

Ft. Hood shootings frame discussion of 'officership' for first CLS

Thomas Zimmerman, Army War College Public Affairs Office

Ft. Hood shootings frame discussion of 'officership' for first CLS



Maj. Gen. Gregg Martin, USAWC commandant, speaks with retired Navy Adm. Vern Clark after he delivered the kick-off lecture for the Commandant's Lecture Series at the Army War College Sept. 14. Photo by Megan Clugh.

Sept. 14, 2010 – One of the darkest days for the Army served as a reminder of the importance of leadership during a frank and open discussion by retired Navy Adm. Vern Clark that served as the Sep. 14 kick-off of the Commandant's Lecture Series at the Army War College.

Framed against the findings of the DoD Independent Review of the Fort Hood Shooting Investigation, Clark stressed the importance of professional ethics and officership.

"The life-saving response to the situation at Ft. Hood was made possible by strong leadership at all levels," he said. "Leadership is key to every human enterprise. I open and close every talk with this essential truth. Strategic leaders must have the courage to define and fight for the value set that supports their culture."

Clark said the topic of this year's lecture series was perfect for today's environment.

"I'm so impressed by the theme of 'officership and the profession' for your Lecture Series this year," he said. "It's spot-on as I consider the key issues facing our Services today. Civil-military relations, ethics,

dissent, leader development...I wish I could address all these things today."

Prior to serving as the co-chair of the review board, Clark served as the Chief of Naval Operations, Director of the Joint Staff and multiple other joint service positions during his 37-year career.

The lecture series brings in nationally recognized experts to challenges USAWC students to examine their assumptions and broader national security connects of the issues presented.

"Each year the Commandant's Lecture Series augments our already robust core and elective curricula," said Maj. Gen. Gregg Martin, USAWC commandant. "This year's theme, officership and the profession, challenges each of us to examine the most basic assumptions of the calling to which those of us in uniform have dedicated ourselves. Rest assured, this theme isn't a review, it's a re-examination."

Martin went on say that the ever-changing world and the growth and development of the students as leaders also plays an important role.

"You're not the same people you were as junior officers, you've changed as well," he said. "You now have decades of rich and diverse experience that provide the context to bring these ideas to life."

Martin asked the students to take the opportunity to re-examine their views on the issues presented and reminded them of their immense responsibilities.

"Your nation will look to you for leadership and judgment as stewards of the profession of arms. You have no higher calling."

