

# Curriculum Synopsis

February 01, 2021

## Noncommissioned Officer Academy (NCOA) (Resident)

CCAF Course ID

Course Name

Start Date \*

38 3 NCO 99200 0004	Noncommissioned Officer Academy (NCOA) (Resident)	1 Feb 21
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**(Replaces NCOA Synopsis dated April 01, 2020)**

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*Table of Contents*

NCOA MISSION STATEMENT ..... 4

CURRICULUM SUMMARY OF CHANGES ..... 5

RATIONALE FOR MAJOR CHANGES ..... 8

CURRICULUM EVALUATION PROGRAM ..... 9

STUDENT EVALUATION PROGRAM..... 10

NCOA GENERAL CURRICULUM OVERVIEW..... 10

COURSE DESCRIPTION..... 10

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES ..... 10

SCORING MODEL..... 10

NCOA AWARDS CALCULATION ..... 11

NCOA DETAILED CURRICULUM OVERVIEW ..... 12

MISSION ..... 13

MISSION OVERVIEW, RESEARCH ACTIVITY, NEAR PEER BACKGROUND PAPER,  
MISSION PRESENTATION ..... 13

LEADERSHIP ..... 14

LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW ..... 14

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT ..... 14

LEADING AGILE, INCLUSIVE, & INNOVATIVE TEAMS ..... 15

MISSION COMMAND..... 15

INTRO TO PROJECT MANAGEMENT ..... 16

ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING ..... 17

PROBLEM SOLVING ..... 17

PROBLEM SOLVING OVERVIEW..... 17

TYPES OF THINKING..... 18

TYPES OF PROBLEMS ..... 18

NEGOTIATIONS ..... 19

PROBLEM SOLVING ..... 20

AF CULTURE ..... 21

AF CULTURE OVERVIEW..... 21

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS ..... 22

TRUST ..... 23

COMMITMENT..... 24

SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE (SAPR) ..... 24

SHAPING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE..... 25

PROGRAM ORIENTATION..... 26  
PROGRAM ORIENTATION..... 26  
REFLECTIVE REINFORCEMENT ..... 26  
FITNESS..... 26  
SELF/PEER ASSESSMENTS..... 27  
COURSE EVALUATION..... 27  
END-OF-COURSE SURVEY ..... 27  
ADMINISTRATION ..... 27  
IN/OUT PROCESSING..... 27  
GRADUATION ..... 28  
COMMANDANT’S TIME..... 28

## **NCOA MISSION STATEMENT**

Prepare Technical Sergeants to be professional, war-fighting Airmen and Space Professionals who can manage and lead units in the employment of Air and Space power.

**CURRICULUM SUMMARY OF CHANGES**

<b>NCOA CURRICULUM AS OF JAN 21</b>		<b>NCOA CURRICULUM AS OF FEB 21</b>	
<b>Modules/Lessons</b>	<b>Hrs</b>	<b>Modules/Lessons</b>	<b>Hrs</b>
<b>LEADERSHIP</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>LEADERSHIP</b>	<b>39</b>
Leadership Overview	9	Leadership Overview	2
Self-Peer Assessments	11	Mission Command	2
Leadership and Management	6	Ethical Decision Making	2
Leading Teams	2	Leadership and Management	6
Team Performance	4	Leading Agile, Inclusive, & Innovative Teams	6
Project Management	8	Project Management	8
Student Case Study	6	Instructor Led Research Time & Peer/Instructor Review Panel	6
		Leadership Presentations	5
		Leadership Assignment & Peer Evaluations	2
<b>MISSION</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>MISSION</b>	<b>46</b>
Mission Overview & Research Activity	8	Mission Overview	4
Mission Lab	36	Joint Learning Objective (JLO) Test	4
		Mission Presentation Instructor Led Research Time	8
		Mission Presentation Instructor Review Panel	4
		Mission Presentation Instructor Led Research Time After Review Panel	8
		Mission Presentation Peer Review Panel	2
		Mission Presentation Delivery	16

**CURRICULUM SUMMARY OF CHANGES (CONTINUED)**

<b>NCOA CURRICULUM AS OF JAN 21</b>		<b>NCOA CURRICULUM AS OF FEB 21</b>	
<b>Modules/Lessons</b>	<b>Hrs</b>	<b>Modules/Lessons</b>	<b>Hrs</b>
<b>PROBLEM SOLVING</b>	<b>31</b>		<b>31</b>
Problem Solving Overview	8	Problem Solving Overview	2
Types of Thinking	2	Types of Thinking	2
Types of Problems	2	Types of Problems	2
Negotiation	6	Problem Solving	6
Problem Solving	6	Negotiations	6
Problem Solving Presentation Setup	7	Peer/Instructor Presentation Review Panel	1
		Instructor Led Presentation Research Time	6
		Problem Solving Presentation	7
		Assignment Feedback & Peer Evaluations	2
<b>AF CULTURE</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>AF CULTURE</b>	<b>25</b>
Air Force Culture Overview	9	Air Force Culture Overview	2
Unconscious Bias	3	Unconscious Bias	3
Trust	3	Trust	3
Commitment	2	Commitment	2
Sexual Assault Prevention Response	3	Sexual Assault Prevention Response	3
Shaping Organizational Culture	5	Shaping Organizational Culture	5
		Culture Presentations	5
		Instructor & Peer Feedback Module 1	1
		Instructor & Peer Feedback Module 2	1

**CURRICULUM SUMMARY OF CHANGES (CONTINUED)**

<b>NCOA CURRICULUM AS OF JAN 21</b>		<b>NCOA CURRICULUM AS OF FEB 21</b>	
<b>Modules/Lesson</b>	<b>Hrs</b>	<b>Modules/Lessons</b>	<b>Hrs</b>
<b>PROGRAM ORIENTATION</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>PROGRAM ORIENTATION</b>	<b>36</b>
Program Orientation	7	Program Orientation	5
Reflective Reinforcement	4	Reflective Reinforcement	4
Fitness	20	Fitness	20
		Peer & Instructor Feedback	7
<b>COURSE EVALUATION</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>COURSE EVALUATION</b>	<b>1</b>
End-of-Course Survey	1	End-of-Course Survey	1
<b>ADMINISTRATION/ COMMANDANT'S TIME</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>ADMINISTRATION/ COMMANDANT'S TIME</b>	<b>18</b>
In/Out processing	2	In/Out processing	2
Graduation	2	Graduation	2
Commandant's Time	14	Commandant's Time	14
<b>TOTAL COURSE HOURS</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>TOTAL COURSE HOURS</b>	<b>196</b>

## **RATIONALE FOR MAJOR CHANGES**

The NCOA curriculum team was tasked with creating a flexible and agile curriculum in response to the events surrounding the pandemic in 2020. This was to ensure that the continuity of the curriculum during disaster or pandemic will remain in place and allow schools to pick up right where the class left off in a virtual environment. Additionally, it was noted during analysis of multiple sources being used that were not peer-reviewed or academically sound.

In response to this, the curriculum team developed and designed an entirely new format of the curriculum that bridged the gap between the lesson plans and the virtual classroom. The ending result was the creation of multiple tools for our instructors and other teams to use to deliver world-class professional military education anywhere in the world at any time necessary. Additionally, all lesson plans were updated to allow instructors the freedom to teach and “read” the class as needed. The lesson plan changes included reducing the amount of unneeded filler material and ensuring only the highest quality and peer-reviewed sources are being used within NCOA curriculum.

Completely revised the Mission Lab. The Learning Outcome was modified to include near-peer threats and how to handle the mission at tactical and operational levels. (*see the detailed curriculum overview for a synopsis of the lab*)



## **CURRICULUM EVALUATION PROGRAM**

Program/course assessment is vital to the Instructional Systems Design (ISD) process. A comprehensive assessment measures the degree to which the educational needs (identified during the needs analysis) were met as a result of instruction. Enlisted PME uses the fundamentals of the Kirkpatrick model to conduct this assessment. Multiple instruments are used both independently and collectively to measure instructional effectiveness. Students attending the resident Noncommissioned Officer Academy (NCOA) are evaluated academically to measure their achievement against specific academic standards and to identify those students who need individualized instruction.

### **1. Level I Assessment (Reaction):**

1.1 End of Course Survey: This questionnaire is administered to 100 percent of the student body after the entire curriculum is delivered to determine the overall effectiveness of EPME at the NCOA.

### **2. Level II Assessment (Learning)**

2.1. Performance Evaluations: The Performance Tasks and Assessments (8) are measured with performance evaluations. Students must achieve a minimum of 70 percent on each outcome assignment: Near Peer Background Paper (Written), Joint Learning Objectives Test (10 Question Test), Mission Presentation (Presentation), Leadership Briefing (Presentation), Leadership Background Paper (Written), Problem Solving Presentation (Group Presentation), Culture Briefing (Presentation), and Culture Background Paper (Written). The standardized evaluation instruments clearly describe each of these competencies. Instructors counsel students who fail to achieve the minimum passing score, and provide additional remediation as necessary. Students who fail to achieve a passing score must re-accomplish the assignment no earlier than one full class day after receiving the failing score.

2.2. Peer Assessment: Students conduct peer-to-peer feedback and record peer assessments as a part of the overall academic grading process. While students cannot fail the course based on peer assessments, the peer-assessment process is fundamental to each student's achievement of the course outcomes.

### **3. Level III Assessment (Transfer)**

3.1 Graduate Survey: This questionnaire is administered to course graduates six months after graduation. The purpose of this survey is to measure transference of knowledge to the job.

3.2. Graduate Supervisor Survey: This questionnaire is administered to supervisors of course graduates six months after graduation. The purpose of this survey is to measure transference of knowledge to the job from the supervisor's perspective.

## **STUDENT EVALUATION PROGRAM**

Students attending the resident noncommissioned officer academy are evaluated academically to measure their achievement against specific academic standards and to identify those students who need individualized instruction. Students are evaluated in the following ways:

### **1. Performance Evaluations:**

- a. Performance Evaluations: Students must achieve a minimum of 70 percent on each outcome assignment: Near Peer Background Paper(Written), Joint Learning Objectives Test (10 Question Test), Mission Presentation (Presentation), Leadership Briefing (Presentation), Leadership Background Paper (Written), Problem Solving Presentation (Group Presentation), Culture Briefing (Presentation), and Culture Background Paper (Written). The 70 percent rating is based on the critical outcomes for each type of performance. Instructors counsel students who fail to achieve the minimum passing score, and provide additional remediation as necessary. Students who fail to achieve a passing score re-accomplish the assignment no later than one full class day after receiving the failing score.

## **NCOA GENERAL CURRICULUM OVERVIEW**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The NCOAs overall goal is to develop NCOs to continue strengthening the Air Force culture, lead and manage teams, solve problems collaboratively, and employ resources to support AF capabilities.

### **COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- Assess and advocate actions necessary for strengthening organizational culture.
- Examine the impact of leadership actions and determine proper courses for achieving team goals.
- Collaborate with team members to analyze problems and implement solutions.
- Connect national defense strategic imperatives to tactical and operational actions.

### **SCORING MODEL**

Instructors evaluate projects and briefings for quality and comprehensiveness, and assign student grades using assignment evaluation instruments. Below is a summary of available academic points and the weight each is assigned in meeting course requirements and completion. All assignments count towards graduation. The academic score consists of eight graded assignments. The graduate score is a combination of all academic assignments and Stratification Exercises.

NCOA Scoring Model				Minimum Passing Score	
	EVALUATION TYPE	POINTS	WEIGHT	POINTS	PERCENT
Culture Background Paper	Written Product	100	13%	70	70%
Culture Briefing	Media Product & Presentation	100	13%	70	70%
Leadership Background Paper	Written Product	100	13%	70	70%
Leadership Briefing	Media Product & Presentation	100	13%	70	70%
Problem Solving Briefing	Group Media Product & Presentation	100	13%	70	70%
Joint Learning Objectives Test	Computer Based Exam	50	6%	35	70%
Near Peer Background Paper	Written Product	100	13%	70	70%
Mission Presentation	Media Product & Presentation	150	16%	105	70%
<b>Academic Total</b>		<b>800</b>			

### NCOA AWARDS CALCULATION

Academic Achievement Award is based on a student's academic score from the eight graded assignments.

Distinguished Graduate Awards are based on a student's academic score and the ranking they received from student peer evaluations.

**Peer Evaluations/Strats** (*Conducted once during the entire course near the end*)

- Strat 1: 200
- Strat 2: 175
- Strat 3: 150
- Strat 4: 125
- Strat 5: 100
- Strat 6: 75
- Strat 7: 50
- Strat 8: 25
- Strat 9-16: 0

## NCOA DETAILED CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The NCO Academy provides professional military education to prepare NCOs to continue strengthening the Air Force culture, lead and manage teams, solve problems collaboratively, and employ resources in support of AF capabilities.

The NCO Academy is **196** hours (25 academic days) of **guided discussion** classroom methodology, **experiential exercises**, and a **lab**. The Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) grants 6 semester hours for course completion.

<u>Course Hour Breakdown</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Leadership:	39
Mission:	46
Problem Solving:	31
AF Culture:	25
Program Orientation:	36
Course Evaluation	1
Administration	4
Commandant's Time	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>

<u>CCAF Credit Hour Breakdown</u>	
Leadership/Management II	4 SH
Military Studies	2 SH
<b>Total</b>	<b>6 SH</b>

## **MISSION**

**HOURS: 46**

**COURSE OUTCOME:** Connect national defense strategic imperatives to tactical and operational actions.

### **MISSION OVERVIEW, RESEARCH ACTIVITY, NEAR PEER BACKGROUND PAPER, MISSION PRESENTATION**

**HOURS: 46** (Informal Lecture 4 hours, Knowledge Assessment 4 hours, Instructor Feedback 4 hours, Peer Review Panel 2 hours, Presentation Delivery 16 hours, Instructor Led Research Time 16 hours)

**OVERVIEW:** The *Mission Overview* is designed to introduce the students to the Mission Outcome, orient them with the content that will be covered, explain its purpose within the curriculum, and the expected outcome upon completion. After the overview, students will be introduced to the research activity on day one to allow time throughout the course to research the assignment. Prior to continuing with the mission module, students will complete the Joint Learning Objectives exam located within the LMS. Students will then use research time to prepare the near peer background paper and mission presentation.

#### **PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Explain how to build a more lethal force and wartime readiness at the tactical or operational level.
2. Explain how to strengthen alliances and build relationships: tactical or operational level.
3. Explain how to develop best practices to achieve greater performance and resource utilization at the tactical or operational level.
4. Define the Basic Enlisted Professional Military Education Learning Areas and Objectives listed in CJCSI 1805.01B.
5. Summarize near peer threats and their impact on strategic, operational, and tactical objectives.

## LEADERSHIP

**HOURS: 39**

**COURSE OUTCOME:** Examine the impact of leadership actions and determine proper courses for achieving team goals.

**PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:** See individual lessons.

### LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW

**HOURS: 15** (Informal Lecture 2 hours, 5 hours Presentation Delivery, Instructor Led Research/Peer Review 8 hours)

**COURSE OUTCOME:** Lead and manage teams utilizing AF resources.

**OVERVIEW:** The *Leadership Overview* is designed to introduce the students to the Leadership Outcome, orient them with the content that will be covered, explain its purpose within the curriculum, and inform them of the expected outcome upon completion. Additionally, this overview provides the students with instructions on their graded assignments for this outcome, the Leadership Presentation, instructor led research time, and peer review panels.

**PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:** Receive information on outcome lessons and graded assignments.

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**HOURS: 6** (Guided Discussion 5 hours, Experiential Exercise 1 hour)

**OVERVIEW:** This lesson enables students to understand the impact leaders and managers have on organizational performance. It also focuses on how an understanding of the concepts taught in the lesson directly contribute to their effectiveness as leaders and managers in accomplishing the Air Force mission.

The lesson begins with an experiential exercise followed by a guided discussion on *Leadership Skills and Traits*. This activity allows students to demonstrate leadership traits as they work together to complete a challenging task that centers on team dynamics, communication, and leadership behaviors (e.g. how well one engages and motivates his/her team, relays directions to team members, capitalizes on strengths of his/her team members, etc.).

Next, the instructor leads a guided discussion focusing on leadership influence and power. Students begin the main point by drawing from their previous knowledge and the assigned reading to discuss the skills leaders use to influence the people they lead and finally wrapping up the main point with a discussion on the types of powers leaders have and use to inspire and motivate their people.

*Management Skills and Traits* is a guided discussion that begins with an activity in which students work together to define management skills and management traits. Students then apply this to their organizations and also explain how a manager can develop themselves.

The intent of this main point is for students to gain a clear understanding of how good management helps enhance mission accomplishment.

*Relationship Between Leadership And Management* is an experiential activity and guided discussion intended to show the correlation between leadership and management. Students will discuss the similarities and differences between the two and how they are both critical in achieving the most optimal mission accomplishment.

**PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Explain the skills and traits necessary for effective leadership and management.
2. Give examples of how leadership and management impact organizational performance.
3. Summarize the relationship between leadership and management.

**LEADING AGILE, INCLUSIVE, & INNOVATIVE TEAMS**

**HOURS: 6** (Guided Discussion 3 hours & 50 minutes, Instructor Led Activities 2 hours, & Informal Lecture 10 minutes)

**OVERVIEW:** *Leading Agile, Inclusive, & Innovative Teams* is intended to help leaders understand how to build agile, inclusive, and innovative teams effectively. The lesson begins with an activity where students review the USAF Strategic Master Plan and documents associated with the Human capital Annex. From what the students research, instructors will conduct a guided discussion on student findings. Next, students identify any hindrances or barriers that could be blocking the formation or performance of these teams. Finally, this lesson brings all of these lessons learned together to identify how, as NCOs, students can overcome these hindrances and barriers to lead teams in their own units.

**PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Explain concepts that are essential to promoting agility, innovation, and inclusivity in a team.
2. Identify hindrances and barriers to team agility, innovation, and inclusivity.
3. Summarize how an NCO can effectively lead agile, innovative, and inclusive teams.

**MISSION COMMAND**

**HOURS: 2** (Instructor Led Research and Discussion 1 hour, Group Outbriefs 50 minutes, and Informal Lecture 10 minutes)

**OVERVIEW:** This lesson enables students to learn about mission command and the role and use of mission command to achieve mission accomplishment. Students begin the lesson by reading the *Mission Command Insights and Best Practices Paper* and work through an activity to develop a class briefing that is conducted in the second part of the lesson.

### **PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Explain the concept of mission command.
2. Comprehend the role and use of mission command as an Air Force leader to achieve mission accomplishment.

### **PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

**HOURS: 8** (Guided Discussion 1 hour & 25 minutes, Informal Lecture 10 minutes, Activity 6 hours & 5 minutes, & Group Briefings 20 minutes)

**OVERVIEW:** This lesson enables students to understand basic concepts and terms associated with Project Management. With this understanding, students will be able to apply their knowledge when managing, leading, or being part of a project management team.

*Project Management Basics* consists of a guided discussion on the differences between project management and program management, key roles in project management, and the project management triangle of constraints. The intent of the guided discussion is for students to have a basic understanding of project management fundamentals before proceeding deeper.

Once the basic understanding of project management is achieved, students will begin to develop a business case based on an idea that students came up with during the preparation for this lesson. Instructors will lead students through group activity in which the plan and answered questions critiqued to allow refinement of the plan.

Once the business case is refined, students will then work to develop a project plan. Students will use all resources at their disposal to draft deliverables like manning requirements, a basic work breakdown structure, Gantt Chart, communications plan, and risk assessment.

Finally, students will conduct a Pre-mortem exercise in which risk areas will be identified and mitigation strategies will be developed.

### **PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Know the basic concepts and terms of project management.
2. Prepare a project management plan.
3. Explain leadership and management actions in project settings.



## **ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING**

**HOURS: 2** (Informal Lecture 10 minutes, Guided Discussion 55 minutes, Instructor Led Activity 55 minutes)

**OVERVIEW:** This lesson begins with a discussion about *Appendix B of Joint Publication 1, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the U.S.* and focuses on moral and ethical adherence to our values, societal norms, personal & professional values and how to resolve values conflicts. Students will discuss this and move into an activity that will highlight the choices students made and how they were able to come to those decisions.

### **PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Discuss the values and standards of the Profession of Arms.
2. Examine ethical principles as a basis for morally justified decisions.
3. Comprehend sound ethical decision-making based on the values and standards of the Profession of Arms.

## **PROBLEM SOLVING**

**HOURS: 31**

**COURSE OUTCOME:** Collaborate with team members to analyze problems and implement solutions.

**PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:** See individual lessons.

## **PROBLEM SOLVING OVERVIEW**

**HOURS: 18** (Informal Lecture 2 hours, 7 hours Presentation Delivery, Assignment Feedback & Peer Evaluations/Review Panel 3 hours, Instructor Led Research Time 6 hours)

**OVERVIEW:** The *Problem Solving Overview* is designed to introduce the students to the Problem Solving Outcome, orient them with the content that will be covered, explain its purpose within the curriculum, and the expected outcome upon completion. Additionally, this Overview provides the students with instructions on their graded assignments for this outcome, the Problem Solving Group Presentation and the Problem Solving Assessment.

**PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:** Receive information on outcome lessons and graded assignments.

## TYPES OF THINKING

**HOURS: 2** (Guided Discussion 55 minutes, Informal Lecture 10 minutes, Activity 40 minutes, & Group Outbriefs 15 minutes)

**OVERVIEW:** This lesson is intended to provide an understanding of the differing types of thinking, provide examples of the types, and summarize how understanding and applying multiple types of thinking can increase a leader's ability to effectively solve problems.

*Types of Thinking Activity* is a where students are divided into four groups. The groups are given one type of thinking to research. The types of thinking will consist of Systems Thinking, Analytical Thinking, Adaptive Thinking, and Creative Thinking/Innovative Thinking. The groups research the type of thinking assigned and provide a definition, when that type of thinking is best used, and how they have used that type of thinking in their personal and professional life. The four groups will develop an outbrief and it will be presented in MP 2.

*Types of Thinking Debrief* consist of student briefings and a guided discussion covering the importance of understanding the different types of thinking for solving problems within the workplace and life. Students should be able to differentiate between each type of thinking, how to apply the types of thinking, and their impacts on leadership effectiveness.

### **PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Describe various types of thinking.
2. Give examples of the types of thinking.
3. Summarize how leveraging different types of thinking can aid in problem solving.

## TYPES OF PROBLEMS

**HOURS: 2** (Guided Discussion 55 minutes, Informal Lecture 10 minutes, Activity 40 minutes, & Group Outbriefs 15 minutes)

**OVERVIEW:** This lesson enables students to identify and understand the types of problems they may face as leaders and NCOs and how to deal with them in an effective and efficient way. It also goes one step further by connecting the types of problems with a type of thinking that should help students engage in the problem solving process later in this course.

The *Cynefin Framework* focuses on the four domains of the framework and types of problems that fall in the domains. Students start the main point by brainstorming some of the everyday problems they have to deal with.

Then, after learning about the framework, they go back and categorize the problems into one of the four domains. Additionally, students watch a video on the Cynefin Framework to help them gain a more detailed understanding of the domains.

During this main point, the instructor ensures students can distinguish between the four domains and the types of problems that belong in each.

*Thinking and Problems* is an experiential that ties *Types of Thinking* content with the domains of the Cynefin Framework. The intent of this activity is for students to reach back and match at least one of the types of thinking with one of the four domains. If students have problems identifying the appropriate type of thinking during the activity, instructor use their questioning techniques to get their brainstorming started.

**PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Summarize the characteristics of the four Cynefin Framework domains.
2. Match the appropriate actions to approach problems in each of the four domains.
3. Determine the type of thinking most suitable to address problems in each domain.

**NEGOTIATIONS**

**HOURS: 6** (Guided Discussion 110 minutes, Informal Lecture 10 minutes, Instructor Led Activity 120 minutes, Group Negotiations Preparation 60 minutes, & Group outbriefs with student feedback 60 minutes)

**OVERVIEW:** This lesson is intended to build students confidence and expand their mindsets on the fundamental terms, phrases and frameworks as it relates to negotiating various problems. It enables students to analyze collaborative negotiation processes and apply integrative agreements likely to create order, stability, and fostering social harmony. The lesson begins with a *Negotiations Refresher* where students recall their knowledge of key terms and discuss their experiences with negotiations.

Then the lesson moves to *Negotiation Strategies* on how students have used the negotiation strategies and whether they were effective or ineffective. During the main point students are encouraged to consider past negotiated actions, focusing on how they used strategies and processes including the Cooperative Negotiation Strategy. Additionally, students discuss the Cooperative Negotiation Strategy which supports a balance in relationships and task to reach a mutually desirable outcome that satisfies the interest of all parties.

Following that is *Categories of Negotiation* that requires the students to “role play & teach” characteristics of the two categories of negotiations: Integrative & Distributive. Students are divided into groups of four and assigned one of the two categories. Each group reads and selects one topic from a handout to role-play their assigned category. Groups are encouraged to be creative with their demonstration and each group uses a minimum of three characteristics from each negotiation category.

The *Negotiations Activity* wraps up the lesson where the students work together to strategize in order to negotiate their needs, interest, demands, Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement (BATNA) etc. The intent of this activity is for students to demonstrate their current knowledge of negotiation skills and understanding of the key terms to resolve a problem.

## **PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Give examples of the use of *Negotiation Strategies* and their impact on mission effectiveness.
2. Differentiate between Integrative and Distributive types of negotiations.
3. Demonstrate negotiation skills in a simulated situation.

## **PROBLEM SOLVING**

**HOURS: 6** (Guided Discussion 3 hours, Instructor Led Activity 1 hour & 20 minutes, & Group Outbriefs 1 hour & 30 minutes, Informal Lecture 10 minutes)

**OVERVIEW:** This lesson enables students to identify, understand, and apply problem-solving processes to a problem-solving model. This will help NCOs solve problems more effectively and efficiently. Problem Solving focuses on problem-solving processes. The lesson builds on Types of Thinking and Types of Problems.

The lesson begins with *Problem Solving Activities*, which begins with a problem solving activity that will be revisited in MP 2. Students must solve a problem, writing down each step they take. They must be prepared to discuss their work in the next main point. For the remaining time, students participate in a brainstorming activity. This activity helps students understand the different approaches to brainstorming and four brainstorming guidelines. Brainstorming is a critical piece to problem solving, especially in a collaborative environment.

From there, the lesson moves to *Problem Framing* that begins with a guided discussion. The first part of the discussion covers the four basic steps in most problem-solving processes: define the problem, generate alternate solutions, select a solution, and implement a solution and monitor. It is important for students to know the four basic steps in order to take a deeper dive into different processes of these steps throughout this lesson. The discussion also revisits the problem-solving activity in the previous main point. This discussion ties the activity into the basic step of, defining the problem. This is important as it sets up the next part of the discussion, problem framing, which is the process of describing and interpreting a problem and ultimately arriving at a problem statement (defining the problem.) The final 55 minutes of this main point is a group activity centered on problem framing. Students are given a stated problem and must: frame with at least three different perspectives, select one of the group's perspective and write a problem statement, explain the brainstorming method the group used, and explain what type of problem the stated problem represents.

The *Root Causes* main point is where students learn and uncover another problem-solving process, determining root causes. By now, students have reviewed a stated problem, applied problem framing, and came up with a problem statement. Now students will continue down the problem-solving model and apply root cause tools in order to effectively uncover the true cause of a problem.

*Assessing Solutions* is the final main point where students learn and uncover another problem-solving process, decision analysis matrix tool. By now, the students have reviewed a stated problem, applied problem framing and came up with a problem statement, and applied a root cause analysis tool. Now students will continue down the problem-solving model and generate alternative solutions; keeping in mind quantity not quality and being mindful of biases. Students also select a solution by applying the decision analysis matrix tool. This tool is designed to weigh solutions and help determine the best solution to implement. The goal is for students to understand how these different approaches and techniques generate different outcomes and how people prefer to solve problems.

**PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Explain how problem framing determines possible solutions.
2. Demonstrate problem-framing strategies and evaluate solutions.
3. Demonstrate the use of problem-solving processes.
4. Apply problem-solving processes to evaluate solutions in a collaborative environment.

**AF CULTURE**

**HOURS: 20**

**COURSE OUTCOME:** Exhibit ways to strengthen organizational Culture.

**PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:** See individual lessons.

**AF CULTURE OVERVIEW**

**HOURS: 9** (Informal Lecture 2 hours, 5 hours Presentation Delivery, & Instructor Led Feedback 2 hours)

**OVERVIEW:** The *Air Force Culture Overview* is designed to introduce the students to the Air Force Culture Outcome, orient them with the content that will be covered, explain its purpose within the curriculum, and the expected outcome upon completion. Additionally, this Overview provides the students with instructions on their graded assignments for this outcome, the Air Force Culture Presentation and the Air Force Culture Assessment.

**PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:** Receive information on outcome lessons and graded assignments.

## UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

**HOURS: 3** (Guided Discussion 1 hour & 20 minutes, Informal Lecture 10 minutes, & Instructor Led Activity 1 hour & 30 minutes)

**OVERVIEW:** The *Unconscious Bias* lesson is intended to equip individuals with the awareness that biases exist in everyone and how to uncover our own. Students will learn how to incorporate this knowledge into their leadership to create more conscious organizations that incorporate diverse perspectives and the creativity and innovation that flows from that type of trusting environment.

*Unconscious Bias* is an experiential exercise based on a Howard Ross presentation. Howard Ross is considered one of the world's seminal thought leaders on identifying and addressing *Unconscious Bias*. During this segment, Ross covers how biases inform the decisions we make daily. Students are informed they need to fully participate with what the video asks them to do (e.g., raise hands, close their eyes, etc.). Students complete the Warmth/Competence Exercise when instructed to do so during this portion of the video. Studies by Susan Fiske and Amy Cuddy have shown that we judge people primarily by two criteria: their warmth, and their competence. Warmth (e.g., friendliness, trustworthiness, empathy, and kindness) and competence (e.g., intelligence, power, efficacy, and skill) represent fundamental dimensions on which both individuals and groups are perceived. This exercise will demonstrate this to the students. Once the video is over, a wrap-up discussion takes place.

*The Impact of Unconscious Bias in the Workplace* is an open discussion on key takeaways from the video and how to apply them to be better leaders. At the beginning of the MP, students should complete the Harvard Implicit Association Tests on their own prior to this main point being taught. The Implicit Association Test (IAT) measures attitudes and beliefs that people may be unwilling or unable to report. The IAT may be especially interesting if it shows that you have an implicit attitude that you did not know about. For example, you may believe that women and men should be equally associated with science, but your automatic associations could show that you (like many others) associate men with science more than you associate women with science.

### **PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Explain the concept of unconscious bias.
2. Explain the impact that unconscious biases have in an organization.
3. Discuss strategies for overcoming unconscious biases in self and others.

## TRUST

**HOURS: 3** (Guided Discussion 50 minutes, Informal Lecture 10 minutes, Activity 1 hour & 30 minutes, & Group Outbriefs 30 minutes)

**OVERVIEW:** *Trust* is essential in creating healthy relationships with members of an organization, and enhancing the culture of Airmanship. This lesson is intended to raise students' awareness of the behaviors that contribute towards high trust relationships and low trust relationships. Students will use the activities to generate discussion based on their experiences with interpersonal trust.

The lesson begins with *Who Do You Trust*, which is an in-class activity. During the activity, students write their responses down. First, students will think about three people who they really trust and three people who really trust them. Then they will write down the reasons why they trust the people they listed in the first list and why they think people list them. Once students are complete with their list, conduct a guided discussion based on the responses from the question.

Students don't have to provide names if they don't want to; however, they need to identify the connection (e.g., supervisor, co-worker, friend, etc.).

Next, students will think about three people they have difficulty trusting. Then they think about three people who might not trust them. Lastly, students enter reasons why they have difficulty trusting the people on their list and reasons why people might not trust them. After students are finished, conduct a guided discussion. The intent is to get students to recognize personal attributes, characteristics, or habits that could create or perpetuate feelings of doubt or mistrust. As you summarize students' responses, reinforce the examples or behaviors that lead to perceptions of mistrust.

In the next main point, student attention is focused on a passage from the Journal of Character & Leadership Integration titled "The Emotional Constructs of Trust". Students will document their interpretation of the article and share it with the class. The instructor then leads a discussion relating the Hierarchy of Trust to their own work center. Upon completion, students will refer back to this article to research some of the different approaches to building trust. The group discussion will be documented and presented to the class.

### **PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Understand the factors that impact trust.
2. Understand the impact different levels of trust have on an organization.
3. Explain how to build and maintain trust.

## COMMITMENT

**HOURS: 2** (Guided Discussion 20 minutes, Informal Lecture 10 minutes, Activity 1 hour & 20 minutes, & Group Outbriefs 10 minutes)

**OVERVIEW:** The *Commitment* lesson is intended to equip individuals with an understanding of the six levels of commitment, how to determine the level of commitment of someone with examples, and summarize how a leader can potentially improve the commitment of others.

The *Six Levels of Commitment* is an experiential exercise based on Mark Sanborn's six levels of commitment. Mark Sanborn, leadership speaker and author, is considered one of the world's most prominent speakers on leadership. This experiential exercise is for students to gain a better understanding of Sanborn's six levels of commitment by having them "teach each other" the six levels and give examples of Airmen at the various levels.

The last main point, *Improving Commitment* is an activity on what a leader can do to potentially improve the commitment of others. This activity has the students brainstorm ways to improve commitment, and then afterwards compares their inputs to Sanborn's recommendations. Instructors have a visual of Sanborn's five recommendations ready to display after the groups have briefed their responses for comparison.

### PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:

1. Explain the different levels of commitment.
2. Give examples of the levels of commitment.
3. Summarize what actions can be taken to improve the commitment level of others.

## SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE (SAPR)

**HOURS: 3** (Guided Discussion 3 hours)

**OVERVIEW:** The purpose of the *SAPR* lesson is to meet requirements specified by DoDI 6495.02 (2020). It provides guidance and procedures for the SAPR Program at all levels, and explains the establishment and implementation of the DoD SAPR Program.

It covers the roles and responsibilities of helping agencies, Judge Advocates General, DoD law enforcement, and commanders, while focusing on the victim and on doing what is necessary and appropriate to support victim recovery. It clarifies definitions, reporting options, and roles of personnel according to position. It describes and expands upon changes in SAPR policy in order to familiarize NCOs of significant improvements in the support of victims. The lesson content covers subject matter specified by DoD.



### **PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Achieve a rank commensurate level of understanding of the Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response training requirements.

### **SHAPING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE**

**HOURS: 5** (Guided Discussion 65 minutes, Informal Lecture 10 minutes & Instructor Led Activity 225 minutes)

**OVERVIEW:** The key to a successful organization is to have a culture based on a strongly held and widely shared set of beliefs. This lesson enables students to understand the importance of identifying the traits of a healthy and unhealthy organizational culture.

Obtaining a healthy organizational culture is an achievable goal. A culture that is enjoyable for members and one that enables them to produce their best work is something leaders must continuously direct their efforts. An unhealthy culture can contribute to low motivation and decreased member satisfaction. Understanding these concepts allows leaders to identify what is working and to address what needs to change in their organization.

Main Point 1, *Organizational Culture* begins with a video entitled Leadership and Management, *The Iceberg of Organizational Culture*.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cjziCs-R2S4&spfreload=10>). The video focuses on the topic and prepares the student for the discussion on organizational culture.

Organizational culture refers to the collective behavior of the people who make up an organization; this includes their values, visions, norms, language, symbols, and shared beliefs. Organizational culture affects the way people and groups interact with others both internal and external. A strong culture is integral to long-term organizational sustainability and success.

Main Point 2, *Shaping the Culture* begins with a discussion on healthy and unhealthy organizational culture. The process of ingraining culture into an organization requires more than communicating a broad cultural process. Leaders must ensure each member understands and aligns with the values and direction of the organization. This creates a sense of unity among members and ensures that the broader objectives and mission of the organization are accomplished.

### **PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Differentiate between healthy and unhealthy attributes of a culture.
2. Explain what actions shape a healthy organizational culture.

## **PROGRAM ORIENTATION**

**HOURS: 36**

**OVERVIEW:** The purpose of this lesson is for students to understand the Noncommissioned Officer Academy's purpose, policies, procedures, and requirements.

**COURSE OUTCOME:** N/A

## **PROGRAM ORIENTATION**

**HOURS: 5** (Guided Discussion 10 minutes, Informal Lecture 5 hours & 35 minutes, & Demonstration-Performance 45 minutes)

**OVERVIEW:** This is the introductory module for the NCOA Course and consists of eight main points. It is the foundational module for the course and designed to help students adjust to the NCOA learning environment.

**COURSE OUTCOME:** N/A

**PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:** Receive information on the NCO Academy's purpose, policies, procedures, and requirements.

## **REFLECTIVE REINFORCEMENT**

**HOURS: 4**

**ACTIVITY STATEMENT:** Participate in reflective reinforcement of previously learned material.

**PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY:** Student learning is improved if they are given "reflection time" in between learning experiences. Reflective Reinforcement provides students the opportunity to pause between learning episodes and process new material. It gives students room to continue a discussion they might have had during the instruction or think of new thoughts that are applicable to what they've just learned. This time allows students' brains the opportunity to make connections between the new material they've just learned and what they already know. Reflective Reinforcement provides students the time to clear their minds in preparation for the next block of instruction.

## **FITNESS**

**HOURS: 20**

**ACTIVITY STATEMENT:** Participate in fitness activities.

**PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY:** The primary intent of this activity is to provide students an opportunity to participate in a physical fitness program that is enjoyable, rewarding, and safe. Students with annotated medical restrictions documented on a completed AF Form 422, *Medical Profile* or AF Form 469, *Duty Limiting Condition Report* must adhere to their profile and participate to the level of their abilities.

## **SELF/PEER ASSESSMENTS**

**HOURS: 7** (Self/Peer Assessment & Stratification Exercise & Peer/Instructor Feedback 7 hours)

**OVERVIEW:** The purpose of this lesson is to better prepare students to give and positively respond to feedback to enhance personal development and communication. Ultimately, this will help students become more effective leaders.

The lessons begins with the *Electronic Self-/Peer-Assessments Ratings* (e-SPAR) and *Stratification Exercise* (Strat). Students complete a self-/peer assessment and Strat for each of their peers in the flight. The lesson concludes with a self-/peer assessments and Strat for each of their peers in the flight and then instructors conduct a one-on-one feedback session with each student.

### **PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Demonstrate the use of Self/Peer Assessments.
2. Develop Feedback skills.

## **COURSE EVALUATION**

**HOURS: 1**

### **END-OF-COURSE SURVEY**

**HOURS: 1**

**OVERVIEW:** This time is allotted for students to complete the End-of-Course survey.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **IN/OUT PROCESSING**

**HOURS: 2**

**OVERVIEW:** This time is for processing students into and out of the school. The first hour should be used for in-processing and the second hour for outprocessing. During in-processing, NCOAs may do such things as verify the eligibility of all students. During outprocessing, the NCOAs will ensure all issued materials are returned and students receive appropriate briefings (i.e., how their education records are updated to reflect award of CCAF credit hours, safe driving practices, reporting to their home units, etc.).

## **GRADUATION**

### **HOURS: 2**

**OVERVIEW:** This time is allotted for graduation. The first hour of this block should be used for preparation, and the second for a graduation ceremony. Encourage students to participate as much as possible in planning this event to reinforce the importance and impact of military traditions, communication skills, and effective leadership.

## **COMMANDANT'S TIME**

### **HOURS: 14**

**OVERVIEW:** These hours are used to bring in speakers of opportunity to enhance the NCOA experience, i.e., wing commander, CMSAF, CCM, chief's group, first sergeants, etc.