The Arroyo Center has suggested seven broad AAN strategic study objectives and several issues associated with each of them that might be explored through wargames. The objectives listed here were developed by TRADOC and together articulate the broad goals of the AAN study. The Arroyo Center issues have been included as issues supporting the TRADOC objectives.

**By 2020, can qualitative advantages offset quantity in a war of strategic depth and width? If so, how?**

World-class research and a dynamic civilian economy are expected to give the United States an important technological advantage over any major competitor well into the next century. The United States is expected to exploit this advantage, leading to the development of new operational and tactical concepts that result in new weapon systems and doctrine for their employment. The current U.S. advantage in information technology will expand, U.S. forces will enjoy greater strategic and operational mobility, and new power sources will likely be available along with weapon systems with considerably greater firepower. The services will be composed of sophisticated forces that can prevail against a major competitor that is likely to field larger, but less sophisticated forces.

**In 2020, what are the elements of a strategic posture that deter and prevent conflict?**

Fundamentally, the United States has to deter nuclear attack on its own territory and on U.S. forces. In addition, it will have to deter and
defend against nuclear and conventional attacks against its allies within theaters of war and it may also seek to deter and prevent other forms of conflict. The United States can deter aggression by showing the will and power to negate any advantage a major competitor might hope to gain through aggression. To this end, the United States should develop a credible defense against WMD and the ability to retaliate.

**How can the United States control escalation or geographic expansion of war?**

As the foremost member of a highly interdependent global economy, the United States is vulnerable to its disruption. Therefore, the United States should try to prevent a major competitor from interfering with the global economy and related information services. Shielding the world economy from disruption will employ all aspects of U.S. national power and also require combined efforts. The United States also has to shield its domestic economy from hostile intrusions against the infrastructure, including the information infrastructure. The United States might isolate an enemy through blockade and interdiction. It might seek to contain conflict through the rapid introduction of land forces to strategic locations. At the same time, the United States will have to guard against being diverted by proxy wars.

**What are war termination options for the United States against major competitors?**

Success in war against a major competitor would probably be short of a complete victory for several reasons: A major competitor might stave off defeat by threatening to resort to weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Or the United States might decide that complete victory would not be in U.S. interests because it would magnify the power of another potentially hostile state. For example, Russia’s defeat would magnify China’s power. Therefore, in war against a major competitor, the United States would probably seek termination on terms short of victory. During the conflict, the United States would try to limit damage to its friends and allies. It would probably aim to restore their territory and subsequently to erect obstacles to renewed aggression.
What are the strategic and operational implications of deployment of effective national and theater missile defenses?

Systems exist today that allow for the low-altitude and low-observable delivery of conventional munitions and WMD. By 2020, many of these weapons will have strategic reach, thus creating a need for effective national as well as theater defensive systems. Unfriendly states that acquire WMD or sophisticated conventional munitions might try to intimidate U.S. allies and to deter deployment of U.S. forces. During hostilities, they might use WMD if their leadership believed these weapons would negate advantages enjoyed by more sophisticated U.S. forces. The United States should defend U.S. forces against these threats and make its forces more survivable.

What are the strategic and operational implications of forward-based forces?

U.S. forces will be more technologically advanced but also relatively small and difficult to replace. The forward deployment of forces puts them at greater risk of preemption and surprise, thus increasing their vulnerability. At the same time, deploying forces from safe havens in the United States or elsewhere is time consuming—even in the 2020 timeframe. In addition, the forward basing of U.S. forces on allied territory has traditionally been a clear signal of U.S. resolve that might be brought into question by CONUS basing.

What are the strategic and operational implications of greatly improved power sources for U.S. capabilities?

Although U.S. forces have far greater combat power than they did during World War II, their logistics tether has hardly lengthened, since they still require fossil fuels to operate. A new power source might lengthen this tether or even create for land forces an operational depth and flexibility analogous to that enjoyed by navies. But novel sources of power are likely to rely on a specialized production base and logistics infrastructure.