

Middle States Commission visits Army War College: Next step toward re-accreditation

By Public Affairs Staff 20 November 2018



The Army War College class of 2019 is on track to earn a graduate degree accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and joint professional military education certification accredited by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

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According to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, accreditation gives an educational institution the right to say: ***“Our students are well-served; society is well-served.”***

A team of six peer reviewers represented Middle States in an on-site visit here Nov. 13-16 as part of a periodic reaffirmation of civilian academic accreditation. Dr. John Yaeger, National Defense University Provost, led the team’s look at both the USAWC resident and distance education programs.

Two different organizations accredit the U.S. Army War College. The Middle States Commission accredits the civilian academic graduate education. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff accredits the joint

military services education – most recently renewed in Fall 2015.

The accreditation process a series of steps: college's self-study, this evaluation, and a follow-on review of seven standards by the full commission. The seven accreditation standards are these: ethics and integrity; design and delivery of student learning; support of the student experience; educational effectiveness assessment; planning, resources and institutional improvement; governance, leadership and administration.

Seven areas prompted commendation by the MSCHE evaluation team:

- **Effective and engaged Army War College leadership**
- **Commitment by the war college leadership to build a culture of planning and assessment**
- **Strength of the USAWC faculty and staff, to include interagency and military faculty**
- **A strong and effective Board of Visitors**
- **The students' "Carlisle Experience"**
- **The Army War College Foundation and its contributions to improve intellectual capital.**

In December, the commission will consider the USAWC self-study, the evaluation team report, the USAWC formal response to the team report, and the team chair's confidential brief to formulate a proposed accreditation decision. The commission will notify the war college of its reaffirmation decision in Spring 2019.

The evaluation team report this week confirmed that the US Army War College meets all MSCHE Requirements of Affiliation. It meets all accreditation-relevant federal regulations. And, all data provided by the war college was reasonably valid and conformed to higher education. Further, the team reported that the U.S. Army War College appears to meet all seven MSCHE educational standards.

"The peer evaluation team specified that the college *appears* to meet all seven educational standards because that final determination will be made by the full commission over the next few months," noted Dr. David Dworak, USAWC deputy provost.

"This accreditation action is an important element in our overall efforts to position the U.S. Army War College for maximal success in an era of increased responsibilities and opportunities," said USAWC Commandant Maj. Gen. John Kem. "I charged the entire faculty and staff to develop [the] self-study with a critical eye – telling the story of the Army War College in a straightforward manner, pointing out our strengths and successes, and acknowledging areas where we can do better."

The Middle States self-study fits tightly within the college's recent trend of growth across USAWC schools, centers, and institutes – evolving in an environment of review and analysis.

“Our current goal is to build upon [historical] strengths.... [The] environment has ... changed, presenting us with an opportunity to reexamine the institution and explore ways to optimize mission success. Is the current organizational structure optimal? As the College continues to expand and receive new missions, how do we improve effort synchronization across the schools, centers and institutes. What is the optimum [building] design to meet our needs for the next 50-60 years?

“The answer to these questions are critically important and will be the focus of institutional efforts for the foreseeable future,” according to Kem.