

APC gives International Fellows a head start to success

By Robert Martin, PAO 29 June 2022



International officers graduated from the War College Academic Preparatory Course, June 24, Wil Waschoe Auditorium, Carlisle Barracks.

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The Army War College year in residence officially begins for 76 senior international officers. Their six-week orientation started June 27, and they join their U.S. counterparts in the U.S. Army War College Resident Program Class of 2023, beginning in August.

A milestone for 40 international officers took place on June 24 as they completed the nine-week Academic Preparatory Course to hone their language skills for graduate-level reading, research, academic writing, and seminar discussions.

“I could not do what you are about to do,” said Col. Brian Henderson, Director of the international fellows’ program. “You are about to get a Master’s level education in a second language; the APC is one the most important programs at the Army War College. You are critical to the education of our senior leaders globally, not just in the United States.”

“U.S. students are also coming out of battalion, and brigade commands, and you are to challenge them in the seminars on strategic international policy. You will be able to tell them this is not how my region views their

perspective. Being up-to-speed as you go into seminars, write at a higher level, and conduct conversations and discussions are incredibly important to the program's success," said Henderson.

"The Academic Prep Course instructs students in the skills necessary to fully participate and accomplish the academic standards of the USAWC Resident Course," said Jeremy Beussink, IF Writing and Research Skills Instructor. "The foundations of these skills are reading, writing, and research."

All classroom instruction, reading, discussion, and lectures are in English to hone understanding, experience, and confidence in English-based national security studies.

"It was a pleasure for me to have students from different countries from around the world in my seminar during APC, said Lt. Col. Dumitru Parfeni from Moldova. "When we look for the answer to a question, we could have many different answers because of different perspectives and challenges in their countries. Also, with so many ideas, this facilitated the discussions. I learned so much about their countries' challenges and how these challenges are affecting their country. "

"Our discussions were from tactical to strategic currently, everyone is talking about Ukraine, and I was able to give some insights since I am from that region. I could explain what was happening so that the other students had a better understanding since they have had little awareness of the situation," he said.

The course is taught by teachers that educate the international fellows on grammar, writing, and how to discuss their points of view articulately so that their opinion is influential and understood. "The course instructors prepared us for the residence course by putting us in different situations to get us comfortable in uncomfortable situations," said Parfeni.

"I love that I am privileged to teach and the gifted, honorable international fellows that I teach," said Gilda Hein, APC English Instructor. "This keeps me coming back, my life is enriched by these intelligent, perceptive, humble soldiers who keep our global peace and stability," she said.

76 International officers will participate in the six-week orientation to the United States.

The six-week orientation course for international students and their families includes briefings and staff rides on American culture and society, history

and government, and values.

All International Fellows live in the civilian communities around Carlisle Barracks; many will send children to Carlisle Area schools. The course's introduction to American society includes experiences ranging from having a softball clinic given by Harrisburg Senators, then later that same day attending a Senator Baseball game, to the birth-of-the-nation educational experience in Philadelphia at the National Constitution Center and a sailing tour on the Spirit of Philadelphia. Introduction to our local area is not complete without a visit to our Amish community and a day at Hershey Park.

Funding for cultural experiences like Hershey Park and the Senators game has been donated through the Army War College Foundation.

Their understanding of American politics and government begins locally, with an introduction to local government by Carlisle Mayor Sean Shultz – followed by an introduction to the justice system in action at the Cumberland County Courthouse.

The Washington, D.C. staff ride includes office calls and briefings in the Pentagon and with the Army Congressional liaison office. Their families, meanwhile, visit the Washington Zoo and Library of Congress. Together, the officers and families participate in a memorable ceremony when the elected IF president lays a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington Cemetery.

Orientation and sponsorship prepare International Fellows for full integration into war college studies.

In between group experiences, these international officers from vastly different backgrounds are assisted by volunteer sponsors from the neighboring community and the war college.

The sponsors guide them through driver's licenses, car purchases, and U.S. banking practices. They generally guide the Fellows in mastering the everyday distinctions of American life so they can focus on studies as of August 8.

The first day of studies for the Class of 2023 begins with seminar introductions and acculturation. The 76 foreign officers will be seated across the 25 student seminars, creating a forum for a rich exchange of experiences and insights when the U.S. military, U.S. federal civilians, and International Fellows address case studies, exercises, and seminar

discussion topics.

Their presence in the seminar brings greater diversity of viewpoints to the strategic thinking process and helps forge stronger ties of cooperation among future coalition partners.

The Chief of Staff of the Army invited the International Fellows to attend the Army War College in a State Department program executed by the Defense Department.

The 76 USAWC International Fellows in the Class of 2020 represent these 73 countries: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belize , Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, France, Georgia , Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guyana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Korea, Kosovo, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mexico, Moldova x2, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia x2, Senegal, Slovenia, Spain, Taiwan, Tanzania, Thailand, Tunisia , Tunisia , Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Vietnam, Zambia.