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Why JCSP Needs More In-Depth Gender Perspectives Education

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JCSP 49

Service Paper

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WHY JCSP NEEDS MORE IN-DEPTH GENDER PERSPECTIVES EDUCATION

Lieutenant-Colonel Anonymous

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WHY JCSP NEEDS MORE IN-DEPTH GENDER PERSPECTIVES EDUCATION

AIM

1. This service paper demonstrates why Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) leaders must understand gender perspectives to meet the Joint Command and Staff Program (JCSP) aim and navigate the complex CAF challenges ahead. This paper will make a persuasive argument supporting this aim and recommends that the current JCSP complementary studies course “DS585, Gender Perspectives in Defence and Security” be immediately added to the core curriculum for all future JCSP serials. While outside the scope of this service paper, a suggested area of further study is how to incorporate this education into senior Non-Commissioned Officer career courses (NCO). Additionally, the benefits of sponsoring post-grads in gender, change management, and diversity and inclusion should be examined.

INTRODUCTION

2. The Canadian Forces College’s (CFC) mission is to prepare “selected senior Canadian Armed Forces officers, international military, public service, and private sector leaders, for joint command and staff appointments or future strategic responsibilities within a complex global security environment.”¹ To prepare senior officers for command and staff appointments, they must understand the human terrain, both within the organization and on operation. This means that to truly achieve the CFC mission, CAF senior leaders need to better understand gender perspectives and what it means to consider them. While the current JCSP program has tried to integrate some of these topics and has certainly done better than in years past, it has not been done in a thorough or systematic manner. This has resulted in the majority of JCSP Students still not understanding the fundamentals of gender perspectives or still believing that integrating gender perspectives means considering “women’s issues.” Over the past 23 years, the UN, NATO, Government of Canada and Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) have all mandated that gender perspectives will be considered in operational planning and execution, and in institutional policies and procedures, outlining in detail the numerous benefits it has on operational effectiveness.^{2 3 4} CAF members are mandated to consider them, while at the same time having little background or understanding of what that actually means or how to do it.

3. This service paper will first define what gender perspectives is and what it means in defence and security. It will then address how gender perspectives are currently being considered

¹ “Mission and Vision of the Canadian Forces College,” Canadian Forces College, last modified May 15, 2014, <https://www.cfc.forces.gc.ca/263-eng.html>

² “Resolution 1325(2000),” United Nations Security Council, October 31, 2000, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf>

³ “Bi-Strategic Command Directive 20-1: Integrating UNSCR 1325 and Gender Perspective into the NATO Command Structure,” North Atlantic Treaty Organization, last modified August 8, 2012, https://www.nato.int/issues/women_nato/2012/20120808_nu_bi-scd_40-11.pdf.

⁴ J.H. Vance, “Integrating Gender Perspectives in Operations: A Gender Aide-mémoire for the Canadian Armed Forces,” Government of Canada, 2019, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/integrating-gender-perspectives-operations.html>.

in the CAF, and the reasons why a greater understanding of gender perspectives should be considered an essential part of the JCSP curriculum. Finally, specific examples of how this education will benefit JCSP graduates in future command and staff positions will be discussed, before concluding with suggestions on how to overcome specific challenges to its implementation.

DISCUSSION

Gender Perspectives in Defence and Security

4. Integrating gender perspectives means the “recognition, acknowledgment, and corresponding assessment of how structures, policies, mission mandates, and institutional culture affect men and women differently. This includes both within military institutions and in operations.”⁵ Each individual’s understanding of these issues will shape their “values and judgements. They guide decisions, and they give life to interactions between people, between institutions, and between states.”⁶ Understanding these dynamics creates a deeper understanding of the human terrain, but also of one’s own biases and judgements, improving their own self-awareness and therefore effectiveness.

5. People are at the centre of all military operations. An understanding of the gender perspective factors in a theatre of operations will empower CAF members to better understand power dynamics and the social, economic, political, cultural, and religious influences. The CDS has stated:

Members of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) operate in a modern conflict environment of unprecedented complexity. Our duty is to prevail in conflict in multidimensional battlespaces, all-the-while attempting to minimize the harm caused in these areas of operation. To achieve mission success in operations, we must understand these conflicts—their causes, influencing factors, and the threats faced by different groups within the operational area. This level of understanding is required at every phase of an operation: from assessment, to planning, to execution. As the threats or situations evolve in response to our actions, we must continually adjust the approach.⁷

6. At the Political and Strategic levels, being aware of and critically analyzing these dynamics will help planners understand *what* the population needs for peace and *how* they should pursue these objectives.⁸ At the operational and tactical levels, considering gender perspectives helps CAF members identify local power brokers and identify who can help them achieve mission goals. Showing locals they care and understand builds credibility and support. They can identify vulnerable populations and the threats of violence against them that may be

⁵ Robert Egnell and Mayesha Alam, “Gender and Women in the Military - Setting the Stage,” in *Women and Gender Perspectives in the Military: An International Comparison*, ed. Robert Egnell and Alam, Mayesha (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2019), 2.

⁶ Egnell and Alam, “Gender and Women in the Military,” 1.

⁷ Vance, “A Gender Aide-mémoire,” 2.

⁸ Egnell and Alam, “Gender and Women in the Military,” 8.

preventing long-term peace and stability.⁹ In institutional defence policies and programs, a gender perspective deliberately considers men and women's different experiences to detect and correct inequality. Often, these improvements benefit all CAF members, not just women.¹⁰

Gender perspectives in the CAF

7. UNSCR 1325 mandated the consideration of gender perspectives in 2000 and NATO in 2012¹¹. The CDS directive was issued in 2016, adding that gender perspectives will be considered in “operational planning, conduct of missions, and across its institutions.”¹² Considering gender perspectives is not just the responsibility of the Gender Advisor (GENAD). The CDS directed that each and every CAF member is responsible for considering gender perspectives within their duties and responsibilities, but enforcement is a *command* responsibility.¹³

8. The CAF and the GoC use Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) to consider gender perspectives. This tool analyses how policies, programs, and initiatives affect women, men, and gender-diverse people.¹⁴ Despite the CDS's 2016 plan to implement CAF-specific GBA+ training, the 1.5-hour generic online GoC course is still only offered by the Canada School of Public Service. In 2019, the CDS published "Integrating Gender Perspectives in Operations: A Gender Aide-Mémoire for the Canadian Armed Forces," which includes a checklist for gender considerations during operational planning process (OPP). This Aide-Mémoire, however, is not well known, less understood, and never mentioned during the OPP on JCSP.

The Need for a Course on Gender Perspectives in Defence and Security

9. According to the CDS, General Eyre, the Canadian Armed Forces is currently facing a personnel and culture *crisis*.¹⁵ ¹⁶ The 2015 Deschamps report found that there was an “underlying sexualized culture in the CAF that is hostile to women and LGTBQ members, and conducive to more serious incidents of sexual harassment and assault.”¹⁷ In 2022, the Arbour report concluded that “the exposure of sexual misconduct in the CAF has shed light on a deeply

⁹ Egnell and Alam, “Gender and Women in the Military,” 1-22.

¹⁰ Sabrina Karim, “Women in UN Peacekeeping Operations,” in *Women and Gender Perspectives in the Military: An International Comparison*, ed. Robert Egnell and Mayesha Alam (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2019), 29.

¹¹ NATO, “Integrating UNSCR 1325.”

¹² Vance, “CDS Directive for Integrating UNSCR 1325.”

¹³ Vance, “A Gender Aide-mémoire,” 3-35.

¹⁴ “What is Gender-based Analysis Plus,” Women and Gender Equality Canada, last modified June 16, 2022, <https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/gender-based-analysis-plus/what-gender-based-analysis-plus.html>.

¹⁵ “Military needs help from Canadians amid personnel crisis: defence chief,” Global News, last modified October 15, 2022, <https://globalnews.ca/news/9201331/canadian-military-personnel-crisis/>.

¹⁶ W.D. Eyre, “CDS/DM Directive for CAF Reconstitution,” October 6, 2022, 5, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/dm-cds-directives/cds-dm-directive-caf-reconstitution.html>.

¹⁷ Deschamps, “External Review into Sexual Misconduct,” I.

deficient culture.”¹⁸ These are significant challenges that face all CAF leaders, but especially JCSP graduates who are expected to be *prepared* for “joint command and staff appointments and future strategic responsibilities within a complex global security environment.”¹⁹ In addition, the CDS identified in the 2022 CDS/DM Directive For CAF Reconstitution that his number one priority for the CAF is *people*, and in particular *CAF culture*.²⁰

10. Addressing the problems identified in the Deschamps and Arbour reports and in line with the CDS’s priorities, JCSP graduates will face challenging situations in their command and staff appointments that require a nuanced understanding and assessment of gender perspectives. Failing to provide in-depth education on these difficult topics during JCSP does not empower leaders to lead in difficult situations, spot their own biases, or implement CAF culture change initiatives. JCSP’s still-predominantly male, predominantly white senior officers don’t always understand the gravity of these difficult topics. They need to have these uncomfortable conversations in an educational setting so they are empowered to address workplace inequalities or questions from subordinates.

11. While it is obvious that additional topics related to gender perspectives have been added to the current JCSP course content, student exposure to these topics will differ significantly depending on the stream and complementary studies they select, which represents a missed opportunity to uniformly educate all services and trades. In some incidences, such as the “Human Security/Gender Perspective Case Study” in Roto two, the topics were also student-led without strong academic insight or guidance. Although this led to engaging conversation, these crucial subjects lacked the academic rigour and background necessary to promote deeper understanding. Madame Arbour states in her report that the quality of education, method of delivery and teaching talent are essential components for education on ethical topics.²¹ Finally, gender perspectives topics are touched on briefly throughout the course, but only skim the surface, creating a shallow and false sense of understanding. Antidotally, this repetitive method may actually contradict the intended effect, by frustrating students and building resentment without improving understanding; but quantitative analysis is needed to confirm this observation.

12. The course topics from DS/CF 585 are included in Annex A and should form the basis of the topics covered in the Core JCSP program. The following are examples of how some of these topics will empower JCSP graduates in future command and staff appointments:

1. **Intersectionality:** How it impacts experiences and access to resources. This knowledge can empower deployed leaders by understanding how it may make certain populations more vulnerable to violence and require specific security considerations to achieve peace and security objectives. Within Canada, it will make leaders aware of how policies and leadership decisions affect subordinates differently based on the intersection of their identities (i.e. single parents, women, racial minorities, etc).

¹⁸ Louise Arbour, “Independent External Comprehensive Review of the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces,” May 20, 2022, 211, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/report-of-the-independent-external-comprehensive-review.html>.

¹⁹ Canadian Forces College, “Mission and Vision.”

²⁰ Eyre, “CDS/DM Directive for CAF Reconstitution.”

²¹ Arbour, “Independent External Comprehensive Review,” 214-215.

2. **Military Culture, including the warrior framework, hegemonic masculinity, culture of misogyny and homophobia:** As US Army General Flynn famously said: “You cannot defeat an enemy you do not admit exists.”²² Numerous academics, the Deschamps and Arbour reports all highlight the history and present-day CAF challenges with these issues. Understanding them in greater depth and how our culture has perpetuated these harmful cultures is an important step in empowering leaders to change it.
3. **Sexual misconduct and sexual assault in the military.** While a difficult topic, these conversations will bring awareness to the statistics and specific reasons military victims underreport military sexual violence, including the prevalence of violence against men and the reasons why the military environment makes it so difficult for them to report. As with the previous topic, to change these issues, leaders need to first admit that they exist and learn how to reduce their prevalence. Of the nearly 19,000 claims submitted as part of the 2021 Sexual Misconduct Class Action Lawsuit, 42% were from men.²³ Yet still, there exists in the CAF a misconception that violence against men is not an issue, which means leaders are not addressing it seriously or implementing changes to make reporting less difficult. Without tough discussions on these topics, leaders are not even aware of their biases nor able to challenge them. The Deschamps report stated that CAF members felt their COs are inadequately trained on topics of sexual harassment, which demonstrates that this is an area requiring greater education.”²⁴
4. **Gender based violence in theatres of operations:** Gender based violence is an issue that CAF leaders will likely face on deployed operations and yet this topic is not discussed on JCSP. In October 2022, the U.N. Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Pramila Patten, confirms that Russia’s *military strategy* includes rape in the present-day Russian invasion of Ukraine. Of the underreported but confirmed cases, victims range from four to 82 years old, and are part of a “deliberate tactic to dehumanize the victims.”²⁵
5. **Applying GBA+ in DND and the CAF.** Successful gender perspective considerations require a focus on the meaningful outcomes of the analysis, not completing a checklist or copying a boilerplate paragraph into an Op Order. Academics have critiqued the GoC for this, but without educating leaders on what that means and what successful implementation looks like, this will not change. Oftentimes, inequality is perpetuated not only by the harmful actions taken but also by the actions that are not taken. Because of their lack of understanding, CAF members are often unaware of their own biases and

²² Thomas Ricks, “The text of General Flynn’s speech”, Foreign Policy, accessed February 23, 2023, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/01/27/the-text-of-general-flynn-s-speech/>.

²³ “Almost 19,000 claims submitted in Canadian military sexual misconduct lawsuits,” Toronto Star, November 25, 2021, <https://www.thestar.com/politics/federal/2021/11/25/almost-19000-claims-submitted-in-canadian-military-sexual-misconduct-lawsuits.html>.

²⁴ Deschamps, “External Review into Sexual Misconduct,” VI.

²⁵ “United Nations: Rape Is Part of Russia’s Military Strategy,” Forbes, last modified October 14, 2022, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ewelinaochab/2022/10/14/united-nations-rape-is-part-of-russias-military-strategy/?sh=725ae2f536a0>.

omissions and thus perpetuating systems of inequality in the CAF.²⁶ As part of their preparation for future staff and command appointments, JCSP graduates must understand how to successfully implement GBA+; not only because it is mandated but also because it increases operational effectiveness.

6. **Gender Mainstreaming vs Gender Balancing in Defence and Security Operations.** Members of the CAF often use these terms interchangeably, but they are entirely different strategies with different outcomes. Often, the biggest critique of gender equity initiatives in the CAF comes from policies which aim to achieve gender balancing. Gender balancing aims to reach a target number of women, at which point women's participation alone is expected to have a transformative effect on the organization. Its success rate is debated, but it is easy to quantify, which is why it is often the default gender integration strategy. Gender mainstreaming, on the other hand, aims to deliberately consider the unique experiences of men and women in order to recognize inequity and make sure it is fixed.²⁷ To support change initiatives, CAF leaders must understand the difference.

Curriculum integration challenges

13. There will be resistance to change and there will certainly be resistance to spending time learning about gender perspectives. In the CAF, as in many Western militaries, there is a long-standing culture of militarized masculinity, which values a very specific set of hypermasculine traits.²⁸ In these institutions, there is a distinct inclination toward “real military skills” over “soft issues,”²⁹ so spending time on topics related to gender will be met with discomfort and resistance. To counter this resistance, start by emphasizing the operational benefits of understanding the human terrain.

14. Time will be an obvious factor when considering adding classes to the core JCSP curriculum. Classroom and study hours are tightly calculated in the JCSP program. To address this problem, some efficiencies with existing classes can be achieved. Roto one already included classes related to some of the proposed topics in Annex A. By refocusing those existing classes to go into greater depth on these topics, a greater understanding can be achieved. The “Human Security/Gender Perspective “Case Study and Briefing Note (BN) assignment, while useful, could have included a greater depth of theory and academic content on Gender-based violence in theatres of operations. Since the recommendations for the BN were already provided in the BOI outcomes, the academic rigour of this exercise was otherwise limited. To allocate classes for gender perspectives subjects, "DS556 - Command" should be critically examined and could be drastically reduced without jeopardizing the achievement of JCSP objectives. The CDS identified that people and culture change are the CAF's most pressing issues.³⁰ As such, CFC

²⁶ Tammy Findlay, "Revisiting GBA/GBA+: Innovations and interventions," *Canadian Public Administration* 62, no. 3 (2019): 523.

²⁷ Karim, "Women in UN Peacekeeping," 29.

²⁸ Rachael Johnstone and Bessma Momani, "Gender Mainstreaming in the Canadian Armed Forces and the Department of National Defence: Lessons on the Implementation of Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+)," *Armed Forces and Society* 48, no. 2 (2022): 255.

²⁹ Arbour, "Independent External Comprehensive Review," 214- 219.

³⁰ Eyre, "CDS/DM Directive for CAF Reconstitution."

may wish to evaluate the utility of the extensive, and sometimes repetitive, coverage of Command Analysis Models and whether the proposed gender perspectives topics would better prepare future commanders, thus achieving the CDS's intent and stated JCSP aims.

15. Sequencing the gender perspectives classes at the start of JCSP, will also provide an opportunity for efficiencies. A deeper understanding of these topics in Roto one would allow for their organic and meaningful inclusion and reinforcement in other related classes, such as the OPP, in ROTO two and three. This would also allow the college to bring in a subject matter expert to teach these specific topics, as recommended by the Arbour report.³¹ This may be an opportunity to draw on the academic expertise in Chief Professional Conduct and Culture, as this education also furthers their strategic objectives. If the budget allows, this may also be an opportunity to hire a contracted expert to teach these important topics.

CONCLUSION

16. This service paper has demonstrated why CAF leaders must understand gender perspectives in order to meet the Joint Command and Staff Program (JCSP) aim and navigate complex CAF challenges in future command and staff appointments. This paper first defined gender perspectives and what it means in defence and security. It then discussed the CAF implementation of gender perspectives. Next, the reasons why JCSP graduates need a more in-depth understanding of gender perspectives and examples of how this knowledge will benefit them in future command and staff positions. Finally, this paper concluded with suggestions on how to overcome implementation challenges on JCSP.

RECOMMENDATION

17. It is recommended that in order to prepare JCSP graduates for future strategic responsibilities and joint command and staff appointments, the current JCSP complementary studies course “DS585, Gender Perspectives in Defence and Security” be immediately added to the core curriculum for all future JCSP serials.

Annex A. DS/CF 585 Gender Perspectives in Defence and Security Topics

³¹ Arbour, “Independent External Comprehensive Review,” 214-215.

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ANNEX A

DS/CF585 GENDER PERSPECTIVES IN DEFENCE AND SECURITY TOPICS

Session	Topics
1	Course Introduction. Activity: 90 minute lecture delivered by instructor.
2	Theoretical and analytical frameworks related to gender, stereotypes, masculinity and femininity, social constructions of gender roles, gender stereotypes, and gender equity. Activity: 90 minute student -led seminar presentation; participation in discussion.
3	Intersectionality theories, including intersections of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, generational, culture and other diversity identities. Activity: 90 minute student -led seminar presentation; participation in discussion.
4	Military culture, including the warrior framework, hegemonic masculinity, culture of misogyny and homophobia. Activity: 90 minute student -led seminar presentation; participation in discussion.
5	Sexual misconduct and sexual assault in military and defence organizations, Military Sexual Trauma (MST). Activity: 90 minute student-led seminar presentation; participation in discussion.
6	LGBTQ2+ members in the military, and discrimination against LGBTQ2+ members. Activity: 90 minute student-led seminar presentation; participation in discussion.
7	Gender-based violence in theatres of operations. Activity: 90 minute student-led seminar presentation; participation in discussion.
8	Focus on Canada - Applying GBA+ and gender mainstreaming in the Canadian government, the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces: opportunities and challenges. Activity: 60 minute lecture by guest speaker; followed by 30 minute question period.
9	Gender mainstreaming in security and peacekeeping operations. Activity: 90 minute student-led seminar presentation; participation in discussion.
10	Looking at the future: Gender, NATO, and the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, on women, peace, and security (WPS). Activity: 90 minute student-led seminar presentation; participation in discussion.
11	Case studies, best practices and lessons on incorporating gender perspectives in defence and security contexts. Activity: 90 minute student-led seminar presentation; participation in discussion.
12	Course Summary. Activity: 90 minute lecture delivered by instructor.