

The Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC)

**Fostering
Friendships,
Strengthening
Democracy**

Mission

DOD's Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC), authorized in Title 10, United States Code, Section 2166 (10 USC 2166) provides a curriculum that is doctrinally aligned to U.S. laws and standards; has active and independent oversight mechanisms; and is open and accessible to the American public. Enacted through the FY01 National Defense Authorization Bill, the Institute operates at DOD level and started classes in early 2001.

10 USC 2166 of the FY01 National Defense Authorization Act assigns to the Institute the mission "to provide professional education and training to eligible personnel of nations of the Western Hemisphere within the context of the democratic principles set forth in the Charter of the Organization of American States, while fostering mutual knowledge, transparency, confidence, and cooperation among the participating nations and promoting democratic values, respect for human rights, and knowledge and understanding of United States customs and traditions"-- promoting peace and democracy in the process. The Institute helps prepare mid-level military and civilian agency personnel for the challenges involved in confronting the new transnational threats to this region.

Curriculum

The Institute provides for the professional education and training of military, civilians and law enforcement from eligible nations of the Western Hemisphere. WHINSEC consists of four teaching departments:

- Professional Military Studies
- Civil-Military Studies
- Tactics and Special Operations
- Benavidez NCO Academy

Professional Military Studies

The Professional Military Studies department offers courses ranging from five to 49 weeks in length to military and law enforcement students. Courses focus on professional military education and operational proficiency. With increased competencies and appreciation for regional issues, these professionally educated and trained leaders directly contribute to hemispheric security and cooperation.

Civil-Military Studies

The Civil-Military Studies Department offers courses to both military and civilian students, teaching them the interagency knowledge and skills needed to improve civil-military cooperation. Within this Department resides the Institute's Human Rights/International Law Division. A team of U.S. and Latin American lawyers, the chaplain, the State Department Foreign Service Officer, and line officers provide the instruction. Functionally structured civil-military courses contribute to regional cooperation and strengthened democracies. These courses include increased numbers of civilian students representing both governmental and non-governmental organizations, and cover a broad spectrum of relevant areas, such as:

- Planning for peace support operations
- Disaster relief
- Civil-military operations
- Planning and conduct of interagency counterdrug operations

Tactics and Special Operations

The Tactics and Special Operations department provides the cadre and organization to teach and train military leadership and professional skills to junior officers and noncommissioned officers. It also offers the Civil-Military Studies Department interagency instruction in disaster relief and counterdrug operations. The department handles numerous resident courses, consisting of leadership and Professional Military Education courses for military and law enforcement officers and military regional militaries. Students develop confidence in new operational environments where they can effectively interact with other regional military forces, police, Non-governmental organizations, and the civilian population in support of multilateral operations.

Roy Benavidez NCO Academy

The Benavidez NCO Academy provides training in small unit leadership and tactics, and in those skills needed to enhance the professionalism of noncommissioned officers from Corporal to Sergeant Major.

Democracy and Human Rights

All programs of instruction at the Institute include, by law, at least eight hours of Democracy and Human Rights instruction, consisting of respect for human rights, the rule of law, due process, civilian control of the military, and the role of the military in a democratic society. This instruction, augmented by supporting and reinforcing training during non-classroom exercises, provides a comprehensive, substantive, and relevant curriculum that supports and communicates the U.S. value system and commitment to democracy and human rights. It is further augmented by visits to local, state, and federal agencies and to significant cultural sites.

Faculty and Staff

The faculty and staff consist of U.S. military officers, enlisted, and civilian personnel, as well as foreign guest instructors. The Department of State (DOS), the Drug Enforcement Administration and the U.S. Customs Division of the Department of Justice all provide full-time professors or send teaching teams for specific blocks of instruction. In addition, the Institute will host one or more visiting Fellows each year, representing diverse functional disciplines and nations.

Oversight

The Institute has, within its Charter, significant oversight of its operations.

- DOD designated the Army as Executive Agent.
- Army set up the Chain of Command for the Institute through the Combined Arms Center and the Army's Training and Doctrine Command to Department of the Army, with DOD providing policy guidance and oversight.
- The WHINSEC Board of Visitors (BoV) is congressionally mandated to provide external and independent oversight on behalf of the Secretary of Defense. The BoV consists of Members of Congress and representatives from Departments of State and Defense as well as from academia and non-governmental and religious organizations.

Resources

The total cost to operate the Institute (in 2004) is about \$7.7 million. It receives funds from Operations and Maintenance Funds, Army (OMA); International Military Education and Training (IMET); and International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) funds from the security assistance portion of foreign operations funds.

Conclusion

The Institute provides to the nations of the Western Hemisphere the opportunity to enhance the professional education and training level of their national military and civilian workforce and to provide them the tools to successfully use multinational and interagency approaches to the security challenges of the region. The Institute also helps to establish professional and personal relationships within and among nations, encouraging cooperation at all levels.