

Crowley kicks off Commandant's Lecture Series

Thomas Zimmerman, Army War College

Crowley kicks off Commandant's Lecture Series



P.J. Crowley, the 2011-12 Omar Bradley Chair of Strategic Leadership, spoke to the Army War College Class of 2012 as the first speaker of the 2011 Commandant's Lecture Series in Bliss Hall Oct. 5. Photo by Scott Finger.

Oct. 5, 2011 – P.J. Crowley, a former Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, opened the Commandant's Lecture Series in Bliss Hall Oct. 5.

Maj. Gen. Gregg, Martin, Army War College commandant, spoke about this year's lecture series.

“The theme for this year is the military profession, engaging political leadership, which combines elements of last year's theme of officership and the profession with civil-military relations,” he said.

“This theme is crucial, relevant and timely because in the future, you will serve in positions where you must be able to render wise and effective strategic counsel to our military and civilian leaders, at the highest political levels.

“In short, the lecture series will go to the heart of the strategic leader's most critical obligation – how to render expert military advice to our political leaders, within our complex democracy – that leads to the wise and effective application of national power to protect the nation.”

Scheduled speakers for the series will include retired Gen. Stanley McChrystal, author Tom Ricks and Dr. Eliot Cohen, a Professor of Strategic Studies at Johns Hopkins University.

“Our lecture series will bring in world-class experts – military and civilian – who will explore the challenges and opportunities of providing strategic advice, both military and the other elements of

power – to political leaders.

“We have to figure out how to achieve results through limited means, limited military force and greater investment in the other elements of national power,” said Crowley.

He continued on to say that while military objectives during a campaign are traditionally much quicker to accomplish, many times the political objectives lag behind.

“You may be tempted to say that we in the military handle the military objective and ignore the political, but that would be shortsighted,” he said. “Every conflict has a political end and you need to be aware and engaged.”

Crowley used examples from Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya to illustrate the changing world that the students will return to once they graduate.

“Credible communication and being associated with responsible reform is increasingly important. What we have accomplished in Libya, matches up very closely with the COIN strategy,” he said. “We have learned from our experience in Iraq. If civilians are a key lynchpin, then what the local population thinks is vital. How we are perceived around the world makes a difference. “

Crowley is also the 2011-12 Omar Bradley Chair of Strategic Leadership.

Omar Bradley Chair of Strategic Leadership

This chair is sponsored by Dickinson College, the Penn State Dickinson School of Law and School of International Affairs, and the Army War College.

Named for World War II hero Omar Bradley, the chair offers a visiting scholar the opportunity to explore with students and faculty at Dickinson and the Army War College, the nature of leadership and how it can best and most ethically be exercised in a world transformed by globalization, technology and cultural change. The joint chair also strives to enhance the study of leadership and to encourage civilian-military dialogue. Previous chair-holders include retired United States Navy four-star Admiral Dennis Blair, who also served as director of national intelligence, and Pulitzer Prize-winning historian and journalist Rick Atkinson.