

# American Diplomacy at **Risk**

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## Disclaimer

It is not surprising that, in grappling with a subject this important and complex, a healthy range of views was reflected in the drafting group, the advisory group and the red team. The views of many of the participants (Academy members and other interested parties) were taken into account in the discussions and drafting but this is not a consensus product.

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*Dedicated to a Strong Professional Foreign Service*

## A STRONG STATE DEPARTMENT,

*based on a strong Foreign Service and a strong Civil Service, is a critical component of America's security. But America's diplomacy—the front line of our defenses—is in trouble. Increasing politicization undermines institutional strength; almost no career officers serve in the most senior State positions, while short-term political appointees penetrate ever deeper into the system. The Foreign Service lacks the professional education and standards to meet its current heavy responsibilities and to create its necessary future senior leaders. The Civil Service is mired in an outdated system with limited coherent career mobility. Some State Department officials seem intent on nullifying the Foreign Service Act of 1980, and its merit-based personnel system by bureaucratically seeking to blend the Foreign and Civil Services. This creates needless friction and diminishes both services. Our national interest requires our immediate recommitment to the law and to strengthening our professional Foreign and Civil Services. State needs to comprehensively review and modernize its entire system of workforce management and budgeting. This report aims to stimulate the changes necessary to prepare American diplomacy for the challenges of the 21st century.*

## I. Introduction: American Diplomacy at Risk

The world beyond our borders profoundly affects every individual American's security, safety and well-being. Events overseas can lead to war or peace, raise and lower the costs of our home mortgages, give you a job—or take that job away. They affect the air we breathe. With help from technology and the emergence of new, regional power centers, these global challenges are multiplying daily and are ever more difficult to manage. In every case there is a diplomatic component. How well we manage our diplomacy will determine the future of American security and the fate of American ideals.<sup>1</sup>

America's diplomatic track record is impressive. Diplomacy secured the alliance with France that made victory over the British possible in our War of Independence, provided the diplomatic dimension of containment which led to the implosion of the Soviet Union, and created and sustained the international system that brought long-term prosperity after World War II.

When force is used, diplomacy remains essential before, during and after combat. Today America's \$17 trillion economy is deeply influenced by the world around us. Globalization and the growing influence of rising powers have changed and will continue to change the global agenda as one in every five jobs in our country is now related to international trade. Almost 50 percent of our exports now go to middle-tier and developing countries.<sup>2</sup> American diplomacy underpins every element of our national influence. In short, our nation needs the highest degree of professionalism in the American diplomatic establishment—the Foreign Service and the Department of State.

We are safer because our military colleagues, business leaders, and development experts share the common goal of partnership. Business associations, think tanks, military leaders, educators, and faith-based organizations all support this strongest possible American voice and presence in the world.

We believe that an effective American diplomacy is in our nation's highest interest. That diplomacy is best carried out by a strong State Department. The State Department is strongest when both the Foreign and Civil Services most effectively contribute to the mission.

We have the utmost respect for the job our Foreign and Civil Service colleagues are doing at home and around the world. Yet the reality is that despite their efforts, America's diplomatic ability to lead globally is declining. American diplomacy is increasingly politicized, reversing a century-long effort to create a merit-based system of high professionalism. Despite recent improvements, State is neither educating its staff to the professional level of our allies and competitors, nor systematically preparing its future "bench" to assume senior roles.

This report looks in two directions. One is at the politicization of and reduction in the role of the professional Foreign Service in diplomacy. We strongly believe this weakens the nation and the State Department and must be resisted. Our second focus is on significant reforms for both the Civil and Foreign Services to improve professional education, and the formation and quality of these careers.

The Foreign Service was established by statute nearly 100 years ago. Its most recent iteration, the Foreign Service Act of 1980 ("the Act"), is under assault from a variety of actors who seek to dilute the commitment to career precepts and service norms to the point of nullifying the Act.

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1 Paraphrased from former Secretary of State James Baker's remarks at the launch of the United States Diplomacy Center, January 25, 2013. Secretary Baker attributed the comments to an unnamed former ambassador.

2 United States Global Leadership Council (USGLC), "Smart Power," brochure, <http://www.usglc.org/downloads/2012/12/USGLC-Smart-Power-Brochure.pdf>, page 6; and the US Census Bureau of Economic Statistics.



## WE RECOMMEND

*the reduction of the total number of political appointees in order to allow Presidents to focus on those most important to policy leadership. In addition, freeing up positions at the management level will improve career opportunities for the best career executives and encourage them to continue in the public service.”*

— National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) and American Society of Public Administration (ASPA), Memo to National Leaders #3, <http://www.memostoleaders.org>, July 2013.

The confusion of roles and functions between the Civil and Foreign Services leads to unproductive friction. The Civil Service also needs help to resist politicization of its own system and provide upward mobility and professional personnel development.

It is both ironic and tragic that the United States is now moving farther away from the principles of a career professional career Foreign Service based on “admission through impartial and rigorous examination,” promotion on merit and selection out for low performance, and advice to political leaders based on extensive experience and impartial judgment. The problem, effectively a return to a nineteenth-century “spoils system,” is government-wide. The Department of Homeland Security has documented the increasing appointment of political and personal associates to what ought to be a professional, career Civil Service.<sup>3</sup>

A recent report of State’s Inspector General documented the same problem.<sup>4</sup> Both personnel systems at State are structured to be competitive and transparent in their hiring processes. Unfortunately, both appear to have lost credibility and are perceived as being subject to manipulation for political and personal reasons. In the Civil Service, appointments may be made by writing job descriptions to match the resumes of individual applicants.

Another serious challenge to the effort to support a strong State Department by having effective but separate Foreign and Civil Services, is the policy described in the official State Department April 12, 2013 press guidance,<sup>5</sup> which states that there is a requirement to “break down all institutional, cultural and legal barriers between the Foreign Service and the Civil Service.” In pursuit of this alleged requirement, many of State’s current personnel actions violate the letter and spirit of the Act, as discussed below.

3 Lisa Rein, “DHS officials broke hiring rules, watchdog alleges,” *Washington Post*, April 9, 2014.

4 Office of Inspector General, “Inspection of the Bureau of International Information Programs,” May 2013. <http://oig.state.gov/system/files/211193.pdf>

5 The Department issued this press guidance in reaction to the op-ed “Presidents are Breaking the U.S. Foreign Service,” by Academy Chair Thomas R. Pickering, Academy President Ronald E. Neumann, and then AFSA President Susan R. Johnson, *The Washington Post*, April 11, 2013.

The increasing importance of what money can buy in American politics has exacerbated the practice of appointing political ambassadors without appropriate experience or credentials.<sup>6</sup> From the earliest days of the Republic, America has called on the skills of highly talented citizens to serve as ambassadors. Some have served brilliantly. The practice of calling on such individuals should not justify sending abroad ambassadors so lacking in evident qualifications as to make themselves a laughing stock at home and abroad. The sale of office is contrary to law. That it appears to be happening is an embarrassment to the country and adds nothing to either the prestige or the quality of American diplomacy.<sup>7</sup>

The challenge to American diplomacy comes not just from outside money and politics. The State Department and the Foreign Service have weakened the capacity for diplomacy by failing to pay sufficient attention to professional education and assignments that develop America's future diplomatic leaders. American diplomacy functions on a highly amateur basis compared to the entry-level training and professional-level development of the diplomats of every other major power.<sup>8</sup> Many emerging powers also have more rigorously structured and extensive professional development than the US does. Leadership skills are only now being lightly addressed. In addition, a combination of short-term promotion considerations and staff shortages have seriously diminished the appropriate representation of Foreign Service officers (FSOs) in the functional policy bureaus (e.g., economics and business, science, technology, arms control, human rights, etc.).

FSOs need the full gamut of experience to develop the professional excellence required for today's diplomats and for future leadership positions. Building professional excellence is required for the successful execution of our nation's diplomatic missions. It is not an assertion of "elitism."

Finally, as the Foreign Service struggles to maintain its excellence and professional standards, the Civil Service is dealing with challenges of its own. Those challenges include: How can career progression retain the best personnel? How can we manage the occasional domestic or overseas assignment for professional development without overlapping and reducing similar opportunities for the Foreign Service? How can we maintain a professional Civil Service at the higher levels as a variety of appointment processes adds politically connected friends of each new administration to its senior ranks? A recent study notes that non-career political appointments have increased to 4,000 in the federal government.<sup>9</sup> This does not include many de facto political appointees designated Schedule B; a fast-growing category across government and in State. The Civil Service, like the Foreign Service, needs public support to address these issues and play its full role in the conduct of US foreign relations.

America's security interests and international goals require top-quality diplomacy, consistent with the letter and spirit of the Act. We need to reduce politicization and re-address education, training and the professional formation of the Foreign Service from top to bottom. The time has come to address both the parallel and differing problems that undercut top-quality Foreign and Civil Services and clearly define the respective roles of all involved in diplomacy. While we recognize and respect the vital role of the career Foreign Service specialist corps, the parameters of this project do not permit an exploration of its contributions, roles and needs.

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6 Dennis Jett, "Selling Ambassadorships Is As American As Apple Pie," *Huffington Post* political blog, January 22, 2013, updated March 24, 2013.

7 AFSA has drafted suggested criteria for minimum ambassadorial competence. Several Academy members participated although the Academy took no position. The AFSA criteria can be found at <http://www.afsa.org>.

8 Stephanie Kinney, "Comparative Requirements of Selected Professions," paper for the Academy's "American Diplomacy at Risk" report, March 2013.

9 The Partnership for Public Service and Booz Allen Hamilton, "Building the Enterprise: A New Civil Service Framework," April 1, 2014, <http://www.ourpublicservice.org/publications>.

Changes will take time. Additional resources will be required. Without a vision of what needs to change, and the commitment to bring it about, nothing will change. Now is the time to start.<sup>10</sup>

**Recommendation 1:** The Secretary and the State Department should strenuously press the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Congress for resources—positions, people and the funds needed to support them—to restore to American diplomacy the ability to play its critical role in the country’s national security.

The objective is to have the resources to undertake the recommendations in this report as well as other initiatives required to modernize American diplomacy to meet current and future challenges to national security. We have identified recommendations where additional funding may be necessary.

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<sup>10</sup> The past two Administrations have placed emphasis on a better integration of diplomacy, defense and development. We endorse this “3D” concept and believe that more effort should be made to effect this integration through joint training exercises and closer collaboration on country teams. While this study and its recommendations focus on the State Department, we recognize that the officer corps of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) is an integral part of the Foreign Service of the US. The development mission is closely related to the diplomatic mission though the program management and technical skills required are uniquely related to the development profession. USAID is a statutory agency whose Administrator reports to the Secretary of State. Development professionals, humanitarian relief specialists and those engaged in transitional activities work closely with State counterparts and consistent with the foreign policy goals of the US. USAID officials also may be engaged in diplomatic activities at post related to development cooperation, and State FSOs are increasingly engaged in diplomacy related to global development objectives. Thus, many of the recommendations contained in this report that pertain to enhancing professionalism, apply equally to State and USAID Foreign Service and Civil Service Officers. In many respects they may apply also to the Foreign Services of the Departments of Commerce and Agriculture.

## NOTE ON STATISTICS

Data in this report come from State's Bureau of Human Resources (HR) offices in the form of overall State employee numbers, employees by bureau, and Civil Service or Foreign Service status or by location, from American Academy of Diplomacy-requested data runs and from the state.gov internet website. Where we encountered discrepancies between State Department data and other data, we used the in-house State data.

Statistical data provide both snapshots at different points in time and broad trend lines over several decades. Data discrepancies at the margins do not affect the validity of the trends. Care has been taken to assure that comparative data sets are the same; e.g., officials at the Assistant Secretary and above levels in 1975 and in 2014.

HR published data are often aggregated in a way that requires qualification. In some cases, we found discrepancies in data that we were not able to resolve in the time available but that do not affect the overall conclusions. For example, data on numbers of Foreign Service personnel at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) show 43 percent as Foreign Service but according to HR data provided in 2013, FSI had 695 total staff of which only 85, or 12 percent, were Foreign Service. It is not clear what other Foreign Service staff are included to arrive at 43 percent.

*Note: Schedule C appointment data cited in the Civil Service paper, provided by HR/ Resource Management and Analysis (RMA) in 2013, and later by HR/RMA in 2014, all differ significantly.*

## II. The Politicization of American Diplomacy

### A. General Discussion

Section 101 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 states that “The Congress finds that—(1) a career foreign service, characterized by excellence and professionalism, is essential in the national interest to assist the President and the Secretary of State in conducting the foreign affairs...” and “that the members of the Foreign Service should be representative of the American people,..., knowledgeable of the affairs, cultures, and languages of other countries, and available to serve in assignments throughout the world” and “should be operated on the basis of merit principles.”

Furthermore, the Department should “provide guidance for the formulation and conduct of programs and activities of the Department and other agencies which relate to the foreign relations of the United States; and “perform functions on behalf of any agency or other Government establishment (including any establishment in the legislative or judicial branch) requiring their services.”

Section 105 of the Act states that (1) “All personnel actions with respect to career members and career candidates in the Service (including applicants for career candidate appointments) shall be made in accordance with merit principles.” The guiding statute creates and designates only the Foreign Service to perform these functions in this manner.

The Academy recognizes that the world has changed since 1980. For example, American diplomacy has adapted to the need for increased scientific and technical experience. The roles we ask American diplomats to play have changed and expanded. But in recent years, the Foreign Service’s role has been challenged by, for example, the expansion of the National Security Council (NSC),<sup>11</sup> the militarization of foreign policy, and the imbalance of resources between civilian agencies and the military. This section of the report focuses on two major areas of concern: the increasing number of political appointees throughout the senior ranks and well down into the working levels of the State Department; and the apparent effort by some of the Department’s leaders to nullify the legislative role of the Foreign Service and its officers embodied in the Act.

In those instances in which individuals or institutions that support the Foreign Service have objected to these trends, they have been strongly criticized by senior officials, and particularly administrative managers, and accused of “feathering the Foreign Service nest,” or of “elitism,” or both. Their concerns have never been rebutted on the merits or legislative basis of their arguments.

As proponents of the law and practices that we believe will strengthen American diplomacy, the Academy will likely be subject to similar attacks. However, driven by national security considerations, we are motivated to support the highest quality formulation and execution of the nation’s foreign policy and to restore the value and role of the Foreign Service to its legislatively mandated place.

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11 Robert Hunter, “Getting State and the Foreign Service Back in the Game,” *The Foreign Service Journal*, May 2014; George Shultz, “The Constitution Doesn’t Mention Czars,” *Wall Street Journal*, April 11, 2011; David J. Rothkopf, *National Insecurity: American Leadership In An Age of Fear*, (New York, PublicAffairs Perseus Book Group, October 2014); David J. Rothkopf, *Running the World: The Inside Story of the National Security Council and the Architects of American Power*, (PublicAffairs Perseus Book Group, April 2005).

## B. The Cost of Non-Career Political Appointees

During the last four decades, the number of political appointees holding positions at the upper, and now mid-levels, at the State Department has increased dramatically. Unfortunately, the Department only has data saved electronically from circa 2000, too short a time to illustrate the longer trend from 1975 to 2014. However, anecdotal evidence for the longer time frame exists in Academy publications and articles, as well as the recollections of many Academy members active in the 1970s, 80s and 90s.

From 1975 to 2013 the number of career FSOs in senior positions, i.e., assistant secretary and above, declined from over 60 percent to between 25-30 percent. The Foreign Service figure for 2014 is at the upper limit (30 percent) as Secretary John Kerry has appointed career FSOs to most of the regional Assistant Secretary positions.

The cost of the declining representation of the professional Foreign Service at senior levels in Washington is three-fold:

**1. Loss of field perspective**—Knowledge essential for melding the desirable with the possible. FSOs speak foreign languages and have extensive knowledge of foreign nations, their policies, cultures, thinking, peoples, and regions. They have spent years living and working abroad among people from all walks of life and with leaders whose cooperation we need if US policy initiatives are going to be successful.

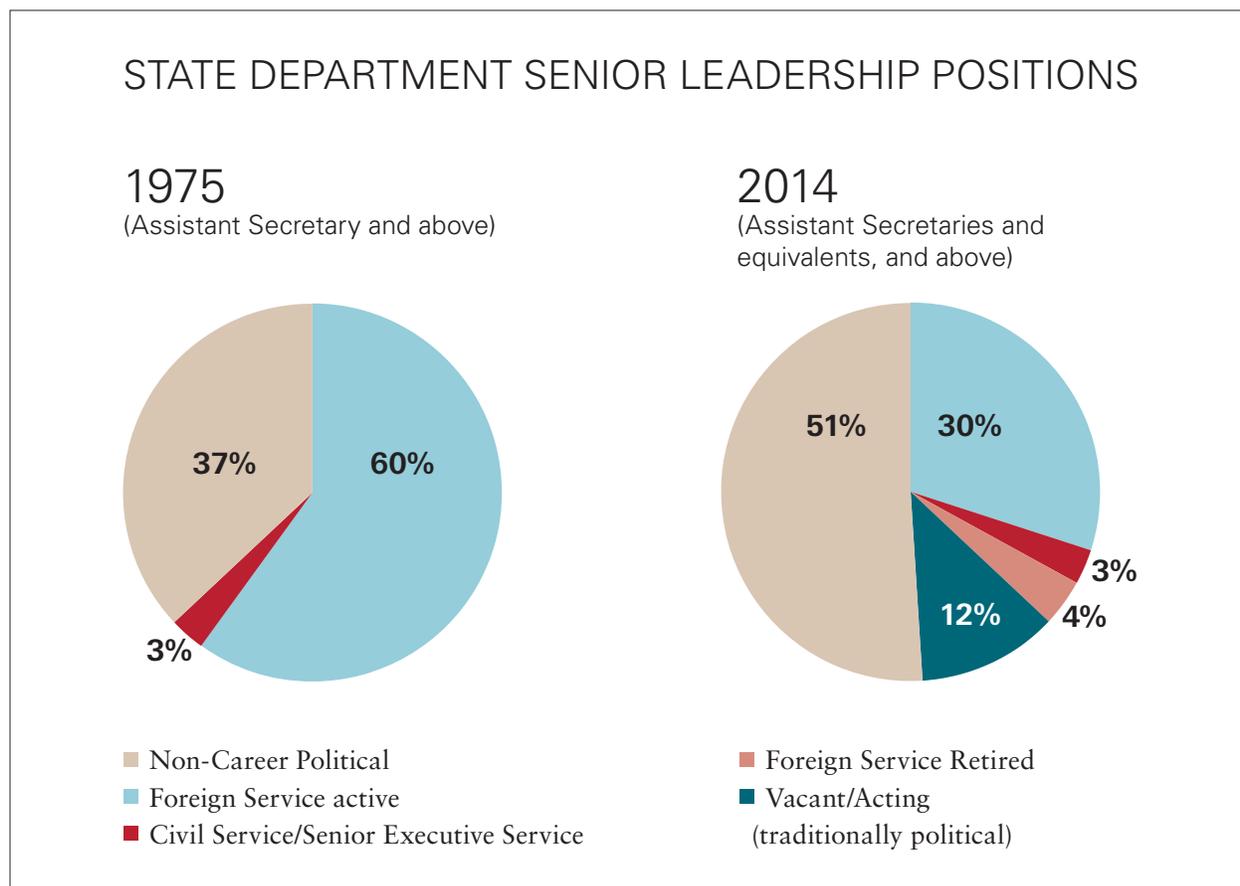


Figure 1. Senior Leadership Positions at the State Department, 1975 and 2014. Source: Data drawn from Department of State website, <http://www.state.gov>.

**2. Loss of Washington experience**—Loss of the Washington positions that provide essential experience necessary for FSOs to excel in the critical interagency aspects of making and implementing foreign policy. Loss of the benefits in the interagency process from the unique blend of field and Washington experience that those who have implemented foreign policy on the front lines bring. The result is too many FSOs who lack sufficient Washington experience to match their overseas experience; both are essential to the development of officers' careers. One example of such a highly skilled blended career is that of former Deputy Secretary William Burns.

**3. Loss of merit-based incentives**— Failure to motivate and to maintain high morale when career advancement depends not on professional merit, but mainly on personal networking and political affiliations. Demoralization occurs when employees see non-career appointees climbing rungs above them on the career ladder.

This raises the related issue: Who will speak truth to the powerful and state what policies ought to be rather than simply cheerleading? Who will be the future Foreign Service officer who proposes a strategic long-term policy framework as George Kennan did in the “long telegram” of February 22, 1946, concerning the Soviet Union? A strong foundation of career service is essential to sound foreign policy thinking and execution.

The dominant presence of political appointees in the upper ranks of the State Department (eight out of the 10 senior-most positions at the end of 2014) is a major reason for the significant decline in professional input into the policy process by the career Foreign Service. A related factor is the recent explosion of ambassadors-at-large, special representatives, and coordinators operating separate offices. Many are not integrated into the specific bureaus that are already responsible for these issues.

Currently, more than 45 diplomatic functions are headed by individuals titled Special Envoy, Ambassador-at-Large, Representative, Coordinator, etc.<sup>12</sup> The hiring of the appointed Special Envoys and their staffs is commonly outside the usual processes for bringing people into the career Foreign and Civil Services. They often bring numbers of staff from outside the Department, operate in a closed loop with other non-career staff, and pursue their issues without integrating the larger national interests that *must* inform responsible foreign policy decisions and implementation. Many are supposed to report directly to the Secretary, an obvious impossibility.

The increase in non-career positions at the upper levels of the State Department has also resulted in a Deputy's (“D”) Committee (the body that recommends ambassadorial appointments to the Secretary) dominated by non-career officers who may not know the in-depth experience and performance of Foreign Service personnel. The original objective of the “D” Committee was to recommend only the most capable career Foreign Service Officers for ambassadorships on the basis of merit.

The variety and overuse of “excepted” appointing authorities, mostly for GS-15 and below,<sup>13</sup> does not support strengthening the institution for the long term. These hiring mechanisms were initially

12 State's organizational chart, March 2014, shows many of the Special Envoys, etc. reporting directly to the Secretary (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/rls/dos/99494.htm>). See Appendix C for list of functions as of June 28, 2014.

13 Source: Code of Federal Regulations, as of October 15, 2014, <http://www.gpo.gov>.

**Schedule A:** Positions other than those of a confidential or policy-determining character for which it is impracticable to examine.

**Schedule B:** Positions other than those of a confidential or policy-determining character for which it is not practicable to hold a competitive examination.

**Schedule C:** Positions of a confidential or policy-determining nature.

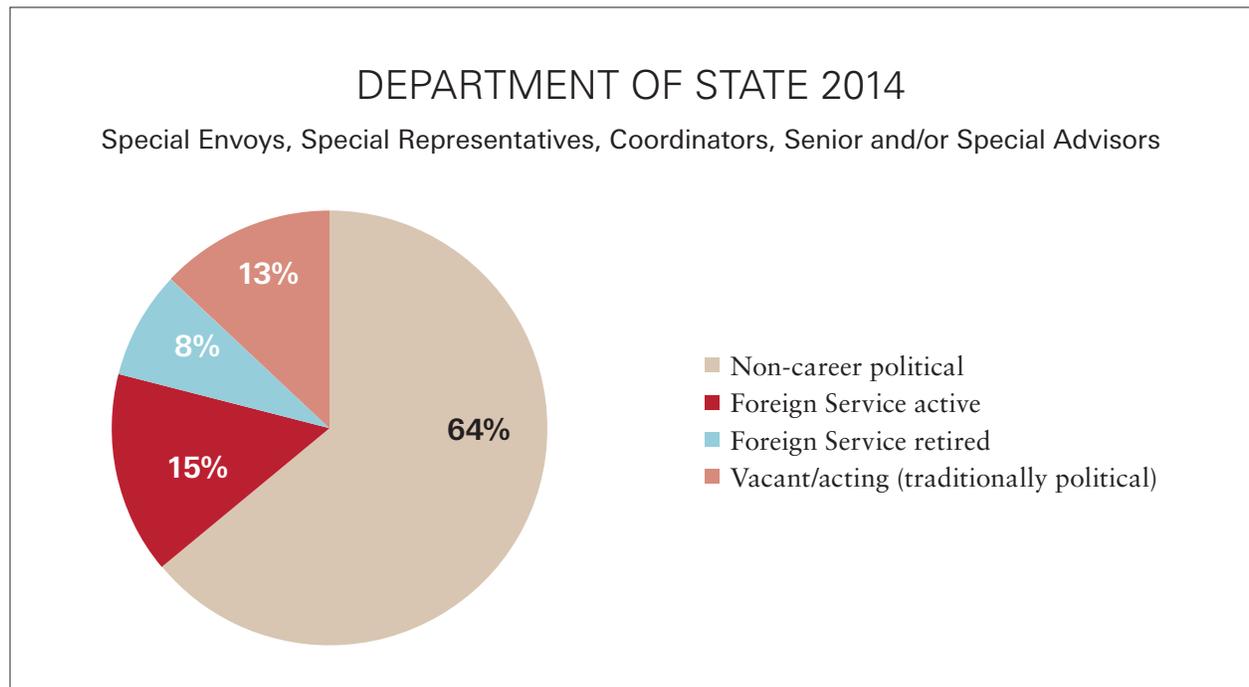


Figure 2. Composition of Special Envoys, Special Representatives, Coordinators, Senior and/or Special Advisors. Source: Data drawn from Department of State website, <http://www.state.gov>.

meant to provide flexibility in unusual circumstances; they have devolved into a permanent work-around, contrary to the best practices for managing Foreign and Civil Service employees.

### C. Recommendations

The following recommendations confirm and strengthen the intention of the section of the Act regarding the importance of maintaining the highest professional standards in the leadership of the diplomatic service and management of the State Department.

**Recommendation 2:** The president and the Secretary of State should systematically include career diplomats in the most senior of State’s leadership positions because they provide a perspective gained through years of experience in diplomacy, thus assuring them the most experienced available advice and support.

**Recommendation 2a:** A senior career Foreign Service Officer should occupy at least one of State’s two Deputy Secretary positions, and the Undersecretary for Political Affairs position. This would not preclude other senior principals at the Undersecretary level from also coming from the career ranks.

The objective is to ensure that the global perspectives and experience of career FSOs are directly available to the Secretary and the national security function.

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**Schedule D:** (1) Positions other than those of a confidential or policy-determining character for which the competitive service requirements make impracticable the adequate recruitment of sufficient numbers of students attending qualifying educational institutions or individuals who have recently completed qualifying educational institutions or individuals who have recently completed qualifying educational programs (2) Entire executive civil service; Pathways Programs.

## A LIMIT ON THE NUMBER

*of political appointees should be established by Congress, especially for Schedule C appointments. The congressional limit on political appointments in the SES has little meaning if political appointees can be added through Schedule C appointments.”*

— A joint 2013 study by the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) and the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) Memos to Leaders #2: Interaction of Political and Career Leaders, <http://www.memostoleaders.org>, September 2012.

In 1972, the Congress upgraded the second-in-command position of chief assistant to the Secretary of State from Undersecretary to Deputy Secretary. In response to a perceived need to provide the secretary with stronger management oversight, the Congress in 2000 created a second deputy position for Management and Resources to act as the Department’s chief operating officer. This position was not filled until 2009. The three acting COOs since then have all been political appointees.

Since 1972, and the creation of the first deputy position, the Undersecretary for Political Affairs has traditionally been both the number three position in the Department hierarchy and the senior career Foreign Service position. However, there are now two deputies and five other undersecretaries for various functions, as well as a counselor of the Department. Non-career appointees usually occupy these positions.

**Recommendation 2b:** Consistent with the Act, select for the position of Director General (DG) of the Foreign Service and Director of Human Resources of the State Department a highly respected senior Foreign Service Officer who has held at least two senior appointments, one as Chief of Mission.

The objective is to have the most experienced senior officer available managing the Foreign Service and personnel issues for the Department, and other Foreign Affairs agencies as chair of the Board of the Foreign Service. The Act elevated the position of Director General of the Foreign Service to a Senate-confirmed position reserved for “a current or former career member of the Foreign Service, stating that ‘the Director General should assist the Secretary of State in the management of the Service and shall perform such functions as the Secretary may prescribe’” (the Act, Sec. 208). The Act recognizes that the DG wears two hats: he or she has both the responsibility for the oversight and management of the Department’s Civil Service component, and also primary responsibility for the professional integrity, quality, and discipline of the Foreign Service.

As the number of principals and other senior appointments has proliferated and the complexities of managing a rapidly changing work force grow, maintaining the role of DG at the level of increased importance suggested by the Act’s language requires the most senior and broadly experienced performers. The DG must enjoy the respect necessary to speak the truth to serving officers as well as State’s leadership. Therefore, DGs should be selected from the most experienced members of the senior Foreign Service, preferably those not seeking subsequent assignments, and should, as a general rule, serve for at least three years.

**Recommendation 2c:** The Director of NFATC (FSI) should always be a senior Foreign Service Officer and the deputy director a senior Civil Service employee.

The objective is to ensure that a Foreign Service perspective on the direction and oversight of State’s training institution serves the foreign affairs agencies and the entire foreign affairs community. The Director is the “face” of Foreign Service education and training and should be a distinguished senior representative of the Service. The Director should have had the experience of serving overseas and in senior positions such as Chief of Mission (COM) and should understand the training and professional needs of the Foreign Service. The great majority of FSI’s constituents are Foreign Service, including Foreign Service officers and specialists; locally-engaged staff (LES); and family members.

FSI also trains Civil Service employees. The position of Deputy Director and other long-term senior positions at FSI offer the Civil Service perspective and represent its needs. It should be filled with senior Civil Service employees. The terms of both the Director and Deputy should be at least three years, not to exceed five.

**Recommendation 2d:** Implement fully the specifications for nomination of COMs in the Act, noting specifically sections (a) (2) that “positions as chiefs of mission should normally be accorded to career members of the Service” and (a) (3) that “Contributions to political campaigns should not be a factor in the appointment of an individual as a chief of mission.”

The objective is to stay true to the provisions of the Act in the appointment of ambassadors of demonstrated capacities, as follows:

Section 304 (a)—Appointment of Chiefs of Mission states that:

- (a) (1) An individual appointed or assigned to be a chief of mission should possess clearly demonstrated competence to perform the duties of a chief of mission, including, to the maximum extent practicable, a useful knowledge of the principal language or dialect of the country in which the individual is to serve, and knowledge and understanding of the history, the culture, the economic and political institutions, and the interests of that country and its people.
- (2) Given the qualifications specified in paragraph (1), positions as chief of mission should normally be accorded to career members of the Service, though circumstance will warrant appointments from time to time of qualified individuals who are not career members of the Service.
- (3) Contributions to political campaigns should not be a factor in the appointment of an individual as a chief of mission.
- (4) The President shall provide the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, with each nomination for an appointment as a chief of mission, a report on the demonstrated competence of the nominee to perform the duties of the position in which he or she is to serve.

**Recommendation 2e:** The Deputy’s (“D”) Committee should be composed of a majority of active duty or recently retired senior Foreign Service Officers. The “D” Committee should approve also the selection of Deputy Assistant Secretaries.

The objective is to ensure informed career input in the selection of FSOs for senior positions. The “D” Committee should promote both a strong State Department and a strong Foreign Service, and therefore should be composed primarily of career FSOs.

The “D” Committee’s role is to select nominees for chiefs of mission from the career services for the secretary to propose to the president for appointment as ambassadors.

The increase of non-career senior appointees has altered the balance on the committee and reduced the input from the career service into this process. Career FSOs are the most knowledgeable of the overall capabilities, as well as the prospects of other career officers for success as Chiefs of Mission. The committee should have available relevant information from both the DG and the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), along with employee evaluation material and the views of the bureaus concerned.

Deputy Assistant Secretary (DAS) positions are an important step in the development of the Department's senior Foreign Service career level. Therefore, the committee should exercise its oversight responsibility for ensuring that selections by Assistant Secretaries for DAS positions are in accordance with the objectives of building leadership talent and institutional capacity, as well as using promising officers appropriately.

Obtaining a majority of senior career officers could be done in a variety of ways. Senior ambassadors could be called in from the field. Alternatively, or in addition, two observer seats could be reserved for recently retired career former Chiefs of Mission at the rank of career ambassador or career minister. One recently retired former COM could be selected from a short list nominated by the Academy and one from a short list nominated by the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) to serve for three years.

**Recommendation 3:** The Department should adhere to the Act, which mandates a “career foreign service characterized by excellence and professionalism” as “essential in the national interest to assist the President and the Secretary of State in conducting the foreign affairs of the United States.”

**Recommendation 3a:** The number of politically appointed ambassadors normally should not exceed 10 percent of all ambassadorial appointments.

The objective of this recommendation is to preserve the intention of the Act regarding the appointment of ambassadors while accommodating the occasional appointment of unusually talented and public service-minded private citizens with relevant experience. Politically appointed ambassadors can, and do, make important contributions to pursuing US national interests when they are carefully selected in certain instances or for a specific issue.

Other sovereign nations rely almost totally on career professionals to pursue their foreign policy interests. Apart from those exceptional cases mentioned above, the US is virtually alone in delegating some of its most important and sensitive diplomatic posts to those with little or no diplomatic experience. Limiting the ranks of political appointees to 10 percent of US ambassadors keeps the proportions of career professionals to appointees within a range that allows for the unusually well-qualified and appropriate appointment while adhering to the best practices in international diplomacy and the intention of Congress as stated in the Act. Qualifications of non-career individuals who are nominated as ambassadors should meet the specifications promulgated in Section 304 (a) 1 of the Act, as noted above.

All ambassadors serve at the pleasure of the president. Political appointees should be able to, and expected to, complete the normal three-year tour for reasons of continuity and in light of the substantial host country's and our government's investment in time and resources.

**Recommendation 3b:** Non-career and political appointments in the front offices of bureau Assistant Secretaries, other than the principal, should not exceed one Schedule B (foreign affairs subject matter expert) and one Schedule C (staff attached to a political appointee) or other limited appointment authority.

The objective is to accommodate some political input—bringing the Administration’s vision of issues oversight and management—into each bureau’s functioning while preserving professional, field-based advice as well as maintaining the foundation of career services.

**Recommendation 3c:** Special Envoys, Representatives, Coordinators, etc. should be appointed only for the highest priority issues and should be integrated into relevant bureaus unless special circumstances dictate otherwise.

The objective is to improve the management of policy and to ensure that the long-term strength and continuity of the Department is available to the Secretary of State and the president. A recent US Institute for Peace (USIP) study discusses the use of Special Envoys in “high-stakes conflicts” where “the situation is of major importance to the United States.” The report concludes that senior State officials have the required skills for assignments as Special Envoys and Representatives.<sup>14</sup> In some cases, envoys have desired large personal staffs and larger offices, often within proximity to Department principals that duplicate bureau functions.

To avoid inefficient and expensive redundancies with existing structures, policies and operations, Special Representatives need to be more closely tied operationally into the activities of the functional and geographic bureaus than often appears to be the case now. Unless unusual circumstances dictate, directing Special Envoys and Representatives to use bureau staff and to report operationally through bureau senior management provides for coherent policy and operations without diminishing the status they need to do their work.

**Recommendation 3d:** The offices of Special Envoys, Representatives, Coordinators, etc. usually should not include more than two non-career staff through Schedule B or C authority or other limited appointment authority (3161).<sup>15</sup>

The objective is to contain the number of short-term outside employees and ensure that non-career appointees benefit from the expertise of career Foreign and Civil Service professionals.

The long-term strength of the Department suffers when non-career staff neither understands the institution’s role nor draws fully on its expertise or memory. This is further self-reinforcing when the single-issue appointee inhabits a closed loop of his or her staff. Additionally, staffs from outside tend to work with their known colleagues in other related offices. Staffs may also attend interagency meetings, which can give rise in some cases to confusion about the Department’s position.

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14 Robert Beecroft and Princeton Lyman, “Study on Special Envoys,” US Institute for Peace (USIP), September 2014.

15 An appointing (hiring) authority that the OPM can give to Federal agencies for filling vacancies when a critical hiring need or severe shortage of candidates exists.

## III. The Nullification of the Foreign Service Act of 1980

### A. General Discussion

President Jimmy Carter, in signing the Act, stated that “it is the product of our non-partisan collaboration” and noted that it states that a “career foreign service, characterized by excellence and professionalism” is “essential in the national interest to assist the President and the Secretary of State in conducting the foreign affairs of the United States.” This means a service that recruits, forms, and develops a strong cadre with a defined and well-understood role and sense of mission, cultivating a high-caliber leadership bench commensurate with the global leadership role the US considers to be a matter of national interest.

Some Academy members and active duty personnel not familiar with the Department’s personnel practices may find it difficult to believe that there is a real and significant effort underway to nullify *de facto* the Act and to homogenize the Foreign and Civil Services in a manner that is fundamentally detrimental to the existence of a professional Foreign Service and to the Department’s strength as an institution. For example, current practice allows Civil Service access to Foreign Service positions without having to assume any of the obligations, requirements and disciplines that come with them.<sup>16</sup>

*“The QDDR requires that we break down institutional, cultural, and legal barriers between the Foreign Service and the Civil Service.”<sup>17</sup>*

This statement referencing the first Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) of 2010 was included in official press guidance approved for the State spokesperson by the offices of the Undersecretary for Management and the DG. It was cleared by representatives of both Deputy Secretaries, the political and management Undersecretaries, and other officials in the offices of the DG and the Assistant Secretary for management. This guidance was prepared on April 20, 2013 in response to the *Washington Post* op-ed of April 11, 2013 by the chairman of the Academy board, the president of the Academy and the then-president of AFSA (See Appendix A).

The “legal barriers” referred to are, of course, the provisions of the Act. This is an astonishing statement of personnel policy made by FSOs and senior officials sworn to “support and defend the constitution of the United States...and to bear true faith and allegiance to the same,” declaring that they are going to “break down” the law of the land. Supreme Court decisions make clear that executive branch officials appointed by the president share constitutional responsibility “to take care the laws be faithfully executed” (Article II, Section 3). The Department’s senior managers—the two Deputies, the Undersecretary for Management, and the DG—are required by the Constitution and law to “take care” that the Act “be faithfully executed,” not to subvert it through administrative practices.

Given the Department’s declaration quoted above, we believe the intention of State’s management side to homogenize the two services is contrary to the Foreign Service Act. This may sound extreme, but leadership has made that clear by word and deed. In addition to the “words,” as described

<sup>16</sup> There are currently several alternate ways to enter the Foreign Service other than via the written and oral exam process: the Foreign Service Conversion Program (also known as the Career Mobility Program); the Mustang Program; the Diplomacy Fellows Program; and Limited Non-Career Appointments (LNA). (See “Alternate Ways to Become Foreign Service Officers,” State Department website, <http://www.state.gov>.)

<sup>17</sup> See Appendix B for text.

above, we now turn to specific actions that appear to violate the Act and our recommendations to counter these efforts. If that is not the case, we would welcome a discussion.

However, the Department’s aggressive reaction to any criticism of the *status quo* appears to signal a determination to continue its efforts to change the distinctions in the roles and missions of the two personnel services by “breaking down” all of the institutional, cultural, and legal “barriers” between the Foreign Service and the Civil Service. The Academy will oppose such efforts with all of the political, Congressional and media resources at its disposal.

FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS	CIVIL SERVICE (GS and SES)
Excepted personnel system (based on US Navy) for global service	General Schedule (GS) personnel system for USG employees
Presidentially commissioned at the officer level; commissioned by the secretary at the specialist level	No Commission
Rank in person	Rank in position through GS15; rank in person in the SES
Selection through written and oral exam and assessment of potential for advancement through the ranks	Hired to position openings based on subject matter expertise typically via US jobs
Recruits to be representative of all 50 states and the American people	No mandate to be representative of the nation in terms of geography or academic institutions
Tenure requires foreign language proficiency certification plus satisfactory performance	Tenure requires three years of substantially continuous creditable service
America’s diplomatic service governed by Vienna Convention international legal responsibilities and rights as well as US laws, regulations and obligations	America’s domestic USG employee service governed by US laws and regulations.
Worldwide availability (including family), based on needs of our diplomatic service including rotational assignments	No rotational requirement; mobility at employee’s initiative
Annual promotion boards by panel of peers with assessment of potential to perform at next rank; (2 percent low ranked with consequence)	Pro-forma review for satisfactory performance
Up or out career mobility (like military)	Mobility at initiative of employee
Time in class/rank (TIC) selection out	Indefinite tenure
Mandatory retirement at age 65	No mandatory retirement age (except for law enforcement)
SFS seven-year TIC (time-in-class) to advance from FE-OC to MC and seven to CM or be involuntarily retired; mandatory rotation; and retirement at 65	SES no competitive annual promotion or up or out requirement; no required rotations; no mandatory retirement age

Figure 3. Foreign Service Officers and Civil Service Systems Compared. The acronyms in the chart are as follows: SFS is Senior Foreign Service; SES is Senior Executive Service; TIC is Time-in-Class, the “up or out mechanism” in the Foreign Service system; OC is counselor of embassy; MC is minister-counselor; CM is career minister.

## B. Recommendations

**Recommendation 4:** The Department must define clearly the respective and distinctive roles of the Foreign Service and Civil Service, in compliance with the legislative language of the Act and other sources as appropriate.

The objective is to provide clear recognition that the Foreign and Civil Services each perform separate and essential functions so that all employees understand the different but complementary roles that each personnel system plays on the Department team. Clearly setting out the respective roles also provides useful guidance for managers and supervisors. For example, there is no clear rationale with respect to the utilization of the different services to properly staff the Department. This circumstance has been confirmed by a survey of former DGs spanning a 26-year period, in which they unanimously agreed that there was no Department guidance with respect to the different roles of the Foreign Service and Civil Service in staffing the Department.<sup>18</sup>

The Department's first QDDR in 2010, rather than seeking to resolve the ambiguities of the parallel personnel systems, chose to call for their *de facto* amalgamation (see discussion of this issue in Sections II and III above). The next QDDR should not repeat this formulation but should strive to promote clarity in the complementary roles of the Services. For example, policies that were put into place for making conversion from Civil Service to Foreign Service easier have increased the conversion success rate from seven out of 28 in 2011 (25 percent); 21 out of 36 in 2012 (58 percent); and 18 out of 24 in 2013 (75 percent).<sup>19</sup> In years just prior to 2011 when Foreign Service staff competed with Civil Service in a single pool for conversion to Foreign Service Officer, Civil Service conversions averaged 5-7 per year.

**Recommendation 5:** State should use the language of the Act to describe publicly and internally the roles, missions, and personnel of the Foreign Service. For example, State should cease all efforts to un-name the "Foreign Service" as a professional cadre and to *de facto* discount and decommission "Foreign Service Officers" by speaking and writing of "generalists."

The objective is to restore the language of the Act: "United States Foreign Service" and "Foreign Service Officer."

For many years, officials in management and HR have been un-naming the Foreign Service and in effect decommissioning Foreign Service Officers by the use and non-use of language. Foreign Service Officers have been renamed "Foreign Service Generalists" or just "Generalists" in official Department literature and parlance. The phrases "Foreign Service Officer" and "FSO" are being removed from the State lexicon and replaced with the more general "State Department Official" for public use and the technical personnel term "Generalist" in internal documentation. The term "Foreign Service" as a professional cadre is now rarely mentioned.<sup>20</sup>

**Recommendation 5a:** Use the slogan "One Mission—One Team" in its appropriate meaning as devotion to the single purpose of supporting US foreign policy interests, not as an excuse for "homogenization."

<sup>18</sup> See section IV B. Also, information used here was developed for this report in a survey of Former Directors General, covering a span of 26 years and done in July 2014.

<sup>19</sup> State Department, HR, analysis provided only to AFSA, September 2014.

<sup>20</sup> See State Department website, <http://www.state.gov>.

The objective is to use the slogan as a meaningful definition of joint teamwork, not as the Department uses it now in attempts to justify activities that undercut the letter and spirit of the Act. The reality is that we have “two personnel systems” plus non-career political appointees. All personnel agree with the “One Mission - One Team” concept, just as all in the military services agree they are one team pursuing one mission. However, that agreement does not extend to “homogenizing” all Department elements without defining their different roles and contributions. No one suggests that the Navy’s submariners, carrier pilots, and Seal teams be “homogenized,” much less that there should be conversion programs for Navy Civil Service employees to convert to commissioned Naval officers.

**Recommendation 6:** The Department should suspend conversions above the FS-03 level of Civil Service employees to Foreign Service and of all Foreign Service positions to Civil Service until the Director General completes a thorough review and evaluation aimed at consolidating, streamlining and rationalizing policies governing conversion of people or positions and negotiates the policy outcomes with the relevant employee representatives.

The objective is to eliminate *ad hoc*, arbitrary, and non-transparent actions that, especially above this grade, are unfair and disadvantageous to FSOs. Clarity in conversion policies is not only needed to remove the negative impact on the Foreign Service and the disadvantages to its members. It is also needed to provide a reasonable avenue of entry for those Civil Service employees who, early in their careers, wish to convert to the Foreign Service without unfairly disadvantaging Foreign Service personnel who entered at the beginning of the more rigorous and lengthy Foreign Service professional career path. It is important to have a clear understanding of, and written agreement to, the objectives of such a measure with the recognized employee representative. Any conversion program negotiated should be capped at the FS-03 (GS-12/4 and above and GS-13) level.

In a situation in which the Department is already warning mid-level FSOs that promotion in all career tracks will slow down because of numbers at current levels, the Department is increasing the number of FSOs in these same grades and cones through conversion of Civil Service employees.<sup>21</sup>

**Recommendation 6a:** The Director General’s assertion of authority to convert Civil Service employees to Foreign Service Officers and Foreign Service Specialists (FSS) in all skill codes not in deficit<sup>22</sup> should end immediately as there does not appear to be legal or regulatory authority for unilateral approval.

The objective is to ensure that any program for conversion from Civil Service to FSO and FSS does not reduce assignment and promotion opportunities for career Foreign Service personnel who are already serving.

The text of the program announcement for 2013 stated that, “As in previous years, the Department (the Director General) will make available a minimum number of conversion opportunities in all five Generalist (Foreign Service Officer) skill codes (cones) and in Specialist skill codes at designated levels, deficits notwithstanding.” This practice of creating Foreign Service positions for a conversion program, mostly above the FS-03 level, clearly disadvantages those in the Foreign Service whose careers are governed by distinct disciplines and relatively slower promotions.

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21 There is another problem with Civil Service to Foreign Service conversion programs. Given the small, select nature of the Career Foreign Service, advantages and benefits provided to those outside of the Service have a negative impact on all Foreign Service personnel and on the integrity of the system itself. Therefore, the terms of implementation of any such programs should be consistent with the Act and properly negotiated with AFSA. The existing program’s terms of implementation have not been properly negotiated, and an agreement not signed with the exclusive bargaining agent, AFSA, as required by Chapter 10 of the Act.

22 State Telegram 77194 of June 24, 2014.

**Recommendation 6b:** The Mustang Program and the Career Mobility Conversion Program should be merged and capped at the FS-03 level. All candidates, regardless of their personnel category, should compete with each other.

The objective is to consolidate and streamline these two conversion programs and level the playing field among competing personnel categories. Such a consolidation would achieve efficiency and improve transparency. The restriction to FS-03, as noted above, minimizes unfair consequences to those already in the Foreign Service who entered through the regular entry process and are at no higher than the FS-04 level.

The venerable “Mustang Program,”<sup>23</sup> originally for the conversion of Foreign Service Specialists to FSOs at the entry level, was expanded to include the Civil Service and, in 2013, employees who have completed the Presidential Management Fellows program.

**Recommendation 6c:** Suspend conversions of Foreign Service positions to Civil Service positions, in both geographic and functional bureaus, until a new process and criteria are negotiated with the employee representatives. Future programs should include provisions for pre-notification and justification of proposed position conversions and annual reporting of all position conversions by bureau, office, position and position grade.

The objective is to ensure that positions that clearly benefit from having Foreign Service field perspective and are needed to grow the strong senior Foreign Service bench necessary for the Department, are not taken away from the Foreign Service. The office director, deputy office director and desk officer positions are integral to professional development and upward mobility for FSOs and ensure the benefit of field perspective in these positions.

There is anecdotal evidence that Department senior managers are pressuring the geographic bureaus to convert Foreign Service positions to Civil Service positions. This is an “informal” activity that has an impact on promotion, assignment, and inspection systems. Given the private nature of the effort, hard evidence is rare. We have not encountered any similar efforts to ensure that Foreign Service field perspective and experience is represented adequately in the functional bureaus.

**Recommendation 7:** The Director General and AFSA should evaluate the pilot Overseas Development Program (ODP) and, if extended, agree on terms and conditions that preserve opportunities for the Civil Service and do not disadvantage the Foreign Service. The program should include a

23 State Department description of the Mustang Program (from State website): “The Mustang Program is a career mobility program for talented (and tenured) Civil Service and Foreign Service Generalist (FSO) career candidates. Applicants may apply in any one of the five generalist career tracks or “cones” (Management, Consular, Economic, Political or Public Diplomacy). The Mustang Program provides expedited entry for those who pass the Foreign Service Oral Assessment (FSOA) and who successfully update or obtain their security and medical clearances. The Mustang Program provides expedited entry as entry-level generalist career candidates for those who pass the Foreign Service Oral Assessment (FSOA), a suitability review, and who successfully update or obtain their security and medical clearances.

**Eligibility Requirements:** *In order to be eligible for consideration for the Mustang Program applicant must:*

1. Be a career employee of the Department of State in cases FP-06 through FP-04 or grades GS-5 through GS-12, at least 21 years of age, and have at least three years of service with the Department;
2. Have a bachelor’s or advanced degree relevant to the functions of the Foreign Service, or have taken and passed the annual Foreign Service Officer Test (FSOT); and,
3. Have completed an approved Foreign Service Institute, university or correspondence course comparable in difficulty and duration to one college semester and related to the generalist functional cone that the candidate wishes to enter.”

**guarantee that participants must return to State in a Civil Service position where they can apply the knowledge and experience gained in their ODP assignment.**

The objective is to ensure that if the pilot Civil Service ODP (that provides for a tour abroad) continues, that it remain a program to enhance the effectiveness of Civil Service employees in their Washington positions and does not become a pathway to conversion to the Foreign Service. To meet this objective, no more than 20 positions, primarily at the FO-03 but no higher than the FO-02 level, should be temporarily loaned at any one time to the program.

The current provision in the ODP for up to one year of language and other training, of which no more than six months can be language, is not an appropriate use of scarce resources. The General Accounting Office (GAO) has criticized the Foreign Service for not filling all Language-Designated Positions with qualified linguists. Positions identified for the ODP program should either not be language-designated, or if so, should only be available to those who already have language proficiency at the designated level.

The need to cap the program, if continued, at current levels takes into account other programs that provide career development opportunities such as Hard-to-Fill and programs run by individual bureaus.

**Recommendation 8:** As a part of the review and evaluation of position conversion processes, the Department should address the relative allocation of Foreign Service and Civil Service positions in functional bureaus and special offices in light of their respective roles (as identified in response to Section III, Recommendation 4).

The objective is to redress the significant loss of the Foreign Service perspective in virtually all of State's functional bureaus and provide opportunities to those FSOs who, as a result of State's recruitment efforts, are bringing to the Foreign Service a diverse array of academic and work experience in transnational issues.

For reasons that no doubt included the scarcity of Foreign Service personnel as well as their assignment preferences, functional bureaus now rely very heavily on Civil Service and contractual employees, with the Foreign Service component often in single-to-low double-digit percentages. Foreign Service practitioners of recent decades attest to this loss of the balance in functional bureaus.

An example of the effort to create a *de facto* quota for Civil Service personnel in regional geographic bureaus is the OIG's defense of a recommendation to the East Asia and Pacific Bureau (EAP) from a September 2013 report it issued, which reads as follows: "Informal Recommendation 6: The Bureau of East Asia & Pacific Affairs should review its current structure and convert at least one additional Deputy Office Director position from a Foreign Service position to a Civil Service position."

The rationale for this recommendation, according to the OIG, was that only 25 percent of the EAP Bureau's positions were designated Civil Service. While the Inspection team's argument for this conversion was to ensure continuity for support of EAP's multilateral work, its own staffing data showed the Civil Service presence in EAP domestic at 36 percent, a pool clearly sufficient in which to find an appropriate position to fulfill this objective without denying additional Foreign Service opportunities.

While the team leader of that inspection maintains that the specific informal recommendation to convert a Foreign Service deputy officer director position to a Civil Service position was not driven by this consideration, the OIG's reason was that this bureau had 25 percent of its positions classified for the Civil Service, the lowest of all regional bureaus. The problem is not, therefore, that particu-

lar OIG report but a climate that allows the easy assertion that the Civil-Foreign Service balance is a virtue independent of any larger purpose or rationale.

Another example is the recent conversion of an officer director position in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs PM (PM/RSAT) that has been designated for decades as a Foreign Service FE-OC position and from which most Foreign Service personnel have been promoted. The position was converted and filled by the Civil Service deputy in that office with the declared intention to make it a Senior Executive Service (SES) position. This was done even though the position already had been advertised as an open Foreign Service position and there were seven or eight bidders for it; at least two were at grade.

Another example is the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES) that several decades ago enjoyed a balance of Foreign and Civil Service positions. Coincident with the closing down of the Environment, Science, and Technology (EST) Global career track in the 1990s, OES is now primarily staffed by Civil Service personnel and contractors. Officers who have served in the bureau have said privately that they believe that the lack of Foreign Service perspective has weakened State's positions in international negotiations.<sup>24</sup>

**Recommendation 9:** The Department needs to share proposed conversions of Foreign Service and Civil Service positions with AFSA and the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), the employee exclusive representative units. (See also Section VI, Recommendation 23 regarding availability of data in general.)

The objective is to change the way the Department approaches consultation on one-on-one conversions to ensure timely consultation with employee representatives and transparency relating to proposals for conversions with the goal of improving Department personnel operations. Historically, it has not been the practice to consult on one-by-one conversions with the employee representatives. The result of that is that the relative change in State Department positions from FS to CS has gone relatively unnoticed despite its significant adverse effect on the Foreign Service. The results should be available not only to AFSA and AFGE but also to the public.

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<sup>24</sup> From a recently retired FSO with two decades of experience and multiple tours in OES and other functional bureaus; currently working as a global issues and environmental negotiator in multiple fora.

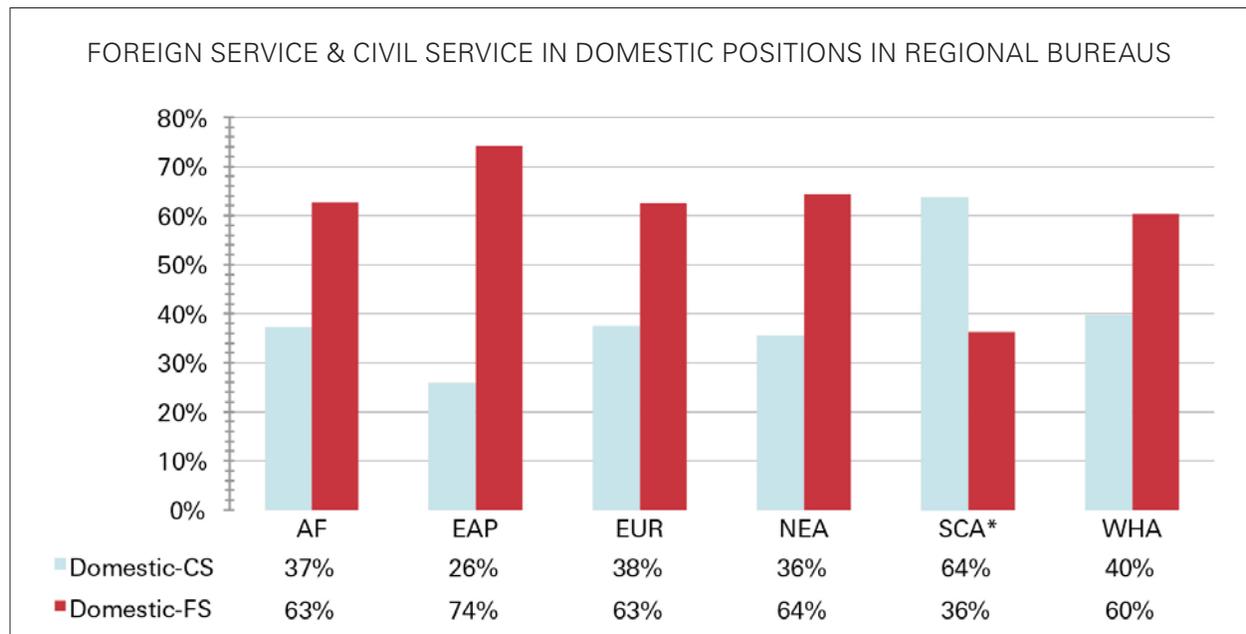


Figure 4. Foreign Service and Civil Service in Domestic Positions in Regional Bureaus. Source: Department of State HR/RMA; data as of March 31, 2014.<sup>25</sup>

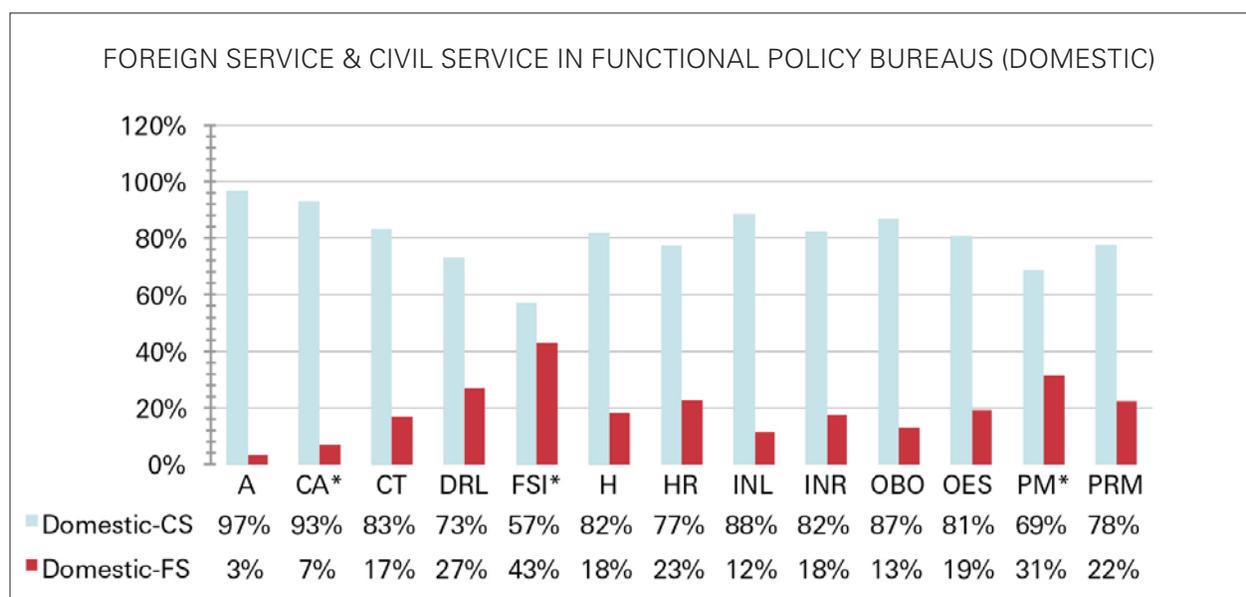


Figure 5. Foreign Service and Civil Service in Functional Policy Bureaus (Domestic) Source: Department of State HR/RMA, data as of March 31, 2014.<sup>26</sup>

25 The Civil Service numbers in SCA likely include 15 temporary limited Civil Service (“3161”) appointments and other Schedule Bs and Cs hired in S/SRAP.

26 The data for the Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA) includes the Passport Agency. The CA Bureau itself has 448 Civil Service and 152 Foreign Service employees, making it 75 percent Civil Service and 25 percent Foreign Service. According to HR information of March 2013, FSI had 695 total staff of which 173 were career Civil Service, 437 were excepted (GG) Civil Service (mostly language instructors) and 85 or 12 percent were Foreign Service (9 management positions and the balance instructors). Data for the Bureau of Political Military Affairs (PM) is not clear. The numbers are not high enough to include the approximately 90 POLADS but too high to reflect actual Foreign Service numbers without the POLADS.

## IV. Valuing the Professional Career Foreign Service

### A. Basic Skills of Diplomacy

The basic qualities needed to pursue US national interests in the diplomatic arena are those one might expect for a profession centered on advocacy, representation, reporting, and negotiation: intellectual curiosity; facility for both oral and written communication; interpersonal finesse that motivates colleagues and convinces interlocutors; the ability to recognize opportunity and the exercise of judgment in pursuing and capitalizing on it to solve problems. This latter quality is, firstly a product of familiarity with the theory, history and practice of international relations. It also bespeaks an understanding of diplomacy's role in shaping outcomes to thorny issues, as besets conducting relations among and between sovereign nations.

Secondly and equally important, it is a skill gained by interacting across a wide spectrum of people, places, and situations in the global community over an extended period of time. As the world has become more complex, the players more numerous, and the stakes ever higher, practitioners must have sustained experience that is both broad and deep to bring sound judgment and the best advice to decision makers. Policymakers need more support than ever to frame and manage policies in a complicated and unpredictable environment that is infused with culture, language, religion, and history, as well as economic, humanitarian, political, and security interests.

These skills are timeless. The global context in which diplomats must operate, however, is changing shape and form. Abroad, regional groupings are proliferating and playing a complementary role to traditional bilateral relationships as transnational issues increasingly create concern and occupy attention. At home, the Foreign Service is no longer the only game in town—since the 1970s, the line between domestic and foreign policy has blurred as domestic agencies develop assets and programs to deploy in support of global foreign policy objectives. The media, non-governmental organizations, banks, law firms, aid workers, business, single-issue advocacy groups and military veterans, among others, all claim a place at the international foreign affairs table.

Time and space for global activities have compressed dramatically, with continuous advances in technology that have tremendous impact on everyone, everywhere. In this rapidly evolving environment, professional diplomats must also manifest the skills to bring “together the unique contribution of civilians across the federal government”<sup>27</sup> by navigating the interagency maze. They must also constantly sketch the big policy picture that will emerge from piecing together the individual agency pieces of the policy puzzle.

State's first QDDR in 2010, modeled on the Defense Department's QDR, encapsulated much of this evolution in stating that, “Leading through civilian power means directing and coordinating the resources of all America's civilian agencies to prevent and resolve conflicts; help countries lift themselves out of poverty into prosperous, stable, and democratic states; and build global coalitions to address global problems.”<sup>28</sup> Abroad, the expansion of regional and sub-regional groupings provides a new focus and opportunity for diplomatic agility in coalescing alliances, agility to which diplomats need to devote enhanced attention.

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27 QDDR key outcomes: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/153109.pdf>.

28 Ibid.

## B. Diplomatic Readiness Compromised

*“The years since the passage of the 1980 Act have not been kind to the position of the Foreign Service within the Department of State. In 1988, the department had 9,323 full-time employees in the Foreign Service and 4,677 in the Civil Service...By 1998, the number of Foreign Service employees had dropped by 16 percent to 7,724 and the number of Civil Service employees had increased by more than 6 percent to 4,977. To repair the damage to the Foreign Service, Secretaries of State Colin Powell and Hillary Rodham Clinton undertook programs—the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative and Diplomacy 3.0, respectively—that secured Congressional support for increased funding and additional positions for Foreign Service and Civil Service employees in the Department of State.... By 2009, State employed 12,018 members of the Foreign Service and 9,487 members of the Civil Service...”<sup>29</sup>*

This welcomed increase in staffing, largely due to the DRI and 3.0 initiatives was, however, much kinder to the Civil Service, which grew by 103 percent over 1988, compared with the Foreign Service’s 30 percent growth during the same 21-year period. The readiness of both the Foreign Service and the Department to keep pace with these challenges has been compromised over the past three decades in numerous ways. Budgetary issues, as documented in previous Academy studies, are only one part of the problem. Beginning in the 1970s with the advent of greater numbers of employees deployed overseas by other agencies, State—the platform agency—had to devote more of its resources and people to administrative support functions.

The creation in 1995 of the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) attempted to redress the financial drain on State by requiring other agencies to pay the share of common management expenses they incurred at a post. However, several personnel reduction exercises from the 1970s through the mid-1990s tended to fall more heavily on career tracks such as political and economic, and not administration. Thus, there were incremental changes in the bureau and overseas staffing patterns of the 1960s (apart from Vietnam), 1970s and 1980s, but the Foreign Service workforce was fairly stable until the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991.

The first big dislocation came when the Department decided in 1991-92 in the wake of the fall of the U.S.S.R. that it would establish and staff more than 20 additional embassies and consulates from existing resources—even though Congress offered to provide additional funds. A few years later, Gramm-Rudman budget reductions restricted hiring to below attrition for an extended period of approximately seven years (1996-2003), occurring concurrently with the virtual shutdown of promotions at the upper mid-level and senior ranks. Lack of upward mobility led to the premature retirements of numerous experienced officers for time-in-class (TIC) provisions of the Act, which created further workforce dislocations in needed grade structures and skills.

Many FSOs, some on their introductory diplomatic assignments, served their country in priority posts in Afghanistan and Iraq. However, allocating so many personnel resources to these locations created numerous staffing shortfalls at home and abroad over an extended period of time. This laid the groundwork for serious distortions in career development, exacerbated by limiting tours to 12 months,<sup>30</sup> a span of time punctuated by several Rest and Recuperation and/or Family Visitation excursions. New officers had little time to absorb the basic workings of embassies (albeit, very atypical ones), make headway in their jobs, or absorb foreign cultures in depth.

<sup>29</sup> Harry Kopp, “Foreign Service, Civil Service: How We Got To Where We Are,” *Foreign Service Journal*, May 2014.

<sup>30</sup> During a similar period in the 1960s and 1970s, significant numbers of Foreign Service personnel, including junior officers on first and second tours, spent 18-month unaccompanied tours in Vietnam.

The net result has been erratic intake and flow-through, resulting in serious distortions in the shape of the Foreign Service. According to the DG's office, by 2011, 60 percent of the Foreign Service had less than 10 years in the Service, undermining its ability to provide as robust on-the-job training and mentoring as was previously available from an experienced mid- and senior level staff. This situation is currently a particularly acute problem at small posts where the grade structure may mean that there are few employees with more than 10 years of service.

State's bureaus are replete with recourse to short-term measures to meet their staffing needs, but those measures fall far short of a diplomatic capacity that best advances our national interests. As one OIG report noted in 2013,<sup>31</sup> **since at least 2004, more than 20 percent of one key regional bureau's staffing was non-permanent**; interns, fellows, and others on temporary duty performed necessary functions for which there were no permanent, direct-hire positions. A 2004 OIG report<sup>32</sup> on this same bureau noted that even with such temporary staffing, the bureau "strains to meet routine activity without virtually any surge capacity." Bureau staffing patterns were not made available to this project but it is safe to assume that other bureaus are likely required to similarly meet their operational staffing needs.

It is no surprise that Department managers, long on ingenuity and problem-solving and long accustomed to the exhortation to "do more with less," have been brilliant in finding temporary "solutions" for some of the staffing shortfalls. Innovations have filled some of the most gaping holes: expanding the numbers of Civil Service "excursion" tours for Hard-to-Fill positions (those with few or no bidders in the regular assignment cycle); a pilot program that allows Civil Service employees to bid on positions in the assignment cycle with the possibility of conversion to the Foreign Service; conversion of Foreign Service positions to Civil Service; vastly expanded use of contractors for both corporate and personal services (some are former FSOs and staff or former Civil Service employees); short-term appointments from outside the Department to staff political special issue appointees; the conversion of Foreign Service desk officer positions to Civil Service positions; various points of entry through the Pathways program; and recall of retired senior FSOs for senior Department positions. Many of these *ad hoc* solutions became embedded, outliving the problem addressed.

These measures are not permanent solutions to the swings and roundabouts deriving from broken government-wide budgeting, personnel, management and contracting processes cited by a wide variety of commentators.<sup>33</sup> One cost of this situation is the loss of country desk jobs in geographic bureaus,<sup>34</sup> an important part of the FSO career development ladder, to Civil Service employees who are not subject to tour-of-duty limitations. Thus, the jobs are effectively lost to the Foreign Service permanently.

When management tries to make a virtue out of institutionalizing stop-gap measures in the name of efficiency, homogenizing personnel systems or other concepts, they diminish both State's role and the diplomatic profession. The Department needs to put a premium on rational workforce development by encompassing the variety of experiences that senior FSOs bring to provide informed and judicious leadership in the policy realm.

31 Office of the Inspector General (OIG), Inspection of the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, ISP-I-13-39, September 2013.

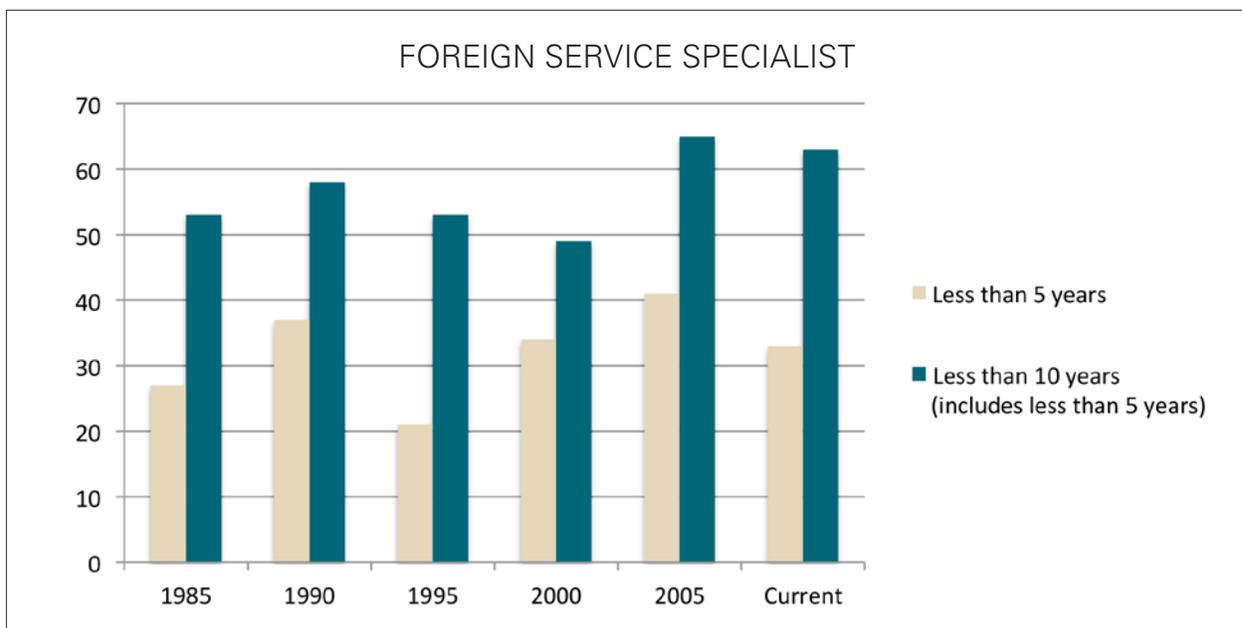
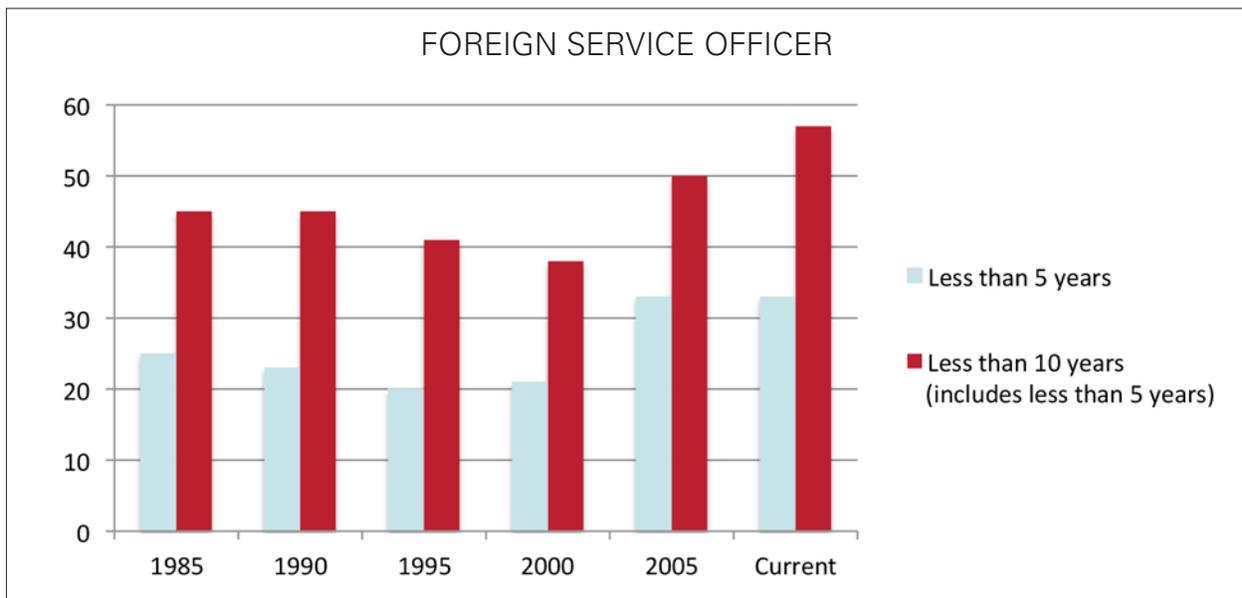
32 OIG, Inspection of the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, ISP-I-04-30, July 2013.

33 Inter alia, Booz Allen Hamilton report, The Impact of Recruitment Strategy on Fair and Open Competition for Federal Jobs, NAPA study, *Merit System Protection Board Report*, January 2015.

34 State HR e-mail to AFSA providing number of desk officers in geographic bureaus, March 2013. (Civil Service employees occupy 28 percent of desk officer positions.)

The Diplomatic Readiness Initiative of Secretary Powell and the Diplomacy 3.0 Initiative of Secretary Clinton moved the Department in the right direction of rational workforce development. To continue this process, the Foreign Service needs to develop the skills and commitment of its senior professionals to take on the responsibilities of maintaining and building the institution.

The US will continue to have worldwide responsibilities and interests. To continue to exercise its authority and power, the US must have a distinct diplomatic profession, defined as such. The Department also needs to establish self-policing mechanisms such as formal accreditation and certification, as do other professional bodies, and as do the great majority of the world’s diplomatic services.



Figures 6 and 7. Length of Time in Service: Foreign Service Officers and Specialists

## C. Background

Making the career Foreign Service a profession of high quality has two aspects: (1) setting and assuring that appropriate standards are maintained and enforced; (2) managing the Service as a career diplomatic service, as envisaged in successive Foreign Service Acts. The basic building blocks of such a service include clear standards or requirements that relate to the profession, purposeful education and training throughout the career which, if met and integrated with assignment patterns for both deeper and broader experience, lead to predictable career advancement.

Diplomacy today is virtually unique among professions in the US in its lack of stringent pre-entry requirements relating to its field, formal accreditation and the absolute requirement for continuing education, and/or re-certification during the career, according to a comparison of nine other professions.<sup>35</sup>

Professional development through the mid-level (up to and through FS-01 or GS-15/colonel equivalent) begins with a short orientation that is neither education nor training but rather familiarization; it is buttressed by the (usually) obligatory first or second consular assignment. Entry-level officers (ELOs) who are assigned to positions on the Secretariat staff, the Operations Center or as a staff aide to a Department principal officer, get an early, larger window on the Washington world. Attending the National Foreign Affairs Training Center (NFATC, commonly known by its former name, the Foreign Service Institute, or FSI) for short courses that range from one day to 2-3 weeks can provide glancing acquaintance with various issues.

On-the-job training remains perhaps the most important element of education, training and socialization to the demands of the profession, but is uneven and insufficient to ensure a robust diplomatic service. What is clearly lacking is a uniform approach to training and mentoring first and second tour officers. This is neither fair to individuals, nor to the Department, which needs all its officers to perform at their highest level. The consular experience could be leveraged by integrating its lessons, opportunities and relevance to diplomatic objectives into mentoring at post. Using various lessons from case studies at FSI, Department veterans value its testing of interpersonal and workplace skills immediately through instant exposure to foreigners, effective language skills, work and time management, sifting the important from the irrelevant under pressure, serving as liaisons with other Embassy departments, and supervising Foreign Service national local staff.

America's diplomatic service also suffers by comparison with the more rigorous entry requirements of other countries' diplomatic services, including testing, academic degrees, and longer initial education and professional development programs. Most foreign services require at least a year or two at the foreign affairs ministry before assignment abroad.<sup>36</sup>

At present, the major means of entry as an American FSO is by the Foreign Service Officer Test (FSOT), a written and oral exam that tests for general knowledge, interpersonal skills, ability to absorb information rapidly, and written and oral communication skills. The FSOT does not test for specific knowledge about the history and functions of diplomacy, foreign language ability, or an understanding of the requirements, special knowledge and skills needed to perform successfully as an American diplomacy professional. Nor does entry require pre-certification in any specific academic studies or body of knowledge relating to the diplomatic profession.<sup>37</sup> Since 2000, according to State

<sup>35</sup> Chart compiled by Stephanie Kinney for this project based on research done for AFSA.

<sup>36</sup> Stephanie Kinney, Annex D in "Forging a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Diplomatic Service for the United States through Professional Education and Training," American Academy of Diplomacy, February 2011.

<sup>37</sup> American Academy of Diplomacy, "Diplomatic Professional Education and Training" (DPET) study, 2010.

## COMPARATIVE PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Profession	Degree for Entry	Mastery Test	License	Cont. Ed Required	Renewable prof. Status	Levels of Prof. Recognition	Alt Entry to Prof.	Prof. Sanctions	Means of sanctions
Accounting	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	Peer panel
Architecture	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	State
Clergy (Presbyterian)	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	Rare	YES	“Church Court”
Law	YES	YES	YES	Varies	YES	YES	NO	YES	State Bar
Medicine (GP)	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	Medical Boards
Military Officer (Marines)	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	Court Martial
Teacher (Primary)	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES:	Low Evaluation scores
Teacher (High School)	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	Low evaluation
Social Work	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	Action on complaint
Diplomacy (USA)	NO	NO	“Sworn in”	NO	NOT during career	YES	YES	Ambiguous	Dept. of State and/or COM (pol/ career)
Diplomacy (Europe)	YES, plus foreign languages	YES	Sworn in & accredited	YES	Varies	YES	Very Rare	“Loss of confidence”	Foreign Ministry and/or COM

Figure 7. Comparative Professional Requirements

Department figures, over two-thirds of its entrants have post-graduate degrees; however, less than one-third of those degrees relate to international relations, economics, or development.<sup>38</sup>

The State Department is deservedly proud of its effort to deliver a Foreign Service that reflects diversity across a wide spectrum of background and experience. However, the call for “representativeness” in the Act in no way suggests diminishing professional standards and knowledge. Professional excellence and representativeness are not mutually exclusive. A key responsibility of a career service is to develop a senior bench and a mentoring class which, in addition to participating in policy formulation and leading policy implementation, should also develop and manage a diverse career service itself.

Foreign Service education is a critical area that has too long suffered from underinvestment. Over the past several decades, American universities and graduate schools have focused more on theories of international relations, international development or strategic communications rather than on the practice of diplomacy itself, area studies, culture and language.<sup>39</sup> The Department needs to continue and intensify its recent efforts to focus on strategic thinking and planning to strengthen our Foreign Service diplomacy skills. It is critical that we prepare FSOs to meet these challenges and take the necessary steps to evolve the Service for America’s diplomacy requirements in the 21st century.

To this end, professional education for all FSOs, regardless of their “specialization,” should refocus on and instill pride in the core function of the profession—diplomacy. It should also teach the skills needed to constantly strengthen the institutional infrastructure. FSOs should define themselves in the first instance as “diplomats” or “in diplomatic service” rather than as specialists in a “cone” or geographic area. While specialization at the entry and mid-level has merit, at the senior Foreign Service level, specialization cones should recede and simply be one of various attributes the FSO brings to the table. Multifunctional promotions should be re-introduced at the mid-level to supplement promotions by cone; promotion within the senior executive ranks should not be tied to cones.

Failure to prioritize and under-investment in diplomatic professional education constricts the possibilities for engaging proactively and contributes to over-reliance on short-termers in top positions rather than preparing officers for more senior responsibilities. The Foreign Service should be focused on the long-term, including a surge capacity to meet unforeseen contingencies. Who among Foreign Service leadership today is thinking seriously about recruitment, professional education, training and assignment patterns—all of which we need to build our best career diplomatic service?

The State Department could benefit from adapting the American military’s approach to performance evaluation and purposeful education, along with training at every level, as prerequisites to certification and promotion. Although the Department does not have the military’s luxury of scale to build in training requirements at every level and provide the resources to make them available, it could adopt a more structured, benchmarked system. ‘The Career Development Program (CDP), underway since 2005, recognizes that it must balance institutional needs and individual preferences. Career development should combine a broad range of experience with specialization to prepare senior officers for future challenges to effective diplomacy.

38 Jack Zetkolic, “Foreign Service Professionalism Project,” paper for the American Academy of Diplomacy, June 2014. (See Appendix D.) Additionally, there is no standardization of degree terminology in public policy schools.

39 Donna Oglesby, “A Fine Kettle of Fish: How Diplomats and Academics Teach Diplomacy,” paper presented to the British International Studies Association Conference, Dublin, Ireland, June 2014.

## U.S. ARMY OFFICERS UNDERGO

extensive training before they are commissioned. Upon entering active duty they attend a Basic Officers' Course lasting 3-5 months. At approximately five years of service, Army officers undergo six months of training at a captain's career course, followed by the Combined Arms and Service Staff School. Between 4-17 years of service, some officers attend civilian schooling to pursue a Master's or Ph. D. degree.

At approximately 12 years of service, all officers take the Command and General Staff College course, either in person or by distance learning. While these courses focus on technical and tactical topics, they also educate on non-military-specific topics such as management, human resources, planning, critical thinking, interagency coordination, etc. All officers wishing to be promoted must complete these courses.

At or just after promotion to colonel the highest ranked 35-40 percent of officers are assigned to a nine-month War College course, most by resident instruction, at either the National War College in Washington or the Army, Navy or Air War Colleges. This course is a pre-requisite for promotion to general officer.

*—Adapted from Naland, John, "Training America's Diplomats: Better than Ever but is it enough," Foreign Service Journal, October 2007*

## SUMMARY OF THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The current Career Development Program began in 2005-2006 as a way to develop the skills and experience needed for leadership within the Foreign Service. These skills, elaborated in the four principles of service below, are necessary for consideration for promotion into the Senior Foreign Service:

**1. Operational Effectiveness:** 3 tours or 6 years (major) dealing with one region or with IO and its overseas posts/positions and 2 tours or 3 years (minor) in a second region or in the bureaus within one of the following career fields: F, INR, H, S (including C, P, and D), J, T, M, E, or R. Super-hard language training held in-region may be counted toward a region.

Electives:        1) Professional development  
                      2) Cross-functional experience or out-of-cone assignment  
                      3) Operational/crisis response

**2. Leadership Effectiveness:** leadership and management training at each grade

**3. Language Proficiency:** one language at 3/3 tested within seven years before beginning the process for promotional consideration

**4. Service Needs:** service at a 15 percent or greater post (hardship) differential/danger pay post (one tour, after tenure, or two directed EL tours)

Five of seven electives also must be completed in order for promotional consideration. Each elective falls under one of the four principles listed above. The electives for each of the four principles are: Operational Effectiveness (Professional development, Cross-functional experience or out-of-cone assignment, operational/crisis response); Leadership Effectiveness (Significant and substantial supervisory responsibility); Language Proficiency (One additional language at 3/3 or one super-hard language at 3/3 or one language at 4/4); Service Needs (Service in an officially designated critical needs position, Service at an unaccompanied post).

## D. Entry-Level Recommendations

**Recommendation 10:** Realign the Foreign Service with the military and intelligence commissioned officer corps, with which it shares the risks and physical demands of overseas service, and reinstitute, through legislation if necessary, a lower maximum entry age ceiling to permit service of 20 years before mandatory retirement as a logical premise for the needs of a professional career.

The objective seeks to make possible the career concept for all commissioned FSOs. Those whose span of service is less than 20 years generally lack the opportunity to achieve using the competencies that a senior American diplomat desires and can ideally cultivate. It makes sound use of the funds invested in hiring and training an officer or specialist.

**Recommendation 10a:** Modify the Foreign Service entry examination to better balance knowledge that is fundamental to diplomacy—American political and economic history, culture, politics and international relations—with currently desired skill sets and a commitment to diversity.

The objective is to assure that a diverse group of new entrants, who represent a wide range of academic concentrations and work experience, are better prepared to represent their country and its interests. The increased common knowledge would both improve the effectiveness of new officers and enhance the true sense of “one mission, one team.” FSO recruitment has been very successful in choosing candidates from a wide array of professional backgrounds, as well as vigorously pursuing minority candidates. While progress must be made in the latter category, the US has a sufficient talent pool

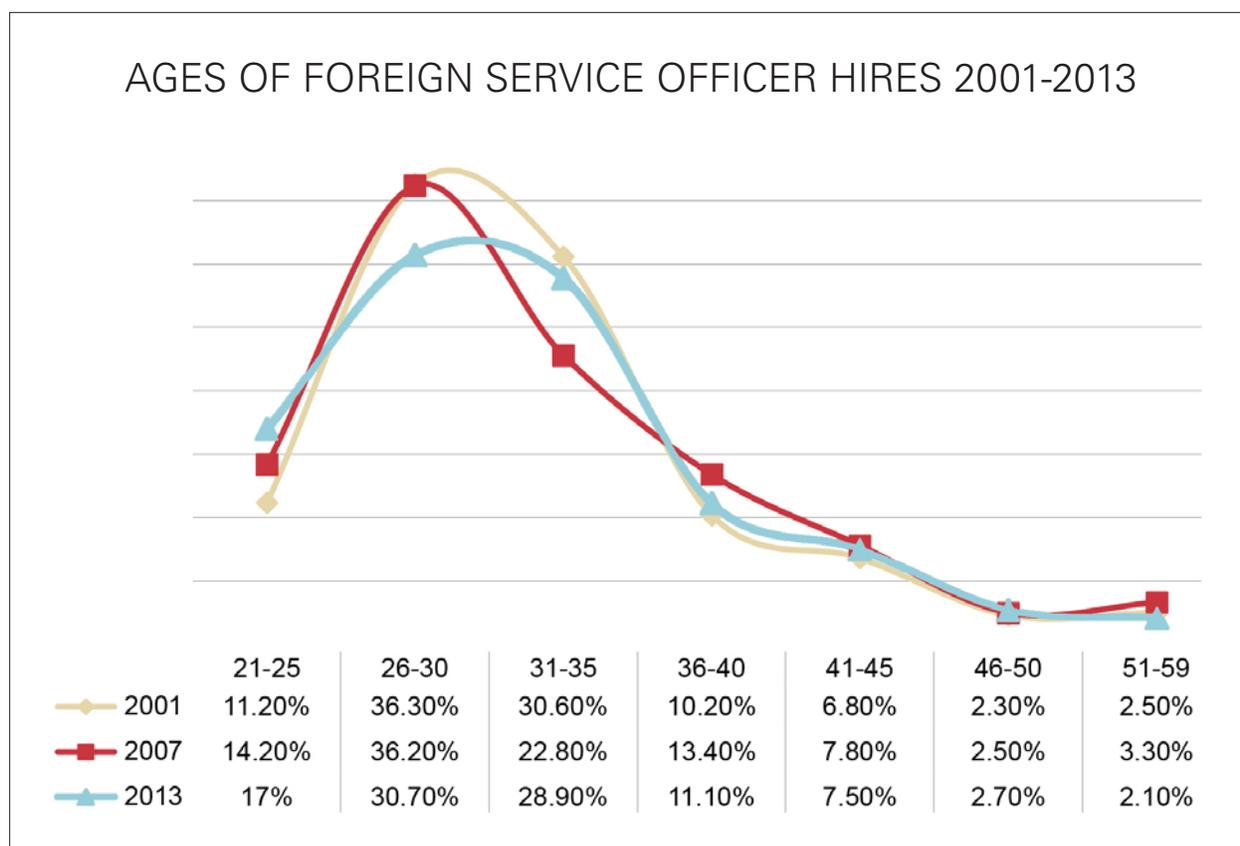


Figure 9. Ages of Foreign Service Officer Hires, 2001-2013. Source: Data provided by Department of State HR/RMA; April 2014.

from which to draw select applicants who are prepared to demonstrate relevant knowledge during the entry exam process.<sup>40</sup>

**Recommendation 10b:** Provide greater incentives to acquire language proficiency prior to entry, reflecting the greater level of familiarity with a wider range of foreign languages among applicants to today's Foreign Service. Institute a monetary language differential determined by testing during orientation that would be sustained over a career by periodic testing and related assignments. This would replace the current language bonus system of added points on the entry register.

The objective is to provide greater recognition to the importance of foreign language skills in diplomacy. The Office of Recruitment has successfully promoted diversity across a variety of factors; greater numbers of ELOs are testing in hard languages. A pre-entry telephone test is not as reliable a proficiency test as the standard full test administered by FSI during orientation. Bringing in entrants with greater language capability reduces the amount of time needed to achieve professional competency; that could make training hours and money available for other education and training priorities. The result of the new incentive program could be cost neutral.<sup>41</sup>

**Recommendation 10c:** In order to achieve a rigorous and realistic tenure process, extend the period for the first review for tenure of ELOs from the current as early as 36 months to a maximum of 54 months. In cases where no language training is required, or if there are multiple Employee Evaluation Reports (EERs) by multiple evaluators covering different functions, candidates could be reviewed at 48 months.

This objective aligns diplomacy with other professions that require a significant apprenticeship period.<sup>42</sup> Providing more rigor and credibility to the tenure process requires that ELOs be evaluated when they have had sufficient time for both the ELO and the Department to confirm readiness and suitability for professional certification as diplomats. The current practice of tenure as early as 30 months does not meet those objectives nor is it always fair. Statistics suggest that tenure is *pro forma* because those who are not tenured by the third try within 10 years are only between 0-2 percent of the population.

If the pre-tenure process was structured with greater rigor, its 54 months should provide the education/study and training necessary to equip all ELOs with "diplomatic literacy." Included in that are area studies, the acquisition or deepening of language skills, global issues, science and technology, and exposure to interagency and multi-lateral dynamics. Attaining tenure would require completing the A-100 orientation, basic consular training, any required language training, and a six-month work-study "practicum" (detailed in Recommendation 10e).

**Recommendation 10d:** Treat the initial pre-entry "cone" selection as a temporary designation for purposes of recruitment; then, as part of the tenure decision, confirm or change designations based on the informed interest and performance of the employee and the needs of the Service.

The objective is to correct the fiction that both the candidate and State can make an informed, rational pre-entry decision on career tracks. Even the best website information and the oral assessment cannot adequately confirm the appropriateness of pre-entry career track choice. There can be no substitute for the evaluation both by State and the officer of actual experience in different functions. Decisions should be made on the basis of informed interest of the employee and the needs of the Service.

40 Zetkubic, Appendix D.

41 Ibid, "Foreign Language Skills" section.

42 Kinney, paper on requirements of other professions.

Ideally, major and minor “specialization tracks” should be designated, or at least confirmed at tenure, not when registering to take the exam when the applicant has little basis for informed selection. This should occur only after the ELO and the Department have had the opportunity to find the best fit for the officer and the service. Specialization should apply mainly at the mid-level and be dropped entirely in the senior ranks.<sup>43</sup>

**Recommendation 10e:** As an extension of the present introductory orientation, assign Entry-Level Officers (ELOs) to a State bureau (preferably related to their onward assignment) for a six-month professional development “practicum” before going overseas. This recommendation requires the willingness of management to allocate sufficient Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions to cover the practicum period.

The objective is to provide ELOs with some introductory knowledge of the Department and the Washington environment before they depart for a first overseas tour; those who have had early Washington experience declare it “invaluable.”

The practicum should cover the basics of diplomatic tradecraft and how to apply and adapt it to multi- and bilateral diplomacy, the organization and functioning of the State Department, and interagency dynamics. The practicum would be a work-study program that would assign ELOs to an office in State working under the supervision of an FSO-2 or higher level officer. The office director or deputy director would provide mentoring. Participants would be assigned to Washington so there would be no costs related to temporary assignments, such as *per diems*.

The practicum would combine assignment to a State Department office with the employee’s start of work toward completion of a Certificate in Diplomatic Studies and Practice. The work would encompass both required credits at FSI and electives that can be completed online during ongoing assignments.

The ELO would work four days (32 hours) per week and spend one day per week at FSI for coursework covering the functions of diplomacy. Such study would provide purpose and understanding to the work experience. Electives, including online courses, would be selected from a menu that allows flexibility for the different levels of knowledge that ELOs bring to the practicum. Instruction teams would include both academics and experienced practitioners.<sup>44</sup> FSI would need additional funds and personnel to carry out this recommendation.

**Recommendation 11:** Include in the tenure process beginning work on a Foreign Service Institute Certificate in Diplomatic Studies and Practice to inculcate the basics of diplomacy as a profession. During the tenure period, ELOs can start earning required credits toward this Certificate at FSI, as part of the study part of the practicum and continue with elective courses online. The Certificate would need to be completed for promotion to FS-01 (see Recommendation 14).

The objective is to provide grounding in the structure of diplomatic practice for professional diplomats in topics such as: the Vienna and Geneva conventions; treaties, alliances, negotiations, and agreements; other aspects of diplomatic law and practice; strategy; grand strategy; public diplomacy; finance and macro-economics, coercive diplomacy (sanctions); science and technology; the roles of the US armed forces, combatant commands, homeland security, the intelligence community; and related topics, including contemporary events and transnational trends of consequence. The Certificate would have to be completed in order to compete for promotion to FSO-1. This program equips aspiring American professional diplomats with a common frame of reference and professional certification.

<sup>43</sup> Cones have been abolished and reinstated several times since their inception in the early 1970s, according to a paper prepared by the State Department Office of the Historian in 2006.

<sup>44</sup> Academy, DPET report.

## E. Mid-Level Recommendations

### 1. Discussion

The strength of State's mid-level cadre determines the quality of the Service and its capacity to advise on and implement policy, and to assure a strong future diplomatic bench. The four areas for development and management of mid-level officers are: (1) purposeful professional education; (2) assignment patterns to gain both broad experience and specialized expertise; (3) effective mentoring by their supervisors and of their subordinates; and (4) performance evaluation and promotion. This education should aim to enhance and sustain traditional skills and knowledge but also to develop new technological communications, social media and leadership skills for current and future Department workplaces.

### 2. Recommendations

**Recommendation 12:** Continue to emphasize the responsibilities of supervisors to mentor subordinates professionally and constructively.

**Recommendation 12a:** Develop a supervisory-mentoring module in both classroom and distance learning format for mid-level management based on the study of effective management and mentoring techniques adapted to the Foreign Service, that covers the responsibilities of supervision, resource management and mentoring of subordinates.

The objective is to improve the professional capacities of the Service by building on existing Department training for supervisory responsibilities to include mentoring as an essential part of professional development for supervisors. It is also to create a module to deliver norms and best practices for mentoring by more experienced practitioners and to codify informal on-the-job training. More systemic attention to stronger supervisory and management skills will be necessary for advancement at and beyond the mid-level.

**Recommendation 12b:** Strengthen the existing mentoring component of the deputy chief of mission/principal officer (DCM/PO) course to reinforce the role and responsibility of DCMs/POs for mentoring ELOs and mid-level officers.

The objective is to emphasize the importance of and responsibilities for mentoring of the DCMs/POs as the key and senior supervisors and mentors at post. Mentoring would be defined in terms of best practices, not functioning as a patron. Although the responsibility for mentoring is well-established, we could make it a major item in the Employee Evaluation Report.

**Recommendation 13:** Refine and expand the existing Career Development Program (CDP) to improve the preparation of Foreign Service Officers for broad senior supervisory responsibilities.

**Recommendation 13a:** Within the roadmap in the existing CDP,<sup>45</sup> the Department should emphasize a mix of assignments for all mid-level 0-2 and 0-3 officers in both regional and functional specialization related to their primary and/or secondary career tracks.

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<sup>45</sup> Survey of former Directors General.

The objective is to expand the breadth, understanding, and capacity of mid-level officers. Once they are tenured and grounded in the craft of diplomacy, mid-level officers should develop, through a variety of assignments, depth in a specific area or function and a broader exposure to diplomatic practice. This will help prepare them for senior service responsibilities in policy formulation, management and interagency leadership.

**Recommendation 13b:** Re-establish the multi-functional promotion track to stimulate development of broad, integrated policy formulation and interagency leadership expertise to provide additional incentives and reward to the CDP, which requires multi-functional service in a variety of areas and specializations.

The objective is also to offer multi-functional promotion consistent with the CDP and to recognize the importance of balancing broad management and deep specialization to advance into the senior ranks. The multi-functional promotion opportunity facilitates the understanding that both skill sets are important for senior Foreign Service positions. Multi-functional promotion enshrines the CDP's objectives and should replace the current class-wide promotion.

**Recommendation 13c:** Consistent with the intent of the Career Development Program, require officers seeking promotion into the senior Foreign Service to first complete at least one assignment in either another foreign affairs agency, or in a functional (global policy) bureau or regional affairs office in geographic bureaus as well as program direction at State. (The requirement would take effect in 10 years to allow time to meet it). As resources permit, add assignments to another Foreign Affairs agency.

The objective is to have FSOs who aspire to executive leadership seek assignments outside their primary career track/specialization. The multi-functional promotion track should become the primary path to entry into the senior Foreign Service ranks. In order to succeed as a Department leader and in interagency discussion—and, when called upon, as an ambassador—all officers competing for promotion into the senior Foreign Service will need both specialized expertise as well as broad and deep experience acquired through a variety of successive assignments.

This Recommendation complements Recommendation 6c in Section III, B calling for the restoration of Foreign Service positions in functional bureaus.

**Recommendation 14:** In order to be eligible for promotion to FSO-1, require that an officer must have completed the FSI Certificate in Diplomatic Studies begun in the pre-tenure period (see Recommendation 11 in the preceding Entry-Level section).

The objective is to ensure that senior Foreign Service candidates have demonstrated that they are grounded fully in the theory and practice of diplomacy as evidenced by completion of the FSI Certificate (M.A. equivalent). Adherence to this requirement ensures that State's senior Foreign Service leadership will have the same foundational knowledge approximate to and required of the Department's Pickering and Rangel Fellows.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Pickering Fellows are undergraduate and graduate students in academic programs relevant to a diplomatic career who receive mentoring, professional development, and financial support while preparing to enter the Foreign Service in return for a minimum five years of service (<http://www.woodrow.org/fellowships/pickering/info>). The Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Program selects 30 Fellows annually for support through two years of graduate study, internships, and professional development. Fellows successfully completing the program and Foreign Service entry requirements receive Foreign Service appointments (<http://www.rangelprogram.org>).

## V. Defining and Improving Opportunities for Professional Civil Service Employees

### A. Discussion

We believe there can be no truly successful Department of State unless all elements of the Department’s work force—Foreign Service, Civil Service, non-career appointees and locally engaged staff—are able not only to aspire to the highest standards of professionalism in supporting our nation’s foreign policy, but also have the institutional flexibility and support to allow them to reach their full potential. Although this report is primarily focused on the Foreign Service profession, the chances of success are exponentially greater when we can also free our colleagues in the Civil Service from constraints and offer them opportunities to better support the Department.

We are not experts in the Civil Service and many will say that the following recommendations are impossible to implement because “OPM will never accept them” or “the Department is too constrained by existing law.” Both of these may be true, but we believe that the time has come to try to change the course of Civil Service careers at State for the better of all Department functions in the national interest. Today is the day to start.

The Department does not have a formal policy articulating the respective roles of the Civil Service and Foreign Service in Washington (see Section III, Recommendation 4). In an agency with two different systems, such a formal policy is imperative. The alternative is *ad hoc* decisions based on expediency and personal preferences that often look like “cronyism” rather than in the national interest. Currently decisions on which personnel system to use result from a wide variety of factors.<sup>47</sup>

The traditional rationale is that the Civil Service role is to provide technical expertise and continuity. This rationale needs to be reviewed and probed in light of developments over the past 30 years and the current need for technical expertise. What specific detailed, operational technical expertise do Civil Service Foreign Affairs officers bring? What sort of continuity are we speaking of and how do bureaucracies provide real institutional continuity?

The role of the Civil Service in agencies other than State is to be responsible for managing the agency, formulating policy and executing day-to-day operations. State stands apart among US government agencies in having a “unique mission with a unique workforce.” Of the Department’s 24,767 American citizen employees, 13,860 constitute an excepted service (the Foreign Service). The Civil Service component numbers 10,907.<sup>48</sup> According to a recent study, approximately 700 Civil Service positions are in foreign affairs categories, weighted toward grades GS-14 and 15 of which some 400 or so are Schedule B, a non-competitive category discussed elsewhere in this report.<sup>49</sup>

The role of the Civil Service in the State Department in Washington and elsewhere in the US is to enable and facilitate the Department in carrying out the policy, management, and operational aspects of its mandate, which is “to serve effectively the interests of the United States and to provide the highest caliber of representation in the conduct of foreign affairs.” (Foreign Service Act of 1980–Sec. 101, b.10). Additionally, as our foreign policy has involved responsibilities in more technical

47 See section IV B and Survey: Former Directors-General, covering a span of 26 years, July 2014.

48 State Department, Bureau of Human Resources, Fact Sheet as of March 31, 2014.

49 Russell Rumbaugh and John Cappel, “Exploration of the Civil Service,” paper for the American Academy of Diplomacy, April 2014.

fields, senior Civil Service experts have become a repository of knowledge and skills in areas such as arms control, climate change, and communications policy.

The Act also seeks “increasing efficiency and economy by promoting maximum compatibility among the agencies authorized by law to utilize the Foreign Service personnel system, as well as compatibility between the Foreign Service personnel system and other personnel systems of the Government.”<sup>50</sup> Designed primarily to foster harmonization among the Foreign Service, cohorts of the then-five foreign affairs agencies (State, USAID, Agriculture, Commerce, and USIA—now integrated into State), this section of the Act calls only for *compatibility* between the two distinct systems of the Department, not *homogenization*. In today’s complex foreign affairs environment, distinctions have become blurred, creating confusion and some tension about the complementary roles of the Foreign and Civil Services in advancing diplomatic objectives.

The career Civil Service is facing challenges of its own: increasing politicization through non-career appointments; diminishing collegiality attributable in part to physical dispersion; recurring budget uncertainties and the influx of contractors throughout the Department; increased non-competitive hiring; lack of focus on and options for career development; and limited and uneven training opportunities. Not least is the frustration engendered by the lack of a process for upward mobility in the Civil Service rank-in-job system. This is especially evident in contrast to the opportunities, and indeed the necessity, for upward mobility centered in the Foreign Service rank-in-person system.

The creation in 1978 of the Senior Executive Service (SES), although providing for rank-in-person, did not contain any concept of term limits on position incumbency, competitive or mandatory retirement provisions. The SES system failed to deliver on the vision of “a unified, government-wide cadre of federal career executives with shared values, a broad perspective and solid leadership skills.”<sup>51</sup> This has produced a corps of senior officers who can stay indefinitely in positions but have no career ladder to aspire to. This entrenched lack of upward mobility is inherently harmful to the employee, to State’s human resource development needs, and sometimes to the host bureau. The lack of opportunities for career advancement is a key cause of frustration for mid-level Civil Service employees.

In recent years the Department has devised mechanisms to allow greater fluidity between the Foreign and Civil Services. Blurring the distinctions between them is a disservice to both. Much of the impetus for that blurring derives from the distortions of the Foreign Service workforce over the past 20 years, caused by staffing shortfalls and promotion issues (as discussed in Section IV, B). Now that the problems that arose from those situations are receding, it is time to review conversion and address the issue of career development for Civil Service employees in a different manner.

## B. Recommendations

**Recommendation 15:** Centralize management of Senior Executive Service (SES) employees in the Human Resources Bureau (HR) to provide mobility, professional education and training, and career development, rather than following the current practice of leaving those responsibilities to individual bureaus.

The objective is to provide SES Civil Service employees the benefit of centralized management rather than have them continue to follow the current decentralized system with its inherently static character. They are dependent on the bureau in which they are situated for information and opportunity

<sup>50</sup> Foreign Service Act of 1980-Sec. 101, b.9.

<sup>51</sup> Booz Allen Hamilton, “Interaction of Political and Career Leaders,” study for NAPA, Memorandum II, Recommendation 1v, <http://www.memostoleaders.org/interaction-political-and-career-leaders>.

for education and training. Nor do they have career development advisors in HR. The record of individual bureaus in paying attention to their interests and needs varies greatly.

Central management offers the possibility of devising a pilot system for greater mobility between SES positions within a group of bureaus and offices. The National Academy for Public Administration's Memo to Leaders #2 recommends that to "ensure development of career personnel capable of handling key operational roles, OPM should expedite a program to provide development opportunities for qualified career personnel from entry through the SES."

**Recommendation 16:** Within the Bureau of Human Resources, establish access to an orientation course immediately on entry and provide formal career development counseling for mid- and junior level Civil Service employees, integrated with the annual Civil Service employee evaluation exercise.

The objective is to provide junior and mid-level Civil Service personnel with greater attention to their introduction to the Department and better management of their career education and development. The infrequency of Civil Service orientation courses means that new employees may wait well into their first year of employment before undergoing orientation. This situation should be remedied.

HR has established a commendable informal mentoring program for Civil Service employees. It should build on this program and also create a structured career development counseling program for those employees.

**Recommendation 17:** Establish a new option for Civil Service employees: a Career Policy Program for domestic positions incorporating rank-in-person, mobility, and up-or-out competitive promotions that allows qualified Civil Service employees to bid on up to 10 percent of Foreign Service domestic positions on the current Open Assignments list.

The objective is to offer qualified Civil Service employees the opportunity to broaden their experience in the Department by rotating through a variety of positions. This program must be conditional on the acceptance of norms that govern Foreign Service assignments, is of a scale that should not create inordinate assignment problems for FSOs, and avoids the difficulties that ensue when Civil Service employees who have no finite assignment length encumber Foreign Service positions that normally have a defined tour-of-duty. Accepting this recommendation will require a larger effort to review position classifications at State (see Recommendation 18).

## VI. State's Workforce Development, Organization and Management

### A. Discussion

State is modernizing and upgrading its physical facilities in Washington and overseas. It is embracing new technologies and communications, and is making solid strides in improving education and training. FSI and its director deserve plaudits for their receptivity to change, enthusiastic embrace of new technology, and willingness to evaluate and implement new ideas in the design and delivery of education and training. FSI needs the full support of Congress and the Department for resources to continue and expand on these laudable efforts.

However, the focus of this project is on the need for State to address the development and management of its human resources. Sustaining and strengthening professional identities includes instilling members of the professional cadres with a strong sense of their respective roles in supporting State's mission. The roles and expectations of the Civil Service need to be examined (See Section III, B, Recommendation 4). For FSOs, basic to inculcating *esprit de corps* is an appreciation for the icons of the profession<sup>52</sup> and for the special obligations that membership in the profession incur. Those include a disciplined approach to worldwide availability, as well as the benefits that flow from being an accredited, recognized diplomatic practitioner.

The following recommendations concern steps that State should take to extend the modernizing and upgrading of the policies that govern its human resources.

### B. Recommendations

**Recommendation 18:** The Department should undertake a comprehensive review of the entire system of human resources management, including recruitment, position creation and classification methodology, staffing, assignment and promotion.

The objective is to achieve sustainable personnel systems at State that meet the needs of American diplomacy. The whole system of recruitment, staffing, assignment and promotion appears to be so full of *ad hoc* changes over time that it no longer constitutes a coherent system, much less one that can meet current and future challenges to diplomacy.

Workforce and budget planning are only as good as the foundation provided by accurate needs assessments, as reflected in State's position descriptions. The computerized software that manages these various categories appears to be no longer state-of-the-art. Upgrading the technology would mean greater efficiency and transparency.

In order to deal with anomalies, deficiencies, and discontinuities, State should undertake a major review of how to conduct all personnel job creation, recruitment, hiring, and personnel management. As it now operates, the processes are complex and opaque. It is not a single system, but rather

<sup>52</sup> Don M Snider, "Modern Professions within the US Government: Are there Lessons from the US Army?," US Military Academy, paper presented at AFSA on May 29, 2014.

a patchwork of plans, practices, and authorities. Multiple hiring authorities and procedures provide flexibility but also lack transparency, sow confusion, and put our merit-based systems at risk.

The methodology of creating position descriptions needs to respect the distinctive roles of the Civil and Foreign Services and reflect the dynamic environment in which State operates. This methodology also has an impact on the calculation of promotion opportunities that may vary greatly from year-to-year. Fluctuating promotion numbers are one-half of the equation; the other is immutable time-in-class provisions, a conflict which causes serious anomalies in career progression and retention.

**Recommendation 18a:** The Department should examine all programs that seek to remedy short-term staffing needs, such as the Hard-to-Fill (HTF)<sup>53</sup> and Limited Career Extension (LCE)<sup>54</sup> programs, to determine their utility and effectiveness in identifying and resolving long-term human resource needs.

The objective is to consolidate, in a thorough evaluation, the various programs that have developed over recent decades to deal with real shortages of FSOs and provide for the legitimate needs of Civil Service personnel. Positions designated HTF should genuinely be the most needed to accomplish the posts' objectives. Disciplined efforts should be made to fill them with qualified FSOs so that HTF positions cease to be a static feature of the personnel system. Officers offered LCEs should only be those very few, if any, who provide some unique experience or skill that would otherwise be lost in the near-term to the Service with their departure.

The DG needs to ensure that HTF positions and a very small number of LCE offers are determined correctly and transparently, jointly by the central personnel system and the relevant regional or functional bureau, based upon appropriate evaluation of need and available alternatives.

**Recommendation 19:** NFATC (FSI) should explore closer relationships with analogous institutions such as military senior service colleges and the intelligence community's National Intelligence University. As a long-term vision, (1) postulate the establishment of the National Diplomatic University at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center and (2) form a closer and more formal relationship among the cluster of national security universities.

The objective is to provide the focus and resources for serious professional education and training from entry throughout a Foreign Service career. State should examine working more closely with the leadership of similar senior educational institutions in the US government throughout the Departments and agencies that make up the national security establishment. The purpose would be to understand course offerings, make maximum use of existing courses and find ways, where they exist, to reduce duplication and overlap. These Departments and agencies should include: Defense, Homeland Security, the intelligence community and appropriate portions of Justice/FBI and Treasury.

A diplomatic university at NFATC would manage and deliver the professional education needed to prepare FSOs and staff to meet the challenges and requirements of 21st century diplomacy. NFATC has already begun to obtain academic accreditation for individual courses; it would need to significantly increase this effort in order to provide more opportunity for employees to gain credits for degrees they wish to pursue, as well as for graduate degrees the new university should confer. It would

<sup>53</sup> In the course of the annual assignment cycle the regional bureau determines which of the positions on the bid list, having three or fewer qualified bids, they wish to propose for the HTF exercise. Usually 50-60 positions are identified from the open assignments list as HTF and are advertised to Civil Service employees. Even if these HTF determinations result in assignments, a number of overseas positions will remain unfilled.

<sup>54</sup> The Department has exercised its appointing authority to offer LCEs to selected senior officers facing Time-in-Class mandatory retirement under up-or-out provisions of the Act.

continue the range of training and language instruction it currently provides to the government's foreign affairs community, without prejudice regarding the sending of Foreign Service employees to private and public universities for selected training.

FSI should consider the steps needed to become accredited and staffed with Foreign Service diplomats and Civil Service instructors, both with a talent for adult education.<sup>55</sup> If State aspires to lead the entire interagency process, it should play an equally major role in education of senior interagency leaders, beginning with its own personnel. We recognize the process of accreditation and, much more importantly, that the granting of a Master's degree involves a multi-year commitment and significantly greater funding.

**Recommendation 20:** Each bureau should designate a career Foreign Service Deputy Assistant Secretary to be responsible for staff training and to oversee professional education, with responsibility for liaison with the HR and with the director of the NFATC.

The objective is to emphasize the importance the Department attaches to professional development and ensure that a FS DAS exercises responsibility for this as well as for staff training. Responsibilities include monitoring the knowledge and skills that jobs require, assuring that supervisory officers are meeting their mentoring responsibilities, and that both Foreign Service and Civil Service officers and staff are permitted time to undertake education and training deemed appropriate and necessary. This responsibility should be an integral part of the work requirements and performance evaluation.

**Recommendation 21:** HR should exercise ultimate authority for the development and assignment of Foreign Service employees in order to ensure that the long-term needs of the employee and the Service are met, as well as those of the bureaus.

The objective is to restore the authority and expertise of the Office of Career Developments and Assignments (CDA) to achieve greater discipline and pay greater attention both to the needs of the Service and to the career development of employees. The needs of the Service are equally as important as the wishes of the employee or the bureaus and the interests of all parties are best protected through a centrally managed, transparent personnel system staffed in the main by Foreign Service personnel.

The assignment process was designed to give voice to employees, bureau requirements and needs of the institution. The DG's authority over the management of the Department's personnel system is not in dispute.

In recent years, however, by far the major voice has been that of the bureaus as the central personnel function (HR) has ceded greater responsibility for and control over the annual assignment process to the bureaus' Assistant Secretaries and executive directors. The host bureau's "handshake" with the candidate employee has become the dominant feature in the assignments process, leaving as secondary considerations the employee's career development, State's own human resources goals, and needs of the Service.

The result is a process that is duplicative and over-bureaucratized, taking up an excessive amount of time for both the employee and the Department. The bureaus rightfully have a voice in the process. They can express it through their representatives in the HR assignment function without replicating much of the activity in each bureau. This recommended reassertion of central HR authority requires competent Foreign Service employees who complete their assigned tours in HR. State's

<sup>55</sup> As of March 2013, FSI had 173 Civil Service staff; 85 Foreign Service staff of which 76 are instructors and nine are Executive/Management administration; 437 Civil Service (GG excepted service), mostly language instructors. Sources: Department of State, Foreign Service Institute.

ability to develop and sustain effective human resources as well as implement many of this project's recommendations requires such central authority.

**Recommendation 22:** Design an online course in US diplomatic history and practice for Foreign Service and Civil Service employees and others in the foreign affairs community throughout the US government. Draw on case studies from American diplomacy, developed by a combination of academic experts, master practitioners of diplomacy and individuals experienced in online learning.

The objective is to provide a common frame of reference and understanding of diplomacy for all parts of the US government, via an online course that is compelling, concise, and easily accessible. State should promote the finished product to all other agencies that deploy staff overseas.

All branches of government need to have a broader comprehension of the mission and the craft of diplomacy among those who work within the interagency process.

**Recommendation 23:** In recognition of its obligations to the Civil Service and Foreign Service exclusive employee representatives, State should report annually to them and to the Congress a greater array of personnel data to ensure that actions affecting Civil Service and Foreign Service positions and employees are transparent (see also Recommendation 9, Section III).

The objectives are (1) to comply with the legislative requirements outlined in 22USC 4173 for consultation and timely information sharing with the exclusive employee representatives<sup>56</sup> and (2) to provide transparent information on which rational long-term decisions on Department staffing can be made, consistent with the provisions of the Act. Transparency also aids in maintaining the trust of employees that the institution operates with equity and fairness according to established rules and regulations and negotiations with the employee bargaining units.

Examples are: the grades and positions of all Civil Service personnel converted to the Foreign Service; Schedules A through D appointments by grade and position, the attrition rates and hiring rates of FSOs, FSSs, and Civil Service personnel for that year; numbers and positions of recalled and rehired Foreign and Civil Service; numbers of contractors; and such other personnel data as are requested.

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<sup>56</sup> "... that the Secretary shall consult with the exclusive employee representatives of the Foreign Service in each agency with respect to steps being taken to implement this chapter .... To that end each such exclusive representative shall have timely access to all relevant information at each stage. Each such report shall include the views of each such exclusive representative on any and all aspects of the report and the information contained in such report."

## Appendix A

### Presidents are breaking the U.S. Foreign Service

*By Susan R. Johnson, Ronald E. Neumann, and Thomas R. Pickering*

*Published: April 11, 2013 Washington Post*

American diplomacy is facing a crisis. The professional career service that is intended to be the backbone of that diplomacy no longer claims a lead role at the State Department or in the formulation or implementation of foreign policy. The U.S. Foreign Service is being marginalized—just as military efforts to resolve major diplomatic challenges in Iraq and Afghanistan have failed, and as diplomacy has become both more complex and more important to our national security and prosperity.

The Foreign Service is being relegated to a secondary status: staff support to political elites who set and manage policy. Long-held concepts about the disciplined, competitive, promotion-based personnel system are being called into question.

The Rogers Act established the Foreign Service as a merit-based, professional diplomatic service in 1924. This concept was reemphasized in 1946, after the U.S. experience in World War II ratified the need to model the Foreign Service's personnel system after that of the military rather than the domestic civil service. The 1980 Foreign Service Act reiterated that "a professional career Foreign Service based on merit principles was necessary to meet the challenges of a more complex and competitive world." The importance of a professional diplomatic service has been underscored by our national experience in the simultaneous wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the broad array of current and foreseeable challenges.

What is wrong at State, the U.S. Agency for International Development, our embassies and other agencies that together are the vehicles for American diplomacy? What accounts for the Foreign Service being marginalized?

The most visible factor is the overwhelming—and growing—presence of political appointees in mid-level and top leadership positions at the State Department. For all their merit, political appointees are short-term officials, subject to partisan, personality-specific pressures. They do not notably contribute to the institution's longer-term vitality, and their ascension creates a system inherently incapable of providing expert, nonpartisan foreign policy advice.

When the bulk of its leadership positions are held by transient appointees, the Foreign Service is undermined. This situation spawns opportunism and political correctness, weakens esprit de corps within the service and emaciates institutional memory.

Diplomatic capacity needs professional, institutional leadership. A career service must nurture a deep bench of high-quality professional diplomats. But the trend has been in the opposite direction. Since 1975, the number of top leadership positions at the State Department, defined as deputy secretaries, undersecretaries and assistant secretaries, has increased from 18 to 33. The share filled by career Foreign Service officers has fallen from 61 percent in 1975 to 24 percent in 2012. Only five of the 35 special envoys, representatives, advisers and coordinators appointed during President Obama's first term were Foreign Service officers.

In exceptional cases, political ambassadorial appointments are understandable. But when a large number of these positions go to people with little exposure to the environment and practice of international diplomacy, it deprives the American people of the full value of their investment in

some embassies, and it denies career officers the opportunity to advance. Treating these positions as rewards for political support or contributions devalues diplomacy.

The State Department has two personnel systems: the General Service, its civil service system, and the Foreign Service. The structure of the Foreign Service makes it more suitable for global diplomacy: Its officers are mobile and available for worldwide service. Unlike in the civil service, they can be reassigned or promoted between jobs at home and abroad without having to compete for a vacancy in the system. The department has struggled to manage these distinctly different systems, and the result has been an increasingly fractious and dysfunctional corporate environment, draining energy and focus.

The civil service has grown significantly the past few decades, at the expense of the Foreign Service, especially in the policy bureaus that deal with issues such as refugees, law enforcement, environment and disarmament. If this trend is not reversed, the United States will lose the invaluable contribution of people with overseas experience. The State Department's civil service personnel system must be adapted to conform more closely to the requirements of professional diplomacy.

Needed are a fresh approach and a strategic vision to build a strong, professional diplomatic service and State Department as the central institution for U.S. diplomacy. The basic requirements include a rigorous, exam-based entry; worldwide availability and mobility; programs to strengthen capacity through professional education and training, integrated with competitive, merit-based advancement; and efforts to foster the knowledge, cross-functional thinking and broad perspectives a premier diplomatic service brings, especially at the senior levels.

Every major country ensures that the competence of its career diplomats is constantly improved to meet 21st-century challenges. We can do no less. The United States can no longer rely on economic and military preeminence to compensate for a less-prepared, less well-resourced, less professional diplomatic service. With a new secretary of state, the time to begin is now.

## Appendix B

### Department of State Press Guidance of April 12, 2013

*M/DGHR Press Guidance, April 12, 2013*

#### Is the U.S. Foreign Service Broken?

##### *Key Points*

- Like any other executive branch agency, the State Department benefits from a diverse workforce comprised of both career foreign service and civil service employees, as well as political appointees who bring a unique set of experience and skills from their work in the private and non-governmental sectors. Both the civil and foreign services bring unique and complementary expertise and talent to our national security mission.
- While serving in the State Department, political appointees make valuable contributions to the long-term vitality of the institution, whether it be by drafting new policy guidelines and procedures (FAM), introducing new ways of doing business such as public-private partnerships, or revitalizing review processes like the QDDR, Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review. We value their unique perspectives and inputs.
- Career employees do occupy many of the senior leadership positions throughout the Department and overseas. The President reaffirmed on first taking office in 2008 that the vast majority of Chief of Mission appointments must be filled by career members of the Foreign Service, in accordance with Section 304 (a)(2) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980.
- Section 304 (a)(2) also recognizes, however, that circumstances will warrant the appointment of qualified individuals as Chief of Mission who are not career members of the Foreign Service.
- The Secretary believes that we need to avail ourselves of the important knowledge and experience that citizen diplomats acquire from successful careers in academia, business, law, the arts, military, and political life.
- We are better for the service and contributions of such towering figures as Washington Irving, Michael J. Mansfield, David Bruce, Claire Booth Luce, Mabel Smyth-Haith, and the hundreds of others who answered their President's call to serve in a diplomatic capacity on behalf of the United States.
- The majority of our overseas ambassador positions are filled with career Foreign Service Officers. The ratio has been fairly consistent over the years: 70 percent career FSOs and 30 percent non-career.
- Of the 214 total Deputy Secretary, Assistant Secretary, and Deputy Assistant Secretary positions, 185 are encumbered. Of those encumbered positions, 69% are career and 31% are political appointees.
- It is also worth noting that Deputy Secretary Burns is the second active career Foreign Service Officer to fill that position.

- The U.S. needs the diverse skills of all of our employees—Civil Service, Foreign Service, Political Appointees, and LE staff—to advance U.S. foreign policy.
- It is that diversity, our citizen diplomats, diplomatic corps, and other foreign policy professionals working together from which we derive our greatest strengths.

*Hard Questions:*

*Q: Has the Civil Service grown at the expense of the Foreign Service?*

A: Given existing resource constraints, we have worked to grow both our civil service and foreign service positions to meet our areas of greatest need. Since 2008, Foreign Service employment has increased by 21% under the Diplomacy 3.0 hiring initiative. During that same time period, Civil Service hiring increased by about 7%, in order to provide much-needed program and infrastructure support. In addition to being involved in virtually every area of the Department from human rights to trade, Civil Service employees in the United States provide direct assistance to U.S. citizens, including issuing passports and assisting U.S. citizens in trouble overseas. Civil service employees also occupy senior leadership positions in the Department.

*Q: What is the new approach to building a strong, professional diplomatic service at the State Department?*

A: *The Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review requires that we break down institutional, cultural, and legal barriers between the Foreign Service and the Civil Service* [emphasis added]. In order to help fill staffing mid-level gaps that have resulted from the less-than-attrition hiring of the 1990s and to provide additional development opportunities, we are offering new opportunities for our tenured Civil Service employees who have been with the Department in permanent positions for at least three years to participate in temporary duty and long-term assignments abroad. This year, we established an Overseas Development Program which provides 20 opportunities for Civil Service employees to serve overseas in Foreign Service positions. This is modest compared with the 3,500 Foreign Service positions that turned over during the 2013 cycle.

Lead Bureau(s): M/DGHR

Keywords: Foreign Service, Civil Service

Drafter: HR/PC: BGreenberg

Cleared by:

HR/FO: BRobinson: ok

M: SMirza: ok

M/PRI: JCore: ok

D/N: MWeiller: ok

D/B: AHerrup: ok

S/P: ELacey: ok

P: CWestley: ok

HR/FO: PLussier: ok

## Appendix C

### Special Advisors, Envoys, and Representatives

*(as of Jan. 30, 2015, <http://www.state.gov>)*

1. Afghanistan and Pakistan, Special Representative
2. Arctic, Special Representative
3. Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), U.S. Senior Official
4. Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) Issues, Special Representative
5. Burma, Special Representative and Policy Coordinator
6. Center for Strategic Counterterrorism, Coordinator
7. Central African Republic, Special Representative
8. Civil Society and Emerging Democracies, Senior Advisor
9. Climate Change, Special Envoy
10. Closure of the Guantanamo Detention Facility, Special Envoy
11. Conference on Disarmament, Permanent Representative
12. Commercial and Business Affairs, Special Representative
13. Cyber Issues, Coordinator
14. Department Spokesperson
15. Faith-Based Community Initiatives, Special Representative
16. Global Coalition against ISIL, Special Presidential Envoy
17. Global Food Security, Special Representative
18. Global Health Diplomacy, Special Representative
19. Global Intergovernmental Affairs, Special Representative
20. Global Partnerships, Special Representative
21. Global Youth Issues, Special Advisor
22. Great Lakes Region and the D.R.C., Special Envoy
23. Haiti, Special Coordinator
24. Holocaust Issues, Special Adviser
25. Holocaust Issues, Special Envoy
26. International Communications and Information Policy, Coordinator
27. International Disability Rights, Special Advisor
28. International Energy Affairs, Special Envoy and Coordinator
29. International Information Programs, Coordinator

30. International Information Technology Diplomacy, Senior Coordinator
31. International Labor Affairs, Special Representative
32. International Religious Freedom, Ambassador-at-Large
33. Israel and the Palestinian Authority, U.S. Security Coordinator
34. Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations, Special Envoy
35. Monitoring and Combating Anti-Semitism, Special Envoy
36. Mujahideen el Khalq Resettlement, Special Advisor
37. Muslim Communities, Special Representative
38. Nonproliferation and Arms Control, Special Advisor
39. Northern Ireland Issues, Personal Representative
40. North Korean Human Rights Issues, Special Envoy
41. North Korea Policy, Special Representative
42. Nuclear Nonproliferation, Special Representative of the President
43. Office of the Special Envoy for Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations
44. Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, Special Representative
45. Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Special Envoy
46. Partner Engagement on Syria Foreign Fighters, Senior Advisor
47. Promote Religious Freedom of Religious Minorities in the Near East and South Central Asia, Special Envoy
48. Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, Special Representative
49. Sanctions Policy, Coordinator
50. Science and Technology, Special Advisor
51. Secretary Initiatives, Special Advisor
52. Senior Advisor to the Secretary
53. Six-Party Talks, Special Envoy
54. Somalia, Special Representative
55. Sudan and South Sudan, Special Envoy
56. Syria, Special Envoy
57. Threat Reduction Programs, Coordinator
58. Tibetan Issues, Special Coordinator
59. U.S. Assistance to Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia, Coordinator

## Appendix D

Study of Entry Level Officers

### Foreign Service Professionalism Project for the American Academy of Diplomacy

*Drafter: Jack Zetkolic*

*Submitted: June 26, 2014*

*Updated: July 9, 2014*

#### Outline

##### *Introduction*

##### Foreign Service Entry-Level Officers

- Employment Background
- Overseas Experience
- Foreign Language Skills
- Understanding Diplomacy and Foreign Affairs
- ELO Performance on the Job
- Recruiting and Hiring
- Entry-Level Training—Re-Tooling A-100
- ELO Views on Training
- Follow-On Training for ELOs

##### *Mid-Level Training*

- Mandatory Leadership Training
- Non-Mandatory Leadership Training
- Cone-Specific Training

##### *Civil Service Entry-Level Training*

- Updated Design

##### *Foreign Service Specialists*

- Assessment and Hiring
- Re-Tooling Specialist Training

## Foreign Service Professionalism Project

### Introduction

This study was conducted at the request of the American Academy of Diplomacy. It reviews various elements related to Foreign Service Entry-Level Officers, including preparation and merit at entry, current orientation and training offered through the mid-level, ELO expectations, and changes or expansion planned at the Foreign Service Institute in orientation and training. The study also describes current entry-level training for Foreign Service Specialists and State Department Civil Service personnel. This study is descriptive, as opposed to prescriptive. Recommendations or other comments in the text were voiced by interlocutors during the course of extensive interviews in the Bureau of Human Resources and at the Foreign Service Institute.

The drafter wishes to thank the leadership of HR and FSI for the welcoming, helpful, and collegial response to this study. HR and FSI personnel at all levels were approachable and helpful. Without their assistance, this snapshot of the State Department's entry-level personnel and their training would have been very much out of focus.

### Foreign Service Entry-Level Officers

Entry-Level Officers in today's Foreign Service are as impressive as they are diverse. They bring to the Service a broad array of academic and professional experience and by measurements of race, gender, and geographic background they are more and more representative of America. At the same time, their variegated backgrounds present a challenge to trainers, managers, and mentors. What knowledge base and what life experience will inform and guide ELOs' day-to-day performance? When ELOs receive the most frequently given instruction in the Foreign Service ("Use your judgment"), what will be the foundation upon which their judgment rests? Can mid-level and senior managers count on their ELOs to share some commonality of knowledge and experience?

This study reviewed in detail the membership of the last eight "Generalist Orientation" (A-100) cohorts (the 169<sup>th</sup> class through 176<sup>th</sup> class), comprising 553 Entry Level Officers. Some basic observations:

#### *Employment Background*

As always, the Foreign Service attracts people possessing an eclectic and entertaining mix of skills, with recent classes including a midwife, police officer, astrophysicist, microbiologist, Egyptologist, aerospace engineer, helicopter pilot, pastry chef, and mural artist. Getting a clear measure of new hires coming from fields of endeavor with at least some relationship to their future work is no easy task, given the difficulty of defining which jobs are truly relevant to the practice of diplomacy. As one ELO stated, "I learned my diplomatic skills waiting tables all through college." This said, some trends are clear:

Former military personnel make up the largest cohort of new Foreign Service Officers. Eighty (14.4 percent) of the 553 ELOs reviewed spent some time in the Armed Forces. The diversity of their experience within the Services is dramatic. There are submariners, naval aviators, helicopter pilots, and more than a few lawyers. The largest proportion of former military personnel spent some time on the ground in Iraq or Afghanistan in roles as varied as infantry, logistics, and intelligence. Only a small number of the ELOs with military experience have completed full careers of 20-plus years.

Most served four to eight years and then chose to move on to the Foreign Service, either directly or, quite frequently, through stints with defense contractors. Perhaps most interesting, about one third of ELOs coming from the Armed Forces were not commissioned officers but were enlisted personnel or NCOs, many with experience as interpreters and/or interrogators. One can imagine how such skills will enrich their work on the visa line or supervising locally engaged staff.

The Foreign Service continues to attract attorneys. Seventy-eight (14.1 percent) of the ELOs' reviewed have JDs, although few seem to have worked in the international sphere.

The Peace Corps continues to be a popular steppingstone into the Foreign Service. Seventy-three (13.2 percent) of the ELOs reviewed served at least once as volunteers. These individuals often brought interesting language skills into the Service.

In addition to Peace Corps volunteers, ELOs have engaged in several other different kinds of international volunteerism. A number have worked overseas for NGOs in fields like human rights or public health. But by far the largest contingent participating in international volunteer work (apart from the Peace Corps) were missionaries, with the clear majority among these coming from the Church of Latter Day Saints. Like their Peace Corps colleagues, missionaries often bring interesting languages into the Service as well as experience adapting to foreign environments.

### *Overseas Experience*

In an attempt to gauge the level of “international experience” among incoming ELOs, this study took note of entrants in the last eight A-100 classes with two or more years of overseas paid employment or university-level study. This cohort totaled 157, representing 28.3 percent of the new officers. So by definition, these officers could be expected to have arrived in the Service with well-honed cross-cultural skills. Of course, the criteria for this measurement are by no means perfect and they certainly are open to challenge. Some may say that the bar is not set high enough. For instance, the total includes infantrymen on combat deployments, a contractor who lived and worked behind compound walls, and an accountant with short bursts of business travel totaling more than two years. In general, however, this group showed significant in-depth experience overseas in fields of endeavor as varied as teaching, studying, volunteering, serving as a “Limited, Non-Career Appointee,” or being a dependent spouse.

### *Foreign Language Skills*

Today's incoming officers bring with them impressive language skills. Of those who self-reported languages in which they expected to show some level of fluency in testing after arrival at FSI, 146 (26.7 percent) claimed two or more foreign languages.

The Department's effort to hire ELOs with competency in incentive languages has borne fruit. Mandarin is something of a new lingua franca for ELOs, with 85 (15.3 percent) of officers claiming some level of fluency. Arabic comes in second, with 64 officers (11.5 percent). Russian is a very close third, with 61 officers (11 percent).

Sixty-two (11.2 percent) of ELOs in the last eight A-100 classes were born outside the United States. Many of these officers bring into the Service native fluency in otherwise hard-to-find languages like Korean, Farsi, Cantonese, and Urdu.

Meanwhile, officers who speak Western European languages are in a distinct minority. While Spanish is relatively well represented, with some officers having native fluency, only a handful entered with French, German, or other Western European languages.

Surprisingly, eighty incoming officers (representing 14.4 percent) arrived at FSI with no foreign language at all. The conal breakdown of these English-only ELOs is telling. Just under two thirds of these monolingual officers are assigned to the management cone while almost all the rest are in the economics cone.

How did ELOs actually perform in FSI testing after they came on board? We asked FSI's School of Language Studies' Office of Continuing Training and Testing, which evaluates ELO language ability. The office kindly agreed to compile testing results from the last eight A-100 classes (the same cohort reviewed for this Report) in five major languages. We reviewed these results to see how many officers who tested in hard languages could speak at the "Two" level or above and to see how many officers could speak romance languages at the "Three" level or above (on FSI's standard zero-to-five scale):

- Chinese: 79 ELOs tested in Mandarin and 45 achieved a "Two" or better in speaking. Of these, 16 were above the "Three" level. One officer attained a "Five."
- Arabic: 59 tested and 22 achieved a "Two" or better in speaking. Of these, six were above the "Three" level.
- Russian: 59 tested and 39 achieved a "Two" or better in speaking. Of these, 39 achieved a "Two" or better in speaking. Of these, 13 were above the "Three" level.
- Spanish: 92 tested and only 38 achieved a "Three" or better in speaking. Only seven individuals tested at the "Four" level and no one achieved a "Five."
- French: 56 tested and only 16 achieved a "Three" or better in speaking. Only three individuals tested at the "Four" level, with no one achieving a "Five."

### *Understanding Diplomacy and Foreign Affairs*

One area where today's incoming officers clearly come up short in their pre-employment preparation is their knowledge of diplomacy. A good number of ELOs may be well-travelled and some certainly have impressive foreign language skills, but only a very small number have engaged in any kind of study of foreign policy, international affairs, or diplomacy.

As was the case when determining "overseas experience" above, measuring a foundational understanding of the diplomatic professional environment is not easy. Again, for the purposes of this study we set a relatively low bar: We counted those ELOs who had majored or minored at the undergraduate level in international relations or foreign affairs or who had focused on these topics in graduate school. We also included in our total those ELOs who studied any of an increasingly broad range of "international" topics with the assumption they would at least have been exposed to more traditional subjects such as international relations, diplomatic history, and foreign policy. Such majors included broad-brush subjects like "global studies" as well as the increasing number of very specialized majors or concentrations related to international affairs, such as "peace and mediation studies," "conflict resolution," and "international communications."

In those cases when the relatively new field of homeland security-related majors came into play, we drew the line at highly technical concentrations. For instance, we did not count majors such as "border and homeland security" or "terrorism and critical national infrastructure protection." But we did count those majors in which students could be assumed to have been exposed to some

study of foreign policy. These included majors such as “global security and terrorism studies” and “security and intelligence.”

Even with the bar set relatively low, most ELOs could not show any measurable study of international affairs, foreign policy, or related subjects. Only 199 of 553 officers reviewed for this report (that is 35.9 percent) had studied such topics. Of these, 138 had studied international relations or somewhat related topics at the graduate level. We should note here that FSOs, unlike their Civil Service colleagues at the professional levels, are not required to have attained higher degrees. In fact, they are not required to have studied any set curriculum, or even have a high school diploma. Still, for many years prospective FSOs had to show some knowledge of foreign affairs during the written and oral exams.

Interestingly, the variation in numbers of those A-100 trainees who had studied international affairs and diplomacy varied greatly from class to class, with some classes coming in as low as one quarter and others at nearly one half. After deeper analysis, it became clear that classes with more fundamental knowledge of foreign affairs were more highly populated with Pickering Fellows (who usually start in summer) and political cone officers.

This study did not directly survey individual ELOs, but the study coordinator spent a good deal of time at NFATC and had the opportunity to speak informally with dozens of ELOs spanning five A-100 classes. This outreach resulted in impressions that were admittedly anecdotal, but that are nonetheless of value. Without question, all the ELOs encountered were well-spoken, focused on their studies, and anxious to begin work in the field. Needless to say, they brought to the Foreign Service more life experience and knowledge than what was listed in their resumes. Several showed a depth of knowledge of diplomacy not evidenced in their CVs, often with a tip of the hat to websites such as the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training’s <http://www.usdiplomacy.org>. As one former enlisted Army interpreter/interrogator observed, “I spent a lot of time online in Iraq.”

Perhaps the most striking takeaway from these many conversations was how the ELOs’ understanding of diplomacy was so remarkably uneven. Some ELOs showed in-depth knowledge of diplomatic history and practice, with a clear idea of where they fit in the flow of American foreign affairs. They easily discussed books like Kissinger’s “Diplomacy” or how-to texts like Fisher and Ury’s “Getting To Yes.” They compared diplomatic initiatives like Camp David and the Dayton Accords or related current U.S. policy to Russia to our policy of containment with the USSR.

At the same time, a stunning number of ELOs seemed embarrassed and out of their depth talking about foreign policy. Many did not know who George Kennan was or what containment meant, even after walking daily past ADST’s display on U.S. diplomatic history. Several did not know which president was served by George Shultz, for whom NFATC is named, and a few did not even know who Shultz was. Several thought that the Ben Franklin statue in the NFATC courtyard honored our first Secretary of State.

Such basic facts are not just valuable for contestants playing a diplomatic version of Trivial Pursuit. They form the foundation of a common understanding about where American diplomacy has been and where it is going. This understanding puts an officer’s daily work in perspective. Both American and foreign diplomats use recent and historical U.S. foreign policy as a reference point for future action. Perhaps most important for the purposes of this study, we noted that it was usually the less informed ELOs whose personal relationship with the Foreign Service seemed more tentative and superficial, even experimental, and whose commitment seemed shakiest.

### *ELO Performance On The Job*

How are ELOs performing in the field? The best answer to this question comes from a comprehensive survey that HR/REE conducted in May 2013. The survey, which was developed by industrial organizational psychologist Mike Campion and HR/RMA analysts, was sent to supervisors with frequent interaction with ELOs. This group included DCMs, POs, and section chiefs overseas and DASs and office directors in the Department. Its main goal was to find out if the 2007 partial “unblindfolding” of the assessment process, by which assessors were allowed some biographic information on applicants, had in fact resulted in the hiring and eventual assignment of officers who would be successful in their work.

The survey asked supervisors to gauge ELO performance along the lines of the 13 established “dimensions” of Foreign Service work, with single-answer questions as well as two open-ended questions offering the possibility of longer comments. Response to the survey was excellent, with 53 percent of supervisors taking time from their busy schedules to reply and with many writing substantive responses to the open-ended questions.

All in all, supervisors were impressed with ELOs’ cross-cultural adaptability (47 percent exceeding expectations), with their motivation (52 percent exceeding expectations), and with the breadth of their education and experience (54 percent exceeding expectations). But ELOs came up short in the eyes of their supervisors in three important areas: written communication, judgment, and “working with others.” Narrative responses by supervisors elaborated on this criticism.

Given the degree to which written communication is tested in the FSO assessment process, it was a surprise that more than 50 percent of supervisors were critical of ELO writing. Further elaboration by the respondents indicated that ELOs had difficulty with “Foreign Service writing.” In other words, new officers had a hard time producing focused, concise writing that was properly modulated to their readership in the Department and other agencies. In response, the Board of Examiners is looking at strengthening one of the three writing segments in the test. At FSI’s Orientation Division, A-100 managers have increased the amount of precious training time devoted to training in writing.

Deficiencies in both “judgment” (with 38 percent falling short of expectations) and “working with others” (with 33 percent falling short of expectations) were considered by HR to be the result of generational differences between supervisors and ELOs. Supervisors noted a sense of entitlement and “self-focus” among ELOs, resulting in a lack of “service discipline.” They noted a disturbing lack of understanding about how the Foreign Service works. They also called attention to how ELOs need to understand the need to work within the chain of command, how to comport themselves with superiors, and how to show respect and responsiveness to colleagues. A related concern voiced by supervisors was ELOs’ unrealistic work and career expectations, with many ELOs apparently expecting greater responsibilities and freedom of action despite the fact that they are in entry-level positions.

Given HR’s determination that generational differences were largely the cause of these weaknesses, BEX and HR/REE agreed that changing the selection process would probably not address these problems. However, HR will consider possible ways to revise one or more assessment areas to measure applicants’ “commitment” and inclination to recognize the importance of service discipline. Recruitment information will explore how to “focus on the less than glamorous realities of Foreign Service work.” Most important, HR has suggested that senior managers “use the results of the survey as an opportunity to initiate a conversation with first and second tour officer groups at post

about professional development goals.” This recognition of the central role of mentoring in developing ELOs may help to address the Service’s obvious generation gap.

After analysis of the results of the survey, HR/RMA and HR/REE began an initiative to seek volunteers from the pool of respondents to participate in virtual focus groups to explore how best to address the weaknesses identified. In addition, these offices will develop an end-of-tour “effectiveness survey” for ELOs to offer their perspectives on professional development. HR will also seek to partner with the Consular Affairs Bureau’s leadership program to address professional development for the many ELOs who begin their careers in CA positions.

### *Recruiting and Hiring*

**Foreign Service Officers:** The intake process for FSOs, made “partially unblind” in 2007 in an effort to assess the “total candidate,” must successfully recruit and hire the best possible ELOs while ensuring that the Department’s diversity goals are met.

The computer-based Foreign Service Officer Test (FSOT) measures cognitive skills, as opposed to knowledge. As planned, on average twice as many candidates have passed the new FSOT as previously, resulting in a larger pool to be reviewed by the Qualifications Evaluation Panel, which reviews applicants’ resumes and personal narratives. In these narratives, candidates are asked to relate their personal experiences to six questions tied to FS promotion precepts. The QEP is seen as the biggest hurdle in the overall process, and the blogosphere is rich with much discussion, and misinformation, about what actually happens in this process. If candidates pass the QEP, they then move on to the Foreign Service Oral Assessment. In the FSOA, candidates engage first in a group exercise and then in a structured interview in which they are judged according to the thirteen dimensions. The assessment concludes with “case management,” when each candidate must absorb and analyze large amounts of material and then write a two-page memo with policy recommendations.

### *Seeking Diversity Through Fellowships and Internships:*

The Pickering and Rangel Fellowship programs remain a major focus for the Department’s efforts to attract ELOs from diverse backgrounds.

The Rangel program, managed in conjunction with Howard University, “encourages the application of members of minority groups historically underrepresented in the Foreign Service and those in financial need.” Annually, 20 graduate fellows are chosen. Rangel fellows commit to five years of government service in exchange for a program that includes orientation at Howard University, a summer interning on Capitol Hill, financial support for two years of graduate school, a summer internship at an Embassy overseas, and mentoring throughout provided by an FSO.

Another component of the Rangel program brings between 15-20 undergraduates to Washington for a six-week summer enrichment program aimed at giving students a “deeper appreciation of current issues and trends in international affairs, a greater understanding of career opportunities in international relations, and the enhanced knowledge and skills to pursue such careers.”

Pickering fellowships, managed in conjunction with Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, are meant to increase the “ethnic, racial, and social” diversity of the Foreign Service. Annually, 20 undergraduates have been accepted into the program as rising seniors while 20 graduate students have been invited to become fellows after they have been accepted into two-year grad programs. Fellows receive up to \$40,000 per year to cover educational costs. In exchange, fellows commit to five years of employment (Note: Before 2013 the commitment was for three years). Fellows choose their cones within the Foreign Service before they take the Oral Assessment. According

to HR/REE, the clear majority of Pickerings have selected the political cone, with the remainder mainly choosing public diplomacy. If one sifts through the many blogs and social media sites perpetuated and frequented by those interested in joining the Foreign Service, this separate fast track into hotly contested cones is a matter of considerable debate.

Starting next year, undergraduates will no longer be part of the Pickering program. To compensate for this change, the number of graduate fellowships awarded annually will double from twenty to forty. This change came about after a review of retention numbers among Pickerings. It was found that after four years in the Service, Pickerings left in only slightly higher numbers than other officers, but that after six to 10 years a significantly higher attrition rate occurred relative to other generalists. REE has attributed this higher attrition rate to the fact that Pickerings opting for the Foreign Service at a rather young age (that is, undergraduates) may not have the same level of commitment to the career as those who make this important decision slightly later in their lives. It is hoped that restricting Pickering fellowships to graduate students will obviate this problem. In any case, HR has noted that retention rates for financially incentivized State Department fellows is not drastically different than rates of other services that offer incentives for recruitment (such as ROTC or the military academies).

USFSIP: The Pickering and Rangel programs have been joined by the newest Departmental initiative to attract diverse applicants: the U.S. Foreign Service Internship Program. Approved and funded in 2013, USFSIP will welcome its first cohort of 18 interns to Washington in early June, 2014. These racially, ethnically, and geographically diverse undergraduates will spend the summer learning about U.S. diplomatic history, State Department writing, and current issues, before working on policy desks for six weeks. Next summer, they will work at embassies overseas. All the while, they will be mentored. In the year between their summer experiences they will be expected to take the written Foreign Service exam. USFSIP stands out because it is being managed entirely in-house by HR/REE, not by an outside contractor. It is hoped that this hands-on approach will help to ensure success of the pilot program.

#### *Entry-Level Training—Re-Tooling A-100*

Thanks to creative management, innovative design, and advances in technology, Foreign Service Generalist Orientation (aka “A-100”) recently has undergone a significant re-tooling. This change came about partly in response to supervisor dissatisfaction with ELO performance, as evidenced by the 2013 survey. Also, new leadership at FSI and in the Orientation Division recognized that the time was ripe to improve on the program’s “death by PowerPoint” and “talking heads” model and, if possible, to inject some actual training into the A-100 curriculum.

The main goal of A-100 has never been to educate or train Entry Level Officers. Rather, A-100 has aimed to ease ELOs into their new work environment and to familiarize them with the mission, structure, and culture of the State Department and Foreign Service. Even when A-100 was longer than its current six weeks, program managers had little time to train professional skills. Occasionally, changes in the Department’s senior leadership, with accompanying changes in priorities, would result in some new program content. Also, the evolving diplomatic and security environment led to necessary adjustments to the small amount of discretionary time available for instruction. These forces created an ebb and flow in various topic areas ranging from security awareness and resiliency to diplomatic history to leadership and management. Still, the work of FSI’s Orientation Division remained, as advertised, orientation, with the vast majority of class time spent on necessary HR and administrative matters interrupted by visits to or from Department principals.

FSI's overhaul of A-100 began in 2013. By the Orientation Division's measure, as of April 2014, more than 63 percent of the program had been updated. Both delivery and content continue to evolve.

A-100 has moved away from PowerPoint slides and now uses Prezi presentation software, allowing for a more interactive experience in the classroom. The day has been shortened, with much content now delivered via online pre-readings. This "flip learning" creates more discussion time in class. Also, the program's overall flow has changed. What had previously been a bumpy ride formed largely around the schedules of Department principals is now a calendar of mutually supportive modules that move forward in logical progression.

Content changes have re-focused the curriculum on values, leadership, policy, and resiliency:

**Values:** A-100 now opens with a discussion of core values: loyalty, character, service, accountability, community, and diversity. These topics are then reiterated during the rest of the program. The end-of-course reflection is a series of group presentations blending policy and leadership topics through the lens of values. This curriculum change is a direct response to the results of the supervisor satisfaction survey. The hope is that a focus on values will increase understanding of "service."

**Leadership:** A new approach to leadership and management is another attempt to counter trends noted in the supervisor survey, specifically complaints about ELOs lacking "judgment" and the ability to "work well with others." Following the usual MBTI assessment and related discussion on self-awareness and self-management, the class explores various leadership topics: supervising LES, team-building, followership, and situational leadership. Homework includes readings on case studies and real-world examples. Class time is focused on role-playing and simulations.

**Policy:** The A-100 program now introduces participants to the linkage between U.S. history and contemporary policy making. On "policy days," the Office of the Historian gives 15-minute presentations on specific topics and policy leaders (Assistant Secretary or DAS level) review "big issues." Previously, leaders from different geographic or functional bureaus would rotate through A-100 to discuss their particular areas of interest. The focus now is on cross-cutting issues, as well as on the interagency process.

**Resiliency:** This new area of focus in the A-100 curriculum is the result of cooperation between the Orientation Division, DS, MED, the Leadership and Management School, and the Transition Center. Redundancies with security training have been eliminated. A-100 has also added short "wellness breaks" to its schedule to emphasize the importance of career-long attention to physical and emotional well being.

Also, in response to criticism in the supervisor survey, training modules in Foreign Service writing have been added to the curriculum, along with some training in public speaking.

It is too early to tell if the re-tooling of A-100 will result in more ELOs who meet their supervisors' standards of performance. Generalist Orientation remains a highly compressed experience for both participants and FSI staff. FSI's leadership and the Orientation Division's staff deserve praise for their creative approach and their considerable effort to squeeze more (and more appropriate) training into this intense six weeks.

### *ELO Views on Training*

Do Entry-Level Officers think that their training has helped prepare them for their work overseas and in Washington? FSI's leadership did not approve our request to survey recent A-100 classes, explaining that ELOs are very busy either preparing for or settling into their assignments and that

ELOs would most likely not be in a position to pass judgment on the efficacy of their training so early in their careers. We do not fault this logic. Nevertheless, we were pleased to have had the opportunity to talk informally with ELOs during our research at FSI and in the Department and to hear generally positive comments about training. It goes without saying that these comments are anecdotal but they are still interesting and perhaps instructive.

ELOs consistently praised their A-100 trainers in the Orientation Division. When the older curriculum design was described to them they said they clearly preferred the new approach, both in terms of content and delivery. The “flip model” of instruction, which allows for more discussion time in class, was very popular. Younger ELOs accepted this method of content delivery as the norm because they had recently seen it in college or grad school, where professors would give lectures by podcast, thus freeing up class time for discussion. Several ELOs also made a point of saying that they liked the “feel” of their classroom, with its visual links and references to the Service’s history and principles. They appreciated the framed copies of the Department’s Mission Statement and other foundational documents as well as the small display of historical artifacts.

Many ELOs continue to use the “fire hose” analogy to describe their initial training experience, but they joked that at least now the flow “comes in drinkable spurts.” And, as one ELO stated, “It wouldn’t be any different if we were training at a big bank. There’s stuff you have to cover before you start your job.”

Many ELOs said that they particularly appreciated the discussion time that was made available for “values,” a topic that has had greater emphasis in A-100’s new design. Several officers said that their review of the Department’s Mission Statement was especially helpful. As one noted, “I guess we all spent so much effort getting in that a lot of us didn’t think a lot about what we’d be doing, or why we’d be doing it, after we actually started work.” Another stated simply, “Context is good.”

Within this broader topic of “values,” one subject that generated very mixed and sometimes heated discussion was cones. Several officers commented that they saw a fundamental disconnect between the Department’s emphasis on “One Team” and the splintering of Foreign Service Officers into subgroups. One officer noted, “The first thing we hear is that we’re all working hand in hand but then we get ‘You consular officers will see...’ and ‘You PD guys will find out...’ so we’re broken up into clans or tribes right in A-100, before we even start our jobs.” Several officers explained how they had gamed their entry process, aiming for less contested cones in order to get hired. As heated as some discussion of cones became, it was oddly paralleled by frequent statements discounting or even dismissing the conal system. As one ELO noted, “I’ve talked to FSOs and they all said that the system changed two or three times in their careers, so why should I worry about it?” And another: “My plan is to just go for the jobs I want to do and I figure the system will catch up to me. If it doesn’t, and I get locked into doing work I don’t like, I can just quit.”

Another new training segment that ELOs liked is A-100’s introduction to “resiliency.” They appreciated the importance of developing and maintaining a healthy lifestyle, especially while doing stressful work in difficult or dangerous places. Several former military personnel said that they were surprised it took the State Department so long to add this segment to training.

The Orientation Division’s re-design of A-100’s presentations on policy received positive comments from most trainees. This new design seems well suited to the average incoming officer. We heard more mixed reviews during discussions with ELOs from different ends of the spectrum of foreign affairs knowledge. As noted above, just over one third of ELOs have rigorously studied international affairs or foreign policy. For some of those who entered with no academic background in foreign

affairs, the policy sessions lacked needed context. As one former non-commissioned military officer commented, “They were interesting, but I sort of felt like I was being taught calculus before having algebra. But I guess I’ll have enough time to learn about policy stuff because I’m going to be a GSO.” At the opposite end of the spectrum, that is, for those who have already studied foreign affairs, the policy reviews were not deeply instructional but were appreciated as events that helped put a human face on their previous classroom study and that also helped establish a link between policy and practice. The only officers that seemed to find the sessions unnecessary were Pickering Fellows, who naturally had been exposed to both policy and policy-makers in their previous study and work.

When ELOs were asked which segments of the A-100 course they thought should be expanded, many officers simply said, “All of them.” ELOs now entering the Service seem to have a deeply ingrained expectation that they should spend a good portion of their careers in training. They consistently said that they would like more of the highly popular “how-to” training segments that focused on their day-to-day responsibilities. This view was shared equally by those with a background in foreign affairs and those without. One ELO who had studied international relations at both the undergraduate and graduate level said, “I got a lot of theory in class (in academia), usually from professors who disagreed with each other about everything, and a great 15,000 foot overview, but it’s great to learn about what I’ll really be doing as a diplomat.” The only A-100 segments that did not require more time were the necessary administrative tasks (such as getting ID badges, discussing pension plans and travel regulations, etc.).

**Other ELO Training:** Of course, most of the ELOs on the FSI campus are chin-deep in language instruction, but we did have a chance to speak informally with officers engaged in other training than A-100. We heard consistent praise for the retooled “Washington Tradecraft” course (described below) and positive views for the mandatory “SOS” class and the new “FACT” security training (also described below).

#### *Follow-On Training for ELOs*

After A-100, ELOs engage in training that is mandatory for all officers as well as training that is specifically focused on their work in their onward assignments.

**“S.O.S.”:** The two-day Security Overseas Seminar is mandatory for all who are en route to posts abroad. This course is also open to adult family members.

**“FACT”:** The five-day “Foreign Affairs Counter-threat Training,” (aka “Crash and Bang”) has evolved as the overseas environment has changed. The program, which is conducted at a facility in West Virginia, includes defensive driving, weapons familiarization, emergency medical treatment, situational awareness, and strategies for personal protection. On the final day of FACT, teams of trainees apply what they have learned in realistic role-playing scenarios. Most recently, these have included a mock Embassy compound and a mock refugee camp at which security incidents occur while the trainees are expected to perform basic diplomatic functions such as reporting and representation. Technical security training in FACT is not provided by DS personnel but rather by contractors who are mainly former military or former law enforcement personnel who have no experience in a diplomatic environment. FSI has been working actively with the contractor to infuse realistic content into the program and to focus not just on security as such but, more broadly, on how to practice diplomacy while remaining secure.

**Area Studies:** The FSI leadership has de-linked area studies from language instruction. Starting at the end of June, the new, two-week, stand-alone program will be mandatory for first tour officers. Currently, area studies is not mandatory for second-tour officers.

**Training By Conal Assignment:** Most ELOs still begin their careers overseas as consular officers, so they usually take ConGen, which lasts six weeks. Political training is three weeks, as is economics training. The length of public diplomacy training depends on the type of job the ELO will encumber: Information Officers and Cultural Affairs Officers spend four weeks at FSI while Public Affairs Officers and Assistant PAOs study for 10 weeks. Management training is also relatively long, with the GSO course lasting nine weeks.

**Washington Tradecraft:** Most ELOs who return to Washington after one or two tours overseas will have spent precious little time in the Department, usually just a few days on consultations or attending to administrative and personnel matters. For these officers, “Washington Tradecraft” (PT203) is designed to provide a deeper understanding of the Department and the interagency community and how to “work” both. The course chair, a deputy director in the Orientation Division, reviews the Department’s structure and mission and coordinates visiting panelists who focus on writing, briefing, the budget and planning process, the role of Bureau EX offices, and how best to work with Washington partners such as Hill staff, the NSS, and the broader interagency. As the course chair stated, “We want people to understand that when people talk about ‘the interagency’ they’re talking about a process and not a structure.” The four-and-a-half-day course is not mandatory. It is also available to Civil Service employees.

## Mid-Level Training

Mid-level FSOs are offered a broad variety of training opportunities specifically keyed to the conal designation of their onward assignments. In this sense, training at this level is almost completely assignment driven. Apart from the mandatory leadership training described below, there exists no broad framework for a continuum of training for mid-level officers that is aimed at the “whole person” or “whole officer.” Several FSI managers have expressed a desire to expand interaction with HR over time to design and build such a framework. Additionally, some training managers have suggested that each bureau in the Department should designate one senior leader, perhaps at the Deputy Assistant Secretary level, to dedicate 5-10 percent of his/her time to focus on training needs. Such measures would help enhance the Department’s “training culture.”

### *Mandatory Leadership Training*

In order to be considered for promotion, FSOs must complete a series of courses offered by FSI’s Leadership and Management School. FS-03s (as well as GS-13s) take “Basic Leadership Skills” (PT245), which began in 2002 and has run on average 37 times per year. At mid-2014, more than 10,500 trainees have worked through this week-long course. FS-02s are expected to take “Intermediate Leadership Skills” (PT207) a five-day course that has averaged 26 classes per year and has trained nearly 6500 personnel. FS-01s take “Advanced Leadership Skills” (PT210).

The content of these courses mirror the management challenges that personnel face at different stages in their careers. As one veteran trainer noted, “For the intermediate class, I tell them how they may feel like the ham in the sandwich, with pressure from above and below and all around, with not much chance to really ‘lead,’ but this is where they really need to understand how much they are responsible for setting the tone.” Another added, “One of my goals is to peel away any

vener of cynicism they might have acquired along the way as camouflage as they were moving up through the ranks. Now it's time for them to model for others." An instructor for the advanced class noted, "A lot of 'Oh-Ones' come in thinking that if they've made it this far they don't need much training, but almost all realize pretty soon that they can learn a lot from the other folks in the room, especially people from other cones or with other agency experience."

### *Non-Mandatory Leadership Training*

LMS is now designing an intriguing pilot training program for Entry-Level Officers who are en route to first or second tours where they will be "singletons," aka a single officer supervising a unit. This program, scheduled for launch in January 2015, will be aimed at managing Locally Engaged Staff. It is expected to begin with face-to-face instruction on the FSI campus, which will be followed after arrival at post by webinars and long-distance mentoring. Currently, LMS is engaged in a needs assessment to see what kind of training—and how much of it—is needed to help ensure the success of such first-time supervisors.

"Fundamentals of Supervision" (PT230), which began in 2009, is designed for first-time FS or CS supervisors at the FS-04 level. By the end of 2013, 1,839 trainees had moved through this class. This program is popular but is not required.

Moving up through the ranks, officers may take a variety of LMS courses that touch on leadership in a broader sense. For example, FS-03s interested in succeeding as leaders while engaged in the interagency process may sign up for "Understanding the Interagency" (PT331) a one-week course given three times per year. A bonus of this program is that it allows cross-interagency communication, as half of the participants come from the Department and half come from other agencies. Other LMS offerings include one-day or two-day programs that focus on leadership challenges in specific organizational or bureaucratic environments. These include "Overcoming Boundaries," "Leading Through Change," and training in dealing with Capitol Hill.

The National Security Executive Leadership Seminar continues to be a successful and popular program for State personnel at the FS-01/GS-15 level. Begun in 2005, NSELS, was conceived as a dramatically scaled-down version of the interagency experience once offered by the Senior Seminar. Thirty participants (half from State and half from other national security agencies) meet for two days each month over the course of five months. The program runs twice annually, in a spring semester and fall semester, with participants from the previous year invited back to take part in a capstone experience in May. Alumni are also encouraged to stay in touch with each other in an alumni network and via Sharepoint.

### *Cone-Specific Training*

The School of Professional and Area Studies manages a large variety of short training programs that are focused on the specific tasks an officer will face in his/her onward assignment. Some are required while most are not. A list of current offerings is attached as an addendum to this report.

In general, training in the consular, management, and PD areas tends to be well integrated into the flow of an officer's overall assignment cycle. Political and economic training seems to be more ad hoc.

Most of the training in all cones is relatively short in duration, running one or two days, often a week, or, in some cases, two weeks. An obvious exception is the well-established "Econ Course" (PE350), which lasts six months and is usually followed by language study or a half-year "practicum" in the Department or elsewhere to keep the officer on the summer assignment cycle. Another

course that may be longer but is still in the design phase is a mid-/senior-level course for PD officers en route to the most challenging PAO jobs overseas or to senior PD jobs in the Department. Tentatively referred to as “PAO Capstone,” the course’s aim is to have PD officers “start thinking strategically about positions in the broader Department senior leadership (DCM, PO, CoM, DAS, etc.).”

## Civil Service Entry-Level Training

Trainees begin “Civil Service Orientation” (PN127) with a video of Secretary Kerry welcoming them to the State Department and emphasizing the importance of “One Team,” combining the Civil Service, Foreign Service Officers, Foreign Service Specialists, and Locally-Engaged Staff. This message is meant to inspire, and the trainees have said that they appreciate it. However, it is followed by a program that is recognized as too short and that often takes place too late after the trainees begin their service.

CS Orientation is a four-and-a-half-day course that is mandatory for all permanent new-hire employees. It runs monthly, 12 times (recently increased from ten times) each year, and it usually has 60 to 65 participants. As of Spring 2014, FSI managers had updated and re-tooled about 48 percent of the program. The course has maintained core content like HR basics, work-life balance, a review of FSI training opportunities, and a discussion of the Department’s broader mission and goals. It has added segments on presentation skills, writing (including a review of the clearance process), “managing up, down, and around,” and a review of the interagency process. One innovation: small-group chats called “Ask an FSO” in which the class engages in informal and candid discussion about how all Department employees can best work together.

Participants have praised the redesign, but an ongoing critique voiced by both trainers and trainees is the difficulty of jamming content into a very short four-and-a-half days. One trainee observed, “There’s just so much to cover and then it’s 11:00 a.m. on Friday and time for the ‘course wrap up’ and swearing-in. But I did love the swearing-in!”

Civil Service personnel are hired according to the very specific requirements of their prospective positions, all of which are very different from each other. Some trainees we polled suggested that the course might benefit from segregation by the rank or type of work, that is, separate classes for “support” versus “professional” personnel. At the same time, several trainees told us that they liked joining all other CS personnel “as a family.”

Ideally, new CS hires should take the class within 30-60 days of their initial employment. In practice, many have waited much longer. The Director General has been working to get people into the class sooner, and the two extra classes annually will help. The timing of CS training is very much in the hands of the bureaus, and HR is working on creating a “dashboard” to keep bureaus’ attention on getting new and recent hires to take the course as early as possible.

## Foreign Service Specialists

### *Assessment and Hiring*

Between 2010 and 2012, the Board of Examiners reviewed and updated the assessment process for Foreign Service Specialists, tailoring the online assessment, the structured interview, and other assessment tools to the specific career tracks of the 19 different FS specialties. It is too early to say with authority if these re-designed assessment procedures have been a success, but initial indications are positive.

Specialists now entering the Foreign Service are more impressive in terms of experience and education than ever before. Discussions with FSI staff and a review of four recent “Specialist Orientation” (PN-106) classes show a truly remarkable cadre of professionals.

One senior FSI trainer encapsulated the current crop of specialists with the simple statement: “These are people with options.” Indeed, many newly-hired specialists rival their FSO colleagues in areas like international experience and foreign languages.

We reviewed 274 specialists in four recent classes. The largest specialties represented were Special Agent Candidates (96), Information Management Specialists (49), Office Management Specialists (41), Facilities Management Officers (13), Information Management Technical Specialists (12), Security Engineering Officers (11), and Facilities Managers (10). In the single digits were 10 other specialties such as Regional Medical Officers, General Service Officers, Human Resource Officers, and FS Health Practitioners.

Compared to FSOs, more specialists come from the military, with many of these heading toward work as Special Agent Candidates or as Information Managers. Also, a higher proportion is foreign born; these individuals bring with them a fascinating range of languages: Spanish, Russian, Polish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Farsi, and various African dialects. More than 80 percent of entering specialists have lived, studied, or worked overseas. About half have advanced degrees.

#### *Re-Tooling Specialist Training*

FSI managers are now at the beginning stages of a major revamp of the three-week “Specialist Orientation” course. Their aim is to re-tool the training program to the same extent that they previously redesigned A-100. Unfortunately, their efforts will not be informed by the same kind of authoritative information on specialist performance as was generated on ELOs during the 2013 supervisor survey. However, HR is now planning to conduct a supervisor satisfaction survey targeted on at least some specialties. The structure and timing of this survey are not yet set. HR is considering how best to address the challenge of gauging the performance of specialists whose areas of work are so very different from each other. In the end, HR may break out its review by groups, such as IM and IT, Facilities Management, etc.

Even without broad-based information from a supervisor survey, FSI managers consider the need to update PN-106 to be clear and their redesign efforts are ongoing. One area of focus will be communication skills, to include writing (such as effective emails and readable reports) and oral briefing. Management training will highlight working with Locally Engaged Staff and “managing across and managing up,” in other words, working well within the interagency community at post and establishing effective relationships with supervisors. A new area of instruction will be a discussion of policy that will help specialists understand where they fit in the broader mission. According to FSI, all of these changes will be presented within the context of “bringing specialists and generalists together to become one team.”

## Addendum

### Mid-Level Training Opportunities—School of Professional and Area Studies

#### *CONSULAR*

- PC114 - Regional Consular Officer Workshop, 1 week, job specific, FS02
- PC116 - Automation for Consular Managers, 1 week, open to all, generally FS03/02
- PC124A - Crime Victims Assistance Workshop, 3 days, open to all, including LES
- PC541 - Fraud Prevention Managers Workshop, 1 week, target FS03/02, also -04
- PC550 - Consular Section Chief Basics, 2 weeks, target FS03 to FS01
- PC557 - Visa Issues for Mid-Level Consular Officers, 1 week, target FS03 and FS02
- PC558 - Overseas Citizen Services Issues for Mid-Level, 1 week, target FS03 to FS02
- PC108 - Consular Leadership and Development Conference, 1 week, invitation only for FS02 and FS01, except for small posts
- PC532 - The Advanced Consular Course, 2 weeks, FS02 and FS01 only
- PC546 - Consular Fundamentals for Mid-Level Officers, 2 weeks, target FS03 and above (Note: required for those without commissions for between 5-10 years)

#### *PUBLIC DIPLOMACY*

- PY219 - Strategic Planning for Public Diplomacy, 5 days
- PY331 - Managing Public Diplomacy Resources at Post, 3 days
- PY341 - Workshop on Cultural, Educational, and Exchange programs, 3 days
- PY321 - Workshop on Media and Information Programs, 3 days
- PY351 - American Spaces Strategic Management, 3 days
- PY352 - Workshop for Information Resource Centers, 5 days
- PY363 - Social Media Practitioners' Workshop, 3 days
- PY362 - Visual Diplomacy (Photo and Video), 5 days
- PY368 - Creating Digital Media for PD Outreach, 5 days
- PT301 - Presenting Effectively to the Media, 3 days

The following are identified as appropriate for both mid- and senior-level practitioners:

- PY230 - New Trends in Public Diplomacy, 3 days
- PY343 - Seminar on Advanced Cultural Diplomacy, 3 days
- PY364 - Social Media Strategy Workshop, 3 days
- PY136 - Working with the Domestic Media, 5 days
- PY142 - Advocacy through the Media, 5 days
- PY370 - Marketing and Message Development/"Marketing College," 5 days

#### *MANAGEMENT*

- PA527 - Advanced Facility Management, 10 days
- PA238 - Advanced Management Workshop, 5 days
- PA335 - Post Management Officer Training, 5 days
- PA228 - Advanced General Services Operations, 10 days
- PA234 - Advanced Human Resources Management Workshop, 10 days
- PA219 - Advanced Financial Management, 10 days

*POLITICAL (one or two days, unless otherwise noted)*

PE300 - Pol/Econ Counselors (note: focused on leading a joint section), 1 week  
PL103 - Labor Officer Skills  
PP203 - Arms Control/Non-Proliferation  
PP204 - Congressional Relations  
PP211 - Multilateral Diplomacy  
PP212 - Intelligence and Foreign Policy  
PP218 - INL Orientation  
PP219 - Legislative Affairs Orientation  
PP221 - POLAD Orientation  
PP223 - Managing Foreign Assistance Awards  
PP225 - Religious Engagement  
PP226 - Gender Equality and Foreign Policy  
PP230 - Genocide  
PE267 - Development in Diplomacy  
PP324 - Foundations of International Law  
PP501 - International Negotiations Art and Skills  
PP505 - Pol-Mil Affairs  
PP515 - Advanced Negotiations-Multilateral  
PP515 - Advanced Negotiations-Bilateral  
PP516 - PRM Orientation  
PP518 - PRM M&E Workshop  
PP521 - International Terrorism  
PP530 - Human Rights & Democracy Promotion

*ECON*

PE125 - Commercial Tradecraft, 1 week  
PE127 - Petroleum and Gas Industry, 1 week  
PE131 - Telecommunications Industry, 2 days  
PE137 - Coal and Power, 1 week  
PE138 - Intellectual Property Rights, 2 days  
PE141 - Combating Terrorist Financing, 3 days  
PE143 - Extractive Industries Seminar, 3 days  
PE150 - Biotech and Global Challenges, 3 days  
PE152 - Global Health Diplomacy, 2 days  
PE160 - New Approaches to Addressing Corruption, 2 days  
PE220 - FSN Economic Training, 2 weeks  
PE221 - ESTH Training for FSNs, 2 weeks  
PE228 - Washington Energy Seminar, 3 days  
PE264 - US Role in Multilateral Development Banks, 2 days  
PE266 - US Global Investment Policy, 2 days  
PE267 - Partnership in Development and Diplomacy, 1 week  
PE292 - Hub Officer Orientation, 3 days  
PE300 - Political/Economic Counselor Seminar, 1 week  
PE305 - ESTH Tradecraft, 2 weeks  
PE330 - International Transportation Policy, 1 week





# American Diplomacy at **Risk**

A strong State Department, based on a strong Foreign Service and a strong Civil Service, is a critical component of America's security. But America's diplomacy—the front line of our defenses—is in trouble. Increasing politicization undermines institutional strength; almost no career officers serve in the most senior State positions, while short-term political appointees penetrate ever deeper into the system. The Foreign Service lacks the professional education and standards to meet its current heavy responsibilities and to create its necessary future senior leaders. The Civil Service is mired in an outdated system with limited coherent career mobility. Some State Department officials seem intent on nullifying the Foreign Service Act of 1980, and its merit-based personnel system by bureaucratically seeking to blend the Foreign and Civil Services. This creates needless friction and diminishes both services. Our national interest requires our immediate recommitment to the law and to strengthening our professional Foreign and Civil Services. State needs to comprehensively review and modernize its entire system of workforce management and budgeting. This report aims to stimulate the changes necessary to prepare American diplomacy for the challenges of the 21st century.



American Academy  
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