

Distance Class of 2013 finally meets face-to-face with peers, USAWC experts

Distance Class of 2013 finally meets face-to-face with peers, USAWC experts



Lt. Gen. William Troy, Director of the Army Staff, spoke to members of the USAWC Distance Education Class of 2013 who came to Carlisle Barracks for the first of two resident phases. The students will complete their studies online and return to Carlisle next summer for their second resident course and graduation.

Make sure to check the [USAWC Facebook](#) page and the [USAWC YouTube](#) page for photos, videos and more from the two-week course.

June 19, 2012 -- After more than a year of learning together behind computer screens all over the world, more than 350 members of the Army War College Distance Education Class of 2013 came to Carlisle Barracks for the first of two resident courses June 18-29.

The two-week sessions allow students to participate in seminar group sessions, to attend lectures and work with classified material relevant to the course of instruction. Attendance at both scheduled resident courses of instruction is required for successful completion of the curriculum.

“The first residence course really provides a capstone for the first year of studies,” said **Col. Darrell Fountain**, first resident course director. “We bring in guest speakers who provide a wrap-up on each of the four courses, as well as guest speakers who talk about each element of national power, diplomatic, information, military and economic.”

Guest speakers for the course include Lt. Gen. William Troy, Director of the Army Staff; Amb. Daniel Kurtzer; retired Gen. Michael Hayden; Dr. Richard Betts and Dr. Richard Neu.

“This is where you can hone the skills that make you value added,” said Troy of the USAWC program.

“We need you to be critical thinking advisers and generators of options to complex problems at the strategic level.”

Fountain said that the course ties together all of the strategic themes of the Army War College and prepares them for the second year of studies, including introducing them to their new seminar mates.

“When they arrive here they are split into the seminars that they will be a part of until graduation,” he said. “This allows them to form relationships here that will carry on during the next year of studies and when they arrive next year for the second residence course.”

The program differs from the resident course in the aspect that it’s a two year program instead of the one year duration for the resident class. Technology overcomes the geographical challenges of students spread around the world. Instead of mailing in papers, students log onto a secure website and watch videos and guest speakers through Defense Connect Online. The distance education site provides students with primary and supplementary materials and allows students to participate in real-time discussions. This site is the focal point for faculty-student interaction, for viewing multimedia course work, constructing papers, sending course papers, and receiving evaluated work.

Fountain said that the distance education course remains committed to its charter when it was formed in 1960 as the correspondence course.

“We have a responsibility to emulate and parallel the curriculum and educational experience of the residence course,” he said. “The delivery method is different, but the educational experience is the same.”