

## Department of Distance Education

### ORIENTATION WEEKEND (OW)

#### Class of 2015

1. **OVERVIEW.** The US Army War College (USAWC) Department of Distance Education (DDE) will conduct a voluntary two-day orientation for the Class of 2015 at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, on 3-4 May 2013 or alternatively on 10 -11 May 2013. This optional resident program for new students is designed to complement the online orientation course (DE2300) beginning 12 April 2013. You are highly encouraged to familiarize yourself with DE2300 prior to your arrival at the orientation. The goal of the orientation weekend (OW) is to help new students get acquainted with USAWC distance education online systems and provide insights regarding course methodology. Each OW delivers the same course content, affording students the opportunity to choose which date better accommodates their schedule. Space is limited to 140 students for each event.

2. **ORIENTATION CONCEPT.** The U.S. Army War College Department of Distance Education resident orientation is an opportunity for new students to become familiar with essential DDE enabling technologies, the USAWC scholarly writing standards and the fundamentals of strategic thinking as they begin the two-year online Senior Service College program. The two-day weekend orientation (Friday/Saturday) introduces students to online methods and tools of learning, key internet collaboration tools, graduate level writing skills and critical thinking techniques. Early familiarity with these methods, software applications and skills significantly enhances the student's ability to successfully begin the two-year U.S. Army War College Distance Education curriculum. Additionally, faculty will review DDE course requirements and articulate evaluation standards. Finally, students are able to meet and develop a rapport with fellow students and supporting faculty.

3. **SCHEME OF EXECUTION** The overall construct of the weekend orientation is optimized to eliminate technology as a barrier to student learning, familiarize students with AWC facilities, faculty and resources, and finally to introduce key strategic thinking concepts and the adult learning model. Day one is dedicated to individual student needs, while day two introduces the student to the seminar and group learning activities.

a. **Friday/Day One** of the Orientation Weekend is structured with five sessions; four training classes; three of which are information technology oriented, one dedicated to effective/USAWC writing techniques and one administrative period. The day ends with a faculty/staff/student welcome social. The training and support opportunities are described as follows:

(1) **Defense Connect Online (DCO) familiarization** – This 45 minute session is designed to familiarize the student with Defense Connect Online (DCO) as an enabling

technology for DDE course participation. To gain maximum benefit from the instruction, students should register for their own DCO account, if they don't already have one, at <https://www.dco.dod.mil/> prior to attending the DCO session. Moreover, once you have a DCO account, you are encouraged to explore several of the DCO tutorials, provided at the link above under Getting Started -> On-Demand Training. The DCO Home site provides 18 tutorials ranging in duration from 1:50 minutes to 10:02 minutes. The basics can be gleaned from tutorials C1, C2, C3, C4, C8, C9, and C15. (approx. 35 min). The remainder of the tutorials can be considered interim/advanced or even FYI.]

The DCO session will provide the following intro/review:

- a) Explain the role of DCO in delivering the online curriculum and how it may benefit students
- b) Demonstrate how to create a meeting room (helpful for all particularly future student hosts)
- c) Identify, describe, and then demonstrate the functionality of the six different meeting "Pods"
- d) Walk through audio and camera setup
- e) Identify, and describe the default layouts
- f) Demonstrate how to upload/download files

(2) [USAWC Online Academic Student Information System \(OASIS\) Familiarization.](#)

This 45 minute classroom session is designed to familiarize the student with the essential software applications required to effectively participate in the DDE program of instruction. It is essentially a "Tips and Tricks" for use of OASIS and will consist principally of familiarization with the OASIS learning management system. The OASIS online tutorial will be the basis of instruction augmented with USAWC staff insights based on student feedback. Students should review the online tutorial prior to class to gain maximum benefit. The instruction will cover the essential features of OASIS required to be a successful DDE student to include:

- a) Completing key Student "Tasks"
- b) Participating in online "Forums"
- c) Updating essential student data via "Self Service"

(3) [Information Technology Assistance \(ITA\).](#) This 45 minute time period is designed to resolve any outstanding AWC connectivity issues for students and assist the student to accomplish the minimum essential baseline actions with one laptop computer. As DoD regulations preclude government technicians from working on civilian owned computer systems, students will assess and verify their hardware/software for compatibility/suitability for the DDE program of instruction by:

- a) Verifying access to the DDE student web site – (add to favorites).
- b) Ensuring their laptop can access courseware
- c) Ensuring their laptop has proper certificates installed

- d) Configuring Internet Explorer, if necessary, to work with courseware
- e) Ensuring adobe flash player is installed and tested
- f) Ensuring the QuickTime player is installed and tested
- g) Ensuring Windows Media Player is installed and tested
- h) Ensuring Adobe pdf reader is installed and tested
- i) Biographical Data Information Entry (time permitted)

(4) Administrative period – This time period is included in the schedule for students to accomplish several administrative support tasks that will be essential to begin their war college journey. The period also includes time for tasks that while not essential can significantly enhance and enrich the war college experience such as visiting the USAWC alumni association store. This period is also an opportunity to seek additional assistance beyond what the schedule permits as required. Key tasks include:

- a) DE2301 Book Issue
- b) Microsoft Office 2007 Software Issue
- c) USAWC Biography Book Photo
- d) USAWC DDE Library resource orientation

(5) AWC Graduate Level Writing Seminar – This 2.5 hour seminar is designed to review essential AWC required executive writing and analytical skills. Topics to be discussed include crafting an effective argument, function of an introduction, purpose of an effective conclusion, documentation, and proofing techniques. Unique attributes of the USAWC writing are discussed, common student errors identified, and examples of appropriate written documents are examined.

b. Saturday/Day Two of the orientation program is structured as a blend of Bliss Hall lectures and seminar discussion which gives students their first encounter of the “AWC seminar learning experience”. Students interact, network, and begin to form the lifelong bonds as colleagues. Students (and designated faculty instructor) are assigned to one of 16 seminars, for the first year of study. After being formally welcomed by the AWC leadership, lectures about the curriculum, AWC themes (i.e., golden threads), and an introduction to critical thinking are presented followed by seminar discussion.

4. POC for the program is COL Darrell Fountain, (717) 245-4603 or [darrell.d.fountain.mil@mail.mil](mailto:darrell.d.fountain.mil@mail.mil). If you have administrative questions please contact Mr. Amos Myers, (717) 245-3424/3492 or [Carl\\_DDE-FirstYear@conus.army.mil](mailto:Carl_DDE-FirstYear@conus.army.mil).