

DANIEL P. GIPPER

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OBJECTIVE

As an active-duty U.S. Air Force Officer selected for Air University's Faculty Development Program, I am a fully government-funded doctoral candidate seeking a Doctor of Philosophy degree in History. After completing my degree, I will return to Air University and serve as a faculty member at the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies. In that role, my overarching goals are twofold. First, I aim to contribute to our understanding of history through research. Second, I plan to have a role in educating the Air Force's future strategists and leaders through teaching.

EMPLOYMENT

2006 – Present **United States Air Force**, Military Officer, Lieutenant Colonel
MC-130J Evaluator Pilot, Weapons Officer, and Staff Officer

EDUCATION

2002 – 2006 **Michigan State University**, East Lansing, Michigan
Bachelor of Science Degree in Mechanical Engineering, with Honor, 3.795 GPA

- Member of the Honors College
- Completed the Academic Scholars Program

2010 – 2012 **Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University**, Worldwide Campus
Master of Science Degree in Aeronautical Science, 3.778 GPA

2019 – 2020 **Naval Postgraduate School**, Monterey, California
Master of Science Degree in Defense Analysis (Irregular Warfare), 4.0 GPA

- Awarded the Outstanding Thesis Award – Lauded as “top 1%” by thesis advisor

2021 – Present **Air University, School of Advanced Air and Space Studies**, Maxwell AFB, Alabama
Candidate, Master of Philosophy in Military Strategy

RESEARCH INTERESTS

U.S. Military History, Twentieth Century.
U.S. Air Force History in the U.S. Military
Innovation and Technology Development in the U.S. Military
U.S. Irregular Warfare and Small Wars
Special Operations History in the U.S. Military

Diplomatic and Military History of the Great Powers, Twentieth Century.
Cold War History
Military Strategy and its Development
Grand Strategy

Motivation

Like many military officers, my interests reflect the current challenges facing the military. I spent many years as a pilot in Air Force Special Operations Command, and, as a result, I have an interest in issues relating to military aviation, Special Operations, and Irregular Warfare. As a future Air University faculty member, I also seek to expand my understanding of strategy through the study of global and diplomatic history. At the curriculum level, I am interested in studying military history with an emphasis on the United States in the twentieth-century, along with a minor field of diplomatic history. In particular, I aim to focus my research on the Cold War because of the intense innovation and evolving strategy in that period. Specifically, a potential research agenda that inspires me is examining the U.S. Air Force and its changes in the context of the Vietnam War drawdown—an underexplored case with sufficient archival material.

SCHOLARLY WORK / RESEARCH

- 2012 Embry Riddle Capstone Examination
- Explored the reduced crew complements across military and civilian aviation
 - Applied human factor theories and quantitative analysis to assess the net impacts of this trend
- 2017 U.S. Air Force Weapons School Paper, “Passive Detection Operations in the MC-130J”
- Classified research paper that aims to solve a current tactical problem faced by the community
- 2020 Naval Postgraduate School Master’s Thesis, “The Cyber Offense-Defense Balance Revisited”
- This thesis provides updates to offense-defense theory and applies the updated theory to cyber conflict
 - The thesis is posted in full at <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/citations/AD1114539>
- 2022 School of Advanced Air and Space Studies Master’s Thesis, “Innovate with Caution”
- This thesis argues that culture, miscalculations, and a lack of capacity contributed to historical “innovation failures”
 - Winner of the The Air Force Historical Foundation Award for Best SAASS History Thesis (2022)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP

Volunteer Activities and Notable Service Operations

- 2004 – 2005 Director of Training, Michigan State Detachment: Reserve Officer Training Corps Drill Team
- 2005 – 2006 Commander, Michigan State Chapter: Arnold Air Society, a collegiate volunteer organization
- 2011 Relief Pilot in support of Operation Tomodachi, a Tsunami and Humanitarian Relief mission, Sendai, Japan (<https://www.afsoc.af.mil/News/Photos/igphoto/2000275068/>)
- 2014 Lead Military Coordinator: City Freedom Scroll presentation, Hunstanton, UK (<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-norfolk-29451887>)

Active Duty: Duty Stations and Leadership Roles

- 2009 – 2012 **17th Special Operations Squadron**, Kadena Air Base, Japan
- Assistant Flight Commander, ranked #1 Captain in Year Group
- Deployed twice as an Aircraft Commander to Iraq and Afghanistan, and commanded an 8-member aircrew through 82 combat missions and 76 airdrops, transporting over 1,200 tons of war material
 - Responsible for planning a 1,800 annual flight hour and \$4.5 million group joint exercise program
- 2012 – 2014 **67th Special Operations Squadron**, RAF Mildenhall, United Kingdom
- Training Flight Commander, ranked #3 of 20 Captains in the Squadron
- Responsible for training and combat readiness of a 68-member squadron
 - Hand-picked twice to serve as the Group’s Liaison to Europe’s Special Operations Command
- 2014 – 2018 **27th Special Operations Group**, Cannon Air Force Base, New Mexico
- Group Standardization and Evaluation Chief, ranked #5 of 167 Majors in the Wing
- Responsible for the qualification and certification for all 1,450 aviators stationed at Cannon AFB
 - Worked as the Assistant Director of Operations for the MC-130 squadron, ensuring the safe operations of 105 aviators and 15 MC-130 aircraft valued at \$1.2 billion
 - Deployed twice as an Aircraft Commander to Iraq, Afghanistan, and Djibouti
- 2018 **Combined Joint Special Operations Air Component**, Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan
- Expeditionary Squadron Commander, ranked #1 of 23 joint Field Grade Officers
- Commanded 46 airmen and two MC-130 aircraft in combat, oversaw 355 mishap-free flight hours
 - Managed the transport of 623 tons of war material and 3,000 personnel
- 2020 – 2021 **Air Force Special Operations Command**, Hurlburt Field, Florida
- Command Weapons Officer, ranked #2 of 38 Lieutenant Colonels in the Staff Directorate
- Responsible for the tactics development and validation for the 19,000 person Major Command
 - Led the production of a classified white paper that articulates the future operating concepts for Air Force Special Operations Command in the post-Afghanistan environment

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters	Meritorious Unit Award with two oak leaf clusters
Air Medal with nine oak leaf clusters	AF Outstanding Unit Award with one oak leaf cluster
Aerial Achievement Medal	
Humanitarian Service Medal	
Air Force Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster	

MILITARY AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Military-Specific Education and Training

2007	Undergraduate Pilot Training, Laughlin AFB, TX
2008	Advanced Flying Training, NAS Corpus Christi, TX
2009	MC-130 Initial Pilot Qualification, Kirtland AFB, TX
2013	Squadron Officer School, Maxwell AFB, AL
2016	Air Command and Staff College, Correspondence
2017	U.S. Air Force Weapons School, Hurlburt Field, FL

Professional Achievements and Liscenses

2014	Airline Transport Pilot <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Certificate granted by the Federal Aviation Administration, authorizing holders to act as pilot in command for a scheduled air carrier ▪ Includes multi-engine land certification
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OTHER AWARDS AND HONORS

2004	Distinguished Graduate, Tyndall Air Force Base Field Training
2006	Distinguished Graduate, Michigan State University Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps
2008	Distinguished Graduate, Corpus Christi NAS Advanced Flying Training
2009	Distinguished Graduate, Kirtland AFB MC-130P Initial Qualification
2010	Company Grade Officer of the Quarter, Kadena AB 353d Special Operations Group Company
2014	Company Grade Officer of the Quarter, Cannon AFB 27th Special Operations Group Company Grade Officer of the Quarter
2015	9th Special Operations Squadron Pilot of the Year
2017	Distinguished Graduate, U.S. Air Force Weapons School
2017	Academic Award, U.S. Air Force Weapons School

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Society of Military History
 Organization of American Historians
 Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association