

INTRODUCTION >>>

Chinese Mandarin LEAP Scholar,

The purpose of this guide is to provide a path to improving and maintaining language proficiency. Specifically, the Department of the Air Force (DAF) is invested in the achievement and maintenance of a 3-level or higher proficiency in Chinese Mandarin and development of interpretation and translation skills. Chinese Mandarin is a DAF strategic language, critical to advancing US national security interests and key to partnerships and interoperability in the United States Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) Area of Responsibilities (AORs). With this as the backdrop, the Development Path guide provides recommendations on timelines, resources, and tools to improve language proficiency and utilize these skills to advance operational success with building interoperability and adversary understanding. We welcome inputs that may enhance the usefulness of this guide for the Chinese Mandarin LEAP community.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS >>>

SCHOLARS WILL ACHIEVE & MAINTAIN GOOD STANDING IN LEAP BY:

- Utilizing the Language Enabled Development Resource (LEaDeR) site at <https://leader.cce.af.mil>. On an annual basis or as changes occur, update profile to include personal contact information, unit commander's contact information, and training availability/preferences. Access LEaDeR periodically to monitor Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT)/ Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) scores and course expiration dates. Update instances of language experiences and utilization.
- Maintaining current DLPT/OPI in at least two modalities (listening/reading/speaking)
- Completing an initial and follow-on eMentor course at intervals required by LEAP policy
- Obtaining and maintaining a LEAP Level
- Completing at least one Language Intensive Training Event (LITE) or LITE equivalent
- Striving to attain and maintain a 3/3 Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) level (see <https://www.govtilr.org>) and attaining and maintaining the LEAP SEI
- Presenting a professional image of the United States when engaging with military partners

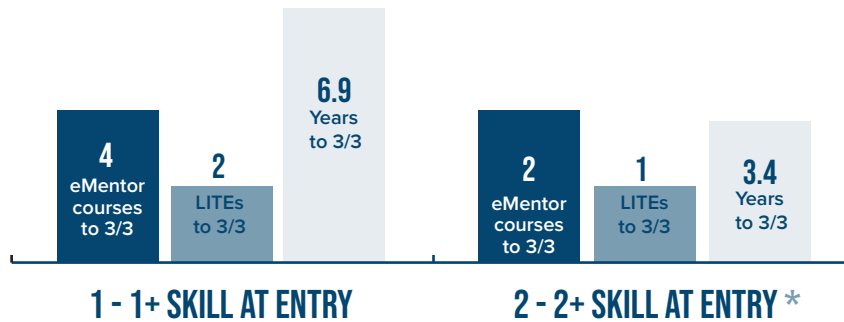
SCHOLARS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ALSO:

- Volunteer for language-focused assignments, deployments, ad hoc taskings, and Training Partnership Requests (TPR) which meet operational requirements and give more contact time in your target language.
- Network with other language enabled service members through LEAP Chapters and other groups
- Further LEAP outreach by mentoring subordinates, sharing one's LEAP story with peers, and advocating to leadership

Refer to [DAFI 36-4005](#) Total Force Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture Program for details on how the Department of the Air Force utilizes LEAP to build and utilize language capability across the force and Language Division Policy in the resources section of [LEaDeR](#) for details on each of the processes listed above that the AFCLC employs to manage LEAP.

COHORT DEMOGRAPHIC METHODOLOGY

*Path to 3/3 is based on data AFCLC gathered through successful scholar surveys, LEaDeR data, and research on language proficiency level advancement.



1 - 1+ SKILL LEVEL AT ENTRY

100 level / 40 hrs	Traditional Development eMentor
150 level / 40 hrs	Traditional Development eMentor
200 level / 3 wks	Traditional LITE (CONUS, OCONUS, or Virtual)
250 level / 40 hrs	Traditional Development eMentor
250 level / 3 wks	Traditional LITE (CONUS, OCONUS, or Virtual)
300 level / 40 hrs	Traditional Development eMentor
300 level / 3 wks	Traditional LITE (CONUS, OCONUS, or Virtual)



AT LEAST 3 HOURS
of self-study spread
across the week

Average time in LEAP to 3/3



For the full AFCLC LEAP Course Catalog visit
<https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/AFCLC/>

2 & ABOVE SKILL LEVEL AT ENTRY



AT LEAST 3 HOURS
of self-study spread
across the week

Average time in LEAP to 3/3



For the full AFCLC LEAP Course Catalog visit
<https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/AFCLC/>

200 level / 40 hrs	Traditional Development eMentor
200 level / 4 wks	LITE-University (CONUS)
200 level / 3 wks	Traditional LITE (CONUS, OCONUS, or Virtual)
250 level / 40 hrs	Traditional Development eMentor
300 level / 40 hrs	Traditional Development eMentor

3/3 ATTAINED / AT ENTRY

- **300-400 level / 12 hrs** | Advanced Assessment eMentor

- **300 level / 12 hrs** | LITE/Power Immersion

- **300 level / 12 hrs** | Special Project eMentor

- **400-500 level / 1-6 wks** | Advanced LITE/TPR

For the full AFCLC LEAP Course Catalog visit <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/AFCLC/>

OPPORTUNITIES

The Training Partnership Request (TPR) provides a means by which DoD or other governmental organizations identify LEAP scholars through a request to the AFCLC to serve in bilateral or international military education and training events.

Advanced LITEs enhance and sustain LEAP Scholar’s language skills in an application setting. During an Advanced LITE, participants study alongside partner militaries or facilitate inter-cultural communication for a mobile training team or inter-cultural conference. Advanced LITEs typically last between one and six weeks, depending on the activity.

IN 2025, THE AFCLC TRACKED THE FOLLOWING #S ON CHINESE MANDARIN ENABLED AIRMEN:

- 339** LEAP Scholars studying Chinese Mandarin (selected or cross-trained)
- 19** Foreign Area Officers (FAOs)
- 7** Assigned to Language Designated positions
- 45** Connected by AFCLC to exercises, mobile training, and conferences across the US and INDOPACOM AORs

SPECIAL EXPERIENCE IDENTIFIER



LEAP Scholars who attain the required level of proficiency and experience are awarded the LEAP Special Experience Identifier (SEI), which serve as an indicator to force managers of those qualified for language assignments.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY BONUS (MAY QUALIFY)



LEAP Scholars who earn the LEAP SEI and attain the required level of proficiency qualify for Foreign Language Proficiency Bonus (FLPB) pay. Please reference [DAFI 36-4005](#) for more information.

Use our courses and resources to grow your skills, network with other scholars, and find ways to get utilized! Your Chinese Mandarin language skills are key to the interoperability of air and space capabilities.

NETWORK

Use the Networking tab in LEaDeR to find Chinese Mandarin LEAP scholars at your base and around the world

TECH VOCAB

Review the Chinese Mandarin glossary under Resources / Military and Technical Vocab and help add to our library

CHAPTERS

Get involved with your base's LEAP Chapter or charter one if no chapter exists

<https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/AFCLC/LEAP-Chapter-Directory/>

MOBILE APP

Reference the China Field Guide, China Culture Course, and Asia-Pacific video content on our mobile app



App Store



Google Play

SUGGESTED SELF-STUDY TOOLS



- 狗熊有话说 (*Bear Talk, advanced*)
- *Sky Link TV*
- *Ted中文 (Ted Chinese)*



- *DLI Resources at <https://www.dliflc.edu/elearning>*
- *Interagency Language Roadmap*
- *bbc.com/zhongwen*
- *ChinesePod*



- *Siguang, Chinese Culture Encyclopedia* (中国文化大本科)
- *Xu Jialu, Harvest: Intermediate Chinese* (收获: 中级汉语)
- *Xu Hui, China Revealed in its Characters* (汉字里的中国)
- *Yan Huan, Origins of Chinese Idioms* (中国成语故事)
- *Li Dejing, A Practical Chinese Grammar for Foreigners* (外国人实用汉语语法)



- *Pleco Chinese Dictionary*
- *DuoLingo*
- *Lingbe*
- *Memrise*
- *LingoDeer*
- *Speechling*



- *Phoenix North America Chinese Channel* (北美凤凰卫视)
- *Sky Link TV*
- *Star Chinese Movies* (衛視電影台)

These are suggestions from Faculty, LEAP Scholars and FAOs, and are not tested or endorsed by AFCLC.



1ST LT. XUE WANG

"The LEAP Advanced LITE/TPR program provided critical experience understanding global adversaries and allies, enabling me to support warfighter operations with my language and regional expertise. Simulating integrated warfare in the INDOPACOM enhanced my readiness for real-world challenges as a Mandarin-speaking Air Force Officer and strengthened my current role at NASIC. Invaluable mentorship from AFCLC proved instrumental in my selection to a Pentagon project, collaborating with French and British allies on future air power strategies. This experience has prepared me for continued growth in my career and my goal of becoming a Foreign Affairs Officer."

1st Lt. Xue Wang, a Ground Radar Engineer with the Electromagnetic Systems Analysis Squadron at the National Air and Space Intelligence Center (NASIC), Wright-Patterson AFB, was selected for LEAP program in 2023. She completed an eMentor course and three LITEs, culminating in her role as the Chinese-Mandarin speaker on the winning seven-member LEAP Scholar team at the 2025 Best Linguist Competition in Salt Lake City, Utah. Through LEAP, 1st Lt. Wang learned how to express in her target language knowledge of Electromagnetic, Information, and Cyber Warfare, along with expertise in adversary weapons systems, including SAMs, ICBMs, hypersonic weapons, nuclear and biological agents, anti-satellite weapons, and UAVs. Her LEAP experience has significantly enhanced her capabilities as an Engineer. Coupled with her language proficiency, makes her exceptionally well-prepared for her role as a Ground Radar Engineer at NASIC, where her understanding of adversarial capabilities directly contributes to national security.