

**JUGGLING DEFENSE AND SECURITY IN THE AMERICAS:
ACADEMIC, DIPLOMATIC, AND PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT AT THE INTER-
AMERICAN DEFENSE COLLEGE¹**

***MALABARES EN DEFENSA Y SEGURIDAD EN LAS AMÉRICAS:
COMPROMISO PROFESIONAL, DIPLOMÁTICO Y ACADÉMICO EN EL COLEGIO
INTERAMERICANO DE DEFENSA***

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Abstract:

This article examines the juggling act central to defense and security education in the Americas and explores the difficulty of “keeping all the balls in the air” to balance diverse political and professional interests in a complex inter-agency and international environment. The Inter-American Defense College (IADC), located in Washington DC and operating under auspices of the Organization of American States (OAS) and Inter-American Defense Board (IADB), juggles these tensions daily as it prepares senior military, police, and civilian officials from OAS member nations to serve as strategic advisors on hemispheric defense and security matters. Forced to evolve in the changing regional landscape of the post-Cold War era, IADC has maintained relevance by prioritizing academic improvements and providing unique opportunities for knowledge sharing and relationship-building among future decision-makers of the Americas. This article analyzes some of the competing organizational priorities of IADC and offers an insider view of College outcomes and complex institutional challenges. Case lessons from the IADC experience are

¹The opinions, conclusions, and recommendations expressed or implied within are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Inter-American Defense College, the Inter-American Defense Board, the Organization of American States, or the country and sponsoring organization of the author.

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framed in a broader regional context, with critical reflections for the evolving field of international military and diplomatic education.

Resumen:

Este artículo examina el acto central de malabarismo para la educación de la defensa y la seguridad en las Américas y explora la dificultad de "mantener todas las pelotas en el aire" para equilibrar los diversos intereses políticos y profesionales en un entorno internacional e inter-agencias complejo. El Colegio Interamericano de Defensa (CID), con sede en Washington DC y que opera bajo los auspicios de la Organización de los Estados Americanos (OEA) y la Junta Inter-Americana de Defensa (JID), hace malabares con estas tensiones diarias, al preparar militares de alto rango, policías, y funcionarios civiles de los países miembros de la OEA para actuar como asesores estratégicos en materia de defensa y seguridad hemisférica. Obligados a evolucionar en el paisaje regional cambiante de la era posterior a la Guerra Fría, el CID ha mantenido su relevancia, dando prioridad a las mejoras académicas y proporcionando oportunidades únicas para el intercambio de conocimientos y el establecimiento de relaciones entre los futuros hacedores de decisiones de las Américas. En este artículo se analizan algunas de las prioridades de la competencia organizacional del CID y ofrece una mirada privilegiada de los resultados del Colegio, así como los desafíos institucionales complejos. Lecciones de caso de la experiencia del CID se enmarcan en un contexto regional amplio, con reflexiones críticas para el área en evolución de la educación diplomática y militar internacional.

Keywords: juggling, IADC, OAS, IADB, institutional challenges, international environment.

Palabras claves: malabares, CID, OEA, JID, desafíos institucionales, entorno internacional.

“Confidence- and security-building measures and transparency in defense and security policies contribute to increasing stability, safeguarding hemispheric and international peace and security, and consolidating democracy.”

-- Declaration on Security in the Americas (Organization of American States, 2003)

“A culture of civil-military cooperation is indispensable. And that in turn depends on shared professional training and experiences that cannot be improvised.”

-- Ambassador Luigi Einaudi (2007), Former Assistant Secretary General of the OAS

“Within the world of PME (professional military education) there is a healthy tension between the demands of graduate education and the requisites of a military institution.”

-- Dr. Janeen Klinger (2004), Professor at US Command and Staff College

Introduction

The metaphor of juggling seems apropos for those working in international diplomacy and professional military education in the twenty-first century.³ This article explores the difficulty of keeping all the balls in the air at the Inter-American Defense College (IADC), where faculty, staff, and students work together to balance political, professional, and educational interests within a complex inter-agency and international environment.

The College, operating under auspices of the Organization of American States (OAS) and Inter-American Defense Board (IADB), prepares senior military, police, and civilian officials from across the Americas to serve as strategic-level advisors in matters related to regional security and defense. IADC has evolved in a changing hemispheric security landscape (described in the next section) and maintained relevance in recent years by targeting academic improvements and providing unique opportunities for knowledge sharing and relationship-building among future decision-makers of the Americas.

This article analyzes competing organizational priorities at IADC and offers an insider view of College outcomes and complex institutional challenges.⁴ Case lessons from the IADC experience are then framed in a broader regional context, with critical reflections for the evolving field of international military and diplomatic education.

Before addressing lessons learned, though, it makes sense to consider the historic ebbs and flows, the challenges and promise, of building regional institutions of security and defense in the Americas.

I. Historical Overview of Defense and Security in the Americas

Considered in broad historical perspective, most of the regional efforts to build collective security and defense institutions in the Americas have amounted to a series of “unequal alliances” and “elegant but emasculating” compromises that have been defined (or, more often, left undefined) by divergent intra- and inter-national interests.⁵

³ According to corporate trainers Gelb and Buzan (1994: 4-5), the metaphor of “juggling offers something special...because learning anything involves keeping a number of things ‘up in the air’ at the same time, (and) because ‘dropping the balls’ provides an ideal metaphor for gracefully coping with mistakes.”

⁴ This article draws from a recent peer-reviewed conference paper (Hamilton 2015b) and updates a widely circulated paper (Ibid 2010) first presented when the author served as member of an external consultant team contracted to support innovations in curriculum development, staff development, strategic partnerships, and evaluation systems at IADC.

⁵ See excellent historical discussion of these alliances and compromises by Child (1980: 46, 42) as well as more recent engagement by Weidner (1998) and Celi (2005), among others.

On the intra-national front, political scientists have recognized the primacy of local and domestic politics in the conduct of international relations.⁶ In this article, intra-national power struggles are treated specifically in relation to the “juggling acts” surrounding IADC operations. The Americas feature a long heritage of civil-military tensions and fiercely competitive political relations organized along stark economic, ideological, and ethnic fault lines.⁷ In the Americas, domestic concerns have long influenced trajectories of regional security policymaking.

On the inter-national front, scholar Richard Millet describes a contradictory dynamic in inter-American relations ever since the colonial era.⁸ On the one hand, there is a broad regional allegiance (at least discursively) to a principle of nonintervention, as codified in the Drago Doctrine of 1902. On the other hand, examples abound in regional history of individual states destabilizing their neighbors based on competing interests or ideals. Millet’s dichotomy continues today, now inter-woven with rhetoric of democracy, human rights, social justice, and 21st century socialism.⁹ Underlying tensions remain unresolved that pit concepts of regional accountability vs. state sovereignty.

As regards the Inter-American system, if nineteenth-century leaders had sought a more effective and sustainable model, they might have focused on regional trust building and highlighted shared defense, diplomatic, and economic interests of all member states. Instead, crucial schisms arose very early between the United States Monroe Doctrine – inherently skeptical of European interventions – and Bolivarian visions expressed in the Hispanic American Congresses of Panama (1826), Lima (1847-8), Santiago (1856), and Lima (1865), in which key Latin American leaders sought to balance growing US power by strengthening linkages to Europe, more specifically with Britain.¹⁰

The formal architecture of the contemporary inter-American system, stunted by the discontinuities of the post-colonial era, began to take shape during the Second World War (WWII) despite lacking full regional consensus on Axis relations. The year 1942 saw creation of the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB), which was designed not as a control organism but instead a forum to enhance dialogue among regional political and military leaders. In addition, a pair of resolutions signed late in WWII – the “Act of Chapultepec” and agreement for “Reorganization, Consolidation and Strengthening of the Inter-American System” – set the stage for the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance of Rio de Janeiro (IATRA, or *TIAR* in Spanish), signed in 1947. The following year saw creation of the OAS, the world’s oldest major regional organization.¹¹

⁶ See Allison (1971), Putnam (1988), Milner (1997), and Bueno de Mesquita (2002), among others.

⁷ See historical discussion of civil-military challenges by Goodman (1990), Ruhl (1998), Bruneau (2005), and Weeks (2006), etc. as well as background on relevant political fault lines in Galeano (1970), Abercrombie (1998), Nuijten (2003), Brockett (2005), Tilly (2005), and Miller (2006), among others.

⁸ See discussion by Millet (1994), who also served as an ad hoc academic advisor to IADC leadership.

⁹ See discussion by a diversity of scholars (Shaw 2004, Herz 2008, Petras 2009, etc.)

¹⁰ See historical and contemporary discussion by Connell-Smith (1966), Weidner (1998), and Einaudi (2007), among others.

¹¹ The OAS was not so much a new creation as a transformation built on the edifice of the more loosely defined Pan American Union and System of Inter-American Conferences.

The OAS was designed without a standing regional military organ.¹² From the start, key regional differences related to security policies and definitions limited such activism. Regarding security/defense cooperation more broadly, the post-WWII inter-American system has evolved significantly: from notable dissonance of members' expectations in the early years to an expansion of counterinsurgency cooperation in the 1960s to the fragmentation in legitimacy of regional security institutions from the 1970s onwards.¹³

The Cold War saw several overt and covert US interventions into Latin American political affairs, undermining the Drago doctrine and, according to critics of the US and OAS, the credibility of stated democratization priorities. In many circles, the OAS, IADB, and other regional institutions came to be perceived as tools of US foreign policy rather than as effective regional mechanisms of conflict management and interest-based cooperation.¹⁴ According to a US military analyst, the “final nails in coffin” for a credible inter-American *military* system were the unilateral actions by the US in the Falklands (taking sides with the British against regional partner Argentina) as well as in Central America, Grenada, and Panama.¹⁵

The post-Cold War era has offered new promise and new challenges for realizing a more effective inter-American system of political cooperation. “Democratization” trumps “security” or “defense” as a stated priority of most regional leaders and certainly the OAS, but key limitations remain in terms of state governance capacity across the Americas.¹⁶ And while consensus is emerging on the need for a strengthened OAS to help address such challenges, implementation efforts consistently have been stifled by nagging questions of respective state roles, levels of influence, and equitable resource contributions by member states.

Questions of regional security have also been thrown into flux during the post-Cold War era. The fall from grace of regional military regimes has given way to civilian leaders' lack of defense preparedness (and distrust of military leadership).¹⁷ Moreover, broadening “security” definitions and emergent citizen-focused challenges have forced a critical reassessment of strategic action at both national and regional levels.¹⁸

¹²Instead, the OAS designed the mechanism of an Advisory Defense Committee (to be chaired by the IADB), which has yet to be called into session.

¹³See insights by Child (1980), Weidner (1998), Drach (2008), Herz (2008), and Yábar (2015), among others.

¹⁴ Critical voices on the OAS are treated in Millet (1994), Weidner (1998), Shaw (2004), Chillier and Freeman (2005), Inter-American Dialogue (2006), and Herz (2008), among others. Supporters highlight the helpful role of the OAS in catalyzing preventative diplomacy, opening communication channels, and building collaborative institutions (Domínguez et al 2003, Herz 2008).

¹⁵ See Weidner (1998:10).

¹⁶Questions of sovereignty lurk in the background, and some analysts argue that OAS timidity has legitimated “flawed democracies” and, as an unintended consequence, actually widened the scope for potential military interventions to resolve governance problems in weak democracies (Arcenau and Pion-Berlin 2007: 25).

¹⁷ This lack of preparedness – highlighted in civil-military literature of Bruneau (2005), Pion-Berlin and Trinkunas (2007), Weeks (2008), and Bruneau and Matei (2008) – is explored related to IADC “juggling”.

¹⁸ New approaches to “security” are addressed in the writings of Buzan (1991), Matthews (1991), Tickner (1995), Burgess and Owens (2004), Chandler (2008), and Herz (2008), among others. For the Americas, see Celi (2005), Cheyre (2005), and Cope and Mora (2009), etc.

In October 2003, at a Mexico City-based OAS conference, regional leaders agreed to a new concept for “multidimensional security” that “includes traditional and new threats, concerns, and other challenges to the security of the states of the hemisphere,” blending state sovereignty discourses with rights-focused “human security” priorities.¹⁹ The Declaration frames security very broadly, addressing at least four major thematic categories (Figure 1): social and environmental vulnerabilities, transnational organized crime (public security), terrorism, and traditional threats (defense).²⁰

Figure 1: Multidimensional Security Themes



¹⁹ The text of the Declaration (OAS 2003) addresses a wide range of security challenges.

²⁰ The table that follows is an original adaptation by the author to categorize diverse themes and issues that are addressed within the Declaration (OAS 2003). The table was developed for a core class at IADC entitled “Multidimensional Security in the Americas: Threats, Challenges, and Responses.” Scholar Margaret Daly-Hayes (2006: 1) offers an alternative table to summarize major “insecurity” clusters discussed in Mexico City and related regional security conferences. Clusters include: 1) Traditional military threats (including armed insurgency), 2) “Mafia criminality” (including assorted illegal actors and activities), 3) Complex emergencies (including natural disasters), and 4) Structural conditions (including an array of socio-economic and political problems). Daly-Hayes provides a compelling history and progress report of the multidimensional security agenda, with particular attention to US interests..

Critiques of the OAS multidimensional security agenda emerge from several corners. Human rights groups and democracy activists have expressed concerns with a greater securitization of public space, reversing the democratic reforms of recent decades.²¹ Traditional security analysts and military leaders scoff at the mission-creep of “multidimensional” definitions and claim these approaches water down states’ focus on “real” defense and security threats such as terrorism and insurgency.²² Even regional advocates for a “multidimensional” security concept voice concerns about difficulties of implementation; that is, the inability for a regional political body like the OAS to set a clear agenda and achieve results beyond compiling a “shopping list of threats” or agreeing to vague and un-actionable declarations.²³

A pending challenge for the OAS, Inter-American system and relevant member states is how to effectively address the most pressing security concerns of the Americas. How will they glean lessons from regional and global history? How will they balance intra- and inter-national interests to build necessary coalitions to act? How will they delimit the roles and responsibilities of strategic actors? And who will be available to advise and support on such matters?

Herein emerges the mission of the Inter-American Defense College, established more than fifty years ago but still finding its rhythm to effectively juggle regional “Security and Defense” matters in the Americas.

II. Overview of the Inter-American Defense College

Established in 1962, IADC has evolved significantly through the years but it continues to provide a unique learning environment for strategic-level leaders from OAS member and observer nations.²⁴ The College mission “to prepare military, national police and civilian government officials...” from around the Americas is operationalized in the curriculum via four major institutional goals:²⁵

1. *To deepen students’ knowledge of defense and security issues as it relates to the states of the Americas and the inter-American system.*
2. *To strengthen professional relationships, increase mutual trust, and contribute to the spirit of regional integration based on a platform of shared experiences, values, interests, and objectives.*

²¹ See early discussion by Barrachina and Rial (2008), Celi (2005), Chillier and Freeman (2005), and Inter-American Dialogue – IAD (2006).

²² See discussion by Chandler (2008).

²³ Regarding the “shopping list, see critical discussion by Krause (2004). On the problem of vagueness and implementation, see Inter-American Dialogue (2006), Daly-Hayes (2006), and Herz (2008).

²⁴IADC is one of the world’s only international and interagency professional schools focused on security cooperation. It shares similarities with an academic body of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the NATO Defense College, which is compared with IADC in the graduate thesis of alumnus Drach (2008).

²⁵ The guiding academic curriculum document for the College is a biennial (now extended to quadrennial) *Plan of Studies* (IADC 2014: 1), which is approved by the IADB Council of Delegates (member states).

3. *To foster the achievement of “Academic Excellence” in an environment of academic freedom and integrity by developing students’ critical analysis, synthesis, research, and strategic communication skills.*

4. *To promote collaborative thinking and motivate active group participation to foster a sense of cooperation and solidarity with respect to defense and security concerns in the Americas.*

The College, which celebrated its first half-century in 2012, has played a subtle yet “valuable” role in the architecture of the Inter-American political system.²⁶ Interestingly, while the idea of developing a strategic regional defense college was explored as early as 1945, it took some 17 years to introduce the first IADC class.²⁷ Since then, the College has graduated more than 2600 civilian and military officials from 26 countries. Many alumni have found that their IADC experience has considerably strengthened their possibilities for access to roles of national and regional prominence. Distinguished alumni include three Latin American Presidents, approximately fifty Ministers and Executive Appointees, and more than 750 General officers. Each student cohort (comprised of 50+ senior officials) represents up to fifteen different countries.

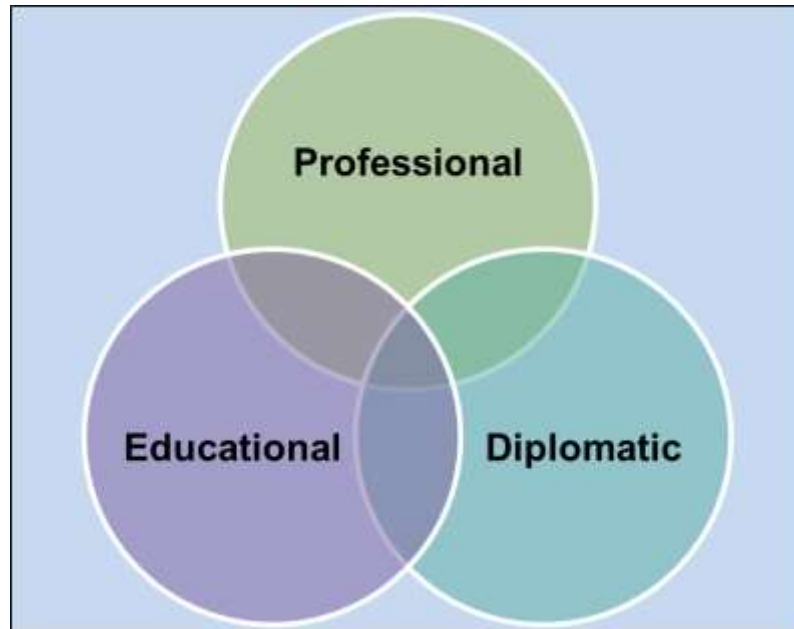
III. Discussion of Contemporary College Priorities

Critical analysis of IADC’s mission and goals underscores a multifaceted and potentially conflicting set of institutional priorities. As diagrammed in Figure 2, the College is at once 1) *Professional*, 2) *Diplomatic*, and 3) *Educational* in its orientation.

Figure 2: Multifaceted IADC Priorities

²⁶ See the report of an Ad Hoc Advisory Team in Goodman et al. (2003: 2).

²⁷ See a captivating description of IADC early history in Davis (1968) and more recently in Yábar (2015).



1) *Prioritizing the Professional*

First, IADC is a *Professional Institution*. Member nations contribute senior state officials to the College for one to three years, paying their salaries and relinquishing other duties so they can participate fully as students or academic staff. Return on states' investment can be measured by the professional capacity gained by these officials, in particular as they fulfill leadership roles in security and defense at national and regional levels. IADC offers students a strategic rather than tactical/operational orientation, and the College operates as a joint (multi-branch) military and inter-agency assignment.

2) *Prioritizing the Diplomatic*

The College also is a *Diplomatic Institution*, often referred to as a “jewel” of the Inter-American system. It offers a collegial forum for networking and relationship building among senior regional officials (primarily military, but also civilian). IADC programs open opportunities for diverse students to engage and collaborate with regional “others” through working groups, study trips, cultural ceremonies, etc. Students are able to learn from and create lasting bonds with diverse peers from across the Americas. A telling observation from the College's early years still rings true today:

One of the most revealing facts in the life of an IADC student is his astounding lack of knowledge about his neighbors... A Peruvian military officer rarely in his military career has the

*opportunity to visit Venezuela or Guatemala, but at the IADC he does visit and see for himself the conditions, progress as well as stagnation, prevailing in other American countries.*²⁸

In recent years, strategic leaders have recognized the need for cultural competencies as a critical component of professional military and diplomatic education.²⁹ Meanwhile, conflict resolution and peacebuilding specialists have highlighted relationship building, identity stretching, and cooperative tasks as means to de-escalate conflicts and secure a more holistic regional peace.³⁰ The College incarnates both principles and offers real-world examples of alumni who have stood in the gap, leveraging IADC ties to pursue dialogue and diplomacy (rather than arms) to resolve budding regional conflicts.³¹

Of course, building relationships across national divides is not the only diplomacy taking place at IADC. Another crucial dynamic is the College's inter-agency approach. Students receive a unique chance to engage across military, police, and civilian institutional "cultures."³² Since 1963, approximately 10% IADC graduates have been civilians, and recent leaders have expressed interest in creating more equitable ratios.³³

Leading defense experts – whether they are supportive or skeptical of the military – have trumpeted the need for greater civilian interest and capacity to provide oversight for national security and defense institutions in the Americas.³⁴ IADC offers a diplomatic platform to build capacity and improve regional civil-military relations through the shared student experience of future defense/security leaders.

3) Prioritizing the Educational

Finally, the College is an *Educational Institution* seeking to enhance the knowledge base and competencies of its student body. Through alumni leadership and example, IADC hopes these capability effects will multiply throughout the hemisphere.³⁵

The complex challenges facing regional governments today underscore a growing need for well-educated and globally-savvy senior advisors, both civilian and military. IADC offers rich

²⁸ See Davis (1968: 184).

²⁹For example, see Klinger (2004), Bruneau et al (2008), etc.

³⁰ See Lederach (1997), Hamilton (2007, 2015a), etc.

³¹There still are several pending interstate territorial disputes in the Americas, but regional analysts claim that positive outcomes elsewhere have been catalyzed by cooperative action (Daly-Hayes 2008, Herz 2008) and a shared hemispheric identity (Dominguez et al 2003). The IADC, in more applied fashion than its IADB parent organization, provides a setting amenable to consideration and construction of cosmopolitan and pan-American approaches to regional security (Einaudi 2007, Smith 2007).

³² See Wilson (2008) for a rich discussion of differences in institutional cultures.

³³ See statistical discussion in Drach (2008), among other sources.

³⁴ See nuanced discussion and debate among diverse regional experts (Bruneau 2005, Pion-Berlin and Trinkunas 2007, Bruneau and Matei 2008, Pacheco 2008, and Weeks 2008, among others). In line with the call for civilian capacity building, recent statistical work by Choi and James (2008) finds a correlation between the level of military control of state institutions and a state's conflict tendency.

³⁵ See discussion by Drach (2008), among others.

opportunities for officials to hone their critical thinking skills, reflect on their experiences, and cultivate broad-based and multidisciplinary strategic insights.³⁶

For most of its history, the College lacked a full-time faculty and relied on assigned international advisors (serving one-to-three years at IADC) to coordinate professional conferences with visiting subject matter experts. Approximately a decade ago, catalyzed by the region's new "multidimensional" security framework, the College developed an ad hoc academic advisory board³⁷ and began to implement critical institutional reforms, leveraging strategic networks in the Americas to establish partnerships with leading academic institutions.³⁸ Agreements included external consultants' assessment of IADC academic programming, hybrid methods of content delivery, and optional (multilingual) Master's degree offerings from sponsored academic partners.³⁹

In the last three years, the College has taken another major step forward, delivering a Master's Degree independent from partner institutions. IADC consolidated its own PhD-level faculty (via the contribution of member nations), refocused its annual academic curriculum around six core courses, and expanded and upgraded its physical campus. The College now is licensed as a degree-granting institution in Washington DC and has secured graduate education accreditation from the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS). Students at IADC, nominated by their member nations, now have the opportunity to pursue a Diploma or Master of Science (M.S.) program in Inter-American Defense and Security Studies.⁴⁰

IV. Juggling Challenges at the Inter-American Defense College (IADC)

As discussed in the introduction, the "juggling" metaphor offers a useful frame to explore cross cutting challenges that face IADC in its pursuit of excellence as a *professional*, *diplomatic*, and *educational* institution. According to noted organizational trainers (and juggling gurus) Gelb and Buzan, the key to "keeping a number of things in the air" is learning and "gracefully coping with mistakes" when the balls drop from time to time.⁴¹

³⁶ See strategic education discussion by Rokke (1995), Klinger (2004), Medeiros (2006), Tipton (2006), Einaudi (2007), Bruneau et al (2008).

³⁷ See Goodman et al (2002 and 2003).

³⁸ Since 2003, IADC's academic curriculum has featured instruction by visiting faculty from a wide variety of regional institutions, including the National Defense University (US), American University (US), Universidad del Salvador (Argentina), Instituto Universitario General Gutiérrez Mellado - IUGM (Spain), Canadian Defense Academy (Canada), American Public University (US), Florida International University (US), Naval Postgraduate School (US), Academia Nacional de Estudios Políticos y Estratégicos (ANEPE-Chile), Catholic University of Chile (PUC-Chile), and Centro de Altos Estudios Estratégicos Nacionales (CAEN - Peru), among others.

³⁹ Master's degree partnerships have included multifaceted agreements with a few targeted institutions: American University (US), American Public University (US), Universidad del Salvador (Argentina), IUGM (Spain), and ANEPE (Chile).

⁴⁰ Details are available in the College's annual Course Catalog and Student Handbook (IADC 2015).

⁴¹ See Gelb and Buzan (1994:4-5) and also the use of juggling metaphor in Radin (2002).

For IADC, the metaphorical balls in the air (in Figure 3) are conditioned by the College’s unique international and interagency nature. Five major challenges will be treated in turn: 1) diverse stakeholder expectations, 2) diverse definitions of security, 3) diverse student backgrounds, 4) resource and staffing constraints, and 5) competing priorities.

Figure 3: Juggling Challenges at the IADC



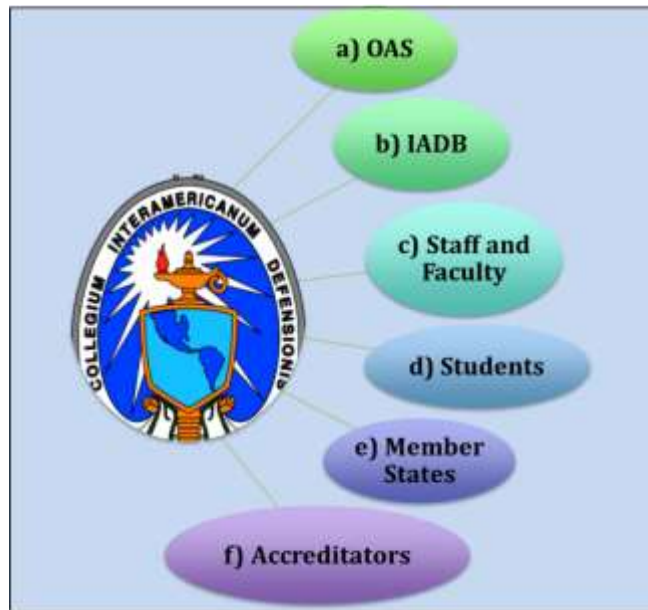
Challenge #1: Diverse Stakeholder Expectations

Throughout its nearly 50 years of existence, the IADC has struggled to operate in the face of blurry institutional oversight characterized by unclear and competing stakeholder priorities.⁴² A former College graduate paints a pessimistic picture of these institutional relationships: “The history of the IADC shows a continuous state of change, constrained by the polemical environment which is the Inter-American System as well as the tight financial situation, both of the OAS/IADB as well as the member countries.”⁴³ While this analysis is a bit dated and far from the only interpretation, IADC does report to many “owners”, among them the OAS, IADB, member states, students, staff/faculty, and now accreditors. These relationships, shown in Figure 4, are now discussed in more detail.

Figure 4: Competing Stakeholder Expectations for IADC

⁴² See discussion by (Davis 1968).

⁴³ Drach (2008: 85) compares IADC to the NATO Defense College in his monograph.



a) Expectations of the OAS (and its Relevant History with the IADC)

IADC (as part of the more controversial IADB body) claims an awkward and often strained historic relationship with the OAS.⁴⁴ Much of this tension can be traced to a tragic regional heritage of civil-military crises (discussed in the introduction), which has left a legacy of distrust for the military establishment in several regional nations. So while designated funding arrives from the OAS, IADC and IADB have long been isolated from OAS core functions and treated like the “organization’s stepchild”, according to an internal document by the Director of OAS Legal Services, William Berenson (2003).

The end of the Cold War, promise of a new democratic century, and implications of the Mexico City *Declaration on Security in the Americas* in 2003 helped to push the OAS to seek more collaboration with IADB/IADC, especially through its relatively new Council on Hemispheric Security (established in 1995). After much negotiation, in 2006, the OAS Permanent Council finally approved the statutes of the IADB/IADC and legally incorporated the paired entity under its institutional umbrella. This adoption was hailed as “historic” by former OAS Secretary General José Miguel Insulza and as “symbolic” of consolidated civilian control of the military and an increased emphasis on regional knowledge sharing and confidence-building.⁴⁵

In practice, nearly ten years after adoption, the College remains relatively isolated from its OAS parent.⁴⁶ Still, IADC gains critical legitimacy and access in political circles when leaders cite

⁴⁴ See discussion by Davis (1968), Child (1980), and Weidner (1998).

⁴⁵ See OAS (2006) and Herz (2008).

⁴⁶ A key strategic priority of IADC’s External Relations and Protocol office is to strengthen OAS bonds.

a formal relationship with the OAS. In turn, the OAS expects the College to fulfill official policies, cultivate relationships with regional Ambassadors, visit the General Assembly from time to time, partner in organizing key events (particularly with the OAS Secretariat of Multidimensional Security), and, most importantly, acknowledge the submission of regional militaries to civilian authority and the primacy of democracy as a hemispheric value.

b) Expectations of the IADB (and its Relevant History with the IADC)

As discussed in the brief historical overview of regional defense and security, the IADB, established during WWII, actually predates the OAS. The Board has experienced some difficulty, though, in clarifying its role in the Inter-American system due to compromises over the years by regional governments and ongoing civil-military tensions.⁴⁷ So while a 2006 OAS adoption enhanced IADB's legitimacy, the institution has not escaped sharp criticism of being "outdated", "out of touch", and "irrelevant".⁴⁸ The Board has received calls for institutional overhaul, de facto replacement by sub-regional bodies,⁴⁹ and even a name change: the name *Junta* (translated in English as "Board") carries long regional connotations of coups and military abuse.⁵⁰

The College has a much closer relationship with the IADB than with the OAS; however, familial frictions still arise, especially with periodic staffing controversies or threatened budget resources (discussed as another "ball in the air" later in the paper). In 2006, the decision was made to divide the IADB/IADC directorships (spreading influence beyond the United States), and to the present, there remains some lack of clarity on the revised reporting structures and thus the underlying questions of ultimate accountability.

Regarding respective missions, while the College is expected to perform all educational functions on behalf of the Board, the IADB is tasked to provide the OAS with "technical advice and services" for demining and "confidence and security building measures" in the region.⁵¹ After the 2010 Haitian earthquake disaster, the Board established a Crisis Support Group located at OAS headquarters, and in recent years, the Board has sought to strengthen its "name brand" by playing a higher profile in the Inter-American system. Perceived "mission creep" has catalyzed competition on occasion with IADC, which continually seeks to prioritize more established and focused educational goals.

The Board oversees a College Commission and a host of IADC-relevant Committees, but in everyday practice there is a relative autonomy between the two institutions. This "peace" holds until a crisis emerges (related to funding, staffing, translation services, event-planning, etc.) that brings to center stage the ongoing controversies in prioritizing *professional vs. diplomatic vs. educational* roles in the IADB-IADC relationship.

⁴⁷ See discussion of the compromise and its costs in Child (1980: 42) and Weidner (1998).

⁴⁸ Critiques of IADB emerge in Cope (2010), Drach (2008), IAD (2006), and Weidner (1998), etc.

⁴⁹ Sub-regional political blocs are increasingly important (Cheyre 2005). For example, UNASUR is developing in South America as an alternative security and defense alliance – including visions for sub-regional educational exchanges and strategic studies institutions.

⁵⁰ See recommendations by Reyes (2008), a retired Venezuelan naval officer serving as IADC Registrar.

⁵¹ See IADB (2008).

c) Expectations of Member States (and their Relevant History with the IADC)

One of the most complex relationships juggled by the College is its network of ties with the diverse governments in the hemisphere. IADC, after all, is a creation of its regional member states, and for decades, participant governments have contributed significant human and financial resources to help the College pursue its *professional*, *diplomatic*, and *educational* priorities.

In the human capital realm, the primary conduit for states' support is commissioning senior military officers or civilian officials to serve one to three year postings at IADC as resident students and/or staff. A secondary conduit of support is individual states' contribution of academic professionals or institutions that may be sent to the College to deliver short academic modules or professional seminars, free of charge to the IADC.⁵² A final conduit is the multifaceted support provided by regional governments for IADC study trips to Latin America, Caribbean, and North America. Host countries for the trips usually provide security and travel support as well as access to high-level state officials.

In the financial capital realm, regional governments contribute both directly and indirectly to College funding coffers. Direct contributions are limited to a small number of countries, especially the United States, which, as the College's host, subsidizes much of its operating budget. Indirect contributions from all states arrive via the OAS, which acts as an official College (and IADB) sponsor. Due to its budgetary constraints, though, the OAS cannot keep up with the IADC financial needs (as discussed later in this section).

Because of the human and financial commitments of its member states, IADC is well advised to heed their expectations. Difficulties emerge, though, in honing institutional policies to please a cacophony of needs, understandings and desires for the College. Some countries have viewed IADC as a sort of "coup insurance" (especially during the Cold War), exiling feared military leaders or out-of-mode politicians to keep them away from state institutions. Other states have utilized the College as a reward for decorated officials, including those who are tiring of battling insurgents, preparing for retirement, or calling upon personal ties with Cabinet leaders. Most often, of course, member states' Ministries of Defense, Foreign Relations, etc. recognize IADC as a forum for building diplomatic ties and strengthening the strategic capacity of targeted high-level officials.

Some states – especially those requiring high levels of educational attainment for their military and civilian officials – have pressed IADC to raise academic standards and offer well-recognized credentials to its graduates. Other states, through interlocutors at IADB and the OAS, have encouraged the College to diversify seminar offerings and expand partnerships with regional institutions. Member states have expressed competing views on prioritizing program quality vs. political access at IADC. There have been critiques (especially during the Cold War) of the College being "too American" in its orientation, which has prompted a fevered defense of IADC, including by its non-US stakeholders.

⁵² One example of this type of contribution is the Canadian Defense Academy (CDA), which, through state funds, sends professors, regional experts, and facilitators to support a weeklong Canadian-designed seminar on Peace-Keeping Operations, coordinated in conjunction with the IADC Seminar division.

A reality recognized by IADC leadership is that institutional and academic reforms at the College tend to “fly below the radar” of defense and security policy-makers in the region. Recent teaching innovations, institutional awards, and graduate accreditation have gone un-noticed by critical stakeholders in some states, who continue to hold onto visions of the past. Governments’ understanding and expectations for IADC change slowly, as do the profiles of students and staff they nominate to send to the College. Alumni often act as the best conduits of current information, so it is promising that IADC alumni associations (with influential national members) have started to spring up in the region.

d) Expectations of Students (and their Relationships with the IADC)

As with any academic institution, students act as the lifeblood of the College. They are the primary recipients of IADC programming and crucial stakeholders who can provide feedback to assess institutional success.

Since the advent of College programming in the 1960s, all three institutional priorities have resonated with a changing student body: officials arrive expectantly in Washington prepared to grow in *professional*, *diplomatic*, and *educational* capacity (although the latter priority has varied according to states’ expectations for professional development).

It is important, though, to examine what incoming students seek to gain (personally and professionally) during their year at IADC. This question helped frame this author’s initial analysis six years ago of College historical records, including broad-based perusal of student monographs, program survey results, and previous reviews.⁵³ Another crucial input was onsite and offsite interviews with students, staff, and alumni of the College.

Findings past and present suggest that student interests can vary greatly, and this tends to be conditioned by governments’ general view of IADC: Is it seen as a stepping-stone to students’ professional ascendancy? Is it viewed as a strategic diplomatic forum? Is it understood as a rigorous academic environment? Is it seen as a form of professional exile? Is it communicated as a vacation destination or a reward for nominees’ previous service? Answers to these questions largely condition incoming students’ expectations.

Regarding students’ *professional* goals, many articulate an excitement to expand their capabilities for new roles and disciplines and to learn more about regional approaches to security and defense. Most incoming officials see promotion potential with their IADC assignment, although the relative value of a College Diploma or Master’s degree varies greatly by country and by specific military force or civilian office.

Regarding students’ *diplomatic* goals, most appreciate the opportunity to experience life in Washington DC and to capture an insider view of the popular and political culture of a regional

⁵³ Particularly helpful sources consulted include Davis (1968), Goodman et al (2002, 2003), Medeiros (2006), and Drach (2008). A yearlong IADC program review was conducted by AU consultants Mark Hamilton and Daniel Masís (2009), under supervision of Louis Goodman, Dean of the School of International Service and longtime IADC supporter and Ad Hoc Academic Board Member. In subsequent years, both authors have served IADC as academic consultants and now part of its inaugural faculty.

(and global) superpower.⁵⁴ They are excited to learn from regional neighbors and create lasting relationships (personally and professionally) that they may cultivate into the future. Students greatly enjoy the opportunities afforded to travel to different countries in the region, analyze new political realities, and learn to operate effectively in an interagency international environment (an arrangement unfamiliar to many students).

Initial state-infused expectations never fully wane, but over the course of the academic year, there is observable inculcation among IADC students of a regional ethos and a cooperative approach to security and defense.

Regarding student *educational* goals, expectations and qualifications have converged in recent years; however, variance can still be observed in students' capacity and interest. Many students enthusiastically dive into IADC academic content and seek enrichment opportunities. They are excited for the challenge (and promotion potential of academic success). Other students, mainly those who fear they lack the requisite background to succeed in a graduate-level academic environment, proceed cautiously and resist any additional demands. Still others feel lost or perhaps cheated: what they understood as a "reward" posting involves far greater demands on their time, study, and intellectual capacity than they initially expected. At times, undue pressure and peer divisiveness can emerge around evaluations, as students fear that a poor performance on a short essay, group project, or oral presentation may permanently damage future career goals. IADC faculty and administrators have designed several innovative responses to help alleviate these fears and refocus the attention on academic outcomes, but the question of evaluation is always an issue of concern at IADC, especially given the high level of diversity across languages and institutional cultures.⁵⁵

Another important set of student goals often goes ignored in institutional surveys, but it heavily influences students' IADC satisfaction (or dissatisfaction): it regards *personal and familial* priorities. As stated earlier, most students are thankful for a chance to study in Washington DC. International officials express appreciation that family members are able to develop English language skills and gain other competencies to raise their social capital upon returning home. Still, operating within a new environment elicits cultural, communication, even traffic challenges for many students and their families. Moreover, many students are tempted to set aside their books (or e-readers) to explore life beyond the College. They fear this may be their only chance to live in the US and thus want to take full advantage of the experience. Finally, there is diversity in the level of housing and income support that students receive from member states: while some live in great comfort, others have difficulty making ends meet, which likely influences performance.

⁵⁴ An edited volume entitled *Understanding the Elephant* (Binnendijk and Kugler 2007) explores multiple perspectives or realities related to US National security interests, drawing reference to the oriental fable of the six blind men who attempt to describe an elephant. As regards the IADC, the power of the US is also like a metaphorical "elephant in the room" in any discussion of regional politics, security, and development.

⁵⁵ Innovations include an introductory research and writing workshop to establish a baseline, an academic mentoring program supported by former IADC students, development of a multilingual Student Writing Guide, use of common assessment rubrics across different classes, access to class lectures and readings made available in four languages, permission to write and participate in students' language of choice, and an institutional commitment to refrain from publishing a global list of academic ranking.

In sum, the students, who are primary recipients of College services, place significant expectations back onto IADC during their year on campus: in *professional, diplomatic, educational, and personal / familial* realms. It is a juggling act by IADC faculty, staff and other stakeholders to keep these students motivated, challenged, and satisfied.

e) Expectations of Staff and Faculty (and their Relationships with the IADC)

IADC staff and faculty are another critical set of stakeholders with expectations to be juggled by the College. If students are IADC's lifeblood, then staff and faculty members act as veins and capillaries, offering the necessary support structure to move the blood where it needs to go: in this case, capacitating students as experts in Inter-American security and defense.

In recent years, IADC has achieved sufficient funding and member state prioritization to hire its own academic faculty of well-qualified professors. For its first fifty years, most of the core academic duties at the College were carried out by an international corps of military "advisors", who were tasked to coordinate IADC academic modules (delivered by external institutions), organize topical seminars with regional field experts, facilitate student discussions, fulfill student evaluations, and perform a wide range of other *professional, diplomatic, and educational* functions.

Staff expectations parallel those of IADC students. In fact, for a majority of international staffers, their "advisor" work is actually an extension of learning and growth as students. Most national delegations send officials for two years (one as a student and a follow-up year as part of the staff). Other states send single year advisors who lack any previous background at the College. The US is a unique case as IADC's host nation, sending its military staff for 3-year commitments, although they rarely possess a student history.

IADC draws its international academic faculty from varied institutional sources, including voluntary national contributions from OAS member nations, IADB employees funded by the College, and elective instructors hired on short-term contracts. The nationalities of faculty members include US, Brazilian, Argentine, Costa Rican, Cuban and Peruvian.⁵⁶

There are other categories of multinational civilian staff at IADC, including a resident team of translator/interpreters (who support four languages of academic instruction), permanent Operations and External Relations supervisors (supplied by the host nation), and an IADB-employed registrar, librarian, and protocol official. Other staff members are contracted for maintenance and guest services, rounding out a multifaceted IADC team.

Professionally, IADC advisors – much like students – seek future promotion, hoping that national delegations value the unique academic and diplomatic skills they develop while serving at the College. Military staffers are thrust into an especially difficult position. Many lack

⁵⁶ At present, the faculty is comprised of Dr. Roberto Pereyra (Argentina), Dr. Daniel Masis (US, of Costa Rican descent), Dr. Mark Hamilton (US), Dr. Mirlis Reyes (Cuba), Dr. Paulo Costa Pinto (Brazil), Prof. Edward Stafford (US State Department), and Prof. Manuel Lora (Peruvian retired Admiral). Recent graduate instructors and elective faculty at IADC include Dr. Sabrina Medeiros (Brazil), Dr. Arturo Contreras (Chile), Dr. Mike Davis (US), Dr. Erich Hernandez (US), Dr. Steve Angerthal (US) and Prof. Laura Freire (Brazil). Academic advisors also play critical academic functions – including instruction and group facilitation – after their graduation.

significant scholarly or professional education background; nonetheless they are called on to occupy the front lines of IADC operations.

IADC staffing faces a number of other institutional challenges: a lack of operational continuity (due to yearly staff turnover), lack of clarity in advisor selection criteria (due to complex diplomatic concerns), and lack of functional role differentiation (due to capacity shortfalls and lack of specialization in some realms).⁵⁷

Non-military faculty and staff serving at IADC tend to provide greater continuity and specialized expertise for academic tasks; however, they make up a small percentage of the overall team and often have some initial difficulty adapting to a “military” culture.

Amid these challenges (and with the support of targeted staff trainings and orientations), most staff members enthusiastically embrace IADC’s unique vision and ethos, rising to the occasion to provide an excellent student experience.

Diplomatically, the interagency and international collaboration discussed in the student’s course of study is also essential to everyday practice among College staff and faculty. Regarding expectations, staffers enjoy the chance to engage with regional neighbors. They are faced with the dilemma of balancing their support for student *paisanos* (their countrymen and women) with IADC staff responsibilities to treat everyone equally and represent the institution and hemisphere at large.

Educationally, most staff members encounter a steep learning curve when tasked to support IADC academic programs. Advisors in direct contact with students are expected to keep up with curriculum readings and balance planning, facilitation, translation, and evaluation functions. Meanwhile, those serving in more operational or diplomatic roles have to work to avoid a student “disconnect” as they complete their everyday tasks.

Faculty are committed to make classes ever more integrated and accessible, employing multiple languages and teaching modalities. They also work to introduce College peers to a scholarly culture of academic freedom, excellence, and external engagement.

In sum, most staff members arrive to the College expecting to work cooperatively with their international peers. They demonstrate openness to contribute and take ownership for the academic program. What they require to succeed – and what they expect from College leadership – are adequate training and support structures to build their capacity and enhance their professional development to serve students’ and institution’s needs.

f) Expectations of Accreditors (and their Relationships with the IADC)

The newest actor with “ownership” stakes in College success is its academic accreditor, the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS), based in Washington DC. IADC is licensed and accredited by ACICS to deliver a professionally oriented Master’s degree to qualified students, with institutional review required in 2020.

⁵⁷Moreover, staff language differences can be a barrier in everyday operations, and the College lacks support services for those returning from previous battle deployments (Iraq, Afghanistan, Colombia, etc.).

ACICS influence is notable in the evolving everyday operations of the College, including increased prioritization of academic process documentation, institutional assessment, campus effectiveness plans, alumni engagement, and faculty professional development.

Professionally, ACICS is focused on post-graduate outcomes of accredited institutions' alumni, in particular their placement rates and employer satisfaction. IADC offers a unique case: it offers a virtual 100% rate of graduates returning to government service and continues to hone appropriate measures for employer satisfaction among diverse ministries of OAS member states (via surveys, focus groups, leadership outreach, etc.).

Diplomatically, ACICS expresses only minimal interest in the regional political dynamics and external relationships of the College (beyond accrediting its governance structure); nevertheless, the visiting team of evaluators highlighted the impressiveness of IADC's commitment to multilingual/multicultural access (including simultaneous interpretation).

Educationally, ACICS has a series of requirements to guarantee the educational quality of accredited institutions. Accrediting officials focus on educational quality and fairness (including the clarity of expectations in IADC's course syllabi, evaluation systems, and student catalogs). Institutions are expected to show a strong commitment to academic freedom and political non-interference. Faculty are expected to play an active role in academic governance, with institutional support for their professional development

Challenge #2: Diverse Definitions of Security

Beyond juggling the stakeholder interests discussed at length for Challenge #1, a related ball that IADC must "keep in the air" is the great diversity in "security" definitions that have emerged in member states through the years. Since its inauguration in 1962, civil-military tensions have cut to the core of IADC identity. This is reflected in College (and Board) names that have purposefully left out any mention of "security" in favor of a "defense" moniker.⁵⁸ Many states then and now resist any form of military involvement in domestic space, preferring its confinement to the specific realm of external threats.

As IADC continues to hone an academic program that reflects contemporary regional realities and responds to the multidimensional security challenges defined by the OAS, it must also deal with almost palpable distrust that some regional governments harbor towards their military institutions.⁵⁹ This distrust can harden into hostility or fear when military-affiliated personnel (a sector that still predominates at the College) express professional interest in public security questions or even propose military involvement in realms beyond the strictest definitions of national defense.

In everyday practice the region still lacks consensus on a clear definition for "security", much less on its relationship to "defense" or on the role of armed forces in times of domestic and transnational crises. Some civil-military analysts argue for an inevitable blurring of "security" and

⁵⁸ See related historical discussion by Davis (1968).

⁵⁹ See discussion by the OAS (2003, 2007, 2008a, and 2008b) as well as a host of regional experts (Goodman 1990, Bruneau 2005, Pacheco 2008, Weeks 2008).

“defense” functions, while others see the analytic and political-institutional value in keeping the functions separate and complementary.⁶⁰

As a *professional* institution, IADC has a responsibility to seek clarity on “security” definitions to help its civilian and military alumni better understand their respective roles. As a *diplomatic* institution, though, it must be careful how its stakeholders approach the question, so as not to undermine the post-Cold War gains and civil-military trust that the College has cultivated. Finally, as an *academic* institution, the College should always be an open forum for students to discuss these questions without attribution (an enterprise made difficult by the other two priorities). Thus, the dilemma surrounding “security” definitions is not only confined to member states; it also is a dilemma that influences the IADC academic program.

Challenge #3: Diverse Student Backgrounds

A third “ball in the air” at the College was cited previously in relation to the expectations of member states and IADC student body. The College faces a difficult task of delivering a rigorous and coherent academic curriculum to students with widely differing academic backgrounds, capabilities, and interests.

While an increasing number of students arrive with PhDs and Master’s degrees, others enroll in IADC without much higher education experience beyond their national military colleges, and, for some students, these experiences are in the distant past. Traditional academic practices – such as critical writing, active reading, scholarly citation, peer assessment, and rubric evaluations – are foreign concepts for many students. Adding to the difficulty is the senior government rank of many IADC students and the attendant pressures they feel for “saving face” and preserving professional dignity. This can make the learning process seem as much a threat as critical opportunity for personal growth.

To maintain students’ motivation and guarantee a baseline for shared knowledge, IADC tries to provide conceptual tools and a general orientation to academic practice without patronizing, humiliating, or diplomatically offending its struggling students. The College continues to communicate academic requirements and expectations to member states and incoming students. The goal is to enhance their selectivity and ensure that students arrive with sufficient capacity and interest to succeed at IADC. A few other dilemmas arising around this goal (and its communications) are treated in Challenge #5.

Challenge #4: Resource and Staffing Constraints

The fourth IADC “ball in the air” contributes greatly to the many other challenges listed previously. As with any institution, College access to resources – human and financial – conditions its ability to accomplish *professional*, *diplomatic*, and *educational* priorities.

⁶⁰ See debates from a diversity of regional experts (eg. Barrachina and Rial 2008, Bruneau 2005, Bruneau and Matei 2008, Celi 2005, Cheyre 2005, Drach 2008, Goodman 2008).

Given its high regional profile, the College operates on a surprisingly limited operational budget and has long been constrained in planning functions by the unpredictability of its funding streams, year to year.

By design, as an official instrument of the Inter-American system, the primary sponsor of IADC should be the OAS. However, the regional body has experienced a wave of severe spending cuts over the last twenty years and operates today at less than half the budget and 2/3 the staff as in 1994.⁶¹ Additionally, there is IADC-IADB competition for limited OAS funds, especially since an IADB decision to divide its directorship in 2006.⁶²

Today the primary fiscal contributor to the College is the host nation: the United States. Even here, funding has tended to be piecemeal, drawn from an array of institutional sources rather than one consistent dependable funding stream. Non-academic College personnel (such as the Chief of Staff, Administration and Resources Coordinators, and Senior NCO) are often visiting the Pentagon or State Department for high-level briefings to strengthen government commitment (a formidable challenge amid slashed budgets).

Other member states, of course, also contribute significant human resources to IADC; however most staff members they send are military or diplomatic personnel and not academic scholars. A notable exception, Brazil in recent years has nominated a rotating stream of visiting professors, now serving two-year terms. Most international staff sent as member state “contributions” to the College are posted for only one to two years.

Impacts of funding constraints (especially unpredictability) have probably been most tangibly evident in IADC’s lack of a permanent faculty for fifty years.⁶³ This institutional shortfall resulted in dependence on external affiliates for most academic instruction and undermined the curriculum’s continuity and integration; not to mention College capacity in student assessment, program evaluation, and educationally sound staff development.

The short tour of duty for College staff has resulted in a constant state of turnover and a lack of institutional memory. Lessons learned by one staff cohort are usually re-learned by the next, making iterative improvements in instruction, curriculum development, and program evaluation a challenge, even for committed and capable international advisors.

During the last few years, changes in IADC funding authorization, facility management, and academic personnel have helped to mitigate these resource challenges. Details about these critical reforms will be discussed in a subsequent section of the paper.

Challenge #5: Competing Priorities

The College juggles not only external constraints, but internal dilemmas and competing priorities, several of which have already been inferred in previous sections. At times, diverse strategic priorities of IADC – *Professional*, *Diplomatic*, and *Educational* – are thrown into stark conflict. Below are just a few of many examples.

⁶¹ See discussion by IAD (2006: 9)

⁶² See helpful discussion by Drach (2008) in the early years of this transition.

⁶³ There have been calls in institutional reviews to prioritize academic hiring, ever since the outset of IADC operations (Davis 1968, Goodman et al 2002 and 2003, Drach 2008, Hamilton and Masís 2009).

a) Competing Priorities Related to Student, Staff, and Partner Selection

As previously discussed, the College encounters diverse levels of academic capabilities and experience among its incoming students and staff members. Because “increasing the academic quality” has been outlined by the IADB Goals and Objectives Committee and highlighted by recent College leadership, *educational* priorities would suggest more rigorous entry standards be dictated and applied immediately to member states.⁶⁴ For IADC, though, academics-driven transitions must also take into account *professional* and *diplomatic* priorities (focused on broadening regional capacity, access, and equity). Policy shifts for higher standards must be communicated and implemented carefully.

On a related note, the College has at times become embroiled in academic partnerships that may not suit the changing educational needs of the institution (for varied reasons). In these cases, *educational* priorities would seem to dictate a quick and easy “divorce” after initial attempts to resolve the problems have failed. However, in IADC’s complex regional political climate, cutting affiliations can be complicated by relevant *professional* ties or related *diplomatic* priorities. This suggests the need for a strategic approach to how the College examines future partnerships and manages its partners’ expectations.

b) Competing Priorities Related to Student and Staff Evaluation

Student and staff evaluations often juxtapose *educational* priorities against competing *professional* and *diplomatic* concerns in an interagency, international setting like IADC. From a purely *educational* perspective, rigorous evaluation and assessment is critical to academic integrity, setting clear standards for scholarly excellence and offering actionable feedback to students (and staff) to develop capabilities as critical thinkers. Educational evaluation in such a framework remains agnostic to questions of diplomacy and professional priorities, limiting its domain of analysis to the academic workload.

Professionally, though, other priorities and realities emerge at IADC. Several member states have sought detailed feedback to help rank their officers or officials for promotion. Others seek to observe students’ oral exams and academic presentations. This can be threatening to students, especially those who arrive less prepared for academic rigor. Moreover, academic freedom is at risk with too much political interference.

Diplomatically, other critical controversies emerge. In a College that has been tasked to “foster a sense of cooperation and solidarity, . . . increase mutual trust, and contribute to the spirit of regional integration,”⁶⁵ there are fears that the colliding approaches to *educational* and *professional* evaluation may create unnecessary competition among students and staff, inhibiting their cooperation and trust building. Moreover, there are concerns that IADC’s growing emphasis

⁶⁴ See several related documents (IADB 2008, Hamilton and Masís 2009, IADC 2010, Yábar 2015, etc.).

⁶⁵ See citation of institutional objectives in IADC (2014 and 2015: 11-12).

on scholarship (with ACICS accreditation) may undermine priorities of cross-cultural relationships and experiential learning. Finally, there are fears that evaluation pressures could catalyze national embarrassment: for a student's failure to graduate, a staff member's reprimand, or a plagiarism accusation.

In IADC's context, the task of appropriate evaluation for students and staff requires a delicate balance and must be managed with sensitivity to its complementary priorities.

c) Competing Priorities Related to Academic Freedom and Public Attribution

The international and interagency dynamic at IADC offers a rich learning environment, but it catalyzes ambiguity regarding students' freedom of academic expression vs. their responsibility to represent and articulate official positions of their states and professions.

Educational priorities obviously side with an emphasis on academic freedom and non-attribution. Students should be encouraged to express their own points of view, explore alternate perspectives, and ultimately expand their conceptual world beyond national or parochial boundaries.

Professional and *diplomatic* priorities lack such clarity on this controversy. On one hand, there is recognition that democratic practice and regional integration favor unrestricted academic freedom and non-attribution. On the other hand, students at IADC are also senior representatives and diplomats of their states and ministries, so "free" expression of their ideas has potential to undermine national policy or even create regional crises.

In recent years, the College has unapologetically prioritized the *educational* approach; however, external pressures from member states, the IADB, and OAS have challenged, conditioned, and tempered this response.⁶⁶ IADC leadership and faculty are sensitive to this dilemma and limit external access to student essays, plenary debate, and group discussions.

A Summary of Challenges: Juggling Security and Defense at the IADC

This section has treated diverse challenges IADC must juggle as a resource-challenged international and interagency educational institution. Since its inaugural class more than fifty years ago, the College and its staff have tried to keep all the metaphorical balls in the air (Figure 3). Of course, the balls "drop" from time to time, but College stakeholders learn from the mistakes and keep moving forward. The next section treats recent IADC efforts at institutional reform and offers a brief progress report of previous assessments.

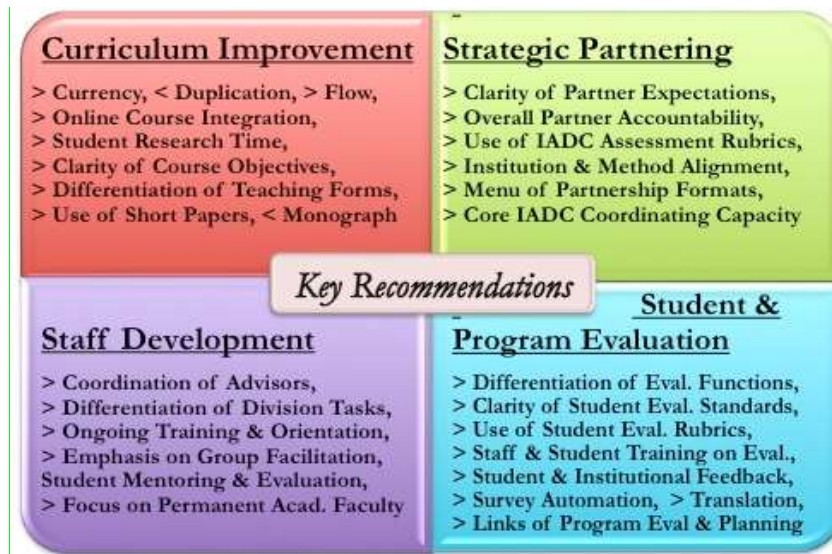
V. Interventions at IADC: Chronicling Reform Efforts of Recent Years

⁶⁶ Fascinating case studies include the 2010 presidential crisis in Honduras and more recently that taking place in Guatemala (2015). Political tensions among students' home states (for example, the Dominican Republic and Haiti) sometime bleed into the classroom and working groups. Diverse perspectives are expressed and explored as part of the academic curriculum; however, students and staff are often careful how, with whom, and under what circumstances they share personal opinions on controversial issues.

The College, past and present, has been deeply influenced by the global environment it occupies. Regional democratization in the wake of the Cold War, related transformation in the defense sector, and the Mexico City *Declaration on Security in the Americas* all provided an impetus for change during the first decade of the new millennium.

From 2000 to 2010, IADC convened an Ad Hoc Academic Board⁶⁷ and established a number of academic partnerships, opening Master's Degree options for its students. College leaders contracted external consulting teams (one of which included this author, under the aegis of American University - AU) to assess IADC programming and offer high impact recommendations for institutional reforms.⁶⁸ The evaluation scope included a yearlong consultancy in 2008-2009 targeting 4 critical areas: *curriculum improvement, strategic partnering, staff development, and student/program evaluation* (See Figure 8).

Figure 5: Summary of Program Recommendations from 2009 IADC Assessment:



Curriculum Improvement

The first task in AU's comprehensive review focused on IADC's academic curriculum. An onsite consultant team carefully reviewed all aspects of the curriculum and academic calendar and

⁶⁷ See Goodman et al (2002 and 2003).

⁶⁸ A yearlong program review was conducted by American University consultants Mark Hamilton and Daniel Masís (2009), under supervision of Louis Goodman, former Dean of the School of International Service and longtime IADC supporter and Ad Hoc Academic Board Member. Subsequently, the author (Hamilton 2010) has served IADC as independent academic consultant and now on its inaugural faculty.

recommended several reforms to improve currency, decrease duplication, improve logical flow, incorporate online courses, and increase student research time.

In addition, the team worked with IADC advisors to review and reform course objectives. The goal was to enhance institutional clarity and differentiate instructional formats for theory-based academic modules, expert-based field seminars, and practical workshops. Then, melding the formats of military-style reports and traditional scholarly essays, the team defined evaluation rubrics for a few types of short papers to clarify College writing expectations and enhance student engagement in academic modules taught by external institutions.⁶⁹ The new, more focused essays replaced a yearlong research monograph that caused many dilemmas due to IADC limitations in evaluative capacity.

Progress: Half a decade later, curriculum improvements are driven by IADC's resident faculty team, which has consolidated, honed, and extended early reforms. The College has eliminated duplication and is organized around six core courses (taught by in-house professors), complemented by elective classes (students choose one), three field-based seminars, three study trips, three team-based research projects, and a few practical skills workshops. All of these academic activities are well integrated in the curriculum, and the student learning outcomes clearly map to IADC's overall institutional objectives.

Professors continue to apply common evaluation rubrics across diverse disciplines, and students are introduced early to essay types, academic policies, research and writing tools, and mentoring feedback in an introductory Research and Writing workshop.

Classes are taught in multiple languages, with simultaneous interpretation available in IADC's auditorium across English, Spanish, French, and Portuguese tongues. Students receive course syllabi and reading lists (even PDF access) in multiple languages, and are encouraged to read, write their essays, and deliver final oral exams in the language of their choice. This unique multilingual aspect of IADC's academic curriculum greatly enhances the burden on faculty (and translator/interpreters); however, it does offer students a chance to practice critical thinking in a language they likely will apply their knowledge.

Another unique aspect of IADC's graduate curriculum is the use of supervised student groups to analyze class readings and collaborate for assigned tasks and larger projects. To this end, a select set of international advisors is dual-tasked as Facilitator-Mentors, accompanying faculty and students across the academic calendar. In their Facilitator role, these "advisors" moderate, facilitate and evaluate students' contribution in working groups and assigned online forums. In an accompanying Mentor role, they provide ongoing academic guidance and necessary staff support to 10+ assigned students.⁷⁰ Facilitators receive a detailed Facilitation Guide for each course and collaborate closely with faculty and interpreters to provide necessary support as the face of the College.

IADC's teaching model "fosters graduate-level, professional understanding of course themes, based on the premise that knowledge is best obtained and retained through student

⁶⁹ See US Air Force (2004) for a practical hybrid approach to military and academic writing styles.

⁷⁰ Whereas facilitated groups (and Facilitators) rotate by course to broaden students' contact with diverse peers, a mentoring assignment is yearlong for the sake of continuity and academic support.

exposure to diverse teaching modalities and relevant active learning methodologies.”⁷¹ Class and group work in core IADC academic modules are balanced by complementary forms of instruction and academic enrichment. Applied methodology projects, including country studies, research committees, and simulation exercises, help students ground the theoretical concepts of their previous classes. Elective courses allow students to specialize in their areas of interest. Finally, IADC study trips, seminars, and conferences expose students to leading experts in both non-state and government sectors, allowing them to engage with technical specialists, ministers, even presidents.

The College curriculum continues to evolve, but the focus has shifted from improvement to stability (to maintain graduate accreditation). IADC is much improved in this area as compared to six years ago, during initial AU assessments and related program reforms.

Strategic Partnering

The second task for AU consultants was a comprehensive review of current College partnerships and strategic recommendations to prioritize future affiliations. The team recommended adapting contracted agreements with all partner institutions to better clarify IADC expectations and ensure reasonable timelines for course deliverables.⁷²

The College was advised to pilot alternative partnership forms and widen the breadth of regional partners. Ideas for engagement included short-term, long-term, online, and video-conference links, with IADC playing diverse roles in the partnerships, ranging from a recipient of content (the 2009 status quo) to a knowledge producer and organizer.

Finally, the team helped strengthen IADC’s internal capacity to deliver its own research methodology workshops, a revised Fundamentals of Security and Defense module, and most new conferences and seminars. Priority here was to decrease the dependence on external institutions in delivering so much of IADC’s annual academic content.

Progress: There have been considerable changes in IADC strategic partnerships since the 2009 assessment. Long-time partners like American University in Washington, D.C. and *Universidad de El Salvador* (from Argentina) no longer teach academic modules or offer supplemental graduate degree options to IADC students. Subsequent Master’s partnerships initiated with graduate security institutes from Spain (*Instituto Universitario General Gutiérrez Mellado* - IUGM) and Chile (*Academia Nacional de Estudios Políticos y Estratégicos* – ANEPE)

⁷¹ See the College’s student catalog for discussion of its “Pedagogy/Androgogy” model (IADC 2015: 12).

⁷² Based on curriculum enhancements, the team developed analytic assessment rubrics for IADC to distribute to partner institutions to standardize student evaluation processes across courses. The team also reviewed the institutional profiles and past program offerings of College partners and recommended realignment to assure the delivery of theory-based modules by academic institutions and practice-oriented seminars and workshops by field experts and simulation specialists.

have also phased out, serving as necessary and mutually beneficial bridge agreements as IADC worked to build a new faculty, curriculum, and independent degree-granting capability.⁷³

In recent years, the College has established ad hoc agreements with a few universities and technical institutes in the region (particularly in Brazil) to access educational software, invite visiting professors, and share server access. Meanwhile, IADC professors have traveled to lecture and teach short modules in partner institutions.⁷⁴

The College's contemporary orientation to partnerships is shorter-term, sector-oriented, and focused on faculty alliances. There are minimal inputs to IADC's academic program from external institutions, which is a major transition from years of content dependence.

Staff Development

A third area of emphasis for the 2009 AU review addressed staff development needs. The consultant team conducted in-depth interviews with College staff, students, and relevant stakeholders to identify critical inefficiencies and staff development shortfalls. The gaps here were glaring: there was no orientation program to speak of for new staff, and most of the written position descriptions and manuals were unclear and outdated.

The team recommended and tailored a plan to restructure IADC's Studies Department (differentiating Academic Support vs. Academic Programs) and also to create a new division of Facilitator-Mentors. When the College decided to implement these reforms, the AU team (in particular this author) designed and delivered customized, interactive training sessions for returning student-advisors. The trainings focused on building skills in small group facilitation, student assessment, and academic mentoring.

A final recommendation of the team focused on a long term plan to secure qualified and permanent faculty members for IADC. Pathways suggested include civilianizing unused military advisor billets, lobbying powerful member states to contribute faculty advisors (with longer staff commitments), and focusing resources of a fledgling IADC Foundation.

Progress: The last six years have seen these staffing recommendations consolidate. For example, IADC leadership has adapted the organizational chart at least three times; however each of its iterations delineates academic versus administrative functions and maintains a critical role for Facilitator-Mentors. Staff training and orientation workshops are now yearly events, including a broader range of participants and functions. These activities continue to focus on the international advisors (vis-à-vis US staff); however, a universal staff development plan (and written operations guide) is close in development.

Another major staff shift is the College's new dependence on resident academic faculty, per the recommendations of many previous assessments. This sea change for staffing is due to several successful transitions in IADC personnel management. These include:

⁷³ An agreement is still in effect with American Public University (US) to recognize a limited number of IADC credits in pursuit of multiple graduate degrees.

⁷⁴ There also are linkages established via video teleconferencing, with future potential for online learning collaboration.

- 1) A pair of US military billets effectively converted to civilian government positions and re-scoped to be permanent academic faculty roles;
- 2) The US State Department re-opening a long dormant faculty billet at IADC;
- 3) Brazil extending its visiting faculty commitments to two year rotations; and
- 4) The College receiving authorization from IADB's Council of Delegates and host nation (US) funders to directly employ a few international faculty members.

The scope of IADC staff development has also shifted with this new resident faculty, incentivized by ACICS accreditation requirements for a graduate-level program. Faculty members now complete individual plans for annual professional development, and the College has taken responsibility to support and fund in-service events as well as targeted opportunities for research, outreach, conference participation, and publication.

In the realm of staff development, IADC strides during the last half-decade are notable. The College now boasts regular orientation and training programs for its academic staff and has consolidated a resident faculty team that completes annual development plans. Of course, progress is ongoing in the staff development arena: tensions can emerge between military and scholarly work cultures, especially the time required for academic preparation and faculty dependence on offsite work and nontraditional schedules. Nevertheless, IADC policies and accountability structures are increasingly focused on empowering an ever more diverse professional staff.

Student and Program Evaluation

The final area for AU's comprehensive review focused on assessment at the College. The first step was dividing functional tasks of student evaluation vs. program evaluation.

For student evaluation, consultants conducted a careful review of existing systems and offered targeted recommendations to enhance clarity, efficiency, and institutional rigor. Focus was on the use of analytic rubrics (evaluation templates) to assess distinct IADC academic products and processes. Institutional norms were developed to better quality control of student evaluation (both internal and external), enhance the privacy of student records, and provide ongoing feedback to students on their academic progress.

It was recommended that student evaluation procedures, rubrics, and documentation be translated in multiple languages to better communicate College expectations and clarify percentage weights of courses/assignments to be completed during the academic year.

Regarding program evaluation, consultants prioritized three major recommendations. The first, and perhaps most important, was to strengthen IADC institutional feedback mechanisms to respond more rapidly to student concerns. The creation of a new mentor function was deemed helpful, as well as regular communication about student survey results and potential College responses. A second recommendation was imminently practical: automation of all student surveys and their translation into multiple languages (English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish). A final recommendation was to establish a stronger link between program evaluation results and planning functions for individual activities.

Progress: The College has made significant changes to student and program evaluation in subsequent years, with greater emphasis on rigor, feedback, and systematic process. Functions are now in separate departments, and the results have been positive overall.

For student evaluation, IADC professors now embrace use of rubrics to grade papers, presentations, and class participation, even sharing the same templates across classes. Several peer workshops have been conducted to improve the quality control in applying specific rubrics and also to unify criteria among faculty and facilitator-mentors.

There also are more careful controls on student records and much greater emphasis on individualized feedback. After professors submit grades for each class, the Office of Student Evaluation analyzes assessment data for all students and restricts its access. Rubrics, scores, and faculty feedback are shared only with individual students and, for the sake of remediation efforts, with assigned mentors.⁷⁵ Confidentiality of students' evaluations is taken seriously at IADC not only for *educational* reasons, but also based on the institution's complementary *professional* and *diplomatic/political* priorities.

For program evaluation, iterative reforms at the College have addressed and extended 2009 recommendations. A Program Evaluation division was set up in the Department of Studies, and student feedback became a higher priority. Surveys were soon automated (via Survey Monkey software) and made available to students in multiple languages. In terms of linking assessment and planning functions at the College, operational guides were developed (for each staff division) that updated functional roles and established general timelines and necessary coordination for academic and administrative activities. These task guides focused on processes and created a greater culture of accountability.

In the last three years, reforms have continued at an even faster pace. An independent Department of Institutional Effectiveness has been established in a lead up to graduate accreditation. This new office is now responsible for developing and analyzing student surveys, alumni surveys, and graduate employer surveys. Its team publishes an annual *Campus Effectiveness Plan*, reviews individual class syllabi and after-action reports, and oversees all documentation for ACICS accreditors and related authorities. Staff expertise remains a challenge in filling these roles, but an overall improvement is noted.

Concluding Reflections on College Reforms

Critical aspects of academic programming at IADC have transformed in the last half-decade in areas of curriculum improvement, strategic partnering, staff development, and student and program evaluation. Two supporting areas of reform that bear mention include College transformations in its resource mobilization and the physical campus.

Hard work by recent generations of IADC leadership has effectively secured a yearly budget from the U.S. Department of Defense, developed the necessary economic, human and

⁷⁵ In cases of academic probation or separation, a few other stakeholders receive limited information. See discussion of assessment policy in the student handbook (IADC 2015). The Registrar eventually receives student records, continuing a chain of confidentiality. Transcripts are only released upon student request.

political capital to support a resident faculty,⁷⁶ and claimed and refurbished multiple buildings (including a wing for faculty offices and state of the art academic auditorium).⁷⁷

Diverse leadership teams⁷⁸ have sought to strengthen College academic programs and institutional partnerships and better reflect the changing security and defense needs of member states. The College's rich legacy of regional camaraderie and cooperation lives on in its staff and students; however, there is greater priority today for educational rigor, inter-agency and civil-military understanding, and capacity building for senior officials.

Conclusion

This paper has focused case analysis on the Inter-American Defense College (IADC), but it carries far broader lessons about the juggling act of international military and diplomatic education and the inherent difficulties of "keeping all the balls in the air."

The paper's first section delved into a brief regional history of security and defense and framed the complex environment in which IADC operates. Sections II and III provided an overview of College operations and discussed three complementary (or competing) institutional priorities: *diplomatic, professional, and educational*.

Sections IV discussed the diverse challenges or "balls in the air" for College leadership: *1) diverse stakeholder expectations, 2) diverse definitions of security, 3) diverse student backgrounds, 4) resource and staffing constraints, and 5) competing priorities*. Each of these challenges should be considered part of the juggling act of any similar institution.

Finally, Section V considers proactive reforms at IADC to avoid "dropping the balls", interventions taken to continue on a healthy path of institutional growth and renewal. Areas include: *curriculum improvement, strategic partnering, staff development, and student/program evaluation, supported by resource mobilization and physical campus*.

IADC has always provided value added to students and member states as a diplomatic forum for senior leaders to engage ideas and encounter regional neighbors. However, in today's rapidly changing regional and global landscape, there are crucial costs for not innovating, not learning from previous failures ("dropping the balls"), and not adapting.

⁷⁶ Leaders committed to developing a more permanent core of resident faculty. The result is greater consistency in the academic program, more efficiency and integration of instruction, and less turnover (vis-à-vis the continuing year-to-year rotations of international military advisors).

⁷⁷ Contemporary leadership at the College includes its Director, Dr. Martha Herb (US Navy Rear Admiral, Ed.D), Vice Director Alexandre Wagner Celso de Sousa (Brazilian Air Force Major General), and Chief of Studies Arturo Gonzalez (Mexican Army Brigadier General), who recently replaced longtime Chief of Studies Francisco Yábar Acuña (Peruvian Navy Rear Admiral, now retired).

⁷⁸ Directors in the new millennium include the "visionary" Major General Carl Freeman, "relationship-focused" Major General Keith Huber, "committed reformer" Rear Admiral Moira Flanders, "institution builder" Rear Admiral Jeffrey Lemmons, and most recently, "consolidation-focused" Rear Admiral Martha Herb. Each Director has contributed to IADC's evolution into a premier institution of defense and security education in the region.

The 21st century demands adept jugglers in defense and security matters, professionals who can analyze and adapt to new situations, remain calm under pressure, and harness lessons learned *professionally, diplomatically, and educationally* at a place like IADC.

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