

ASIA-PACIFIC CENTER FOR SECURITY STUDIES

ASIA-PACIFIC ORIENTATION COURSE (APOC) “UNDERSTANDING THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION”

Purpose:

The Asia-Pacific Orientation Course provides security practitioners from the United States, its allies and key partner nations within the region, whether experienced or new to the Asia-Pacific, an invaluable understanding of the region while developing active Communities of Interest that elevate their ties beyond the orientation course itself.

As the U.S. pivots to this region, which increasingly influences global geopolitical, economic and military trends, understanding Asia Pacific and its actors has never been more important. Given the size and complexity of the region and its increasing inter-connectedness with the world, it is critical that security practitioners tasked with responsibilities in this domain are able to understand sub-regional differences as well as current and over-the-horizon security challenges, both traditional and non-traditional.

Accordingly, this course provides an overview of Asia-Pacific actors, trends and patterns and their dynamic relationships to one another. It develops security practitioners' awareness of the need to form and implement coherent, integrated and effective policies and programs linked to an understanding of domestic determinants and regional dynamics.

Course Description:

While only a week long, our experienced faculty of practitioners and academics constructed APOC to be an intensive introduction to the Asia-Pacific region. The course establishes the cornerstone upon which a Fellow can form or improve professional knowledge and skills by conferring the following:

- In-depth analysis of countries, sub-regions, and key trends
- Access to resources
- A means of integration into a global network of experienced practitioners and academics through Foundations of Fellowship and Communities of Interest

For those who are new to the region, the course provides the foundational knowledge of Asia-Pacific security dynamics. For those who already have experience in, or education of the region, the course provides an opportunity to test, broaden and further develop their expertise. Faculty subject matter experts offer insight into the region's diverse cultures, histories, values, economies, and politics that shape the formation of national identities and behaviors which, in turn, shape regional interactions. Through plenary lectures and small group seminar discussions, participants discuss the political-military, socio-economic and transnational security dynamics facing the Asia-Pacific region today. APOC is structured to allow Fellows to select elective seminars that tailor their APCSS experience and broaden their knowledge on topics and countries that interest them most.

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All graduating Fellows obtain membership in an expanded network of contacts among a community of security practitioners that includes their classmates, APCSS faculty, as well as the APCSS alumni network of more than 10,000 Fellows. Fellows also remain connected via a Community of Interest as well as access to an online research library.

Who would benefit by attending this course?

- Primarily mid-level US government executives, both civilian and military (O3-O6/GS12-GS15/FS3-FS1), whose current position involves operating in international or intergovernmental settings or regional policy analysis, formation and execution within or relating to the Asia-Pacific. More junior personnel may be accommodated based on space available and with the concurrence of APCSS.
- Security practitioners of equivalent rank and responsibilities from the governments and militaries of allies and key partners within the region, whose current/future responsibilities require significant input to policy analysis, formulation and execution regarding the Asia-Pacific region.
- All attendees should have a demonstrated aptitude or potential for graduate-level studies.

Educational Objectives:

- 1) Enhance knowledge:
 - a) Develop an appreciation for Asian-Pacific cultures, histories, politics, economies, national identities, and geopolitical considerations underpinning national behaviors and regional interactions.
 - b) Enhance understanding of the comprehensive and interdependent nature of security dynamics in the region.
 - c) Enhance understanding of current and over-the-horizons security challenges.
- 2) Establish and expand security-practitioner networks:
 - a) Integrate graduates into a community of academics, analysts and practitioners working with/in the Asia-Pacific region.
 - b) Provide graduates with access to research and analysis.
- 3) Enhance skills:
 - a) Identify limits and enablers of security cooperation.
 - b) Identify best practices in security engagement.

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Educational Approach:

The educational approach and the course curriculum are designed to enable participants to compare, contrast, and integrate multi-dimensional perspectives of comprehensive security. The course provides a basis to understand and assess both current and future security trends in the Asia-Pacific region. Following from that, Fellows will be encouraged to re-frame and examine key issues and trends.

- Primary medium for learning in this course is participant-centered, small group seminar discussions supported by current, lectures, interactive luncheon discussions, and on-line library support.
- Thematic lectures and interactive seminars are guided by flexible APCSS faculty and facilitators encouraging mutual respect, transparency, and non-attribution. APCSS faculty facilitators leverage participants' knowledge and expertise to further enrich discussions and collaborative learning activities.
- The interactive activity-based learning environment affords participants opportunities to reflect and connect newly acquired knowledge with the information they already possess to enhance their understanding of the subject matter.
- World class on-line resources and connections to a network of security practitioners and Communities of Interest that enable Fellows to stay current in the region and support life-long learning and continued collaboration beyond their one week experience at APCSS.