



THE AIR UNIVERSITY

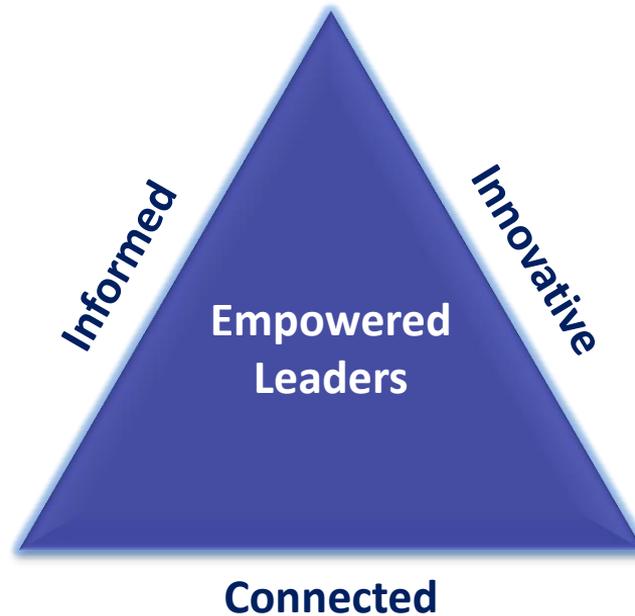


Transforming the Squadron Officer School Experience

Think Tank Group 2



Overview





Informed



- Enhance core foundational knowledge
 - Leadership, Warfare, Communication, Profession of Arms, International Security Studies
- Broaden perspectives
 - Regional experts lecture on geopolitical challenges & adversary mindsets
 - Panel discussions on current foreign policy & DoD strategy
 - Interactive drama scenarios
- Personalized Education
 - Management & experiential electives to hone practical leadership skills and expand on areas of interest



Informed: Regional Comprehension



- Broaden perspectives
 - Regional expert lectures on geopolitical challenges & adversary mindsets
- How
 - Introduce 2-3 areas of national interest, US policy, and Current strategy
 - Assigned reading on geopolitics, history and influences of key regions
 - Classroom discussion focused on current strategy, trends, and potential new COA's
 - Polifka lecture by regional experts addressing same topics covered in class to reinforce and challenge student perspectives
- Experts
 - Air Advisor Academy, Air Force Culture and Language Center
 - Stratfor, Air University (SAASS, AWC), Partner Universities



Informed: Panel Discussion



- Combatting Rise of Islamic Extremism: Are we taking the proper approach?
- Key Reading: Andrew H. Kydd, Barbara Walter, The Strategies of Terrorism. Kydd, A. H., & Walter, B. F. (2006). The Strategies of Terrorism. International Security. doi:10.1162/isec.2006.31.1.49
- Panel Members: Marwan Muasher, Carnegie Institute; Zhudi Jasser American Islamic Forum for Democracy; Rula Jebreal, Journalist; Gen Tommy Franks
- Post-activity debrief and position essay synthesizing students opinions on best COA to counter the rise of Islamic extremism



Informed: Interactive Drama



- Utilize interactive scenarios covering difficult situations officers may face
- JAG School currently utilizes interactive drama
- SMEs will perform scenarios such as disciplinary action, suicide, SAPR events, etc.
- Class engages in discussion followed by interactive role playing led by SME from JAG School, Mental Health, SAPR
- SME can pause, reflect, re-direct or discuss alternative COAs



Informed: Electives



- Combination of voluntary practical and exploratory electives
 - Practical: Manpower, Billets, Colors of money
 - Exploratory: Oral history program, Roll call, Field trips, Combatives
- Practical electives offered during common break times (i.e. lunch)
- Potential for weekend / after-class scheduling of exploratory offerings



Innovative



- Engage private sector institutions known for innovation to discuss techniques for fostering creativity & ideas
- “Innovate or Die” lecture series
- Partner with universities to leverage expertise & resources



Innovative: Engage Private Sector



- Engage private sector institutions known for innovation to discuss techniques for fostering creativity & ideas
- How
 - Case studies exploring how successful companies foster and implement innovation
 - Polifka lecture by Senior Management to provide insight on innovation and implementation of creative ideas
 - Follow up with Flight discussion comparing and contrasting private sector culture with military culture



Innovative: “Innovate or Die” Lecture Series



- Foster innovative mindset through lecture series
- How?
 - SOS solicits recent successful military operations
 - Wings nominate action officers who faced operational challenges (Sinjar Mt.)
 - SOS assigned reading(s) to provide historical context
 - Polifka briefings by nominated action officers (multiple briefings per class)
 - Close the loop through immediate follow-on Flt/CC-led seminar discussions



Innovative: Partner With Leading University



- Gain Intellectual Capital and Alternative Perspective Through a University Partnership
- How?
 - Partner with a University to share resources (lectures, expertise etc.)
 - Expand intellectual capital and academic perspective
 - Exposes SOS students to a broader perspective on innovation



Connected



- Connected to our partners...
 - Briefings from joint and inter-agency partners, PME attendance
 - Engagements & briefings from International Officer School
- Connected to each other...
 - Increase corps specific mentorship opportunities
 - Intra-service mentorship & engagement
- Connected to our institution...
 - Leverage Air University resources & human capital



Connected: Joint & Interagency



- Gain a strong joint/interagency perspective
- How?
 - Polifka lectures by CIA, DIA, NSA and JSOC
 - Provide student slots to Joint & Interagency peers



SOS Brain Bank



- Empower CGOs by trusting them to solve AF challenges
- How?
 - Web-based submission process, vetted by SOC
 - Each flight selects a topic from SOC-approved list of AF challenges
 - Senior mentors assigned to each flight (Sq/CC, SAASS students?)
 - Flight presentations to respective Sq/CCs
 - Sq/CC identifies strongest ideas to push up the chain
 - Flt/CC leads debrief to reinforce desired learning objectives



15C Think Tank Topic: To DG...or not to DG...



“Evaluation for evaluation’s sake is an evil practice and can destroy a learning-oriented course”

Col Russell V. Ritchey, *Years of the Tiger*

- Are we recognizing the right people?
- How do you balance team versus individual performance?
- What is the right mix of quantitative and qualitative metrics?



Questions?

