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Professor Selected for Prestigious Research Opportunity

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SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE STUDIES

Professor Selected for Prestigious Research Opportunity

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Article by Kate Lamar and Sarah Snyder, Photo by Javier Chagoya

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Christopher Twomey, a professor with the National Security Affairs Department was selected in April by the National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR) and the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars to participate in the first class of Research Associates and Fellows of the National Asia Research Program (NARP).

"I was attracted to the National Asia Research Program because it meshes well with NPS and my interests," said Twomey. "In terms of substantive topics, some of the specific areas that NBR and the Wilson Center are emphasizing are international security, military modernization, geopolitics, and grand strategy. These hard core security topics are too rarely studied in civilian universities. The opportunity to connect with other scholars working on related topics is extremely attractive and helps facilitate outreach beyond Monterey and the nearby universities."

Thirty-nine scholars working in Asian studies were chosen through a competitive, nationwide selection process based on their research into issues of importance to U.S. interests in Asia. The NARP will support the research of these scholars during their two-year term, bringing their research to the attention of policymakers.

"Our goal in this new program is to highlight and reward scholars who have successfully bridged the gap between the academy and policy," said NBR President and NARP co-director Richard Ellings. "America's future security, prosperity, and well-being will be deeply linked with Asia's future, and thus America needs some of its best and brightest to understand our interests in Asia – and the history, nations, peoples, and issues of Asia. In short the NARP is responding to the needs for information and assessment arising from the shift in locus in world power from the Atlantic to the Pacific."

Twomey, who specializes in Chinese studies, was attracted to the program's real-world focus that corresponds with his experience at NPS.

"The goal of the program is to expand the links between the Academy and Washington," said Twomey. "That is precisely what attracted me to NPS in the first place: we are a university that is uniquely placed at the intersection of those two worlds. Thus, for me it was a natural fit."

Robert Hathaway, Asia Program Director at the Wilson Center and co-director of the NARP, underscored the role the Associates and Fellows will play in bridging the gap between the academic and policy communities.

"The selection of these top scholars from across the United States marks the beginning of a new national association for U.S. experts who care about policy issues related to Asia," Hathaway said. "The enthusiastic response we've seen to the NARP is a good indication of the potential we have to achieve our goal of strengthening and reinvigorating the policy-relevant study of Asia."

The heads of universities and research organizations in the United States were invited to nominate outstanding scholars from their faculty and staff for consideration as Research Associates and Fellows. More than 140 experts were considered during the selection process, which concluded in March.

The National Asia Research Program is a new research and conference program designed to reinvigorate and promote the policy-relevant study of Asia, particularly by highlighting the research of NARP Associates and Fellows, who will present their work at the inaugural Asia Policy Assembly in Washington, D.C., on June 17–18, 2010.