



# BIOGRAPHY



UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

## LIEUTENANT COLONEL SEAN A. ATKINS

Lt Col Sean A. Atkins is Commander of the 21st Student Squadron at Air University's Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. He leads 250 active, reserve, guard, sister service, and international officers and civilians throughout a rigorous mid-career graduate program focused on developing air-minded joint leaders.

Prior to this, Lt Col Atkins completed a PhD in International Security from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) where he also served as a Project Officer at the Air Force-MIT Artificial Intelligence Accelerator. Before coming to academia, he served as the Director of Operations of the 55th Intelligence Support Squadron where he led a team of 450 officer, enlisted, and contract aviators and ground intelligence and maintenance professionals providing critical intelligence to warfighters and national decision-makers. His national policy experience includes serving as Cyber Policy Advisor in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and establishing and leading the Headquarters Air Force A2 Cyber Capabilities branch. While assigned to the Pentagon, he co-developed a Presidential Policy Directive on DoD cyber operations, managed key cyber-alliance development, and led the writing of the first Air Force Cyber Operations Strategy.



Lt Col Atkins received his commission through the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) at the University of Southern California. He is a graduate of the National Security Agency's Junior Officer Cryptologic Career Program and is a qualified RC-135 Information Integration Officer. Lt Col Atkins has deployed multiple times, to include leading Intelligence Community teams in Iraq and Afghanistan, and most recently as Chief of ISR Operations for Operation Inherent Resolve.

## EDUCATION

2004 Bachelor of Arts with Honors, International Relations, University of Southern California  
2005 Intelligence Fundamentals Course, Goodfellow AFB, Texas  
2009 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell AFB, Alabama  
2009 Master of Arts with Distinction, War Studies, King's College London, United Kingdom  
2012 Junior Officer Cryptologic Career Program, National Security Agency, Ft Meade, Maryland  
2017 Master of Military Operational Art and Science, Air Command & Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Alabama  
2022 Doctor of Philosophy, Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge

## ASSIGNMENTS

1. June 2004 - Mar 2005, Student, Intelligence Officer Course, Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas

2. March 2005 - Jan 2007, Mission Operations Commander & Chief of Training, PACAF Air Intelligence Squadron, Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii
3. January 2007 - Sep 2007, Senior Watch Officer, 324<sup>th</sup> Intelligence Squadron, Camp Kunia, Hawaii
4. September 2007 - May 2008, Officer in Charge, Cryptologic Support Team, Iraq
5. May 2008 - May 2009, Assistant Director of Operations, 324<sup>th</sup> Intelligence Squadron, Camp Kunia, Hawaii
6. May 2009 - Aug 2012, Junior Officer Cryptologic Career Program, National Security Agency, Ft Meade, Maryland
7. August 2012 - Jul 2014, Chief of Cyber ISR Capabilities Branch, Headquarters Air Force, Pentagon, Virginia
8. July 2014 - Jul 2016, Director of Operations, 55<sup>th</sup> Intelligence Support Squadron, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska
9. August 2015 - May 2016, Chief of ISR Operations, Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve, Camp Arifjan, Kuwait
10. July 2016 - May 2017, Student, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama
11. June 2017 - Aug 2018, Fellow, Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama
12. September 2018 - Feb 2022, PhD Student, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts
13. February 2022 - May 2022, Air Force Project Officer, Department of the Air Force-Massachusetts Institute of Technology Artificial Intelligence Accelerator, Cambridge, Massachusetts
14. June 2022 - June 2023, Deputy Department Chair, Joint All Domain Strategist Program, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama
15. June 2023 - Present, Commander, 21<sup>st</sup> Student Squadron, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama

## **MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS**

Defense Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters  
Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster  
Joint Service Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster  
Air Force Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster  
Army Commendation Medal  
Joint Service Achievement Medal  
Air Force Achievement Medal  
Iraq Campaign Medal

## **EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION**

Second Lieutenant	June 14, 2004
First Lieutenant	June 14, 2006
Captain	June 14, 2008
Major	December 1, 2014
Lieutenant Colonel	June 1, 2019

(Current as of September 2023)