic Agenda

Commander Directed Research Priorities

1. How does deterrence theory change now that the U.S. faces two nuclear-armed, near-peer competitors?
 2. What are strategies for facing two nuclear-armed, near-peer competitors?
 3. How does the U.S. set deterrence thresholds and how should it communicate those thresholds to adversaries? What is the effect on adversary decision making if thresholds are communicated?
 4. Is stability possible within tripolar long term competition and low level non-kinetic conflict?
 5. How can the US improve the balance of perceived resolve to defend national interests? How might we take a net assessment approach to illuminate this problem of adversary perception of US resolve?
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6. What is the role of U.S. nuclear weapons in deterring strategic or existential attacks? How can declaratory policy impact this?
 7. How can deterrence be restored once it has failed?
 8. What could break deterrence in the 21st century? What could strengthen deterrence?
 9. What is the efficacy of multi-domain deterrence in an economically competitive environment?
 10. How can we shape deterrence of non-nuclear strategic attacks that employ cumulative strategies across systems and domains?
 11. How might cyber attacks on NC3 capabilities introduce doubt in the reliability and effectiveness of an actor's NC3 capability? What impacts might this have on strategic deterrence?
 12. How does the wide spread use and effects of sharp power affect the credibility of deterrence?
 13. How does great power competitive conflict affect extended deterrence?
 14. How should we treat information operations in global power competition and with regard to U.S. ability to deter? How do we integrate strategic communications into operations, activities, and investments as well as advocacy?
 15. Considering the environment today and future trends, what decisions would we make about forces and doctrine if we were starting from zero? What does this mean in the context of taking PRC as "the pacing threat"¹?

¹ Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin. 19 Jan 2021. Senate Confirmation Hearing testimony.