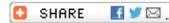




News > ACSC welcomes its 73rd class

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by Kelly Deichert
Air University Public Affairs

8/20/2012 - **MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala.** -- Air Command and Staff College welcomed 480 students as its 73rd academic year began last week.

Lt. Gen. David Fadok, commander and president of the Air University, greeted students during a ceremony Aug. 8 at Wood Auditorium.

"We are a military organization with an academic mission," Fadok said. "We want to instill within you: critical thinking skills and air mindedness, the sense of appreciation for what air power brings."

The class of 2013 has 480 students, including 273 Airmen, 43 Soldiers, 29 Sailors, 12 Marines, 22 civilians, 15 from the Air National Guard and 10 Air Force Reservists. Upon completion, ACSC graduates will earn a master's degree in Military Operational Art and Science.

Fadok encouraged the students to develop relationships with their fellow classmates, especially the 76 international officers from 65 countries. "These relationships and these partnerships are what you will carry throughout your career," he said.

The academic program combines courses in cultural studies with strategic thinking development and real-world exercises in order to help students become better military leaders.

"The overall purpose is three objectives: to prepare you as leaders, help you develop your critical thinking skills and to enable you to build partnerships," said Brig. Gen. Stephen Denker, ACSC commandant and vice commander of the Spaatz Center for Officer Education.

In addition to class work, the students will participate in a variety of activities, including cultural events fitness programs and the Gathering of Eagles event in June. The class also will compete in a dragon boat rowing race for charity in Montgomery Aug. 25.

"It's exciting to have the hallways full of students from all over the world and we appreciate the fantastic support that Maxwell-Gunter gives us every year," said Lt. Col. Dane Christensen, commander of the 21st Student Squadron. "This rigorous 10-month program will build relationships, challenge preconceptions and forge new friendships that will have a lasting global impact."

Fadok and Denker encouraged the students to think about their goals for the year and be willing to learn.

"You have to think about what you want to get out of the year, and that starts with why are you here," Denker said.

"Apply yourself and get the most out of this tremendous opportunity," Fadok said. "Our mission here at the Air University is simple: We produce the future. You are that future."

CHANGE OF COMMAND

Air Command and Staff College said farewell to Denker during a relinquishment of command ceremony Aug. 8. He will become the director, strategic plans, programs and analyses, Air Force Materiel Command at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

"Your leadership has influenced thousands of officers," said Maj. Gen. Scott Hanson, commander of the Carl A. Spaatz Center for Officer Education. "For that, you can be justifiably proud."

Brig. Gen. Thomas Deale will assume command during a ceremony later this month after serving as the commander of the 451st Air Expeditionary Wing, Air Combat Command, Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

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