

# International Fellows get head start with Academic Preparatory Course

*Robert D. Martin, Army War College Public Affairs*

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As US military officers plan to start rigorous graduate-level studies at the Army War College, a select group of very experienced officers are preparing to do so in a language that is not their own.

For academic 2016, 80 senior military officers from around the globe have been extended an invitation from the Chief of Staff of the Army to attend the Army War College. To prepare some of these International Fellows for a year of study and research, the Army War College offers 30 officers the Academic Preparatory Course, April 20 to June 19.



“The APC better prepares these IFs for success with their studies, makes them more capable of engaging with their peers in seminar, and generally allows them to get the most out of their academic experience at the USAWC,” said Burbank. “As the number of IFs attending the USAWC has increased, our number of IFs who speak English

as a second language, who have less experience with the Western academic model, has increased as well,” Burbank continued.

International Fellows from around the world take part in the academic preparatory course, the nine-week course, which started April 20, is made up of diverse subjects on such topics as fundamentals of English grammar, conducting research, and completing of a graduate level paper.

“This course is helpful because we are going back to the basics of English grammar, which I

can apply while in the resident course since we need to complete research papers,” said Niger Air Force Lt. Col. Moctor Amodou Mounkaila. “The class teaches a good mixture of advanced and basic English. I will expect to widen my horizons and learn the meaning of the strategic thinking process so that I can apply them to my country.”

“I am expecting a busy schedule and I am eager to learn so my expectation is that I will learn to be an effective senior officer,” said Zambian Army Col. Amos Zimba. “The fact that my country selected me out of many officers to come to this course, gives me the emphasis to expect more and by expecting more, I actually am getting myself very prepared to come to grips with every task that may come before me.”



Academic preparatory course instructor Sharon Haseman (right) listens to International Fellow Brazilian Col. Valerio Luiz Lange (left) while Macedonian Fellow Lt. Col. Sashko Lafchiski looks on. The officers are taking part in the course to better familiarize themselves with English grammar and research techniques.

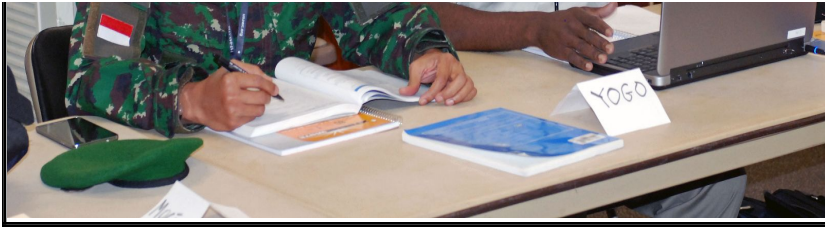
“My first impression is that this is a bright group of guys who I expect good things from,” said Jeremy Beussink, who manages the prep course and serves as the writing and research skills instructor throughout the academic year. “We never know exactly what level of English proficiency, academic education, or operational experience an International Fellow will show up here with, but typically it's pretty good.”

“I will be learning how to read and operate at the strategic level, to include elements of national power,” said Colombian Army Col. Juan Correa. “I want to learn more about how you do it, how you do it overseas and how you maintain your Army here. What are the relationships with government agencies and non-governmental agencies?” he asked, rhetorically.



“I expect a demanding learning system and to enjoy and share with my seminar comrades all my experiences, listen to their experiences and do the best we can in the coming year,” he said.

The nine-week course is made up of diverse subjects on such topics



as fundamentals of English grammar, conducting research, and completing of a graduate level paper. The course also provides practice for the Test of English as a Foreign Language. Fellows

must pass this test to be eligible for the master's degree in Strategic Studies.

International Fellows from Indonesian Col. Yogo Triyono (left) and Congolese Lt. Col. Fulgence Luhembwe go over study material during their academic preparatory course. The APC better prepares International Fellows for success with their studies while attending the Army War College.

“It's not a cut-and-paste curriculum. It's flexible, broad and includes a variety of materials and teaching methods so that each teacher may cater to the needs of their class,” Beussink said. “There is a good mix of English language communication, Army War College-specific content, and higher level academic skills such as writing a research paper,” he added.

“Our hope is that at the end of the course our International Fellows will be confident about their ability to attain a master's degree in Strategic Studies, if that is their desire,” said Burbank.

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