

# **NCO Enlisted Foundations 500 Syllabus**

## **MISSION**

The mission of the NCO Foundations 500 course is to prepare middle tier Enlisted NCOs for increased responsibilities by developing their leadership capabilities and expanding their understanding of the military profession to achieve national strategic objectives.

## **FOUNDATIONAL OUTCOMES**

1. Foster self-discovery, strategic planning, and preparedness for the future.
2. Formulate actionable steps to effectively mentor others in accessing and utilizing learning resources.
3. Forge a link between strategic thinking and the trajectory of the organization's evolution.
4. Articulate the concept of "developing organizations" at the Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) level.

## **CURRICULUM OVERVIEW**

The NCO Enlisted Foundations 500 is 32 hours (4 academic days) of guided discussion classroom methodology and experiential exercises. The course is designed to meet specific objectives associated to each of the four course learning outcomes. These learning outcomes are divided into the broad areas of:

<u><b>Course Hour Breakdown</b></u>	<u><b>Hours</b></u>
Program Orientation:	1
Leadership Development:	5
Understanding Teams:	7
Critical Thinking:	8
Joint Operations:	4
Capstone:	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **1. READINGS**

Before each lesson, students are expected to complete all assigned readings (if applicable) for the day. Students are encouraged to read the explanation given in the syllabus before reading the assigned materials.

### **2. CLASSES**

Students will attend class for guided discussions, experientials, and interactive activities. These discussions and activities will complement the readings and students are expected to contribute positively to the classroom environment.

### **3. PARTICIPATION**

Student participation in classroom discussions and activities is vital to the success of the course. Students must prepare for each lesson by completing all the assigned readings. Each student is expected to contribute to the discussion and actively participate in experientials.

### **4. REFLECTIVE WORKBOOK**

The purpose of this workbook is to provide students the opportunity to reflect on the course content covered throughout each day. These topics focus on key competency areas to strengthen the foundation of their Air Force career and the effect they have on themselves, their unit, and their mission. The NCO tier is a critical part of Air Force mission execution and their development within the Airmanship Continuum is of the utmost importance to the success of world's greatest Air Force. This workbook is designed to ask thought-provoking questions to help students seek understanding and strive to be the best version of themselves, leaders, and future supervisors.

### **5. REFLECTIVE WORKBOOK INSTRUCTIONS**

After each Day of Education (DOE), students are required to reflect on lesson concepts and principles for future application. The students will use a minimum of 2-3 sentences to answer the questions with details or examples to demonstrate their understanding. Students will utilize this time to enhance their understanding of what it means to be an NCO in the United States Air Force and the role they have in mission execution.

### **6. CAPSTONE**

On DOE 4, students will complete an exercise and presentation which will incorporate their reflective work throughout the academic week. The CAPSTONE will enable students to collaborate in a team exercise that emphasizes the practical application of Airmanship concepts.

### **7. END OF COURSE SURVEY**

The survey is administered to 100 percent of the student body after the entire curriculum is delivered to determine the overall effectiveness of NCO Enlisted Foundations 500 course.

## Lessons, Objectives, and Readings

**LESSON NAME:** Program Orientation

**Method of Engagement:** Guided Discussion

**FOUNDATIONAL OUTCOME:** Introduce NCO Foundations 500 overview and Capstone Workbook.

**LESSON OBJECTIVE:** Understand the expectations for the foundations course.

**LESSON INTENT:** The intent of this lesson is to introduce the Noncommissioned Officer Foundations 500 course, an overview of the topics covered, and the relationship between course material, Major Performance Areas, and Airmen Leadership Qualities. Additionally, this lesson will cover the requirements and goals for the Capstone Workbook.

1. Capstone Workbook Introduction

**REQUIRED READINGS:** None

## Leadership Development

**LESSON NAME:** Team Dynamics

**Method of Engagement:** Guided Discussion/Activity

**FOUNDATIONAL OUTCOME:** To equip NCOs with the tools they need to effectively build networks and manage diverse teams.

**FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES:** Understanding Teams, Leadership Development, Fosters Inclusion, Communication, and Influence.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:**

- Facilitate team building exercises to establish connections.
- Reflect on the importance of member's roles within a team, and how it affects the mission.

**LESSON INTENT:** The intent of this lesson is to discuss fundamental team roles in the team building ecosystem. Explain how to establish connections to work effectively.

1. Communicating and Establishing Connections
2. Team Role Fundamentals

**REQUIRED READINGS:** None

**LESSON NAME:** Progressive Discipline

**Method of Engagement:** Guided Discussions/Activity.

**FOUNDATIONAL OUTCOME:** Learn effective progressive discipline tool and concepts and revisit effective use of progressive discipline.

**FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES:** Leadership Development and Profession of Arms.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:**

- Identify different progressive discipline tools and their basic processes.
- Identify barriers to administering progressive discipline.
- Explain the effectiveness of progressive discipline within the unit.

**LESSON INTENT:** The intent of this lesson is to articulate the effective use of progressive discipline and how progressive discipline is used to maintain adherence to the profession of arms and uphold standards. This lesson will also focus on how corrective actions rehabilitate Airmen and Guardians, maintain good order, and discipline, and promote unit effectiveness.

1. Barriers to Issuing Progressive Discipline.
2. Effective Use of Progressive Discipline Scenario.

**REQUIRED READINGS:** None

**LESSON NAME:** Profession of Arms

**Method of Engagement:** Guided Discussions

**FOUNDATIONAL OUTCOME:** Understand the importance of upholding the Profession of Arms, Core values, while leading/influencing teams and the obligation of upholding Ethical Commitment as an NCO and future supervisor.

**FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES:** Profession of Arms, Leadership Development, Developing Self, Developing Others, Accountability.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:**

- Explain the Professions of Arms.
- Explain the “4 whys” of the Core Values.
- Understand the impact of ethical commitment.

**LESSON INTENT:** The intent of this lesson is to fortify an understanding of the Profession of Arms. NCOs will gain an in-depth understanding of the Air Force Core Values and ethical commitments required of themselves and their subordinates.

1. Profession of Arms
2. The Four “Whys” of the AF Core Values
3. Ethical Commitment

**REQUIRED READINGS:** None

# **Understanding Teams**

**LESSON NAME:** EI (Emotional Intelligence)

**Method of Engagement:** Guided Discussion/Activity

**FOUNDATIONAL OUTCOME:** Understand the components of emotional intelligence and its role in effective leadership and followership.

**FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES:** Accountability, Communication, Decision Making, Self-Control, Teamwork, Develops People, Leadership, Fosters Inclusion, Influence.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:**

- Recognize the four components of EI.
- Examine the benefits of EI.
- Formulate ways to improve EI.

**LESSON INTENT:** The intent of this lesson is to raise students' awareness of emotional intelligence within themselves and the importance of understanding the role it plays in communicating within personal and professional environments.

1. Benefits of Emotional Intelligence.
2. Components of Emotional Intelligence.
3. Improving Emotional Intelligence.

**REQUIRED READINGS:** None

**LESSON NAME:** Talent Management

**Method of Engagement:** Guided Discussions

**FOUNDATIONAL OUTCOME:** Formulate actionable steps to effectively mentor others in accessing and utilizing learning resources.

**FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES:** Decision making, Information Seeking, Teamwork, Develops People, Leadership, Fosters Inclusion, Resource Management, Change Management, Strategic Thinking.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:**

- Define manning documents and manning resources.
- Interpret the balance of human resource management and mission success.
- Identify Force Development Opportunities.

**LESSON INTENT:** The intent of this lesson is to understand how manning and talent management drives mission success and familiarize students with how to navigate career growth opportunities for themselves and their subordinates.

1. Manning Documents Overview
2. Career Growth and Mission Success

**REQUIRED READINGS:** None

**LESSON NAME:** Influential Mediator

**Method of Engagement:** Guided Discussion/Activity

**FOUNDATIONAL OUTCOME:** Formulate actionable steps to mentor others in accessing and utilizing tools to effectively mediate.

**FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES:** Leadership Development, Understanding Teams, and Critical Thinking.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:**

- Understand the NCOs role to offer creative approaches, suggestions, and innovative solutions, while maintaining an unbiased perspective.
- Understand the impact of NCOs effectively utilizing influence and mediation to address issues and provide fair outcomes for all parties.

**LESSON INTENT:** The intent of this lesson is to identify and understand the impact of influence in an organization and the NCO role in utilizing influence on effectively mediate conflict and promote a healthy environment.

1. Understanding Influence in an Organization.
2. The Roles and Impact of an Influential Mediator.

**REQUIRED READINGS:** None

**LESSON NAME:** Psychological Safety

**Method of Engagement:** Guided Discussions/Activity

**FOUNDATIONAL OUTCOME:** Articulate the concepts of Psychological Safety at the tactical level.

**FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES:** Understanding Teams, Leadership Development, Teamwork, Fostering Inclusion, Communication, and Fostering Innovation.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:**

- Understand concepts of psychological safety.
- Explain how psychological safety can be leveraged to improve your organization's culture.

**LESSON INTENT:** The intent of this lesson is for students to gain an understanding of psychological safety, and how it's leveraged to foster successful teams.

1. Psychological Safety Research Activity.
2. Psychological Safety Briefings.

**REQUIRED READINGS:** None

## **Critical Thinking**

**LESSON NAME:** CPI<sup>2</sup> (Continuous Process Improvement and Innovation)

**Method of Engagement:** Guided Discussion

**FOUNDATIONAL OUTCOME:** Gain an understanding of the Continuous Process Improvement and Innovation (CPI<sup>2</sup>) programs.

**FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES:** Critical Thinking, Leadership Development, Develops Ideas, and Develops Others.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:**

- Explain the importance of modernization and innovation.
- Discuss programs and resources available to aid in continuous process improvement.

**LESSON INTENT:** The intent of this lesson is to examine the CPI<sup>2</sup> program, explain why it is an effective tool to an efficient force, and the importance of modernization and fostering innovation.

1. CPI<sup>2</sup> Programs
2. CPI<sup>2</sup> Processes

**REQUIRED READINGS:** None

**LESSON NAME:** Mission Command

**Method of Engagement:** Guided Discussion

**FOUNDATIONAL OUTCOME:** Articulate the concept of “developing organizations” at the Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) level. Introducing the four-focus area of Mission Command.

**FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES:** Communication, Teamwork, Developing People, Influence, Strategic Thinking.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:**

- Explain the focus areas of Mission Command
- Explain the role of NOCs within Mission Command.
- Comprehend the use of Mission Command to conduct military operations.

**LESSON INTENT:** The intent of this lesson is for the students to gain a better understanding of their role in the execution of mission command. Specifically, students need to examine the NCOs role in translating commander's intent into executable actions to achieve mission objectives.

1. Mission Command and NCO Roles
2. Mission Command in the Work Center

**REQUIRED READINGS:** None

**LESSON NAME:** Critical Thinking

**Method of Engagement:** Guided Discussion/Activity.

**FOUNDATIONAL OUTCOME:** Understand the importance of fostering critical thinking to enhance mission effectiveness.

**FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES:** Leadership Development, Understanding Teams, Critical Thinking, Develops Self, Decision Making.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:**

- Foster critical thinking to maximize personal and organizational effectiveness.
- Introduce critical thinking framework.

**LESSON INTENT:** The intent of this lesson is to understand the importance of fostering critical thinking to enhance mission effectiveness.

1. Critical Thinking Framework.
2. Critical Thinking Activity/Discussion.
3. Activity Debrief.
4. Improving Your Critical Thinking.

**LESSON NAME:** Social Media

**Method of Engagement:** Guided Discussion

**FOUNDATIONAL OUTCOME:** Revisit the concepts of digital literacy and its impact on information security and good order and discipline.

**FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES:** Critical Thinking, Understanding Teams, Digital Literacy, Information Seeking, Influence, and Decision Making.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:**

- Explain digital literacy concepts.
- Explain benefits and threats from the use of social media.
- Understand Air Force social media governing documents.



**LESSON INTENT:** The intent of this lesson is to enhance the digital literacy of supervisors by helping them understand how social media is used by the Armed Forces, and to overcome challenges that it poses.

1. Digital Literacy
2. Social Media Etiquette & Guidelines Activity
3. Activity Presentations

**REQUIRED READINGS:** None

## **Joint Operations**

**LESSON NAME:** AFFORGEN (Air Force Forces Generation)  
**Method of Engagement:** Guided Discussion

**FOUNDATIONAL OUTCOME:** Understand the Air Force Deployment Cycles and the importance of Total Force readiness.

**FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES:** Leadership and Development, Understanding Teams, Joint Operations, Developing Self, Developing Others and Developing Organizations.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:**

- Explain AFFORGEN and its four phases.
- Discuss how Airmen contribute to AFFORGEN.
- Explain the A-Staff structure.

**LESSON INTENT:** The intent of this lesson to expand knowledge of the AFFORGEN process. By the end of this lesson, NCOs will understand how Airmen contribute to the AFFORGEN process and how A-Staff structure fits into AFFORGEN.

1. Four Phases of AFFORGEN
2. A-Staff

**REQUIRED READINGS:** None

**LESSON NAME:** Strategic Priorities  
**Method of Engagement:** Guided Discussion

**FOUNDATIONAL OUTCOME:** Understand the strategic vision, leadership priorities and how they fit into the preparedness for the future.

**FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES:** Leadership Development Joint Operations

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:**

- Explain the concept of leadership priorities.
- Understand the NCOs role throughout the three levels of leadership.

**LESSON INTENT:** The intent of this lesson is for students to understand leadership priorities at all levels (Sq, Gp, WG, MAJCOM) that align with DoD priorities. This lesson will challenge students to start thinking about their role as an NCO in the Tactical, Operational, and Strategic levels of leadership.

1. Understanding Strategic Vision
2. Strategic Vision Activity and Discussion

**REQUIRED READINGS:** None

**LESSON NAME:** JIIM (Joint International Interagency Multinational)

**Method of Engagement:** Guided Discussion

**FOUNDATIONAL OUTCOME:** Understand the basics of JIIM and how NCOs contribute to the Joint Strategic vision.

**FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES:** Leadership Development and Joint Operations.

**LESSON OBJECTIVES:**

- Explain the JIIM environment.
- Give examples of how Total Force Airmen utilize JIIM to achieve strategic objectives.

**LESSON INTENT:** The intent of this lesson is to introduce NCOs to the Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental and Multinational (JIIM) environment. NCOs will be able to explain how their missions are incorporated in the JIIM environment and how they are developing their Airmen to operate in this environment.

1. Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, Multinational (JIIM) Environment
2. JIIM and Strategic Vision

**REQUIRED READINGS:** None