

Report Part Title: SUMMARY

Report Title: SHORT OF GENERAL WAR:

Report Subtitle: PERSPECTIVES ON THE USE OF MILITARY POWER IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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SUMMARY

Looking out to 2025, many see the potential for a prolonged period of instability as a result of competing economic models, demographics, the rise of new international actors and the resurgence of old ones, climate change, and the scarcity of resources. The range of stability challenges will stretch the capabilities of any military force structure and require innovative thinking on the part of policymakers and military professionals alike concerning the appropriate development and use of the military element of power. In this anthology, sixteen students of the United States Army War College Class of 2008 offer their perspectives on the use of military power across the spectrum of conflict in the 21st century, short of or following general war, and they provide insights into the necessary force structure, policy, strategy, and doctrinal approaches for future success.

The first chapter, written by the faculty editor, describes the security dilemma confronting the United States and the implications for military force structure and operations. It argues that full spectrum operations are an appropriate doctrinal response, and that stability operations will present new challenges for the use of military force. The subsequent chapters are a collection of edited student research papers from the U.S. Army War College Class of 2008 selected for their focus on operations short of general war. The editor cast a wide net in search of papers that grasp the implications of the emerging strategic environment, apply strategic level thinking, and offer new and useful ways for the application of military power. Consequently, each of these writings shares in common a worthwhile idea or set of ideas that can materially contribute to how the United States military can best conduct full spectrum operations.

Collectively, these essays reveal the innovative thinking, diversity, and depth of thought that is characteristic of the U.S. and foreign military and civilian agency personnel that comprise each class of the U.S. Army War College as they prepare themselves to become senior leaders of their militaries or agencies. The essays also offer key insights at the policy, strategy, planning, and doctrinal levels that can be applied in the current and future strategic environments confronting the United States and its security partners.