

Teaching chair Col. Douglas Winton guides faculty, leads change

By Elena Patton, Public Affairs Office 18 August 2021



Winton joined the War College faculty in 2015 as a professor of Strategic Art in the Department of Military Strategy, Planning, and Operations and in 2018, he became the chair of that department.

The chair of the Department of Military Strategy, Planning, and Operations went to college to studied pre-med. After discovering he was no good at chemistry and a course in American politics, his academic focus shifted, and he graduated with a degree in International Relations.

Col. Douglas Winton has an M.A. and a Ph.D. International Relations and a concentration in Strategic Studies from Johns Hopkins University.

Winton joined the War College faculty in 2015 as a professor of Strategic Art in DMSPO, and in 2018, he became the chair of that department.

Throughout his academic career, Winton has maintained an interest in various topics: global politics, how and why nations use war to achieve national political objectives, economics, the law of armed conflict, and specifically urban operations.

“My interests are pretty varied, which I think is befitting of someone who purports to be a strategist,” said Winton. “To think strategically requires one to draw on a lot of disciplines and a lot of knowledge areas.”

His military experience solidified the importance of all that he studied. Winton recalls the frustration many of his colleagues felt in Bosnia during the mid-late '90s because they could not see how they were helping to achieve the outlined political objectives.

“My military experience reinforced for me that anytime the U.S. was using military power, it was going to have effects far beyond what was happening in that operation,” said Winton. “That there was something bigger taking place.”

“So, I was always drawn to think about what was that bigger, and the academic discipline of international relations and the concentration in strategic studies allowed me to do that.”

Winton explains why understanding “that bigger” is important for War College students.

“As military leaders, it is our job to translate those vague political objectives into clear military outcomes that our units can actually accomplish,” said Winton.

International Relations and Strategic Studies serve as a tool for students to do just that.

“Our graduates need to employ military power as a joint force, but they have to do that with a clear sense of what are the strategic goals and objectives,” said Winton. “They can’t just be technical experts. They have to be able to think about the application of military power over time and space and how that use of military power is contributing to achieving political objectives.”

Winton's current research centers on urban military operations—how militaries adapt to conducting operations in cities and incorporate new technologies.

Urban operations are a relevant topic for War College students because the world is urbanizing, meaning more and more military operations will be conducted in urban areas. Urban operations also increase the strategic importance of the military operation, noted Winton.

The Chair of the Department of National Security and Strategy at the Army War College has dedicated her career to understanding the importance of civil-military relations—the military-society relationship and the military-political relationship.

Dr. Carrie Lee is the daughter of a retired Air Force colonel, and her brother served in Afghanistan. "I very much lived the civil-military divide," she said.

"Being able to speak both languages made me realize that what I do is important on both a personal and professional level," said Lee, noting that it shapes her approach as chair of the Department of National Security and Strategy.

"I see my role as spanning the civil-military divide," she said, speaking about advising students and supporting faculty.

Today, society is grappling with two civil-military issues simultaneously: determining how the relationship between political and military leaders should work, and to what degree the military should reflect the society it protects.

Lee knows that understanding civil-military relations is significant for our students, who will serve as advisors and staff officers to senior military leaders upon graduating.

"You cannot advise senior leaders properly if you are not aware of the political situation that surrounds them, what the relationship with their civilian counterparts is supposed to look like, and how to navigate it," said Lee.

"I don't think that there has ever been a more important time for what professional military education and this teaching department can do," said Lee.

Dr. Carrie Lee joined the USAWC faculty in June as the first female chair of a resident education department in the school. The department focuses on teaching students about national security issues in an international context. DNSS sponsors the Regional Studies Program in the core curriculum, and the annual staff ride to the National Capital Region.

Previously, Lee served as course director for National Security Decision-Making at the Air War

College. As a postdoctoral fellow at Notre Dame's International Security Center, she focused on innovative approaches to grand strategy. At the RAND Corporation, she was a Stanton Nuclear Security postdoctoral fellow.

Lee received her Ph.D. in political science from Stanford University and her Bachelor of Science in political science from MIT.



Dr. Carrie Lee joined the War College faculty in June as the Chair of the Department of National Security and Strategy.

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