Modern Warfare Framework
Duty First Exhibit

This framework was created in partnership with Justin Riskus of York High School. It is intended as an educator’s guide to modern American military conflicts (post-Vietnam). Those wishing to incorporate modern military warfare into their teaching can use this framework in parts or as a whole to help them determine what to teach and emphasize in the classroom.

BIG IDEA

In the complex global security environment since 1970, soldiers are asked to do more than fight wars.

**BATTLE** - Fighting the armed forces of another state.

**STRATEGY**
Post Vietnam-US military planning has emphasized "shock & awe" (ie Panama, First Gulf War, Afghanistan, Iraq).

The core function of the military is to fight a conventional war.

Battle planning requires the consideration of many different factors.

The US has been committed to protecting its interests in the Middle East for decades.

**TACTICS**
Recent and ongoing conflicts have required the US military to adapt, improve its fighting abilities in urban settings and versus insurgencies.

**TECHNOLOGY**
Airpower is one of the greatest advantages of the American soldier.

Armored warfare has been forced to take on less traditional roles.

American soldiers have some of the most advanced weapons in the world. This technology requires training and is effective because good training is used properly.

**LEADERSHIP**
More and more soldiers in positions of leadership are required to take on more complex roles and responsibilities outside combat, such as peacekeeping and nation building.

In 2016, all combat positions became open to women.

**LOGISTICS**
The logistical capabilities of the US are, in many ways, unmatched by allies, rivals and enemies and allow it to project its power and protect its interests around the globe.
COUNTER-INSURGENCY - Finding and confronting enemies hidden within a population.

STRATEGY
Following the end of the Cold War, the US military has been primarily focused on countering stubborn insurgencies in Afghanistan and Iraq. This has led to significant changes in strategic planning and forced the US to reevaluate traditional modes of thinking.

Counter insurgencies are complex, requiring the cooperation of local forces along with civilian assistance and “buy-in”.

Following the end of combat against conventional enemies, the US military fought a sustained counterinsurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan to protect the US and its interests.

 Iraq and Afghanistan are different and had different insurgencies.

TACTICS
Successful counter insurgencies require forging close relationships with locals, often placing soldiers in greater danger. Combat is often waged in urban or rugged areas in which insurgents can be difficult to distinguish from non-combatants.

COIN requires soldiers to perform both hard (traditional fighting) and soft (non-combat) duties. These are not always distinct and could transform from one to the other.

COIN operations were initially conducted on an ad-hoc basis but became codified.

Snipers play an integral role in counterinsurgency missions.

TECHNOLOGY
Unmanned Arial Vehicles (UAVs) have played an increasingly prominent role in COIN, as they are low risk and effective. They represent one way the US military achieves security objectives without having to deploy troops.

Relatively low tech insurgencies (utilizing civilian cover and IEDs) are enough to erode support for a conflict in America.

Technological advantages provide US soldiers with significant advantages over insurgents.

Insurgents use conventional and improvised weapons to inflict casualties and disrupt daily life and military operations.

LEADERSHIP
The quality of leadership can easily determine success or lack thereof in a mission. This is true from squad level on up to Congress and the office of the President.

Leaders are developed and tested at all levels. The decisions of even the newest Private at a checkpoint can have major implications to the overall mission.

Political pressure and public opinion play an increasingly larger role in military decision making and have a great influence on civilian and military leaders.

COIN operations forced women to take more active roles in combat zones.

LOGISTICS
Counter insurgencies waged across the world require a long term commitment. The sustainment of which can be effective, but costly.

Bases must often be built and sustained, national forces (ie Afghanistan and Iraq) must be trained and equipped, and humanitarian and nation building efforts (food aid, infrastructure projects, schools, etc) require enormous amounts of resources.

Female Engagement Teams (FETs) were necessary in dealing with women in Iraq and Afghanistan.

DETERRENCE - Displaying military force to prevent attack.

STRATEGY
A US show of force can be an effective method of maintaining peace. This is true on a global level (ie NATO or the South China Sea) or in embattled nations (Afghanistan, Iraq) or in peacekeeping missions (the Balkans).

Nations and individuals often take notice of a US military presence and make strategic decisions (to support, resist, etc) based on it.

US military alliances around the globe play a key role in deterring conflict.

Preventing war is as important as waging war.

Deterrence missions can last so long they become the status quo (ie Cold War).

TACTICS
Effective deterrence requires elements of US forces to be combat ready at all times. This is true at all levels, from a patrol in Afghanistan to the US nuclear arsenal (ie the triad).

In many scenarios restraining and limiting use of force is often necessary to win over local populations. Ie, the debate on the use of UAV strikes balances their effectiveness at killing terrorists vs. alienating civilians.

There are 5 components to deterrence: Show of force (Reforgar exercises), Training (NTC), Equipment Integration (big 5), and strategic positioning (11D Forward in Germany).

TECHNOLOGY
To maintain military supremacy, the US typically devotes half of its discretionary annual budget to defense spending, much of this going to the development of new weapons, vehicles and technology (ie F22, F35).

Proponents argue that such spending is necessary for the US to maintain its military edge, while critics argue that the government can afford to spend much less, still maintain supremacy, and devote those funds to domestic projects.

LEADERSHIP
At the higher level, US presidents often play an outsized role in their approach to using deterrence to curb the influence of rival powers (ie Reagan vs. the “Evil Empire”). The robustness of US deterrence often vary based on a variety of political and economic factors.

On the ground, officers and other leaders must often make critical decisions that balance the use of force with that of diplomacy.

LOGISTICS
Maintaining the world’s most effective military in a state of constant readiness requires significant amounts of resources but helps curb rivals and enemies from taking military action.

US allies play a critical role in deterrence, allowing the US to project its power around the globe.

Deterrence needs to be credible to be successful. (Ex. During the Cold War the professionalism and training increased military power).
**MILITARY ASSISTANCE** - Training and helping the armies of friendly foreign countries.

**STRATEGY**
Equipping and training the militaries of allied nations and governments is seen as a necessary and viable alternative to the use of US ground troops.

In many instances, particularly following the failures of Vietnam and difficulties in Afghanistan and Iraq, the American public is much more willing to accept involvement in foreign conflict if largely local forces are used.

The size of an all-volunteer, professional force in the US discourages the use of large number of personnel in various actions.

The US military participates in military assistance missions around the world to establish a secure environment that protects US security interests.

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**TACTICS**
US forces are often embedded with foreign units to train and equip them in various ways. (Ex. Military Transition Teams, MiTT, of 10-15 soldiers train and advise local forces on intelligence, communications, fire support, logistics and infantry tactics.

Special Forces other play an outsized role in military assistance programs (ie Syrian Civil War).

Often times, US forces will accompany foreign units in specialized roles, such as operating new weapons systems or calling in airstrikes (ie Afghanistan 2001-Northern Alliance).

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**TECHNOLOGY**
Providing allies with military equipment represents one of the largest aspects of military assistance (and its budget). One can often determine US allies from the hardware they use (ie F16s, M16 rifles, etc).

Closer and more trusted allies (ie the UK, Israel) receive higher grade technology than others (Pakistan).

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**LEADERSHIP**
At the higher level, presidents and Congress determine who gets what based on a variety of political and sometimes economic factors. Historically, the decision to arm certain groups has been controversial (ie Contras, Mujahedeen) in hindsight.

The role played by US military trainers is often complex and can be dangerous (ie Blue on Green violence, Afghanistan). They must balance cultural norms and social customs with effective training.

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**LOGISTICS**
Logistical support is often a key form of assistance provided by the US military to our partners (ie US aerial refueling in the Libyan Civil War, UK & France or US airstrikes and supply convoys to Iraqi security forces).

The military uses more than weapons and armored vehicles on military assistance missions. These missions require a lot of equipment.

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**PEACEKEEPING** - Enforcing peace agreements between hostile groups.

**STRATEGY**
Since the end of the war in Vietnam, US forces have played an extensive role in various peacekeeping missions around the world. These missions reflect America’s status of global leader and its influence around the world.

The involvement of US forces in peacekeeping missions is often dependent on a combination of interests, humanitarian needs and recent events. For example, the US intervention in Mogadishu deterred involvement in the Rwandan Genocide.

Peacekeeping forces are often multi-national coalitions.

There are complex geopolitical factors involved in deciding when to deploy the US military as peacekeepers.

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**TACTICS**
US peacekeepers receive additional training as their ability to use force can often be restricted in the interest of the mission and collateral damage. This can, at times, place US peacekeepers in precarious situations.

Deterrence play a key role in keeping peace, convincing would-be aggressors that the price would not be worth the cost.

Peacekeeping requires soldiers to do a variety of non-violent tasks; including patrols, policing, confiscating weapons, and educating civilians about mines to keep them safe.

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**TECHNOLOGY**
In addition to lethal weapons, peacekeeping forces may also be equipped with a variety of non-lethal weapons designed for various purposes (ie crowd control, incapacitating an attacker, etc).

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**LEADERSHIP**
The decision to embark upon a peacekeeping mission often comes from the executive and legislative branches.

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**LOGISTICS**
Peacekeeping missions often involve multi-national forces that may or may not require additional support.