

Allies and partners at the U.S. Army War College completed Academic Preparation for graduate-level strategic studies

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Allies, partners and U.S. military officers study side-by-side while pursuing the U.S. Army War College senior level Joint Professional Military Education and master's degree in Strategic Studies.

Carlisle, Pa. -- Allies and partners at the United States Army War College got a leg up on success through the International Fellows' Academic Preparation Course, today graduating its 10th cohort from the annual 9-week course.

"What's important about this course is the theory and practice of academic writing and research," said Dr. James Breckenridge, Army War College Provost, to the 33 graduates from across the globe. Easy to say and hard to do, he admitted, with nods from the assembled officers, each hand-selected by their nation to attend the U.S. Army War College.

Breckenridge talked about the reputation these 33 officers: "dedicated to learning, inquisitive, studious, motivated.... "There's nothing more difficult than going to a foreign country and speaking that language, taking their

sources. And here's the hard part, as you know, Americans talk too fast or too slow. It's never just right," he said, adding that they then have to learn all the slang and the truly daunting list of acronyms.

"What's really great about what's ahead is that we have embarked at the Army War College in significant reform efforts," he said. The courses they'll take and the way that they're presented will be the beginning of the new Army War College education.

In August, the full group of 80 senior military officers of allied and partner nations will fully integrate into the Army War College resident Class of 2022 – 380 joint, interagency and multinational leaders who will work collaboratively in a 10-month educational program to earn both senior level Joint Professional Military Education and a master's degree in Strategic Studies.

But, first, these 33 officers committed to additional reading, guest lectures, a strategic wargame, a strategic staff ride to the Gettysburg National Battlefield, and wrote both a position paper and a longer research paper – investing in their skills for the War College experience.

"I teach English to empower leaders in the global marketplace," said Gilda Hein, one of four APC instructors. Recruited for her experience in teaching college-level English Composition, she explained that this course guides students to master composition and grammar and prepare for sophisticated exchanges about complex and strategic topics with other senior military officers in a second language, English.

A native of Chile, Hein's parents had enrolled her in an international school in the 5th grade where English was the only language spoken in every class. "Even lunch was in English," she said. So she understands the new challenge for these officers, high-achieving yet unaccustomed to full-time English, she said. Hein learned to relish the interactions with students of other cultures and nations then, and now.

"It's extremely satisfying engaging with the variety of personalities with one unifying goal – to secure global peace and security.

"That's why they're here," she proposed. "They come from countries with conflict. They know sacrifice. They know the value of the Army War College's knowledge and relationships."

"These officers are compelled toward excellence, driven by a motivational force that's underlined by diligence, diversity, and conquest," said Hein. She admired their sociability and openness as they worked collaboratively

at times.

“I’m working myself out of my job,” she said, emphasizing the skills that will serve them in their graduate studies and beyond. She shares tools they’ll value: how to do critical annotation as they read, how to formulate questions, how to write a thesis, how to transform questions and thesis into an outline, how to delimit the range of the topic, and how to be persuasive.

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