



Heather PENNEY

Director of Studies and Research,
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Current Assignment

As the Director of Studies and Research, Ms. Penney oversees and manages all Mitchell research, writing, podcast, video, and other products. Conducts advanced analytical research on national defense, military strategy and operations, advanced technologies, and other aerospace power issues. She also hosts the weekly "Aerospace Advantage" podcast. Provides interviews and other public engagement such as paper presentations, keynotes, and expert panels; publishes Op-Eds, policy papers, and full research studies.

Education

Ms. Penney received her undergraduate degree from Purdue University, majoring in English with a minor in Philosophy. She earned her MA in American Studies from Purdue University. She earned her wings at Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training (ENJJPT) at Sheppard AFB, and qualified in the F-16C at the 149th FTW at Kelly ANGB. She has successfully completed numerous defense industry executive leadership courses and holds multiple aviation certifications.

Previous Assignment

Prior to joining Mitchell, Penney worked over a decade in the defense industry focusing on defense budgets, supporting combat aircraft program execution, and capture campaign management. She served in the Washington, DC Air National Guard flying F-16s, executing Operation Noble Eagle as well as two combat tours; flew DV airlift in G-100s as a mission commander and served in the Air Force Reserve in the National Military Command Center. She has lectured extensively on subjects such as Air Force capabilities and force structure, force management, defense industrial policy, future operational concepts, advanced technologies in warfare, and other defense policy issues to a broad number of organizations, universities, and military institutions. Penney is a recognized expert on defense policy issues concerning autonomous aerial systems, software maintenance and operations, autonomy, and force structure considerations. Penney is established voice on distributed and networked warfare, collaborative combat aircraft and autonomy, and future operational concepts associated with information architectures.



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