

Wisner brings experience to diplomacy discussion

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Nov. 2, 2008 – The job of the next president won't be an easy one, especially when it comes to domestic and international issues, according to a veteran, 30-year diplomat.

Ambassador Frank Wisner, who served in various diplomatic capacities in the Department of Defense and State Department, spoke to Army War College students and faculty in Bliss Hall on Nov. 3 as part of the National Security Policy and Strategy course. Wisner was most recently the special envoy of the U.S. in the Troika group for the negotiations on the future status of Kosovo.

"It's imperative that the next president be prepared to use all of the tools in the tool-kit, including military and diplomatic skills," he said. "We have to shape the context when all elements of national power are used. We have to practice state-craft."

Wisner described state-craft as executing national power by more than just military power, also using diplomacy and organizations like the United Nations.

"Despite what some may think, we do not limit ourselves and what we can accomplish by engaging organizations like the United Nations," he said. "These organizations give voice to all country-members, no matter their size. They can all help shape the consensus."

That sentiment fits perfectly into the discussions currently ongoing in the seminars about the situations in Iraq and Afghanistan, according to **Col. Steven Cummings**, student.

"It's apparent that at times the military is the first element of national power used and that we should look harder at the other options like diplomacy," he said.

Wisner did point out that maintaining a powerful military is important, but the use of it was just as vital.

"We must maintain a military that is second-to-none," he said. "But I do not believe that it should be used unless it's defined by our political objectives. National power can be executed by more than just

military means."

The experience of the speaker made him a perfect fit for the lecture, according to one of the students.

"Even though he said he has been out of the government for 10 years, his information was still applicable to today," said **Col. Keith Sledd**, student. "It was very refreshing to see a different perspective."

National Security Policy and Strategy

Wisner spoke as part of the USAWC course that explores National Security Policy and Strategy. The students will examine all the elements that underpin national security policy and strategy, the global strategic environment, national security policy and strategy formulation, the instruments of national power and the processes employed by the United States Government to integrate and synchronize those instruments in the pursuit of national security objectives.

Throughout the course, faculty will challenge students to appraise complex national security issues that are often characterized by ambiguity and uncertainty using critical, creative, ethical and systemic thought processes as well as historical/contextual reflection and analysis. The outcome will be a better understanding of how global issues may affect U.S. policy and strategy.