

USAWC Strategic Perspectives videos introduce faculty expertise

By Curt Keester 03 January 2018



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CARLISLE, Pa. (Dec. 22, 2017) – The Army War College relies on the professional passions and teaching abilities of its faculty in its mission to educate and develop future strategic leaders of the Army, Joint Force and nation. A new video series highlights these diverse backgrounds and expertise invested in the shaping students for their future.

“Strategic Perspectives” available at <https://www.youtube.com/usarmywarcollege>, asks two questions: What drives the War College faculty? And, how do they use the War College educational experience to prepare the nation’s military leaders?

“We have a lot of interesting subject matter expertise in the faculty. Probably every member of the faculty ... has expertise in something relevant to our curriculum that is unique to them,” said Richard Lacquement who is dean of the School of Strategic Landpower.

“It’s important for us to have that sort of broad set of experiences, and that includes the military officers as well as the civilian professors. We have a fascinating group of subject matter experts, but in any particular area of expertise you may only be one or two deep in that specific area, but we have larger groups of experts in the core courses.... We have an interesting combination of individual academic expertise, which is deeply impressive.

“It’s a fascinating combination of subject matter experts and interdisciplinary generalists who really make this work,” said Lacquement about the faculty.

Sixty percent of the faculty members of the USAWC School of Strategic Landpower are national security professionals. They include senior officers from nearly every branch of the military and national security-associated agencies such as the Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development. Most of these faculty members, at least 70 percent, are qualified at the Joint Professional Military Education II level, graduated from a senior service college, and have served in senior joint positions throughout government.

National security professional, Army Col. [Celestino ‘Tino’ Perez](#), professor and political scientist, has been developing a theory of political judgment. “I think that the education that a military professional goes through should be commensurate to the stakes that are involved when we take action,” he said. “So if you think about, as an analogy, a surgeon: A surgeon at any moment in time is taking action wherein one person’s life is at risk.... How much education goes into a surgeon’s background?”

“If you think about the military professional, when we take actions, when the strategic leader takes actions, often it’s hundreds of people’s lives that are at risk,” said Perez. “When we think about the surgeon and the military professional, the educational burden for both should be really rigorous.”

George Woods, Ph.D., a professor of Strategic Leadership, reached back to his West Point cadets days to explain his long-lasting fascination with the study of leadership. “I had a tactical officer there that was just a huge positive example, and I was wondering what makes him so successful and others not,” he said about a lifelong pursuit of deeper understanding of leadership development, when he returned to teach organizational psychology to West Point cadets, when he served in the Pentagon in the at the Leadership Division, when he designed his doctoral dissertation, and when he returned to teach at the Army War College.

Civilian academics add to the diversity across the faculty. Experts in their field, they provide an academic challenge and practical experience in the various areas of study to include military history, political science, comparative politics, industrial organizational behavior, behavioral sciences and economics.

Vanya Bellinger, USAWC Professor of Clausewitz Studies, is a civilian academic from Bulgaria and authored *Marie von Clausewitz: The Woman Behind the Making of On War*. “I was enormously lucky to be the first scholar to work with the newly discovered correspondence between the Clausewitz couple ... which were never published before, and contain more information about the circumstances surrounding the creation of *On War*, and *On War* is the seminal text on military theory,” she said. “I’m very passionate about teaching my students military theory.”

The curriculum of the War College is generalist and interdisciplinary, and of the nearly 110 faculty members many teach several courses. That’s why functional experts not only teach students but influence and enrich their teaching colleagues. Faculty reflect expertise in the wide array of electives available for students. And, all teach in the core courses of Theory of War and Strategy, Strategic Leadership, Nation Security Policy and Strategy, Theater Strategy and Campaigning, Regional Studies, and Defense Management.

“Had I not had this preparation, this year of developing habits of the mind, to serve at that next level, I don’t believe I would have been successful, or useful in any way,” said one faculty member about the influence of his student year here on his service at the Pentagon. Now assigned as a seminar historian, Prof. Doug Douds Prof. said, “To be honest, after three years on the Joint Staff, I hit the grand ‘I believe button’ in the Army War College mission, and it’s one of the reasons I wanted to come back.

“What I found when I got here was that I thoroughly love teaching in the classroom too, so it proved an opportunity to continue to give back and teach, which is something that I thoroughly love,” said Douds about the opportunity for faculty to invest in the future.