



# ***LEADERSHIP AND THE PROFESSION OF ARMS***

**5510 SYLLABUS  
AY 26**

**JOINT PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION PHASE I INTERMEDIATE LEVEL  
COURSE**

**UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Challenges**

**AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE  
MAXWELL AFB, AL**

*Current as of 6 June 2025*

# FOREWORD

This syllabus for the Leadership in the Profession of Arms Course for the Air Command and Staff College, July-September 2025, provides an overview of the course narrative, objectives, and questions, as well as a detailed description of each lesson to assist students in their reading and preparation for lectures and seminars. Included herein is information about course methods of evaluation, the course schedule, and the fulfillment of joint professional military education core goals.

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## **LEADERSHIP AND THE PROFESSION OF ARMS COURSE OVERVIEW**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Mission command requires developing and sustaining a culture of shared understanding, mutual trust, prudent risk, disciplined initiative, and commander's intent to succeed in operational and garrison environments of increasing uncertainty, complexity, and change (AFDP 1-1, 12).

The AY26 Leadership and the Profession of Arms course examines how leaders can build and sustain a culture that allows mission command to operate successfully along the continuum of conflict and develop the most lethal and effective warfighting force to meet the needs of future threats. A mission command culture relies on leadership skills like building and sustaining trust, encouraging initiative, providing shared understanding, clear and consistent communication, and defining and accepting risk. Through commander's intent, which requires leaders to accept creativity and sometimes failure in the learning process, leaders can effectively utilize their teams by trusting their people to complete the mission, even when accomplished in surprising ways.

This class provides leaders with tools to establish this culture and gives space for leaders to evaluate past attempts at mission command and see when it was successful or where it could have been improved using historical case studies. Through authentic assessments and applied learning, leaders will gain experience in creative problem solving to tackle wicked problems in a complex, contested, and constrained environment. In becoming familiar with mission command culture, students are enabled to establish these cultures in their future units and develop an effective and efficient lethal force, cultivating the warrior ethos necessary to meet our national security needs.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. Comprehend mission command and the requirements for building and leading a mission command culture in the profession of arms.
2. Analyze the roles of ethics in military decision-making, leadership, and the profession of arms.
3. Illustrate effective methods of organizational leadership in constrained, complex, and changing environments.
4. Understand the role of the civil-military relationship and military leadership.
5. Design creative solutions to complex problems affecting the profession of arms through creative thinking.

## COURSE MAP

The course is designed to reflect the overlap of topics within the principles of mission command.

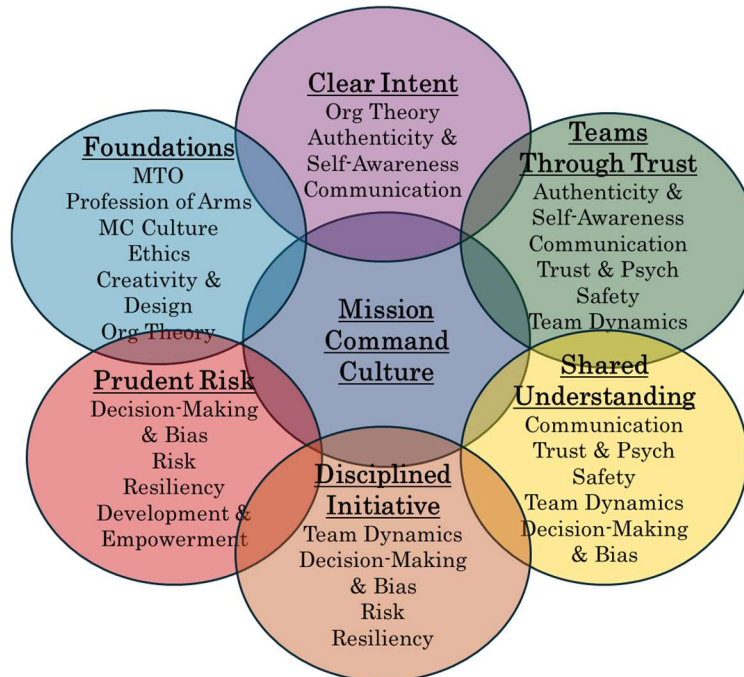


Figure 1: Principles of mission command for this image from Curtis E. LeMay Center for Doctrine Development and Education, "AFDP 1-1: Mission Command," 14 August 2023.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### LP-601: Project Analysis

**Deliverable:** As a group, students will conduct and write a project analysis to better understand and prepare a solution for a leadership challenge currently impacting the service. Students will choose this challenge prior to the analysis. In 8-10 pages, students will clearly define the problem, discuss the context and causes contributing to their challenge, analyze the various stakeholders affected or involved, and conduct an ethical analysis related to the challenge and any early identified potential solutions. The assignment is due 15 Aug at 2359 via Canvas. The assignment is worth 25% of the grade and will be graded as a group.

### LP-602: Commander's Intent

**Deliverable:** Students will compose a commander's intent directing the execution of their LP-603 project. Students will write the intent as commanders working to implement LP-603 in their squadrons, including components of purpose, end state, and risk. Students will share their intent with other students in the classroom and receive feedback on the last day of LP (15/16 Sept). Students will submit their final Commander's Intent along with the feedback as the final assessment. The assignment is due electronically on 16 Sept at 2359 via Canvas for all seminars. The assignment is worth 20% of the overall grade and will be graded individually.

### **LP-603: Project Presentation**

**Deliverable:** Students will brief their solution to the leadership challenge they analyzed in LP-601. This brief will define and provide context for the problem, advocate for the group's chosen solution, discuss ethical implications for the solution, and explain the problem-solving process the group underwent to reach the solution. Along with the brief and presentation, the group will submit a 1–2-page executive summary of the brief. Briefs will be 16-20 minutes and have no required template. The assignment is worth 35% of the grade. While a group presentation, all students will be graded individually on their briefing and presentation, peer feedback, and mastery of information regarding the leadership challenge, the solution, and applicability of course material.

**Project Competition:** Each flight will vote on the best presentation to move up a round. From there, the projects will be judged from the presentation and the executive summary until the top 4 – one from each division – are selected. The top four will present their briefs to the school in Wood Auditorium to the cohort, invited guests, and Air Force stakeholders.

### **LP-604: Contribution**

**Deliverable:** Students are expected to attend lectures and seminars, individually read the assigned pages, participate in class exercises, and contribute to seminars. This includes journal prompts, in-class seminar activities, and participating in group projects. It also includes general preparedness, engagement, and respectfulness. The assignment is worth 20% of the grade.

### **COURSE MATERIALS**

There are two types of readings in this course: 1) readings from books issued by ACSC; and 2) electronic files, hyperlinks, and/or permalinks to online content indicated by the suffix [EL]. Students can access the syllabus, lecture videos, electronic readings, and other supplemental materials online through Canvas as well as through Microsoft Teams. ACSC provides students with copies of the following course books, which must be returned at the conclusion of the course:

1. Barno, David and Nora Bensahel, *Adaptation Under Fire: How Militaries Change in Wartime*. NY: Oxford University Press, 2020.
2. Grenny, Joseph *et al.* *Crucial Conversations* (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw Hill, 2021.
3. Marlantes, Karl. *What it is like to go to War*. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2011.
4. Marquet, L. David. *Turn the Ship Around! A True Story of Turning Followers into Leaders*. New York: Penguin Random House, 2012.
5. Schein, Edgar & Peter Schein. *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (5th ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2016.

Please refer questions to Dr. Amber Batura, Course Director ([amber.batura@au.af.edu](mailto:amber.batura@au.af.edu))

# LEADERSHIP AND THE PROFESSION OF ARMS SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

## DAY 1 – Profession of Arms

DATE: 21/22 July 2025

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Comprehend the themes, deliverables, and expectations of the course.
2. Understand principles, responsibilities, and arguments regarding the profession of arms.
3. Understand the military role and military leaders' professional obligations regarding civil-military relations.
4. Analyze the FGO's roles and responsibilities as a leader in the profession of arms.

**Day Zero Course Introduction.** Dr. Amber Batura (Course Director), presented on 18 July.

### LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson explores the concept of the military as a profession from the service perspective, historical perspectives, civil-military relations, and current command perspectives. Students should grapple with what makes up the demands and expectations of a professional military and evaluate what it means to belong to a profession that exists to serve society through disciplined application of force.

**LP-501 (L):** Brig Gen Corey Simmons, AMC

*CONTACT HOURS: 60 minutes*

### LP-502 (S): Reflecting on the Profession of Arms

1. USAF, "A Profession of Arms: Our Core Values," 16 May 2022 [EL]
2. Mick Ryan, "Mastering the Profession of Arms, Part I: The Enduring Nature," *War on the Rocks*, 2017, Retrieved from <https://warontherocks.com/2017/02/mastering-the-profession-of-arms-part-i-the-enduring-nature/> [EL]
3. Mick Ryan, "Mastering the Profession of Arms, Part II: Keeping Pace with Changes," *War on the Rocks*, 2017, Retrieved from <https://warontherocks.com/2017/02/mastering-the-profession-of-arms-part-ii-keeping-pace-with-changes/> [EL]
4. Mick Ryan, "Mastering the Profession of Arms, Part III: Competencies Today and Into the Future," *War on the Rocks*, 2017, Retrieved from <https://warontherocks.com/2017/03/mastering-the-profession-of-arms-part-iii-competencies-today-and-into-the-future/> [EL]
5. Vasabjit Banerjee and Sean P. Webeck, "Civil-Military Relations: Through a Perilous Lens," *Armed Forces & Society* 50, no. 1 (2024): 3-24. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/0095327X221108198> [EL]
6. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 100-112.

*CONTACT HOURS: 120-minute seminar.*

## DAY 2 – Mission Command Culture

DATE: 24/25 July 2025

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the principles and goals of mission command.
2. Evaluate the necessary components for a culture that supports mission command principles and goals.
3. Comprehend the challenges in developing a culture of mission command and executing mission command in the armed services.
4. Analyze the benefits of mission command culture and principles applied to a historical case study.

### LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson encourages students to deepen their understanding of mission command and what makes it successful through Air Force doctrine and critical analysis. Students explore the underlying values, behaviors, and institutional norms that shape a mission command culture.

#### LP-503 (S): Mission Command Culture

1. Curtis E. LeMay Center for Doctrine Development and Education, “AFDP 1-1: Mission Command,” 14 August 2023. [EL]
2. James W. Harvard, “Airmen and Mission Command,” *Air & Space Power Journal* (March-April 2013): 131-146. Retrieved from [https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/ASPJ/journals/Volume-27\\_Issue-2/F-Harvard.pdf](https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/ASPJ/journals/Volume-27_Issue-2/F-Harvard.pdf) [EL]
3. Gavin Egerton, “Toward a Leadership Theory for Mission Command,” *Military Review* (Jan-Feb 2025), 61-67. Retrieved from <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/Military-Review/English-Edition-Archives/January-February-2025/Leadership-Theory/> [EL]
4. LtCol Brian Blaine (USMC), “USAF Mission Command: Cultural, Organizational, and Operational Change to Meet Future Demands,” *Wild Blue Yonder*, 10 June 2024. Retrieved from <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Wild-Blue-Yonder/Article-Display/Article/3792595/usaf-mission-command-cultural-organizational-and-operational-change-to-meet-fut/> [EL]
5. James Kitfield, “Barnstormers,” in *Prodigal Soldiers: How the Generation of Officers Born of Vietnam Revolutionized the American Style of War*, (VA: Brassey’s Paperback Edition, 1997),41-58. [EL]

#### LP-504 (S): Team Development and Brainstorming

- With facilitation from instructors, students will practice various methods of brainstorming to develop leadership challenges to address and finalize groups.

CONTACT HOURS: 180-minute seminar.

## DAY 3 – Warrior Ethics

DATE: 28/29 July 2025

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the major ethical theories and their role in the profession of arms.
2. Comprehend the profession's ethical responsibilities to the US Constitution and how this influences the civ-mil relationship.
3. Analyze the ways in which ethical dilemmas and ethical judgment are tested and practiced in warfighting.
4. Extrapolate how ethics and moral injury impact leaders and followers in mission command environments.

### LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson emphasizes the role of ethics and ethical decision-making in a military context beyond an abstract understanding of ethical theory. Students should critically assess the competing ethical frameworks and expectations to act morally, identifying how ethics shapes their identity and responsibility as military leaders. Students should also understand the military's role in upholding ethical standards through civil-military expectations.

**LP-505 (L):** Lt Col Joseph Chapa

CONTACT HOURS: 60 minutes

### LP-506 (S): Warrior Ethics

1. Marcus Schulzke, "Moral Theory and Ethics at War," in *Pursuing Moral Warfare: Ethics in American, British, and Israeli Counterinsurgency* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2019), 24-43. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvb1htwk.6> [EL]
2. Peter Olsthoorn, "Military Leadership and Ethics," in *Handbook of Military Sciences* (2023), 1-14. Retrieved from <https://philarchive.org/go.pl?id=OLSMLA&proxyId=&u=https%3A%2F%2Fphilpapers.org%2Farchive%2FOLSMLA.pdf> [EL]
3. Kenneth Keskel, "The Oath of Office: A Historical Guide to Moral Leadership," *Air & Space Power Journal* (Winter 2002), 47-57. Retrieved from <http://aufric.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/oath-office-historical-guide-moral-leadership/docview/217766744/se-2?accountid=4332> [EL]
4. Karl Marlantes, *What It's Like to go to War* (NY: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2011), 26-47, 80-113.

CONTACT HOURS: 120-minute seminar.

## DAY 4 – Creativity and Design in MC

DATE: 31 July/1 Aug 2025

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the importance of creative thinking and creative teams in responding to obstacles and problems.
2. Analyze the links between creativity, innovation, and adaptation.
3. Analyze the tensions of employing or encouraging creativity in military organizations.
4. Apply creative problem solving to current military challenges.

### LESSON OVERVIEW

Students will learn about creative problem solving and human-centered design to better inform their decision-making abilities. In an applied exercise that emphasizes this lesson's readings, students will explore the relationship between innovation and adaptation and how to improve their creative skills to develop innovative solutions within the mission command construct.

#### LP-507 (S): Creativity and Adaptation in Practice

1. Video: Alfonso Neri. "ABC Nightline – IDEO Shopping Cart." December 2, 2009. Alfonso Neri, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M66ZU2PClCM>
2. Video: David Kelley. "How to Build Your Creative Confidence." May 16, 2012. TED, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16p9YRF0l-g>
3. David Barno and Nora Bensahel, *Adaptation Under Fire: How Militaries Change in Wartime*, (NY: Oxford University Press, 2020), 9-29, 270-288.
4. Todd T. Holm, "Teaching Creative Problem-Solving: Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures," *Journal of Military Learning* (April 2024): 3-16. Retrieved from <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/journal-of-military-learning/Archives/JML-April-2024/Teaching-Creative-Problem-Solving/Holm-Teaching-Creative-Problem-Solving-UA.pdf> [EL]
5. Pete Blaber, "Gorilla Warfare," in *The Mission, The Men, and Me: Lessons from a Former Delta Force Commander* (NY: Dutton Caliber, 2008): 40-59. [EL]

#### LP-508 (S): Creativity and Design

1. IDEO, "The Field Guide to Human-Centered Design," 2015, **10-14, 19-25**. [EL]  
Skim field guide for methods and resources for project ideas, activities, and creative design assistance.
  - o Experiment with some of the methods of creativity and design to develop ideas around the leadership challenge.

CONTACT HOURS: 180-minute seminar.

## DAY 5 – Organizational Culture

DATE: 5/7 Aug 2025

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Understand Schein’s theory of organizational culture.
2. Apply Schein’s theory of organizational culture to experience in military organizations.
3. Analyze Marquet’s use of organizational culture theory and mission command in the case study.
4. Extrapolate how organizational culture theory contributes to building a mission command culture.

### LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson explores organizational theory to prepare students to evaluate organizational culture. Through organizational theory and a case study, students will explore ways to shape identity and effectiveness within units through organizational culture and align culture with mission command principles.

#### LP-509 (S): Organizational Culture and Mission Command

1. Edgar Schein and Peter Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Wiley 2016), 3-30, 149-179, and 181-204.
2. L. David Marquet, *Turn the Ship Around! A True Story of Turning Followers into Leaders*, (Portfolio, 2013), xxiii-47.

#### LP-510 (S): Evaluating Culture Activity

- Utilizing Schein’s organizational theory, analyze aspects of organizational culture in *Turn the Ship Around* and in other organizations (former units, workplaces, etc.).

CONTACT HOURS: 180-minute seminar.

## DAY 6 – Leading Change

DATE: 11/12 Aug 2025

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Analyze theories and principles of leading organizational change and apply them to a military context.
2. Understand the demands of leading in times of change and how to adapt civilian change management theory to military organizations and challenges.
3. Analyze how principles of organizational change and mission command operate using the case study.

### LESSON OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students examine theories from civilian experts to understand the steps and processes necessary for leading change effectively. Students apply tested civilian theories from industry and business to military contexts to analyze similarities and differences and develop tools for leading change in increasingly complex, contested, and constrained environments and organizations.

**LP-511 (L):** Dr. Amber Batura

*CONTACT HOURS: 60 minutes*

### **LP-512 (S): Leading Change with Mission Command**

1. Edgar Schein and Peter Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 5<sup>th</sup> Ed. (Wiley, 2016): 322-339.
2. John P. Kotter, “Transforming Organizations: Why Firms Fail,” in *Leading Change* (MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012), 3-17. [EL]
3. John P. Kotter, “Accelerate!” *Harvard Business Review* (Nov 2012), 4-13. Retrieved from [https://www.kotterinc.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/OFFICIAL--Accelerate-HBR-Nov\\_2012\\_print-1.pdf](https://www.kotterinc.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/OFFICIAL--Accelerate-HBR-Nov_2012_print-1.pdf) [EL]
4. L. David Marquet, *Turn the Ship Around!: A True Story of Turning Followers into Leaders* (Portfolio, 2013), 48-113.

*CONTACT HOURS: 120-minute seminar.*

## DAY 7 – Authenticity and Self-Awareness

DATE: 14/15 Aug 2025

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the theory and principles of authentic leadership and its potential in military contexts.
2. Determine the relationship between personality theory, self-awareness, and leadership.
3. Comprehend the importance of emotions and emotional intelligence to self-awareness, authenticity, and leadership.
4. Analyze the role of emotions, authenticity, and self-awareness in the case study.

### LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson focuses on self-awareness as a leadership trait from experts in psychology, leadership, and business fields. Students learn how tools like personality tests and skills including emotional intelligence build self-awareness and quality team leadership. Along with the lecture, students will analyze how their behaviors, traits, and patterns might impact their leadership and teams, and they will discuss how they might develop healthier team dynamics for mission success.

**LP-513 (L):** Mr. Bryan Stevenson

CONTACT HOURS: 60 minutes

### LP-514 (S): Authenticity and Self-Awareness in Practice

1. Bill George, Peter Sims, Andrew N. McLean, and Diana Mayer, “Discovering Your Authentic Leadership,” in *Authentic Leadership: HBR Emotional Intelligence Series*, (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2018), 1-37. [EL]
2. Jason Newcomer and Dan Connelly, “Personality and Leadership: The Potential Impact to Future Strategic Thinking.” *Air & Space Power Journal* (Summer 2020), 36-54. Retrieved from [https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/ASPJ/journals/Volume-34\\_Issue-2/F-Newcomer\\_Connelly.pdf](https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/ASPJ/journals/Volume-34_Issue-2/F-Newcomer_Connelly.pdf) [EL]
3. Marc Brackett, *Permission to Feel: Unlocking the Power of Emotions to Help Our Kids, Ourselves, and Our Society Thrive* (New York: Celadon Books, 2019), 48-66; 145-164. [EL]
4. Karl Marlantes, *What It’s Like to Go to War* (NY: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2011), 61-79, 114-133.

CONTACT HOURS: 120-minute seminar.

## DAY 8 – Communication

DATE: 18/19 Aug 2025

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the importance of effective communication in both personal and professional environments.
2. Analyze the relationship between mission command and effective and safe communication.
3. Determine how effective communication played a role in the case study and identify areas of success or areas for growth.

### LESSON OVERVIEW

Students understand the importance of effective communication, not only for mission success but for personal development. Through the lecture, students learn more about communication theory and its significance to military success. Students explore how leaders can develop better communication skills to help create a culture that enables and supports mission command.

**LP-515 (L):** Dr. Sara Kitsch

*CONTACT HOURS: 60 minutes*

### **LP-516 (S): Communication, People, and the Mission**

1. Joseph Grenny et al, *Crucial Conversations*, (NY: McGraw-Hill, 2023), 1-20, 107-160, and 231-244.
2. L. David Marquet, *Turn the Ship Around!: A True Story of Turning Followers into Leaders*, (Portfolio, 2013), 115-160.

*CONTACT HOURS: 120-minute seminar.*

## DAY 9 – Trust and Psychological Safety

DATE: 21/22 Aug 2025

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Comprehend the difference between trust and psychological safety.
2. Understand the role trust and psychological safety play in building a culture for successful mission command in complex military environments.
3. Analyze the impact vulnerability has on leadership, mission command, and organizational change.

### LESSON OVERVIEW

Students delve into building trust within teams and fostering an environment where members feel safe to speak up, challenge ideas, and take initiative. The readings and lecture aid students in applying these concepts to the military environment and underscores how psychological safety and trust supports mission command, innovation, and development of team members.

**LP-517 (L):** Dr. Mara Robinson

*CONTACT HOURS: 60 minutes*

### **LP-518 (S): Building Trust and Psychological Safety**

1. Video: Brene Brown. "Anatomy of Trust (abridged)." April 24, 2020. Uncommon Shapes, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OqB5CEkPII4>
2. Brene Brown, *Dare to Lead: Brave Work, Tough Conversations, Whole Hearts*, (NY: Random House, 2018), 19-43. [EL]
3. Amy Edmondson and Zhike Lei, "Psychological Safety," *The Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior* (2014): 23-43. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/268328210\\_Psychological\\_Safety\\_Trust\\_and\\_Learning\\_in\\_Organizations\\_A\\_Group-level\\_Lens](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/268328210_Psychological_Safety_Trust_and_Learning_in_Organizations_A_Group-level_Lens) [EL]
4. L. David Marquet, *Turn the Ship Around!: A True Story of Turning Followers into Leaders*, (Portfolio, 2013), 161-216.

*CONTACT HOURS: 120-minute seminar.*

## DAY 10 – Team Dynamics

DATE: 25/26 Aug 2025

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Understand what elements contribute to a successful team and good dynamics.
2. Comprehend how to follow and lead in a team environment effectively.
3. Analyze how team dynamics operate during and after wartime.

### LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson examines team dynamics, with an emphasis on the power of followership, which explores the nature and role of followers in the leadership process. Students learn practical skills for developing effective teams while also learning how to be the best follower, even when lacking strong leadership—a concept that is crucial for effective mission command.

### LP-519 (S): All Leaders are Followers

1. Russell Steven Willford and Wendi Peck, “Success on Purpose,” *Joint Forces Quarterly* 99 (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter, 2020): 88-94. Retrieved from [https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Portals/68/Documents/jfq/jfq-99/jfq-99\\_88-94\\_Williford-Peck.pdf?ver=mihrcCbBH2ctx3A0HleiPw%3d%3d](https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Portals/68/Documents/jfq/jfq-99/jfq-99_88-94_Williford-Peck.pdf?ver=mihrcCbBH2ctx3A0HleiPw%3d%3d) [EL]
2. Gibb Dyer and Jeff Dyer, *Beyond Team Building: How to Build High Performing Teams and the Culture to Support Them*, (Wiley, 2020), 7-16, 135-157. Retrieved from <https://research-ebsco-com.aufric.idm.oclc.org/linkprocessor/plink?id=74ef159d-7827-313c-9753-8c40325b6b35>. [EL]
3. Mikail Kalimuddin, “The Practical Application of Followership Theory in Mission Command,” *Military Review Online Exclusive* (Sep 2017): 1-6. <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/Army-Press-Online-Journal/documents/Kalimuddin-v2.pdf> [EL]
4. Joseph Crawford, Sarah M. Young, and Matthew Knox, “Following Through the Good and the Bad,” in *Leadership and Followership in an Organizational Change Context*, ed. Sajjad Nawaz Khan, (Hershey, PA: Business Science Reference, 2022): 242-271. Retrieved from <https://research-ebsco-com.aufric.idm.oclc.org/linkprocessor/plink?id=15e7bb27-eaeb-3cf6-b777-f3bd13750cc0> [EL]
5. Karl Marlantes, *What It’s Like to Go to War* (NY: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2011), 134-154, 208-219.

CONTACT HOURS: 180-minute seminar.

## DAY 11 – Decision-Making and Cognitive Bias

DATE: 28/29 Aug 2025

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the roles of bias, heuristics, judgment, and intuition in decision-making.
2. Comprehend the role emotion plays in decision-making.
3. Analyze the effects of cognitive bias and heuristics in the contemporary leadership environment, upon the mission, and upon the people in teams and organizations.

### LESSON OVERVIEW

Students will explore the processes leaders use to make decisions under pressure and how biases, heuristics, intuition, emotions, and organizational culture influence judgment through expert discussion. Students will work to assess their own biases and weaknesses and determine effective ways to make prudent decisions in a complex, contentious, and demanding operational and organizational environments.

### LP-520 (S): How Decisions are Made

1. Video: Daniel Kahneman. “Thinking Fast and Slow.” March 16, 2022. Book Summary LAB, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TpvffIWSvb4>
2. Video: Lisa Feldman Barrett. “How Emotions Work.” June 20, 2023. Big Think, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJLROKV2SzU>
3. Daniel Kahneman and Gary Klein, “Conditions for Intuitive Expertise: A Failure to Disagree.” *American Psychologist* (Oct 2009): 515-526. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/26798603\\_Conditions\\_for\\_Intuitive\\_Expertise](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/26798603_Conditions_for_Intuitive_Expertise) [EL]
4. David Epstein, “Learning to Drop Your Familiar Tools,” in *Range: Why Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World*, (NY: Riverhead Books, 2019): 233-267. [EL]
5. Karl Marlantes, *What It’s Like to Go to War* (NY: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2011), 48-60.

CONTACT HOURS: 180-minute seminar

## DAY 12 – Risk

DATE: 4/5 Sept 2025

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Understand risk and why risk is important to the current armed forces and mission command.
2. Analyze the role risk plays in decision-making at all levels of the armed forces.
3. Understand the Joint Risk Analysis Methodology (JRAM) and its use for communicating risk up, down, and across the chain of command.
4. Apply JRAM to the case study to assess risks in a real-world scenario.

### LESSON OVERVIEW

This day encourages students to explore how leaders evaluate, communicate, and accept operational risk through doctrine and critical analysis. Students will examine how risk management supports disciplined initiative and empowers subordinates while aligning with commander's intent. They will practice evaluating and communicating risk with the case study using joint methodology.

### LP-521 (S): Understanding and Communicating Risk

1. R.J. Knighton, "The Psychology of Risk and its Role in Military Decision Making," *Defence Studies* 4, 3 (2004): 309-334. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/1470243042000344786> [EL]
2. Lynn Marie Breckenridge, "Curbing the Helicopter Commander," *Military Review* (July-August 2017): 14-21. Retrieved from [https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/MilitaryReview\\_20170831\\_BRECKENRIDGE\\_Helicopter\\_Commander.pdf](https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20170831_BRECKENRIDGE_Helicopter_Commander.pdf) [EL]
3. Noah Taylor, "Toward a Vernacular of Risk: Unmirroring Mission Command Through Risk Education," *Military Review* (May-June 2023): 80-90. Retrieved from <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/MJ-23/Toward-a-Vernacular-of-Risk/Toward-a-Vernacular-of-Risk.pdf> [EL]
4. Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Manual 3105.01B, *Joint Risk Analysis Methodology*, (2023): A1-B14. [EL]
5. USAF Aircraft Accident Investigation Board Report, "WC-130H, T/N 65-0968," [EL]
  - o **Read:**
    - **Executive Summary (1)**
    - **Authority and Purpose (pp. 1)**
    - **Accident Summary (pp. 1)**
    - **Crew Qualifications (pp. 25-31)**
    - **Human Factor Analysis (pp. 32-27)**

### LP-522 (S): Applying and Assessing Risk

- Use the JRAM to identify, evaluate, and communicate risk in the case study.

CONTACT HOURS: 180-minute seminar.

## DAY 13 – Resiliency

DATE: 8/9 Sept 2025

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Understand resiliency and its role in individual, team, and organizational dynamics.
2. Comprehend the relationship between risk and resiliency and resiliency's place in a mission command culture.
3. Analyze the role of failure in learning organizations and in resiliency.
4. Apply concepts of resiliency to the case study to understand its importance in combat operations.

### LESSON OVERVIEW

This day focuses on personal and organizational resiliency and the concept of post-traumatic growth and failing intelligently. Through the readings and expert discussion, students will assess the traits and practices that enable leaders and teams to recover from adversity, adapt, and maintain effectiveness even in deadly operational environments.

**LP-523 (L):** Dr. Susan Steen

*CONTACT HOURS: 60 minutes*

### **LP-524 (S): Resiliency, Trauma, Growth**

1. Michael D. Matthews, "Tough Hearts: Building Resilient Soldiers," in *Head Strong: How Psychology is Revolutionizing War*, (NY: Oxford University Press, 2020): 166-198. **[EL]**
2. Joseph P. Regan, "Are you GAME? Team Resiliency: An Imperative to Mission Command and Agile Combat Employment," in *Warrior Heart: The Foundation of Combat Readiness*, eds. Susan Steen, Angelle Khachadorian, and Mary Bartlett (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 2024): 139-152. **[EL]**
3. Amy Edmondson, *Right Kind of Wrong: The Science of Failing Well* (NY: Simon Acumen, 2023): 49-84. **[EL]**
4. Donald L. Miller, *Masters of the Air: America's Bomber Boys Who Fought the Air War Against Nazi Germany*, (NY: Simon and Schuster, 2007), 102-137. **[EL]**

*CONTACT HOURS: 120-minute seminar.*

## DAY 14 – Development and Empowerment

DATE: 11/12 Sept 2025

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the importance of empowerment and development for service members in the armed forces and for mission command culture.
2. Comprehend the benefits of empowering leadership to the various and complex threats and challenges facing the armed forces.
3. Analyze best practices for coaching, mentoring, and leading in the armed forces.
4. Assess the risk and reward of encouraging development and empowerment of subordinates to leaders.

### LESSON OVERVIEW

As a requirement of command, students will spend some time exploring best practices to develop their team members. The lesson explores practical application methods for mentoring and coaching, including through concepts such as empowerment. Simultaneously, students will analyze best practices for working with ineffective or toxic leaders that maintains growth and mobility in their teams.

#### LP-525 (S): Building and Growing Leaders and Followers

1. Joao Teixeira et al, “Empowering Leadership in the Military: Pros and Cons,” *Merits* 4, (2024), 346-369. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3390/merits4040026> [EL]
2. James W. Shufelt, Jr. and Clinton O. Longnecker, “Practical Lessons Learned for Dealing with Toxic Leaders and Bad Bosses,” *Military Review* (Nov 2017): 1-10. Retrieved from <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/Army-Press-Online-Journal/documents/Shufelt-v2.pdf> [EL]
3. Eric Parsloe and Melville Leedham, “Models of Coaching and Mentoring,” in *Coaching and Mentoring: Practical Techniques for Developing Learning and Performance*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed., ed. Diane Newell (NY: Kogan Page, 2017): 19-42. Retrieved from <https://research-ebSCO-com.aufric.idm.oclc.org/linkprocessor/plink?id=0e94db95-8cd7-37a5-9208-8b154f2c828a> [EL]
4. **Skim:** “AFH36-2647: Competency Modeling” (2022), 4-10, 35-50. [EL]

#### LP-526 (S): Class Activity: Commander’s Intent Practice

- Students will practice interpreting and writing commander’s intent, as facilitated by their seminar instructor.

CONTACT HOURS: 180-minute seminar.

## DAY 15 – Presentations and Feedback

DATE: 15/16 Sept 2024

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Understand best practices for giving and receiving constructive feedback.
2. Apply course material to present a solution to a leadership challenge facing the armed services.
3. Practice feedback through briefing and commander's intent exercise.

### LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson enables students to provide constructive and effective feedback through expert advice via videos. Students present their commander's intent and solutions and receive structured feedback. These deliverables demonstrate their grasp of leadership concepts, their ability to communicate ideas clearly and persuasively, and their willingness to receive and action constructive feedback.

#### LP-527 (S): Commander's Intent and Feedback

- Students will swap commander's intent with a student from another group and receive feedback.
- Must be conducted prior to presentations.

#### LP-528 (S): Presentations and Feedback

1. Video: Adam Grant and Andrew Huberman, "How to Give & Get Constructive Feedback," March 30, 2024. Huberman Clip Labs, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPWRjjj2iok>
2. Video: LeeAnn Renniger, "The Secret to Giving Great Feedback," February 10, 2020. TED, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtl5UrrgU8c>
3. Video: Sheila Heen, "Feedback: A Game of Give and Take," July 4, 2014. IESE Business School, YouTube, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9uQIG7LbT\\_k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9uQIG7LbT_k)

*CONTACT HOURS: 180-minute seminar.*

## APPENDIX I: JOURNAL PROMPTS

Journal prompts are designed to guide students through reflective practice.

- Day 1: There are many definitions of leadership. What does leadership mean to you and how has that evolved during your life? What events/moments/people caused you to rethink or refine your view of leadership?
- Day 2: Mission command relies on principles of disciplined initiative, prudent risk, building teams through mutual trust, shared understanding, and clear intent. Of these, what do you struggle with the most and in what ways? How would you want to improve? What aspect do you think you are most effective? How and why?
- Day 3: Spend some time reflecting on your own values and ethics. What are they? What are your top personal ethical and moral beliefs? Now think about your professional ethics. Do these align? What do you do when your job asks you to violate your personal ethics? What will you do if one of your subordinates violates a key moral or ethical value of yours? What will you do to make sure you can still serve that person as required?
- Day 4: The Air Force has pushed for creativity, innovation, and adaptation for a long time. What do you think are the biggest barriers to creating this in military organizations? Do you agree with the need for creativity and innovation? Why or why not? How would you encourage creativity, innovation, and adaptation in your own squadron?
- Day 5: What matters to you as a leader when it comes to the organization's culture? What kind of culture do you want to develop? What matters to the people around you? Should the unit's culture be driven solely by your vision? What was the culture in some of the worst units you have worked in and what was missing?
- Day 6: Why do people hate change? What makes you most uneasy about change? How can you, as a leader, try to ease those fears or anxieties to make change a little less burdensome for some people?
- Day 7: This day is all about knowing yourself and using tools to help you do that. What are some of the biggest changes you've seen in yourself in the last 5 years? How has that changed how you interact at work and within your units? Do you feel you can be authentic if you are in a leadership position? Why or why not? How could you potentially create an environment that allows others to be more authentic? Do you think authenticity is necessary for a good culture?
- Day 8: Communication is more than just from the leader to their followers. It's also lateral and up. How can you proactively communicate your vision, goals, successes, and failures to both your team, your peers, and your leadership in ways that are proactive and effective?
- Day 9: Reflect on the leader you have trusted the most in your life that is not your family or a close friend. What did that leader do that earned your trust? In what ways did you trust them? Did they also develop psychological safety for you? How? Now reflect on a time when you did not feel that sense of trust or safety. What is the biggest difference and what can you do to avoid that and still accomplish the mission?
- Day 10: Recently, there has been more calls for Multi-Capable Airmen and doing more with less resources and labor. What habits or boundaries will you set as a leader to prevent burnout in yourself and your team? How can you model those habits and who can help hold you accountable? And where do you draw the line between being accessible and being overwhelmed?

- Day 11: We've learned that biases, heuristics, and intuition all play a significant role in decision-making. Reflect on a time when you made the wrong call in a leadership role (formal or informal). Can you now identify the thinking that led you to that decision? What would you now change with hindsight and knowledge about decision-making? How will you try to check yourself for these biases/heuristics in the future?
- Day 12: In researching for this class, it became apparent that risk is a topic many people like to avoid. Why do you think that is? What is your risk acceptance as a leader? What do you think your service's risk acceptance is like? How might we communicate risk better as a whole? What would you like to change about your own relationship with risk?
- Day 13: Some predict that future warfare could become more deadly considering near peer competition and conflict. How do you handle the probability that, as a leader, you will have to ask people to fight and die? How do you prepare yourself to handle the loss of friends or subordinates? What ways can you personally work on your resiliency now, as Marlantes encourages?
- Day 14: What does accountability mean to you as a leader? Is there a time when the leader is not accountable for the actions their team takes or the mistakes they make? Give an example. How do you handle that level of responsibility as a leader? Does it matter to the effectiveness of the team to know if their leader does take accountability? Why?
- Day 15: Reflect on your experience working in teams to develop your solution through creative problem solving and the course. What do you see as the biggest challenges for you in developing a culture for mission command to succeed? What are your biggest strengths?