

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

PRESENTATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SUBJECT: WAR COLLEGES

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JUNE 4, 2009

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED
BY THE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

In 1946, one year before the US Air Force became a separate service, the Air War College admitted its first students. Then, as now, the college reflected its motto, "proficimus more irretenti" (we make progress unhindered by custom). In May, the 237 members of the resident class of 2009 joined the ranks of 13,555 previous alumni, including 1,279 international fellows from 93 countries, defining the standard by which the Air War College must ultimately be judged: the quality of our graduates. Creating that quality graduate requires an outstanding faculty teaching a proven yet flexible curriculum, united by a common vision and mission for educational success.

Our vision for the Air War College is to be the foremost center for air, space, and cyberspace education and thought: preparing the world's best joint strategic leaders. Our mission statement makes that vision operational: the Air War College prepares students to lead in a joint environment at the strategic level across the range of military operations; develops cross-domain mastery of joint, air, space, cyberspace power, and its strategic contributions to national security; and advances innovative thought on National Security, Department of Defense and Air Force issues. Whereas the curriculum addresses strategy writ large in terms of employing all elements of national power -- diplomatic, informational, military, and economic -- our vision and mission capture two things that make the Air War College unique. First, while many graduate programs teach critical thinking at the strategic level, as a professional military education institution the Air War College focuses on these subjects specifically in the context of military operations involving the joint, multinational, and interagency community. This contextual setting pays high returns particularly when it comes to building personal and professional relationships with the international fellows which influence cooperative, coalition and allied relationships long after graduation. Secondly, the Air War College places particular emphasis on

the employment of joint and multinational air, space, and cyberspace capabilities by an air component. Fulfilling the school's educational mission and vision demands experienced, expert faculty members.

The 63 members of the Air War College resident faculty strive daily to accomplish the educational mission. We believe that the quality of the faculty, more than any other single factor, determines the school's success. Our faculty is evenly balanced among approximately one-third Air Force colonels, one-third civilian PhDs, and one-third sister service, interagency, and international officers and civilians. Augmenting our assigned faculty are additional Air Force colonels and civilian PhDs assigned to the Air University Academic Centers but teaching at the college. These officers and civilians increase our faculty count by the approximately 15% needed to meet the Officer Professional Military Education Policy (OPMEP) required student-to-faculty ratio of 3.5-to-1. The Air Force faculty members represent a diverse cross-section of officer specialties from rated operations to non-rated operations such as space to mission support. The fully staffed complement of Army, Navy, and Marine Corps faculty members reflect the diversity of their respective services. In addition to their recent operational, leadership, and command experience, all of the military faculty members have master's degrees and three have doctoral degrees. Two Air Force colonels, products of the Air Force's advanced academic degree program, are returning from PhD programs within the next 6 months to join the Air War College faculty. Using the authority granted under Title 10 US Code, the Air War College has recruited an accomplished civilian faculty all of whom, save one, have PhDs in history, political science, military studies, or related disciplines. As testament to their scholarship, over the last two academic years the college's faculty has published 13 books, 26 book chapters, and 52 journal articles.

The faculty has structured the Air War College curriculum to produce five broad outcomes. The Air War College graduate, in a joint, interagency and multinational environment, will be able to explain the air component's perspective; critically analyze, articulate, and present both verbally and in writing, succinct, comprehensive, and accurate accounts of strategic level issues; articulate a vision for organizational success, adopt a plan to achieve that vision, and then lead the organization in execution of the plan, adjusting for unforeseen changes as necessary; make decisions in the face of changing, uncertain circumstances, accurately describing assumptions and quantifying risks the decision entails; and enthusiastically pursue lifelong professional learning.

The Air War College curriculum reflects enduring concepts, as well as emerging topics. It is revised annually and updated continually to incorporate materials and cover subjects most relevant to today's security environment while retaining that which has passed the test of time. For example, the curriculum includes a significant exploration of the topic of irregular warfare in both the core curriculum and specific elective courses. A number of lessons in the Foundations of Strategy core course focus on irregular warfare topics such as building partner capacity, counterinsurgency, counter terrorism, support to insurgency, finding-fixing-finishing-isolating insurgents or terrorists, and deterring and shaping operations. The Warfighting Course covers irregular warfare from the standpoint of joint and interagency capabilities and planning considerations, the new joint US counterinsurgency doctrine, current and future capabilities, and employment considerations of military and other instruments of national power in military operations. We currently have four elective courses that deal specifically with the topic of irregular warfare.

While flexible enough to accommodate emerging topics, the curriculum is firmly rooted in the study of military history and strategy. By examining various theorists' concepts and applied disciplines, the Foundations of Strategy course equips senior leaders with the tools and knowledge to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate strategy (strategy development, statecraft, and the pursuit of national interests). A grounding in statecraft and the development of historical mindedness serves as the basis for understanding the concept of strategy and the ends, ways, and means model to analyze how nations pursue their national interests. The Foundations course pays special attention both to strategy development in the realms of air, space, and cyberspace, and to the impact of airpower on national and military strategy. Finally, the course serves as the underpinning for further study in follow-on courses that examine the national security decision-making process and the application of military power as a means to attain national objectives.

The National Security and Decision Making course assesses the context and processes for developing US security strategy and policy, as well as the use of the national instruments of power in support of that policy and strategy. The context assessment encompasses the overarching cultural, religious, political, and economic currents that influence local, regional, and global security environments. The course assesses the role and impact of civil-military relations, the interagency process, Congress, as well as the media and public opinion in policy development and execution.

Acknowledging culture as a major factor affecting strategy, the Air War College curriculum reflects its importance through its courses. The Global Security course examines growing and emerging security concerns affecting both state and non-state actors outside of the purely military context such as energy security, environmental security, migration, and changing population demographics. In the Regional and Cultural Studies course, students gain unique

regional and cultural perspectives through the study of one of more than a dozen regions. After investing 15 seminar periods in focused academic preparation, the students and faculty embark on two weeks of field research conducted in the region, examining issues relevant to the exercise of all elements of national power. The field research allows students to discuss security policy issues with senior political, military, religious, cultural, and academic leaders of other nations. It further encourages the students to consider security issues from non-US perspectives. Students also take the non-credit language elective most appropriate for their regional studies of the five languages (French, Spanish, Russian, Mandarin Chinese, and Arabic) taught by Defense Language Institute faculty.

While the Global Security and Regional and Cultural Studies courses highlight the challenges involved in operating in a multinational environment, the Warfighting course develops senior leaders with the skills to plan, deploy, employ, and command US and multinational forces throughout the range of military operations. Our students evaluate current and emerging joint warfighting and enabling capabilities with a special emphasis on the employment and sustainment of air, space, and cyberspace forces in a joint, interagency, and multinational environment. Students analyze the joint operation planning process through which combatant commanders set the military conditions for attaining national and coalition objectives as both a supported and supporting instrument of power.

The Leadership course analyzes the concepts and skills required of senior leaders through an examination of various command, leadership, and management practices. The course encourages personal and professional reflection, critical assessment, creative thinking and the consideration of leadership issues pertinent to today's uncertain and chaotic global environment. The Leadership course emphasizes the imperative to support an organizational culture of

accountability, responsibility, and ethical decision making. The Air War College curriculum hones students' critical thinking and writing skills. In addition to written assignments across the curriculum, resident students conduct in-depth research. They select a topic of personal and professional interest nominated by a military or other government agency, conduct research, and articulate their results, recommendations, and insights. The product of that research, the Professional Studies Paper, is forwarded to the agency or office that requested the research. The Research course provides a venue for students to address issues of relevance and importance to sponsoring agencies while improving their abilities to conduct thoughtful, logical, and critical research and analysis. Faculty advisors assist students in submitting papers for publication in Air Force, sister service, and other professional journals or periodicals.

Finally, students must choose three electives to complete program requirements. The Electives Program is designed to enhance the core courses by providing students with opportunities to achieve greater depth and breadth of understanding in issues of special interest and to provide courses that have the flexibility to adapt quickly to changes in the international and domestic security environments.

The curriculum is academically rigorous; approximately 75 percent of all contact time is devoted to active learning methods such as seminar discussions, case studies, and practical exercises. The Air War College balances contact time with the need to preserve time for student reflection and interaction. Next academic year, the resident program schedule will have a day each week specifically devoted to research and reflection. Every course employs some form of essay exam or other written assignment along with student-led exercises and briefings to evaluate student progress. The faculty also assesses the quality and consistency of student participation when determining student grades. With active seminar learning so much a part of

the Air War College experience, the final ingredient needed to produce the desired graduates is a quality student body.

The 240 officers and civilians in the typical Air War College resident class form a diverse, well-educated, uniquely-experienced student population. The military officers average 19 years of service, most having successfully completed command. They are selected to attend by their respective services; the Air Force students come from the top 15% of their peer group and comprise 47% of the student body. The addition of Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard students (7 each) brings the total host service representation in the class to 53%, well below the 60% maximum limit set by the OPMEP. Officers from the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps account for 18% of the students, DOD, and interagency civilians selected by their agencies another 10%. The remaining 19% of the class are senior officers from 45 countries, our international fellows, who are fully integrated into the student body and fully participate with their US counterparts in the academic program. Students are assigned to seminars in ways to ensure that each seminar reflects the diversity of the entire class.

The combination of a highly-selective resident student body, a challenging and relevant curriculum with a dynamic and accomplished faculty enables the Air War College to produce graduates with the education needed to lead in both today's and tomorrow's joint, multinational, and interagency environment. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) has accredited Air University to grant a Master of Strategic Studies degree to Air War College graduates since 2004. More relevant to the school's military education mission, the Process for Accreditation of Joint Education (PAJE) Team thoroughly reviewed the Air War College curriculum, faculty, and student mix during a routine onsite assessment in October 2008. In its final report, the PAJE team noted that the Air War College met or exceeded standards in all

areas, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff accredited the college's Joint Professional Military Education Phase II program for six years.

From its inception, the Air War College has endeavored to live up to its motto, "we make progress unhindered by custom." While the specific challenges posed by the future security environment remain unpredictable, it is practically certain that Air War College graduates will be in positions of leadership and called upon to develop, recommend, and execute joint, multinational, and interagency options. Our highly qualified faculty members delivering a first-class academic program to highly motivated students combine to create an educational experience that fully prepares our graduates to succeed in the challenges ahead.