

Army War College prepares new faculty to guide, teach, mentor Class of 2021

By Elena Patton, Public Affairs Office 09 July 2020



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Faculty participate in Elenkhos: The Socratic Dialogue Game, guided by Dr. Abram Trosky, of the USAWC Applied Communication & Learning, ACL, Lab. The game explored seminar dialogue and experiential learning, as part of the New Faculty Orientation.

This week the Army War College conducts its New Faculty Development, July 7-18. The days are structured thematically, addressing the various needs and challenges new faculty encounter during a first year of teaching here. Much of the orientation is conducted virtually, on the Blackboard and MS Office platforms used in Army War College education.

Today, the new instructors congregated in person, in a socially distant manner, to interact with one another and gain insight into the educational dynamic of the war college.

The week started with a welcome event and transitioned into activities

centering on the dynamics of adult learning, developing students' strategic skills through executive communication and causal learning, seminar teaching, and faculty wellbeing and mindfulness, among other topics.

"We have a high faculty turn-over rate and a diverse mix of people," said Dr. Megan Hennessey, director of Educational Methodology, who works yearlong with faculty and understands common challenges. "This orientation gives us an opportunity to address and meet those specific needs."

In the COVID environment, new challenges surface. "Not all faculty have even been able to on-board yet," she said. "We had to work quickly to come up with a hybrid solution. We have one faculty member who dials in daily from Belgium."

Each activity functions as an experiential learning exercise to expose faculty to real situations that can occur in a seminar setting.

For example, Elenkhos: The Socratic Dialogue Game requires faculty to think through and practice how to ask purposeful questions and layer those questions to reach desired learning objectives in a limited amount of time.

The orientation also extensively addressed the transition to virtual learning to ensure that students receive the highest quality of strategic leadership education.