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THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF DIPLOMACY  
STRENGTHENING AMERICAN DIPLOMACY

# Forging a 21st-Century Diplomatic Service for the United States through Professional Education and Training

Forward by former NSC Head LTG Brent Scowcroft

Full Report

February 2011

STIMSON



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# Contents

<i>Executive Summary</i> .....	9
<i>Chapter 1</i>	
<i>Background: Changing American Diplomacy in the New International Environment</i> .....	16
<i>Chapter 2</i>	
<i>Professional Education and Training at State: Today’s Realities</i> .....	29
<i>Chapter 3</i>	
<i>Future Requirements for Diplomatic Professional Development, Education, and Training</i> ....	39
<i>Appendices</i>	
<i>Appendix A</i>	
<i>US Foreign Service Primer</i> .....	55
<i>Appendix B</i>	
<i>Professional Development in the US Military</i> .....	60
<i>Appendix C</i>	
<i>Professional Education and Training at USAID: An Emphasis on Learning</i> .....	62
<i>Appendix D</i>	
<i>Professional Development in Other Diplomatic Services</i> .....	65
<i>Appendix E</i>	
<i>Diplomatic Professional Formation: An AFSA Perspective</i> .....	68
<i>Related Reports and Works Cited</i> .....	72

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Jeremy Curtin served as lead drafter for this report under the auspices of the Center on Communication Leadership and Policy, University of Southern California Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism.

# Foreword

by Brent Scowcroft

I warmly welcome this timely and action-oriented report by the American Academy of Diplomacy and the Stimson Center. At a time when US foreign policy interests face an unparalleled set of political, economic, strategic, and cultural challenges, this report puts into stark relief the urgent need to prepare and sustain a corps of American diplomatic professionals that is intellectually and operationally ready to lead in the new environment. Its publication is especially timely, as foreign affairs experts across the political spectrum call for a realignment of our national security structure, accompanied by a reallocation of resources to support adequately all three components of US international engagement — diplomacy, development, and defense.

The report emphasizes that on-the-job training alone is no longer a sufficient method, if it ever was, to develop a US diplomatic service that is second to none. In addition to mastering practical skills and tradecraft, our foreign affairs professionals must be fully capable of operating in a multitude of strategic, analytical, and programmatic environments. Their effectiveness, like that of their military counterparts, should rest on a systematic regime of education, training, and professional preparation — one that is linked to their career advancement.

In recommending that “every Foreign Service Officer ... should complete a year of advanced study ... as a requirement for promotion to the Senior Foreign Service,” the report recognizes that the international affairs landscape of the 21st century will be characterized by rapid change, emerging challenges, and new sets of issues. If the US is to maintain its leadership, the enhanced education and training of our diplomats and development experts will require an adequate and consistent resource flow. For decades, that flow has been a trickle as compared to the resources devoted to our military, even though the military acknowledges that most international challenges do not have a military solution. Even as the Foreign Service Institute has geared up to prepare US diplomats to serve in difficult new environments, personnel and budgetary shortages have made it difficult to release diplomats from operational demands so that they can receive necessary training in new skills and foreign languages. This has to change — and quickly.

A thorough recalibration of the instruments of American international engagement is overdue. Secretary of Defense Gates defined the problem neatly when he noted in 2007 that “during the 1990s, with the complicity of both the Congress and the White House, key instruments of America’s national power ... were allowed to wither or were abandoned.” This AAD/Stimson Center report lays out a road map for restoring and enhancing the future viability of the diplomatic instrument of national power. I commend its recommendations for prompt action by decision-makers in the Executive Branch and on Capitol Hill.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brent Scowcroft". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "B" and a stylized "S" at the end.

Lt. General Brent Scowcroft (USAF, ret.)

## Dear Reader

**D**iplomatic education and training must be expanded to safeguard US interests. Over the past decade, the Department of State and the civilian agencies of the US government were under-funded and under-manned, and failed to play their part in US engagement overseas. The US military not only fought wars but also struggled to take on traditional diplomatic responsibilities. Both the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State acknowledge the acute need to address the imbalance caused by the failure to fund diplomacy. Diplomats and other civilians must lead and support diverse programs and activities overseas for the United States to utilize its power and influence effectively in a world of diverse and demanding threats to, and opportunities for, American interests.

A previous study, *A Foreign Affairs Budget for the Future: Fixing the Crisis in Diplomatic Readiness* (2008), documented the numbers of personnel needed by State and USAID. Filling that need remains half done. Progress must be sustained. Personnel recruited must be trained as well. The present study addresses the training and professional education needed by Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) to meet the changing requirements of the US government in the conduct of its foreign and national security policies.

In the 21st century, the relatively small US-citizen workforce of the Foreign Service must cover duties ranging from the traditional promotion of foreign and economic policies, treaty negotiation, crisis prevention and management, and protection of American citizens to a growing roster of responsibilities on counterterrorism, counternarcotics, border security, migration and refugees, climate and science cooperation, and post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction. This study considers ways and means to ensure that the right people with the right skills and education are available for the complex requirements of the new century.

The American Academy of Diplomacy and the Cox Foundation initiated this study, and enlisted the Stimson Center to provide support to the research, and a platform for a series of meetings of the project's Advisory Board, led by Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering. Those meetings enabled the project team of Robert Beecroft, Jeremy Curtin, Jonathan Larkin, and Harry Kopp to solicit the valuable input of former and current State Department officials



deeply knowledgeable about personnel, training, and professional education. We are grateful to all those who shared their wisdom and supported the goals and purpose of this study. The American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) helped with the funding, as did the Delevan Foundation and the Academy itself.

It is our hope that those responsible for the training and education policies for the State Department and USAID will use this study to ensure adequate resources to carry them out. We have worked closely with currently serving officers in key positions, and while they are not responsible for the views of this independent study, our expectation is that the ideas generated here may be integrated into action plans. These ideas also are largely compatible with the training-related recommendations of the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR), which was released in December 2010, after this study was largely completed. We see strong compatibility between the judgments of this report and the QDDR, broadly captured by the theme of “Training Our People for 21st-Century Missions,” and including many specific ideas, such as strengthening the role of the Chief of Mission to better oversee the diversity of staff at embassies, improving the diplomacy-development interaction at all levels, and generating new training modules for conflict, crisis, and instability requirements.

Sincerely,



Ambassador Ronald Neumann  
President, American Academy of Diplomacy



Thomas R. Pickering  
Advisory Group Chairman



Ellen Laipson  
President and CEO, The Stimson Center



Robert M. Beecroft  
Project Chairman

## Executive Summary

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*We must use what has been called "smart power": the full range of tools at our disposal — diplomatic, economic, military, political, legal, and cultural — picking the right tool, or combination of tools, for each situation. With "smart power," diplomacy will be the vanguard of foreign policy.<sup>1</sup>*

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Since at least 2001, America's "smart power" equation has been out of balance. Increasingly, under-investment in diplomacy and development has led to our military taking on responsibilities traditionally met by diplomats and development experts. Driven by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the need to respond to the global threat of terrorism, resources and influence have flowed, abundantly and too often uncritically, to the Defense Department, which has pointed to the limitation of bullets in addressing the challenges in this region. This imbalance has two root causes. The first is the lack of broad understanding about the value and requirements of diplomacy and development at this point in history. The second is the lack of resources allocated to the State Department and other foreign affairs agencies. The inconsistent and uncoordinated response of those agencies to rapidly changing international priorities and demands has also played a contributing role.

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates captured the problem succinctly in his remarks at Kansas State University in 2007:

Funding for non-military foreign-affairs programs has increased since 2001, but it remains disproportionately small relative to what we spend on the military, and to the importance of such capabilities. Consider that this year's budget for the Department of Defense — not counting operations in Iraq and Afghanistan — is nearly half a trillion dollars. The total foreign affairs budget request for the State Department is \$36 billion.... What is clear to me is that there is a need for a dramatic increase in spending on the civilian instruments of national security — diplomacy, strategic communications, foreign assistance, civic action, and economic reconstruction and development.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hillary Rodham Clinton, Nomination hearing to be Secretary of State, statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Washington, DC, January 13, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, Kansas State University, November 26, 2007.

There is little question that under-investment in diplomacy over the last decade or so has left our Foreign Service overstretched and under prepared.<sup>3</sup>

A 2008 report by the American Academy of Diplomacy and the Stimson Center, *A Foreign Affairs Budget for the Future* (FAB), recommended a way forward, based on an increase of 3,500 positions for State by 2014.<sup>4</sup> Over the past few years, the State Department and USAID have begun to rebuild through the increased hiring under the Diplomacy 3.0 initiative at State and the Development Leadership Initiative at USAID. These initiatives are intended to increase the size of the Foreign Service alone by 25% at State and 100% at USAID by 2014. If fully implemented — not a given in these strained budget times — these initiatives would finally allow State to fill longstanding vacancies and USAID to reduce its reliance on contractors and rebuild its own expertise.

A surge in new numbers, however, will not be enough. Crucially, more resources will be required to start providing a now admirably diverse diplomatic service a common professional formation, with ongoing education and training responsive to a rapidly changing geo-strategic environment, one in which Western values and post-World War II institutions must compete with challenging new forces. If America intends to be known for the quality and effectiveness of its diplomacy, we must sustain traditional skills and develop more broadly new capabilities demanded in an increasingly complex international environment.

Professional education and training are essential to raise the overall level of performance of our Foreign Service. This need is made even more acute by the shifting dynamics of international relations, characterized by geo-strategic change, rapidly evolving technology, and the urgency of leadership within a foreign affairs community vastly more varied than was the case even 10 years ago. For America's diplomats, the principal responsibility must be to manage change and

3 Government Accountability Office, "Additional Steps Needed to Address Continuing Staffing and Experience Gaps at Hardship Posts, GAO-09-874," September 2009; Government Accountability Office, Department of State - "Comprehensive Plan Needed to Address Persistent Foreign Language Shortfalls, GAO-09-955," September 2009.; *A Foreign Affairs Budget for the Future: Fixing the Crisis in Diplomatic Readiness*, the American Academy of Diplomacy and the Stimson Center, Washington, October 2008.

4 Although there is overlap between the FAB's recommendations and Diplomacy 3.0's actual hiring, a direct comparison is difficult because they present their numbers differently. The FAB recommended 3,500 new positions for State, including 1,099 for what it termed "core diplomacy"; 1,287 for training, 487 for public diplomacy; 562 for reconstruction and stabilization; and 50 for security assistance. These roughly 3,500 positions did not include the management, security, and technical support staff that would also have to be increased to support the increase in officers for political, economic, consular, and public diplomacy.

minimize instability and conflict and, when conflict has occurred, to take a leading role in post-conflict stabilization. The very nature of the Foreign Service, with frequent transfers, reassignments, new duties, and bodies of knowledge to master every few years, further raises the importance of a firm commitment to early and ongoing professional education and training for those already active and those being selected into diplomatic service for the coming decades.

Formal training has grown in importance as traditional means of acquiring the knowledge, skills, and know-how of the diplomatic profession — especially on-the-job training and guidance from more senior officers — have lost much of their effectiveness. Hiring shortfalls over the past 20 years have created gaps in the mid-level ranks, resulting in a shortage of the very officers who should be providing practical advice and hands-on training to the rising generation of new officers. Available quality mentoring resources continue to be outstripped by growth in the lower ranks of the Service.

Education and training for 21st-century diplomatic service must be part of a *coherent pattern of professional development* to ensure that from entry level through mid-level ranks Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) have a clear understanding of the calling as protectors of national interests through negotiation whenever possible and in post-conflict stabilization, when required. Our officers must be prepared both for specific assignments and increasingly senior coordination, oversight responsibilities, and leadership. Like military officers and corporate leaders, FSOs, especially at the senior level, require the ability to think beyond the moment and tactical needs — to act strategically, to plan and execute complex operations and policy initiatives, and to lead effectively in a vastly more varied foreign affairs environment than existed even a decade ago. The professional development of FSOs should include, in addition to sustained practical training, a comprehensive and well-articulated curriculum to be accomplished over time, with the goal of producing greater intellectual and operational breadth and a wider command of the great issues of the day affecting US national security and global interests.

Recognition of the need for robust professional education and training is a first step. To act on this recognition requires the necessary financial and human resources. Establishing the necessary professional development process for the Foreign Service will take sustained commitment — from the State Department, from various administrations, and from Congress — to a 15%

training float that cannot be eaten away again. Even with full commitment and support, some steps will take time, both to recruit more FSOs and highly qualified mentors and educators and to allow our next generation of diplomats to gain knowledge and experience as they rise through the ranks. The Department has undertaken important steps already. More remains to be done.

The three initial recommendations that follow address the resources and decisions essential to progress. They are equally essential to the many detailed training recommendations of the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR). The three “big picture” recommendations are followed by important, specific reforms and changes critical to the professional education and training of the nation’s diplomats.

While this report focuses on the Department of State, all the Foreign Affairs Agencies — United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Foreign Commercial Service (FCS), Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), and International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) — confront similar professional education and training problems; therefore, our recommendations should be reviewed, adjusted, and adopted by all the foreign affairs agencies.

## Recommendations

**RECOMMENDATION 1:** Redress the under-investment in diplomacy and the consequent imbalance between defense, on one side, and diplomacy and development, on the other, by fully funding Diplomacy 3.0.

**RECOMMENDATION 2:** To provide and sustain an explicit 15% level of personnel above that required for regular assignment to create positions for training (training float).

**RECOMMENDATION 3:** Make a long-term commitment to investing in the professional education and training needed to build a 21st-century diplomatic service of the United States able to meet the complex challenges and competition we face in the coming decades.

**RECOMMENDATION 4:** Strengthen and expand the Department of State’s professional development process to ensure that all FSOs receive the training needed for immediate assignments and the combination of training, professional education, and assignments needed for foreign policy leadership positions in the future.

**4.1:** To the maximum extent possible, require that FSOs, before they begin assignments to specific positions, complete courses currently recommended as preparation for those positions.

**4.2:** As staff resources become available, give education and training priority over other staffing requirements, eliminating waivers, save in the most exceptional circumstances.

**4.3:** Synchronize the timing of increases in required training with the inflow of new staff, funding for teaching positions, facilities required for expansion, and travel to allow education and training to take place in fact as well as in theory.

**4.4:** Strengthen the Office of Career Development and Assignments in State's Bureau of Human Resources (HR/CDA) with a cadre of Civil Service Human Resources Professionals for continuity and institutional memory purposes, supplementing the field experience of the FSO Career Development Officers. Such Human Resources Professionals would also assist workforce planning by helping to coordinate assignment patterns with long-term strategic plans.

**Resources:** Although the Department does not have exact planning models for short-term training and "persons in motion," it calculates that Diplomacy 3.0 would provide staffing necessary to fill vacancies and account for "persons in motion" between assignments, thus freeing FSOs for the short-term training foreseen as necessary in this recommendation. Establishing a cadre of Human Resources Professionals in HR/CDA would require seven to 10 additional GS employees, ranging from GS-11 to GS-14, at a total annual cost of between \$1.33 million and \$1.90 million.<sup>5</sup>

**RECOMMENDATION 5:** As a response to the problems that the mid-level gap has caused for mentoring, establish a temporary corps of roving counselors, drawn extensively from among recently retired officers with appropriate skills, who can remain abroad for periods of several weeks or months to provide counseling, advice, and career guidance focused on supervision and section/resource management.

<sup>5</sup> The State Department calculates the average cost of a domestic Civil Service position at \$190,000.

**5.1:** Require that all officers going into positions where they will oversee new employees take a short course, perhaps through distance learning, on supervising and mentoring new employees.

**5.2:** Require officers going into positions where they will supervise Locally Employed Staff (foreign nationals) to take a course on supervising employees in other cultures.

**RECOMMENDATION 6:** All FSOs are exposed to on-the-job training over the course of their careers. To maximize its value, the Department should contract a study that will examine best practices in the field to determine how on-the-job training can be most effectively conducted.

**RECOMMENDATION 7:** Every FSO at the FS-01 or FS-02 level should complete a year of advanced study related to his or her career track as a requirement for promotion to the Senior Foreign Service.

**Resources:** Considering the average rate of promotion into the FS-02 rank and through FS-02 and FS-01, we calculate that this recommendation would require a permanent increase of 161 FSOs, with the increase phased in over 13 years. In addition, to accommodate officers at the FS-02 rank when the requirement took effect, an additional 145 FSOs would need to be hired at the beginning of the program and maintained for 10 years. When fully established, the program would provide advanced study to about 285 FSOs a year, including in that number the 125 currently in long-term training.

**RECOMMENDATION 8:** Before a new Chief of Mission (COM) begins pre-assignment consultations in the Department, the relevant bureau and country directorate personnel should be fully prepared to assist him or her proactively in quickly and accurately identifying the major policy issues relevant to the COM's new responsibilities and to arrange for appropriately targeted consultations.

**8.1:** To assist desk officers and others responsible for preparing new COMs for their posts, the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) should develop a short course, possibly through distance learning, focused on proactive techniques for identifying key policy issues and arranging for relevant appointments.

**8.2:** FSI should develop a brief familiarization course for new non-career State Department officials, whether serving in Washington or

overseas. The course should focus on the structure and procedures of the Department, the interagency process, and Washington power relationships. For those going to embassies or other missions overseas, personnel-related responsibilities and the role of the Country Team should be included. (Non-career COMs should be required to take the course before proceeding to the regular COM course, unless prior experience or the absolute needs of the Service make a waiver advisable).

### Diplomacy 3.0

#### *Projected Foreign Service Employment (End of Fiscal Year)<sup>6</sup>*

	FY08 (base)	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	5 Year Increase
Total Foreign Service	11,772	12,642	13,383	13,813	14,223	14,633	2,681
New Hires		1,355	1,370	830	810	810	
Attrition		398	400	400	400	400	
Net Gain		957	970	430	410	410	3,177
Net FSO		567	646	322	310	310	2,155
Net Specialist		390	324	108	100	100	1,022
% Increase (Cumulative)		7%	14%	17%	21%	24%	24%

<sup>6</sup> These figures are from the 2010 Personnel Strategy Report, tables three and 14, prepared by the Department of State's Office of Resource Management and Organizational Analysis. These figures are periodically reviewed and revised. FSO/Specialist splits are notional and based on recent hiring ratios. Of the new FSO hires in FY09, 60% went to fill vacant positions, 26% to training, and 14% to new positions. In FY10, 34% went to fill vacancies caused by additional personnel in training with 66% going to new positions.



# Chapter 1

## Background: Changing American Diplomacy in the New International Environment

**D**iplomacy, development, and defense have become essential elements of US national security. They will remain so for the foreseeable future. The Foreign Service must be prepared to play its full part in this multi-disciplined, multi-agency arena. In the 20 years since the end of the Cold War, diplomatic roles and missions have expanded and evolved dramatically, but the numbers, resources, and, despite strenuous efforts by the Foreign Service Institute (FSI), preparation of America's diplomats have not kept pace.

In order to maintain readiness and progressively advance to higher levels of responsibility, US military officers follow a systematic program of professional development throughout their careers. A comparable regime is essential to maintaining diplomatic readiness and enabling US Foreign Service Officers (FSOs), the career professionals charged with advancing national security through diplomatic means, to respond adequately to present and future challenges. Such a program requires the systematic integration of training and advanced education with assignments and promotions.

In recent years, senior leaders have repeatedly addressed the challenges facing American diplomacy and have sought to bring about change. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, speaking at Georgetown University in 2006, said that “it is impossible to draw neat, clear lines between our security interests, our development efforts and our democratic ideals. American diplomacy must integrate and advance all of these goals together.”<sup>7</sup>

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton frequently refers to the need to deploy “smart power,” defined as the intelligent use of all means at our disposal, including economic power, military power, and our ability to convene and connect. She and others in the Obama administration repeatedly stress the need to treat diplomacy, defense, and development as equally important components of foreign policy.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Remarks at Georgetown School of Foreign Service, January 18, 2006.

<sup>8</sup> Secretary Clinton's foreign policy address at the Council on Foreign Relations, July 15, 2009; Statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Nomination Hearing to be Secretary of State, January 13, 2009; Development in the 21st-Century: Remarks at the Center for Global Development, Washington, January 6, 2010; Town hall meeting for employees marking one year at State, January 26, 2010. See also the administration's National Security Strategy, May 2010, p. 5.

Non-governmental analysts and experts have reached similar conclusions regarding both policy and resources. The 2008 *A Foreign Affairs Budget for the Future*, by the American Academy of Diplomacy and the Stimson Center, identified increased staffing and funding levels needed to “produce a corps of American diplomatic professionals who are fully capable of serving — in Secretary Clinton’s words — as ‘the vanguard of foreign policy.’” Numerous other reports have recognized the changing diplomatic landscape and the need for the Foreign Service to adjust.<sup>9</sup>

The Department of State and USAID began joint strategic planning and budgeting in 2006, with a view to tightening the links between development and diplomacy.<sup>10</sup> The elevation of US development policy, and its relationship to diplomacy and defense are central issues of study in the first Quadrennial Development and Diplomacy Review (QDDR), released December 15, 2010.

But these initiatives are only the beginning. A more systematic approach to building and sustaining the skills and knowledge of diplomacy will be needed to enable America’s diplomats effectively to carry their share of the international affairs burden. This paper proposes such an approach.

## The Multiple Roles of American Diplomacy

The Department of State presently employs about 7,500 FSOs (mid-2010).<sup>11</sup> These men and women bear the primary responsibility for developing and implementing US foreign policy through diplomatic action on multiple fronts. Among their duties:

- Promote and support US foreign policies to foreign governments and international organizations.

9 *A Foreign Affairs Budget for the Future: Fixing the Crisis in Diplomatic Readiness*, the American Academy of Diplomacy and the Stimson Center, Washington, October 2008. The current study is an extension of the 2008, looking in more detail at the issue of training and education needed for 21<sup>st</sup>-century diplomacy. See also: *Embassy of the Future*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, October 2007. “Final Report of the State Department in 2025 Working Group of the Secretary’s Advisory Committee on Transformational Diplomacy,” US Department of State, Washington, 2008; J. Brian Atwood, M. Peter McPherson, and Andrew Natsios, “Arrested Development: Making Foreign Aid a More Effective Tool,” *Foreign Affairs* magazine, Council on Foreign Relations, New York, November/December 2008; *Putting ‘Smart Power’ to Work: An Action Agenda for the Obama Administration and the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress*, Center for US Global Engagement, Washington, 2009.

10 Congress greatly aided joint budgeting by placing appropriations for USAID and State in the same bill, beginning with the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress (2007).

11 Bureau of Human Resources, Department of State (HR). According to the HR Fact Sheet, as of June 30, 2010, the Department of State’s full-time permanent employees totaled 65,689, including about 7,458 FSOs, 5,401 Foreign Service Specialists, 9,914 members of the Civil Service, and 42,916 locally employed staff (host-country or third-country nationals employed by US missions abroad).

- Support US economic and commercial interests. (American businesses seeking new opportunities abroad regularly draw on embassy expertise and knowledge of the local culture, laws, and practices to gain footholds.)
- Negotiate treaties and agreements to protect America's interests.
- Play an active role in conflict prevention and crisis management.
- Inform US foreign policy decision making through their reporting, analysis, and policy recommendations on political, economic, social, and other developments around the world.
- Protect American citizens traveling abroad. (When an American citizen runs into trouble in a foreign land, FSOs in our embassies ensure that their rights are respected and that help is available.)
- Engage foreign publics across the spectrum of society through active educational exchange and other public diplomacy activities.
- Support counternarcotics, counterterrorism, and border security/law-enforcement missions.<sup>12</sup>

In carrying out these and many other tasks, FSOs in the field are led by America's Ambassadors, of whom some two-thirds are career FSOs. An ambassador's responsibilities are set out in a number of statutes and presidential directives and enumerated in nineteen paragraphs of regulations that cover everything from US export promotion to halting arms proliferation; promoting human rights; and international cooperation on the environment, counter-narcotics, and refugees.<sup>13</sup>

US Ambassadors, whether career members of the Foreign Service or non-career appointees, are the personal representatives of the President and receive their instructions from the Secretary of State. They bear responsibility for, and have defined authority over, the work of all the agencies at their embassies. In a typical embassy, about a third of the American employees

<sup>12</sup> The duties and responsibilities of FSOs are generally described in the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-465), as amended, 22 USC. 3901 et seq. Less formally, the Department of State describes the work of its FSOs on the careers.state.gov section of its website. The comparable pages for USAID are at usaid.gov/careers. Other sources include Kopp and Gillespie, *Career Diplomacy*, Georgetown University Press, 2008; and *Inside a US embassy*, American Foreign Service Association, 2005.

<sup>13</sup> The duties and authorities of American Ambassadors are enumerated in US Department of State, *Foreign Affairs Manual*, volume 2, Section 113.1c (2 FAM 113.1c), and in letters of instruction, which by custom the President sends to Ambassadors at the beginning of their assignments. Section 207 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, cited above, defines chief of mission authority over executive branch personnel (22 USC. 3927). Ambassadorial authorities and responsibilities also figure in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, the Diplomatic Security Act of 1986, and in numerous executive orders, presidential directives, and memoranda of understanding between the Department of State and other executive agencies.

work for the Department of State and two-thirds for other agencies. Some 60 different agencies of the US government have employees stationed in US embassies abroad. One of an ambassador's most important duties — arguably the most important — is to ensure that the policies and programs of the various agencies operate coherently and consistently. His or her vehicle for doing so is the Country Team, the top management structure in more than 250 US-missions around the world, and the sole place in government where an institutionalized, “whole of government,” all-agency operation already exists. As FSOs prepare to become Ambassadors, they must come to understand and manage this multiplicity of agencies, each with its own mandate, culture, and place in executing US foreign policy goals abroad.<sup>14</sup>

The duties of traditional diplomacy — focusing principally on maintaining bilateral relations between states and governments and working with international and multinational organizations — remain an essential core of what our diplomats do. But the profound changes in the foreign policy environment after the end of the Cold War and especially in the years that followed the attacks of September 11, 2001, have made the conduct of traditional diplomacy more difficult, while adding significant new and demanding functions and activities to the diplomat's portfolio. The collapse of the Soviet Union produced instability across the vast arc of Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Eastern Europe, from the Chinese border to the Balkans, introducing American diplomacy to countries, leaders, cultures, and languages with which it had scant familiarity. The rise of China, India, Brazil, Indonesia, and other states, and the morphing of the G-7 into the G-20, shifted the center of global economic dynamism, greatly increasing the demand for diplomats with experience and linguistic fluency in these countries. Terrorist groups made embassies and diplomats targets of choice, imposing drastically increased security costs, and further impeding customary ways of doing business while

14 As expressed in the QDDR, “Our embassies in the field today look and operate very differently than in the past. Many have a large presence with representatives from a number of agencies of the US government who run, manage, and implement programs that advance the array of US-interests overseas. ... Today, given the wide array of US agencies and actors and the corresponding need for coordination and leadership, it is essential that *all* Ambassadors are both empowered and held accountable as CEOs.” The first QDDR, *Leading Through Civilian Power*, Washington, DC, December 2010, pp. 28–29.

posing a new set of issues for cooperation with foreign governments.<sup>15</sup> An unintended consequence has been the growing isolation of American diplomats from foreign governments and publics, coupled with the transformation of many US embassies and missions into inhospitable fortresses, making real engagement ever more challenging.

While the Department of State and the Foreign Service worked to adapt to these new conditions, rapid and accelerating changes in technology, especially communications technology, have further broken the frame of traditional diplomatic practice. These changes have increased the speed and volume of economic and financial flows, blurred distinctions between foreign and domestic affairs, and rendered formal diplomatic exchanges, with their measured pace and stylized process, increasingly secondary in importance. Diplomats accustomed to managing the gamut of state-to-state relations through a monopoly of exchanges with foreign government officials (“Under ordinary conditions,” says a quaint passage in the State Department’s manual of regulations, “all official contact between the US government and that of a foreign country is through a diplomatic mission.”<sup>16</sup>) discovered that other USG agencies, including those with a primarily domestic focus, can and do engage easily and directly with foreign governments and counterparts.

More consequentially, organizations, entities, and private citizens unaffiliated with any state or nation have demonstrated an impressive ability to shape international events, as recently illustrated by the WikiLeaks scandal. Secretary Clinton, speaking to the Council on Foreign Relations, mentioned corporations, criminal cartels, NGOs, al-Qaeda, and individuals using Twitter.<sup>17</sup> Former Department of State Policy Planning Director Dr. Anne-Marie Slaughter says, “Diplomacy requires mobilizing international networks of public and private actors.”<sup>18</sup> Diplomats, who are still formally and legally sent and received by states, continue to search for more effective ways to deal with non-state entities.

15 Terrorist acts against American diplomats have a long history. According to the 1981 report of the President’s Commission on Hostage Compensation, in the decade before the American Embassy in Tehran was taken hostage in 1978, 10 American diplomats had been murdered in eight separate incidents, and almost 50 more had survived 37 acts or attempted acts of kidnap. Following the destruction by car bomb of the American embassy and Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983, Congress began funding new and retrofit construction to reduce embassy vulnerability. The program still continues, and in FY 2009 almost half of the \$11 billion spent by the State Department on administration of foreign affairs went for security and security construction.

16 2 FAM 111.1.3

17 Foreign policy address at the Council on Foreign Relations, July 15, 2009.

18 “America’s Edge: Power in the Networked Century,” *Foreign Affairs*, January–February 2009.

The tasks of American diplomacy expanded dramatically when, at the end of 2005, President George W. Bush, in NSPD-44, directed the Secretary of State to lead and coordinate all US-Government efforts, involving all relevant departments and agencies, in stabilization and reconstruction efforts in “complex emergencies and transitions, failing states, failed states, and environments across the spectrum of conflict,” including in Iraq.<sup>19</sup> The Department of State had some recent experience in stabilization and reconstruction efforts (for example in the Balkans), but this presidential directive placed the Department in charge of an effort that was far greater in scale and already facing severe problems in Iraq, where security was deteriorating rapidly.<sup>20</sup> The QDDR reiterates the centrality of “crisis and conflict prevention and resolution; the promotion of sustainable, responsible, and effective security and governance in fragile states; and fostering security and reconstruction in the aftermath of conflict as a central national security objective and as a core State mission.”<sup>21</sup>

The massive US engagement in Iraq and Afghanistan has called into question both NSPD-44 and the State Department’s ability to meet present and future diplomatic challenges. *A Foreign Affairs Budget for the Future* expressed a common view in stating that “many observers find that today’s Foreign Service does not have to a sufficient degree the knowledge, skills, abilities, and outlooks needed to equip career diplomats to conduct 21st-century diplomacy.”<sup>22</sup>

The dominance of the Department of Defense and the military, not only in Iraq and Afghanistan but also in humanitarian relief and other high profile interventions in recent years has diminished public and Congressional understanding of the essential role that the State Department, the Foreign Service, and diplomacy itself play in protecting our national security. The imbalance in resources, with Defense speaking in billions and State speaking in millions (and the Hill challenging State’s requests even for millions<sup>23</sup>),

19 NSPD-44 of December 7, 2005.

20 Ambassador James Dobbins cited seven instances in the period from 1991 to 2003 of societies that the United States helped to liberate and then tried to rebuild: Kuwait, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. *Occupying Iraq: A History of the Coalition Provisional Authority*, RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, 2009, iv.

21 QDDR, 123.

22 *A Foreign Affairs Budget for the Future*, p. 19.

23 Michael Gerson, “Pound-foolish on National Security,” *Washington Post*, October 1, 2010. Gerson contends that, in contrast to routine approval of Defense Department requests, Congress has cut funds “for civilian efforts in Iraq in ways that may undermine hard-won achievements and endanger American lives. Resources were reduced in the 2010 supplemental spending bill and slashed by the Senate Appropriations Committee in the 2011 budget.”

underlines the contention, more accurate than not, that diplomacy today wears combat boots.<sup>24</sup>

## The Personnel Gap

The Department of State and the Foreign Service were not prepared for the challenge of Iraq and the mandate of NSPD-44. The Service was short of resources, especially experienced FSOs. The United States reduced spending on diplomacy when the Cold War ended. In the 1990s, the Foreign Service in the State Department shrank because hiring was held below attrition. USAID experienced losses from attrition and layoffs, a 10% reduction in force, as well. But in the same period, the United States opened 23 new embassies in the states that emerged from the breakup of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia — with no new resources provided. The resulting austerity was felt worldwide, and America’s ability to conduct diplomacy deteriorated.<sup>25</sup>

An initial effort at rebuilding was launched in 2001 with the Department’s Diplomatic Readiness Initiative (DRI). With support from Congress, the DRI added more than a thousand FSOs and Specialists and more than 200 civil-service positions to the State Department’s rolls in 2002–2004.<sup>26</sup> But the additional personnel, intended to fill vacancies and allow for expanded training, were quickly absorbed by the unanticipated demands of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. Despite the mandate of NSPD-44, from 2005 to 2008 funding for State did not permit hiring above attrition, except for security and fee-funded consular positions. As a consequence, posts around the world were stripped of personnel needed to staff the most critical jobs. By late 2008, 17% of FSO positions in high-hardship posts, excluding Iraq, were vacant, and 34% of mid-level positions were filled by officers one or two grades below the position grade.<sup>27</sup> At the end of fiscal year 2008, 16% of all Foreign Service positions were vacant worldwide, including 25% of domestic positions.<sup>28</sup>

24 The phrase “Public diplomacy wears combat boots” was introduced by Matt Armstrong, who writes the blog *MountainRunner* on strategic communication and foreign policy.

25 US Department of State, “America’s Overseas Presence in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Report of the Overseas Advisory Panel,” Washington, 1999.

26 In addition, Congress authorized the hiring of 608 Specialists in diplomatic security and 561 Consular Officers funded by fees. For an account of the DRI, see Foreign Affairs Council, “Secretary Colin Powell’s State Department: An Independent Assessment,” Washington DC, June 2007.

27 US Department of State, Bureau of Human Resources, “FY 2010 Personnel Strategy Report”; Government Accountability Office, “Additional Steps Needed to Address Continuing Staffing and Experience Gaps at Hardship Posts, GAO-09-874,” September 2009, p. 7.

28 US Department of State, Bureau of Human Resources, “FY2010 Personnel Strategy Report,” 5.

Training suffered, and skills were not up to standard.<sup>29</sup> Of the 44% of all overseas positions that, according to Department criteria, require competence in the local language, 25% were vacant, and more than 25% of the rest were filled by incumbents who lacked the necessary level of competence.<sup>30</sup> These acute shortages in personnel greatly increased the challenges of coping with new pressures on traditional diplomacy and demands for developing non-traditional diplomatic practices.

The State Department announced a new hiring plan early in the Obama administration. Called Diplomacy 3.0 for the “smart power” triad of diplomacy, development, and defense, the plan proposed increasing the size of the Foreign Service from end of FY 2008 levels, adding 2,700 personnel, including 2,150 officers (see table below). About 1,200 of those 2,150 officers had been hired by the end of 2010.<sup>31</sup> Diplomacy 3.0 would also increase the size of the Department’s Civil Service staff by 13%. If the program is completed — not a given in these times of very strained budgets — the total Foreign Service in the Department of State would number about 14,600, including about 8,800 commissioned FSOs. USAID in 2008 announced plans to double its corps of FSOs to about 2,400 by the end of FY 2012, and through FY 2010 is on track to do so.

29 In FY 2008, the Department of State estimated that 1,100 employees needed to be assigned to the training complement to allow completion of required training (almost all language training). Higher-priority demands reduced the training complement (the float) to just 500 employees, resulting in staffing gaps and language deficiencies. “FY 2010 Personnel Strategy Report,” p 6.

30 Part of the deficit is attributable to the Department’s more demanding approach to language competence. The number of language-designated positions has doubled since 2001. The number of positions requiring competence in Arabic has increased fivefold. US Department of State, Bureau of Human Resources, “FY 2010 Personnel Strategy Report,” pp. 6–7.

31 US Department of State, “Congressional Budget Justification,” volume 1, Department of State Operations, Fiscal Year 2011, ix, 43. The original FY 2013 target date for completion of the program slipped to FY 2014 in the FY 2011 budget request.



## Diplomacy 3.0

### Projected Foreign Service Employment (End of Fiscal Year)<sup>32</sup>

	FY08 (base)	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	5 Year Increase
Total Foreign Service	11,772	12,642	13,383	13,813	14,223	14,633	2,681
New Hires		1,355	1,370	830	810	810	
Attrition		398	400	400	400	400	
Net Gain		957	970	430	410	410	3,177
Net FSO		567	646	322	310	310	2,155
Net Specialist		390	324	108	100	100	1,022
% Increase (Cumulative)		7%	14%	17%	21%	24%	24%

The hiring plan, if fulfilled, would finally provide the Foreign Service with an officer corps large enough to cover transit and training (first of all language training) without creating vacancies. The US military tries to maintain an officer corps equal to about 115% of regular duty assignments — a 15% float — for exactly that purpose.<sup>33</sup> Consistent with that model, the State Department’s goal is a FSO corps larger than the number of operating field and domestic positions by about 15%.

## Traditional and New Skills

The May 2010 *US National Security Strategy*, which discusses the “whole of government” approach to international affairs, affirms:

Diplomacy is as fundamental to our national security as our defense capability. Our diplomats are the first line of engagement, listening to our partners, learning from them, building respect for one another, and seeking common ground. Diplomats, development experts, and others in the United States government must be able to work side by side to support a common agenda. *New skills are needed...*<sup>34</sup> (emphasis added).

<sup>32</sup> These figures are from the 2010 “Personnel Strategy Report,” tables three and 14, prepared by the Department of State’s Office of Resource Management and Organizational Analysis. These figures are periodically reviewed and revised. FSO/Specialist splits are notional and based on recent hiring ratios. Of the new FSO hires in FY09, 60% went to fill vacant positions, 26% to training, and 14% to new positions. In FY10, 34% went to fill vacancies caused by additional personnel in training with 66% going to new positions.

<sup>33</sup> The Army’s term for the float is TTHS, for trainees, transients, holdees, and students.

<sup>34</sup> *National Security Strategy*, May 2010, p. 14.

Until recently, new diplomatic skills have received relatively little attention in Foreign Service professional education, training, or evaluations. These skills reflect three distinctive features of contemporary diplomacy: the need to stabilize societies where government is weak and the level of violence high; the need to draw on the resources of many government agencies (the “whole of government” approach described in the *National Security Strategy* and the QDDR); and the need, as identified by Dr. Slaughter among others, to mobilize “international networks of public and private actors,” which is, to engage non-traditional interlocutors beyond governments, across societies, and across borders.<sup>35</sup>

Today’s requirements need to go hand in hand with traditional Foreign Service strengths in language and area expertise. Extensive interviews with military officers and civilians familiar with their work show that FSOs in Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq were most highly valued and respected by their non-diplomat peers for their knowledge of the local scene and language, cultural sensitivity, and political acumen.<sup>36</sup> As FSOs rise through the ranks and take on jobs of increasing responsibility, they need to master both traditional and new skills in order to do their jobs effectively.

In addition to the core diplomatic skills of the Foreign Service, the Department of State also requires expertise in specific, sometimes technical areas that figure prominently and increasingly in international relations: environmental affairs (such as climate change, global health issues, and epidemiology), control and nonproliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, energy, telecommunications, religious practices and human rights, refugee matters, law of the sea, and many others. Much of this highly specialized expertise is carried by Civil Service professionals, who commit their entire careers to developing the necessary knowledge and skills, or by non-career appointees bringing expertise from outside government. But FSOs, especially as they rise to positions of senior leadership, also must have a firm, general grounding in such specialized issues that could play a significant role in bilateral or regional diplomatic relations for which the Department is responsible.

35 *Ibid.*; Slaughter, *op. cit.* As part of the first QDDR, a task force is reviewing “legacy” (traditional) and new skill sets, as well as bodies of knowledge that FSOs need to master. Similar lists and descriptions can be found in the 2007 CSIS report “Embassy of the Future” and in the 2008 publication by the American Academy of Diplomacy and the Stimson Center, *A Foreign Affairs Budget for the Future*, both cited above.

36 This theme emerges repeatedly in the interviews that the US Institute of Peace conducted as part of its Oral Histories Project on Stability Operations. The transcripts are available at: <http://www.usip.org/resources/oral-histories-iraq-provincial-reconstruction-teams>.

In sum, the State Department needs the right combination of Foreign Service and Civil Service skills and expertise, working together. It is important to avoid the mistake of assuming that career FSOs are most at home (and are more likely to advance their careers) in the regional bureaus, while subject matter experts belong in — some might say are relegated to — the functional or substantive bureaus whose work centers on global issues.<sup>37</sup> This would only lead to functional bureaus knowing less and less about the international environment in which their work is realized, while FSOs would have less and less capability, as they get to senior levels, to deal effectively with global issues.

## **Current Professional Development Policy and Practice at State**

The professional development of FSOs involves more than the acquisition of languages and the skills, new and traditional, associated with the practice of diplomacy. As an officer rises through the ranks and moves to positions of increasing responsibility, he or she deals progressively with broader and more complex issues, while managing larger staffs and programs. Mid-career is a 15- or 20-year passage, during which an officer is expected to grow professionally in a number of ways: to learn to develop policy, not merely implement it; to integrate political, political-military, economic, humanitarian, social, environmental, and other issues in policy recommendations and calibrate them to available resources; to act effectively in an interagency framework; to see issues in a regional or global context, as well as bilaterally; to think in strategic terms; and to nurture the careers of more junior members of the service. In most cases, such expertise historically has been acquired on the job. But the current and future international environment requires a more systematic approach.

Chronic resource shortages have made it difficult for the Department of State to develop and maintain a structured program of professional development, one that is protected from relentless operational demands. By contrast, the US military makes professional education a fundamental part of an officer's career.

<sup>37</sup> State Department's six regional bureaus are responsible for bilateral and alliance relations in Africa (AF), East Asia and the Pacific (EAP), Europe and Eurasia (EUR), the Near East (NEA), South and central Asia (SCA), and the Western Hemisphere (WHA). Functional bureaus include Democracy Human Rights and Labor (DRL), Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECU), International Narcotics and Law Drug Enforcement (INL), Intelligence and Research (INR), Oceans, International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES), Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM), and others.

Virtually all US Army officers at the O-4 (major) level attend 40 weeks of study at the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, or comparable programs elsewhere. Many Army officers in mid-career also study or teach at the National Defense University, the Army War College, the CGSC School of Advanced Military Studies, or other institutions. The Department of State makes only limited use of military and other outside facilities for long-term study. For all its excellent work, the focus of FSI is short-term and centered on training, not professional education. FSI has no longer-term programs of study comparable to those at the Command and General Staff College.

It is our considered view that the changed circumstances and demands of 21st-century diplomacy require the Department of State to put in place a program of professional development for its officers. Such a program, in which diplomatic professional education and training would be linked to assignments and promotion, would enhance and broaden the skills of its diplomatic professionals, producing a service that is capable of conducting a more potent diplomacy, is better attuned to the changing international environment, and is equally adept at both traditional and non-traditional diplomatic practices. Specific recommendations are in Chapter 3.

## **Leadership Training at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI)**

The Department's continuum of courses in leadership centers on four mandatory courses, all taught at FSI's Leadership and Management School. Three of the courses are each one-week long, and are taught at the basic (FS-03), intermediate (FS-02), and advanced (FS-01) levels. The Senior Executive Threshold Seminar (SETS), mandatory for all FSOs newly promoted to the Senior Foreign Service (counselor level), is a two-week course, open to 28 students per session, including newly promoted executives at other national security agencies. It will be offered six times in FY 2011.

Officers below the FS-03 level are urged to take a one-week course in Fundamentals of Supervision, offered 25 times a year (not mandatory).

FSI's National Security Leadership Seminar, offered to competitively selected FS-01s, GS-15s, and O-6 military officers, meets two days a month, for five months. Each seminar has 30 participants, half from State and half from other agencies, who work together on cross-cutting interagency issues affecting national security. Between sessions, participants keep in touch through a course website.

In 2009, FSI's Leadership and Management School introduced "Understanding the Interagency: A Primer for National Security Professionals," a one-week course for employees of State and other agencies at the FS-03/GS-13 level. Understanding the Interagency is not mandatory. The course will be offered three times in FY 2011, with each session open to 30 professionals, ideally 15 from State and 15 from other agencies with national security responsibilities.

## Chapter 2

### Professional Education and Training at State: Today's Realities

The Department of State recruits widely to build a diverse Foreign Service that is representative of American society. Candidates are evaluated on the basis of personal qualities of leadership, management, communication, interpersonal, and intellectual skills. Entering officers ordinarily possess a strong base of general knowledge and experience. Between two-thirds and three-quarters have postgraduate degrees, many in politics, foreign cultures, languages, and international affairs, but others in English, foreign languages, economics, history, or the arts.<sup>38</sup> At least 80% of entering officers have spent significant amounts of time living, working, or studying abroad.<sup>39</sup>

Almost all Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) enter the Service through a rigorous competitive examination process that tests primarily for the skills and personal qualities deemed necessary for successful performance as a diplomat, not for knowledge of specific policy issues. The latter, along with the workings of the State Department and the Washington interagency structure, are seen as secondary considerations.<sup>40</sup> FSOs are expected to develop knowledge in these and related areas on the job over the course of their careers.

The Foreign Service is a closed personnel system that promotes from within, like the US military. Retention rates are high; attrition is about 4% in the Foreign Service.<sup>41</sup> The high retention rate from entry level to the senior ranks enhances the value of training and education invested in individual officers during the course of their careers.

38 Michael A. Campion, "Summary for Diplomats in Residence: Education and Work Experience of Passers of the FSO Selection Processes at the US Department of State." October 8, 2009. Prepared for Office of Recruitment, Examination, and Employment Bureau of Human Resources, US Department of State.

39 Profiles of the 150th, 151st, 152nd, and 153rd A-100 classes provided by the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA).

40 Authors' review of the Foreign Service Officer Test, the Qualifications Evaluation Panel Review, and the Oral Assessment. The Department offers bonus points for applicants who have passed the Foreign Service Written Exam and demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language, with emphasis on super-critical languages like Arabic, Mandarin, Farsi, Dari, Pashto and Urdu.

41 US Department of State, Bureau of Human Resources, "FY-2010 Personnel Strategy Report," p. 8.

## Training and Education at State

The State Department's Foreign Service Institute (FSI) has its headquarters at the George P. Shultz National Foreign Affairs Training Center (NFATC) in Arlington, Virginia. With an annual budget of \$129.6 million in FY-2009, FSI offers more than 600 classroom courses in subjects ranging from the required A-100 introductory course for incoming FSOs, to highly technical language, technology, and management courses, to tradecraft, broader area studies, leadership courses, and policy seminars.<sup>42</sup> Courses run from two days to as long as two years for super-hard languages, such as Chinese and Arabic. FSI also offers nearly 300 custom-designed and 1,500 commercial distance learning courses. FSI teaches more than 80,000 student-classes annually. Training in 70 languages has been the cornerstone of FSI's offerings. In addition to the State Department's Foreign Service, Civil Service, and locally employed Foreign National Staff, FSI also makes its courses available to employees from other agencies across the government.<sup>43</sup>

FSI's curriculum is designed to reflect US foreign policy priorities and State Department norms. FSI maintains a core of language, substantive, and technical courses, while adapting its programs to changing Department requirements. For example, in response to the continuing demands of service in Iraq and Afghanistan and to the deployment of Department personnel to other areas of crisis or instability, FSI has created a Division of Stability Operations Training to provide familiarization training on the regions of deployment, operational training for Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), interagency civilian-military integration training (at Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center in Indiana), and other specialized courses. FSI has instituted new courses for service in hardship and critical-threat posts, and training and guidance for employees returning from service in high-stress positions. FSI has also placed special emphasis on adapting leadership training to meet changing requirements, recently carrying out an extensive curriculum review of its Leadership and Management School.

Outside FSI, the Department of State offers opportunities for long-term professional education of nine months to a year to approximately 125 mid-level

<sup>42</sup> The A-100 course, named for the number of the room in the 1947 State Department building where the first classes met, is an orientation program for officers newly entered into the service.

<sup>43</sup> Locally Employed Staff (LES) are persons hired by US embassies and missions overseas, often under personal service agreements. Almost all are nationals of the host country.

employees, mainly FS-02 or FS-01 officers. This number represents about 5% of FSO's at those levels. (As noted in Chapter 1, the US Army gives virtually all of its majors a resident year of professional education and training. About 25% of its lieutenant colonels receive a second year.<sup>44</sup>)

About two-thirds of FSOs in long-term professional education attend institutions of the Department of Defense, including the National War College, the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, and the Army, Naval, and Air War Colleges.<sup>45</sup> A select few are sent to other institutions, including Harvard, Princeton, Columbia, and the Council on Foreign Relations. Participants are chosen competitively. Selection is considered an honor, but other assignments, especially as Deputy Chief of Mission, can take precedence, and officers selected for long-term professional education may refuse the opportunity. In most cases, participation in these courses does not entail subsequent service in a specified field of professional expertise. There is a required commitment to continue in the Service for a reasonable period afterwards.

The content of long-term professional education programs varies from the broad sweep of current issues, with an emphasis on the political-military perspective at the war colleges, to the quantitative and policy analysis of the Master of Public Policy program at Princeton. FSI also offers a highly regarded Foreign Service Economic Studies Program, which includes an intensive six-month academic program, followed by a separate six-month assignment in the Department or with a relevant outside organization.<sup>46</sup>

## Training Patterns Today

Entry-level FSOs are required to take FSI's A-100 orientation to the Department of State course, currently five-weeks long but due to revert to seven weeks in

44 Department of the Army, Pamphlet 600-3, Personnel-General, *Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management*, Headquarters, Department of the Army, Washington, DC. December 11, 2007. Lieutenant Colonels not selected for resident education and training are given the opportunity to pursue a two-year distance learning program on their own time. Completion of the Majors' Command and General Staff Officer Course (CGSOC) — 40 weeks, and the Lt. Colonels' Senior Service College (SSC) — 40 weeks, are both required for promotion.

45 The National Defense University, including the National War College and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, receives substantial support, including faculty, from the Department of State and other agencies.

46 The Economic Studies Program is aimed at Foreign Service Economic Officers very early in their careers to provide a graduate-level foundation in the subject. About 20 FSOs take the course annually, a small percentage of the roughly 1,500 officers in the Economic career track.



2011.<sup>47</sup> The A-100 course gives new officers a basic understanding of how the Department works; the mission and structure of an embassy, including the roles of other USG agencies; administrative issues; security training; public speaking and composure under pressure; embassy culture and representation; crisis management training; Foreign Service management; Foreign Service writing; and sessions in diplomatic history.<sup>48</sup> Following the A-100 course, many officers receive specific training for their first assignments, including language training if necessary. Most receive basic training for consular work because nearly all new officers are assigned to consular positions in at least one of their first two tours.

Working with State’s Bureau of Human Resources (HR), FSI has developed continua of courses that are appropriate for officers in the five FSO career tracks (consular, economic, management, political, and public diplomacy) at various stages of their careers and in preparation for assignments. However, with a few exceptions (e.g., mandated leadership training for mid-level and newly promoted senior officers, training for service in Afghanistan and other danger zones, the Deputy Chief of Mission course, the Ambassadorial Seminar, and ethics training), these courses are not required. Rather, they are “available” if sufficient numbers sign up, if a given officer is back in Washington, and if his or her time and personal availability permit. For example, the continuum for Consular Officers states that “Senior Consular Officers *should consider* (emphasis added) taking the Advanced Consular Course... and the Consular Leadership Development Course.”<sup>49</sup>

In the past, persistent staffing shortages have created fundamental conflicts between operational requirements and opportunities for professional education and training. To better prepare FSOs for specific assignments, we recommend that the Department require and enforce attendance at the courses currently listed as “recommended” for FSOs being assigned to particular positions for which the training is relevant (Chapter 3, Recommendation 1.1).

## **The Career Development Program (CDP)**

In 2005, the State Department launched a Career Development Program (CDP). Its declared purpose was to help FSOs “plan their careers around

47 Pressure to accommodate large numbers of new FSOs coming into the Department under Diplomacy 3.0 forced FSI to shorten the A-100 course from seven to five weeks.

48 Authors’ review of the 154<sup>th</sup> A-100 Class Schedule, June 21 –July 23, 2010.

49 Ibid, p. 12.

a series of training and assignment milestones calculated to develop the essential skills of an accomplished Foreign Service generalist.”<sup>50</sup> CDP training emphasizes language ability and leadership and management skills, as opposed to professional education and intellectual development in particular substantive areas or operational knowledge, such as understanding of interagency processes and structures. An optimist might argue that the very existence of the CDP suggests a tacit admission on the part of the Department that a more structured approach is needed to prepare FSOs systematically for the professional demands they can expect to face across their careers.

However, as of this writing, the CDP still has not been completely phased in. Requirements were grandfathered for officers in the mid-level grades at the time the program was established in 2005. Many current FS-01 officers are only now reaching the deadline for meeting the requirements in order to be promoted to the Senior Foreign Service. Information about the requirements has been widely available to officers going through the ranks, but it has been left up to individuals to ensure they were making progress in meeting and sustaining the requirements. There is concern that officers will reach the deadline unprepared. The Department of State could soon be faced with a situation in which officers are coming before senior promotion boards without having met all the requirements of the CDP because of conflicting pressures to staff essential positions. The Department will then face the decision of whether to block substantial numbers of officers from promotion over the senior threshold in order to enforce the CDP.

When fully established, the CDP would require that, in order to be considered for promotion to the Senior Foreign Service, FSOs demonstrate operational effectiveness, leadership effectiveness, language proficiency, and the ability to meet service needs.

- Operational effectiveness must be demonstrated by successful service in two geographical regions or in one region and one functional area.
- Leadership effectiveness requires a specific course in basic, intermediate, and advanced leadership and management skills at each mid-level grade. (A Senior Executive Threshold Seminar is also required for newly promoted members of the Senior Foreign Service.)

50 US Department of State, Bureau of Human Resources, “Career Development Program Playbook,” pp. 4-5. The terms “generalist” and “officer” are interchangeable.

- Language proficiency<sup>51</sup> requires that officers sustain a 3/3 level in one language, testing at that level within seven years of asking to be considered for promotion to the Senior Foreign Service (“opening the window”).
- Finally, the service need requirement is met by service at a hardship post (at least 15% hardship differential/danger pay).

In addition to these mandatory requirements, officers would be expected to meet further elective requirements in the same four areas, choosing from a list of options.

Assuming it becomes fully operational, the CDP could represent a useful framework for bringing centralized strategic planning to officers’ career paths and professional development. The framework is broad and does not ensure that individual Foreign Service Officers are being trained and deployed as efficiently and effectively as possible. Furthermore, in the past, pressure for operational assignments and a limited number of training slots made mandatory training difficult to enforce. With the growing number of new training and education slots, the pressure should ease if Diplomacy 3.0 hiring is maintained. The Department needs to protect — and Congress needs to fund — those positions even in difficult budgetary conditions.

The Office of Career Development and Assignments in the Bureau of Human Resources (HR/CDA) provides guidance to individual officers about particular assignments and possible career paths, but CDA is not equipped to offer full career advice or to ensure optimal coordination between assignments, including training and workforce planning. Turnover is high, and CDA personnel are not professionally trained in career development and planning. Consequently, we are recommending that the Department strengthen HR/CDA with a small cadre of Civil Service Human Resources professionals who would provide continuity and institutional memory in support of the field experience of the FSO Career Development Officers (Chapter 3, Recommendation 1.4).

<sup>51</sup> State uses the foreign language proficiency scale established by the federal Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) to rate its officers’ language skills. The scale, as used by State, assesses proficiency in speaking (S) and reading (R) on a scale from 0 to 5. S-1/R-1 is Elementary Proficiency; S-2/R-2 is Limited Working Proficiency; S-3/R-3 is General Professional Proficiency; S-4/R-4 is Advanced Professional Proficiency; S-5/R-5 is Functionally Native Proficiency.

## Assignments

Traditionally, the typical FSO's career path consists of a series of assignments to positions overseas and in Washington that he or she hopes will lead to promotion to the Senior Foreign Service. These paths are shaped in large measure by the individual officer, working informally with the Department bureaus and missions that control positions. After achieving tenure (usually after about five years in the service, during which HR/CDA directly assigns entry-level officers to positions in their first two tours), officers seek assignments to meet their individual preferences, promotion goals, and interests.

It is standard practice for mid-level officers to lobby bureaus and overseas missions directly. The bureaus and missions, in turn, seek the best officers, and many bureaus groom selected officers for a series of increasingly senior positions within their ambit. This unofficial mentoring process of rising officers by more senior officers has been an important, albeit informal, element of Foreign Service career development, a form of talent-spotting that has helped many outstanding FSOs rise to the top of their profession.

Traditionally, FSOs learned what they needed to know through on-the-job training and mentoring from more experienced officers. This model is now breaking down. The significant drop in recruitment following the end of the Cold War, coupled with continuing retirements and a growing influx of new officers, means there are simply not enough experienced officers at the middle and senior levels to give entry-level officers the mentorship they need. This is dramatically illustrated by the fact that two-thirds of FSOs now have less than 10 years in the Service.

## Language

Skill in foreign languages has long been recognized as the hallmark of an effective diplomat, and the State Department invests heavily in language training. Meeting the standard of minimal professional proficiency, however, is not sufficient for operational effectiveness in some of the most critical languages, such as Mandarin Chinese and Arabic. Debating complex issues on television, engaging in give-and-take with public audiences, and discussing complex issues with important interlocutors across society — not just educated elites and government officials — require greater fluency and command of the language.

If broad people-to-people engagement is to be a hallmark of future diplomacy, very highly developed language skills will be even more at a premium.

Full professional proficiency, especially in difficult languages, requires years of experience and reinforcement. The Department is introducing a pilot process (Beyond-3, 3/3 being the level of general professional proficiency) whereby missions and bureaus can request advanced language training for select officers assigned to positions that would benefit from enhanced language capability. We believe that this process should be regularized, and that select overseas positions be designated as requiring a higher level of language competency, rather than depending on the particular interest of individual officers and the happenstance of vacancies coming open.

Under another pilot program now being tested in Mandarin Chinese, officers with outstanding language potential and strong interest are designated for a managed pattern of assignments, including in Washington, where policy formulation and interagency processes relevant to the country or region take place. The program requires that an officer commit to serve in an extended sequence of assignments, alternating training with in-country assignments in language-designated positions, and that the Department assign the officer to increasingly responsible positions, assuming excellent performance along the way. We strongly support this initiative, which should help to build a cadre of FSOs with exceptional language skills and regional expertise. We recommend that the Department explore ways to incentivize Foreign Service careers with such a tight focus on one area.

An expanded Beyond-3 program would depend on work, now underway, to regularize and rationalize the process through which language requirements for given positions in overseas missions are determined. Some bureaus and

missions are reluctant to designate positions above or even at the 3/3 level for fear that they could not be filled. A commitment by the Department to make staffing such positions a priority would enable decisions about language designations to be made on the basis of mission needs, not on the perceived availability of trained staff to fill those positions. A Language-Designated Position Working Group in the Department is working with bureaus to revamp the process through which language requirements for positions worldwide are determined.

## Attitudes Toward Training

In contrast to their US military counterparts, whose career progress is contingent on completing periodic training and professional education, there has been, according to some observers, a “widely held perception among FSOs that State’s promotion system does not consider time spent in language training when evaluating officers for promotion, which may discourage officers from investing the time required to achieve proficiency in certain languages.”<sup>52</sup> A similar perception has historically held true for longer-term professional education at the National War College or other outside institutions, particularly in the case of fast-track FSOs.

This perception may be changing to some extent, albeit gradually. Many courses, such as the Senior Executive Threshold Seminar, are oversubscribed. Anecdotally, newer officers are seeking more, rather than less, training, including in leadership and management, as well as tradecraft. The Director General is reinforcing the importance of training by limiting waivers that give other assignments priority over training.

This approach will become more practical if the Department’s current Diplomacy 3.0 hiring program proceeds as planned, reducing still-serious staffing shortages. If, however, the hiring program is suspended or terminated,

52 Statement of Jess T. Ford, Director, International Affairs and Trade, Testimony before the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, US Senate. From United States Government Accountability Office (GAO): “Department of State: Persistent Staffing and Foreign Language Gaps Compromise Diplomatic Readiness,” September 24, 2009, -1046T, p. 9. Senior HR officials told GAO that while the promotion system, by law, “weighs time in training as equal to time at post,” officers applying for promotion while in long-term training “were at a disadvantage compared with officers assigned to an overseas post.” United States Government Accountability Office (GAO): “Report to the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia,” Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, US Senate, “Department of State - Comprehensive Plan Needed to Address Persistent Foreign Language Shortfalls,” September 2009, GAO-09-955, pp. 23-24. *A Foreign Affairs Budget for the Future* noted an apparent tendency among FSOs to “undervalue” and “avoid training” p. 21.

the conflict between immediate operational needs and professional education and training requirements will reassert itself, with the latter certain to suffer.

## **Building On Change**

In the years since 2003, the State Department has taken steps, including incentives and directed assignments, to ensure that posts in dangerous and difficult environments are filled. Service in such places has had a profound impact on Foreign Service training, assignment patterns, promotions, and the expectations officers bring to their careers.<sup>53</sup> Incentives include danger and hardship pay that can amount to 70% of base pay, additional leave for rest and recuperation, favorable consideration for onward assignments, and instructions to promotion boards to give particular weight to creditable service in the most challenging places. Requirements include action by the Director General and the central personnel system to withhold assignments to non-priority posts until priority posts are filled. The Director General has taken more active direction over the assignment choices of FSOs than in the past, when the preferences of individuals and regional bureaus tended to take precedence. We endorse this policy.

Taken together, the combination of the CDP, bidding rules such as “Fair Share,”<sup>54</sup> the increase in hardship and danger posts, and steps taken to fill high-priority positions has produced a significant, if largely unnoticed, shift in Foreign Service and State Department culture, imposing greater service discipline and giving State’s leadership new tools for greater strategic management of Foreign Service human capital. These developments are important moves in the right direction, but they need to be continued, expanded, and strengthened.

53 Fifty percent of all US diplomatic posts, accounting for 62% of positions overseas, are rated as hardship by the State Department. Unaccompanied positions have more than quadrupled to over 900 in the past decade. US Department of State, Bureau of Human Resources, “FY-2010 Personnel Strategy Report,” p. 5.

54 Under the “Fair Share” policy, Foreign Service employees who have not served in a hardship post (15% differential) during the eight years prior to an upcoming transfer, must, if bidding on overseas assignments, bid on at least three posts with a differential of 15% or higher in two geographic regions.

# Chapter 3

## Future Requirements for Diplomatic Professional Development, Education, and Training

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*We must learn from our experiences as we define the civilian mission and give our people the training, tools, and structures they need.*<sup>55</sup>

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**M**uch has been said in recent years about the “militarization of US foreign policy.” The preceding chapters describe recent and current efforts at the Department of State to build the capabilities essential to rebalance the respective roles of diplomacy, development, and defense. They are a starting point, but more is required. The professional development of America’s diplomats requires a clear and deliberate strategy, one that integrates assignments and training throughout a career, develops and rewards core skills and knowledge, and incorporates new intellectual and functional skill sets into a body of diplomatic knowledge that is as fundamental to the practice of American diplomacy as its military counterpart is to the practice of defense and security.

Three basic questions require answers:

1. What is the body of knowledge that American diplomats need?
2. Can the body of knowledge be learned on the job?
3. What needs to be done to ensure that US diplomats are fully qualified to protect and advance America’s interests in a rapidly changing world?

### 1. What is the body of knowledge that American diplomats need?

**The body of knowledge grows throughout a career. Learning never stops.**

- **Early Career (FS-06 to FS-04, two tours<sup>56</sup>):** There are two components to the foundational skills of the Foreign Service — the value added that US diplomatic professionals bring to the policy table. The first is area expertise, i.e., a profound knowledge of the political, economic, and social realities of other countries, societies, and groups. The second is a solid command of foreign languages, a necessary skill if one is to develop true

55 QDDR, p. xiii.

56 See Appendix D: “Foreign Service Primer.”



area expertise. Essential supporting skills include leadership, contact work, policy analysis, management, public diplomacy, and the ability to engage effectively with non-traditional publics and individuals. Finally, all diplomats need to know, from the very outset of their careers, how to protect American citizens abroad and America's borders, including through proper visa procedures.

- **Mid-Level (FS-03 to FS-01, five to eight tours):** As they move through the mid-level ranks, Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) reinforce their skills and expertise through assignments to embassies abroad, missions to international organizations, and positions in Washington. By the time they reach FS-01, they should have added significantly to their basic body of knowledge, so that they are able to draw on well-developed skills and related experience in multiple areas: negotiation; policy formulation; pre-crisis preventive action; crisis management; post-conflict and reconstruction and stabilization operations; program development, implementation, and evaluation; operating in the interagency environment; managing staffs and budgets; and mentoring junior officers.<sup>57</sup> Strong strategic thinking and planning abilities are essential underpinnings.

Some FSOs, consistent with their career tracks and assignments, will also develop advanced knowledge in specialized substantive areas, including democracy and human rights, science and technology, complex economic and trade issues, refugees and humanitarian relief, counterterrorism and counter-narcotics, or arms control and nonproliferation. Not all FSOs will be expected to master these subjects to the same degree, but all should have some understanding of them. The mix of issues of greatest urgency and importance to the US will change over the course of an officer's career. Officers will have to adjust their priorities and refocus accordingly.<sup>58</sup>

- **Senior Level (Counselor, Minister-Counselor, Career Minister):** An officer who reaches the Senior Foreign Service is expected to have amassed the breadth and depth of substantive knowledge, policy expertise, operational skills, and management ability that are required

<sup>57</sup> *Foreign Affairs Budget for the Future*, p. 19. More and more FSOs are serving in hardship posts of one kind or another where effective civilian-military coordination is essential. Cf. Dobbins.

<sup>58</sup> See, for example, QDDR p. 42: "In a world in which economic and political issues are ever more interconnected, State's Political Officers—in addition to its Economic Officers—must understand the economic dimensions of political challenges and the political dimensions of economic ones. To build our Political Officers' fluency in economics and finance, we will mandate training in geo-economics for political cone Foreign Service personnel."

at the highest levels of profession. However, the experience of senior officers varies significantly, as does their aptitude and readiness for service in specific senior positions. Some Senior Foreign Service Officers will have had little experience managing large, high-profile organizations. Those assigned abroad as Chief or Deputy Chief of Mission (COM) may lack an operational understanding of the relationships among agencies under COM authority at the post to which they are assigned and an understanding of how these connect to interagency dynamics in Washington. They may lack experience in program management and accountability issues and processes, skills that are especially relevant at posts where USAID is present. Those assigned in Washington as Assistant or Deputy Assistant Secretary in a geographic or functional bureau will require acute policy sense, exceptional stamina, mastery of the bureaucratic and interagency environment, and finely honed interpersonal skills — skills not necessarily developed in assignments overseas.

The need for exceptionally high levels of knowledge, skills, and management ability applies equally to non-career officials filling senior positions. Even the most experienced non-career appointee may lack detailed understanding of the State Department and the interagency process.

## **2. Can the body of knowledge be learned on the job?**

**Only imperfectly and inconsistently and not at a level and with the quality that is required and expected of the world's leading power.**

Issues related to future professional education and training of America's diplomats are part of a broader debate about the place of diplomacy in the national security structure of the 21st century. Whether termed “transformational diplomacy” or “smart power,” the professional requirements of diplomacy have changed since the end of the Cold War and especially since September 11, 2001. Adapting to change has become a professional necessity for FSOs throughout their careers. New skills are needed, and traditional skills must be applied in new ways. New bodies of knowledge — of emerging cultures, of global issues, of unfamiliar bureaucratic environments — have to be learned. As we have seen in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, trying to acquire

the necessary skills and knowledge in the middle of operations in the field can be inefficient, ineffective, and at times life threatening.<sup>59</sup>

On-the-job training is an essential part of professional development. The accumulation of experience in Foreign Service work and life shapes an officer's temperament and judgment and builds a vital, sustaining network of relationships with US colleagues and foreign counterparts. But as noted earlier, the mentoring that was a central part of learning on the job has frayed. The ratio of experienced officers to those with less than 10 years' experience has shifted profoundly toward the latter. There are no longer enough senior mentors for the increased intake of new officers, and the mid-level gap will produce faster promotions with less time to gain experience. At the same time, the body of knowledge that a senior officer must master keeps growing and changing. Operational assignments alone cannot prepare a mid-level officer for senior responsibilities. A formal, sustained continuum of education and training is overdue.

FSI has done much to assist with new training and new ways of delivering courses. Now these changes must be regularized and institutionalized. Because the pace of diplomatic activity is relentless and the working life of FSOs is regularly driven by the demands of daily tasks, professional training must be protected and integrated into requirements for promotion and more senior assignments, or it will be pushed aside. As officers rise to senior ranks, they must be given opportunities to develop their thinking on a more strategic level beyond the tactical pressures of the moment.

It is worth noting that the diplomatic services of other major powers, including the UK, China, India, and Brazil, impose educational and targeted training requirements on their officers for advancement through the ranks. Chinese diplomats, for example, must take a leadership and management training course, along with courses on international relations, economics and finance, international history, Chinese history, protocol, and consular affairs for promotion to Second Secretary. While mandatory, these courses are completed while the officers continue with their normal duties (Appendix D).

The hiring surge of the Diplomacy 3.0 initiative is providing the Department with a strong foundation in additional staffing for necessary education and training. It is essential that Congress continue the funding to complete Diplomacy 3.0

<sup>59</sup> *US Uplift in Afghanistan is Progressing but Some Key Issues Merit Further Examination as Implementation Continues*, Office of the Special Investigator for Afghanistan Reconstruction, October 26, 2010.

and create the required training/education float of about 15%. Over time, further increases in staffing would be required to fully meet the training and educational needs identified in this report, particularly for the mid-level year of advanced education.

### **3. What needs to be done to ensure that US diplomats are fully qualified to protect and advance America’s interests in a rapidly changing world?**

#### **Policies need to be put in place that link professional development to assignments and promotions.**

The State Department’s Bureau of Human Resources, in consultation with the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA), developed the Career Development Program (CDP) described in Chapter 2. The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) has introduced a vast array of courses on general and specific topics, from supervision to computer security, with nearly 2,000 courses available for distance learning. Yet several factors make these voluntary approaches inadequate. Bureaus are under pressure to staff their positions, officers are under pressure to take critical assignments and fill vacant slots, and there is a perception among some FSOs that selection boards regularly reward operational work over education and training.<sup>60</sup> In times of personnel scarcity, assignments to training are often the first cut and the last reinstated. When training is “mandatory,” the obligation is generally enforced, but training requirements in general often are waived. A large expansion of mandatory training or more long-term education is not feasible without more staff, and a change in culture away from resistance to training is not likely without more mandates and a change in the behavior of selection boards.

Without the ability to link assignments to career development for the long-term needs of the Foreign Service, assignments will continue to be determined on short-term and individual preferences. In sum, recent improvements in professional development are significant and necessary, but they are not sufficient to ensure that FSOs acquire the body of knowledge they will need to master at each stage of their careers.

<sup>60</sup> While there is evidence that there is a competitive disadvantage for officers who are eligible and considered for promotion while undertaking long term training, the competitive advantage of long-term training is paid back downstream in one’s career one to two years or further out after the training is completed.

## Recommendations:

### Securing the Necessary Resources

Implementation of this study's specific reforms and changes will not be possible without sustained commitment and resources from Congress.

**RECOMMENDATION 1:** Redress the under-investment in diplomacy and the consequent imbalance between defense, on one side, and diplomacy and development, on the other, by fully funding Diplomacy 3.0.

**RECOMMENDATION 2:** To provide and sustain an explicit 15% level of personnel above that required for regular assignment to create positions for training (training float).

**RECOMMENDATION 3:** Make a long-term commitment to investing in the professional education and training needed to build a 21st-century diplomatic service of the United States able to meet the complex challenges and competition we face in the coming decades.

### Systematic Professional Development

American diplomacy cannot be fully effective in the multidimensional environment of the 21st century without a comprehensive professional development strategy for its diplomats. Such a strategy will integrate assignments with a robust, mandatory training curriculum throughout a Foreign Service career, promoting officers who demonstrate mastery of the skills of their profession.<sup>61</sup>

The CDP recognized that assignments and training need to be integrated in order to prepare officers for their assignments and build careers on a coherent and evolving base of knowledge and experience. As the first officers to work in the CDP approach the senior threshold, the Department should urgently evaluate the CDP and refine it. The CDP should retain a core set of requirements in leadership, management, and language skills for all officers, while adding mandatory courses tailored to officers in particular functions and positions. Much of what now are "recommendations" must become firmer requirements. To accomplish this will require not only increases in positions for training envisioned under Diplomacy 3.0 but also some increases in teaching positions, facilities, and funding for travel.

61 Advisory Committee on Transformational Diplomacy: "Final Report of the State Department in 2025 Working Group," January 2008, p. 33.

Additionally, the Secretary and her senior deputies will have to affirm the importance of training and support training discipline in the face of pressure for exemptions driven by operational needs. Without support from the top, the Service will not have the authority to impose the required discipline.

Currently, the Office of Career Development and Assignments in the Bureau of Human Resources (HR/CDA) is staffed primarily by FSOs, including about 50 FSOs who serve as Career Development Officers (CDOs). They bring essential experience and insight from field operations, but they are reassigned every two or three years, have little time to follow their clients' careers, and lack professional training in career guidance and workforce planning. A program of professional development needs informed professionals to undergird it. HR/CDA needs to be reinforced by the addition of a small cadre of full-time Civil Service HR Specialists who can provide to their FSO supervisors continuity and in-depth guidance on the rules and regulations that apply to assignments, promotions, and related personnel matters.

**RECOMMENDATION 4:** Strengthen and expand the Department of State's professional development process to ensure that all FSOs receive the training needed for immediate assignments and the combination of training, professional education, and assignments needed for foreign policy leadership positions in the future.

- 4.1:** To the maximum extent possible, require that FSOs, before they begin assignments to specific positions, complete courses currently recommended as preparation for those positions.
- 4.2:** As staff resources become available, give education and training priority over other staffing requirements, eliminating waivers save in the most exceptional circumstances.
- 4.3:** Synchronize the timing of increases in required training with the inflow of new staff, funding for teaching positions, facilities required for expansion, and travel to allow education and training to take place in fact as well as in theory.
- 4.4:** Strengthen the Office of Career Development and Assignments in State's Bureau of Human Resources (HR/CDA) with a cadre of Civil Service Human Resources professionals for continuity and institutional

memory purposes, supplementing the field experience of the FSO Career Development Officers. Such human resources professionals would also assist workforce planning by helping to coordinate assignment patterns with long-term strategic plans.

**Resources:** Although the Department does not have exact planning models for short-term training and "persons in motion," it calculates that Diplomacy 3.0 would provide staffing necessary to fill vacancies and account for "persons in motion" between assignments, thus freeing FSOs for the short-term training foreseen as necessary in this recommendation. Establishing a cadre of human resources professionals in HR/CDA would require seven to ten additional Civil Service, GS, employees, ranging from GS-11 to GS-14, at a total annual cost of between \$1.33 million and \$1.90 million.

### **Dealing with the Mid-Level Gap**

Before severe shortages developed in the 1990s, officers regularly received informal mentoring from their supervisors and other more senior officers. Over the years, the informal, non-bureaucratic process of mentoring has played a key role in enhancing the sense of unity and common purpose across the ranks of the service. However, for some years to come, there will not be enough experienced high-level officers to maintain traditional levels of mentoring. The deficit is already evident in terms of the deficit in knowledge and supervisory skills at the mid-level, as well as in the gap in sufficient numbers of mid-level officers.

The mid-career gap has specific implications for professional education and training. To deal with the need to more rapidly institute mid-level skills, we recommend the establishment of a corps of roving mentors and career counselors using serving officers, supplemented by recently retired FSOs. Such officers would travel to posts and hold regional career guidance sessions, providing advice to officers facing new situations for which they lack background, particularly in the areas of supervision and management of personnel and resources. By remaining in the field for extended periods, such roving counselors would be able to provide more detailed training. Their presence would alleviate the problem caused by short staffing that now prevents posts from releasing officers for exactly the supervisory and management training that is most critical.

The mid-level gap is expected to persist for five to seven years, until increases in hiring reach the middle grades. We recommend several interlinked steps to address the problem. Some, which go beyond the training focus of this report, include:

- Limited career extensions, to keep qualified officers for a few additional years when their time in service would otherwise force retirement.
- Use of recently retired officers to return to duty to fill many of the mid-career needs (this will require legislation to allow for longer periods than is now permitted).
- Accelerated promotions within the service.
- Selective use of Civil Service personnel (currently being introduced).
- Flexibility in allowing Civil Service conversions to Foreign Service for those who have already served the required number of Foreign Service excursion tours.
- The use of limited non-career hires<sup>62</sup> for specific needs, particularly in crisis and stabilization missions.

Anecdotal but widespread accounts, by both entry-level officers working in the Department and more experienced officers working with them, raise several common themes deriving from the extensive use of new officers for substantive-level positions. Basic skills are lacking in drafting, understanding interagency processes (including what and how to coordinate them), control officer skills, and the purpose and process of clearances. These shortfalls are exacerbated by the mid-level gap. With entry-level officers being sent to a greatly increased number of supervisory positions, there is significant evidence that their supervisors do not understand the degree to which their new charges lack the necessary background. All supervisors, especially new supervisors, must be aware of the need to mentor and train new officers assigned to demanding positions before they have gained experience in basic operational procedures and practices. Supervisors need to be prepared to build on the basic knowledge of the Department, including the human resources system and the intricacies of the annual efficiency report process.

**RECOMMENDATION 5:** As a response to the problems that the mid-level gap has caused for mentoring, establish a temporary corps of roving counselors, drawn extensively from among recently retired officers with appropriate skills, who can remain abroad for periods of several weeks or months to provide

<sup>62</sup> The term “limited non-career” means limited, by current law, to five years, and not eligible for conversion to the career service.



counseling, advice, and career guidance focused on supervision and section/resource management.

**5.1:** Require that all officers going into positions where they will oversee new employees take a short course, perhaps through distance learning, on supervising and mentoring new employees.

**5.2:** Require officers going into positions where they will supervise Locally Employed Staff (foreign nationals) to take a course on supervising employees in other cultures.

## **Mid-Level Training on the Job**

Historically, FSOs have had relatively few opportunities for professional education and training, partly because of a persistent lack in financial and personnel resources at State. Many others, both inside and outside the Service, believed that FSOs already had all the education and training they needed to be effective diplomats. By default, on-the-job training became the primary focus of professional development in the Foreign Service. While on-the-job training has lost some of its effectiveness in recent years, as we have noted above, informal mentoring and guidance from senior officers are likely to remain a valuable part of most FSO's professional development.

The continuing relevance of on-the-job training being connected to high-quality mentoring derives from two considerations. One is that, given the broad variety of tasks FSO's perform, a major expansion in training and education as recommended by this report cannot be expected to cover all that needs to be learned by a successful officer. Secondly, as in any profession, there is a need for those with years in the service to pass on their experience in multiple ways, small and large. Yet while the Service has and will continue to require mentoring as a central part of forming succeeding generations of diplomats, there has rarely been any systematic effort to teach mentoring itself; to study what techniques work best, to examine whether and how generational changes (the so called generation X or generation Y) make some mentoring approaches more or less successful, and to profit from the experience of those recognized to be superior mentors. Accordingly, we believe that the Department should

make a more systematic effort to develop guidelines and best practices for the use of those charged with on-the-job training.

**RECOMMENDATION 6:** All FSOs are exposed to on-the-job training over the course of their careers. To maximize its value, the Department should contract a study that will examine best practices in the field to determine how on-the-job training can be most effectively conducted.

## Mid-Level Training and Education

As they rise to more senior ranks, FSOs need to acquire and refine the ability to think strategically beyond the requirements of specific assignments, to reflect on the broad policy issues of the day and the directions of their profession, and to develop their intellectual capabilities free from the frenetic pace of daily work. Training for specific positions is not sufficient preparation for this larger role. As our military colleagues phrase it, “we train for certainty, but we educate for uncertainty.”<sup>63</sup> Periods away from the demands of a frenetic daily schedule enable FSOs to address issues that are vitally important, but not necessarily urgent, to refresh their intellectual capital and to prepare to respond to the broad gamut of challenges the United States faces in international affairs.

We see great value in a mandated year of study for all mid-level FSOs preparing for the senior ranks, similar to the Army’s assignment of its majors to a year of study at the Command and General Staff College. Such a year would reinforce a common sense of mission and core skills, although specific needs will vary depending on an officer’s experience, likely future assignments, and areas of specialization. A Management Officer may well require advanced education different from that of a Political Officer, and an Economic Officer would likely have different choices from those made by a Public Diplomacy Officer. The QDDR points out, however, that all would benefit from advanced training that focuses on strategic issues and analysis, leadership skills, program management, and relevant substantive knowledge, including development issues.<sup>64</sup>

Because of the importance of civil-military coordination, professional education at the National Defense University and other Defense Department schools will have particular value for many officers. In other cases, high-level strategic

63 BG Volney J. Warner, USA, and Lt Col James H. Willbanks, USA (ret) “Preparing Field Grade Officers for Today and Tomorrow,” *Military Review*, Jan – Feb 2006, pp. 104 – 111.

64 QDDR, pp. 173 – 175.

planning and the budget may be a better focus. In all cases, exposure to interagency processes and the “whole of government” approach for foreign policy will be important. It is our view that these opportunities for advanced education should come at the FS-02 and FS-01 levels, after officers have gained experience of working in particular career tracks, and have a sense of their own individual interests and aptitudes.<sup>65</sup>

At present, about 125 mid-level officers (mainly FS-01s and FS-02s) each year take advantage of current long-term education programs. About 85 mid-level officers each year are assigned to a full year of study at the National Defense University or another educational institution attached to the Department of Defense. Another 40 officers are assigned to study at civilian universities and institutions.

Even if funds were available and even if the infrastructure were in place, it would be several years at best before the Department could hire and promote to the middle grades sufficient numbers of officers to support the comprehensive program we believe proper, without stripping operational positions of their personnel. We propose, therefore, a cascade or stair-step approach, building on existing programs and allowing mid-level education and training to expand as resources permit.

If all FSOs promoted to FS-02 after a given date are required to complete a year of advanced study as a condition of promotion to the Senior Foreign Service, a gradual increase in the number of FSOs assigned to advanced study will be necessary — from about 125 to 285 per year. If the same requirement were also imposed on officers who are currently FS-02s, additional positions will be needed temporarily to accommodate them. (We do not recommend placing this requirement on current FS-01s, many of whom are already competing for promotion to the Senior Foreign Service.)

<sup>65</sup> For some officers, detached service with another agency or with the Congress can provide an opportunity to refocus, acquire, or reinforce substantive and functional skills, expand relationships, and improve one’s understanding of interagency operations. The experiences of FSOs who have spent a year or two on the National Security Council staff, in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, with the US Trade Representative’s office, at the Office of Management and Budget, at USAID, with the Voice of America, on the staff of a member of Congress or a congressional committee, or in the private sector, have been almost uniformly positive. About 175 FSOs now have such opportunities. We believe they should be greatly expanded as part of a program of mid-level learning. Many of them are personnel exchanges that are essentially cost-free. While we recognize the added value of detached service, and we believe that as many FSOs as possible should have that opportunity, detached service does not eliminate the need for advanced professional education and training separate from operational assignments.

**RECOMMENDATION 7:** Every FSO at the FS-01 or FS-02 level should complete a year of advanced study related to his or her career track as a requirement for promotion to the Senior Foreign Service.

**Resources:** Considering the average rate of promotion into the FS-02 rank and through FS-02 and FS-01, we calculate that this recommendation would require a permanent increase of 161 FSOs, with the increase phased in over 13 years. In addition, to accommodate officers at the FS-02 rank when the requirement took effect, an additional 145 FSOs would need to be hired at the beginning of the program and maintained for 10 years. When fully established, the program would provide advanced study to about 285 FSOs a year, including in that number the 125 currently in long-term training.

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*“Running an embassy is more complicated than ever. We will give our Chiefs of Mission the tools they need to oversee the work of all US government agencies working in their host country... We will enhance their training...”*  
— Secretary Clinton<sup>66</sup>

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## **The Senior Level and Chiefs of Mission (COM)**

The experience of senior officers, even the best, varies significantly from case to case, as does his or her background in the country or organization to which he or she may be assigned as a COM. Every country or organization has its own share of specific policy issues. US government agencies at post under COM authority may have particular perspectives that a COM needs to understand as he or she prepares to go to post. Knowledge of program management, and accountability issues and processes, is essential where there is a USAID presence. International organizations have their own mandates, cultures, and practices that a senior officer must understand in advance in order to lead successfully. In Washington, managing a large geographic or functional bureau brings its own set of leadership challenges, including acute policy sense, exceptional stamina, mastery of the bureaucratic and interagency environment, and effective interpersonal skills.

66 Remarks at Town Hall Meeting on the release of the first *Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review*, “Leading through Civilian Power,” Washington, December 15, 2010. <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/12/152934.htm>

COMs preparing to depart for post rarely have much time for consultations. Some COMs, though broadly experienced, skilled, and accomplished, will still be new to their countries of assignment and will need to identify quickly and accurately during consultations the issues that require attention. Broad anecdotal evidence from many former COMs is, while bureaus and Country Directorate Officers are willing in principle to do their utmost to prepare a new COM, supporting officers (e.g. at the desk level) frequently fail to understand their key role in identifying the full range of policy, personnel, bureaucratic, and fiscal issues that a new COM needs to master during initial consultations. As a result, COMs on their way to the field frequently spend too much of a short period of consultation identifying those issues for themselves. A tightly focused training course for country directorate and desk officers would support them in their efforts to identify the principal issues of concern to departing COMs and arrange for appropriate consultations. Such a course should require a day or two, and could be accomplished via distance learning.

The need for superior knowledge, skills, and management ability applies equally to non-career officials filling senior positions, whether at US embassies or international missions abroad or in the State Department in Washington. However, non-career officials have additional needs: to become familiar with the structure of the Department, to gain quickly some sense of Washington power relationships and to become acquainted with the operation of the interagency processes that bear on the policy and management issues they will face. They would also benefit from a brief but focused introduction to internal mission dynamics and common pitfalls in the field. The investment of a new non-career appointee's time in a short, well-structured course or detailed briefing, designed by FSI, would be rapidly repaid in gains in efficiency and operational effectiveness on the job. Strong support by senior Department leaders would be essential.

**RECOMMENDATION 8:** Before a new COM begins pre-assignment consultations in the Department, the relevant bureau and country directorate personnel should be fully prepared to assist him or her proactively in quickly and accurately identifying the major policy issues relevant to the COM's new responsibilities and to arrange for appropriately targeted consultations.

**8.1:** To assist desk officers and others responsible for preparing new COMs for their posts, FSI should develop a short course, possibly through

distance learning, focused on proactive techniques for identifying key policy issues and arranging for relevant appointments.

**8.2:** FSI should develop a brief familiarization course for new non-career State Department officials, whether serving in Washington or overseas. The course should focus on the structure and procedures of the Department, the interagency process, and Washington power relationships. For those going to embassies or other missions overseas, personnel-related responsibilities and the role of the Country Team should be included. (Non-career COMs should be required to take the course before proceeding to the regular COM course, unless prior experience or the absolute needs of the Service make a waiver advisable).

## The Senior Seminar

The Department of State's Senior Seminar (1958 – 2004) provided a limited number of carefully selected Senior Foreign Service, Senior Executive Service and military officers with a year-long professional development opportunity of the highest caliber. The Seminar was particularly noteworthy for its interagency nature, bringing together future leaders of agencies from across the national security apparatus. Although a number of factors led to its demise, linked primarily to competing State Department and other-agency priorities and resources, the Senior Seminar left behind a distinguished legacy and addressed needs that remain as pressing as ever:

- To educate senior national security officials across the government, broaden their horizons and expand their thinking about the strategic, political, economic, and cultural influences, domestic and international, that affect our nation's security and shape our policies.
- To deepen, in fundamental and profound ways, its members' understanding of US national security and the role of the Department of State as the lead foreign affairs agency of the US government;
- To organize discussions with thought leaders in and outside government, promote individual research and writing, and provide its members an opportunity for reflection and creative thinking;
- To enhance members' executive skills in areas that include senior leadership, public speaking, and congressional relations.

We encourage the Department to consider ways to revive the spirit, goals, and objectives of the Senior Seminar, including through internal and interagency discussions, culminating in cooperative professional education opportunities that respond to the above objectives.

# Appendix A

## US Foreign Service Primer

### History

The US Foreign Service traces its lineage to the Continental Congress, which sent Benjamin Franklin on his revolutionary mission to France, and to the Constitution, which empowered the President to name ambassadors, ministers, and consuls.

In the 19th century, Congress established academies to professionalize the Army and Navy (West Point, 1802; Annapolis, 1845), but it left the diplomatic and consular services to patronage and political spoils. Well into the 20th century, ambassadors and ministers were often men of wealth, political connections, and social ambition whose service rarely lasted more than a few years. Consuls, although sometimes also creatures of political patronage, were more often American citizens resident in foreign ports and with private business interests there. Diplomats, who were unpaid, were expected to cover their expenses. Consuls could keep a portion of the fees they charged for official services, largely related to maritime trade.

Reform of the spoils system began in the 1880s in the Civil Service and reached the diplomatic and consular services as well. In 1924, Congress passed the Rogers Act, merging the two services to establish a Foreign Service of the United States, with entrance by competitive examination, a system of ranks with promotion by merit, and pay and benefits comparable to other government jobs. Subsequent legislation authorized the lease or purchase of facilities abroad for embassies and consulates, allowing men — they were all men — of ordinary wealth to serve without ruinous expense.

Under the Rogers Act, members of the Foreign Service spent their entire careers abroad. That pattern did not change until the 1950s, when about 1,500 State Department Civil Servants were brought into the Foreign Service, and an equal number of Civil Service positions in the Department of State were reclassified as Foreign Service positions. Today Foreign Service personnel spend about one third of their careers in Washington assignments.



## The Foreign Service Today

The governing legislation for the Foreign Service today is the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended. The Act created the Senior Foreign Service, a counterpart to the Senior Executive Service established for the Civil Service in 1979. And it allowed US agencies in addition to State, specifically the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Commerce, and the US Information Agency (closed in 1999), to use the Foreign Service personnel system “to carry out functions which require service abroad.” The Act created a Director General of the Foreign Service, a post in the State Department that must be filled by a senior career Foreign Service Officer (FSO), but for nearly all purposes, the responsibility and authority of the Director General extend only to the Foreign Service personnel of the Department of State, not to Foreign Service personnel employed by other agencies.

The Civil Service and the Foreign Service are similar in many ways, but four elements distinguish the Foreign Service in the rights and obligations of its members:

- **Worldwide availability:** Members of the Foreign Service, with a very few exceptions, may be ordered on assignment anywhere in the world. Overseas assignments for Civil Servants are voluntary and exceptional. (Only a small number of the government’s two million Civil Servants are posted abroad).
- **Rank in person:** Members of the Foreign Service, like members of the military, have a personal rank that determines base pay, regardless of assignment. In the Civil Service, the pay grade is associated with the job, not the job holder.
- **Up or out:** FSOs (and Specialists) face mandatory retirement after a certain number of years in grade without promotion or after a certain number of years in service without promotion into the senior ranks. There is also a mandatory separation review for low performance. Civil Servants face no such requirement.
- **Early voluntary retirement:** Foreign Service personnel may choose to retire as early as age 50, with 25 years of service. Civil Servants may choose to retire at age 55 with 30 years of service, or at 60 with 20 years of service.

The Foreign Service in 2010 had fewer than 14,000 members in four agencies.

### The US Foreign Service in Round Numbers, 2010

Agency	US Personnel	Remarks
Department of State	12,800	7,400 Officers (generalists) 5,400 Specialists
Agency for International Development	1,600	Officers
Department of Commerce	240	Officers, Foreign Commercial Service
Department of Agriculture	225	175 Foreign Agricultural Service (Officers) 50 Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (Officers)
Total	14,865	

In addition to US personnel, the Foreign Service includes persons hired by US embassies and other missions overseas to work in those missions. These Locally Employed Staff (LES) are usually citizens of the country in which they work, although some are nationals of third countries; a very few may be US citizens. Worldwide, LES number close to 60,000.

Pay, allowances, retirement, and other benefits are uniform throughout the Foreign Service agencies, but each agency sets its own rules for hiring and promotion. USAID posts specific job openings and screens applicants based on responses to standard forms and an interview. The Department of Commerce conducts an oral assessment annually or every other year, depending on hiring needs. The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) accepts as Foreign Service Officers only individuals who have served as FAS interns or employees.

## Entry

The Department of State is the only Foreign Service agency with two classes of Foreign Service employees. FSOs, sometimes called generalists, are hired after passing both a written test and an oral assessment. In 2009, about 16,000 applicants took the written test, competing for roughly 1,000 job offers.<sup>67</sup> Applicants must declare when they register for the written test whether they are competing as Consular Officers, Economic Officers, Management Officers, Political Officers, or Public Diplomacy Officers. They will receive a job offer only

<sup>67</sup> QDDR, 164.

in the area or “cone” they select. The political and public diplomacy cones, which together account for about 44% of all FSOs, are the most hotly contested.

Foreign Service Specialists apply to join particular specialist cadres: administration, construction, information technology, international information and English-language programs, medicine and health, office management, and security. Candidates are evaluated on their response to standard forms and undergo an oral assessment. About 35% of all Foreign Service Specialists work in security.

## Promotion

Foreign Service Officers at the Department of State serve initially as candidates. They are normally evaluated through two, two-year tours. If their performance is satisfactory, as is the case for 95% of candidates, they are awarded tenure.

Thereafter, they face the up-or-out limitations described in the following table.

		Up or Out	
	Class	Maximum Time in Class	Maximum Time in Service
Entry level	FS-06	NA	5 years to achieve tenure
	FS-05		
Mid-career	FS-04	10	27 years from entry to FE-OC
	FS-03	13	
	FS-02	13	
	FS-01	15	
Senior Foreign Service	FE-OC (Counselor)	7	OC-MC total 14 yrs
	FE-MC (Minister Counselor)	14	
	FE-CM (Career Minister)	7	

*Note: Retirement is mandatory at age 65, with five-year extension allowed in exceptional cases.*

Promotion boards evaluate tenured FSOs annually according to precepts prepared by the Bureau of Human Resources in consultation with the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA), which represents the Foreign Service in all four agencies in labor-management negotiations. The boards rank officers by class and cone, and the highest ranked are promoted in numbers determined by the needs of the Service.

## Assignments

Untenured officers ordinarily spend two, two-year tours overseas, at least one of which is in consular work. (Because of the surge in hiring in FY 2009–2010, many new officers are likely to spend one of their first two tours in Washington). Career Development Officers indicate to new officers which of the available posts would be a good fit for them, and the new officers indicate their preferences within that guidance. The Bureau of Human Resources (HR) makes the final assignments.

The influence of the HR bureau diminishes thereafter. Mid-level officers coming up for assignment can review a list of opening positions on the Department's Intranet and reach tentative agreements with the relevant bureaus. The HR bureau must approve these "handshake" agreements. Under current rules, all vacancies at high-hardship and high-danger posts, including but not limited to Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, must be filled before agreements on other assignments are considered. Senior officers follow a similar process, with even greater reliance on informal contacts.

A committee of senior Department of State officials, headed by the two Deputy Secretaries, reviews career candidates to be Chiefs of Mission (Ambassadors) and makes recommendations to the White House. By custom since the Kennedy administration, about two-thirds of chiefs of mission come from the career Foreign Service. FSOs currently hold about two-thirds of these jobs. Inside the Department of State headquarters in Washington, DC, the proportions are reversed, with career FSOs holding about one-third of the top 50 positions.

## Appendix B

### Professional Development in the US Military

The US military approaches professional development with the view that one “trains for certainty, and educates for uncertainty.”<sup>68</sup> Both certainty and uncertainty are a fundamental part of every officer’s career. In the US Army, for example, young officers train for the specific functions that they will carry out as lieutenants and captains. These include leading small units, rifle marksmanship and weapons familiarization, urban combat, and convoy operations. As the officers’ career advance, professional development gradually shifts from tactical training towards broader education.

In the US Army, senior captains and all majors<sup>69</sup> must complete the academic, year-long Intermediate Level Education (ILE) program, consisting of a sixteen-week common course offered to all officers, plus twenty-four weeks of additional, specialized courses tied to the requirements of each officer’s branch or functional area.<sup>70</sup> The common curriculum includes the following: understanding joint, interagency, and multinational operations; solving complex problems systematically and under pressure; applying the perspectives of military history; the principles and values of military leadership; understanding the role of the military in a free society; and effective written, oral, and electronic communication.<sup>71</sup>

The majority of captains and majors complete their intermediate-level education at the US Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. However, some also attend the Navy, Marine, or Air Command and Staff Colleges, the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC), or foreign schools that have been granted the required military-education-level equivalency. The successful completion of the required course is essential to remain competitive for selection to lieutenant colonel.<sup>72</sup>

68 Warner, Volney J., Brigadier General, US Army, and James H. Willbanks, Lieutenant Colonel, US Army, Retired, Ph.D. “Preparing Field Grade Officers for Today and Tomorrow,” *Military Review*, Jan – Feb 2006. [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m0PBZ/is\\_1\\_86/ai\\_n16346166/](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0PBZ/is_1_86/ai_n16346166/)

69 The diplomatic ranks of Foreign Service Officers are equivalent to US military officers. For example, FS-04s and O3s are equivalent to US Army captains and majors, respectively.

70 Department of the Army, Pamphlet 600–3, Personnel-General, Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management, Headquarters, Department of the Army, Washington, DC, 11 December 2007, pp. 24-25.

71 Army Commissioned Officer Career Information, Military Schools. About.com: US Military. <http://usmilitary.about.com/library/milinfo/arofficerinfo/blmilschools.htm>

72 Department of the Army, Pamphlet 600–3, Personnel-General, Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management, Headquarters, Department of the Army, Washington, DC, December 11, 2007, pp. 24–25.

The military considers education and time to reflect on the “big issues,” — such as the strategic underpinnings of US foreign policy and the military and civilian agencies’ role in support of US national security — to be essential to building the leaders that today’s missions require. Like a college liberal arts program, the “24/7” nature of these long-term residential courses encourages officers to examine different, often conflicting, opinions. Moreover, it forces them and their civilian classmates to interact and learn from each other.

## Appendix C

### Professional Education and Training at USAID: An Emphasis on Learning

Currently, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) uses the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) only for language and security training. Otherwise, USAID conducts or (in most cases) contracts for its own training programs. These include a five-week orientation course for new officers and a “highly recommended,” but not required, suite of three short leadership and management courses taught by the Federal Executive Institute at its Charlottesville campus and online. USAID’s regional and functional bureaus provide specialized technical training in Washington and in the field. Missions also provide a variety of training on the job. The training and education budget for all employees (about 1,600 FSOs, 1,350 Civil Servants, and 4,500 Locally Employed Staff) is about \$10 million a year. The Office of Learning, Evaluation, and Research in USAID’s new (2010) Bureau of Policy, Planning, and Learning is charged with building the agency as a results-oriented learning organization. A Training Quality Assurance Council (TQAC), managed (with contractor support) by the Training and Education Division of the Office of Human Resources, is charged with oversight of training programs.

In late 2009, USAID released a 40-page Corporate Learning Strategy (CLS) that, in its own words, “is meant to increase training’s effectiveness, reduce unnecessary duplication of effort, and promote operational readiness.”<sup>73</sup> To prepare the CLS, USAID worked with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and an outside consultant to examine best practices in education and training in Federal agencies and private-sector organizations with international responsibilities and to build an inventory of competencies in the existing workforce that could be compared to the mix of skills likely to be required in the future. The inventory requires constant updating but provides a guide for professional training and education.

The CLS notes that USAID’s “current delivery model relies on permanent staff, consultants, and institutional support contractors.” It says that “resources for learning must be substantially increased” and cites statutory and policy

<sup>73</sup> USAID, Office of Human Resources, Training and Education Division, *Corporate Learning Strategy (CLS)*, 2009-2013, November 2009.

justifications for doing so. The CLS calls for a centralized career development system that more closely relates acquisition of certain skills and knowledge to career ladders. It does not lay out specific course recommendations, but it does call for increased attention to recapturing internal technical expertise and to building “in-house technical capacity to identify learning needs, plan learning solutions, and meet surge and special initiative requirements.” It also urges instruction of field personnel on interagency relationships, policies, objectives, and activities, and on developing and managing public-private partnerships. It recommends greater use of collaborative web-based technologies and a greater emphasis on learning rather than training.

The CLS will be part of the talent management component of the USAID Forward Reform Agenda, a program announced in November 2010 to modernize and strengthen the agency and restore its status as a premier development agency.

Implementation of the CLS or any comparable program of increased professional education and training at USAID will require increases in the workforce along the lines contemplated in the Development Leadership Initiative (DLI), a USAID hiring program comparable to State’s Diplomacy 3.0. Under the DLI, as described in USAID’s Human Capital Strategic Plan FY 2008-2013, the agency would raise the number of its FSOs to about 2,400 by 2013, enough to provide a 14% float for training and assignment.

The QDDR’s emphasis on “consolidating, streamlining, and identifying efficiencies in current operations” points to the need for a reappraisal of collaboration between USAID and FSI. In keeping with the guidance contained in the QDDR, State and USAID should together examine ways to increase USAID’s use of FSI for training and education in suitable course, and with attention to cost effectiveness. Collaboration in course design may be necessary.

In the QDDR Secretary Clinton outlines several steps that must be taken to respond to the need to “strengthen training across the board.” All of the following apply to USAID and many to State as well:

- Expand the training complement. The QDDR correctly underlines the critical requirement for additional personnel. Without a continuing build-up in State and USAID ranks, training goals will not be met because virtually all personnel will be involved in active operational jobs.



- Tie training to promotion. This will be realized by establishing training in promotion precepts.
- Support cross-training at State and USAID. This important imperative should be coupled with a cross-assignments program. State Officers could usefully gain some basic introduction to the field of development in order to be more knowledgeable interlocutors with development professionals and scientists. USAID Officers would derive benefit from working in the foreign policy context in which development programs operate. The QDDR notes that USAID and the FSI will conclude a framework agreement to strengthen collaborative training.
- Increase rotational assignments to other agencies and from other agencies to State and USAID. First-hand knowledge of the member organizations of the interagency will enhance collaborative efforts overseas and in Washington.
- Strengthen management training. This report has dealt extensively with this subject (Recommendations 5, 7, and 8), and we are very supportive of the QDDR's resolve in this regard.
- Launch a Development Studies Program. USAID will launch a state-of-the-art Development Studies Program to examine the mechanisms, tools, opportunities, and challenges for development in the 21st century.

The activities described immediately above and others elsewhere in the QDDR make it clear that the senior leaders of State and USAID share the intensity of our concerns regarding training, education, and professionalism in State and USAID. Many initiatives are already underway; others will follow. The challenges of obtaining Congressional approval for the human and financial resources necessary to meet the requirements of successful diplomacy and development in the 21st century remain. The institutions engaged in this report will be very strong proponents for Congressional support going forward.

## Appendix D

### Professional Development in Other Diplomatic Services<sup>74</sup>

**B**razil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Mexico, and the UK all spend a great deal of time and resources on diplomatic education and professional formation, but they make this investment chiefly at the beginning of their Diplomatic Service Officers' careers. Unlike the US, all of these countries use traditional international diplomatic titles and structure for purposes of promotion, continuing education, and training requirements within their services. None has anything resembling the US cone system or numbered ranks from six to one. Like the United States, most are beginning to appreciate the need for integrating more explicit management and leadership development within their respective services.

#### Entry Level

In virtually every service surveyed, aspiring officers are expected to be highly and purposefully educated for diplomatic service before they apply, with fluency in one foreign language (and in some cases two or three), as either a formal or practical requirement. Most services require new officers to pass through substantial initial professional formation and training programs, lasting as long as two or three years, before their first assignment abroad. These courses ground entry-level officers, first in how their own government functions and then in the theory, practice, and legal foundations of diplomacy and international relations in the field. Many services also require coordinated service in their home ministry before entry-level officers are more specifically prepared for their first tour, with appropriate area studies and consultations. All assume entry-level officers are embarking upon a recognized and respected profession, which is defined not only by formal formation but also by practical experience, perspective, and hard-won operational expertise. Most entry level officers understand that they will eventually be responsible for most of the institutional leadership, resources, and functional vitality of their home ministry.

<sup>74</sup> Susan Johnson and Stephanie Kinney of the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) conducted interviews with the Deputy Chiefs of Mission (DCM) of the Washington embassies of Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Mexico, and the UK in order to learn more about their diplomatic services and how those services prepare and train officers and support staff. This section is adapted from Susan Johnson and Stephanie Kinney's summaries of those interviews. We are grateful for their assistance.

For example, the Canadian Foreign Service puts its new officers through a 60-day Foreign Service Development Program, which includes a two-week orientation, an on-the-job training assignment in a division of the ministry, and training in report writing, negotiations, economic, and political reporting for all officers.

Entry-level Brazilian officers must pass an eighteen-month course at their diplomatic academy, which they attend full-time for six months, and then part-time for twelve months, splitting their time between the academy and working in the foreign ministry headquarters.

Newly hired Chinese officers undergo a four-month entry training course focused on the foreign ministry and how it operates, with one month spent training with the military, including physical exercises. Officers only receive a diplomatic passport and a diplomatic title upon their first tour abroad, which may often come after several years of successful service in the ministry.

## **Mid-Level and Senior Level**

At the middle and senior levels, almost all services require written and/or oral exams. If no exam is required, they employ targeted training in order for officers to pass from one career phase to another.

Canadian officers are required to pass a managerial competencies-based exam for promotion into the executive ranks. Chinese officers must take a leadership and management training course, along with courses on international relations, economics and finance, international history, Chinese history, protocol, and consular affairs for promotion to 2nd Secretary. These courses are taken in officers' spare time, in addition to their normal duties.

Brazilian officers must sit for exams following a one-month course that focuses on economics, law, civil society, and politics before promotion to 1st Secretary, and a PhD-level dissertation is required for promotion to Counselor.

Several other services also require thesis-length research papers, focused on emerging policy and institutional issues of relevance to their profession for entry into senior ranks.

For example, Indian officers must take a one- to two-month course that updates their knowledge of Indian foreign policy and diplomacy, business interests, technology, and changing perspectives on global issues and international

policy in order to be promoted to 1st Secretary. They must also produce a dissertation-length paper on a relevant topic for promotion to the senior rank of Minister Counselor.

Long-term residential education programs at the mid- and senior levels are generally not part of officers' professional development in other diplomatic services. Training at this stage is more targeted and short term. Most services do test for acquired knowledge and expertise, whether acquired through training, education, or online distance-learning courses, before promotion. Many services expect officers to acquire real foreign language expertise on their own once they have arrived at post. Some facilitate this process; others expect it as a matter of professionalism.

## Appendix E

### Diplomatic Professional Formation: An AFSA Perspective

**D**iplomacy is a profession. Its practice requires acquisition and assimilation of a specialized body of knowledge and practice and a set of skills and know-how generally acquired through instruction by master practitioners and other experts and on-the-job experience. Diplomatic services of most developed countries are structured with rigorous systems and standards for selection, training, acquiring of skills, and professional advancement. In contrast, and unlike other learned professions, new US diplomats are not required to demonstrate mastery of a foundational body of knowledge and skills as a prerequisite for being granted a black passport and diplomatic title for service abroad.

America’s diplomatic service — the US Foreign Service — selects its officers largely based on tests designed to filter for aptitude and some court-certified, job-related skills, while at the same time ensuring that selectees are fully “representative of America” geographically, racially, ethnically, and in terms of social class, gender, and age. Hence, there are no defined academic or professional pre-requisites to take the examination for entry in the Foreign Service, lest this prove to be too restrictive. Ours is the only diplomatic service that does not even require a college degree. What surprises many is that once selected into the Service, there is no institutionally defined, common body of diplomatic knowledge and practice conveyed to Foreign Service Officers (FSOs). Rather, the Service expects its officers to acquire the knowledge they need assignment by assignment, without regard to a larger picture, and to enhance their skills on the job and through haphazard in-service training. Longer-term professional education, such as that provided to our military officer corps, is scarce to nonexistent.

The United States is one of only a very few countries (the Philippines and Poland are among the rest) that routinely place large numbers of untested newcomers into the international diplomatic game in senior diplomatic positions. Similarly, we are one of the few to provide little or no definition, history, and theory of international diplomacy and its national manifestation to its FSOs. Indeed, if asked to name their profession and its requirements — as a recent American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) survey queried members —

FSOs' answers are as diverse as the individuals responding. There is no discernable, shared professional core knowledge or values to create and sustain a common professional service of individuals committed to a career in diplomacy. The institution that hires them provides no clear, common definition of diplomacy, its functions, core values, ethics, and professional standards and only minimally conveys expectations about required attributes and skills or inspirational history and examples of master practitioners whose accomplishments and standards entering officers should seek to emulate.

AFSA's Academics Project has invited a number of former US diplomats now in academia to help define a core body of knowledge that should be common to all US diplomats. They have noted the dramatic shifts in the geopolitical environment that foreshadow the rise of competing value systems and suggest that continued dominance of Western values should not be taken for granted. Hence, they have emphasized that marginal changes to the status quo will not be sufficient to meet coming challenges. They have stressed the value for all officers of a well-defined, professional body of knowledge, introduced starting with A-100 and deepened over time. Equally important is the quality of the instructors and the integrated nature of the overall curriculum and methodologies used, including teachable history and primary sources, case studies, and scenarios, as well as inspired and inspiring narrative.

Participants in these consultations recognize that the academic and experiential backgrounds of today's entry level officers represent an impressive diversity and an array of postgraduate degrees and experience, but prior to entering the Foreign Service, few have had any exposure to the practice of diplomacy in the context of the Department of State, the US Government, or the international diplomatic system. Although a limited number may have had university-level instruction in the history and theory of diplomacy at either the international or national level, such formation is not common to most. Many new officers may have had experience overseas, but because of the flexibility of US secondary and post-secondary curricula, there is no guarantee how deeply steeped entry level officers may be in the history, culture, constitution, government, and government processes of their own country. A few in each class may have a law degree, but this does not mean that most have a clear grasp of the legal foundations of diplomacy or basic literacy in the fundamentals of international law, as most of their competitive counterparts abroad do.

In the eyes of most participants in the AFSA consultations, and as a recent AFSA survey of both entry and mid-level officers demonstrates, current Department of State training does little to confer on entering or active-duty officers any well-defined, common sense of professional identity, professional expectations, standards, and ethics or an inspiring collective sense of public service on behalf of American diplomacy. Instead, the emphasis remains on individual career development and competition and on narrowly defined, cone-driven functional technical expertise. To not challenge this status quo is to diminish the collective potential of those entering today's Foreign Service.

Although the AFSA Academics Project is ongoing, preliminary thinking has focused on the following content as essential to professional formation for America's 21st century diplomats once they have been selected into the Foreign Service:

## **Enduring Stewardship**

- Diplomacy: Definition, history, theory, and practice within an international legal context and system of international organizations, treaties, and alliances.
- American diplomatic and consular history, its constitutional foundations, and evolution.
- Grand strategy and the elements of US national security interests, instruments of influence, tools, and processes.

## **The Changing Geopolitical Environment**

- Drivers of change and strategic surprise: Demographics, political, economic, technological, and socio-cultural factors and consequences.
- Facing competition: Economics, trade and finance, and a BRIC in every port.
- Global issues literacy: Environment, science, technology, health, human rights, migration, international crime and terrorism, cyber reach, proliferation, etc.
- Complex humanitarian and conflict driven emergencies and "whole of government" response.
- Development assistance: Then and now, why, and how?

## Essential Diplomatic Tradecraft

- Three-D thinking: Thinking and planning based on mission, goals, and objectives aligned with strategy, tactics, and operations and effective budgeting.
- Fundamentals of cultural psychology and effective cross-cultural listening, messaging, and marketing.
- Fundamentals of negotiation and conflict resolution.
- Tools of the trade: Analysis and report writing; public speaking and advocacy; strategic communications and media management; strategic planning and budgeting; a policy formulation, program development, and execution practicum (assess and strengthen weak points and practice integrating all skills).
- Doing the right thing: An introduction to E3 Leadership. Envision, educate, and empower in the office, in the interagency, in the embassy, and in crisis.
- Doing things right: Management of self, others (up and down), events, teams, meetings, negotiating teams, policy and resources. Performance management: Programs and projects, grants and contracts, staff and peers, metrics and outcomes.



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