

To the Point: Academic Excellence at USMA

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Summer 2015

Center for Oral History

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Faculty Spotlight 2

Department
Spotlight 3

AIADs 4

Semester
Abroad 5

From the Dean 6



The West Point Center for Oral History has had a tremendously busy year and has been expanding to better serve Cadets, faculty, graduates, and the American public. We have been focusing on conducting and posting more interviews, and on expanding our marketing plan. Additionally, we have been supporting *The West Point History of Warfare* digital textbook by providing short videos, interviews, and authors' introductions for inclusion in that text. Finally, we are exploring new opportunities for expanding our archives.

This past year, we conducted over 120 interviews and posted dozens of new interviews on our website (www.westpointcoh.org). Some of our interviews were scheduled well in advance, while others were "targets of opportunity." For example, by chance we ran into retired Air Force General James E. Dalton, USMA '54, at Grant Hall and arranged to interview him that afternoon about his experiences at West Point, in Vietnam, and as a participant in the SALT (Strategic Arms Limitations Talks) conference during the Cold War. In other instances, our interviews are scheduled ahead of time, and we have been fortunate to interview General Vincent K.

Brooks, USMA '80, about his experiences as the first African-American First Captain, and Major General (Retired) Robert Scales, USMA '66, about his service in Vietnam and his time at the Field Artillery School, in TRADOC, and as Commandant of the Army War College. Not all of our interviews are with West Point Graduates. We have interviewed Army spouses, widows of service members, and Air Force, Navy, and Marine veterans. One woman, Mrs. Sung Yoon, the wife of a retired Army doctor who was born in northern Korea two days before the Korean War started, told us her mother's story of survival and escape during the Korean War.



Mrs. Sung Yoon

After recording interviews, the next step is to make them available on our website and announce that they have been posted. Whenever we post a new interview on our web page (www.westpointcoh.org), we also advertise it on our Facebook page ("West Point Center for Oral History"), on the department's Facebook page ("West Point Department of History"), on our Twitter feed (@WestPointCOH), and on Instagram ("westpointcoh"). We have seen a marked increase in the number of times our interviews have been viewed since launching our marketing campaign. Not only have our advertised interviews been getting considerable attention, but our other interviews have similarly benefited from the additional traffic on our website. Our most popular interview, CDT Doug Sprowl, gained over 3500 views in only three weeks, thanks primarily to it being a fascinating and very moving interview, but aided by a solid marketing campaign.



LTC Rick Black interviewing
GEN Vincent Brooks

In addition to conducting and posting interviews, we have supported the Department of History's *West Point History of Warfare*, a digital textbook. We have filmed brief interviews featuring authors introducing their chapters, which are incorporated into the innovative, multimedia presentation. We have also contributed short excerpts from our archived interviews that support some of the twentieth-century chapters. For example, we've provided several clips from Bataan survivors talking about their experiences, from the defense of the Philippines to the surrender, the death-march, imprisonment, and, finally, liberation.

Our next step in growing the Center is to create more interest in what we do, and more support for our important mission of collecting, preserving, and presenting the stories of America's Soldiers. Our goal for the next year is to develop additional funded archives to tell our story in more diverse ways. We are currently planning for an additional five archives, covering topics including Army Sports, Honor and Ethics, Women in the Military, the African-American Military Experience, and the Jewish War Veteran Archive.

Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Lawrence Mansour

Department of Foreign Languages

Lawrence Kevin Mansour is Acting Deputy Department Head and Russian Language Program Director in the Department of Foreign Languages where he's been teaching Russian language and culture studies, as well as linguistics, since 1995. He earned a PhD in Slavic Literatures after spending a year at the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow writing a doctoral thesis on "Origins of Russian Aesthetic Criticism," which won him an "outstanding dissertation" award at Brown University in 1993. Prior to graduate school, he worked in a somewhat more practical field, agrotechnics, as orchard development manager in Michigan and Maine, having received a BS in Horticulture (*magna cum laude*) from Michigan State. This included spending the fateful year, 1979, at a field station of the Research Institute of Pomology in south-eastern Poland, where he first discovered the pleasure and value of knowing a foreign place from the inside, mainly by talking to people in their own language.

As a result of his education and experience, though he has taught at five other universities and colleges, Dr. Mansour feels most at home with the hybrid USMA curriculum, where Cadets master hard and applied sciences as well as theoretical and applied humanities and social studies, while at the same time breaking away during summers and semesters for extensive travels abroad.

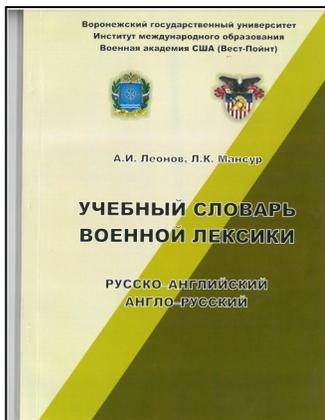
In support of teaching advanced courses in Russian history, culture and 19th and 20th century literature, Dr. Mansour's research treats various aspects of cross-cultural borrowing, aesthetics, and literary criticism. He has published studies on aspects of Russian culture, such as Dostoevsky's popular democracy, and on Russian literature, including the poetry of Boris Pasternak and works of an early friend of Leo Tolstoy, Aleksandr Druzhinin. In addition, he's collaborated on projects ranging from Russian cultural idioms (*The Russian Context*, edited by Boyle and Gerhart) to a two-volume study of the Italian sculptor, Padovano, in the Polish Renaissance to a Russian-English dictionary of military terms. More recently he read a paper titled, "Who was John Galt?" on Russian origins of Ayn Rand's cult novel.



With eminent Russian practical linguist, Dr. Frank Miller of Columbia University



With Dr. John Pendegast and Cadets – Spoken Russian Olympiada (2015)



"Russian-English Military Dictionary" produced in collaboration with Voronezh State U. colleagues

Over the last twenty-five years, Dr. Mansour has worked with dozens of students and Cadets on group and individual Russian-language studies ranging from Soviet era poetics and language policy, to Russian views of capital punishment, to Soviet military doctrine and honor code, to Russian literary, military and diplomatic history, to projects evaluating military cooperation in Central Asia and the Caucasus and on controlling small arms proliferation in the former Soviet lands. During extensive travel in Eurasia, Dr. Mansour collaborated on numerous Central Command sponsored initiatives to enhance junior officer development in the Caucasus and Central Asia; and with US and foreign partners from Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan aimed at improving language and cultural studies for American students. He's a member of the American Council of Teachers of Russian and other professional associations. In 2005, he worked closely with USMA Cadets and faculty to revive the Kosciuszko Squadron Polish Culture Forum.

With encouragement from wife, Diane, Dr. Mansour cultivates an oddly Russian mix of outside interests, including gardening, ice hockey, opera, beekeeping, and poetry.

Department Spotlight:

DEPARTMENT OF SYSTEMS ENGINEERING



COL Rob Kewley, Department Head, teaching SE485, Combat Modeling

Department Head Corner. Department of Systems Engineering enhances the leadership success of Cadets and faculty by teaching complex problem solving and decision making skills. These skills are required for the Army to be able to design and field successful systems. We are excited this year about the new leadership team taking over each of our four programs, and the curricular changes that will provide more interdisciplinary choice and more flexibility in our programs. We strive to find ways to work with practicing engineers in the Army and industry. Whether they are capstone clients or guest speakers, these professionals bring our disciplines to life. All Systems Go!

We are 'The Army's Systems Engineering Department' teaching our current and future officers how to design solutions to the Army's most challenging problems.

CLDT Experimental Platoon. This summer, the department teamed with the Department of Military Instruction and the Army's Program Executive Office (PEO) for Soldier equipment to conduct simulation and field experiments for a set of selected small unit technologies. Cadet Leadership Development Training (CLDT) provided a unique venue



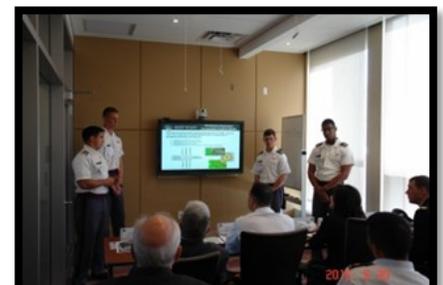
Cadet Rebecca Lee experiments in VBS2 to measure situation awareness provided by the Nett Warrior handheld system

to evaluate energy harvesting equipment, mission planning tools, and software for the Nett Warrior handheld system in a field environment by comparing an experimental unit with other non-enabled control units. The Operations Research Center developed the tactical situational awareness test to measure situational awareness at the small unit level and integrated the Nett Warrior with VBS2, the Army's game-based training environment. These tools allow PEO Soldier to define and measure the increase in situational awareness derived from Nett Warrior.



Cadets train on experimental soldier equipment during CLDT

The Department hosted the 10th Annual General R. Keith Memorial Conference on 30 April 2015. Students from United States Air Force Academy, California Polytechnic Institute, Columbia, George Mason University, and Stevens Institute of Technology joined West Point Cadets in presenting some 50+ student papers for eventual inclusion into the conference proceedings. The top ten papers were included in the peer reviewed Industrial and Systems Engineering Review. The conference also hosts up to 40 judges from the Army and industry to provide their expertise in judging conference presentations. The conference ended with an awards banquet at Eisenhower Hall Ball Room. The top finishers in each track were awarded plaques. Overall, the conference is a rousing success and is gaining recognition as a top conference for undergraduate Systems Engineering.



Cadets brief Army and industry judges at the 2015 Capstone Conference

Summer 2015 Advanced Individual Academic Development (AIAD) Program



CDT Carolyn Kehn (2018), Hope Global in Haiti, volunteering at an orphanage, teaching a proper salute



CDTs Christina Bouvier (2018), Ezra Engle (2017), and Thomas Moore (2016) with BG Stephen L. Davis, National Nuclear Security Agency Principal Assistant Deputy Administrator for Military Application at Los Alamos National Labs (and with USAFA Cadets and USNA mid-shipmen.)

2015 AIAD Participation
1088 Cadets participated in an AIAD
319 of these Cadets went abroad

AIADs occurred in 36 states
and 39 foreign countries



CDTs Patrick Kearney (2017) and Delainey Stokes (2017), Cross-Cultural Solutions Thailand, volunteering at a school with a 6th grade class



Cadet Marie Schmelzenbach (2018) experiences virtual worlds using an Oculus Rift as part of the Ethical Implications of the Utopian Impulse AIAD

Semester Abroad

Cadet Brett Benedict (2016)

Aside from the time I have spent on the Army Wrestling team, my semester abroad experience to Portugal has been the most memorable experience I have had at West Point. The Cadet side of me loved the freedom to study and live in a civilian-college setting. However, with all the time I have had to reflect since returning to West Point, I am becoming even more thankful for the immense contribution and investment that West Point made to my development as an Army Officer.

Studying abroad gave me the opportunity to be completely responsible for myself in a very unfamiliar setting. Aside from attending classes taught in Portuguese, I had to navigate the challenges of everyday life in a very different culture. Whether



University of Coimbra (Coimbra, Portugal)

it was haggling in Portuguese with the gas vendor for cheaper propane, or getting lost in quiet coastal towns during weekends, every day presented a new challenge to overcome and an opportunity to grow. Despite those challenges, I quickly adapted to the new environment I was living in, and after nearly five months, I can say that I was able to adapt to life in a new culture.

Not all of my time while abroad, however, was spent in Portugal. During our Spring Break and four-day weekends, I had the opportunity to travel extensively with Cadet Shane Connolly, who I knew from West Point. We travelled to Spain, France, Germany, Austria, Ireland, and the Azores. I visited Europe on a month-long trip prior to attending West Point; however, after my time at West Point and living in Portugal, traveling throughout the European Union felt completely different—in the best, most unexplainable sort of way. I think the best way I can express it is through my experience during a trip we took to Normandy's D-Day sites. During our tour, we were thanked by numerous local French nationals for our service and for taking the time to learn about European culture. I was extremely humbled by this and other experiences during our travels, and it made me realize how important the profession that I am about to enter actually is for everyone, regardless of nationality.

Looking forward, I am very excited to use my interpersonal skills and my improved cultural-competency to positively impact my decisions as an Army Officer. I think I have a clearer understanding of what it means to assimilate into a culture and how to engage people from other cultures on a personal level; had I not lived abroad, I would never have developed these skills. Moreover, I am very excited to continue to pursue higher education through cultural immersion programs, such as the Olmstead Scholars Program. In fact, I would like to develop my Portuguese skills through graduate studies in Brazil. I hope I can come back to West Point and use my experiences to teach Cadets. I cannot thank West Point enough for the privilege of living and studying abroad.



Normandy battlefield trip (Utah Beach)



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The purpose of the Academic Program is to provide our students the intellectual foundation for service as a well-educated commissioned officer who possesses the knowledge and skills necessary for continued growth as a U.S. Army officer. In coordination with the Military and Physical Programs, and the Character Development Strategy, the Academic Program develops in Cadets a professional self-concept as an officer and nurtures their competence, character, and confidence to act decisively on matters of concern to the Nation. The structure, content, and process of education and development enables Cadets to understand the interrelated roles of a commissioned officer: soldier, servant of the Nation, military professional, and leader of character. The leader development process compels Cadets to incorporate these roles into their own emerging professional identities.

Duty, Honor, Country

From the Dean: BG Tim Trainor



Congratulations on another excellent summer. Our faculty and staff developed numerous AIAD programs that sent Cadets on enriching experiences around the Nation and the world. These experiences enabled Cadets to learn about new cultures, interact with diverse groups of people, and sharpen their intellect. In addition to planning and executing great AIADs, sixty-nine members of the Directorate's faculty and staff supported Cadet Summer Training, while others conducted cutting-edge research and prepared to teach their fall courses.

The implementation of the new curriculum continued over the summer, and we entered Academic Year 2016 well positioned to achieve our curricular implementation goals. The new curriculum will better prepare our graduates for the changing needs of our Army and our Country. At the beginning of the fall semester, we began teaching 1259 Cadets from the Class of 2019, who are the first class to experience the new curriculum.



We also welcomed 120 new members to the Directorate. These new members of our faculty and staff participated in intensive development programs throughout the summer so that they would be prepared for their responsibilities once Academic Year 2016 began. With a successful summer behind us, we look forward to continuing to educate and inspire the Corps of Cadets during the fall semester.

GO ARMY!

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