

Dear Security Cooperation Colleagues,

It is hard to believe that a year has passed since former Under Secretary Rood, Lieutenant General Hooper (ret.), and I cut the ribbon that opened the doors to the Defense Security Cooperation University (DSCU). At that time, no one would have predicted the challenges that would face us all in our personal and professional lives. The COVID-19 pandemic has required us to adapt to a new reality that has demanded extreme flexibility. The Security Cooperation (SC) Workforce has risen to this challenge and excelled. I am proud to serve you and your University.

DSCU was established in response to the FY2017 National Defense Authorization Act, which cited the need to “establish and maintain a school to train, educate, and certify the security cooperation workforce.” From this call to action grew the SC Workforce Development Program, an ambitious initiative to certify and professionalize the entire SC Workforce. After one year, and despite the obstacles placed in our way by the pandemic, our workforce and University should be proud of what we have achieved together. Below are a few highlights from the past year.

- Twenty-six new Basic- and Intermediate-level courses were developed to provide you with the best and most current knowledge for your professional development. Over 25,000 discrete courses have been completed, over 13,000 personnel are in progress toward certification, over 2,000 personnel have already completed their basic level certification, and over 500 are certified at the highest level required for their position. These are impressive numbers for this transition year!
- DSCU partnered with the Defense Acquisition University, Naval Postgraduate School, and the Joint Military Attaché School to develop and deliver courses for our SC workforce. Additionally, DSCU faculty supported the George Washington University’s Elliott School training for Foreign Area Officers, under the auspices of the Defense Language and National Security Education Office.
- Despite COVID-19, SC leadership and action officers from across the enterprise maintained positive forward momentum and participated virtually in all scheduled governance events (SC Workforce Development Program Working Group Meeting, Annual Summit, and Senior Steering Board).

An anniversary offers an opportunity to reflect on our journey so far. Though we have accomplished much, there is still much to do. DSCU’s first year has been highlighted by standing up the University, initiating the transition year of the Workforce Certification Program, and adjusting to a completely virtual environment. Now we need to focus on the strategic and more difficult goals of advancing SC as a profession and further strengthening our curriculum and knowledge base while continuing to support those within our SC workforce as they move towards mandatory certification starting in January 2021.

Finally, I would like to announce the launch of the DSCU LinkedIn page. I envision this to be a location to highlight the latest topics of interest for the SC community. Please follow this site and be on the lookout for DSCU and SC updates. <https://www.linkedin.com/company/defense-security-cooperation-university/>

Thank you for your strong support and dedication in continuing to make this a professional workforce. DSCU will continue to adapt and modernize to ensure we remain a center of excellence for our SC Workforce. I look forward to what we will accomplish together as a team over the next 12 months. Stay safe!

Very Respectfully,

Cara Abercrombie