

DDE Students complete first resident seminar

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SSG Corey Baltos, War College public affairs

June 30, 2010 - The members of the Distance Education Class of 2011 are half way through their course. To mark this milestone the 367 members reported to the Army War College to begin the first of their two week residents' sessions.

The two-week course, which met from June 21-July 2nd, allows the students to participate in seminars group sessions, attend lectures and staff rides, and hear guest lecturers teach them on strategic leadership in a global environment.

Distance education at the Army War College began in 1967 as the Department of Corresponding Studies to meet the increased demand for senior level officers needed to fight in south-east Asia. Now many students partake in the distance learning because their location or job makes it difficult for them to break away for a year and study as a resident.

“The distance education course allows the students to continue their full time job while attending this course,” said Dr. Clay Chun, Department Chair of the Department of Distance Education. “Plus, they can immediately put their education and training to use in their full time jobs.”

“This course is a lot harder than the resident course is,” said Marine Lt. Col. Darrell Akers. “You have to balance your normal duties, your family and your course work. It is a very challenging use of time management.” Akers is the regimental executive officer for the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force out of Camp Pendleton, CA.

“While distance education has come a long way, there are still many things that we cannot do well over the internet,” said Chun. “It is difficult, for example, for the students to listen to and interact with a guest lecture over the net.”

One of the guest lecturers was Ambassador Husain Haqqani, Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States. He gave the assembled class insight in how many Pakistani's view the U.S. He stated that the majority of Pakistanis view the U.S. as either a well meaning country that uses their military to react to

the world instead of understanding it, or as a bully who is trying to take over the world. “For a country that does not see itself as militaristic, your preferred method of international involvement is through your military,” said Haqqani.

An important aspect of the first two week resident’s session is the forming of the seminars that will be utilized during the remainder of the course and after they graduate. “Forming them now, gives the students a chance to put a face to a name and began forming the interpersonal relationships that will be vital for the remainder of the course and beyond,” said Chun.

“Getting to know the people we have been conversing with over the internet for the past year will help us with the second half of the course,” said Lt. Col. Joe Ebert, 378th Engineer Battalion. “It is nice to put the face with the name.”

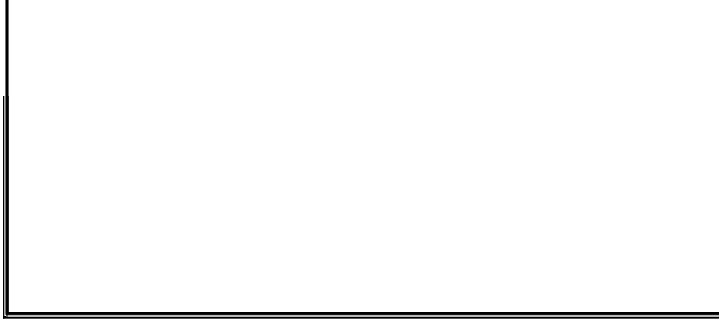
For all War College students their seminar is probably the most important aspect of their time here. “I am still in contact with most of my seminar,” said Gen. (Ret.) David McKiernan, USAWC class of 1992, who spoke to the DEC.

At the end of their residency the students are expected to have a different appreciation of the curriculum they are being taught. They are also expected to use the skills they learned in strategic leadership and apply them both to the rest of the course and to their professions. “You are not expected to leave here as modern day Clausewitz,” said McKiernan. “But rather as a better “practitioner” in a service, joint interagency and coalition context.”

The distance education program consists of a series of 10 on-line courses and 2 resident courses, taken over a 2-year period, giving a total of 36 credit hours for the program. Like the resident program, successful completion of the distance education program results in the Graduation Certificate and a Master of Strategic Studies degree.

During their two week residency, students also have the opportunity to utilize the USAWC Library and AHEC for research and to participate in the Leadership Feedback and Physical Fitness Assessment programs. The Distance Education class of 2011 is slated to graduate July 22, 2011.





(Above) DDE students conduct hands on strength training from the APFRI staff. (Right) Students gather in the Command Conference Room for a "brown bag discussion" with that day's guest speaker.

Watch for photos to be posted throughout the next two weeks, capturing the DDE Class of 2011's First Resident Course [here](#)



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