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Dr. Tomlinson is an Associate Professor in the National Security Affairs (NSA) department of the Naval War College at the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California. He received his BA from the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA. He holds Masters Degrees from Golden Gate University, San Francisco in Public Administration, and California State University, Northridge in Modern Middle Eastern History and a PhD in Modern Middle Eastern History and National Security Policy from Claremont Graduate University, Claremont, CA. His area of study is Shi'a representation in Lebanon.

Dr. Tomlinson was Distinguished Graduate of the ROTC program at Holy Cross after which he served twenty-six years in the Air Force, retiring as a Colonel. He is a graduate in residence of Air Command and Staff College, Air War College and the Senior Level Joint and Combined Warfighting School at Armed Forces Staff College. He has published articles in a number of academic webpages and journals to include publications in Proceeding and the Ventura County Star on United States policy in the Middle East. He is a certified Joint Specialty Officer (JSO) with service on the Joint Staff and has commanded at the squadron and group level in the Air Force. Upon retirement from the Air Force he taught as a lecturer for California State University at Northridge and as an adjunct professor for the Naval War College Distance Education (CDE) program before arriving at the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) where he served as an Assistant Professor for Advanced Strategic Leadership Program (ASLSP) and later assuming responsibilities as Director of ASLSP. He joined the NSA department at the Naval War College in February 2016.