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Georgia Southern University building ethical skills in military leaders

December 21, 2022



Georgia Southern University's Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies recently partnered with key leaders of the U.S. Army's 188th Infantry Brigade from Fort Stewart for a Leadership and Professional Development session in Jenkins Hall Theater at the Armstrong Campus.

Professor Leisa Schwab, a part-time member of the department and former military judge advocate, presented "Introduction to Moral Theory" to the unit's officers and senior non-commissioned officers. The session focused on ethical leadership and communication techniques in the military.

"Military leaders are people entrusted with authority in a really broad range of areas and they have difficult decisions to make," Schwab said. "Whether in the heat of the moment or as an after-the- fact analysis, these ethical

frameworks can be helpful for making sense of these decisions."

The members of the audience were introduced to three different ethical theories, which were then discussed in relation to difficult situations that leaders may encounter in the military.

Schwab's session focused on how an understanding of philosophical ethics could help leaders both make better decisions and communicate more effectively. The military is made up of countless personalities and backgrounds. Just like any other group, company or society, the leadership must find ways for everyone to work together effectively.

"You may have two soldiers who have wildly different cultural backgrounds and they have deep disagreements about what is right or wrong in a certain situation," Schwab said. "Being able to help them communicate effectively about that can help maintain that kind of functional sense of community. That's so important."

Schwab said this was a fun opportunity to mix her love of teaching philosophy with her military background.



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