

Army Strategist deliver strategic perspectives on complex problems

By Robert Martin, USAWC PAO 10 September 2021



15 graduated Army Strategist stand with their faculty after their graduation, Aug. 20 at Carlisle Barracks.

Carlisle, Pa. -- The Army War College's Basic Strategic Art Program graduated 15 new Army officers as strategists on Aug. 20, Carlisle Barracks. Army strategists immerse themselves in current political, economic, and military events to provide sound advice to national and military strategic leaders.

"BSAP is the Army's credentialing program for officers entering Functional Area 59, which is the Army's core of strategists," said Col. Francis J.H. Park, Director of BSAP. "It gives strategists an educational and training foundation to prepare them for assignments ranging from general staff with troops to the national level.

The Basic Strategic Art Program introduces students to strategy and the unique knowledge, skills, and behaviors that provide the foundation for their progressive development as Army strategists. Case studies challenge students to apply their theoretical foundations to historical examples

throughout each of the six modules.

- Strategic theory
- Strategic art
- National security decision-making
- Contemporary strategic challenges
- Institutional strategy and planning, and
- Joint and Army planning.

The program conducts three courses per year, graduating an average total of 45 officers. FA 59 officers serve throughout the Army and the joint force, DOD, and other Executive Branch agencies.

During this class, Maj. Gen. Steve Maranian, Commandant of the Army War College, received a notional briefing, where the students played the role of the planning staff for a theater army. The students presented combatant command-level flexible deterrent options and evaluated those joint options for presentation to a senior leaders.

“BSAP has significantly evolved over the past several years extending from 14 to 16 weeks and introducing classified content and instruction into multiple portions of the program,” said Lt. Col. Roy Kempf, Deputy Director, Basic Strategic Art Program.

As an example of that evolution, Park added that “In response to observed shortfalls in planning, the Army directed an increase in planning capability to prepare Functional Area 59 strategists for real-world challenges.

“Exercises, wargames, and discussions are far less conceptual, sometimes not at all depending on current events. Planning has become an increasingly essential skill, and BSAP is renovating its classroom to improve the delivery of classified curriculum and ability to conduct collaborative planning.

“The course has become even more relevant now than it was at its inception by integrating current practice back into instruction,” said Park.