

Polishing their English, writing, and research skills, International Fellows to start Academic Preparatory Course

By Robert Martin, USAWC PAO 19 April 2021



Army War College acting Commandant Maj. Gen. David Hill greets senior international fellows attending the academic preparatory course in Bliss Hall, April 4.

For 31 international officers, their road to graduating from Army War College in 2022 is just beginning. For the next nine weeks, they will be honing their language skills for graduate-level reading, research, academic writing, and seminar discussions as part of the Academic Preparatory Course from April 19 to their APC graduation on June 18, 2021.

Maj. Gen. David Hill welcomed 31 International Fellows of the resident class of 2022, acknowledging their nations' commitments to partnering with the Army War College for the education of strategic leaders.

"It's a personally rewarding aspect of this job to welcome you," said the acting commandant and Pittsburgh-area native, who added his personal endorsement of travel in Pennsylvania.

"We will be enriched, and your classmates will have a much more valuable

educational experience, with the benefit of your perspective. If you think about global security interests, shared interests, and the U.S. approach to securing our own nation and our interests abroad, it's a tremendous opportunity.

"This would not be the course that it is without each of you being here," said Hill.

Hill's command partner Cmd Sgt. Major Brian Flom introduced himself as their command sergeant major.

"As a Soldier of almost 30 years in the Army ... I think I'm a better Soldier because of partnerships with people like you." He said that he still maintains relationships formed with international students while attending the US Army Sergeants Major Academy he attended in 2012. And he expressed his interest in connecting with the officers and their family members, who will later join them here in many cases.

The International Fellows are senior officer of allied and partner nations fully integrated into the war college student body. The resident class of 2022 is expected to integrate 80 senior international officers into the class of 370, approximately one-fifth of the joint, interagency and international student body.

The 31 officers welcome in Bliss Hall today have arrived several months early for the academic preparation course, orienting the International Fellows to graduate school educational practices, research and writing, and seminar-based discussions, case studies and experiential exercises. Many in this cohort recently completed English language instruction at the Defense Language Institute in San Antonio, Texas.

"The programs offered by the DLI help improve English language skills but not to the master's academic level. We wanted the fellows to succeed and be able to share their knowledge and experiences through well-presented discourse, papers, and deliverables," said Col. Brian Henderson, Director of the IF program.

"The USAWC International Fellows Program staff developed the APC to help prepare students for the rigors of a resident master's level education in a second language," said Henderson. "The course also benefits the entirety of the USAWC academic environment by preparing the IFs for participation and interaction within the program.

"Our international partners send their absolute best each year and they are

all highly accomplished and educated. Many, however, need assistance in the nuances of a master's level program conducted in English.

"The participation of International Fellows is a critical aspect of the strategic and academic learning environment here at the War College," he said.

"The amount of time at DLI depends on their English Comprehension Level score," said Jeremy Beussink, IF Reading and Research skill instructor. Depending on their score, they can spend as much as three months or as little as four weeks, he said.

Instructors Tom Marchi, Gilda Hein, Deborah Blakeslee, and Mike Piellusch will lead small groups of eight students each in classrooms selected to enable social distancing. The course includes topics such as: fundamentals of English grammar and structure, familiarization with the writing process, conducting research, and understanding research citations, and standards for a graduate-level paper or essay.

APC students, by country --

LTC Hayk Amalyan of Armenia, LTC Afgan Gasimov of Azerbaijan, BG Iftekhar Anis of Bangladesh, LTC Ricardo Cirilo Leal of Belize, COL Emsad Cickusic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, COL Leandroq Noveli Espindola of Brazil, LTC Ismael Kiswensida Souampa Diaouari of Burkina Faso, LTC Viliame Draunibaka Ratu of Fiji, COL Malhkaz Kalmakhelidze of Georgia, COL William Archibold Kwabiah of Ghana; COL Nikolaos Zaras of Greece; COL Alfred Mwiher Gitonga of Kenya, BG Daniel Kuwait of Malawi; LTC Pedro Leyva Flores of Mexico; COL Sergiu Cirimpei of Moldova; COL Altankhuu Badarach of Mongolia; LTC Enes Muric of Montenegro; COL Manoj Thapa of Nepal; LTC Ibrahim Salifou Issa of Niger; COL Olakunle Oluseye Nafiu of Nigeria; LTC Marjan Milenkovski of North Macedonia; COL Vitorio Emmanuele Bossio Ballesteros of Peru; MAJ Ghanim Abdulla SM Al-Kaabi of Qatar; COL Bogdan Florin Tudorache of Romania; LTC Ababacar Niang of Senegal; COL Norbert Hrib of Slovak Republic; COL Aniroot Srihawong of Thailand; LTC Helmi Bedoui of Tunisia; LTC Hafedh Hamdi of Tunisia; COL Viktor Savchenko of Ukraine; COL Saeed Saeed Ali Mohamed Aldhanhani of United Arab Emirates