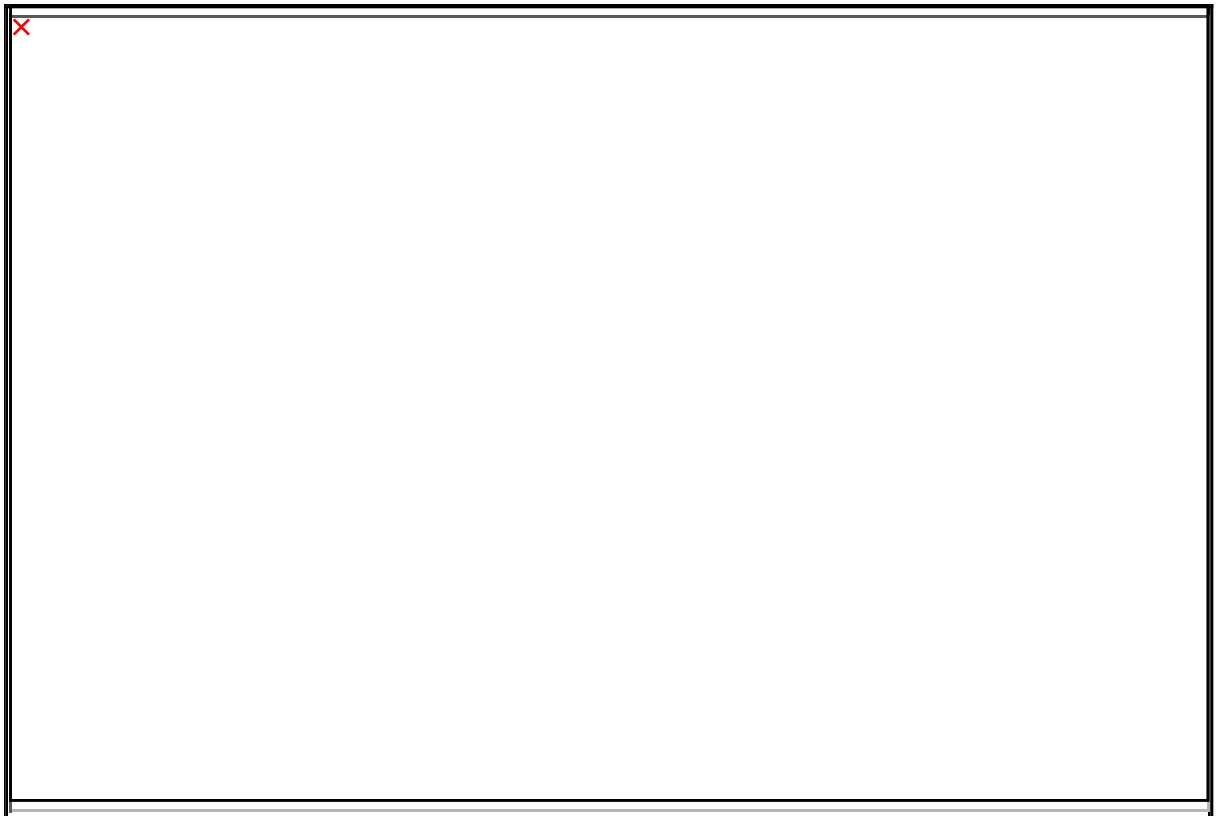


## **Second year USAWC distance education students prep for future**

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The students of the Army War College Distance Education Class of 2014 finished their second resident course here in Carlisle, July 14-25, completing the requirements for the Master's degree in Strategic Studies.

The Distance Education course is acknowledged by many to be the most challenging way to complete a senior service college. The course includes two years of distance learning plus two 2-week resident phases. The overwhelming majority of the class are either Army Reserve or Army National Guard Officers, who have been balancing full-time jobs, military duty, family and a rigorous graduate degree



program.

Some officers have been challenged by completing the course while deployed. Lt. Col. Robert Powell, an Army Reserve officer was deployed until April of this year as the Chief of Operations for the 335<sup>th</sup> Signal Command (Theater-Provisional).

“It was very difficult being deployed and being a member of distance education,” said Powell. “The time zone difference could be very challenging when conducting group work.”

***USAWC faculty member Dave Willmann guides his group of second year students through the Gettysburg strategic staff ride.***

Because students like Powell are simultaneously working in their units and completing coursework, they are able to start immediately to put into practice what they are learning.

“I found the information that I learned during distance education very helpful in my position,” said Powell. “When I attended meetings with [general officers] I actually understood the concepts they were discussing and was able to use this information to ensure that we were in line with their intent,” he said.

“I will be able to better advise my senior leaders and add value to my next command,” said Col. Rita Casey. The Alabama National Guard officer was in command of the 111<sup>th</sup> Ordnance Group for the duration of the distance education course.

The resident phases provide a welcome change and camaraderie while learning from staff rides and national speakers. Lectures by key policy and military strategy experts, the national security staff ride to Gettysburg, and the Commandant’s National Security Program are among the highlights of the second residence course, scheduled for the last two weeks of the two-year program.

Lt. Gen. Mark F. Ramsay, director of Force Structure, Resource and Assessment, Joint Staff, gave the keynote address on day 1 of the resident course. Gen. Frank Grass, Chief of the National Guard Bureau addressed challenges and opportunities facing the Guard with Army War College students and Barbara A. Sisson, Assistant Chief of Army Reserve, discussed the Army Reserve's Private-Public Partnership Initiative (P3i), recruiting, and other topics relevant to the Reserve Component. Maj. Gen. Gary Cheek and Brig. Gen. John Ferrari participated in a panel discussion about the “strategy-resource gap, reviewing implications of the Quadrennial Defense Review with Army War College students.

The Commandant’s National Security Program took place in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week. This program invites distinguished civilians to take part in the Army War College experience by joining students for lectures and subsequently engaging in dynamic seminar discussions with the students and faculty.

“I enjoyed Gen. Allyn’s comments on the future of the Army,” said Mike Prout, the Assistant Director of the U.S. Marshall’s Service, about the commander of US Forces Command, who spoke to the student body during CNSP. Prout appreciated the later opportunity to interact and discuss the presentation with Seminar 20 students.



Participants in CNSP come from a variety of professions and bring their experiences into play during discourse in seminar.

***Gen. Daniel B. Allyn, Commanding General U.S. Army Forces Command discussed developing priorities, mission command and facets of leadership at the senior level.***

“With my background in advertising, I approached the seminar discussions from an emotional perspective,” said Michele Stoos who is marketing and communications manager at Sedona Technologies Government Services in Moline, Ill. She added that she appreciated the seminar setting where varied opinions are voiced and considered with no right or wrong answer. She particularly related to Dean Cheng’s talk about China's defense strategy, she said, because she had recently visited China. Cheng is a senior research fellow with the Asian Studies Center at the Heritage Foundation's Davis Institute for National Security and Foreign Policy. Retired Lt. Gen. David Huntoon, commandant of the Army War College from 2003 to 2008, gave the CNSP capstone address on strategic leadership in the current national security environment.