

# Resident phase of joint exercise brings senior service college students together

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*38 Army War College students recently took part in the Joint Land, Air, Sea Strategy Exercise. JLASS is a five-month war gaming elective USAWC students and their counterparts at the Naval, Air, Marine Corps war colleges and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.*

May 7, 2012 -- March 2022 – International terrorists have just poisoned the Rome

drinking water system, Iran is threatening to close the Strait of Hormuz and gas just spiked to \$150 per barrel. Just another day in the newsroom? Not for the 122 war college students participating in the Joint Land, Air, Sea Strategy Exercise.

JLASS is a four-month special program elective offered by the Center for Strategic Leadership that immerses selected US Army War College students in a challenging futuristic global environment alongside students from senior service colleges across the nation. Thirty-eight USAWC students, representing all services, civilians, and international fellows functioned as the staffs of U.S. European Command, U.S. Africa Command, Allied Command Operations (SHAPE), and the Joint Staff.

In 2012, all Geographic Combatant Commanders as well as U.S. Transportation Command and U.S. Special Operations Command were represented by students from the USAWC, the Naval War College, the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, the Air War College, and the Marine Corps War College. 2012 marked the 29<sup>th</sup> year for the exercise.

JLASS is designed to supplement the core curriculum by reinforcing the principles of critical thinking, policy and planning, and theater strategy that resident students have developed throughout the year. JLASS is specifically not designed as an alternative to the USAWC's capstone event, the Strategic Decision Making Exercise. JLASS is designed to allow a "deep-dive" study into strategic decision

making, environmental scanning, and the long-term outcomes and implications of strategic decisions but does not examine the Interagency System. In short, the two exercises complement each other by examining strategic decision making through different lenses.

***Col. Tommy Mize, a USAWC student role-playing the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, meets with Geographic Combatant Commanders during the JLASS exercise.***

JLASS is a fully adjudicated wargame which allows student decisions to directly impact the daily progress of the scenario. Complicated global scenarios, projected ten years into the future place participants in a challenging strategic

environment with very few “right” answers. Through in-depth regional and global environmental analysis, students develop national-level policies and theater level strategies to attempt to influence events in support of national, alliance or global policy objectives.

The five-month exercise is played in two distinct phases. In December, students from all learning centers begin distributed play, during which clock time runs on a day-for-day basis to allow environmental scanning and shaping while theater campaign plans are developed. During distributed play, students from the individual learning centers meet separately in support of their schools’ academic calendars. Then, in April, all participants come together for a five day interactive experience to execute their plans. This second, collaborative phase was hosted at Maxwell Air Force Base’s LeMay Center Wargaming Institute. During the collaborative phase, clock time is accelerated to allow longer-term repercussions of strategic decisions to manifest themselves – for better or for worse.

