



Inside SWCS

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Ready for anything. Ready for anywhere.



At SWCS, students learn to be culturally aware and regionally astute

Future special-operations Soldiers study Urdu during a class held by the SWCS Directorate of Regional Studies and Education in Bank Hall, Fort Bragg, N.C. Urdu is one of the 17 languages that SWCS students might be taught before they graduate their qualification course and report to a Special Forces, Civil Affairs or Military Information Support Operations unit.

By Caroline Goins
SWCS Public Affairs Office

Army special-operations Soldiers conduct complex, high-risk missions around the world. Working in small teams in remote areas, these men and women must work with foreign forces and civilians in order to accomplish their mission and get home safely. They aren't just strong; they're smart.

Which is why at SWCS you'll find future special-operations Soldiers sitting in classrooms that, at first glance, might be for kindergartners. Hanging from wall to wall are bright posters filled with cartoons and extra-large text listing the days of the week and the colors of the rainbow.

One key difference: these posters aren't written in English, but in any one of 17 core languages taught to members of the special-operations community: Spanish, French, Indonesian, Chinese, Russian, Thai, Tagalog, Korean, Dari, Pashto, Arabic, Persian-Farsi, Urdu, Polish, Turkish, Czech or Hungarian.

"To these Soldiers, language is a survival tool," said Maqbool Hassain, a Pashto instructor. "Without knowing the language, it's like walking blinding

in the dark. To be language-blind, so to speak, is a great handicap. Language and cultural understanding is like adding eye-glasses to sharpen the scope to the situations they will face."

Last year, more than 2,000 Civil Affairs, Military Information Support Operations and Special Forces Soldiers of various ranks studied a specified region's language and culture at SWCS during their qualification course training.

Early into each of the three branches' qualification courses, each Soldier must spend 18 to 24 weeks in language training, depending on the difficulty of their assigned region. This training is coordinated by SWCS' Directorate of Regional Studies and Education.

The knowledge and understanding of how to deal with different cultures could save lives, said Hakim Rahimi, a Dari, Pashto, and Persian instructor.

"This ability to speak formally and informally with a broad range of vocabulary builds Soldiers' ability to communicate with anyone, from improvised rural vil-

lagers to high ranking leaders," he said.

"In four months, we've gone from speaking our names to expressing ideas clearly," said Sgt. Anthony Hernandez, a French student.

By combining language and cultural training, students learn to communicate within the context of a

region's customs and traditions. Language and regional studies education at SWCS focuses on socio-linguistic and cultural competency.

"We're going to a country in our operational specialty to communicate with people; that's what we're

here for. That's what's most important in my mind, the ability to easily interact with people that speak it as a first language," said Sgt. Eric Tomaz, one of Hernandez's classmates.

"These language courses are not simple lessons in sentence structure and punctuation," said Michelle Vit, a French instructor. "They learn family structures and culture nuances to make it possible to relate and be efficient with problem-solving."

"This ability to speak formally and informally with a broad range of vocabulary builds Soldiers' ability to communicate with anyone, from improvised rural villagers to high-ranking leaders."

Hakim Rahimi

Dari, Pashto and Persian instructor, DRSE

SWMG(A) welcomes new Command Sergeant Major

Command Sgt. Maj. Robin L. Duane assumed responsibility of the Special Warfare Medical Group (Airborne) in a ceremony March 18 at the group's headquarters on Fort Bragg.

As the SWMG(A) and Joint Special Operations Medical Training Center command sergeant major, Duane will be the senior non-commissioned officer in charge of overseeing all U.S. military special-operations medical training.

The SWMG(A) is one of the

Army's only seven active-duty Special Forces groups.

"This is a Soldier who brings with him a depth of experience essential to the success of the Special Warfare Medical Group," said Col. Robert Lutz, the group's commander, during the ceremony.

"My top priority is to train and sustain special-operations medics," Duane said. He will also focus on taking care of the SWMG(A)'s students and instructors, and their families, he said.



Command Sgt. Maj. Robin L. Duane, right, accepts the SWMG(A) NCO sword from Col. Robert Lutz, the SWMG(A) commander, at the Special Warfare Medical Group (Airborne) assumption of responsibility ceremony March 18.

Education fair to show off SOF-specific degree programs for Soldiers

Special Forces, Civil Affairs and Military Information Support Operations Soldiers interested in pursuing education opportunities related to their military career fields are welcome to attend a special-operations education fair between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. April 12 in Bank Hall on Fort Bragg, N.C.

All special-operations Soldiers, including those assigned to active-duty units on Fort Bragg as well as SWCS instructors, staff and personnel, are welcome to attend. Additionally, the education fair is open to individuals who will be in Fayetteville to participate in the 2011 Special Forces Regimental Week.

The fair will feature presentations and booths with information regarding many education programs available to special-operations Soldiers.

Participating organizations include: Campbell University, Central Texas College, East Carolina University, Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville Technical Community College, Liberty University, Methodist University, Troy University, Webster University, UNC-Pembroke, Southern New Hampshire University, the University of Maryland University College, Western Carolina University, the Army Center for Enhanced Performance, the Gen. Wayne A. Downing Scholarship Program, the George and Carol Olmstead Foundation, the Interagency Studies Program, National Defense University, Naval Postgraduate School, North Carolina State University, Norwich University, and others to be announced.

Some informational material will be available online following the education fair at www.soc.mil/swcs

The event is coordinated by the SWCS Directorate of Regional Studies and Education.

SWCS Cadre Profile

Sokhna Diagne Fatma Sèye Mbacké

Language Instructor and Academic Specialist, Department of Languages, DRSE



Sokhna Diagne Fatma Sèye Mbacké from Touba (Diourbel) in Sénégal, Africa greatly desired independence and academic enlightenment. For more than 20 years, she worked as an educator with the Defense Language Institute, teaching and coordinating language classes for DLI and other agencies within the Washington, D.C. area. She speaks French, Wolof, English, German, Spanish, a bit of Arabic, and some Japanese. She joined the Department of Languages at SWCS enthusiastic about the program and its opportunities.

On using personal experiences to enhance her classes:

Some students are not really as interested in learning the language, but every time I sit with them I explain that learning a language is for their protection and their life. Special-operations are not just about using force, it's about using your brain in many circumstances. You need to know how to handle other people so you can be safe. They need to know the culture and get all the information they need without fighting.

On coming to the United States to teach:

I didn't want to be married to my cousin whom already has other wives. I didn't want to live that life. I wanted to learn. I wanted to be independent, not dependent on men like my sisters were. I was able to receive a scholarship and when I came I fell in love with the country. I didn't want to go back and miss the opportunity, not having the ability to work for what I learned for. It was a struggle, but I'm proud of where I am now.

On the personal benefits of teaching:

I like working with people. I love teaching. In my country, when you are born you become a teacher of the younger ones. It comes naturally, interacting with people.

On the importance of language in special-operations:

Teaching and learning the language is extremely important because of the role of the U.S. in the world. The better we teach the military to learn the cultures of others, they will be able to use those other countries for support. It's extremely important for them to be able to read, write, speak and understand the language, so they can be protected.

On coming to work at SWCS:

I really liked coming here and being part of the new ideas for the program. I have seen the ideas become improvements and the students are leaving the program with what they need.

Upcoming Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
20	21	22	23	24	NDU Distinguished Lecture Series 10 a.m to 11:30 p.m. JFK Auditorium	26
27	28	29	Robin Sage Ends	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	Special Forces Qualification Course Graduation 3 p.m. Crown Coliseum	8	9