Transcript of War Studies Online Promotional Video, 2011

Anne-Lucie Norton
I’m Anne-Lucie Norton, the Executive Director of War Studies Online, which includes two programmes – War in the Modern World and Airpower in the Modern World. In War in the Modern World we study contemporary conflict from 1945 up to the present, including recent conflicts. There is no other masters degree that studies only contemporary conflict and takes it right up to the present, and that is delivered entirely online.

Student Crispin Thorold
So for me, as a journalist who has worked in conflict and post-conflict zones, I’ve had many opportunities to speak to the people most affected by them, but I’ve never had that chance to kind of take a step back to analyse academically these conflicts – why they happen? How they can be ended? And War in the Modern World is a wonderful opportunity for me to get that academic perspective on the working experience that I’ve had and allow me to improve in my working environment, whilst also really enjoying the opportunity to have that intellectual rigour.

Anne-Lucie Norton
We felt that there was a market for a completely web-delivered degree, because of the kind of students that we teach here in the Department. We have always had a fair sprinkling of mature students, people who work in government, people who are in the military, people who work in non-governmental organisations, and these are busy people, tend to be older. And we felt that if we created a degree to address that market we’d be successful. We’ve had over 100 graduates, all around the world, and we’ve got about 150 current students right now. We thought about everything we do in teaching a high level masters degree in a social science subject, and we made it flexible for students to be able to do this wherever they are in the world.

Dr David Easter, Academic Director
One of the keys to the course’s success has been its flexibility. We try and be very flexible and help students who are actually working full-time who also study part-time. We give options for students to take part in discussions at various times during the week, they can actually read and research at different times, they’re not tied down to one particular lecture at a certain time a day or one, say two hour slot for a seminar. There’s lots of time to actually take part in the discussions, to fit them in their own schedules. We can also allow students sometimes to take a break in their studies and then come back to it, if professional life gets too demanding for them.

Student Richard Stiennon
One of the great things about War in the Modern World is it travels with you wherever you go. As long as you have your laptop and an internet connection you can work on the course, and I’ve sat in cafes in Beirut and done my course or at home in the Netherlands or here at my mother’s house in London. The learning environment where you study War in the Modern World is very easy to use, you click through and you can see lecture notes and links off to different articles, you can see the area where there are discussions and it really is just a question of sitting there, clicking around for a few hours. And you have an induction period at the beginning of the course and you find, just by clicking around, very quickly it’s second nature.
It's like being in a discussion group on LinkedIn or Facebook. The only thing that was new was being introduced to all of the students from around the world, all with the same interest and all with tremendously varied backgrounds, they each had something to contribute, it was really fascinating.

Student Crispin Thorold
I was concerned that there wouldn’t be that human element but it’s amazing the way that the online system and the tutors at King’s are really good at bringing the best out of you, even though you don’t physically see people.

Anne-Lucie Norton
I think it might be the case that students could be apprehensive about a feared cold environment. I cannot stress enough how very different the atmosphere is. What they’re joining when they join us is a vibrant, lively, active seminar.

Student Gottfried Wessels
There is certainly a sense of a community spirit. I think most of us find ourselves in pretty much similar positions. We have taxing daytime jobs, we have a family and social life, and then there is the programme. So whenever you meet your fellow students online you know that they're putting in the efforts, as you do yourself, and that makes a feeling of a community, yeah, of a bond.

Student Crispin Thorold
You're not physically in the same place but by discussing these subjects and by getting people from such different backgrounds together for every unit, you do begin to get a sense of community, you do begin to have that feeling for your fellow students and also for the faculty. Okay, it's not the same as being physically there in a classroom, but for busy people with busy lives you can’t really find a better alternative.

Dr David Easter, Academic Director
The discussions we have are very, very good, better I would say than in a conventional classroom seminar. Because people have more time to think about what they want to write and say, even to research some things and then come back to you with links or photos or articles, to try and back up what they’re saying and develop their arguments. So it’s a much more profound actually debate than you get sometimes in classroom seminars.

Student Richard Stiennon
The great thing about this class is it seems like the world is acting for a laboratory for us. So just while we’re taking the class current events have been supporting or layering on top of what we’re studying in the class. It’s amazing.

Student Gottfried Wessels
I would certainly recommend this course to anyone who is interested. The combination of the online content provided by the tutors and the discussions as they unfold online with your fellow students makes for a great learning experience.
Student Richard Stiennon
I keep my eye open for other courses around the world and I've seen nothing that would come close to what King's College is offering. And I do recommend it, have recommended it highly to several people who are thinking about getting into it.

Student Crispin Thorold
What you're getting with this course is the flexibility to do it anywhere at any time, to fit it around your busy life, but at the same time you're getting an academic experience in the leading department in this subject in the UK, and one of the leading departments in the world.