

# **Noncommissioned Officer Academy Course Syllabus**

**Effective: 3 January 2023**

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The Air Force Noncommissioned Officer Academy (NCOA) is a resident Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) affiliated course that consists of 196 classroom hours. The overall goal of NCOA is to develop the leadership capability of NCOs and expand their understanding of the Air Forces role in joint operations to achieve national strategic objectives.

All NCOA flight rooms are approved CCAF classrooms.

## **COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon graduation, NCOA students should be able to:

- 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 joint knowledge, skills, and abilities to AF tactical and operational actions.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Students will act professionally and comply with all school, EPME, and Air Force policies and guidance.

Students will adhere to class schedule attendance requirements and engage in the learning process by completing all homework, objective, performance, and remediation assignments on time. In class, students are expected to actively listen, critically think, and willingly discuss lesson principles. Students must put forth the effort necessary to achieve all learning objectives. Students who turn in late assignments are subject to administrative corrective action.

## GRADUATION & EVALUATION CRITERIA

**To graduate, all NCOA students must meet the following requirements:**

Students will be assessed on curriculum material via seven graded assignments (also referred to as Performance Tasks or assessments). Students must meet the minimum passing standard (score) on each assignment.

The graded assignments are:

- Air Force Culture Background Paper
- Air Force Culture Presentation
- Leadership Background Paper
- Leadership Presentation
- Problem Solving Group Presentation
- Mission Test
- Strategic Threat Background Paper

All instances pertaining to students not meeting performance objectives due to a lack of participation will be documented. Remediation or other appropriate administrative action will be taken to correct this unacceptable behavior. Multiple infractions may lead to a student's release from the academy.

### SCORING MODEL

Instructors evaluate student assessments for quality and comprehensiveness and assign grades using evaluation instruments (rubrics). The scoring model is a summary of available academic points each assessment has in meeting course completion requirements. The academic score consists of seven graded assignments. The graduation score is a combination of all academic assignments and the Peer Evaluation/Stratification Exercise.

NCOA Scoring Model			Minimum Passing Score	
	EVALUATION TYPE	POINTS	POINTS	PERCENT
Culture Background Paper	Written Product	100	70	70%
Culture Briefing	Presentation	100	70	70%
Leadership Background Paper	Written Product	100	70	70%
Leadership Briefing	Presentation	100	70	70%
Problem Solving Briefing	Group Presentation	100	70	70%
Mission Test	Computer Based Exam	100	72	70%
Strategic Threat Background Paper	Written Product	100	70	70%
<b>Academic Total</b>		<b>700</b>		

## **REMEDIATION**

The remediation process is a series of actions that occur due to a student's failure to meet minimum academic requirements. Students who fail a performance task will retake (refire) the assignment. Students who fail the refire will meet an Academic Review Board (ARB).

### **Academic Review Boards (ARB)**

An ARB will convene when students cannot meet graduation criteria and when remediation and re-evaluation attempts are unsuccessful. The purpose of the ARB is to determine whether the institution and the student fulfilled their respective responsibilities. A key consideration during the ARB is whether the student engaged in the learning process. Disciplinary release is only considered when sufficient evidence proves the student did not put forth enough effort or failed to fulfill their academic responsibilities.

### **Disciplinary Review Boards (DRB)**

When students violate Air Force directives or individual school policies, the school may consider disciplinary release. Examples include but are not limited to: lack of effort, disruptive/poor attitude, engaging in unprofessional relationships, cheating, plagiarism, or other conduct in violation of local policies or the UCMJ. The commandant will convene the DRB to serve as an investigative body and objectively evaluate all circumstances and issues pertaining to the situation.

## **STUDENT RELEASES**

There are three types of releases: administrative, academic, and disciplinary.

- **Administrative Release:** Students are administratively released when they encounter extenuating circumstances, or when recalled by their commander.
- **Academic Release:** Students are academically released when they fail to meet minimum academic requirements. Academic releases render students ineligible for re-entry into any EPME course for three months (90 days) from the release date.
- **Disciplinary Release:** Students are disciplinary released when they violate Air Force directives or individual school policies (e.g., cheating, disruptive/poor attitude, or other conduct in violation of the UCMJ). Disciplinary releases render students ineligible for re-entry into any EPME course for one year (365 days) from the release date.

## **LEADERSHIP EVALUATION**

Leadership is an integral part of the EPME experience and is visible in varying degrees. It is the responsibility of the instructor to inspire and develop leadership within their flights. Therefore, both instructors and students will assess demonstrated student leadership qualities and attributes.

- **Peer Leadership Evaluation:** The peer leadership evaluation is based on a Self/Peer Assessment and Stratification Exercise conducted by students once during the course. Students will perform a peer leadership evaluation in the EPME Course Application Toolkit (ECAT) accessible through the LMS.
- **Instructor Leadership Evaluation:** It is the responsibility of instructors to inspire and develop leadership within their flights. Instructors will provide leadership performance feedback after evaluating each student. This feedback will highlight both strengths and weaknesses based on observations noted during throughout the course.

## **AWARDS PROGRAM**

The following EPME Awards are given at the NCOA: John L. Levitow, Distinguished Graduate (DG), Academic Achievement, and Commandant's Award. Commandants may disqualify any award candidate who fails to exhibit USAF leadership traits and characteristics, professional behavior, military bearing, respect for authority, the highest standards of dress and appearance, or exemplary standards of on- and off-duty performance to include physical fitness standards.

### Eligibility:

- Students who did not meet minimum passing scores on any performance task are ineligible (redlined) for the John L. Levitow, Distinguished Graduate, and Academic Achievement awards.
- John L. Levitow Award: This is the highest honor awarded based performance evaluations, as well as instructor and peer leadership evaluations. The John L. Levitow Award is the most distinguished graduate and is included as part of the top 10 percent of Distinguished Graduates. Each academy class will have only one John L. Levitow Award recipient.
- Distinguished Graduate Award: This award is presented to the top 10 percent of the class which is determined by the performance evaluations, as well as instructor and peer leadership evaluations.
  - The Distinguished Graduate award is a combination of all seven performance tasks, and the Stratification Exercise.
- Academic Achievement Award: This award is presented to the student with the highest academic standing, excluding the John L. Levitow Award recipient.
  - The Academic Achievement Award is based on a student's total academic score from the seven performance tasks.
- Commandant's Award: This award is presented to the student who, in the Commandant's judgment, made the most significant contribution to the overall success of the class. The John L. Levitow Award winner is NOT eligible for this award; however, students academically redlined may be eligible.

## COURSE/LESSON SUMMARY

### PROGRAM ORIENTATION

**Hours:** 7

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson provides information on the NCO Academy's purpose, policies, procedures, and requirements.

**Objective:** Recall the NCO Academy's purpose, policies, procedures, and requirements.

### AF CULTURE OUTCOME

**Hours:** 32

**Course Outcome:** Assess and advocate actions necessary for strengthening organizational culture.

**Total Lessons:** 9

### LESSONS

#### CULTURE OVERVIEW

**Hours:** 9

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson provides information on the topics that will be covered in the module as well as the assessments conducted during the Culture module.

**Objective:**

- Recall information on Culture module lessons, activities, and graded assignments.

#### UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

**Hours:** 3

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson is intended to equip individuals with the awareness that biases exist in everyone. Students will learn how to uncover and overcome their own biases and incorporate this knowledge into their leadership style to create a trusting environment that incorporates diverse perspectives.

**Objectives:**

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

## TRUST

**Hours:** 3

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson covers the behaviors that contribute towards high trust relationships and low trust relationships and the impact each has on an organization.

**Objectives:**

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

## COMMITMENT

**Hours:** 2

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson equips individuals with an understanding of the six levels of commitment, how to determine the commitment level of someone, and summarize how a leader can potentially improve the commitment of others.

**Objectives:**

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

## PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

**Hours:** 2

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson provides information on the impact professional and unprofessional relationship have on a unit, both positive and negative. Students will cover the role they have in maintaining professional relationships and preventing the development of unprofessional ones.

**Objective:**

- Explain the impact of professional and unprofessional relationships on unit culture.

## SHAPING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

**Hours:** 5

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson introduces the students to the importance of identifying traits of a healthy and unhealthy organizational culture and how to obtain a healthy organizational culture or maintain an existing healthy culture.

**Objectives:**

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

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

**Hours:** 2

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson covers the role NCOs have within the Equal Opportunity (EO) program. Students examine the purpose of the EO program, and the impact unlawful discrimination and harassment has on an organization. This lesson also covers the Defense Equal Opportunity Climate Survey (DEOCS) program.

**Objectives:**

- Understand leadership roles and responsibilities within the Air Force Equal Opportunity program.
- Understand the impact of unlawful discrimination and harassment on individuals and the unit.
- Understand unit climate assessment methodologies.

## INTEGRATED RESILIENCE

**Hours:** 3

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson equips students with the knowledge, skills, and tools required to continually assess and respond to Airmen in need. Students will cover how to empower individuals to maintain the necessary balance of cognitive skills, physical endurance, emotional stamina, social connectedness, and spiritual well-being to thrive and carry out the mission.

**Objectives:**

- Identify risks and protective factors of interpersonal violence and suicide.
- Promote help seeking for individuals.
- Discourage violence and suicidal thoughts through empathy for individuals.
- Recognize when fellow Airmen need intervention and how to intervene.
- Understand the mission impact from violence and suicide.

## SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE (SAPR)

**Hours:** 3

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson covers the impact sexual assault has on individuals and their work environment as well as how NCOs should respond at the individual and unit level in the event of an allegation of sexual assault.

**Objectives:**

- Describe the aftermath of sexual assault on victims.
- Explain sexual assault's impact on work performance.
- Explain how actions and behaviors can impact victim recovery and reintegration.

## LEADERSHIP OUTCOME

**Hours:** 26

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

**Total Lessons:** 6

## LESSONS

### LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW

**Hours:** 9

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson provides students with information on the topics that will be covered as well as the assessments conducted during the Leadership module.

**Objective:**

- Recall information on leadership module lessons, activities, and graded assignments.

### MISSION COMMAND

**Hours:** 2

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson enables students to better understand of their role in the execution of mission command. Specifically, students will examine the NCOs role in translating commander's intent into executable actions to achieve mission objectives.

**Objectives:**

- Explain the concept of Mission Command.
- Explain the role of NCOs & SNCOs within Mission Command.
- Comprehend the use of Mission Command to conduct military operations.

### ETHICAL DECISION MAKING

**Hours:** 2

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson aids the students in understanding the importance for military leaders to make ethically sound decisions and how their decisions impact mission success. Students will examine the implications decisions have in a war-time environment, the role NCOs have in making decisions, and how the choices they make could result in the loss of life in order to secure a military victory.

**Objectives:**

- Discuss the values and standards of the Profession of Arms.
- Examine ethical principles as a basis for morally justified decisions.
- Explain the NCOs role in promoting ethical decision making.
- Comprehend sound ethical decision-making based on the values and standards of the Profession of Arms.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Hours:** 6

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson introduces students to the various skills and behavior traits that may be required for effective leadership and management of teams and organizations. Students will examine the different roles that leaders and managers have as well as how to develop their own method to be effective leaders/managers.

**Objectives:**

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

## LEADER ATTRIBUTES

**Hours:** 1

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson provides information on the Enlisted Desired Leader Attributes outlined in CJCSI 1085.01C. These attributes are the enduring qualities that form the foundation of enlisted leadership development in which all other leadership and management actions depend on.

**Objective:**

- Describe the elements that make up each enlisted desired leader attribute (EDLA)

## LEADING DIVERSE TEAMS

**Hours:** 6

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson develops the students understanding that the diversity of our Nation and our Air Force team is what contributes to our success. Students will examine how the building of diverse and inclusive teams leads to the generation of innovative ideas contributes to mission success.

**Objectives:**

- Explain concepts that are essential to promoting agility, innovation, and inclusivity in a team.
- Identify hindrances and barriers to team agility, innovation, and inclusivity.
- Summarize how an NCO can effectively lead diverse teams

## PROBLEM SOLVING OUTCOME

**Hours:** 27

**Course Outcome:** Apply strategies to solve problems in a collaborative environment.

**Total Lessons:** 5

## LESSONS

### PROBLEM SOLVING OVERVIEW

**Hours:** 9

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson provides students with information on the topics that will be covered as well as the assessments conducted during the Problem-Solving module.

**Objective:**

- Recall information on outcome activities and graded assignments.

### TYPES OF THINKING

**Hours:** 2

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson covers the differing types of thinking, provides examples of the types, and summarize how understanding and applying multiple types of thinking can increase a leader's ability solve problems.

**Objectives:**

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

### TYPES OF PROBLEMS

**Hours:** 2

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson introduces the types of problems NCOs may face and how to deal with them in an effective and efficient way. The lesson also connects the types of problems with a type of thinking that enables the students to engage in the problem-solving process later in this course.

**Objectives:**

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

## NEGOTIATIONS

**Hours:** 8

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson builds the students confidence and expands their mindsets on the fundamental terms, phrases, and frameworks as it relates to negotiating various problems.

**Objectives:**

- Give examples of the use of negotiation strategies and their impact on mission effectiveness.
- Differentiate between integrative and distributive types of negotiations.
- Demonstrate negotiation skills in a simulated situation.

## PROBLEM SOLVING

**Hours:** 6

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson focuses on problem-solving processes and enables students to identify, understand, and apply problem-solving processes to a problem-solving model.

**Objectives:**

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

## MISSION OUTCOME

**Hours:** 54

**Course Outcome:** Connect joint knowledge, skills, and abilities to Air Force tactical and operational actions.

**Total Lessons:** 7

## LESSONS

### MISSION OVERVIEW

**Hours:** 7

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson provides students with information on the topics that will be covered as well as the assessments conducted during the Mission module.

**Objective:**

- Recall information on Mission module lessons, activities, and graded assignments.

## MILITARY ORGANIZATION

**Hours:** 2

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson provides foundational knowledge and information of how the U.S. military is organized and structured.

**Objectives:**

- Describe the origin and organization of the U.S. national security structure.
- Describe the organization and command structure of the U.S. military.
- Describe the capabilities of the U.S. military.

## JOINT FORCES OVERVIEW

**Hours:** 2

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson aids the students in becoming more knowledgeable of the other military services by examining the formation and organizational structure of each service in addition to their unique customs and courtesies.

**Objectives:**

- Identify the typical command, organization, & formation structure for each military service
- Name the applicable uniform references for each military branch
- Identify the customs and courtesies of the military services

## NATIONAL STRATEGY

**Hours:** 2

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson enables the students to gain a deeper understanding of the U.S. National Defense Strategy and how the strategy is used to maintain national security and achieve national objectives.

**Objectives:**

- Define the National Security Strategy (NSS) and its relationship to the National Military Strategy.
- List the instruments of national power (diplomatic, informational, military, economic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement).
- Recall how the instruments of national power achieve national goals and objectives.
- Describe the relationships among the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war.
- Summarize the competition continuum with its three states of relations: armed conflict, competition below armed conflict, and cooperation.
- Explain the complexities of operations below the threshold of armed conflict as manifested by constant competition in the Information Environment.

## JOINT OPERATIONS

**Hours:** 4

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson introduces joint operations concepts and how they are applied to the planning and conduct of warfare operations.

**Objectives:**

- Recall the fundamentals of both traditional and irregular warfare.
- Describe how the U.S. military is organized to plan, execute, sustain, and train for joint operations.
- Recall the components of the Joint Operations and Planning System (JOPES).
- Describe principles of Joint Operations and Functions.
- Recall the fundamentals of Operations in the Information Environment.
- Describe the nature of globally integrated operations in the information environment.

## OPERATIONAL CULTURE

**Hours:** 7

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** This lesson prepares students to successfully operate in a global joint environment by introducing the concept of cross-cultural competence and how key elements of cultures may influence their ability to operate in and understand the world's major regions. This lesson also examines the impact violent extremist organizations and non-state actors have on military operations.

**Objectives:**

- Identify elements of the dominant culture in each of the world's major regions.
- Explain the importance of regional and cultural awareness in a joint environment.
- Explain how non-state actors influence world regions and military operations.
- Explain how international organizations influence world regions and military operations.

## MISSION EXERCISE

**Hours:** 30

**Lesson Purpose/Relevance:** The intent of this exercise is to allow the students to apply what has been learned throughout the course to a variety of scenarios in which they have to make important decisions on the acquisition, organization, and employment of various resources in support of a hypothetical operation.

**Objective:**

- Apply Mission Module content to plausible scenarios

## **MANDATORY PREREQUISITE READING**

The following documents are required to be read by each student prior to attendance at NCOA.

- AFDP 1, 10 March 2021, *The Air Force*
- AFI 1-1, 6 August 2012, *Air Force Standards*
- “The Blue Book,” *A Profession of Arms: Our Core Values*, 16 May 2022
- “The Brown Book,” *The Enlisted Force Structure*, 16 May 2022
- CSAF ACTION ORDERS to Accelerate Change Across the Air Force, December 2020
- National Defense Strategy 2022
- Description of the National Military Strategy 2018
- National Security Strategy, October 2022
- DoD Cyber Strategy Summary, 2018
- DoD Space Strategy Summary, June 2020
  
- Optional Readings (Highly Recommended): CMSAF Leadership Library Reading List

*System Requirements for Noncommissioned Officer Academy*

**Minimum Recommended Operating System:**

Windows 8, Mac OSX 10.6, or later Windows 8.1 or later, latest Mac OSX Processor  
2 GHz processor 2.86 GHz or faster processor

Memory 4 GB of RAM or higher 8 GB of RAM or higher

Monitor: Resolution 1024 x 768 1024 x 768 or higher

Free Hard Disk Space: 5 GB of free disk space 20 GB or higher of free space Wireless WPA2  
Personal

Encryption: (802.1x) WPA2 Personal Encryption capable (802.1bg)

**Internet Browser:**

IE10, latest Chrome or Firefox

IE11, Safari 6, latest Chrome Version or latest Firefox Version

Word Processing Program: Any word processing program that will the ability to save documents  
in PDF format

Antivirus Any up to date antivirus Acrobat Pro Version 9+

Adobe Acrobat Reader or Adobe Acrobat Pro Version 9+

**Mobile Devices:**

Devices, such as, the Apple iPad, Android Tablets, or Windows Slates, it is highly recommended  
that you bring a keyboard and mouse that will connect to these devices since you will be required  
to compose several essays. External keyboards or mice will not be provided by the schoolhouse for  
these devices.

Wireless WPA2 Personal Encryption capable (802.1x) WPA2 Personal Encryption capable  
(802.1x)

Internet Browser: Mobile IE, Safari Mobile (latest), Chrome or Firefox

Word Processing Program: Any word processing program that will the ability to save documents  
in PDF format

Antivirus Any up to date antivirus

Adobe Acrobat Reader or Adobe Acrobat Pro Version 9+

## **Government Systems**

Governments systems should have the Standard Desktop Top (SDC) v3.4 (with Office 2010) with Google Chrome or Firefox installed and the wireless connection turned on prior to coming to the schoolhouse.

## **Simulation System Recommendations**

- 4 GB or greater of RAM
- Hard drive with at least 1 GB of free storage area
- 1024 x 768 resolution (minimum) Display zoom set at 100%
- 16-bit sound card and speakers
- Internet Explorer (IE) version 11.0 or later, MS Edge, Chrome 53 or better; Firefox and Safari browsers with the iOS platform (for IE browser, compatibility mode must be turned off)
- Browser set to allow popups; browser zoom set at 100%
- Windows 10, including the latest service packs and security patches; iOS 11.X
- Cable or better (internet bandwidth connection)

### *Notes:*

All software, drivers, and updates must be installed prior to arriving at the schoolhouse.

Any system older than 3 years may not have the processing power to work with our current version of the Learning Management System and its components.

Smartphones are not considered a viable method to complete the course. Laptops must have current date and time set.

It is recommended to bring a CAC reader.