

## Orientation introduces new faculty to Army War College experience

By Alex Pinnell, Public Affairs Office 17 July 2018



*Prof. Hennessey discusses Experiential Learning theory at the New Faculty Orientation on July 10, 2018.*



*Dr. Hershock gives an overview of memory's role in learning at the New Faculty Orientation on July 11, 2018.*

### RELATED LINKS

[Army War College educational programs](#)

[School of Strategic Landpower](#)

The New Faculty Orientation was held at the US Army War College from July 9 – 11, 2018. It prepared new faculty members for their assignments by addressing instructional needs, providing networking opportunities, modeling teaching strategies, and emphasizing the culture of faculty development at every level. Many of the new faculty members are graduates of the Army War College themselves and will become faculty instructors. For the rest, the NFO is often their first official introduction to the environment and culture of the Army War College.

On the first day, Prof. Douglas Lovelace, Jr., Director of the Strategic Studies Institute, discussed his organization's role as a resource for independent analysis, and called attention to the Research Grant program open to staff. He was one of several directors who welcomed the new staff and spoke about the numerous available resources.

Col. Doug Winton presented faculty roles and responsibilities. “The three domains are good bedrocks for the Army War College faculty: teaching, scholarship, and service,” he said. Participants discussed opportunities for faculty to support students and the meaningful relationships that result from helping students develop their ideas.

As the orientation progressed, the sessions focused on learner-centric teaching strategies. Staff reviewed adult learning theories, like experiential learning, and their application to the Army War College’s graduate program. The new faculty considered the pros and cons of these approaches in a classroom of accomplished military officers and civilians. Other panels led staff through processes like facilitating a seminar and creating course evaluation reports.

The New Faculty Orientation included a session led by Chad Hershock, Ph.D., of the Eberly Center at Carnegie Mellon University. He discussed using evidence-based principles of learning to improve student performance.

“Experts often forget what it’s like to be a novice,” Hershock said. He listed methods to work around this expert blind spot and acknowledge the students’ point of view. Then, they participated in an active learning activity to see how these concepts help students apply information. Said Hershock, “Frequent, low-stakes practice and feedback support learning.”

Each session addressed the staff’s instructional needs by introducing critical information and fostering a positive, reflective environment. The New Faculty Orientation, led by Megan Hennessey, Professor of Educational Methodology, has also incorporated changes and suggestions from faculty over time. This year had a focus on using digital media.

“Video-based and other multimedia components,” Hennessey said, “offered new faculty the opportunity to learn more about additional topics traditionally covered during the residential NFO.” This improved accessibility and customization by letting staff view content online. “This modality also modeled the values of interactive student engagement that USAWC espouses, while freeing time in the residential NFO for not only essential content, but also networking and community-building,” said Hennessey.