



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

**NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY
JOINT FORCES STAFF COLLEGE
NORFOLK, VA 23511-1702**

Office of the Commandant

30 July 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR Mr. Steven Williams, Joint Forces Staff College, Norfolk, VA 23511

SUBJECT: Notice of Proposed Removal

1. This is official notification that I am proposing to remove you under the provisions of 5 CFR Part 752 Sec 301 from your position as a Supervisory Public Affairs Specialist, GS-1035-13, from the Federal Service for failure to follow instructions, unauthorized disclosure of sensitive information and negligent performance of duties. This action, if taken, will be effected no sooner than thirty (30) calendar days from your receipt of this proposal.

2. The past disciplinary action taken prior to this proposed removal:

8 August 2011 - Suspension without pay for 14 days for failure to follow written regulations, Orders, Procedures and/or Protocol and Discourtesy.

3. The Charges and Specification for this action are:

CHARGE 1: Failure to Follow Instructions.

(1) SPECIFICATION 1: By Commandant Guidance for Staff and Faculty JFSC-ALL emails dated 26 April 2012 and 8 May 2012, JFSC employees were given instructions from the Commandant to direct all media inquiries regarding a JFSC elective course "Perspectives on Islam and Islamic Radicalism" to the Joint Staff Public Affairs Officer. On May 9, 2012, you failed to follow this instruction by answering media questions posed by Mr. Spencer Ackerman of Wired Magazine.

CHARGE 2: Unauthorized Disclosure of Sensitive Information.

(1) SPECIFICATION 1: On May 9, 2012, you disclosed sensitive information, the name of a JFSC course instructor linked to the course content in the JFSC elective "Perspectives on Islam and Islamic Radicalism", to Mr. Spencer Ackerman of Wired Magazine. This disclosure was without authorization and in violation of Joint Forces Staff College non-attribution policy - JFSC Policy Directive 2 Section 2.1.7.

CHARGE 3: Negligent Performance of Duties

SPECIFICATION 1: You were negligent in performing your duties by failing to research past articles written by the journalist Mr. Spencer Ackerman of Wired Magazine after he contacted you regarding the JFSC elective course "Perspectives on Islam and Islamic Radicalism". Had you researched, an abundance of open source data was readily available that would have clearly

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warranted communicating a heightened concern to the leadership at JFSC regarding the reporter's inquiry. Therefore, you failed to use due care at a standard consistent with the duties of a Supervisory Public Affairs Specialist.

4. In determining the appropriate level of discipline, I have considered the following aggravating factors: Your past misconduct as Master of Ceremonies during the Joint Forces Staff College combined graduation that resulted in a 14 day suspension in August 2011 for failure to follow written regulations, orders, procedures, military protocol and discourtesy. Upon your return to duty, you assured me that you were up to the challenges of performing your duties as Supervisory Public Affairs Specialist, GS-1035-13. In addition to mentoring, you were also offered services through the Civilian Employee Assistance Program on 27 June 2011 and again on 12 July 2011. After receiving written and verbal orders to forward all media inquiries concerning the elective to the Joint Staff Public Affairs Office, you engaged in an unauthorized conversation with Mr. Ackerman which resulted in a subsequent multi-media release that attributed a Joint Forces Staff College instructor to contentious curriculum material. Your actions potentially placed this service-member and his family at risk of threat or harm because of the subject matter related to the disclosure. Your actions required the implementation of protection measures by the Naval Criminal Investigative Service and local police. Further, by failing to use due care in the performance of your duties, JFSC leadership were unaware of the potential risks posed by the reporter's inquiries. Based on these factors, I no longer have trust and confidence in your ability to serve in your federal position as the Joint Forces Staff College Supervisory Public Affairs Specialist.

5. You have the right to reply to this proposal in person, in writing, or both, stating why this proposed action should not be taken. You may submit affidavits and other documentary evidence to support your reply. Any reply should be made to Major General Joseph Ward, USAF, Commandant, JFSC, no later than 10 calendar days after the date of this notice. If more time is needed for the preparation of your reply, you must request an extension in writing from Major General Ward within the stated time period, explaining why you need more time. Your reply will be given full and fair consideration. Whether or not you reply, you will receive a written notice of the final decision. You will remain in a duty status during the notice period and any absence during this period will be charged appropriately.

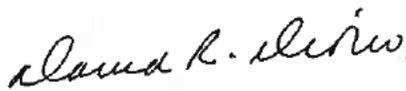
6. You have the right to select an attorney or other representative to assist you in the preparation and presentation of your reply. Any choice of representative or change in representative must be designated in writing. You must include your representative's name, address, and phone number. You must sign and date the designation document. You must submit the notification to Ms. Mollie Murphy, Office of General Counsel, National Defense University. You may request a reasonable amount of official time to prepare and present your reply. Arrangements for the use of official time for the purpose must be made with me. You must make all arrangements for and pay all costs associated with representation.

7. The material being relied upon to support the reasons for this proposed action, to include documents and applicable regulations, are available for review by you and/or your

representative. If you and/or your representative wish to review the material, please contact me at 757-443-6208 to schedule an appointment.

8. You will receive a written notice of my decision as soon as possible after all the evidence in your case, including your written and/or oral reply and all associated documents, has been reviewed and considered. If you do not respond, the decision will be issued after the time allotted for your response has elapsed. If it is determined that your removal is warranted, the decision notice will explain applicable grievance and appeal procedures and how to exercise them.

9. Please sign and date the "Acknowledge receipt" signature block of this Memorandum. Your signature does not indicate your agreement or disagreement with this action. Failure to sign will not void the contents of the Memorandum.


DAVID R. DiORIO
Deputy Director and Chief of Staff

Acknowledge receipt:


Signature

30 July 2012
Date

SUBJECT: Inquiry Report – AR 15-6 Informal Investigation

1. In response to Reference (a), Attachments A – W are forwarded. As directed, I have conducted an informal investigation in accordance with AR 15-6 into the actions of Mr. Steve Williams, Public Affairs Officer, Joint Forces Staff College, involving media contacts pertaining to the JFSC elective course 'Perspectives on Islam and Islamic Radicalism.' All reasonably available evidence has been collected and all directives set forth have been satisfied. Below are my findings and recommendations.

2. The following specific questions were the focus of my fact finding related to Mr. Williams' actions:

Inquiry Question 1: Did Mr. Williams grant Colonel David Cade (a JFSC student in the JCWS class of 12-1) permission to talk with a representative of the media, Mr. Spencer Ackerman of WIRED magazine, about the JFSC 'Perspectives' elective course?

Inquiry Question 2: Did Mr. Williams properly coordinate with or gain approval from the JFSC Chief of Staff before granting permission to a student to talk to a member of the media?

Inquiry Question 3: Did Mr. Williams properly perform his overall duties related to managing media interest in the JFSC 'Perspectives' elective course, keeping his chain of command properly notified and informed on critical matters?

Inquiry Question 4: Does Mr. Williams have an explanation for his actions on 9 May 2012, when he confirmed to the media the identity of a JFSC course instructor, and commented on responsibilities of the commandant of JFSC, thus failing to follow orders from NDU-P and JFSC-CMDT that all media queries were to be referred directly to the Joint Staff public affairs office at that time?

3. Executive Summary of Findings

Finding 1: I find conflicting evidence exists on whether the JFSC student, Colonel David Cade, ever contacted Mr. Williams to seek permission to talk to the media. In separate signed statements, Colonel Cade says he did, and Mr. Williams says he did not. I could not establish an independent source to conclusively resolve the question. However, I believe the preponderance of evidence suggests Colonel Cade never contacted Mr. Williams, and thus conclude Mr. Williams did not grant the student permission to talk with Mr. Spencer Ackerman of WIRED magazine.

Finding 2: I find that because the preponderance of evidence suggests Mr. Williams did not grant permission to the student, the issue of coordinating with anyone on the matter is a moot point.

Finding 3: I find the general pattern of duty performance suggests Mr. Williams faithfully performed his JFSC-PAO duties for routine matters. However, I find his performance was substandard in managing media activities related to the JFSC 'Perspectives' elective course. Specifically, when the original media query came to him on 12-14 March 2012, a long list of relevant articles written by Spencer Ackerman were available in the open media. Dating back nine months, Ackerman had published a series of hard hitting articles about FBI training programs on Islam, resulting in public comments from officials as high as US Senators and the US Attorney General, also reported in the

open press. When he received the media query in mid-March, Mr. Williams committed a failure of omission, by not performing the common PAO due-diligence task of creating a media summary on Mr. Ackerman's reporting interests. This would have immediately highlighted in mid-March there was reason to flag this as a sensitive media query. Though no one directed him to do the media summary, I find that Mr. Williams did not fulfill his duty as the first line monitor of media interest in JFSC in a timely and proper fashion. His status as an independent PAO, assigned to the JFSC-CMDT staff, made Mr. Williams the key official who should have notified the chain of command of a need for heightened concern for media interest in JFSC by journalist Spencer Ackerman.

Finding 4: I find Mr. Williams admits to his failure to follow orders on 9 May 2012. He does not seek to make excuses, and says only that he made a mistake that was not malicious or intentional.

4. Recommendations. In view of the foregoing findings, I recommend:

a. Mr. Williams be issued a written admonition for his actions on 9 May 2012, for his failure to follow orders. Namely, while fielding a phone call from a member of the media related to the JFSC 'Perspectives on Islam and Islamic Radicalism' elective course, Mr. Williams confirmed to the media the identity of the instructor of the JFSC 'Perspectives' elective course, and made mention of the responsibilities of the commandant of JFSC. Mistakenly or otherwise, he failed to follow orders in his possession, to refer all media queries directly to the Joint Staff public affairs office during a critical period of media interest for the JFSC.

b. Mr. Williams' next performance appraisal should include some language indicating substandard performance in his duties as JFSC-PAO. Both his failure to follow orders, and his failure of omission in not sending forward relevant, available media analysis in a timely fashion, constitute substandard performance, and resulted in serious potential consequences for his organization, and the individuals involved, who relied on his professional performance as a PAO.

c. For the foreseeable future, Mr. Williams should not be assigned to duties as a lead Public Affairs Officer for a major government organization. I do not have convincing evidence Mr. Williams acted with malice or deceit at any time, and thus do not believe it would be justified to administer more severe disciplinary measures.

5. The Appendix and attachments provide a detailed record of all data and analysis pursued during my investigation, which form the basis of my findings and recommendations above.

[SIGNED IN HARDCOPY]

CLARK M. GROVES
Colonel, U.S. Air Force
Investigating Officer

Reference (a): NDU-COS Memo, "Appointment Order – AR 15-6" dated 20 June 2012

Appendix: Evidence and Findings

Attachments: A – W

APPENDIX

Evidence and Findings

In accordance with my appointment letter, I focused my investigation on the actions of Mr. Steve Williams, JFSC-PAO, involving media contacts related to the JFSC 'Perspectives' elective course. The time period covered in my analysis covers mid-February through early May of 2012, with specific focus on mid-March 2012.

Overall Chronology

The overall chronology in this case can be separated into six periods represented in Table 1 below. Certain key events are numbered for later reference, and relate to the numbered events in Figure 1 on page 5.

TABLE 1. Overall chronology of events in the case

15 Feb – 11 Mar 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 15 Feb, Col Cade attends the JFSC 'Perspectives' elective and becomes concerned• ~28 Feb, Cade begins discussing academic concerns with JFSC Academic Chain (1)• Cade does research on the elective's guest speakers Coughlin and Guandolo• In web research Cade finds relevant articles by Spencer Ackerman of WIRED
12-16 Mar 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 12 Mar, Col Cade claims he asked JFSC-PAO for permission to contact the media• 12 Mar, Col Cade contacts Spencer Ackerman of WIRED magazine (2)• Cade's contact with Ackerman triggers a media query to the JFSC from WIRED• Over the next four days, JFSC personnel respond to the media query (3)
17 Mar – 15 Apr 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 22 Mar, Col Cade graduates from JFSC and transfers to FL• Col Cade continues discussions about academic concerns with JFSC Academic Chain
16-20 Apr 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 16 Apr, Col Cade elevates his academic complaint to JFSC-COS (4)• JFSC Staff Chain begins working with Academic Chain to address Col Cade's concerns (5)• 20 Apr, Col Cade elevates concerns to Pentagon, sends course slides to AO at OSD (6)
21-24 Apr 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 21 Apr, HHQ begins requesting information from JFSC on the academic complaint (7)• 24 Apr, HHQ directs JFSC to suspend the elective at 1556 hours• 24 Apr, WIRED publishes an article on the JFSC 'Perspectives' elective at 1859 hours (8)
25 Apr – May 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Media and official attention increases

Detailed Analysis

To determine the answers to the Inquiry Questions, I examined the events listed above and gathered evidence including witness statements, emails, and documents. To present the volume of evidence gathered, it is most convenient to separate the detailed analysis into three sections within this Appendix. Appendix Section I covers Inquiry Questions 1 and 2. Appendix Section II covers Inquiry Question 3. Section III covers Inquiry Question 4.

APPENDIX SECTION I
INQUIRY QUESTIONS – 1 & 2

Inquiry Question 1: Did Mr. Williams grant Colonel David Cade (a JFSC student in the JCWS class of 12-1) permission to talk with a representative of the media, Mr. Spencer Ackerman of WIRED magazine, about the JFSC elective course, 'Perspectives on Islam'?

Inquiry Question 2: Did Mr. Williams properly coordinate with or gain approval from the JFSC Chief of Staff before granting permission to a student to talk to a member of the media?

EXAMINATION OF EVIDENCE

Unfortunately, I did not find direct evidence to resolve if Mr. Williams gave permission to Col Cade to talk to the media. The direct evidence leads to a classic "He said – He said" dilemma. In separate signed statements, Col Cade said he contacted Mr. Williams on 12 March 2012 and asked permission to contact the media, ¹ and Mr. Williams said he had no contact with Col Cade whatsoever. ²

Consequently, to resolve the dilemma, I was left to judge the credibility of Col Cade and Mr. Williams based on an analysis of indirect evidence. For Inquiry Questions 1 and 2, I examined evidence from 15 Feb - 24 Apr 2012. Within each time period I structured my analysis according to three organizing principles: key issues, key individuals, and level of specific knowledge related to the key issues.

Key Issues:

- (1) Academic complaint
- (2) Media contact with WIRED
- (3) Media query from WIRED

Key Individuals/Groups:

- (1) Col David Cade
- (2) JFSC Academic Chain
- (3) JFSC-PAO
- (4) JFSC Staff Chain
- (5) NDU-PA

Level of Knowledge Related to Key Issues

Table 2 below illustrates the analysis framework used to judge the various levels of specificity of knowledge displayed by the key individuals as they discussed the key issues in this case.

TABLE 2. Framework for examining levels of specific knowledge on key issues

		LEVELS OF SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE ABOUT KEY ISSUES			
	KEY ISSUE	SUPPOSITION	VAGUE KNOWLEDGE	GENERAL KNOWLEDGE	SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE (Media Contact)
1	Academic Complaint	Someone might complain	Someone complained	A student complained	Col Cade complained
2	Media Contact	Someone might contact the media	Someone contacted the media	A student contacted the media	Col Cade contacted the media
3	Media Query	The media might send a query	The media sent a query	WIRED sent a media query	WIRED queried because Col Cade contacted them

←←← Key Issues
Seen As Unconnected

←←← Results in
Routine Behavior

Key Issues →→→
Seen as Interconnected

Results In →→→
Non-Routine Behavior

Reading across a row in Table 2 provides a sense for how individuals might generally think about the issue, depending on how much specific knowledge they possess. Columns toward the left side of the table are less specific, and those to the right more specific. Less specific facts are not as likely to be perceived as connected to one another. However, a person possessing the highly specific facts on the right side of the table would clearly know the issues are interrelated.

Analysis Approach

The case boils down to proving (or disproving) whether a single 5-minute conversation took place. If it did, certain key issues and facts would have passed between the two individuals. Since I do not have the benefit of independent direct evidence, I analyze the indirect issue of whether the two people *acted like* the conversation took place as time went along. In other words, did they act as though they knew the key facts that allegedly passed between the two during the conversation? Did any of the key individuals around them act as though they knew these facts?

I thus examined the evidence to determine which key individuals/groups were discussing the three key issues, at what level of specificity, during which time periods. In essence I posed the following question:

According to the evidence -- who ... knew what ... to what degree ... when?

I then looked at whether the pattern of evidence was more consistent with Col Cade's claim that the conversations took place, or was more consistent with Mr. Williams' claim that it did not.

The first logical hypothesis in the analysis is this: knowledge level should affect behavior and communication patterns. For example, a person in possession of all three key facts (especially at a highly specific level of knowledge), would behave differently than a person aware of only one fact in isolation, or of two facts at a vague or general level. A person who knew only that "a student complained about the course" would likely treat that knowledge as routine. Similarly, a person who knew only "the media sent a query about a course" might treat that as routine.

A person with knowledge of the second key issue, "someone contacted the media," at almost any level of specificity (other than supposition), might behave in a non-routine fashion. And, if a person possessed specific knowledge of all *three* key facts related to Col Cade and the Islam course, that person would possess very explosive information. It is logical that person's actions, emails, and verbal discussions over time should reflect his knowledge of these facts. Otherwise, a **motive for keeping quiet would be logically needed.**

The second logical hypothesis in the analysis is this: in the real world, a consistent pattern over a sustained time period rarely arises by chance. Consistent patterns typically have a discernible cause.

Thus, the analytic framework for this investigation is straightforward. Col Cade admits he possessed specific knowledge of all three key facts starting on 12 Mar 2012. He claims he contacted Mr. Williams the morning of 12 Mar and passed those same things to him. Mr. Williams denies the contact occurred. What does the overall pattern of indirect evidence from that time – who, knew what, to what degree, when – suggest about whose version of events is more credible? Based on an analysis of emails,

conversations, behavior patterns, third-party testimonies, and potential motives underlying these actions, who makes the more credible claim?

Bottom Line Up Front

The evidence available strongly indicates only one person's overall communication and behavior patterns are consistent with those of a person possessing highly specific knowledge of all three key facts. Everyone else's overall communication and behavior patterns do not. There must be a reason. The most straightforward explanation is that it is true. It appears from the evidence that Col Cade knew the complete story, and no one else did, including the JFSC-PAO, Mr. Williams. Thus, the evidence strongly indicates Col Cade did not contact Mr. Williams on 12 March, or at any other time, and communicate with him. Thus, the evidence strongly indicates Mr. Williams could not have given permission for Col Cade to talk to the media, because the two never had contact with one another.

Visual Depiction of Evidence For Inquiry Questions 1 and 2

Figure 1 on page 5 summarizes the findings and evidence presented in Appendix Section I related to Inquiry Questions 1 and 2. The figure acts as a guide to understand the evidence, laying out in visual form the analysis approach.

LEGEND FOR FIGURE 1

- Figure 1 shows eight key events, as numbered in the chronology in Table 1
- Four major discussions take place between key individuals or groups, shown as red boxes labeled A-D
- Whether any of the three key issues above entered into each discussions is color-coded:
 - Tan = Academic complaint
 - Yellow = Media contact
 - Green = Media query

Time Period	15 Feb - 11 March	12-16 March	17 March - 15 April	16-20 April	21-24 April	
Summary of Key Events	Col Cade attends the Islam Institute begins expressing concerns to the JFSC Academic Chain and doing research on the the speakers	Col Cade contacts WIREd says he asked for permission from PAO. Independent evidence suggests he did not. He never took any other steps to contact WIREd. Contacting PAO via media query. PAO Academic Chain responds 1/24/16 Mar	Col Cade graduates from JFSC and transfers to Florida. He continues to elevate his concerns within the JFSC Academic Chain	Col Cade elevates concerns to JFSC staff & Academic Chain w/ PAO. PAO makes phone call to WIREd. PAO makes phone call to WIREd. PAO makes phone call to WIREd.	Col Cade elevates concerns to JFSC staff & Academic Chain w/ PAO. PAO makes phone call to WIREd. PAO makes phone call to WIREd.	21 Apr. HHQ requests information on academic complaint from JFSC. 24 Apr. HHQ directs JFSC to issue per Islam elective. 24 Apr. WIREd publishes article on JFSC Islam elective
Is there independent evidence the 3 Key Topics below were being discussed?	Col Cade attends JFSC Islam elective 15 Feb. Col Cade compares to JFSC academic chain starting ~28 Feb. Priority: Col Cade contacts FBI PA, ethics, (bring in carban). Col Cade does web research and finds WIREd articles. Col Cade calls PAO. WIREd to call PAO. Col Cade views any of connection with per complaint's query.	Col Cade calls the JFSC Academic Chain & PAO responded to media query 12-16 Mar. A few individuals visible above are Col Cade on media query. Col Cade contacts WIREd's Academic Chain ~28-12 Mar. Col Cade contacted WIREd on media query. Col Cade views any of connection with per complaint's query.	Col Cade graduates from JFSC 22 Mar. Col Cade continues elevating concerns in JFSC Academic Chain. Col Cade does not inform anyone he has contacted the media.	Col Cade elevates academic concerns to Pentagon ~20 Apr. JFSC Staff & Academic Chain w/ PAO. PAO makes phone call to WIREd. PAO makes phone call to WIREd.	HHQ requests info on course from JFSC ~21 Apr. WIREd in contact w/ Col Cade asking for quote 24 Apr. Col Cade elevates concerns to Pentagon ~20 Apr. JFSC Staff & Academic Chain w/ PAO. PAO makes phone call to WIREd. PAO makes phone call to WIREd.	24 Apr. HHQ requests information on academic complaint from JFSC. 24 Apr. HHQ directs JFSC to issue per Islam elective. 24 Apr. WIREd publishes article on JFSC Islam elective
Academic complaint	#1 Col Cade issues academic complaint w/ JFSC Academic Chain	Col Cade issues academic complaint w/ JFSC Academic Chain	Col Cade issues academic complaint w/ JFSC Academic Chain	Col Cade issues academic complaint w/ JFSC Academic Chain	Col Cade issues academic complaint w/ JFSC Academic Chain	
Media contact	Col Cade contacts WIREd	Col Cade contacts WIREd	Col Cade contacts WIREd	Col Cade contacts WIREd	Col Cade contacts WIREd	
Media query	Col Cade posts to JFSC/PAO	Col Cade posts to JFSC/PAO	Col Cade posts to JFSC/PAO	Col Cade posts to JFSC/PAO	Col Cade posts to JFSC/PAO	
Academic complaint	Academic Chain works with Col Cade on academic complaint	Academic Chain works with Col Cade on academic complaint	Academic Chain works with Col Cade on academic complaint	Academic Chain works with Col Cade on academic complaint	Academic Chain works with Col Cade on academic complaint	
Media contact	Unaware of student media contact	Unaware of student media contact	Unaware of student media contact	Unaware of student media contact	Unaware of student media contact	
Media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	
Academic complaint	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	
Media contact	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	
Media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	
Academic complaint	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	
Media contact	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	
Media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	Academic Chain works media query	

FIGURE 1. Analysis of Evidence for Inquiry Questions 1 & 2

15 FEB - 11 MAR 2012

Col Cade and JFSC Academic Staff

As reported in the *Preliminary Inquiry*, Col Cade first attended the 'Perspectives on Islam' course as a visitor to a session held on 15 February 2012.³ Col Cade became concerned with the course content and its guest speakers, and on or about 28 February (event #1 on Figure 1) he began to express his concerns to the JFSC Academic Chain. The discussion between Col Cade and the JFSC Academic Chain is depicted in the box labeled "A" on Figure 1. The key topic discussed during the entire period of this discussion, was Col Cade's academic concerns with the 'Perspectives on Islam' course.

Col Cade's signed statement indicates he did not discuss his own contact with the media at any time with the Academic Chain.⁴ He only made reference to media concerns in terms of suppositions, saying negative media exposure *might* happen. Thus, the JFSC Academic Chain seems to have focused on the key topic of academic concerns in *isolation* from the other key topics as they interacted with Col Cade.

Col Cade's statement to the *Preliminary Inquiry* indicates he began to do his own research regarding the elective, contacting the FBI public affairs office, the Southern Poverty Law Center, and completing internet searches to build a case to back up his concerns.⁵ At some point Col Cade found media articles written by a journalist named Spencer Ackerman, who had reported in a WIRED publication on concerns related to FBI training programs using the same individuals who were participating as JFSC guest speakers. Col Cade concluded it might be useful for him to contact Mr. Ackerman. To facilitate that, Col Cade reports he decided to contact the JFSC-PAO for permission to contact a media member.

According to Col Cade's signed statement for this investigation,⁶ sometime in early March 2012 he went to the command section on the second floor in the JFSC building, looking for someone who could tell him how to contact the JFSC-PAO. He says he found a woman who appeared to be part of the JFSC staff, to whom he posed his question. The woman wrote the phone number and room number for the JFSC-PAO on a yellow sticky and gave the note to Col Cade. Col Cade provided me a copy of that sticky note.⁷

Ms. Tracy Bradley, Administrative Assistant, JFSC

I sent a copy of the note I received from Col Cade to the JFSC-COS so he could have all women working in the command section examine the handwriting on the note. The JFSC-COS put me in touch with Ms. Tracy Bradley, an administrative assistant who has worked in the command section for three years. The JFSC-COS checked leave records, and Ms. Bradley was present for duty during the relevant timeframe in March 2012. According to her signed statement,⁸ Ms. Bradley is very certain the information on the note is her handwriting (the JFSC-PAO phone and room numbers).

Though she confirms she wrote the note Col Cade provided to me, Ms. Bradley does not have any specific recollection of doing so. I asked Ms. Bradley to look up Col Cade's photograph on the JFSC DES information system (which she did), and to tell me whether she remembered meeting the individual pictured. She had no recollection of meeting Col Cade. However, not having specific memories of these things would not be unexpected since providing general information to students is a very common occurrence for her. The sticky note evidence does strongly indicate that at some point in time, Col Cade sought and obtained information from Ms. Bradley on how to contact the JFSC-PAO.

However, this evidence does *not* speak to the issue of whether Col Cade actually *contacted* Mr. Williams, which is the key issue under consideration. In this regard, Col Cade told me he did not know of any independent party, nor did he have any independent collaborating evidence, that could verify that he actually contacted Mr. Williams. The only evidence he provided was that he had obtained the contact information for Mr. Williams at some point.

12-16 MARCH 2012

Col Cade's account of his contact with the JFSC-PAO

In his signed statement for this investigation,⁹ Col Cade says that around 0900 on 12 March 2012 he telephoned Mr. Williams and talked to him for approximately five minutes. He says of this event, "During my conversation with the JFSC-PAO on 12 March, I informed Mr. Williams that I had some concerns with the academic content of the JFSC elective on 'Perspectives on Islam and Islamic Radicalism.' I thought it might be helpful for me to contact a reporter to do some fact-finding to get more background on the invited speakers. I asked the JSFC/PAO for permission to contact a reporter (Mr. Spencer Ackerman), and he granted me permission. I also asked how I should respond if the reporter asked for any course materials, and he directed me to refer any such requests to him."

Thus, in this single 5-minute telephone conversation, Col Cade indicates he passed to Mr. Williams all three key, specific facts in the case: (1) Col Cade had a complaint about the 'Perspectives on Islam' course + (2) Col Cade was contacting Spencer Ackerman of WIRED about the course + (3) a media query from Spencer Ackerman would be directed to the PAO. Col Cade said this 5-minute conversation was the only contact he ever had with Mr. Williams.

JFSC-PAO account of contact with Col Cade

The JFSC-COS checked leave records, and Mr. Williams was present for duty at the relevant time frame in March 2012.

However, in his signed statement for this investigation,¹⁰ the JFSC-PAO says he never engaged in any communication exchange of any kind, at any time, with Col David Cade. He also says he had never heard Col Cade's name mentioned by anyone at JFSC until mid-April, when the front office staff at JFSC became aware that a recent former student had been complaining about the 'Perspectives' elective course within the Academic Chain of command. Mr. Williams further states that when he started hearing discussion about Col Cade in mid-April, he made his own inspection of Col Cade's photo in DES. The PAO states that Col Cade's face was not familiar to him, and he had no memory of seeing Col Cade in the hallways during the previous several months when he would have been a JFSC student.

Col Cade's account of his contacts with journalist Spencer Ackerman

According to his statement,¹¹ after phoning Mr. Williams at 0900 to get permission, Col Cade proceeded to initiate contact with the WIRED journalist, Spencer Ackerman. This resulted in a phone conversation between Cade and Ackerman at approximately 1230 on 12 March 2012 (event #2, Figure 1). Below is the portion of Col Cade's signed statement related to his communications with Spencer Ackerman.¹² Some of the items in this extract occurred on 12 March 2012, some later. For simplicity, I'll post all material on Cade-Ackerman communication here:

Col Cade Interview Question #4: Can you please describe to me the communication exchange you had with Mr. Spencer Ackerman, of WIRED magazine, when you contacted him on 12 March 2012 to do your fact finding?

Cade Answer #4: After I got clearance from JFSC/PAO, I think my initial step was to send an email to Mr. Ackerman. After I got a response to that, I called Mr. Ackerman and had a phone conversation with him at approximately 1230, 12 March 2012. I told Mr. Ackerman who I was, and that I had read some of his recent articles on WIRED/DangerRoom related to the problematic characterization of Islam in FBI training by some unqualified guest speakers. I told Mr. Ackerman I had run across Coughlin and Guandolo at the Joint Force Staff College as guest speakers in one of the JFSC elective course. I asked what he could tell me about these men, and if he could provide me any background that would help me demonstrate to the JFSC faculty that they were not appropriate lecturers to invite. It was not a very substantive conversation. I was trying to walk a line between obtaining information from Ackerman, and becoming a source of information beyond the minimum required to ask the questions I had. During this call, he asked me to provide documents and course materiel. I referred those requests to the JFSC/PAO. The call lasted about 10-15 minutes.

Col Cade Interview Question #5: When you called Mr. Ackerman of WIRED on 12 March 2012, did it seem like he was already aware that Coughlin and Guandolo were guest speakers at the Joint Forces Staff College?

Cade Answer #5: No. He did not seem to be aware of that before I called him. That was something that came up in the course of our conversation.

Col Cade Interview Question #6: After your phone conversation with Mr. Ackerman of WIRED on 12 March 2012, did you have any further communication exchanges with him related to this issue?

Cade Answer #6: Yes, on two other occasions. Mr. Ackerman emailed me on April 24th and May 7th.

On April 24th he asked me to call him, which I did. He informed me that he'd heard that an investigation of the JFSC Islam course was being conducted and asked if I'd like to provide a quote for an article on the topic. I declined and referred him to JFSC/PAO.

On May 7th, he wrote that he'd heard about an inflammatory presentation given by LTC Dooley to the Islam class. After consulting with Mr. Daniel Donovan to learn which PAO office was in the lead for this issue, I made contact with Lt Col James Gregory OSD/PA. Acting in accordance with his instructions, I referred Mr. Ackerman to Lt. Col Gregory.

Col Cade Interview Question #7: During the months of March and April 2012, as you interacted with the JFSC about the problems with their Islam elective, and tried to urge them to action, did you highlight to the faculty and staff that you strongly suspected a particular media outlet might already be interested in the fact that Coughlin and Guandolo were JFSC guest speakers, because you had already personally been in contact with Mr. Ackerman of WIRED?

Cade Answer #7: No. Furthermore, I did not perceive that Mr. Ackerman was "hot on the trail" of this story as a result of our conversation. Had I believed so, I would have emphasized it to the appropriate members of the staff. I did emphasize to the JFSC faculty and staff that they were very vulnerable to

negative media scrutiny by having Coughlin and Guandolo as guest speakers, and (after I reviewed LTC Dooley's ppt on or about March 12th) because of the inflammatory content that existed on the course CD. I pushed them to act with urgency. I do not remember letting any staff member other than Mr. Steve Williams know specifically that I had myself been in direct contact with Mr. Ackerman, although I believe it to have come up in informal discussions with classmates with whom I shared my concerns as I worked this issue with JFSC.

Col Cade Interview Question #8: Based on your own interactions with Mr. Spencer Ackerman of WIRED, do you have any idea how he came into possession of the course CD, or found out the name of LTC Dooley as the course instructor, so that he published this information in his April and May articles? Did Mr. Ackerman discuss any of this with you?

Cade Answer #8: No. I have no idea who would have been the sources, or how he came into possession of the course CD or the name of the course instructor.

Summary of Col Cade's phone call to Spencer Ackerman on 12 March 2012 (event #2, Figure 1)

1. Cade told Ackerman he had read his articles on problems in the FBI's Islam training courses
2. Cade told Ackerman a course on radical Islam existed at JFSC
3. Cade told Ackerman that Coughlin and Guandolo were invited speakers to the JFSC course
4. Cade told Ackerman he was trying to convince JFSC that these invited speakers were unsuitable lecturers (implying a dispute was occurring at JFSC)
5. Cade says Ackerman did not know Coughlin and Guandolo were JFSC speakers until he revealed that information to the WIRED journalist (indicating Cade was the original source for this information for Ackerman)
6. Cade says he referred Ackerman to the JFSC-PAO regarding Ackerman's request for course materials (NOTE: this represents an alternate explanation for why Cade would have a yellow sticky note from Ms. Bradley with the JFSC-PAO contact information)
7. Cade says over the entire time he was discussing his concerns to JFSC faculty and staff over a two month period, he never revealed to anyone he had contacted a member of the media – except for his claim of calling Mr. Williams on 12 Mar 2012

The information above that passed from Col Cade to Spencer Ackerman at ~1230 on 12 March is relevant to the events that unfolded next during the period of 12-16 March. The contact Col Cade made with the WIRED journalist triggered a series of events within JFSC that centered on the PAO. A summary of these events is listed next. In Figure 1, the discussion between key players involving the media query is depicted as the large red box labeled "B."

The WIRED media query from Spencer Ackerman

The next set of key developments start 2-3 hours after Col Cade finished talking to Ackerman, when Mr. Williams received a phone call from the WIRED journalist (event #3, Figure 1) inquiring about the JFSC 'Perspectives on Islam' course. The interactions that transpired between key individuals and groups at JFSC are important to establish whether there is corroborating evidence to determine whether Col Cade actually contacted the JFSC-PAO on 12 March as he claims, or whether Mr. Williams is credible in his denial of having a conversation with Col Cade on 12 March.

Detailed Chronology

Monday, 12 March 2012

~1500: Steve Williams received a phone call from Spencer Ackerman of WIRED.¹³ Williams told Ackerman to send written questions, but also indicated JFSC has a strict non-attribution policy.

NOTE: This timeline would follow naturally from Col Cade talking to Ackerman from ~1230-1245, giving new information to a journalist on one of his long-standing interests, and pointing him to the JFSC-PAO to request course materials. It is logical this would prompt Ackerman to make his initial contact with the JFSC-PAO later that afternoon.

Tuesday, 13 March 2012

1206: Steve Williams sends the first email¹⁴ on the subject of an Ackerman media query to LTC Dooley and LtCol McKnelly (the course instructors for the JFSC 'Perspectives' elective course). In this original email, Williams simply gives a heads up that a journalist called the previous evening requesting information and materials on their course. Williams tells the course instructors he informed the reporter he likely would not be able to provide information due to the strict JFSC non-attribution policy, but there still might be follow-up requests from the reporter. Also copied on this email were DJCWS, COS, CHOPS, NDU-PA, and CDR Kirkbride.

NOTE: It is important to take note of what does *not* appear in this original email. At no point does Mr. Williams mention to his JFSC colleagues that he thought Ackerman's interest in JFSC or their 'Perspectives' course was prompted by a student who had contacted Mr. Ackerman. At no point does Mr. Williams mention Col Cade or any other student being tied to the media query, nor does he mention any student asking permission to contact the media. This is not consistent with a person in possession of these key facts, unless he has reason to hide them.

Another point arises in this email. In his signed statement for this investigation,¹⁵ Williams says he had never heard of Ackerman before receiving a call from him. A small piece of evidence in this email adds credence to his claim. Williams misspells the name of the reporter as "Eckerman," suggesting he may not have seen Ackerman's name in print before this point in time.¹⁶

Wednesday, 14 March 2012

1004: Williams receives written questions from Ackerman by email.¹⁷

NOTE: Ackerman's questions are detailed, often representing the kind of media query received by a PAO when a reporter has done his homework, and is following up on information he has already obtained from somewhere else. In fact, many of the questions in the query track topic-for-topic with what Col Cade says in his signed statement he discussed with Ackerman on 12 March on the phone.

Additionally, the wording of Ackerman's media query item #4 is important: "Have any enrollees at the JFSC objected to the material presented in the elective? If so, on what grounds?"¹⁸ If Mr. Williams had talked to Col Cade, this question by Ackerman would have reinforced in the mind of Mr. Williams the content of Col Cade's alleged phone call from only two days earlier.

Remainder of 14-16 March

In his first signed statement for this investigation, the JFSC-PAO provided a chronology and summary of all interactions with the media that occurred during the time period of 14-16 March while JFSC personnel generated a response to the Spencer Ackerman media query.¹⁹ The total number of times Ackerman called or emailed the JFSC-PAO during this 4-day period was three: one phone call, and two emails from Ackerman. The JFSC-PAO sent one email to Ackerman, which was the final set of answers to the questions in the media query.

The following excerpts are taken from the JFSC-PAO signed statement regarding these activities:²⁰

Monday, 12 March 2012, 1500: (approximate time) Received first phone call from Spencer Ackerman from Wired. I asked him to send me his questions, but told him we have a non-attribution policy. This was the first time I had heard of or from Akerman, Wired or Danger Room.

Wednesday, 14 March 2012, 1004: Ackerman emailed me his questions. Two minutes later, I emailed NDU PAO and told him I would draft a response for his review prior to me emailing a response to Ackerman

Wednesday, 14 March 2012, 1501: Emailed response to Ackerman

Thursday, 15 March 2012, 1258: Received email from Ackerman asking for CD-ROM and syllabus

NOTE: These are the only instances of interaction between JFSC-PAO and WIRED until 9 May, when Ackerman called the PAO one more time. Analysis of that incident is presented in Section C of this report.

Friday, 16 March 2012, 0837: Emailed Dave Thomas stating I was not going to respond to Ackerman

The list of all emails between those responding to the media query is quite long.²¹ The short version of events is this -- Mr. Ackerman's media query led to a lengthy exchange of emails between Mr. Williams and a variety of people in the JFSC Academic Chain, who helped generate answers to the media query. In addition to personnel in the JFSC Academic Chain, at various times Williams courtesy copied the JFSC-COS (Mr. Dave DiOrio), the JFSC-CHOPS (Mr. Thomas Falconer), and the NDU-PA (Mr. Dave Thomas).

Analysis of information related to the media query from various sources

To help determine whether it is reasonable to believe Col Cade contacted Mr. Williams on 12 March and passed on all three key facts, I pursued several lines of inquiry. Listed below are findings from the independent, third-party sources I examined, related to the media query.

a. Emails related to media query during 12-16 March period -- None of the emails²² I examined that were exchanged during the period of 12-16 Mar between those drafting answers to the media query in the Academic Chain, or among those copied in the Staff Chain, give any evidence that anyone was talking about the key topic that Ackerman's media query was prompted by a JFSC student, or was tied to the concerns of a JFSC student. Mr. Williams does not raise the issue, and no one else mentions anything about it either. None of the emails make mention of Col Cade. This is curious if Col Cade had just gone

to the JFSC-PAO and announced he wanted to contact the media. The absence of any discussion of Col Cade, or his concerns with the 'Perspectives' course, strongly suggests that his action of contacting the media on 12 March (which actually did occur, by his own signed statement) was simply not known to *anyone* in JFSC at that time. The discussion listed as "B" in Figure 1 is entirely consistent with a group of people who were either aware only of the third key fact, "WIRED has made a query," or who viewed the media query in complete isolation from any other key fact, such as the Academic Chain who also knew the key fact that "Col Cade has an academic complaint."

Reinforcing the point that Col Cade's key action of contacting the media was completely unknown to this group, one need only consider the focus of item #4 in Ackerman's media query, i.e. has any student complained about the elective course? This question would be a giant prompt to think of Cade for the members of the Academic Chain who were, at that very time, dealing with Col Cade regarding his concerns on their 'Perspectives' course. These faculty members were the very individuals who were providing to the JFSC-PAO the majority of the detailed information to answer Ackerman's media query. However, it seems even those involved from the Academic Chain *did not* make a mental connection to Col Cade as being the trigger for Ackerman's question. If they did, they did not say so in any of the email traffic I examined that circulated among the email working group.

This is a critical point. The key fact 2 in Table 2 (someone contacting the media) is somewhat unique among the three key facts, even considered in isolation from the other two. In isolation, key fact 1 is commonplace – a student has an academic complaint. In isolation, key fact 3 is unremarkable – the media has inquired about something. But key fact 2 is different for many reasons. Even suspecting a senior officer of going to the media with a complaint presents a mental barrier for most people working for the military. Certainly no one would accuse a senior officer of such a thing without definitive proof. Making such a claim would be a serious matter. Thus, even though the faculty members involved knew Col Cade had an academic complaint, and they knew WIRED had asked about their course, they were not likely to assume the two things as connected. Logically, their default would be to view the simultaneous occurrence of the student complaint and the media query as coincidence. This would explain why they would not bring it up in their email exchanges with the PAO regarding the media query.

So, the question of whether *anyone* expressed *any* awareness of Col Cade contacting Ackerman is a critical point in judging the actions of Mr. Steve Williams as the JFSC-PAO. According to Col Cade's testimony in his signed statement for this investigation,²³ Mr. Williams was the *only* person on the JFSC staff whom he told of his media contact. This would make Mr. Williams the *only* possible source for anyone else at JFSC. But the PAO would not know that. The PAO would logically assume that if Col Cade told him, what will keep him from telling others? Thus, if Mr. Williams actually possessed the knowledge on 12 Mar that a student had contacted the media, why would the PAO keep quiet and put *himself* at risk of being responsible for leaving the institution vulnerable. Also, what strategy would Mr. Williams develop to keep this unusual fact concealed? Under these circumstances, what logic would explain why the PAO would *want* to keep quiet? The actions and discussions of the PAO during this time are not consistent with someone struggling with these serious dilemmas. Everything in his handling of the media query appears to be routine behavior. Thus, the facts do not fit Col Cade's claim about contacting Mr. Williams on 12 March.

Since the email record I examined between the individuals involved in answering the media query did not provide any evidence that anyone was aware Ackerman's media query was prompted by Col Cade, I next followed up with interviews with relevant individuals available to me who were involved in answering the media query. I wanted to see if any *verbal* discussion might have occurred amongst the JFSC Staff Chain (of which Mr. Williams is a member) in the mid-March period, which might indicate Mr. Williams possessed the key knowledge that a student had asked permission to contact the media about the 'Perspectives' elective course.

b. Interview with Mr. Dave DiOrto, JFSC-COS: As someone courtesy copied on some of the mid-March media query emails, I interviewed the JFSC Chief of Staff.²⁴ I asked him about his recollection of any verbal exchanges he might have had with Mr. Williams in mid-March, to see if he remembered Mr. Williams mentioning verbally, or anyone else mentioning, that the media query being staffed was tied to a student expressing concerns over the 'Perspectives' elective course, or a student coming to Mr. Williams asking permission to talk to a member of the media, or any mention of Col Cade. Mr. DiOrto had no recollection of engaging in any such conversations at that point in time, or of *anyone* in the Staff Chain discussing any such thing. In fact, Mr. DiOrto states that he himself did not find out about Col Cade's concerns with the 'Perspectives on Islam' course until mid-April, when Col Cade elevated the issues he had been discussing within the JFSC Academic Chain to the JFSC front office staff. This is confirmed by Col Cade's own statement to the Preliminary Investigation (Atch x), and by the original email received by Mr. DiOrto from Col Cade on 16 April outlining his concerns (Atch x).

I asked the COS if anyone else on the staff might have been in any conversation related to Mr. Williams in the mid-March time frame, who might be able to shed light on my questions. The COS said the most likely person, if anyone, would be Mr. Thomas Falconer, Chief of Operations, the direct supervisor of Mr. Williams at the time.

c. Interview with Mr. Thomas Falconer, JFSC-CHOPS: As someone courtesy copied on the mid-March media query emails, and as the direct supervisor of Mr. Williams at the time, I interviewed the JFSC Chief of Operations.²⁵ I asked him about his recollection of any verbal exchanges he might have had with Mr. Williams in mid-March, to see if he remembered Mr. Williams mentioning verbally, or anyone else mentioning, that the media query being staffed was tied to a student expressing concerns over the 'Perspectives' elective course, or a student coming to Mr. Williams asking permission to talk to a member of the media, or any mention of Col Cade. Mr. Falconer had no recollection of engaging in any such conversations at that point in time, or of anyone in the Staff Chain being aware of any such thing.

d. Interview with Mr. Dave Thomas, NDU-PA: As one of the individuals courtesy copied on the mid-March media query emails, I interviewed the NDU-PA at Ft McNair,²⁶ concerning his recollection of any verbal exchanges he might have had with Mr. Williams at that time, to see if he remembered Mr. Williams mentioning, or anyone else mentioning, that the media query being staffed was tied to a student expressing concerns over the 'Perspectives' elective course, or a student coming to Mr. Williams asking permission to talk to a member of the media, or any mention of Col Cade. Mr. Thomas also had no recollection of engaging in, or hearing about, any such conversations at that point in time. Like the JFSC-COS, Mr. Thomas also thinks it was not until mid-April that he first heard of student concerns related to the 'Perspectives' elective course, or of Col Cade.

The NDU-PA does remember receiving a short phone call from the JFSC-PAO regarding the general fact of the media query going on in mid-March, and some of the routine matters involved in answering it. However, Mr. Thomas' phone journal for this period has no entries related to this topic. This is important because Mr. Thomas makes it a disciplined habit to keep a phone journal in his office to record notes related to all significant phone calls as they occur. Thus, the NDU-PA says the lack of an entry in his journal indicates there was nothing significant about the phone conversation he had with the JFSC-PAO related to this media query in mid-March. Mr. Thomas says he would remember, and would have written in his journal, if the subject of student concerns over a course had arisen, and certainly would remember if Mr. Williams had mentioned the mid-March media query was prompted by a senior officer student making contact with the media, because that would be a rare event.

The following is excerpted from my interview with the NDU-PA on matters related to the mid-March WIRED media query:²⁷

NDU-PA Interview Question #2: Did the media query itself raise any special concerns in your mind, or did the fact that Steve Williams was asking for your inputs raise any special concerns?

NDU-PA Answer #2: No. I took this to be a fairly standard media query that the academic staff at JFSC was answering through their PAO channels down there. I understood the reason Steve was including me was simply to get my take on best phrasing of the answers to the query. He did not flag this as a problematic query, nor did I see anything in the email exchanges with the JFSC faculty that indicated it was raising heightened concerns in their minds.

From time to time over the years, Steve would include me on PAO matters at JFSC. But, JFSC was not required to process PAO matters through NDU at that time. The normal working relationship had been for JFSC to handle its own press matters. I keep a phone log of significant phone calls as they occur each day. My log for the timeframe of 13 March and several days following does not include any notes on phone conversations with Steve Williams related to this press query. That would typically mean that at the time I thought his phone call to me was about a very routine matter. I also have no record of elevating this to anyone past myself in the NDU chain. I would most certainly have done that if I had suspected any sort of special concerns were attached to Mr. Ackerman's media query in March.

NDU-PA Interview Question #3: Had you heard of Spencer Ackerman, WIRED magazine, or DangerRoom, before Mr. Ackerman's media query arrived on 13 March 2012? Did the fact the query came from Mr. Ackerman raise any special concerns in your mind?

NDU-PA Answer #3: I was not familiar with Spencer Ackerman or DangerRoom before his media query arrived. I had heard of WIRED magazine. To my recollection, he is not one of the journalists we have dealt with. Also, the questions from Mr. Ackerman sent looked fairly standard. Taken in isolation at the time, without anyone suggesting otherwise, I had no reason to take it with heightened concern. I was not aware of any history or extenuating circumstances that would have put me on my guard."

Discussion of Findings for the 12-16 March Period

It is impossible to reconcile the statements of the two claimants, Col Cade and the JFSC-PAO, Mr. Williams. If Col Cade actually made a phone call to the PAO on the morning of 12 March, Mr. Williams would have had a vivid memory of that student's call when he received the media contact from Ackerman that afternoon. This is especially true since Col Cade's alleged request, asking the PAO for permission for a senior officer and student to contact the media, would have been a very rare request. According to both the JFSC-PAO and the NDU-PA such a request would generate a flurry of responsibilities for the PAO, and create a buzz in the faculty and staff.

Furthermore, if Col Cade actually phoned Mr. Williams the morning of 12 March to ask permission to contact the media, it seems incredible the topic did not arise somewhere in the email discussion over the following few days or weeks, or in the verbal discussions of the COS, the CHOPS, the NDU-PA, or someone else whom those individuals would hear, at some point in time.

Thus, logically there are only two possibilities. Either the 12 March contact Col Cade claims to have made with Mr. Williams did not occur, and Col Cade has a motive for claiming it did, or the 12 March contact did occur, and the JFSC-PAO had some motive for keeping quiet about it.

It is the task of this investigation to examine the actions of Mr. Steve Williams pertaining to his handling of media contacts related to the JFSC 'Perspectives on Islam' course. Of necessity I must examine the truthfulness of his claim that he did not give approval to a student (Col Cade) to contact the media, because he had never even *spoken* to that student. Fortunately or unfortunately, to judge the truthfulness of Mr. Williams on this point requires me to judge the truthfulness of Col Cade on this point, and to weigh the relative merit of the two claims. In separately signed statements, each individual lays out diametrically opposed versions of events. Obviously, they cannot both be telling the truth.

Thus, another question germane to judging the credibility of each person's claim is to ask which of the two, Cade or Williams, has a stronger and more straightforward motive for claiming the contact between them did or did not occur. A first point of examination in this regard relates to timing.

For Mr. Williams, it is necessary that his motive for covering up contact with Col Cade was present immediately at the time Col Cade says he phoned him on 12 March, or very shortly thereafter. Otherwise, there is no explanation for why the PAO did not immediately start acting as expected after receiving the highly unusual and rare request from a senior officer and student to contact the media. If the motive and idea wasn't immediately present on 12 March, why didn't he start discussing the occurrence of this explosive event with the COS, other staff members, faculty ... *someone, anyone?* If the call from Col Cade actually occurred, what motive would there be for the PAO to keep quiet about it immediately and very carefully? Why not just act normally? The whole scenario would require a degree of pre-planning from the start, which implies some larger agenda. It seems very far-fetched.

On the other hand, a motive for Col Cade to falsely claim he made contact with the PAO would not require pre-planning, but could arise more slowly and deliberately. Unlike for Mr. Williams, for Col Cade the entire *idea* of making the claim could arise much later. In his own signed statement for this investigation, Col Cade says that during the entire two month period he was elevating his concerns to all levels at JFSC, at no point did he ever tell anyone he had contacted the media (except for his claim of the

single 5-minute phone call to Mr. Williams).²⁸ In addition to evidence from his signed statement in this regard, the indirect evidence examined thus far indicates the key fact a student contacted the media remained unknown to everyone at JFSC for a very long time after it occurred. If it was Col Cade's original plan for it to remain secret, he would not need to claim he had contacted the PAO until later, for such an idea to be useful to his purposes. The first mention I found of Col Cade's claim of contacting the JFSC/PAO for permission, arose in his statement for the *Preliminary Inquiry* in May 2012.²⁹ Based on his own statement for this investigation, Col Cade was very thorough, for a long time, not to reveal the sensitive fact of his media contact as he went along in this unfolding scenario. Why wait until May when the Preliminary Investigation started, after it was already obvious someone had tipped off the media? Why did he not mention this claim that he asked the PAO for permission to anyone at the JFSC during March and April when he was dealing with them about his concerns?

Thus, coming up with a scenario in which Cade has a strong motive to falsely claim he contacted Mr. Williams for permission is straightforward. After the media story broke, and the investigation started, Col Cade might want to be able to claim he wasn't acting as a maverick in his dispute with JFSC about the elective. He might want to be able to claim he checked the box of clearing with the PAO before going to the media. He might want to be able to imply that if JFSC didn't know he had contacted the media, it wasn't his responsibility -- they should ask Mr. Williams why he failed to notify anyone. If Col Cade was going to go to the media secretly to get his way, and then make a false claim, he might look for someone who seemed an easy target to pin the blame on. The potential motives involved are rather straightforward.

It is not straightforward to think of a scenario where it makes sense for Mr. Williams to immediately have a strong motive to keep quiet about Col Cade asking his permission to go to the media. For one thing, if the PAO knew Col Cade was going to contact the media, he could not be sure when Col Cade might get around to contacting WIRED. For another, the PAO could not be sure if Col Cade or anyone else would start talking about the fact that a senior officer and JFSC student and contacted the media. Why would Mr. Williams put himself at professional risk as a PAO by staying quiet?

I can think of only two possible scenarios for a spontaneous motive arising in the mind of the PAO immediately wanting to keep quiet, and they are both a bit far-fetched, and require several unlikely things to be true. The first possible scenario involves carelessness. For example, it is possible what Col Cade claims is true: on the morning of 12 March the JFSC-PAO carelessly said "yes" in a 5-minute conversation to grant permission to a very rare request for a student to make contact with the media. He might have given very little thought to the implications, and taken very little time to counsel the student. It is possible Mr. Williams did this, only to realize later that day, after Col Cade had already contacted WIRED, that he shouldn't have given permission for a student to go to the media. At that point Mr. Williams might have concluded he must immediately start acting like nothing happened, hoping it will all just go away if he keeps quiet. He might have concluded he should not try to contact the student, he should not let anyone else know, he should just sit on it for weeks and hope for the best. All of this seems like a stretch. Mr. Williams' supervisors would have to be the judge of how likely any of this behavior might be for Mr. Williams, based on their observations of his overall long-term behavior patterns.

The second possible scenario involves forgetfulness. It is technically possible, though absurd, that the PAO simply forgot that Col Cade asked his permission to go to the media on the morning of 12 March.

Thus, when Spencer Ackerman called that afternoon, Mr. Williams genuinely believed, and continues to believe, that he had never heard of Ackerman or Col Cade before all of this came about. Again, others would have to be the judge of how likely that might be based on observations of long-term behavior. However, memory shortcomings of this magnitude are rare.

Bottom line, it is clearly difficult to find a way to reconcile the third-party and circumstantial evidence occurring in mid-March (reflected in emails from that time, and memories of staff conversations) with a convincing motive for Williams to immediately and thoroughly keep quiet if Col Cade actually contacted him the morning of 12 March. It is just not very straightforward.

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As depicted in Figure 1, Col Cade graduated from JFSC on 22 March and transferred to his new duty station in Florida.³⁰ It appears Col Cade continued to elevate his concerns within the JFSC Academic Chain throughout this period from 17 March – 15 April 2012. It also appears the key topic of discussion between Col Cade and the Academic Chain was his academic concerns with the 'Perspectives on Islam' course.

Col Cade *does* testify³¹ that he repeatedly and strongly emphasized to those he dealt with in the JFSC Academic Chain there was an important threat that someone might go to the media with information on the elective, and the media might start asking questions, resulting in negative media coverage for JFSC. However, at all times he kept his statements in this regard at the level of a *supposition* – someone *might* go to the media; the media *might* ask questions. But, as stated previously, according to his own signed statement for this investigation, at no point did Col Cade notify the Academic Chain that there was a very *specific* reason for them to be concerned about explosive and negative media coverage in the very near term. He did not give these individuals the benefit of the specific knowledge he possessed: he had academic concerns with the elective course + he had already contacted the media and discussed his concerns about the course + media queries about the elective course from WIRED or Ackerman should thus be treated as highly sensitive.

The reason this is relevant to this investigation is that declining to pass along the specific knowledge he possessed would be consistent with someone who thought *no one else knew about his contact with the media*. But, such behavior would be *inconsistent* with a person who had revealed his media contact to the JFSC-PAO on 12 March. Consider. If the JFSC Academic Chain found out Col Cade had gone over their heads and had gone to the media before they were finished resolving his concerns, they would likely have been furious. Thus, Col Cade would have a motive to hide the fact from them. But, this would only be effective if he was sure they would never find out. If he had already revealed his media contact to Mr. Williams on 12 March, what assurance would Col Cade have that Mr. Williams would not simply tell the Academic Staff? They might simply find out from the PAO he had gone over their heads and contacted the media -- if Mr. Williams actually knew that fact on 12 March as Col Cade claims. Thus, the facts do not fit. Why would Col Cade think he could get away with not telling the Academic Chain for a whole month or more, unless he believed his secret was entirely safe?

Further evidence from this period that Col Cade's version of events regarding 12 March is false, and Mr. Williams' is true, relates to the fact that discussion of Spencer Ackerman's media query went dormant inside the JFSC for a month. Col Cade claims he and Mr. Williams both possessed the same three key

facts starting on 12 March. However, if one considers whose behavior during this month-long interlude (from 17 March – 15 April) was more consistent with being in possession of a volatile combination of facts, it is hard to explain the routine behavior inside the JFSC Staff Chain, which includes Mr. Williams as the PAO. It would be very strange to know a time-bomb was ticking, and the next shoe was about to drop from the Ackerman media query, and then drop the subject for a month. No one was acting overly nervous during this time -- except for Col Cade.

It seems likely that Col Cade alone knew he had already made contact with the media on 12 March. It's certain he knew he had contacted Mr. Spencer Ackerman, a journalist who had published a series of hard-hitting articles about the FBI and other government agencies related to their Islamic training courses. He knew he had informed Spencer Ackerman specifically that a course on radical Islam existed at JFSC; that controversial individuals such as Coughlin and Guandolo were invited speakers to the JFSC course; that he was trying to convince JFSC these invited speakers were unsuitable lecturers (implying a dispute was occurring at JFSC between high ranking individuals). He knew this was all new and important information to the journalist, and that Ackerman was very likely to query the JFSC, and then publish a negative article, prompted by his own contact with the media.

Col Cade's actions during the period of 17 March – 15 April are consistent with a person in possession of such explosive facts. Even though he already graduated from JFSC, had all the pressures of a transfer, and was facing the pressures of starting a new duty position in a different state, he continued to push the issue of his concerns related to the JFSC elective. This is very non-routine behavior.

However, the actions of the JFSC-PAO during this period suggest the only thing he was aware of was the isolated and general fact that "WIRED sent a media query." The record indicates he dealt with it as a routine matter, suggesting he genuinely understood it to be a routine and general matter. Thus, when he finished managing the issue on 16 March, he dropped the matter until it arose again in mid-April.

16 - 20 APRIL 2012

As depicted by event #4 in Figure 1, on 16 April Col Cade next elevated his concerns about the 'Perspectives' elective course out of the Academic Chain and up to the JFSC front office Staff Chain.³² The large red box labeled "C" and key event #5, in Figure 1, represent the discussion that took place from 16-20 April after the JFSC-COS became aware that Col Cade had concerns with the JFSC elective. From the evidence I examined, discussion C within the Staff Chain was about Col Cade's concerns with the academic quality of the elective and its guest speakers.^{33, 34, 35} Thus, as per Table 2, the Staff Chain was only focused on one key fact, in isolation from either of the other two key facts. They thought the problem was that they had an upset former student, who had not been able to resolve his issue with the Academic Chain.

Again, according to his own signed statement,³⁶ at all times in his discussion with the Staff Chain during this short 4-day period, Col Cade made mention of media concerns only at the level of a *supposition* – someone *might* go to the media; the media *might* ask questions. As before, Col Cade does not notify the Staff Chain *he knew* there was also a very *specific* reason for them to be concerned about explosive and negative media coverage for JFSC in the very near term, due to his own contact with Spencer Ackerman from WIRED the previous month.

And for the same reasons as stated previously, this is relevant to this investigation, because declining to pass along the specific knowledge he possessed would be consistent with someone who thought *no one else knew about his contact with Ackerman*. Such behavior by Col Cade would be *inconsistent* with a person who had revealed his media contact to the JFSC-PAO on 12 March.

As before, if the Staff Chain found out Col Cade had already gone to the media before they had a chance to resolve his concerns, they would be upset. Thus, Col Cade has a motive to hide the fact from them. But, hiding it works only if he knew for sure no one else was aware of his contact with the media. If he had contacted the PAO on 12 March as he claims, he would have been unsure whether Mr. Williams might simply tell his superiors that Col Cade contacted the media. The facts do not fit.

Thus, as before, this calls into question Col Cade's version of events of what happened between him and Mr. Williams on 12 March, and lends believability to Mr. Williams' claim that he had never been contacted by Col Williams.

A further fact comes to light in analyzing data from this 4-day period. There appears to be consensus that this mid-April period, when Col Cade finally contacted the COS with his academic concerns, is the first time that *anyone* in the Staff Chain became consciously aware of Col Cade as a former student. The signed statements from the JFSC-COS,³⁷ the JFSC-CHOPS,³⁸ the JFSC-PAO,³⁹ and the NDU-PA⁴⁰ all state that they first became aware of Col Cade in mid-April 2012, but not before. This set of facts is more consistent with the version of events claimed by the JFSC-PAO, Mr. Williams, that Col Cade did not contact him on 12 March, than it is with the claim of Col Cade. As PAO, Mr. Williams was a member of the Staff Chain, and his claim that he lacked knowledge of Col Cade until the mid-April time frame is consistent with the memories of others in the Staff Chain as to when they first became aware of Col Cade.

21 - 24 APRIL 2012

As depicted by key event #6 in Figure 1, on 20 April 2012 Col Cade elevated his concerns about the 'Perspectives on Islam' course past the JFSC altogether, and up to the Pentagon, when he sent slides from the course to a LTC Whitehead at OSD.^{41,42} The large red box labeled "D" in Figure 1 represents the discussion that ensued between various HHQ elements and JFSC from 21-24 April after HHQ became aware that Col Cade had concerns with the JFSC 'Perspectives' elective course.

From the limited evidence I saw from this period, it appears the focus of the discussion inside the JFSC was still on resolving issues related to the academic quality of the elective and its guest speakers. It appears the senior staff at JFSC still did not possess any specific knowledge of media concerns at this point in time, only the suppositional risk that a CD *might* get to the media somehow, and the media *might* start making queries. In fact, an email from the JFSC-COS to NDU-P on 21 April, focusing on reporting the status of efforts to address Col Cade's academic concerns, has little to say about media concerns. There is a small discussion of issues related to information control and a CD. Then there is conclusive evidence that the COS was unaware of any specific linkage between Col Cade and the media, thus strongly indicating no one in the Staff Chain was aware of the two key facts in this case related to media concerns. At the end of the email the JFSC-COS states the following (emphasis added):

"As a separate and unlinked event – JFSC PAO had an exchange with a Steve Ackerman of WIRED magazine on March 14 who is searching for information on Stephen Coughlin one of the more

controversial guest speakers. The CD he is asking about is NOT the same presentation provided by the JFSC faculty. *We know of no linkages between Ackerman and Col Cade, but it is an interesting coincidence.*"⁴³

"... separate ... unlinked ... no linkages ... coincidence" The two of the key facts in this case, that Col Cade made contact with the media, and that Ackerman's media query was prompted by Col Cade, were entirely unknown to JFSC personnel as late as 21 April. It is clear, even as the crisis rose to HHQ, Col Cade **still did not** give the JFSC Staff Chain, the Academic Chain, or anyone else at JFSC, a head's up regarding his interaction with the media many weeks prior.

This is consistent with other actions taken by Col Cade during this period. According to Col Cade's own statement to the *Preliminary Inquiry*, when he sent the slides from the JFSC 'Perspectives' course to LTC Whitehead at the Pentagon on 20 April, he did not inform the JFSC leadership of that action either. Col Cade says, regarding sending these slides forward: "I really intended to use the chain of command on this, but I ended up getting ahead of the JFSC Commandant due to my interaction with LTC Whitehead at OSD."⁴⁴

The final key event depicted in Figure 1 is #8 on 24 April, when Col Cade interacted with Spencer Ackerman of WIRED a second time. Below is the portion of Col Cade's signed statement related to his communications with Spencer Ackerman.⁴⁵

Col Cade Interview Question #6: After your phone conversation with Mr. Ackerman of WIRED on 12 March 2012, did you have any further communication exchanges with him related to this issue?

Cade Answer #6: Yes, on two other occasions. Mr. Ackerman emailed me on April 24th and May 7th.

On April 24th he asked me to call him, which I did. He informed me that he'd heard that an investigation of the JFSC Islam course was being conducted and asked if I'd like to provide a quote for an article on the topic. I declined and referred him to JFSC/PAO.

On May 7th, he wrote that he'd heard about an inflammatory presentation given by LTC Dooley to the Islam class. After consulting with Mr. Daniel Donovan to learn which PAO office was in the lead for this issue, I made contact with Lt Col James Gregory OSD/PA. Acting in accordance with his instructions, I referred Mr. Ackerman to Lt. Col Gregory.

Col Cade Interview Question #7: During the months of March and April 2012, as you interacted with the JFSC about the problems with their Islam elective, and tried to urge them to action, did you highlight to the faculty and staff that you strongly suspected a particular media outlet might already be interested in the fact that Coughlin and Guandolo were JFSC guest speakers, because you had already personally been in contact with Mr. Ackerman of WIRED?

Cade Answer #7: No. Furthermore, I did not perceive that Mr. Ackerman was "hot on the trail" of this story as a result of our conversation. Had I believed so, I would have emphasized it to the appropriate members of the staff. I did emphasize to the JFSC faculty and staff that they were very vulnerable to negative media scrutiny by having Coughlin and Guandolo as guest speakers, and (after I reviewed LTC Dooley's ppt on or about March 12th) because of the inflammatory content that existed on the course CD. I pushed them to act with urgency. I do not remember letting any staff member other than

Mr. Steve Williams know specifically that I had myself been in direct contact with Mr. Ackerman, although I believe it to have come up in informal discussions with classmates with whom I shared my concerns as I worked this issue with JFSC.

Col Cade's answers to the two questions above are inconsistent. In answer to my Interview Question #6, he states that he was in contact with Mr. Ackerman on the *very day* Ackerman published his hard-hitting article on the cancellation of the JFSC 'Perspectives on Islam' course. He also says Ackerman asked him for permission to use specific words from Col Cade as a quote for the article (Col Cade declined to be a named source). Clearly, even as he was expressing concerns to the highest levels of the JFSC, Col Cade had insider knowledge straight from the journalist that an article related to the JFSC 'Perspectives on Islam' course was teed up and about to be published. At the same time, in answer to Interview Question #7, Col Cade states he did not provide a heads up to anyone at JFSC regarding the likelihood of an impending media story because he -- "did not perceive that Mr. Ackerman was 'hot on the trail' of this story as a result of our conversation. Had I believed so, I would have emphasized it to the appropriate members of the staff." There is no credibility in this pair of answers, nor is it consistent with the other facts taking place at the time.

It appears to me the actions and words of Col Cade depict a person who knew the media was interested in a story about the JFSC, who repeatedly interacted with the media, yet deliberately and successfully kept those facts from everyone at JFSC, despite the unfolding crisis. Col Cade's actions in keeping silent on this matter do not fit with his claim that someone on the JFSC staff, the PAO, Mr. Steve Williams, was just as aware as he was of the specific media contacts and media interest from WIRED that began as early as 12 March. This does not ring true.

If he had told the PAO about his media contact on 12 March, then at this point in time in the third week in April, Col Cade would not have any assurance Mr. Williams would not simply reveal to his superiors at JFSC at any moment, that an explosive burst of media scrutiny was likely to break, and that Col Cade was responsible. The most logical reason for Col Cade to keep silent during his extensive interactions with all levels of JFSC personnel was simply to guard what he believed was a well kept secret -- he was the only one aware of his ongoing contact with the media. For the same reasons stated previously, the facts do not fit with Col Cade's claim that he told Mr. Williams on 12 March he wanted permission to contact the media about the 'Perspectives' elective course.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

APPENDIX SECTION I

Unfortunately, the direct evidence available does not definitively answer whether Colonel Cade contacted Mr. Williams to seek permission to talk to the media on 12 March 2012. In separate signed statements, Colonel Cade says he did, Mr. Williams says he did not. I did not discover any direct, corroborating proof from independent sources to fully resolve the question. There were no eye witnesses.

To resolve the dilemma I was left to judge the credibility of Col Cade and Mr. Williams as witnesses, based an analysis of indirect evidence. The analysis approach I took examined the available evidence to determine which of five key individuals or groups were, or were not, discussing three key facts, during the key periods of time in March and April of 2012. In essence I posed the question of what does the

overall evidence show regarding “who ... knew what ... to what degree ... when” to examine whether each person’s claim fit into the overall mélange of indirect evidence.

If Cade’s testimony about 12 March is true, then both he and Williams were in possession of the same set of three key facts: (1) Cade, as a student, had an academic complaint about the JFSC ‘Perspectives on Islam’ course; (2) Cade contacted Ackerman at WIRED about his concerns related to the JFSC ‘Perspectives on Islam’ course; and, (3) Ackerman would make a query about the JFSC ‘Perspectives on Islam’ course triggered by Cade’s contact with him.

Logically a person in possession of all three key facts, including how those facts interrelate, would behave much differently than an individual aware only of a single fact in isolation, or aware only of a more generic version of a key fact. Indeed, a person possessing specific knowledge of the combination of all three key facts would have insight into an explosive situation, and his actions, emails, and verbal discussions should bear some mark reflecting his knowledge of these key facts.

Looking at Figure 1 and the overall information flow between those involved in the four key discussions (the red boxes labeled A through D), it seems clear from the patterns that only one person behaved in way consistent with being in possession of all three key facts – Col Cade. His behavior is quite out of the ordinary – repeatedly elevating complaints outside the normal chain of command, insistently following up on academic matters in an escalating fashion long after graduating from a school, etc. He was sitting on a powder keg, and his behavior is consistent with that reality. Everyone else, including Mr. Steve Williams, appears to behave in a way consistent with being in possession of facts only in isolation, or in generic form: “a student has an academic complaint,” or “a media query came in about a course” etc. Consequently, their behavior was routine, as expected of those possessing only routine knowledge.

It is known that Col Cade knew all three key facts as of 12 Mar. He claims he called Mr. Williams the morning of 12 Mar and passed those same key facts to him. However, in my judgment, the overall pattern of indirect evidence throughout this incident – emails, conversations, behavior patterns, third-party testimonies, potential motives – is not consistent with Col Cade’s claim he called Mr. Williams on 12 March, discussed his concerns about the ‘Perspectives on Islam’ course, or requested his permission to contact the media. I do not find Col Cade to be a credible witness in these matters. Rather, it seems likely Col Cade successfully and deliberately hid the key facts of his contact with the media from *everyone* at JFSC, including Mr. Williams.

In my judgment, the preponderance of evidence falls in favor of Mr. Williams, the PAO. His behavior and communications patterns at the time, his potential motives, and the behavior and communication patterns of those around him, are most consistent with simply believing Mr. Williams’ statement that he did not have contact with Col Cade on 12 March (nor at any time), and did not even know about Col Cade until mid-April, along with the rest of the JFSC Staff Chain.

Finding 1: I find conflicting evidence exists on whether the JFSC student, Colonel David Cade, ever contacted Mr. Williams to seek permission to talk to the media. In separate signed statements, Colonel Cade says he did, and Mr. Williams says he did not. I could not establish an independent source to conclusively resolve the question. However, I believe the preponderance of evidence suggests Colonel Cade never contacted Mr. Williams, and thus conclude Mr. Williams did not grant the student permission to talk with Mr. Spencer Ackerman of WIRED magazine.

Finding 2: I find that because the preponderance of evidence suggests Mr. Williams did not grant permission to the student, the issue of coordinating with anyone on the matter is a moot point.

APPENDIX SECTION II

INQUIRY QUESTION – 3

Inquiry Question 3: Did Mr. Williams properly perform his overall duties related to managing media interest in the JFSC ‘Perspectives’ elective course, keeping his chain of command properly notified and informed on critical matters?

EXAMINATION OF EVIDENCE

I examined several elements of Mr. Williams’ duty performance tied to his management of media activity related to the JFSC ‘Perspectives’ elective course, to determine the degree to which he kept his chain of command properly notified and informed on critical matters.

Mr. Dave Thomas, NDU-PA

As a basis for establishing a longer term contextual view of Mr. Williams’ duties as JFSC-PAO, I asked his counterpart, Mr. Dave Thomas, NDU-PA, questions in this regard during my interview with him.

In his signed statement for this investigation,⁴⁶ Mr. Thomas provided a positive assessment of Mr. Williams’ overall, long term performance as a fellow PA officer. Mr. Thomas indicated that the normal working relationship between NDU and JFSC over the years had been that JFSC handled its own press matters. In other words, the JFSC-PAO worked for the JFSC CMDT and was not required to process PAO matters through NDU. Mr. Thomas indicated he had collaborated with Mr. Williams as a fellow PAO for at least 4-5 years, and he’d had no problems in his working relationship with him as a PAO over that time. From time to time, Mr. Williams would ask Mr. Thomas for inputs on an infrequent basis.

With respect to the media query from Ackerman in mid-March, Mr. Thomas said that when he received the courtesy copy on the questions, his sense matched that of the others involved in answering the query, that it seemed like a routine matter, the questions from Mr. Ackerman looked fairly standard. Taken in isolation at the time, without anyone suggesting otherwise, Mr. Thomas saw no reason to take it with heightened concern. He was also not aware of any history or extenuating circumstances that would have put him on his guard. Further, the NDU-PA stated he was not familiar with Spencer Ackerman or DangerRoom before the media query arrived, though he had heard of WIRED magazine. To his recollection, Ackerman was not one of the journalists they had dealt with before.

Mr. Steve Williams, JFSC-PAO

As a basis for better understanding his duties as JFSC-PAO, I asked Mr. Williams several general questions related to his duties in my interview with him.⁴⁷ Here are relevant excerpts from that interviews:

JFSC-PAO Interview Question #9: Can you give a little background on your PAO training, your history at JFSC, and the general nature of how you’ve handled media queries over the years as the JFSC PAO?

JFSC-PAO Answer #9: I served as an active duty Marine from 1976 until 2003. My military occupational specialty was military intelligence. I was not a Public Affairs Officer during my uniformed career. I was a JFSC student in 2002. I retired from the Marine Corps on 10 November 2003, and was hired by JFSC to manage a variety of mission areas to include being the program manager for the Senior Fellow Program and our International Officers Program. In the fall of 2006, I attended the 5-month PAO qualification course at Fort Meade, MD, and received my official DoD certification as a PAO. I've been doing the Public Affairs work officially here JFSC for more than 5 years.

Over the years, most of the media queries I've fielded have been pretty low key. Almost all of them are from local media outlets here in the Norfolk area such as the Virginia Pilot. Mostly JFSC was viewed by the local media as a repository of subject matter experts, and when a local reporter was interested in writing a story on a military or international topic, I would get a call along the lines of, "Hey, I'm writing a story on Africa. Do you have anybody at JFSC who can give me some background on Africa?" I would then put the reporter in touch with the appropriate faculty member. I had a very thorough process for reminding faculty members to keep me in the loop on all media contacts, and everything generally worked well in this regard. I publish a monthly newsletter and frequently include a reminder in the newsletter that if a JFSC faculty or staff member is contacted by the media, they should immediately let me know. Such notification allows me to offer guidance on dealing with the media as well as allowing me to keep the JFSC leadership aware of potential mention of JFSC or any of its personnel in the media. The latest reminder was included in the May 2012 newsletter. (I provided Col Groves with a copy of that newsletter -). Finally, I also ask all JFSC personnel who are in fact going to have something published, that I should be allowed to review the story or article before it is submitted. I also inform them they need to include a caveat along the lines of "The views expressed are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of the JFSC or the National Defense University"

Comments on general long-term duty patterns by the JFSC-PAO

The focus of this investigation is the actions of Mr. Williams specific to his handling of events surrounding the 'Perspectives' elective course. It would not be possible or appropriate in a short investigation to do justice to the broader assessment of long-term duty performance, in either its positive or negative manifestations. Such responsibilities fall to his supervisors. Instead, my intent in examining longer term duty patterns is limited to understanding the context that fed into Mr. Williams' behavior during the media crisis surrounding the events of March - May of 2012. Therefore, my comments on general duty performance are brief.

The evidence above suggests the typical nature of JFSC-PAO duties centered on local, low-key press interest, acting as a liaison to local reporters seeking subject matter experts from JFSC to provide background on complex topics, and producing motivational school newsletters, etc. It appears Mr. Steve Williams did well in these routine duties over the long run as JFSC-PAO. Furthermore, it appears Mr. Williams was careful, conscientious, and consistent in reminding students and faculty of their general responsibilities to notify the PAO should the media contact them, or should the media express interest in JFSC as an institution. Overall it seems Mr. Williams has great regard for JFSC as an institution.

Mr. Williams was an independent PAO, responsible for handling press matters directly for JFSC CMDT. He was not required to process matters through NDU, and the record shows he only infrequently sought assistance from NDU. This speaks well of this general dedication to his responsibilities.

Mr. Williams has official DoD PA training and certification, and appears to have a growing base of experience, though it is still limited. He started PA work only five years ago, as a second career after retiring from the Marine Corps. Importantly, before this incident, Mr. Williams lacked any routine experience in dealing with national-level media scrutiny. Also, since his entire short PA career has been spent as the sole, independent PA at JFSC, he lacks the experience of directly watching grey-beard PAs in action, as they mentor younger professionals climbing gradually through the ranks, and working side-by-side with those ahead who know the ropes, and have been burned a few times by enterprising journalists.

Media summary omission

It is true the portfolio of a PAO is very broad, encompassing any and all activities and individuals within the institution he serves. It is not possible to be aware, before the fact, of all issues that might potentially arise. Even the most experienced PA professional must sometimes do reactive, crisis communication management. It's inevitable. No amount of 20-20 hindsight will make that reality disappear completely. Further, in this fast-changing digital age, the number of reporters, bloggers, news outlets, websites, cable TV channels, etc., creates a dizzying reality for even the most experienced PA.

At the same time, it is important to ask the question whether Mr. Williams as the JFSC-PAO could have managed anything differently, so the JFSC might have been spared some of the detrimental consequences of being caught unawares in such a high-level and negative media storm.

With respect to anticipating specific trouble arising from the Spencer Ackerman media query in mid-March, Mr. Williams was not the sole player. The statements of others in key positions around Mr. Williams about their perceptions of the need for heightened sensitivity of this media query indicate that in isolation, no one saw the questions in the query as remarkable, and no one really questioned whether there was particular reason for concern associated with the media query.

For example, the emails from the members of the JFSC Academic Chain indicate they saw little reason to regard the Ackerman media query with singular concern.⁴⁸ Personnel from the JFSC Staff Chain were courtesy copied in mid-March, but did not participate in answering the query. But their choice to not weigh in indicates they did not see reason to flag the query as especially sensitive.

The NDU-PA stated that he was not familiar with Spencer Ackerman before the media query arrived, and that the questions, taken in isolation at the time, looked standard. He stated that because he was not aware of extenuating circumstances, and no one closer to the action was raising expressing heightened concerns, the query did not put him on his guard.⁴⁹

Here is Mr. Williams' characterization of these events from his statement:⁵⁰

JFSC-PAO Interview Question #11: Did you normally contact NDU-PA on media queries? Was this a special case because you had particular concerns about the sensitivity of this media query.

JFSC-PAO Answer #11: No. I did not have any particular concerns with the sensitivity of this media query when it came in March, and I did not flag this query as anything out of the ordinary to Dave Thomas at the time. There was no set process I followed for interacting with NDU-PA. We here at JFSC were responsible for our own media queries. I was not required to get approval from NDU before I answered a query. When I included Dave Thomas at NDU-PA on 13 March in my coordination on the Ackerman media query, it was just to get his input as the PAO at the next higher level on the best wording.

Thus, the overall level of sensitivity that Mr. Williams expressed for this media query was not outside the norm for all those involved.

However, as the media storm related to the JFSC 'Perspectives' course formed behind the scenes and then broke, Mr. Williams had a unique level of responsibility compared to all the other players in narrative. As the independent PAO for the institution, it was his particular responsibility to monitor the press for the appearance of potentially sensitive topics or story lines. Mr. Williams was also the only official representative from the institution (disregard Col Cade in this) to actually speak to the journalist on the phone, thus having the unique advantage of potentially detecting any reason for concern based on the tone or manner of speech used by the journalist.

From his signed statement, one disturbing finding is thus revealed in Mr. Williams' answer to a question I posed during our interview (emphasis added):⁵¹

JFSC-PAO Interview Question #12: After you received the call and written query from Mr. Ackerman, and while you worked the response to query with the faculty and staff over the period of 13-14 March 2012, *did you do your own background media search on Mr. Ackerman's writings to see what sorts of issues he might have been concerned with, or what might be motivating his query?* Did anyone ask you to take a deeper look at the media implications of the Islam elective?

JFSC-PAO Answer #12: *No.* I thought this was just a routine media query like most of the others received over the years. The academic side of the house coordinated with me to provide answers to the questions, but they did not ask me to dig deeper. I copied the CoS on the staff side of the house on all of this in March, but I did not flag this media query to him as a special case.

I thus find that the performance of Mr. Williams in managing media activities related to the JFSC 'Perspectives' elective course was substandard in one important way. Specifically, when the original media query came to him in mid-March, a long list of relevant articles written by Spencer Ackerman was already available in the open media. Dating back nine months, Ackerman had published a series of hard hitting articles about FBI training programs on Islam, resulting in public comments from officials as high as US Senators and the US Attorney General, also reported in the open press.

Thus, when he received the initial phone query on 12 March, followed by multiple exchanges with the journalist, and with faculty and staff, over the period of 4 days, Mr. Williams committed a failure of omission. At no point in all this work on the query did Mr. Williams perform the common, due-diligence PAO task of creating a media summary on Spencer Ackerman's recent reporting. Had he done this very simple task, the JFSC-PAO would immediately have seen in mid-March that there was strong and ample

reason to flag this as a sensitive media query. Here are the dates and titles of the Ackerman articles from the nine months prior to his mid-March query to JFSC.⁵²

July 27, 2011	FBI 'Islam 101' Guide Depicted Muslims as 7 th -Century Simpletons
Sept 14, 2011	FBI Teaches Agents: 'Mainstream' Muslims are 'Violent, Radical'
Sept 15, 2011	Senators Blast FBI Terror-Training 'Lies'
Sept 23, 2011	New Evidence of Anti-Islam Bias Underscores Deep Challenges for FBI Reform Pledge
Oct 5, 2011	Justice Department Official: Muslim 'Juries' Threaten 'Our Values'
Nov 3, 2011	FBI Calls in The Army to Fix Its Counterterrorism Training
Nov 8, 2011	Attorney General: FBI Hurt Terror Fight With 'Violent Muslim' Training
Nov 29, 2011	Obama Orders Government to Clean Up Terror Training
Dec 8, 2011	Government to Overhaul Anti-Terror Training By Spring
Feb 15, 2012	FBI Purges Hundreds of Terrorism Documents in Islamophobia Probe

This set of 10 articles includes coverage of all of the vulnerabilities and sensitivities that would later come to light. In his Nov 29, 2011 article⁵³ Ackerman cites (and links to) the "Memorandum For Director, Joint Staff," dated Oct 14, 2011, and written by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense & American Security Affairs, in which he tasks the Joint Staff to task all COCOMs, Services, National Guard Bureau and Components to vet their process for training on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE). Furthermore, in many of his articles, Ackerman posts slides of training materials from CVE-type courses in other government security agencies, and he also takes these agencies to task for using speakers who being used as guest speakers at the JFSC.

Thus, had Mr. Williams accomplished a standard media summary, he might have been the means by which the JFSC command chain became alerted to the problems of the FBI training, and using Coughlin and Guandolo as guest speakers. His completion of this task might have alerted JFSC leadership of the need to exercise heightened sensitivity regarding their 'Perspectives' elective course, bringing to light a host of issues in mid-March.

As covered in the *Preliminary Inquiry*, there were many others involved in this process who should have better fulfilled their responsibility for institutional management. However, specifically with regard to the actions of Mr. Williams, it is troubling to me that these 10 articles published on WIRED.com were all readily available at the time of Ackerman's mid-March media query to JFSC, and he failed to do a media summary.

I find that Mr. Williams did not fulfill his duty as the first line monitor of media interest in JFSC in a timely and proper fashion. His status as an independent PAO, assigned directly to the JFSC commandant staff, made Mr. Williams the key official who should have notified JFSC chain of command of a need for heightened concern related to this specific media query by the journalist Spencer Ackerman. I make this finding even though I believe Mr. Williams did not know Ackerman's query was prompted by Col Cade, and thus it seemed to Mr. Williams to be a routine media query. I make this finding even though I believe no one in the JFSC Staff Chain, including Mr. Williams, was aware at the time of the connection between the media query and an academic complaint from Col Cade to the Academic Chain.

Timeliness in notifying HHO of inquiries: 25 April – early May 2012

The final item in my investigation relevant to Inquiry Question 3, relates to the period immediately after 24 April, as Spencer Ackerman's WIRED article began to generate elevated scrutiny from public officials and press outlets. An email issued by NDU-P to JFSC-CMDT at 1635, on 25 April raises the question of whether Mr. Williams was acting with appropriate urgency in keeping his chain of command notified and informed on critical matters. That email reads as follows:⁵⁵

Joe: your staff needs to inform you and me immediately of congressional and press inquiries about this case. The fact that your staff was contacted by Congress at 1 pm today and I'm only learning about it indirectly at 4:30pm is not a good thing. Don't mean to play the heavy but they need to tighten up procedures. Thanks very much, Nancy.

To determine what happened leading up to this email, I examined in detail the events of the late afternoon of 24 April through 25 April. The following detailed chronology briefly summarizes what transpired:

Tuesday, 24 April 2012⁵⁶

1556: NDU-P sent an email to JFSC-CMDT (Cc: NDU-Director Academic Affairs and JFSC-COS) directing suspension of the elective, effective immediately. NDU-P also issues orders giving specific handling directions for media and official queries. The exact wording of these orders: "Any and all press inquiries on this matter should be forwarded to the JCS Press Office for response."

1859: Spencer Ackerman article is published on WIRED.com. Title: "Exclusive: Senior U.S. General Orders Top-to-Bottom Review of Military's Islam Training"

Wednesday, 25 April 2012⁵⁷

0736: JFSC-COS forwarded the NDU-P email order on course suspension and media handling to JFSC-PAO

0750: JFSC-PAO responded by email back to JFSC-COS acknowledging receipt of NDU-P email order

0752: JFSC-PAO forwarded the NDU-P email order to the NDU-PA (Cc: to OCJCS-PA)

0942 – 1056: At 0942, JFSC-COS sent an email to JFSC-PAO and LTC Dooley asking for background information on Whalid Shobat soonest. Several emails are exchanged over the next hour-plus about Shobat. JFSC-PAO ultimately sends forward data on Shobat based on Google research.

NOTE: The next item relates to the Congressional inquiry that ultimately raised questions from NDU-P on the timeliness of the JFSC-PAO in his handling of inquiries during this critical period, and prompted her "tighten up procedures" email cited above. Here are the details of the next email:

1251:

From: WILLIAMS, STEVEN (JFSC-PAO)
To: DIORIO, DAVID (JFSC-COS)
Cc: Thomas, David (NDU-PA)
Subject: Congressional inquiry

Good afternoon, Sir. Got a call from a staffer in Republican Congresswoman Michele Bachmann's office (6th district of Minnesota) asking to confirm if the elective has been suspended as per General Dempsey's statement. I responded by asking her to contact CDR McNally in the Chairman's Public Affairs Office.

She didn't seem to take any issue. Will of course keep you posted whenever I get an inquiry.

NOTE: What occurs next jumps to exchanges between individuals at NDU

1324: NDU-PA forwarded Mr. Williams' 1251 email on Congressional inquiry to Steven Kett (NDU-SVP for legislative affairs) after a 33 minute delay.

1628: NDU-SVP forwarded Mr. Williams' 1251 email on Congressional inquiry to NDU-P (Cc: John Yeager, Dave Thomas, Michael Cannon, Mollie Murphy) after a 3 hour and 4 minute delay.

1635: NDU-P emails JFSC-CMDT with "tighten up procedures" email cited at the top of this section

NOTE: What occurs next jumps back to individuals at JFSC

1638: JFSC-CMDT forwards the NDU-P "tighten up procedures" email to JFSC-COS and JFSC-PAO with the following comment added:

Gents,
Please notify me straight away if/when we get more media or other (Congr) inquiries.
Much Thanks,
J\$W

1654: JFSC-PAO responds to JFSC-CMDT and JFSC-COS with the following:

Aye, Aye Sir!

Approximate times today: (I referred all to CDR McNally (JCS PA office).

1300 – Congresswoman Bachmann's office called.

1430 – Phone call from Kate Wiltrout of the Virginian Pilot.

1500 – Phone call from Martin Evans of Newsday.com (covering NYC and Long Island).

1600 – Phone call from Hugh Lessig with the Daily News (Peninsula newsletter).

Very respectfully, Steve

NOTE: When Mr. Williams received the mid-afternoon inquiries from Wiltrout and Evans he references in his 1654 email above, other emails indicate he followed the same procedure for these inquiries as he had for the Congresswoman Bachman inquiry. He referred the individuals to the JS/PA, and sent an

email to the next level in his chain (JFSC-COS, with Cc: to NDU-PA), notifying members of senior staffs in both institutions of all inquiries within roughly 30 minutes in all cases

Thursday, 26 April 2012 ⁵⁸

A variety of inquiries continue to arrive during the morning of 26 Apr. JFSC-PAO refers all matters to JS/PA, and sends email notices to his chain of command.

In all of these cases, none of his email notices go directly to NDU-P. This matches the pattern of the previous two days, since the onset of the media crisis. Also, as far as I can tell looking back longer term, Mr. Williams was not in the habit of emailing directly to the NDU-P.

NOTE: Something changed in this regard on the afternoon of 26 Apr. At 1308, JFSC-PAO sends forward a notice of a media contact with NDU-P as a direct recipient of his email. Almost all subsequent emails over the next few days from Mr. Williams giving notification of media or other high-level inquiries related to the JFSC Islam course include NDU-P as a direct recipient.

Analysis

On 25 Apr, NDU-P experienced a total delay of 3 hours 37 minutes in receiving notification of the Congresswoman Bachmann staff inquiry, on the critical first day after the media story broke. The delays break down into the following blocks of time:

Delay by JFSC-PAO in notifying the next level of command: 0 minutes

Delay by NDU-PA in notifying the next level of command: 33 minutes

Delay by NDU-SVP in notifying the next level of command: 3 hours 4 minutes

From the evidence I have available, it appears Mr. Williams was sending notifications of inquiries up his chain to the next level in a timely fashion during this crisis. However, notifications were not necessarily getting to the top of the chain as rapidly as needed. Delays appear to be due primarily to all mid-level individuals following previously honored standard protocols related to expectations on when it is appropriate for mid-level individuals to send messages directly to the top of the chain of command. But, such protocols are typically varied according to the preferences of the senior leaders involved. This crisis called for a departure from standard protocol, and the situation was somehow corrected by mid-day on the 26th of April, when email evidence suggests Mr. Williams was given direction to forward notices directly to NDU-P. He began to do so from that point forward.

Given Mr. Williams' relative unfamiliarity in dealing with high-level national media crises, he seems to have handled notification processes as well as could be reasonably expected. Perhaps a more seasoned PA would have been more forceful in ensuring notifications were making it all the way to the top of the chain.

What is clear is that given the level of media exposure JFSC has received in this incident, it is reasonable to expect an increased level of ongoing national media attention compared to past norms. The PA official who leads media management activities for JFSC will need deeper experience in handling crises and high-level media scrutiny going forward.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS
APPENDIX SECTION II

Finding 3: I find the general pattern of duty performance suggests Mr. Williams faithfully performed his JFSC-PAO duties for routine matters. However, I find his performance was substandard in managing media activities related to the JFSC 'Perspectives' elective course in one regard. Specifically, when the original media query came to him on 12-14 March 2012, a long list of relevant articles written by Spencer Ackerman were available in the open media. Dating back nine months, Ackerman had published a series of hard hitting articles about FBI training programs on Islam, resulting in public comments from officials as high as US Senators and the US Attorney General, also reported in the open press. When he received the initial media query on 13 March, Mr. Williams committed a failure of omission, by not performing the common PAO due-diligence task of creating a media summary on Mr. Ackerman's reporting interests. This would have immediately highlighted in mid-March there was reason to flag this as a sensitive media query. Though no one asked him to do the media summary, I find that Mr. Williams did not fulfill his duty as first line monitor of media interest in JFSC in a timely and proper fashion. His status as an independent PAO, assigned directly to the JFSC commandant staff, made Mr. Williams the key official who should have notified the chain of command of a need for heightened concern related to media interest in JFSC by the journalist Spencer Ackerman.

APPENDIX SECTION III

INQUIRY QUESTION – 4

Inquiry Question 4: Does Mr. Williams have an explanation for his actions on 9 May 2012, when he confirmed to the media the identity of a JFSC course instructor, and commented on responsibilities of the commandant of JFSC, thus failing to follow orders from NDU-P and the JFSC commandant that all media queries were to be referred directly to the Joint Staff public affairs office at that time?

EXAMINATION OF EVIDENCE

Receipt of orders

On at least three occasions, the JFSC-PAO received notice of specific written orders from those above him in his chain of command, on how to properly handle media inquiries related to the JFSC ‘Perspectives on Islam and Islamic Radicalism’ elective course. Namely:

Wednesday, 25 April 2012, 0736: JFSC-PAO received an email from the JFSC-COS, with the forwarded message from NDU-P, stating in part: “Any and all press inquiries on this matter should be forwarded to JCS Press Office for response.”⁵⁹

Thursday, 26 April 2012, 0831: JFSC-PAO received an email from the JFSC-CMDT, stating in part: “The Joint Staff Public Affairs Office is the POC for all press inquiries. You will direct all press inquiries to the JFSC PAO, who will redirect all inquiries to the JS PAO.”⁶⁰

Tuesday, 8 May 2012, 1813: JFSC-PAO received an email from the JFSC-CMDT, stating in part: “As many of you are aware, the preliminary inquiry is ongoing. The review is scheduled to be complete by 23 May. In the interim, I expect there to be more press. In the event someone asks you about this issue please remember to refer all queries to our Public Affairs Officer, Steve Williams, who will in turn forward them to the Joint Staff. The guidance given out two weeks ago still stands – stay the course. Previous guidance below.”⁶¹

Failure to follow orders

On the afternoon of 9 May 2012, at approximately 1525, the JFSC-PAO received a phone call from Spencer Ackerman of WIRED magazine. The following is an excerpt from Mr. Williams’ signed statement for this investigation, reporting the events of 9 – 10 May 2012 relevant to Inquiry Question 4 in this investigation.⁶²

Wednesday 9 May

1500 (approximate time) Maj Gen Ward stops by my office. Thanks me for all my efforts, tells me I’ve been doing a great job and that keeping me as the PAO after he became Commandant was “one of the best decisions I’ve made.” Told me to “stay the course.” Told me to call it a day and head home.

1525: (approximate time) Five minutes before the end of my scheduled work day, I received a call from Ackerman. Following conversation ensued

Me: Joint Forces Staff College, this is Steve Williams.

Ackerman: Steve, Spencer Ackerman from Wired. Could I get a reaction from you about the Islam course being suspended by the Chairman.

Me: No.

Ackerman: You have no comment.

Me: No, I refer you to the Joint Staff PAO.

Ackerman: I've already spoken to them. I would like a reaction from you.

Me: No.

Ackerman: Can you confirm that LTC Matt Dooley is on the faculty.

Me: Yes, he is.

Ackerman: Is Dooley responsible for the content of the course?

Me: The Commandant is ultimately responsible for everything at JFSC.

Ackerman: You won't answer any of my questions?

Me: I refer you to the Joint Staff PAO.

Ackerman: (Sarcastically) Thank you, you've been very helpful.

END

I immediately realized I should not have answered his questions about LTC Dooley still being on the faculty or who was responsible for the course content with anything other than "I refer you to the Joint Staff PAO."

I immediately went to Maj Gen Ward and told him what had happened.

1542: I emailed AMB McEldowney informing her of what had transpired.

1707: Maj Gen Ward emailed me "There is one answer only to all questions: call JS PAO."

1710: AMB McEldowney emailed response thanking me for the report but reminding me to refer everything to JCS.

Thursday, 10 May

0700: Upon arriving at work, I conducted a media search and discovered Ackerman had put out another story (0400 that morning) in Wired alleging Maj Gen Ward was culpable.

0751: I emailed the article to Maj Gen Ward, copying AMB McEldowney.

Later that morning (10 May), Maj Gen Ward came by my office and asked how I had let this happen and that AMB McEldowney was very upset that I had gone outside of her (and Maj Gen Ward's) guidance. I apologized and offered to resign. Maj Gen Ward said that wasn't necessary, that what I had done was clearly not malicious and I hadn't said anything that wasn't true...but that something would need to be done.

Later that day, or perhaps early the next morning, Friday 11 May, the COS came by the office and told me I was no longer the PAO and asked if I was still willing to resign. I responded by saying I had made a mistake, but did not feel it warranted resigning and told him I would not resign. He said he understood, but that he would have to do whatever it was determined should be done. He suggested I should look around for PAO jobs elsewhere, while at the same time, looking around JFSC for areas where I might be of use...but that I was no longer the JFSC PAO...that the position was being consolidated into a single NDU-PAO at north campus.

END OF STATEMENT

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS
APPENDIX SECTION III

Mr. Williams admits to failing to follow orders on 9 May 2012. Namely, while fielding a phone call from a member of the media related to the JFSC 'Perspectives' elective course, Mr. Williams confirmed to the media the identity of the instructor of the JFSC 'Perspectives' elective course, and made mention of the responsibilities of the commandant of JFSC. Mistakenly or otherwise, he failed to follow orders in his possession, to refer all media queries directly to the Joint Staff public affairs office during a critical period of media interest for the JFSC.

Finding 4: I find Mr. Williams admits to his failure to follow orders on 9 May 2012. He does not seek to make excuses, and says only that he made a mistake that was not malicious or intentional.

ENDNOTES

1. Interview #1, JFSC student, Col David Cade, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch A)
2. Interview #2, JFSC-PAO, Mr. Steve Williams, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch D)
3. *JFSC Self-Assessment: Perspectives on Islam and Islamic Radicalism Elective 5812* (Atch K)
4. Interview #1, JFSC student, Col David Cade, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch A)
5. Summary of Interview with Col David Cade, for Rudesheim *Preliminary Inquiry*, 17 May 2012 (Atch J)
6. Interview #1, JFSC student, Col David Cade, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch A)
7. Interview #2, JFSC student, Col David Cade, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch B)
8. Interview, JFSC administrative assistant, Ms. Tracy Bradley, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch G)
9. Interview #1, JFSC student, Col David Cade, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch A)
10. Interview #2, JFSC-PAO, Mr. Steve Williams, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch D)
11. Interview #1, JFSC student, Col David Cade, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch A)
12. *Ibid.*
13. Interview #1, JFSC-PAO, Mr. Steve Williams, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch C)
14. Email from JFSC-PAO to elective course instructors, dated 13 March 2012 (Atch L)
15. Interview #2, JFSC-PAO, Mr. Steve Williams, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch D)
16. Email from JFSC-PAO to elective course instructors, dated 13 March 2012 (Atch L)
17. Email from Spencer Ackerman to JFSC-PAO, dated 14 March 2012 (Atch M)
18. *Ibid.*
19. Interview #1, JFSC-PAO, Mr. Steve Williams, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch C)
20. *Ibid.*
21. Group of emails between JFSC-PAO, JFSC Academic Chain and others, dated 14-16 March 2012 (Atch N)

22. *Ibid.*
23. Interview #1, JFSC student, Col David Cade, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch A)
24. Interview, JFSC-COS, Mr. Dave DiOrio, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch E)
25. Interview, JFSC-CHOPS, Mr. Thomas Falconer, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch F)
26. Interview #1, NDU-PA, Mr. Dave Thomas, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch H)
27. *Ibid.*
28. Interview #1, JFSC student, Col David Cade, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch A)
29. Summary of Interview with Col David Cade, for Rudesheim *Preliminary Inquiry*, 17 May 2012 (Atch J)
30. *JFSC Self-Assessment: Perspectives on Islam and Islamic Radicalism Elective 5812* (Atch K)
31. Interview #1, JFSC student, Col David Cade, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch A)
32. *JFSC Self-Assessment: Perspectives on Islam and Islamic Radicalism Elective 5812* (Atch K)
33. *Ibid.*
34. Summary of Interview with Col David Cade, for Rudesheim *Preliminary Inquiry*, 17 May 2012 (Atch J)
35. Group of emails between Col Cade and JFSC Staff Chain, dated 16-18 April 2012 (Atch O)
36. Interview #1, JFSC student, Col David Cade, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch A)
37. Interview, JFSC-COS, Mr. Dave DiOrio, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch E)
38. Interview, JFSC-CHOPS, Mr. Thomas Falconer, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch F)
39. Interview #2, JFSC-PAO, Mr. Steve Williams, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch D)
40. Interview #2, NDU-PA, Mr. Dave Thomas, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch I)
41. Ackerman, Spencer. "Exclusive: Senior U.S. General Orders Top-to-Bottom Review of Military's Islam Training". <http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2012/04/military-islam-training/>. April 24, 2012. (Accessed June 24, 2012) (Atch U)
42. Summary of Interview with Col David Cade, for Rudesheim *Preliminary Inquiry*, 17 May 2012 (Atch J)
43. Email from JFSC-COS to NDU-P, dated 21 April 2012 (Atch P)

44. Summary of Interview with Col David Cade, for Rudesheim *Preliminary Inquiry*, 17 May 2012 (Atch J)
45. Interview #1, JFSC student, Col David Cade, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch A)
46. Interview #1, NDU-PA, Mr. Dave Thomas, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch H)
47. Interview #2, JFSC-PAO, Mr. Steve Williams, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch D)
48. Group of emails between JFSC-PAO, JFSC Academic Chain and others, dated 14-16 March 2012 (Atch N)
49. Interview #1, NDU-PA, Mr. Dave Thomas, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch H)
50. Interview #2, JFSC-PAO, Mr. Steve Williams, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch D)
51. *Ibid.*
52. Group of articles published from July 2011-February 2012 by Spencer Ackerman related to U.S. security agencies training on Islam (Atch V)
53. Ackerman, Spencer. "Obama Orders Government to Clean Up Terror Training".
<http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2011/11/obama-islamophobia-review/>.
(Accessed June 24, 2012) (Atch T)
54. Mayorga, Jose S. MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR, JOINT STAFF; SUBJECT: Request for Joint Staff Coordination, October 14, 2011 (Atch W)
55. Email from NDU-P to JFSC-CMDT, dated 25 April 2012 (Atch R)
56. Group of emails between HHQ, NDU, and JFSC Staff Chain elements, dated 24-26 April 2012 (Atch S)
57. *Ibid.*
58. *Ibid.*
59. *Ibid.*
60. *Ibid.*
61. Group of emails between HHQ, NDU, and JFSC Staff Chain elements, dated 1-10 May 2012 (Atch S)
62. Interview #1, JFSC-PAO, Mr. Steve Williams, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation* (Atch C)

ATTACHMENTS

- Atch A. Interview #1, JFSC student, Col David Cade, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation*, 27 June 2012
- Atch B. Interview #2, JFSC student, Col David Cade, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation*, 27 June 2012
- Atch C. Interview #1, JFSC-PAO, Mr. Steve Williams, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation*, 25 June 2012
- Atch D. Interview #2, JFSC-PAO, Mr. Steve Williams, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation*, 27 June 2012
- Atch E. Interview, JFSC-COS, Mr. Dave DiOrio, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation*, 27 June 2012
- Atch F. Interview, JFSC-CHOPS, Mr. Thomas Falconer, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation*, 27 June 2012
- Atch G. Interview, JFSC administrative assistant, Ms. Tracy Bradley, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation*, 27 June 2012
- Atch H. Interview #1, NDU-PA, Mr. Dave Thomas, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation*, 27 June 2012
- Atch I. Interview #2, NDU-PA, Mr. Dave Thomas, signed statement for *JFSC-PAO 15-6 Investigation*, 27 June 2012
- Atch J. Summary of Interview with Col David Cade, for Rudesheim *Preliminary Inquiry*, 17 May 2012
- Atch K. *JFSC Self-Assessment: Perspectives on Islam and Islamic Radicalism* Elective 5812
- Atch L. Email from JFSC-PAO to elective course instructors, dated 13 March 2012
- Atch M. Email from Spencer Ackerman to JFSC-PAO, dated 14 March 2012
- Atch N. Group of emails between JFSC-PAO, JFSC Academic Chain and others, dated 14-16 March 2012
- Atch O. Group of emails between Col Cade and JFSC Staff Chain, dated 16-18 April 2012
- Atch P. Email from JFSC-COS to NDU-P, dated 21 April 2012
- Atch Q. Group of emails between HHQ, NDU, and JFSC Staff Chain elements, dated 24-26 April 2012

Atch R. Email from NDU-P to JFSC-CMDT, dated 25 April 2012

Atch S. Group of emails between HHQ, NDU, and JFSC Staff Chain elements, dated 1-10 May 2012

Atch T. Ackerman, Spencer. "Obama Orders Government to Clean Up Terror Training".
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Atch U. Ackerman, Spencer. "Exclusive: Senior U.S. General Orders Top-to-Bottom Review of Military's Islam Training". <http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2012/04/military-islam-training/>.
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Atch V. Group of articles published from July 2011-February 2012 by Spencer Ackerman related to U.S. security agencies training on Islam

Atch W. Mayorga, Jose S. MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR, JOINT STAFF; SUBJECT: Request for Joint Staff Coordination, October 14, 2011