

Army War College professor serves as a liaison among institutions of thought leadership

By Elena Patton 17 November 2021



Dr. Abigail Stonerock, a professor of Executive Communication in the War College's Applied Communications and Learning Lab, was recognized for her institutional service.

An Army War College professor, through her external service, serves as a liaison among institutions of thought leadership. Through her experience and participation in professional programs, organizations, and consortia, USAWC's innovative ideas are presented and analyzed among thought leaders in major international organizations, corporations, and institutions of higher education.

Dr. Abigail Stonerock, a professor of Executive Communication in the War College's Applied Communications and Learning Lab, was recognized for her institutional service. She represents USAWC in Harvard University's Graduate School of Education Learning Innovations Laboratory, the Writing Center Consortium for Graduate Professional Military Education, the PME Faculty Consortia, and several joint PME teaching and learning fora. She shares USAWC's best practices for developing strategic leader

communication competencies and brings back different methodologies for teaching communication, explained Stonerock.

The Innovation Lab brings together global leaders, scholars, and futurists in an interdisciplinary learning community from organizations like Deloitte, NASA, Amazon, Visa, PepsiCo, BlackRock, Steelcase, St. Jude's, Great Places to Work, and Jobs for the Future to discuss pioneering topics that are impacting organizational change, learning and development. The topics discussed—systems thinking and leadership; unlearning to learn; complexity, curiosity, and critical knowledge transfer; and agency, connectedness, and belongingness—are relevant for the mission of the War College.

“The way this year's theme [agency, connectedness, and belongingness] is being unpacked among learning leaders will be very valuable to us in our discussion of diversity, equity, and inclusion; women, peace, and security; the antecedents relative to strategic teaming in agile organizations, and cultural intelligence,” said Stonerock.

The information gained from the conversations surrounding systems leadership can be used to shape future curricula, core, specializations, and electives explained Dr. Stonerock.

As the only senior service school participating in the Innovation Lab, USAWC brings something unique to the table—the strategic military perspective.

“We have numerous teaching moments with chief learning and innovation officers, cognitive scientists, and talent development leaders that actually move the pendulum and change perceptions about what an army war college is, what it does, and who we are,” said Stonerock.

The challenges and resistance that these organizations and companies face are similar but seeing those challenges recast from a different perspective helps us understand how we can adapt to remain on the cutting edge, note Dr. Stonerock.

The Writing Center Consortium for Graduate-level PME brings together other PME institutions to discuss ideas and share writing resources. This is where the innovation of the War College's ACL Lab comes through. Other PME institutions have traditional writing centers. The ACL lab focuses on strategic level written, spoken, and visual communication, as well as organizational, rhetorical, interpersonal, and intercultural communication competencies, said Stonerock.

For example, as part of the Army Strategic Education Program-A, officers must produce an op-ed. As an executive coach, Dr. Stonerock works with the officers to not only write the op-ed but also deliver and defend it.

She has over 28 years of higher education experience, including service as a Vice-Chancellor, Dean, Executive Director, Director, Division Chair, and faculty member. She has over 15 years of federal service to include leadership and teaching at the Air Command and Staff College, the US Air Force Academy, the FBI Academy, and Marine Corps University.

Her other professional teaching and scholarship experiences include teaching several years in Princeton's junior state program for emerging leaders, serving as a Fulbright scholar in Mexico, serving as a fellow with the Foundation for the Defense of Democracy in Israel, and teaching at universities abroad in the Middle East and Eastern Europe.

She earned her B.A. in Communication Education from Southeastern Louisiana University, her M.A. in Communications from Northeastern Louisiana, and her Ph.D. in Organizational Communication from Bowling Green State University.