### BASIC BATTLE ANALYSIS: KASSERINE PASS (Instructor Notes)

These instructor notes are provided to assist the ROTC instructor in teaching the Battle Analysis Methodology. It provides slides and notes of explanation for each step of the methodology from which to build a complete lesson plan. Additionally, each step is followed by an example of that step, which utilizes the Sidi Bou Zid engagement of the Battle of Kasserine Pass. The instructor has the option of teaching the class as it is presented in these notes, or instructing all the methodology first, followed by a complete Battle Analysis of Sidi Bou Zid. There are some sections of the example that are designated as ‘extra analysis’ that do not effect the engagement, but are relevant to the latter stages of the battle of Kasserine Pass. The intent is to allow maximum flexibility in building the lesson plan if class time is limited. Not all the information provided needs to be briefed, but is provided to insure proper background information for the instructor.

It is important to understand that this is a ‘Basic’ Battle Analysis and not ‘Advanced.’ The difference between the two is scope, and thus this Battle Analysis of Kasserine Pass does not include complete details. It centers on the 1st two engagements at Sidi Bou Zid and focuses primarily on armored units. This was done to limit the briefing time and concentrate on the primary engagements (Armor). However, this conforms to later instruction that suggests that the cadets focus on the most critical aspect of the battle/engagement. A great deal of research and slide preparation has been dedicated to creating this example, but it should be suggested to the cadets that they do not need to create such elaborate presentations. It is the analysis and conclusions that are important, not the presentation itself (moving icons and detailed slides were only meant to assist the instructor in quickly understanding the battle, and limit your preparation time).

**Note:** Some slides are animated with pictures or icons that will appear, disappear and/or move. The note (*Click Slide*) will alert you to activate these pictures/icons.

**Slide 1&2**: Military History and the Conduct of Battle.

1. “We must judge their performance, but judge them with humanity”. This phrase, coined by Dr. Glenn Robertson of the Combat Studies Institute, is often repeated by the Staff Ride Team at Fort Leavenworth, KS. One purpose of this statement is to remind students of the difficulties of command in war. During staff rides, judgment must often be rendered on decisions made by officers and soldiers during battle. The intent is to better understand others and in turn, better understand ourselves. As leaders, it is our duty to examine where other leaders have traveled before us, but we must be careful to not create an exercise of ridicule. Our ultimate goal is not to fault or praise the leader in battle, but to understand how they arrived at the decisions they made and gain insight on the many changing elements and time tested principles of warfare. The result of a Battle Analysis is a better understanding of the factors that went into success or failure on the battlefield and the ability to apply these insights toward future battlefields.
2. The quote used on Slide 2 is an example of instructions given by the US II Corps Commander, MG Lloyd Fredendall, just prior to one of America’s greatest defeats: Kasserine Pass. The quote illustrates the vague nature of his orders, which in turn gives us insight into some flaws in his leadership style. It is shown up front to be used as an attention step (or concrete experience, using the experiential learning model), and is designed to elicit an emotional response from the cadets. By allowing the cadets to read it, then soliciting comment from them, you may receive a note of ridicule regarding MG Fredendall’s vague verbiage. This is a good lead-in to explain that we need to avoid the pitfall of finding personal fault, while concentrating on analysis of the battle.

# Slide 3: What is Battle Analysis?

1. Definition.
   1. GEN Frederick M. Franks, Jr., who Commanded VII Corps during Desert Storm, wrote afterwards: “Training and leader development must include a historical perspective—especially of the conduct of battle.” Battle Analysis provides a method of understanding conflict and the complexity of military operations. Leaders must be able to integrate a variety of sources of information, determine the relevance of the information, and assess the situation based on the context. Battle Analysis Methodology provides a tool to accomplish the assessment.
   2. Slide: *Battle Analysis is a method used by the U.S. Army to provide a systematic approach to the study of battles, campaigns, and other operations*. It is designed as a general guide to ensure that significant actions or factors affecting the outcome of a battle or operation are not overlooked. The end result of the Battle Analysis is to derive lessons from a study of past battles, campaigns, or operations, which will give today’s Army leaders insight into problems they may encounter in contemporary operations. At its very core, a Battle Analysis is a tool to help military professionals understand some of the constants which govern military actions as well as the multitude of variables.

**Slide** **4**: Battle Analysis Steps.

1. The battle Analysis process contains four steps. Each step builds on the previous one to provide a logical order to the study.
   1. Define the subject. This step decides which battle, campaign, or other operation will be studied.
   2. Set the stage. This step examines the situation at the beginning of the operation chosen.
   3. Describe the action. This step reviews the conduct of the operation and looks for key events or decisions that affected the outcome.
   4. Draw lessons and insights. The last step involves analyzing the information gathered in the previous steps to formulate lessons and derive insights about contemporary operations.
2. The Battle Analysis Methodology provides a guide to conducting a study of a past battle, campaign, or operation. Battle Analysis should not be used as a lock-step approach to the study if it inhibits learning. It is not essential to use every element contained in the Battle Analysis process, but students should at least consider each element before deciding which may not be relevant. This analysis usually results in a written product or briefing. Steps 2 through 4 also provide a good format for either. Used with care, the Battle Analysis method can be applied to derive insights from any organized military operation, in war or in peace.

**Slide 5**: **Battle Analysis: Step 1--Define the Subject.**

1. Define the subject. In the first step of Battle Analysis, choose the subject (or have it chosen) for study. This will provide the parameters of the Battle Analysis and will enable the student to determine if sufficient research sources are available to support the study.

**Slide** **6**: Battle Analysis: Step 1--Define the Subject –Identify Event (where, who, when).

1. Determine where, who and when. Selecting a battle, campaign, or other operation limits the subject in time and space. Then ask the journalist’s questions, keeping in mind the time available for the study and the reasons for making it. Time will most likely limit the possibility of studying the entire European Campaign during World War II. Likewise, study of an entire war, or even an entire campaign or battle, to derive lessons useful for battalion or company level operations may be misguided
   1. Pick a subject appropriate to the level of interest. A study of how MacArthur’s headquarters planned the invasion of the Philippines will not be helpful if the subject of interest is battalion operations.
   2. Select a topic related to the types of lessons desired. Studies conducted to illuminate a low intensity conflict exercise would probably benefit more from examination of the Philippine Insurrection (1899-1902) than the Battle of the Bulge (December 1944-January 1945).

**Slide** **7**: Kasserine Pass: Step 1--Define the Subject-Identify Event (where, who, when).

1. The topic selected as an example is the Battle of Kasserine Pass. Your student text contains experts from the book “America’s First Battles”. This book is a compilation of ten opening battles in the nine major wars the United States has participated in prior to and including Vietnam. The book reviews the US preparations for war, to include doctrine, training and equipment, and it analyzes how US forces performed and adjusted to the realities of war. Kasserine Pass was chosen for its illustration of dramatic challenges and shortcomings in leadership, doctrine, and combined arms.
2. In this Battle Analysis, we will review the Strategic and Operational level briefly and focus on the tactical level, specifically the opening days of the battle, known as the engagements at Sidi Bou Zid. While the battle lasted from 14 February to 22 February and involved entire corps of multinational forces, we shall concentrate on the first two days and examine only brigade and below movements. To further focus the discussion, we will concentrate primarily on armored units and their actions.

**Slide** **8**: Battle Analysis: Step 1--Define the Subject-Determine & Evaluate Research Material.

1. Determine the sources. A trip to the library will determine whether enough sources exist to conduct a Battle Analysis. One source, especially a secondary source espousing a single point of view, is generally insufficient. Books and articles will make up the bulk of the resources, but other sources—video, audio, and electronic—should be examined as well. Look for a variety of sources in an effort to get a balanced account of what happened. Sources may include, but not be limited to, primary sources (documents from the actual event), secondary sources (written by someone who was not a participant), official histories, and maps.
   1. Books. Again, diversity of sources is important. Seek out memoirs, biographies, operational histories, and institutional histories. A good general history can provide information on the strategic setting.
   2. Articles. Articles from professional military and historical journals, such as branch journals, Military Review, Parameters, MHQ: The Quarterly Magazine of Military History, The Journal of Military History, and others can provide information on a battle as well as analysis.
   3. Other. Good documentaries provide general background and actual images from the battle being studied. Interviews with participants or oral histories, either as audio recordings or as transcriptions, can furnish insights, provided that individual biases and intentions are taken into account. The internet, contains many sites devoted to military history, some exclusively to particular battles, campaigns, wars, or other operations.
2. Evaluate the sources. Regardless of the number of sources available, each must be evaluated in terms of its content and bias. In most cases, the only way to do this is by a comparison of sources, weighing each against the other for accuracy, with primary sources given the greatest weight.
3. Content. Look at the type of information provided by the source. Ensure it is relevant to the subject and provides straightforward information. Accuracy of the information is, of course, relative to the author’s perspective, intent, and biases. Secondary sources can be evaluated in part by the types and breadth of the sources upon which they are based.
4. Bias and intent. Participants in actions often create sources to defend or justify their actions, or those of their organization or country. Others may intend to correct the errors and biases, perceived or otherwise, of others. Historians generally agree that no source is completely free of bias; hence, do not search for unbiased sources. Rather, seek to determine what biases and intentions exist, and if they have damaged the usefulness of the source.

**Slide** **9**: Kasserine Pass: Step 1--Define the Subject-Determine and Evaluate Research Material. (While many more sources were consulted, the following are listed to give the student an example of what types of reference material the students should utilize)

1. Books.
   1. *Kasserine Pass* by Martin Blumenson. This is a secondary source that contains an excellent overview of the entire battle. It contains detailed strategic and operational background, as well as tactical level description and analysis (Mr. Blumenson’s contribution to America’s First Battles was also used, as mentioned above).
   2. *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations* from *TheUnited States Army in World War I*. by George F. Howe. Howe’s book is part of a large series commonly known as the “Green Books”. These volumes are the official history of the Army in World War II. Years in the making, they contain detailed and accurate accounts based on primary sources. There is more factual description than analysis, which is generally left to the reader.
2. Articles.
   1. *Armor Magazine*. (November-December, 1982) “Sidi Bou Zid – A Case History of Failure” by Captain William Betson. A magazine article that provides specific tactical analysis of the Sidi Bou Zid engagement. This article has the advantage of being an analysis conducted by an armor officer (tactical background) who was also serving as an instructor at the USMA (historical background).
3. Other

a. Center of Military History Publication: Staff Ride Background Materials. This is a collection of primary and secondary sources that contains doctrinal manuals, after action reports and eye witness accounts from both sides. This material can be found at their Web Site: [www.army.mil/cmh-pg/books/Staff-Rides/kasserine.htm](http://www.army.mil/cmh-pg/books/Staff-Rides/kasserine.htm)

**Slide** **10**: **Battle Analysis: Step 2—Review the Setting (Set the Stage).**

1. Setting the stage establishes the foundation for the study by reviewing the context of the operation being considered. Reviewing the setting in this manner prepares for both the description and the analytical phases of the process in steps 3 and 4. The level of detail gathered in this step will depend upon the purpose of the study as well as the audience for which it is intended. For example, an abundance of detail on the causes of World War II is probably not necessary for an analysis of the battle of Okinawa. But a thorough knowledge of the campaign in the Pacific will be required. Step 2 is broken into four parts:
   1. Strategic/Operational Overview
   2. Area of Operations
   3. Compare Forces
   4. State the Mission & Describe Initial Disposition

**Slide** **11**: Battle Analysis: Step 2--Set the Stage- Part A: Strategic/Operational Overview.

1. Strategic Overview – Produce a brief background leading up to the battle to be analyzed.
   1. Identify the war in which this battle was fought to include the time frame and areas covered.
   2. Objectives of the principle antagonists. What were the intentions of the principles?.
   3. Briefly overview the campaign. What were the events leading up to this battle?.

**Slide** **12**: Kasserine Pass: Step 2--Set the Stage- Part A: Strategic/Operational Overview.

1. The Battle of Kasserine Pass occured during World War II in the Mediterranean Theater of Operations. While World War II in Europe lasted from September 1939 to April 1945, the Mediterranean Theater witnessed major army operations from September 1940 in Egypt (an Italian army attacked British forces) until the end of the war in Italy. With the entry of the United States in the war in December 1941, the Western Allies, primarily the United States and Britain, began the formulation of an overall strategy utilizing their combined forces. While the United States initially argued for an operation to invade France in 1942, logistical limitations prevented such a bold move. The invasion of France was therefore moved to 1943 (and would again be delayed until 1944), but Roosevelt and Churchill (with pressure from the Soviet Union) insisted that an operation should occur somewhere in 1942. The Allies finally agreed to Northwest Africa. Several advantages would be gained with this operation. *Slide: a. Creation of a Second Allied Front to relieve some pressure from the hard pressed Soviet Union (who was receiving the brunt of a second major German offensive in the Caucasus/Stalingrad area). b. Control of the Suez Canal and sea lanes in the Mediterranean to avoid the long shipping routes around the Horn of Africa. c. The ability to attack weaker German forces*. The Allies landed on 8 November 1942, at three separate sights in Morocco and Algeria in an operation known as TORCH. This course of action proved to be very beneficial for reasons beyond the stated objectives: the green American troops were given the opportunity to practice war; it allowed for the accumulation of men and equipment; and it allowed the Allies to test their equipment, and more importantly, test the newly formed alliance, prior to attacking the Germans in Europe.
2. The Axis strategic objectives were more defensive in nature, trying to prevent the Allies from using the Mediterranean for shipping, protecting their southern flank and trying to keep the Italians in the war. They had been trying to gain control of North Africa since the ill fated attack by the Italians into Egypt in September 1940. From that point onward, until the Allies landed in Northwest Africa, the British 8th Army and the German/Italian forces, led primarily by Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, conducted a continuous see-saw campaign between Tunisia and Egypt. The advantage kept shifting between the two forces as one side overextend its supply lines, and were pushed back by the enemy until they in turn overextended their own supply lines.

**Slide 13**

1. The final shift on the Egyptian and Libyan front occurred at El Alamein in 1942, 4 days prior to the TORCH landings, when the British 8th Army, under General Bernard Montgomery, began to push the Panzer Army Afrika back toward Tunisia. After TORCH, the Axis forces were in danger of being crushed between two major Allied forces. A race then ensued, with Rommel rushing westward back toward Tunisia (with Montgomery on his trail), while the newly formed British First Army moved east from Algeria to capture the ports of Bizerte and Tunis. Field Marshall Kesselring, the ranking German in the Theater, attempted to counter this move by rushing troops into Tunisia to secure Rommel’s rear area. (*Click Slide*)

**Slide 14**

1. By January 1943, the Axis had won the race with a newly formed German 5th Panzer Army (under General von Arnim) halting the British 1st Army in actions just west of the two ports. (*Click Slide*) The Allies were forced to go on the defensive due to stiff German resistance, poor weather and very extended supply lines. They established a defensive line along a mountain range known as the Eastern Dorsal, and positioned forces blocking several passes. After a series of smaller battles, the US II Corps took up positions to the south, along a 50 mile front from Fondouk Gap to Maizila Pass, protecting the French XIX Corps’ right flank. The 1st Armored Division was the Corps’ main combat force. (*Click Slide*) The Germans conducted a series of attacks at several passes and demonstrated to both sides that the French XIX Corps, holding the Allied center, was critically weak. (*Click Slide*) The First Army commander, British Lieutenant General Sir Kenneth Anderson, responded by detaching Combat Command B from the 1st Armored Division and placing it behind the French line. This action, however, spread the US II Corps dangerously thin. By the end of January, as Rommel’s forces, known as Panzer Army Afrika, occupied defensive positions in southern Tunisia, (*Click Slide*) the Germans had identified that they had an opportunity to strike a blow to the Allied First Army, prior to any offensive that could be conducted by Montgomery’s Eighth Army in the south. The Axis therefore planned a major offensive in the Area of Faid Pass and Gafsa (the extreme right of the 1st Army defenses) for mid-February. (*Click Slide*)

**Slide** **15**: Battle Analysis: Step 2--Set the Stage-Part B: Area of Operations.

1. Study the area of operations. Look at weather and terrain. What was the impact of weather? Which side gained an advantage from the terrain?

**Note:** Encourage use of the OAKOC factors when studying terrain—Observation and fields of fire, Avenues of approach, Key terrain, Obstacles, and Cover and concealment,

**Slide** **16**: Kasserine Pass: Step 2--Set the Stage-Part B: Area of Operations.

1. Weather: Although weather did not play a great role in the actual Sidi Bou Zid engagement, it was significant in the events leading up to Kasserine Pass. In November 1942, as the British First Army approached Bizarte and Tunis along the northern routes from the TORCH landing sites, severe rains turned the ground into a muddy quagmire. (*Click Slide*) A great advantage thus shifted to the German defenders and the Allied offensive ground to a halt (See Logistics for further problems). The Allies decided to await the end of the rainy season (March) for further offensive operations. As a result, the US II Corps was moved south to establish defensive positions along the Eastern Dorsal. (*Click Slide*)
2. Terrain: Stretching down the center of Tunisia, just south of Tunis, are two mountain ranges, called the Eastern (*Click Slide*) and Western Dorsal (*Click Slide*). The more dominant chain is the Eastern Dorsal and it had the advantage of being tied to salt marshes in the south. However, to traverse from the east or west through either chain, one must utilize one of the several passes through the mountains. (*Click Slide*) This is why the 1st AD positioned its combat commands adjacent to these passes, defending the Western exits.

**Slide** **17**

* 1. Sidi Bou Zid: From the US Army in World War II: “There was considerable mirage. The dips and folds of the plain were for the most part gradual, but several steep-sided deeper wadies creased it in general from north to south. Monotonous brown-grey of the landscape was marked at various points by patches of darker cactus, but the geometric figures of cultivated fields and orchards, and by small clusters of low, block shaped white buildings.”

**Note**: Instructor may want to list the acronym, OAKOC and utilize the blackboard for this portion of the lesson. You also may want to take this time to orient the map and point out the locations of Sidi Bou Zid, Faid and Maizila Passes, Djebel (DJ) Lessouda, DJ Ksaira and Garet Hadid.

* 1. Observation and fields of fire: Being an open, high desert, observation appears to favor the defense in the Sidi Bou Zid area. Since movement and dust trails can be seen from long distances and troop strength estimates can be made from the surrounding hills and ridges, it is difficult for an attacker to conceal his intentions and easy for a defender to react to them. However, from the description above, we can determine that the land was deceptively rolling. Therefore, long range fields of fire were not always possible. An attacking force may have the advantage of concealment that is difficult to view from the defender’s positions (in other words, the defender may think he has clear fields of fire, but may actually have a depression or wadi to his front, invisible to the naked eye).
  2. Avenues of Approach. There are three areas from which an attacker can approach Sidi Bou Zid: From the east, through the narrow, rugged passes at Faid, or from the south at Maizila Pass that, in turn, splits into two advances – northward, vicinity of Djebel Ksaira or north-westward to Bir el Hafa. This limitation forced the Germans to face three disadvantages: 1) The Germans were limited to the amount of troops that could be moved through the passes at any given time and had to move through them in compact formations, while the defender was free to mass forces on the western exits of the pass; 2) Maneuver would be limited through the constraining passes; 3) Deception would also be limited – the US forces knew the Germans would have to use one or both of the passes, and thus could prepare accordingly.
  3. Key Terrain. Djebel Ksaira and Djebel Lessouda were identified as the key terrain by the II Corp Commander (and we can assume he meant decisive as well). However, this author feels that the key and decisive pieces of terrain were Faid and Maizila Passes for the reasons named above. (The Germans had the advantage of actually possessing Faid Pass prior to the battle. While they did not have significant defensive positions in the pass, previous battles allowed them to occupy the areas around it and gave them the capability of keeping the Americans out of the pass with artillery fire.)
  4. Obstacles. The only natural obstacles were the constraining nature of the passes and some deep wadi’s as mentioned above. But the Americans did not add many man-made obstacles (mines) of their own.
  5. Cover and Concealment. See Observation and fields of fire. The defenders had the same advantages/disadvantages of the attacker. Cover and concealment in this area was difficult at best and formations/equipment could be easily identified from the surrounding hills and from the air.

**Slide** **18**: Battle Analysis: Step 2--Set the Stage-Part C: Compare Forces.

Determine the strengths and weakness of opposing forces. There are eight factors to consider (This can be done in any order. The order given was the best way to present for Kasserine Pass. Also other factors can be added if needed, or deleted if they do not apply). (*Click Slide eight times to show each factor, then click again for box around first factor*) Factors include:

1. Size and composition. How many units? Troops? Major weapons systems? How were they organized?

**Slide** **19**: Kasserine Pass: Step 2--Set the Stage-Part C: Compare Forces. (Note, this slide is not a complete order of battle – only the major participating units are shown)

1. US Compostion:
   1. US armored divisions of 1942 contained 6 battalions of armor: 2 light battalions equipped with the M3 Stuart tanks (inferior to most of the German tanks used in Tunisia) and 4 medium battalions equipped with either the M3 Lee or M4 Sherman. The division had brigade level headquarters, called Combat Commands, which could task organize with any number and type of battalion as the mission required. At the time of Kasserine, an effort was being made to supply all US units with the superior M4, and the majority of the units that saw battle at Kasserine were M4 equipped.
   2. The US 1st Armored Division, however, was spread thin in their defensive area. At Faid Pass, the Americans had only allocated one combat command (CCA) which included:
      1. (*Click Slide*) One tank battalion of about 50 M4s(3rd Battalion, 1st Armored Regiment) and a company of tank destroyers of about 12 M3s (A/701st TD)
      2. (*Click Slide*) One artillery battalion of self propelled 105mm howitzers (91st FA) and one battalion of towed 155mm howitzers (2-17 FA)
      3. (*Click Slide*) A light infantry regiment (168th IN) (2 battalions and pieces of several other units. Once the battle began, the regimental commander gathered these pieces under his command and formed a 3rd battalion sized ad-hoc unit on Garet Hadid.)
   3. (*Click Slide*) A mechanized battalion (1st Battalion, 6th Armored Infantry) a light tank battalion (1st Battalion, 13th AR) and a tank destroyer company (C/701st TD) were in division reserve, located at Sbeitla, about 40 miles from Sidi Bou Zid.
   4. (*Click Slide*) To the North of CCA, CCC was located 12-15 miles from DJ Lessouda, and would become part of the engagement on February 15th. It had a company of Sherman Tanks (G/13th AR), an armored infantry battalion (3rd/6th IN) two self propelled artillery batteries (105mm) and a company of Tank Destroyers (B/701st TD). It would also receive an armor battalion (2nd/1st AR) detached from CCB.
2. The two German Panzer Divisions to be used in this operation, The 10th Panzer (*Click Slide*) and the 21st Panzer (*Click Slide*) were organized into two Kampfgruppe (KG) each (brigade sized units). Their units were far less standardized than the US Divisions and exact numbers were difficult to establish. Battle losses and mechanical difficulties also affect the data (numbers on the diagrams are only estimates). According to the official US History, the northern two KGs (10th Panzer Division) had 110 tanks and the southern two KGs (21st Panzer Division) had 91 (assumptions using the normal organization tables were then made to build this and other slides). The Germans utilized 4 tank battalions and 4 mechanized/motorized infantry battalions (panzer grenadiers) and a hodge podge of anti tank units (panzerjager) with both towed guns and self propelled guns (mounted on older tank hulls).

**Slide** **20**

1. Technology. What was the level of battlefield technology (deployed, not theoretical)? Did one side have an advantage over the other?

**Slide** **21**

1. (*Click Slide*)The main US self propelled tank destroyers at the time of Kasserine Pass were half tracks mounting a 75mm gun similar to the one mounted on the Sherman. This vehicle, the M3, was only an interim vehicle while the US developed a fully tracked tank destroyer. While the gun had good penetrating power, the crew was obviously vulnerable to enemy fire with its light armor and open crew area.
2. (*Click Slide*) The main US tank in 1943, and for the rest of the war, was the M4 Sherman. As a result of this and many other battles in World War II, the Sherman tank received a bad reputation as an inferior tank. One reason for this was its tendency to catch fire easily once it had been penetrated (consequently, the Sherman received the dubious nickname of “Ronson” after a famous lighter that had the motto of “lights first time, every time”). This problem, combined with the presence of German heavy tanks and superior anti-tank weapons (particularly the famed German ‘88’) made the Sherman appear to be heavily outclassed. However the British had been employing the Sherman for months prior to Kasserine Pass with great success against the German Afrika Korps. The Sherman was in fact superior to the most numerous German tank of the time, the PanzerKampfwagon III (PzKpfw III) (*Click Slide*: *compare gun size and armor differences*). The Sherman easily outgunned the PzKpfw III and was nearly the equal of the second most numerous tank, the PzKpfw IV (*Click Slide*). (German battalions of the time had 1 PzKpfw IV company and three PzKpfw III companies [22 tanks each] while the US medium battalion had three companies of Shermans [17 tanks each]).
3. If the Sherman received an undeserved poor reputation, it was the German PzKpfw VI, the Tiger, that received just the opposite reaction (*Click Slide*). Possibly the best known tank of World War II, the Tiger was just beginning to arrive in Tunisia and was rapidly thought to be invincible.

**Slide** **22** This slide shows the equality of the Sherman and the PzKpfw IV and the huge difference with the Tiger. Show the PzKpfw IV, then (*Click Slide twice*) to show the Tiger’s penetrating capabilities:

The armor was impenetrable by the US 75mm frontally and the 88mm gun could defeat any US or British tank at great range. However, it was still few in number and mechanically unreliable, restricting its use on this battlefield. While the 88mm gained a healthy respect from the Allies when mounted on the Tiger or used as an anti-tank gun, this battle saw much more use of the German 75mm and 50mm guns mounted on tanks and with anti-tank units.

1. The bottom line of this analysis is: We should analyze the battle with the understanding that the opposing tanks were, for the most part, equally matched in quality. Since we can discount a drastic mismatch of equipment, we must look elsewhere to explain the lopsided results of this engagement.

**Slide** **23**

1. Doctrine and training. Was tactical doctrine understood and used? What was the level of training and experience?

**Slide** **24**

1. One of the main US failures in this engagement occurred well before the battle began. Shocked by the massed panzer formations of 1939 and 1940, and the ease which the Germans seemed to break through the static lines of their enemies, the US attempted to find a solution. In 1941, the US developed the tank destroyer concept. While not a separate branch, tank destroyers had their own unique doctrine. To defeat massed German panzers, US doctrine envisioned separate, independent TD battalions, with large reconnaissance elements, to find the enemy formations and rapidly defeat them (thus their motto: Seek, Strike and Destroy). To accomplish this mission, the US embarked on the development of a new, fully tracked vehicle that relied on high speed (thus light armor) and a powerful gun. The unfortunate result of this new doctrine, however, was that the tank was not seen as a tank killer itself. The tank’s primary role was to exploit the enemy rear areas. Killing enemy tanks was a secondary mission for armor, leaving the German panzers to the tank destroyers. While the US tried to put an offensive spin to this new tank destroyer concept, it was still essentially defensive in nature. As much as the doctrine writers tried to incorporate the TD into the offensive, it was the tank that spearheaded most of the attacks, not the TD. This paradox was not identified until the doctrine was put into practice, and even then, not fully rectified until the end of the war. As a result, the 1st Armored Division tank crews at Kasserine Pass entered a battle in a role not conducive to their main function, and tank destroyer crews would fight with a piece of equipment that could not seem to find its designated role.

**Slide** **25**

1. Logistics. Did either side have an advantage in supplies and transportation?

**Slide** **26**

1. Much like weather, logistics had a lot to do with the events leading up to the engagement. As you can see from the TORCH landings map, (Slide 13) the Allied 1st Army had an over-extended logistics line by the time it met stiff German resistance in Northern Tunisia. The long distances, along with rail problems and the mechanical loss of many of its worn out trucks, left the 1st Army critically short of equipment, particularly spare parts. These logistical constraints in turn limited the amount of combat units the Allies were able to field on the front line. While additional units were available back in Morocco, it was felt that they could not be brought forward until the logistics had been improved.

**Slide** **27**

1. Intelligence. What types of intelligence assets were available to the antagonists (human—spot reports from front-line troops, information from deserters and spies), imagery (photo reconnaissance), signals (ranging from flags to GPS)? How did intelligence figure into planning?

**Slide** **28**

1. Intelligence was a great factor in the establishment of 1 AD’s disposition prior to the engagement. The 1st Army Commander and Staff, backed up by Eisenhower’s G2, was convinced that the Germans would attack in mid February. However, they were also convinced that the attack would occur in the northern areas of their line. Even though the II Corp intelligence had amassed a large amount of hard evidence that the attack would occur in the south, the intelligence staff estimates and message intercepts convinced the 1st Army Headquarters to ignore this information. The 1st Army, therefore, had massed combat power in the north, including the detached CCB from the 1st AD. CCB, assigned as the 1st Army reserve and backing up the weak French XIX Corps, left the rest of the division to conduct a very weak economy of force.

**Slide** **29**

1. Condition and morale. How high (or low) was morale at the beginning of the operation? Did it change over time? If so, what caused the change? Did leadership affect morale for better or worse?

**Slide** **30**

1. While the US morale would decrease as the battle progressed, the initial fight at Sidi Bou Zid demonstrated that the Americans were more than willing to fight. There was little panic observed and even the light infantry units which were immediately surrounded, stood their ground and fought on. US tankers fought heroically against much greater numbers. However, it was the intangible battle hardness and savvy of the Germans that often gave them the advantage over ‘green’ GIs. No amount of training can fully prepare a soldier for the ‘first fight.’
2. It should be noted that in the engagements that followed Sidi Bou Zid, incidents of panic and low morale were frequently observed and had a negative effect on the US effort. It is in these follow on fights, that the stand-off leadership style of the Corps commander was felt. MG Fredendall, the II Corps commander, rarely left his Headquarters and felt a battle could be fought from there (as a side note, his HQ was 60 to 70 miles from the front, built with underground bunkers, which required an enormous engineer effort and contained a large guard contingent). Visitation of the troops seemed to be of little value to him. In contrast, as observed by Martin Blumenson in his book, *Kasserine Pass*, MG Harmond would have just the opposite effect on the Corps. He arrived on 23 February from the 2nd Armored Division (upon request from the Theater Commander, General Eisenhower) and took tactical control of the battle. While he was on the battlefield after Rommel made the decision to withdraw, Blumenson notes that Hammonds personal visits to the battlefield, his siting of tank positions and his positive and winning attitude, seemed to considerably improve morale. Blumenson also re-enforces the importance of personal leadership on morale with a quote from Rommel: “There are always moments when the commander’s place is not back with his staff, but up with the troops. It is sheer nonsense to say that maintenance of the men’s morale is the job of the battalion commander alone. The higher the rank, the greater the effect of the example.”

Note: Extra Analysis: This post Sidi Bou Zid analysis of morale can be omitted if time is limited.

**Slide** **31**

1. Command, control, and communications. How effective was each side’s command and control system? How did communications (or lack of it) affect of operation?

**Slide** **32**

1. Both sides had command relationship problems, but only the American problems affected battlefield performance at Sidi Bou Zid.
2. Germans: Throughout the Battle of Kasserine Pass, the Germans suffered from a lack of unity of command. The initial plan called for General Ziegler (von Arnim’s Deputy of the 5th Panzer Army) to command the 10th and 21st Panzer Divisions for the Sidi Bou Zid engagement, and then to pass the 21st Panzer to Field Marshall Rommel (Panzer Army Afrika) for his attack on Gafsa to the south. This attack had two separate operations, which were controlled by two separate armies, which shared a division and had no coordinating higher headquarters in Tunisia. Technically, the two army commanders answered directly to the Italian High Command (Commando Supremo) and the ranking German officer in the theater, Field Marshall Kesselring, needed to get their approval on operations. This poor command relationship did not affect the engagement at Sidi Bou Sid, and since the Allies withdrew from Gafsa prior to Rommel’s attack, the 21st Panzer was never transferred to him. However, army and command rivalries (Rommel and Arnim disliked each other) would become a factor during the follow-on engagements at Kasserine Pass, when elements of the 10th Panzer, particularly the new Tiger tanks, were withheld from Rommel by Arnim and robbed the follow-on attack of considerable combat power. (FM Rommel would later be named the Panzer Army Group Commander, thus finally giving the two armies a central command, but not until after the battle of Kasserine Pass was over)

Note: Extra Analysis: This post Sidi Bou Zid analysis of German C3 can be omitted if time is limited.

1. Americans: As mentioned in the first quote of the class (Slide 2), MG Fredendall’s verbal orders were often vague and imprecise. (While the quote was an attempt at OPSEC over the phone, it was simply too unorthodox to be considered a proper movement order for an entire brigade sized element. Other examples also exist of Fredendall’s imprecise manner such as: “Go get ‘em at once….Go smash ‘em” and: “Everything is rosy”, the troops “went to town”). These orders allowed for the possibility of misinterpretation and thus confusion of subordinate missions. However, Fredendall complicated his command structure further by regularly skipping the chain of command. Personally disliking the 1st Armored Division Commander, MG Orlando Ward, Fredendall often bypassed his headquarters and made direct coordination with the Combat Commanders. (The Slide 2 quote was an example of such an order given directly to CCB)

**Slide** **33**

1. This practice had disastrous consequences with the II Corp operations order for the defense of Sidi Bou Zid. The order specified the exact locations of Combat Command A’s battalions and some companies (thus, II Corp not only bypassed the division HQ, but also bypassed BG Mcquillen’s Combat Command HQ). To make matters worse, since MG Fredendall rarely left his HQ, this overly directive order was based only on a map reconnaissance. The order stated that the key terrain features were DJ Ksaira and DJ Lessouda and should be defended with a battalion each. In reality, these two areas were not mutually supportive, and did not even properly cover the most decisive area, the Faid Pass itself. The result was that two infantry battalions were defending hills that served little purpose in the actual defense.

**Slide** **34**

1. Leadership. How experienced and effective were leaders? What were their leadership styles?

**Slide** **35 (This slide summarizes previous leadership comments about MG Fredendall)**

1. If one person can be faulted for the US loss at Kasserine Pass (and he was – he was relieved of command and sent back to the US after this battle) it was MG Fredendall. So far we have seen his vague and peculiar orders, lack of situational awareness of the battlefield, and his penchant for bypassing the chain of command. We can also add to this list his single-mined approach with other officers, both peers and subordinates. Not only was MG Fredendall a difficult man to get along with (he had open disdain for the Allies, and as noted, personally disliked MG Ward, who returned this sentiment) but he also had a bad practice of disregarding the opinions of subordinates (particularly Ward’s), and discounting recommendations by those that had a better appreciation of the terrain or situation. Many subordinate officers in 1st AD identified the flaws in the CCA defense, yet there was an inability by these officers to affect the plan.

**Slide 36**: Battle Analysis: Step 2--Set the Stage-Part D: State the Mission & Describe Initial Disposition.

1. State the missions of the opposing forces. Briefly state the objectives for each force, such as seizing and holding key terrain, partial or total destruction of the opposing force, etc. What plans were undertaken to achieve the objective? Did other options exist to achieve the mission other than those undertaken? (Instructor Note: this last question may be used as open discussion or moved to step 4)
2. Describe the initial disposition of forces. What were the locations and strengths of the opposing units? How were forces deployed? Which units were selected to lead the attack or defense?

**Slide** **37:** Kasserine Pass: Step 2--Set the Stage-Part D: State the Mission.

1. As directed by the Corps order, the mission of CCA was to defend the Faid and Maizila Passes. As mentioned earlier, the 1st Army saw the II Corps area as an economy of force effort and thus only an Armor Battalion, reinforced with an infantry regiment, had been allocated to their defense. The objective was to hold the passes, and protect the French XIX Corps’ flank until the 1st Army could accumulate sufficient power to continue the offensive into Tunisia.
2. The German 5th Panzer Army’s mission was to conduct an attack into Sidi Bou Zid and destroy American forces to allow for future operations to the north. The Germans, however, lacked unity of effort and never had a clearly stated objective upon which the senior commanders could agree. While the objective of securing Rommel’s new western flank was understood, the follow-on objective after the initial attack was never fully accepted by all. General von Arnim, 5th Panzer Army commander, wanted to eventually resume the attack in the north, and saw the southern attack as only a diversion in preparation for a larger offensive by his army. Field Marshal Rommel, who was to command a separate attack to the south, using the 21st Panzer Division after Arnim’s mission was complete, saw this attack as a possibility to create a decisive defeat of the enemy and drive deep into their rear. This constant lack of a well defined objective and the fight for forces between the two competing commanders, would weaken subsequent attacks and eventually exhaust Rommel’s will to continue the offensive.

Note: The above section is somewhat redundant with the ‘extra analysis’ of the German C3, but should be covered if the C3 Analysis is dropped.

**Slide** **38:**

1. US Initial Disposition: (Click Slide) Elements of the 81st Reconnaissance Battalion screened Maizila Pass to provide early warning to CCA. (Click Slide) 3rd Battalion, 168th Infantry defended Djebel Ksaira and once the battle began, (Click Slide) the 168th Regimental HQ, collecting several companies up, defended Garet Hadid. Both formations were generally oriented south, to halt any enemy attack coming from the Maizila Pass. (Click Slide) 2-17th Artillery Battalion and the 91st Artillery Battalion (minus one battery) were just south-east of Sidi Bou Zid and (*Click Slide*) 3rd Battalion, 1st Armored Regiment (minus one company) was just south-west of it, with Company A, 701st Tank Destroyer (minus one platoon), prepared to counterattack. The detached artillery battery, tank company and tank destroyer platoon were all attached to the 2nd Battalion, 168 Infantry, (Click Slide) that defended Djebel Lessouda, and was oriented east and south. Finally, (*Click Slide*) an infantry battalion and light tank battalion were located at Sbeitla, 40 miles to the north west, in division reserve.

As dawn of 14 February approached, the tank company and tank destroyer platoon of the 2/168th were moving to defensive positions between DJ Lessouda and DJ Ksaira. Since CCA understood that the corps order had emplaced the two infantry battalions in unsupporting positions, mobile forces were used to cover the ground between the two hills. Infantry units patrolled aggressively at night, and the tank company covered the area by day. Since these two activities rotated at dusk and dawn, the Americans were extremely vulnerable at these two times. The Germans stuck at dawn, just at the ‘shift change’.

**Slide** **39:**

1. German Plan
   1. Kampfgruppe (KG) Gerhardt (10th PZR) (Click Slide) was the lead element through Faid Pass. It was to encircle DJ Lessouda and cut the Faid-Sbeitla road, preventing any reinforcements from Sbeitla.
   2. KG Reimann (10th PZR) (Click Slide) was to move along the Faid-Sbeitla road and engage enemy forces between DJ Lessouda and Sidi Bou Zid.
   3. KG Schuette (21st PZR) (Click Slide) was the lead element through Maizila Pass, and it was to travel on the road north through DJ Ksaira and Garet Hadid and approach Sidi Bou Zid from the south-east.
   4. KG Stenkhoff (21st PZR) (Click Slide) was to move through Maizila pass and travel north-west toward Bir el Hafa, then swing to the north-east and approach Sidi Bou Zid from the south-west, cutting off any US forces once linked up with KG Gerhardt of the 10th Panzer Division.
   5. The two divisions were making simultaneous attacks, and intended to link up at Sidi Bou Zid, and trap US forces between them.

**Slide** **40**: **Battle Analysis: Step 3--Describe the Action.**

1. The third step of a Battle Analysis, describe the action, encompasses what might be thought of as the traditional approach to operational military history, that is, taking a normally chaotic event or series of events and attempting to impose order to be able to understand what happened.
2. Describe the opening moves of the battle, campaign, or operation. Briefly examine the initial actions by each side. Did one side accrue an advantage in the opening phase? Was the opening phase important to the overall outcome?
3. Detail the major phases. The intent here is to provide a degree of order to the Battle Analysis by breaking the operation being studied into major phases. This effort to understand the operation may actually presume a structure on events that was not apparent to the participants, and may not have existed in real time. It is necessary, however, to impose such an order if a study is to be undertaken at all. Major phases of an operation may be stated as movement to contact, initial assault, breakthrough, counterattack, exploitation, and pursuit. The key objective in this portion of the Battle Analysis is to look for events or decisions that shifted the course of battle toward one side, or otherwise affected the outcome. Causes will be found in Steps 2 and 3, and effects of those causes should be evident in Step 3. Step 4 will put those two groups together which in turn should result in relevant insights.
4. State the outcome. Review the course of the operation as laid out in the earlier parts of this step, and decide if there was a clear victor, if one side came out with some advantage, or if the operation produced no clear advantage to either side. Questions to ask include: Did either side achieve its objectives? What were losses to personnel and equipment? What was the immediate and long-term impact of this operation on the larger campaign, war, or other event under study?

**Slide** **41**: **Kasserine Pass: Step 3--Describe the Action**.

14 February – German Attack

* Click Slide
* Dawn. The 21st Panzer moves south, then north through the Maizila pass. The 81st Recon Battalion did not provide any warning to CCA of this movement until 0940. An entire Recon Company, with all its vehicles, was captured.
* Click Slide
* Dawn. The 10th Panzer Division moved through Faid Pass as Dawn approached. A dust storm covered their movement and noise (weather effect).
* Dawn. G/3rd Battalion/1st AR and the platoon of tank destroyers move to their positions in front of Faid Pass. They are quickly overwhelmed and destroyed. (One of the first tanks destroyed was the commander’s tank, which had the only radio that could communicate with the HQ on Lessouda)
* CCA began to get reports of enemy movement through Faid Pass. 3rdBn/1st AR was sent forward. LTC Hightower was ordered to “clear up the situation.” The two companies of tanks and two platoons of tank destroyers moved toward Post de Lessouda.
* Click Slide
* LTC Hightower took up positions to block to the east, one company to the north, one company to the south, and the TDs in between.
* Click Slide
* 0900. KG Gerhardt rounded DJ Lessouda and destroyed the battery of artillery to the west of the hill. They searched for the 21st Panzer units to the south, but both KGs are delayed due to soft sand (terrain effect). At this point, the Germans have deviated from their original plan, and have actually piecemealed their originally overwhelming, two division attack.
* 0930. LTC Hightower learns of the encircling force to the north-west of DJ Lessouda and shifted the southern company to his left rear flank to meet this new threat.
* Click Slide
* 1000-1100. 2-17 Artillery began to move west to alternate positions, but was hit by German aircraft and direct fire and was destroyed.
* Click Slide
* 3rd/1st AR and 91st Artillery began a delaying battle to the west.
* Click Slide
* 1st Bn, 6th Armored Infantry (the division reserve) and a company of light tanks (M3 Stuarts) under LTC Kern moved from Sbeitla to what was to become known to 1st AD as Kern’s Crossroads.
* Click Slide
* Noon. KG Stenkhoff began to arrive south-west of Sidi Bou Zid. LTC Hightower reoriented his and two other tanks to meet this threat. His tank was destroyed, but he survived.
* Click Slide
* Dusk. 3/1st AR and 91st Artillery finally withdraw past 1/6 IN. 3/1st AR had only 7 tanks left.
* MG Ward was unable to identify the enemy divisions, nor exact number of enemy tanks.
* The 168th IN Regiment was marooned behind enemy lines. CCA was ineffective.
* II Corp began to react to new threat at 1530 by pulling CCC south. 2nd Battalion, 1st AR (LTC Alger) was detached from CCB (Army Reserve) and attached to CCC.
* Late on 14 Feb, MG Fredendall gave orders to MG Ward:

“As Regards action in the Sidi Bou Zid area, concentrate tomorrow on clearing up situation there and destroying enemy. Thereafter collect strong mobile force in Sbeitla area ready for action in any direction…”

* At 0140, 15 Feb, MG Ward gave orders to CCC, commanded by COL Stack:

“Mission to Combat Command C: ...This force will move south, and by fire and maneuver, destroy the enemy armored forces which have threatened our hold on the Sbeitla area. It will so conduct its maneuver as to aid in the withdrawal of our forces in the vicinity of Djebel Ksaira, eventually withdrawing to the area north of Djebel Hamra for further action.”

* Bottom Line: 1st AD had planned to send CCC in to rescue the 168th IN Regiment on the 15th of February. However, there were no details on exactly how that was to be accomplished.

**Slide** **42**:

15 February – CCC Counter Attack

* CCC Formation:
  + Lead unit was 2nd/ 1st AR (3 Companies of M4s) with a TD Platoon screening each flank.
  + 2nd Unit: Artillery Battalion (two Batteries)
  + 3rd Unit: 3/6 Armored Infantry
  + 4th Unit: G Co/13th Regiment – CC Reserve.
* Click Slide
* LTC Alger was put in tactical command of the Combat Command while COL Stack positioned himself on DJ Hamra. Therefore, LTC Alger was put in the difficult position of commanding his battalion, and all the follow on forces behind him (Note: This could have been a discussion topic in Step 4, but was deliberately left out to conserve time. The instructor may want to incorporate it if desired).
* Click Slide
* 1230. CCC conducted the attack. This was essentially a movement to contact due to the lack of knowledge of the enemy strength or position. The artillery batteries picked up firing positions as contact began and the IN battalion passed through them. The Germans engaged LTC Alger’s battalion with anti-tank fires to its front and flanks.
* Click Slide
* Tanks from KG Gerhardt and KG Stenkhoff attacked from the north and south respectively. LTC Alger turned his companies in all three directions to meet these threats. G Co, the CC reserve was directed to intercept KG Gerhardt tanks, but misses them as they turned south.
* Click Slide
* By 1740 LTC Alger’s Battalion was destroyed. The infantry and artillery made an orderly withdrawal and were mostly intact, but 2nd/1st AR had only 4 tanks return.
* Click Slide
* Evening of the 15th. DJ Lessouda forces attempted to withdraw. Over 200 out of the original 600 from DJ Lessouda reached friendly lines.
* Click Slide
* Evening of the 16th. DJ Ksaira and Garet Hadid forces attempted to withdraw. With a much longer route to travel, they were still behind enemy lines as the sun came up. They were seen, surrounded, and all 1400 were captured.

**Slide** **43**:

1. OUTCOME: This engagement was a clear German victory. Not only did II Corps lose the Sidi Bou Zid area, but it lost almost two entire tank battalions (*Click Slide*), two companies of tank destroyers (*Click Slide*), the majority of a light infantry regiment (*Click Slide*), and a large number of guns and howitzers(*Click Slide*).

**Slide** **44**:

This victory for the Germans threw the Allied 1st Army into a panic, and opened the way for further German victories to the north (*Click Slide*). However, as mentioned above, the lack of unity of command would be the major reason for the German offensive stalling on 22 February, which in turn resulted in the German forces eventually returning to the pre-battlefield defensive lines on the Eastern Dorsal. By the end of February, the situation had reverted back to an Axis Army Group caught between two Allied Armies. The only difference was the loss of many soldiers, the destruction of a huge amount of equipment and an American Army desperately searching for reasons why they lost so completely. We shall now join them in this analysis.

**Slide** **45**: **Battle Analysis: Step 4—Assess the Significance.**

1. The fourth and final step of Battle Analysis determines what lessons and insights can be drawn from the study that may help military professionals understand the nature of military operations. Having set the context, gathered the facts, and imposed some order on the information accumulated, the student should ask two key questions:
   1. Why did events turn out the way they did?
   2. What is relevant about this study to current operations?
   3. These are not necessarily separate questions. They can be answered together.

**Slide** **46**

1. Cause and Effect: Examine the battle or operation by establishing cause and effect.
   1. Who won? Who lost? Is determination of victory or defeat possible, or even meaningful?
   2. What were the constants that affected the outcome?

**Slide** **47**

1. Relevance. Military history, whether in the form of sources or more structured as Battle Analysis, cannot find specific solutions to specific problems. Nevertheless, there are lessons and insights that can be drawn from intelligent study. In addition to the constants referred to above, there are other tools to use in seeking insights. Each of the tools is useful in its own right, although there is some overlap among the elements.
   1. Principles of War. Commonly, nine principles form part of the foundation of U.S. Army doctrine, providing general guidelines for the conduct of operations. The nine principles are objective, offensive, mass, economy of force, maneuver, unity of command, security, surprise, and simplicity.
   2. Threads of Continuity. Although the art of war has changed over time, USMA has identified constant themes and categories of analysis to facilitate the study of these changes in warfare. We call the factors that provide a common reference for the study of the changes in the art of war the threads of continuity. They fall into two general groups: the internal threads, which are predominantly a part of the military profession; and the external threads, which are part of the greater society in which the military exists.
   3. Warfighting Functions. The six warfighting functions are tasks and systems united by a common purpose that commanders use to accomplish missions and training objectives. Tied together with leadership, they create Combat Power. The warfighting functions are: intelligence, movement and maneuver, fire support, protection, sustainment, and command and control.
2. The process of deriving lessons and insights should formulate ideas about the operation that go beyond the operation itself. Even with the same body of information, no two students may find the same lessons and insights. The value of the process is to give a method for analytically considering the military profession and its missions. Students may find that factors affecting an operation in the past may or may not be relevant to the present; either outcome provides a better understanding of their profession.

**Kasserine Pass: Step 4—Assess the Significance.**

Slide 48: Doctrine.

Cause & Effect: As mentioned earlier, the US tank and tank destroyer doctrine that entering into World War II was flawed. If the tank destroyer was designed to ‘Seek, Strike and Destroy” German panzers, why were tank destroyer platoons fighting alongside tank companies south of DJ Lessouda, as if they were simply ‘extra’ platoons of tanks, and in another case, a tank destroyer company covering the flanks of a tank battalion during the counter-attack of CCC? Certainly this is not what the pre-war doctrine writers envisioned. Commanders either did not understand, or did not agree with the TD doctrine. Additionally, we see tank battalions charging into the teeth of German tank and anti-tank strength, clearly missing the doctrinal intention of the tank to attack enemy weakness. Is this a case of not understanding the doctrine, or a doctrine that is looking beyond the realities of war? (Instructor Note: The instructor can use this slide to demonstrate the difference between the doctrinal vision vs. the reality of using tank destroyers as ‘additional tanks’. When put into that role, the tank destroyer is simply too thin skinned to perform similarly to the tank. Yet the ability for a unit to actually employ the vision on the left of the slide, may be beyond the realm of possibility. Instead of the slide, you may want to use the blackboard to demonstrate this dilemma).

Insight: Doctrine is a living and breathing documentation of how we fight. There are no hard or fast rules about what is right or wrong. Many factors, to include ever changing technology, political situation and society make yesterdays doctrine obsolete and we must be able to adapt to the future. The US soldiers of 1942/43 had grown up on the lessons of World War I, and were desperate to understand the new realities of World War II. Blood and losses resulted in new lessons, which is understandable, but it is our job to constantly stay vigilant and attempt to anticipate the next evolution of doctrine.

Slide 49: Intelligence.

Cause & Effect. Intelligence efforts failed at almost every level for the Allies. From the 1st Army Headquarters that gave emphasis on intercepted traffic over the signs gathered by the front line troops, down to the Division and Combat Command’s total lack of initiative in failing to conduct thorough reconnaissance. The misread of German intentions led to the weakening of the 1st Armored Division in the south (*Click Slide twice*). The failure of early warning detection resulted in a tank company surprised to be facing two Kampfgruppen of enemy tanks (*Click Slide twice*). Then poor analysis and reconnaissance lead to the destruction of almost two entire tank battalions. (*Click Slide*) Once the battle began on the 14th, without a proper appreciation for the attack in front of them, LTC Hightower’s counter-attack force was committed into an unknown situation with the orders to “clear it up.” This tank battalion was nearly cut off and forced to fight a withdrawal to save its life, and the lives of other units within CCA (*Click Slide*). This disregard of intelligence continued when the corps and division failed to properly analyze the events of 14 February, which led to an entire combat command being sent to once again, ‘clear up the situation’. What should have been a deliberate attack based on reconnaissance of enemy strengths and locations, became a movement to contact into an unknown enemy anti-tank ambush(*Click Slide*). In each event, improper intelligence resulted in inadequate forces matched against overwhelming enemy forces.

Insight: No plan can be made without proper intelligence/reconnaissance. Without it, resources are likely to be wasted conducting unwise or unnecessary activities. Without proper reconnaissance by the corps commander, 168th IN Regiment was left to be marooned on three hills. Without knowing what was to his front, LTC Alger’s battalion ran into an anti-tank ambush and was slaughtered. Understanding your surroundings and the enemy, allows you to apply the appropriate methods. The principle of Security states that we should “Never permit the enemy to acquire an unexpected advantage.” The Allies violated this principle from the top of the command down to battalion level. (*Click Slide*) Security not only applies to keeping your own forces protected, but also understanding and better knowing the enemies intent and capabilities.

Slide 50: Mass.

Cause & Effect. The Principle of Mass states: “Concentrate the effects of combat power at the decisive place and time.” The US II Corps plainly violated this principle throughout their operations. When comparing just the numbers of tanks on 14 February, we can see from slide 50 (Click Slide) that the first company of tanks was easily overwhelmed. (Click Slide) While the counter-attack force was a far more formidable force with two tank companies and a company (-) of TDs, (*Click Slide*) it was still obviously overpowered by such a numerous enemy force. (Click Slide) However, combining the entire tank battalion, and establishing appropriate defensive positions, the force ratio evens out dramatically (Click Slide) (Remember that the Sherman was equal to the PzKpfw IV in the top group, far superior to the middle group of PzKpfw III’s and inferior to the much smaller group of PzKpfw VI’s that saw little action). If LTC Alger’s battalion was added, the amount of Shermans that could have been involved in the initial engagement would have been double the amount shown on slide 50 (While this is a ‘what if’ scenario, certainly a better intelligence effort at Army level would have increased the combat power in the south). Since the 21st Panzer Division had been delayed in the attack, it would seem possible that the 10th Panzer Division could have been defeated with a massed CCA, followed by the American forces reorienting to face the southern threat. Instead, one company of tanks met two Kampfgruppen, followed by two companies meeting the same forces, and finally becoming overwhelmed by the arrival of two more. The following day, the Americans threw four companies of tanks at four Kampfgruppen worth of panzers and anti-tank guns. This is certainly poor battlefield math and a gross violation of mass.

Slide 51: This Diagram is an actual survey of LTC Alger’s lost battalion that may be used. The teaching point is that ½ of the German hits were 50mm and the other ½ was 75mm. The PzKpfw III had to close within a very close range of the superior Sherman to do any damage and the dreaded ‘88’ only accounted for one hit. This is yet another indicator that the problem was not the equipment, but the utilization of that equipment.

Insight: While the above analysis looked strictly at numbers of tanks, we can take the next logical step and determine that numbers alone do not compose the Principle of Mass. While the Americans did not mass their tanks, they also failed to coordinate a proper combined arms effort. The 1st AD disregarded any incorporation of the infantry into the defense or the attack. While artillery was put to great use by the Americans, it was also piecemealed and did not have overwhelming effect at the ‘decisive place or time.’ Engineer efforts were also severely neglected, and could have greatly enhanced the Americans ability to mass. Mines in or near the pass, over-watched by an infantry and tank battalion, reinforced by artillery fires and close air support, would have resulted in a much different outcome. Massing of the appropriate combined arms at the decisive time and place, while not insuring victory, is essential to it.

Slide 52: Leadership.

Cause & Effect. MG Fredendall. Recall the initial line of these instructor notes: “We must judge their performance, but judge them with humanity.” These words are very appropriate for this situation. It is a simple task to site numerous faults with MG Fredendall’s leadership style. However, the objective is not to ridicule, but to identify the elements of success or failure. Therefore, to establish the cause of MG Fredendall’s effect on Sid Bou Zid, we can again utilize some battlefield math: (*click slide 4 times*) *Directive orders + Lack of proper leader reconnaissance – subordinate counsel/trust = conditions for failure*. The II Corps order to 1st AD was overly directive and left little room for flexibility. Combined with Fredendall’s lack of first hand knowledge of the terrain and actual situation, minus his ability to heed the advice of his subordinates who cautioned him that the plan did not satisfy the actual needs of the defense, resulted in little latitude for CCA to be successful. The consequence of this action was felt on 14 February with a piecemealed armor counter-attack and two easily bypassed infantry battalions.

Insight: (*Click Slide*) Fredendall’s leadership style left little room for a team effort. There are simply too many elements to be planned and regulated to attempt to run battles from a command post 70 miles from the front. What was needed was a simple, clear order, with the flexibility to allow his subordinate commanders to adjust the plan to fit their particular situation and capability, yet still meet the commander’s intent. (*Click Slide twice*) MG Fredendall never had any faith in anyone but himself. While that is a difficult statement to consider, we again, must judge to insure we do not fall into the same trap. But we should not condemn the man for being the wrong person at the wrong time. We can only use his experience to better understand ourselves.

Instructor Note: The utilization of different tools of analysis: This example included a warfighting function (Intelligence), two Threads of Continuity (Doctrine and Leadership) and a Principle of War (Mass) as subject headings for Step 4. A Principle of War (Security) was also used to better analyze a warfighting function. These were presented to illustrate their flexibility. Only one set of tools may be used, or all three of them could be mixed. There is no set pattern, and other tools may be used as appropriate. The format of Cause and Effect / Insight, is also a suggested one. The student may brief as the battle dictates.

Instructor Note: FM 6-22, Army Leadership. Another useful tool can be the FM 6-22 when evaluating the leadership of an individual. While not incorporated into this Kasserine Pass example, three backup slides have been provided that list appropriate Core Leader Competencies. Certain action lines have been selected from Appendix A of FM 6-22 that best describe leadership characteristics that MG Fredendall could have utilized to improve his performance in 1943. This type of analysis can occur in Step 2, Review the Setting, or Step 4, Assess the Significance, or broken up throughout the Battle Analysis. As the Battle Analysis is essentially a tool itself designed to improve the abilities of military professionals, this exercise can be a link to other leadership classes to insure the student’s understanding of the leadership doctrine.

Instructor Note: Other backup slides contain non-moving diagrams of the engagement if preferred by the instructor, or for use as handouts.