

Distance Education students finish first week of Second Year Course

By Elena Patton, Public Affairs Office 16 July 2021



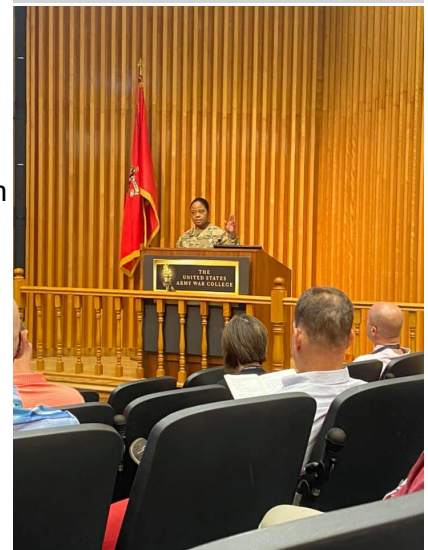
On July 15, in front of the student body, seven International Fellows in the Distance Education program were awarded the Army War College badges.

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This week, U.S Army War College students in the second year of the distance education program began the two week in-resident phase at Carlisle Barracks, July 12-23. This is the first time these students have been in a classroom with their seminar members since starting the program in 2019. Due to COVID, their first year in-resident phase was entirely virtual.

The Department of Distance Education is an arm of the School of Strategic Landpower that specializes in remote learning methodologies and innovative technologies. Distance Education delivers in two years a curriculum equivalent to the one-year residential program.

Those in the DEP graduate studies are primarily in the Guard and Reserve, balancing their civilian jobs and military duties with their studies at USAWC. This year's class consists of 314 Army students, 24 Air Force, 9 Marines, 4



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Navy, 7 international fellows, and 33 civilians. Of these, 170 students are National Guard officers and 143 are Reserve officers.

The in-resident phase began with a welcome from the USAWC Acting Commandant Maj. Gen. David Hill and the new chair of USAWC Distance Education, Col. Heather Smigowski, July 12 in Bliss Hall. She mentioned having completed the program herself last summer.

“[W]hat are you going to do to reflect on your last two years?” Smigowski asked the student body. “How are you going to apply what you learned? How are you going to make those connections while you are here in person and keep those connections after you leave?”

Over the two-week resident phase, students interact face-to-face with fellow students during a variety of activities unique to the SCR program: presentations, lectures, war gaming, and a staff ride to Gettysburg.

“I am excited about it because I enjoy collaborative learning and I like to have dialogues, versus shared monologues, with fellow students, and I feel like we all learn more when we can read body language, read expressions and interact in a collaborative environment,” said AY 21 student Lt. Col. Timothy Ozmer, Washington Army National Guard officer.

To be inclusive with the few students prevented by COVID from traveling, students will also hear from a variety of senior leaders in hybrid formats.

On July 13, Brig. Gen. Janeen Birckhead, Commander of the Maryland Army National Guard and USAWC Deputy Commandant for Reserve Affairs, spoke to students in Bliss Hall about the events of January 6, 2021. Using the DIME—diplomatic, informational, military, and economic—paradigm, Birckhead discussed how all these elements came together as the Maryland National Guard responded to the events at the Capitol.

“I thought it was a unique perspective on civil military relationships. Usually in these forums, we focus on our duties overseas and carrying out that mission,” said AY 21 student Lt. Col. Rosa Maynard, Kentucky Army National Guard officer. “But to hear it to us relayed in a way that is focused on our domestic mission, it gave a different way of looking at it. It is very

refreshing.”

Birckhead discussed the things that went well, and lessons learned. She ended her presentation by emphasizing the importance of documenting, dissecting, and sharing the success and weakness of any operation so we can pass that knowledge to future Soldiers and senior leaders.

On July 15, Lt. Gen. Chance Saltzman, Deputy Chief of Operations, U.S. Space Force, spoke to students in Bliss Hall about the development and structure of the Force. Although the Space Force is its own entity, Saltzman emphasized a total force approach to addressing conflicts in the space domain.

The Space Force, through launching rockets, keeping satellites safe and operational, and developing technology, defends our way of life on Earth

Saltzman touched on how the Force will handle commercialized space travel and ended his presentation by offering recommendations to students who will take on strategic leadership positions upon graduation. For example, Saltzman discussed the key questions he considers when making strategic decisions.

On July 15, in front of the student body, seven International Fellows in the class were awarded the Army War College badges authorized to be worn on their uniforms.

“We hope you wear it because we are very proud of you . . . I hold you all in high regard,” said USAWC Acting Commandant, Maj. Gen. David Hill.

The following officers from allied and partner nations were badged—

- LT. Col. Christopher Poole – Canada
- Lt. Col. Pavel Crhonek – Czech Republic
- Col. Jiri Hrazdil – Czech Republic
- Col. Kai S. Schlolaut – Germany
- Col. Hillary Biwott – Kenya
- Col. Edward Rugendo Nyaga – Kenya
- Col. Viktor Lisakonov – Ukraine

