

USAWC takes on cyber during elective

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Brian Gouker, National Security Agency Visiting Professor assigned to the Department of Military Strategy, Planning, and Operations, reads over some course documents for his elective “Cyberspace Theory & Strategic Security Implications.”

“Cyber as a whole has evolved extensively and affects us in every aspect of our lives,” said Brian Gouker, the National Security Agency Visiting Professor assigned to the Department of Military Strategy, Planning, and Operations who is also teaching the “Cyberspace Theory

& Strategic Security Implications” elective.

The non-technical elective is designed to give students a greater understanding and appreciation of the dynamic cyber landscape they will face when they graduate as strategic leaders.

“Students have been given a taste of cyber in the core curriculum, and I’ll expand on those lessons into various facets of the ‘cyber domain,’” he said. Gouker pointed out that the cyber environment is receiving more and more attention and emphasis throughout the DoD and the federal government.

The class will be lecture based and include guest speakers from industry and government, with seminar-based discussions and extensive student participation and student presentations. The course is designed to compliment other cyber-focused electives taught at the USAWC.

The cyber arena and the issues and challenges are important for USAWC students to understand and be familiar with, he said.

“No matter what role or position our graduates find themselves in, they will be responsible in one way or another for maintaining and protecting a network,” he said. “They need to be aware of the legal

issues, roles and responsibilities, policies, capabilities, and what the threats and risks are in cyberspace. This is an ideal place to discuss these issues.”

He added that the course is being taught at an unclassified level in order to include the International Fellows.

“No matter what country you are from, the security of your network is important to everyone,” he said. “A vulnerability on one network can spread quickly and affect others. I think the fellows will bring an global perspective which will benefit everyone.”

He should know, as the USAWC Class of 2003 graduate has served for 22 years at the National Security Agency after retiring from the Air Force. He is the former Deputy Director of the National Security Incident Response Center, and has served in various managerial, technical and advisory positions within NSA’s Information Assurance and Signals Intelligence Directorates as well as in the agency’s Legislative Affairs Office.

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