



UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY  
**WEST POINT®**

**Developing Leaders of Character**  
The West Point Leader Development System



United States Military Academy  
West Point, New York

2025

# LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

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Members of the West Point Team,

Our unwavering dedication to developing the Corps of Cadets into commissioned leaders of character for the Army continues to be exceptional. I extend my sincere gratitude to those of you who have contributed to our critical Mission, and to those who are beginning their service at this hallowed institution.

All members of the West Point Team - Cadets and all military and civilian staff, faculty, and coaches assigned to West Point - play a crucial role in developing commissioned leaders of character who live honorably, lead honorably, and demonstrate excellence. Developing commissioned leaders of character is our mission essential task and thus is my top priority. This crucial role extends to stewarding our culture of character growth, a culture that is vital to being the world's preeminent leader development institution.

Although we all contribute in unique ways to building, educating, training, and inspiring the Corps of Cadets, we all must be committed to developing the character of Cadets. Character development is the most important thing we do at the United States Military Academy (USMA). I expect you to take advantage of every interaction with a Cadet as an opportunity for character development, to set a standard for professional behavior, and to encourage character growth within each other. This is our collective responsibility.

*Developing Leaders of Character (DLC)* is our foundational document. It summarizes at the institutional level how we achieve our Mission through the West Point Leader Development System. All lower echelon publications should be consistent with the guidance it provides. DLC is meant to empower your actions toward effectively developing leaders of character; the document serves as my commander's intent for the achievement of our Mission. Read it and understand your role in accomplishing our Mission.

In addition to *DLC*, I also expect every member of our team to read and understand their roles in the *USMA Strategy* and in my annual guidance. The *Strategy* describes my priorities in five Lines of Effort (LOEs); these LOEs prioritize areas of growth as we continue to achieve our vision of being the world's preeminent leader development institution. My annual guidance is informed by our assessments and further prioritizes our efforts and resources.

In closing, I ask you to be positive, do your best, and be a good teammate. Only together will we continue to develop leaders of character who live honorably, lead honorably, and demonstrate excellence. Thank you for your commitment.



STEVEN W. GILLAND  
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army  
Superintendent



# WEST POINT MOTTO

Duty, Honor, Country

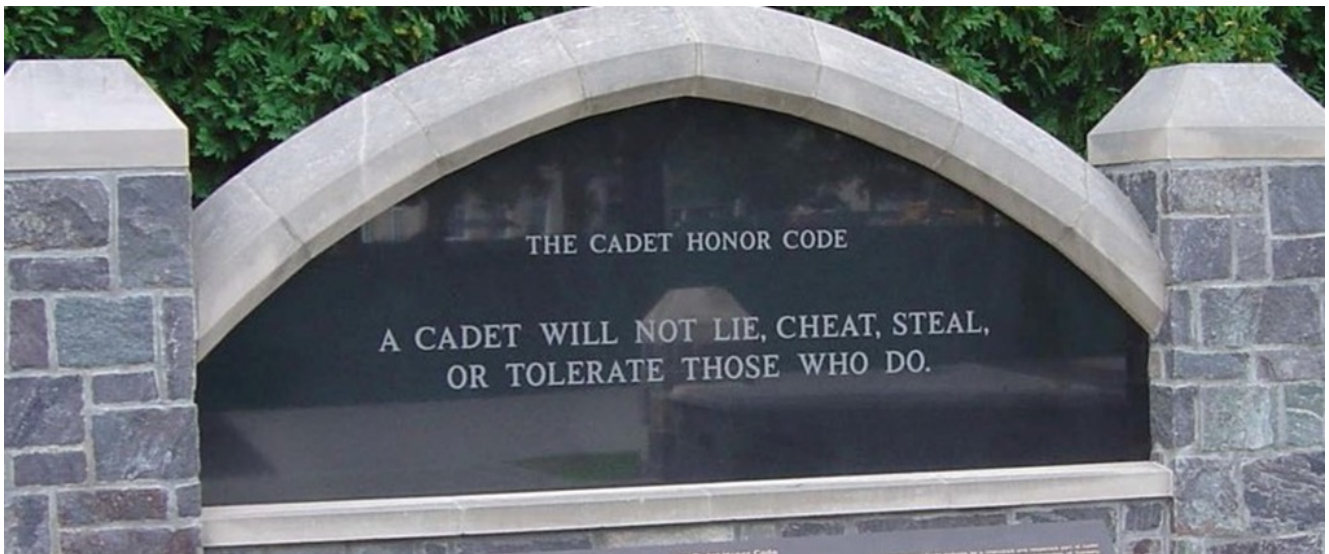
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## VISION

West Point is the preeminent leader development institution in the world.

## MISSION

To build, educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets to be commissioned leaders of character committed to the Army Values and ready for a lifetime of service to the Army and Nation.



## CADET CREED

I am committed to the values of Duty, Honor, Country. I am an aspiring member of the Army profession, dedicated to serve and earn the trust of the American People. It is my duty to maintain the honor of the Corps. I will live above the common level of life and have the courage to choose the harder right over the easier wrong. I will live with honor and integrity, scorn injustice, and always confront substandard behavior. I will persevere through adversity and recover from failure. I will embrace the Warrior Ethos and pursue excellence in everything I do. I am a future officer and member of the Long Gray Line.

## WARRIOR ETHOS

I will always place the mission first.  
I will never quit.

I will never accept defeat.  
I will never leave a fallen comrade.

# DEVELOPING LEADERS OF CHARACTER

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# I. INTRODUCTION

*To meet the combat leadership challenge, officers must demonstrate three things: (1) they must be competent, (2) they must exercise good judgement, and (3) they must have character. By itself, competence is meaningless without character and good judgement.<sup>1</sup>*

*LTG Hal Moore, USMA Class of 1945*

USMA graduates are expected to be trusted servants to the Nation. They voluntarily accept an exceptional and unremitting responsibility to lead honorably and effectively America's sons and daughters in winning our Nation's wars. A graduate's character demonstrates the principles that guide an officer's judgment, attitudes, decisions, and actions towards fulfilling the responsibilities associated with the oath they voluntarily take:

## **OATH OF COMMISSIONED OFFICERS**

I \_\_\_\_\_, having been appointed an Officer in the Army of the United States, in the grade of \_\_\_\_\_, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter.  
So help me God. (Title 5 U.S. Code 3331)

Cadets become commissioned leaders of character when they live honorably, lead honorably, and demonstrate excellence. These are the three fundamental outcomes of the West Point Leader Development System (WPLDS) and are designed to meet the requirements of the Army's future operating environment. The outcomes align with Army doctrine and the Army Ethic which requires that professional officers are: <sup>2</sup>

- Honorable Servants of the Nation – Professionals of Character who Live Honorably
- Stewards of the Profession – Committed Professionals who Lead Honorably
- Army Experts – Competent Professionals who Demonstrate Excellence

To develop Cadets into leaders of character, Cadets are immersed in WPLDS. This system is a comprehensive and integrated approach designed to harness every facet of the West Point experience while leveraging specific developmental events and activities to reinforce and assess character and honorable living. The Cadets' primary role in WPLDS is to take ownership of their personal development, seeking to grow professionally and become leaders of character. They are also expected to serve as exemplary role models and trainers, enhancing the development of peers and followers.

# DEVELOPING LEADERS OF CHARACTER

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Developing commissioned leaders of character, USMA's mission essential task,<sup>3</sup> is the most important thing we do at West Point.<sup>4</sup> This document empowers the West Point Team to develop commissioned leaders of character.

As mentioned in the Superintendent's letter, every member of the West Point Team has an important and unique role not only in developing character, but also in stewarding our culture of character growth. It is truly what distinguishes West Point as the world's preeminent leader development institution.

Everyone on the West Point Team is a character development practitioner who demonstrates good character and professionalism while also actively participating in the education, training, and inspiration of Cadets. To be empowered in finding ways to develop character, each member of the West Point Team should understand their critical role in the following areas.

- Implementing WPLDS and its associated outcomes.
- Strengthening West Point's culture of character growth as a vital enabler.
- Executing Comprehensive Character Development.
- Integrating Cadet development across and within programs.
- Stewarding WPLDS and our culture of character growth.
- Continuously improving how we develop Cadets.

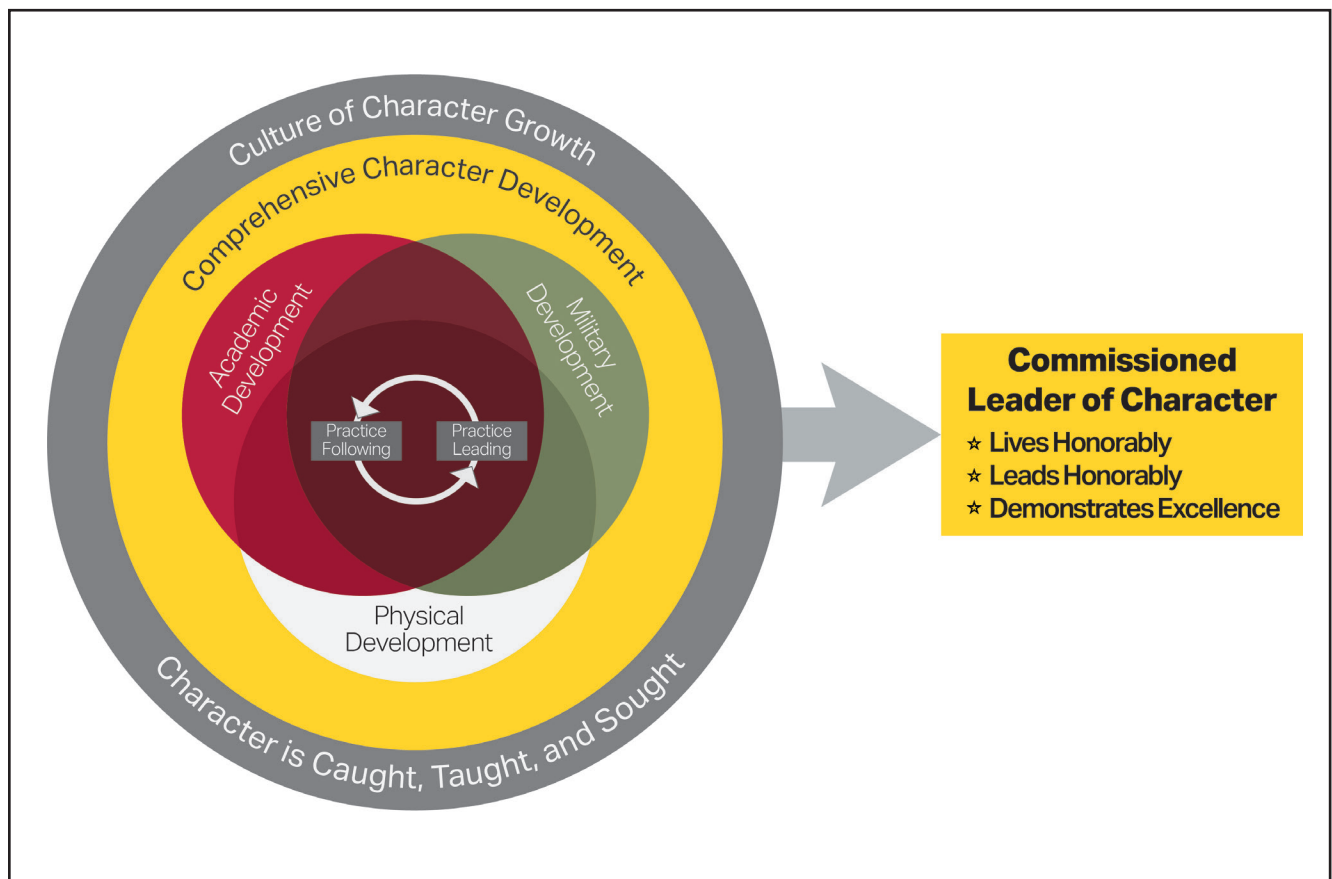
The West Point Team referred to throughout this document consists of Cadets and all military and civilian staff, faculty, and coaches assigned to West Point.

## II. THE WEST POINT LEADER DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

WPLDS is the purposeful integration of character and leader development through the academic, military, and physical development programs, all within a culture of character growth. WPLDS provides the structure in which West Point accomplishes the Mission of developing commissioned leaders of character (Figure 1).

West Point's graduates are leaders of character who live honorably, lead honorably, and demonstrate excellence; these three components are referred to as the WPLDS outcomes. They require comprehensive and integrated development across the academic, military, and physical development experiences, grounded in a culture of character growth.

Integration occurs when faculty, staff, and coaches form, coordinate, or blend seemingly disparate developmental experiences into a unified and synergistic whole greater than the sum of the parts, thus achieving a greater developmental effect. All developmental experiences overlap in Figure 1 to underscore this goal. The most impactful development occurs when Cadets integrate the knowledge and practice gained across the breadth of their developmental efforts.



**Figure 1:** Graphical Depiction of WPLDS

# DEVELOPING LEADERS OF CHARACTER

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As stated in Chapter I, our mission essential task is to develop commissioned leaders of character who live honorably, lead honorably, and demonstrate excellence. These three WPLDS outcomes, shown in Figure 1, are defined by sub-outcomes to further delineate how each overarching outcome is defined and understood. The outcomes and their supporting sub-outcomes (see the callout below) have been purposefully aligned with the attributes and competencies described in the Army Leader Requirements Model.<sup>5</sup> Graduates who achieve the WPLDS outcomes are commissioned as officers who then earn and maintain the trust of their Soldiers, their leaders, and the American public, while inspiring those they lead with the character and competence that our Army and our Nation expect.

## WPLDS OUTCOMES

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### USMA graduates:

#### **1. Live honorably:**

- Internalize the Cadet Honor Code, West Point Motto, and Army Values.
- Demonstrate moral courage regardless of personal consequences.
- Treat others with dignity and respect.
- Act with humility and professional decorum in all environments through appearance, demeanor, behaviors, and words.

#### **2. Lead honorably:**

- Accomplish the mission consistent with the Army Values.
- Know, adhere to, and enforce standards.
- Build cohesive and effective teams.

#### **3. Demonstrate excellence:**

- Maximize academic, military, and physical performance.
- Seek challenges and feedback; reflect and improve.
- Communicate and interact effectively.
- Anticipate and solve complex problems.

USMA graduates live and lead honorably when they move beyond compliance-based adherence to the Army's professional standards and internalize their role as a professional Army Officer and leader for the Nation. This internalization allows their actions on and off duty to exude the strong character and selfless service our Army and our Nation expect and ensures their adaptability to future challenges. USMA graduates lead with honor when they provide purpose, direction, and motivation that enables a team to accomplish assigned missions in accordance with the Army Ethic. They continuously foster cohesion and capability in their organizations. USMA graduates demonstrate excellence when they exhibit strong professional competence intellectually, physically, and militarily while continuously striving to progress in their knowledge, skills, and abilities to meet the evolving needs of the Army and Nation.



# DEVELOPING LEADERS OF CHARACTER

The WPLDS outcomes guide West Point Teammates in determining, resourcing, and integrating the developmental experiences at USMA that ensure graduates thrive in complex situations and environments, humbly and confidently contributing to their teams within the Army Profession and beyond.

**West Point's Culture of Character Growth** (gray circle in Figure 1 encompassing all developmental experiences and the broader community of West Point) WPLDS takes place within a culture of character growth that is the overarching environment that shapes character development. The culture exists within the context of the organizational and regulatory structure of the Academy and the Corps and consists of artifacts, traditions, expectations, and social norms surrounding Cadets, and it is what truly distinguishes USMA from other commissioning sources. The West Point Team promotes that character development is caught, taught, and sought. (See Chapter III)

**Comprehensive Character Development** (gold circle in Figure 1 encompassing all developmental experiences) is the structured set of Cadet developmental experiences and leadership interactions that strengthen a Cadet's character--their reliability to do the right thing, in the right way, at the right time, for the right reasons, and with the right attitude. (See Chapter IV)

**Academic Development** (red circle in Figure 1) occurs within USMA's Academic Program, which is responsible for the intellectual development of each Cadet. This development primarily occurs through a broad liberal arts education called the Academic Core Curriculum; it includes core courses, an engineering sequence, and a study-in-depth component (academic majors and minors), all of which are described in USMA's Redbook.

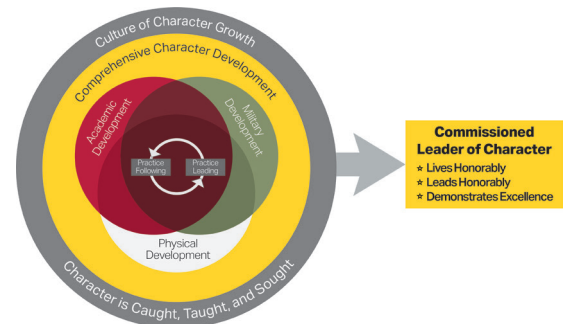


Figure 1: Graphical Depiction of WPLDS

**Military Development** (green circle Figure 1) occurs within USMA's Military Program, which is responsible for developing in each Cadet the foundational military competencies, including the Army's pre-commissioning training requirements, all of which are described in the Greenbook. Military development also includes many of the formal and informal leadership roles referenced above.

**Physical Development** (white circle in Figure 1) occurs within USMA's Physical Program, which is responsible for challenging each Cadet in activities that promote holistic health and optimal physical performance to prepare them for their commission as leaders of character who are physically fit and mentally tough. See the Whitebook for additional details.

**Practice Following / Practice Leading** (center of Figure 1) - At the core of WPLDS are the challenging leadership development experiences that build each Cadet's ability to provide purpose, direction, and motivation with care and precision.

## DEVELOPING LEADERS OF CHARACTER

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During the 4<sup>th</sup> Class Year, Cadet's practice followship. Their development is grounded in the Army Leadership Attributes – *Character, Presence, and Intellect*.<sup>6</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> Class Cadets learn and understand the underpinnings of these Leadership Attributes (Army Values, Warrior Ethos, Military Bearing, Judgement, etc.). These attributes are reiterated throughout the entire Cadet experience.

3<sup>rd</sup> Class Cadets, in their first formal role as leaders, start to practice the Leadership Competencies – with an emphasis on Leading. Yearlings *Lead* by personal example while refining their communication and trust building skills.

2<sup>nd</sup> Class Cadets, in their formal role as Cadet Sergeants, refine their leadership competencies. While continuing to lead their subordinates, they take on a greater role in efforts to *Develop* their subordinates, creating a positive environment, and assuming stewardship of the Army profession.

1<sup>st</sup> Class Cadets, Cadet Officers, are the organizational leaders of the Corps. They establish a vision for their unit, from the Company to the Brigade level, and work to *Achieve* the results of that vision.

At every iteration of the Practice Following / Practice Leading progression, Character remains the cornerstone of the West Point experience. The formal and progressive leadership experiences are informed by seamlessly integrated academic theory and iterative, immersive, experiential learning opportunities. This developmental progression occurs during both the academic year and in summer training opportunities. It also occurs throughout the totality of Cadet activities and experiences – from NCAA athletics to academic trip section opportunities. Cadets are expected to apply insights from past education and experience as they reflect, grow, and develop, all while being assessed and supported by members of the West Point Team (see the Deliberate Leader Growth Model later in this chapter for additional details).

WPLDS is enacted through an integrated core experience that is sequential and progressive in complexity and provides a common foundation for each Cadet. The conceptual layout in Figure 2 presents these experiences sorted by development and time. (Terms are described in the glossary in the Appendix) Figures 1 and 2 help the West Point Team to visualize how components of WPLDS contribute to Cadet development, and then to empower everyone to better integrate those components.

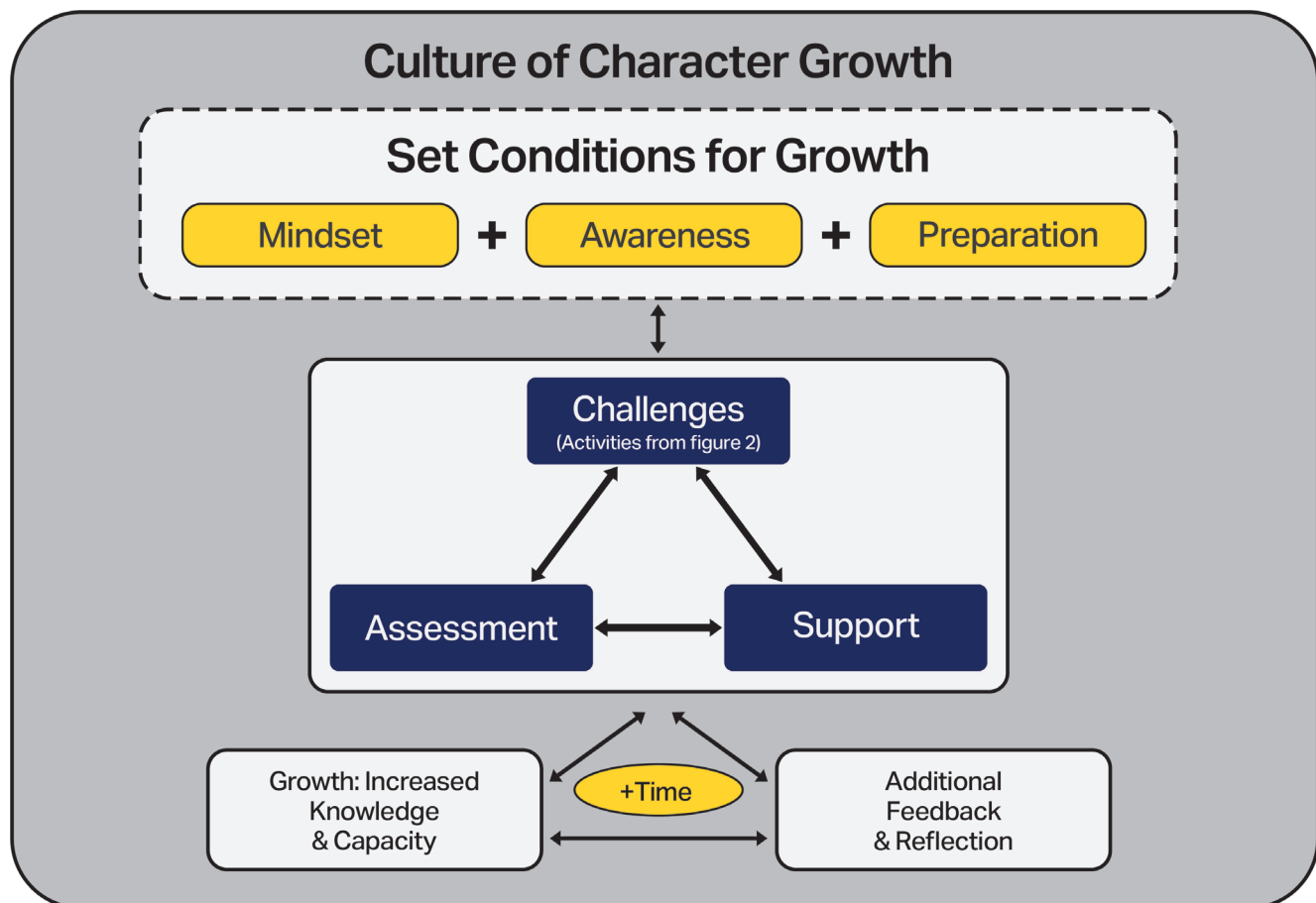
# DEVELOPING LEADERS OF CHARACTER

		4 <sup>th</sup> Class (Plebe)	3 <sup>rd</sup> Class (Yearling)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class (Cow)	1 <sup>st</sup> Class (Firstie)
<b>Culture of Character Growth</b>	<b>Comprehensive Character Development</b>	<b>Commissioned Leaders of Character</b>			
		Life in the Corps: cadet companies, chain of command, regulations, standards, & stewardship - Cadet Company Tactical Officers & Tactical NCOs			
		Academic Development	Bachelor of Science Core Curriculum, Engineering Sequence, Study in Depth (Majors & Minors), the Character Thread, & IADs		
		Physical Development	Army Fitness Test		
			IOCT	IOCT	IOCT
			Physical Education Courses & IADs		
		Military Development	Competitive Sports (intercollegiate, competitive club, or company athletics)		
			Military Science Courses & IADs		
			Sandhurst and Branch Week		
			CBT - Member of Squad	CFT - Member of Squad	CLDT, CTLT, & Summer Leadership Details (SL/PSG/PL/Staff)
			Member of Squad	Team Leader	SL, PSG, or NCO
					PL, CO, Officer, or Team CPT
		Foundational	Character Education Program (Leader Challenge for Cows / Firsties) & IADs		
			Primary Prevention: Deep Dives, Intervention Training, and Weekly / Monthly Themes		
			Squad 30		Mission Command Conference
			Inspirational Professional Knowledge	Inspiration to Serve	Stewardship of the Profession
					MX400 - Officership
			Cadet Honor Code and Honor System		
		Feedback	Informal (during / after class, in the academic or cadet areas, etc) and Formal (PDRs, CDRs, & CORs) enhanced by small instructional class size		
		Role Models	Staff, Faculty, Coaches, ORs, Club OICs, Academic Advisors, Chaplains (Spiritual Fitness and Religious), 50 Year Affiliation, and Sponsors		
		Milestones	Oath; Acceptance	CFT Graduation	Affirmation
					Ring; Commissioning

**Figure 2:** The West Point Experience

## DEVELOPING LEADERS OF CHARACTER

Cadet development is more fully realized when it includes the components of West Point's Deliberate Leader Growth Model <sup>7</sup> (DLGM). Where Figure 2 summarizes the West Point Experience, Figure 3 shows how leader development can be optimally fostered by faculty, staff, coaches, and Cadets - ultimately cultivating more self-aware, adaptive leaders of character. The model takes advantage of important psychological elements to create a useful leader development model leading to deliberate growth. This model can be used to design and implement a specific activity within WPLDS, or to integrate activities within or between programs. The following paragraphs briefly describe each of the components of the model.



**Figure 3:** West Point's Deliberate Leader Growth Model

**Culture of Character Growth.** As portrayed in Figures 1 and 2, West Point's culture is a critical enabler for leader growth. (See Chapter III.)

# DEVELOPING LEADERS OF CHARACTER

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**Set Conditions for Growth.** Three factors—Mindset, Awareness, and Preparation—create the foundation for growth collectively referred to as the Leader Growth MAP. Different ways to develop each are provided below.

- **Mindset.** Believing in growth through effort fosters resilience and persistence. This conviction, which creates resilience and persistence in the face of challenges, is reinforced through reminders of Cadets' own and others' past improvements, sequenced activities that build mastery, and exposure to role models who demonstrate growth through persistent effort.<sup>8,9</sup>
- **Awareness.** Cadets develop awareness by recognizing their strengths, weaknesses, and growth areas, as well as of the gap between current capabilities and relevant standards.<sup>10</sup> Such awareness, which is largely honed through assessment and feedback, motivates change and directs development efforts toward targeted areas for improvement.<sup>11,12</sup> Self-assessment enables Cadets to evaluate their own performance against established standards. Cadets also gather essential performance feedback by way of open, honest communication from leaders and teammates through both formal and informal channels.
- **Preparation.** Success in challenges is maximized through goal-setting and deliberate planning, increasing the likelihood of meaningful development. Setting *difficult* and *specific* goals tied to personal aspirations<sup>13</sup> and employing deliberate planning techniques<sup>14</sup> substantially increase the likelihood of success in the face of challenge.

**Challenges:** Challenges are opportunities to apply leadership skills and test character under pressure. Faculty, staff, and coaches deliberately structure these experiences to progressively increase in complexity as Cadets continue to develop.

**Additional Feedback and Reflection.** Growth occurs through structured feedback and intentional reflection. Cadets analyze their experiences through personal journals, discussions, and guided frameworks like *What? So What? Now What?* to deepen learning.

*We do not learn from experience... we learn from reflecting on experience. Our experiences shape us, and when reflective practice is part of learning, meaning and relevancy is created, which initiates growth and change.<sup>15</sup>*

*John Dewey (1933)*

**Increased Knowledge and Capacities.** Cadets develop new knowledge and capacities by applying the lessons gained through the Deliberate Leader Growth Model (DLGM).

By integrating evidence-based psychological principles with West Point's proven institutional practices, the DLGM serves as a powerful approach for shaping leaders who exemplify virtue in action. This deliberate, comprehensive approach fosters growth in key areas, including the moral foundation and adaptive mindset necessary for service as a commissioned leader of character.



### III. WEST POINT'S CULTURE OF CHARACTER GROWTH

West Point's culture of character growth sets the context for developing leaders of character and shapes individual behavior. It is a vital enabler for all character development activities and is what truly distinguishes USMA from other commissioning sources. Our culture underscores our place as the world's preeminent leader development institution.

This culture of character growth, which exists within the context of the organizational and regulatory structure of the Academy, and the Corps, consists of artifacts, traditions, expectations, and social norms that reinforce character development if emphasized correctly. West Point's artifacts of monuments, statues, and buildings provide a constant reminder of the importance of striving to develop strong character to maintain West Point's legacy of excellence. Traditions that transcend and connect generations are a source of inspiration when Cadets memorize plebe knowledge, participate in similar training, and overcome similar challenges in Cadet life. Every member of the West Point Team stewards this culture and strives to meet long standing expectations of living honorably, including upholding the Cadet Honor Code, and providing honorable service to the Nation.

West Point's culture also requires social norms that enable effective character development and must be consciously maintained.

- **Be a role model.** Moral exemplars are a powerful influence on our character. Everyone, including Cadets, should provide a consistent example of what right looks like.
- **Make *every activity* count.** Teammates recognize that every activity and interaction between teammates is a character development opportunity. We have a collective responsibility to take advantage of deliberate and spontaneous teaching moments whenever and wherever they occur.
- **Demonstrate initiative.** We all have an obligation to demonstrate initiative on how to connect character development to all activities in our sphere of influence. We cannot wait for detailed guidance to find ways to develop and strengthen character.
- **Integrate within and across programs.** West Point does not have a separate character program; the best way to achieve our WPLDS outcomes is to infuse character development opportunities into all areas of Cadet life. Every member of the West Point Team and every program is expected to find ways to connect and synchronize the various activities in WPLDS.

Teammates must be mindful of social norms that may unintentionally undermine character development. For example, the phrase "Cooperate and Graduate!" can encourage teamwork but, if misinterpreted, may excuse dishonorable behavior in the name of cooperation. Similarly, while West Point staff, faculty, and coaches are experts in their fields, some may see character development as a secondary task rather than a core responsibility. This mindset can diminish its importance, influencing Cadets to adopt the same attitude. Every member of the West Point Team must recognize and challenge negative social norms. When you encounter one, speak out and replace it with a positive, character-building alternative.

## DEVELOPING LEADERS OF CHARACTER

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When interacting with Cadets, it can be helpful to remember a phrase that summarizes three key components of character development:

***“Character is caught, taught, and sought.”***<sup>16</sup> (Figure 1 on page 7)

Character is ***caught*** indicates that character is learned through socialization and through watching the actions of others. Role models and exemplars play a significant part in others “catching” character; thus, every member of the West Point Team must be committed to demonstrating strong character.

Character is ***taught*** in formal and informal settings within the curriculum. Courses in the Academic Program and during several military program activities deliberately teach character, but character education can also happen in spontaneous teaching moments that occur in real time and in context.

Character is ***sought*** is a reminder that people are active in their own character development. USMA provides opportunities for Cadets to cultivate character as they seek ways to demonstrate virtuous excellence. If Cadets do not pursue those opportunities with the motivation to improve themselves, then culture and teaching will not have the desired effect.

Like the culture of character growth, West Point’s professional climate is vital in shaping the Cadet experience and enables character to be effectively *caught*. Different from culture, climate manifests in the immediate attitudes and actions toward each other and the collective outlook of the organization. Less persistent than culture, climate is temporary, changing due to current leadership, policies, academics, training, and events.

A professional climate requires respect for the dignity of all individuals and is expected across our enterprise. West Point members look out for each other and strive to be good teammates within and across offices, departments, directorates, the Academy, and West Point as a whole. West Point provides a growth-oriented environment to maximize opportunities for everyone to succeed. Teammates hold each other accountable to high standards and that accountability is welcome.<sup>17</sup>

Understanding of the relationship between the culture of character growth and the professional climate enhances and empowers efforts to develop (and sustain) the character of every West Point Teammate. Promoting both is a continuous endeavor that requires vigilance, personal effort, and mutual accountability.

## IV. COMPREHENSIVE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Comprehensive Character Development (CCD) is highlighted in Figure 1 on page 7 (gold circle) as the set of Cadet developmental experiences that create the capacity for Cadets to demonstrate trustworthy character. These activities, derived from each of the developmental programs, are shown in Figure 2 on page 11. The combined effect of all these activities, implemented within our culture of character growth, is to develop each graduate's reliability to do the right thing, in the right way, at the right time, for the right reason, and with the right attitude.

Character development is not solely an intellectual exercise in moral reasoning. It also requires fostering the right motivations, skills, and capacity to ensure follow-through from knowing what to do and then implementing that decision with virtuous action. In many situations that require moral action there is often a gap between knowing and doing the right thing. While most people can describe what moral action they should take, they frequently struggle to take the right action for a variety of reasons. Comprehensive character development is designed to help close the gap between knowing and doing.

In other situations, the required moral action is less clear because there are competing desired outcomes that require some compromise between virtues or values. In these situations, leaders are expected to exercise judgment to find the best answer for the situation. Cadets develop their judgment through experience and education in moral reasoning. Once they decide the most appropriate moral action for the situation, they face the same challenges of closing the gap between knowing and doing.

The components of USMA's CCD shown in the callout box below help guide and categorize character development efforts to increase the likelihood of someone taking the right action for the right reasons in the right manner. Each component contributes to a Cadet's ability to close the gap between knowing and doing the right thing. Individually, none of these categories are sufficient for ensuring the proper action or behavior. A weakness in one of these categories makes it more difficult to act honorably. For these reasons, all WPLDS experiences should contribute to one or more of these categories as part of the comprehensive character development intended for each Cadet.

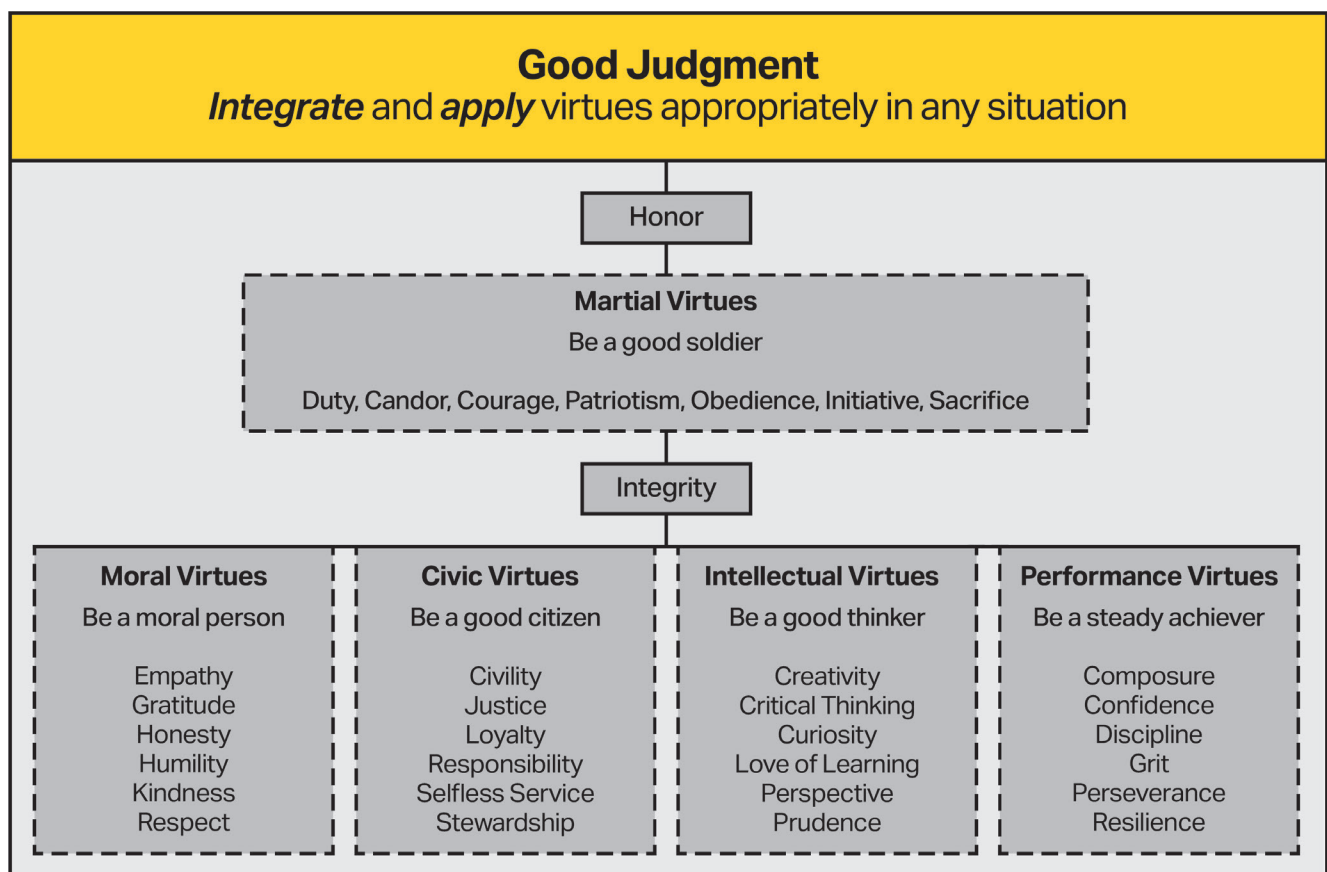
### Components of Comprehensive Character Development

- **Character Education:** Set expectations and internalize officer identity.
- **Leadership Skills:** Empower leaders to act with confidence.
- **Holistic Health and Fitness:** Build personal capacity for peak performance.
- **Professional Climate:** Enable leaders to live and lead honorably.
- **Stewardship & Accountability:** Inspire and motivate to demonstrate excellence.
- **Primary Prevention:** Prevent harmful behaviors and promote protective factors

## DEVELOPING LEADERS OF CHARACTER

*Character education* helps Cadets internalize an officer identity—ensuring they not only have the knowledge of what is expected of an Army Officer, but the desire to meet those expectations. Character education begins with the Cadet Honor Code, an unremitting foundational standard from the moment Cadets arrive on R-Day.<sup>18</sup> Building on that foundation, Cadets learn the Army Values and how to apply them in multiple situations. Ultimately, added character education develops additional virtues and gives them the knowledge and motivation for fulfilling the moral obligations of the Constitutional oath they will take upon graduation. Character education helps Cadets develop moral reasoning and judgment.

A comprehensive approach to character development requires virtues that go beyond the Cadet Honor Code and the Army Values. The framework shown in Figure 4 is based on virtue ethics<sup>19</sup> and provides a more comprehensive consideration of the virtues necessary to be a person of character and a commissioned leader of character.



**Figure 4:** Comprehensive Character Development - Character Education

## DEVELOPING LEADERS OF CHARACTER

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Moral, civic, intellectual, and performance virtues are necessary for anyone to live a good life and to have integrity. Martial Virtues are also applicable to others but are uniquely important to the Army Profession. (Note: All virtues in Figure 4 are defined in the Appendix.) Developing the martial virtues in the framework defines an honorable person within the Army Profession. Finally, the virtues included in this framework are embedded throughout Army doctrine for the Army Profession and Leadership, Mission Command, and Holistic Health and Fitness. This framework simply organizes these virtues into a single source. Once a solid foundation of the Cadet Honor Code and Army Values is established early in the WPLDS experience, Cadets should expand their character development to incorporate the virtues and continue that development for the rest of their lives. In a culture of character growth, every member of the West Point Team should be a moral exemplar who should demonstrate these virtues in their own lives.

Character education also addresses primary prevention of harmful behaviors because character and primary prevention are understood as mutually reinforcing endeavors. By developing and practicing character virtues, any trust eroding behaviors are expected to diminish. Further, strong character and good judgment support primary prevention by developing the skills and motivation for effective intervention and promoting a professional climate.

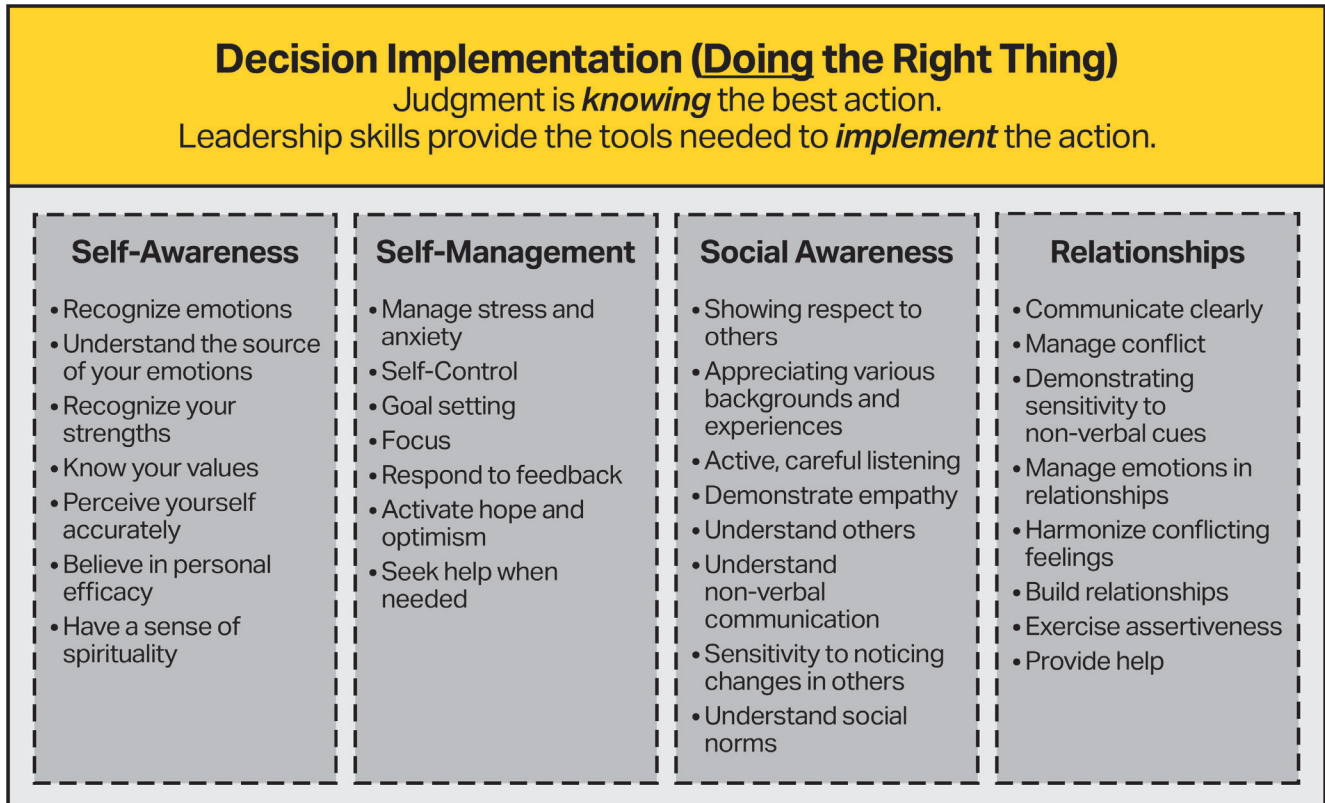
While effective character education is necessary, it is not sufficient for closing the gap between knowing and doing the right thing. Cadets need *leadership skills* (Figure 5) that empower them and give them the confidence to do the right thing. Self-management and relationship management are important skills for implementing the right moral action. These skills are emphasized in Army Leadership Doctrine.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, many of these skills align with best practices in primary prevention to reduce harmful behaviors or risk/protective factors for building a professional climate.

The first two categories of self-awareness and self-management shown in Figure 5 focus on individual development that enables a Cadet to set a good example of self-control in all situations. The other two categories are necessary to build cohesion, communicate effectively, motivate others, and resolve conflict. Most of these skills are embedded throughout Army Profession and Leadership Doctrine.<sup>21</sup> Just as prevention is interwoven into character development, it is also reinforced by mastering these leadership skills. The knowledge, skills, and abilities of primary prevention, such as intervening in the face of harmful behaviors, supporting one's teammates, and maintaining cohesion and trust within one's team, are the very skills of an engaged and active leader.

Finally, Cadets build capacity for moral action through *holistic health and fitness*.<sup>22</sup> A person who is physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually well has a higher capacity to act honorably. A leader who is tired, stressed, emotionally unwell, and spiritually unmoored will find it more difficult to act honorably.



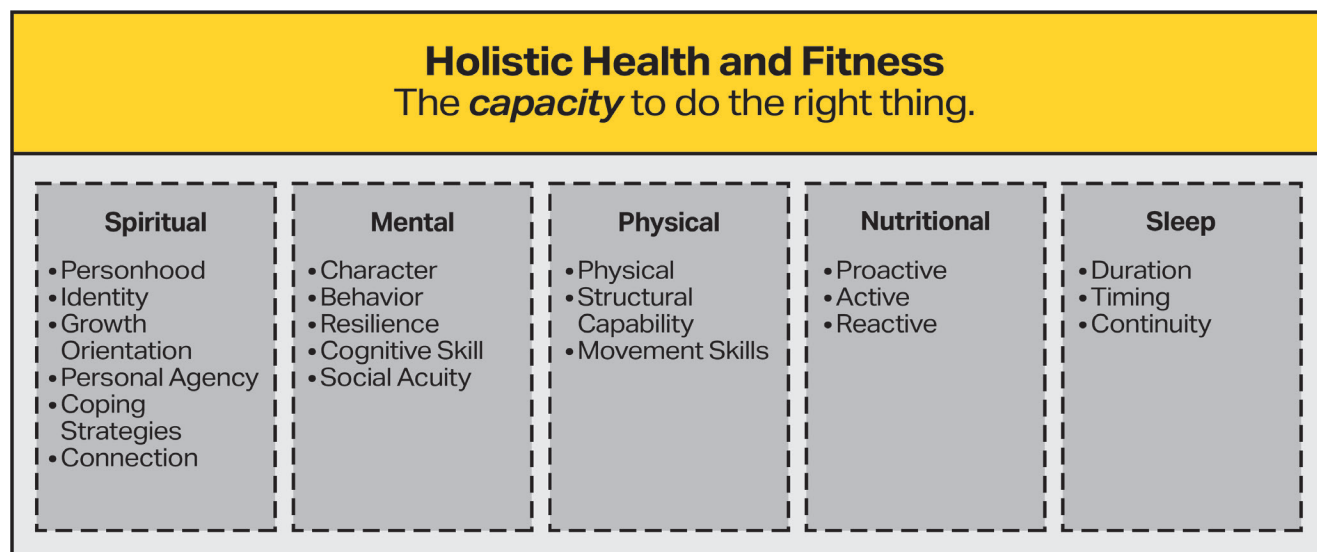
## DEVELOPING LEADERS OF CHARACTER



**Figure 5:** Comprehensive Character Development - Leadership Skills

Army Doctrine for Holistic Health and Fitness <sup>23</sup> establishes five categories of fitness that are shown in Figure 6. The skills within these categories build the capacity for excellent physical performance and the capacity to serve as a commissioned leader of character who achieves peak performance in all areas. The significant overlap between these categories and other aspects of the West Point approach to character development and primary prevention of harmful behaviors illustrates the mutual reinforcement of these concepts and the need for effective integration to ensure we provide the necessary repetitions without being unnecessarily repetitive.

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**Figure 6:** Comprehensive Character Development - Holistic Health and Fitness<sup>24</sup>

The first three components of comprehensive character development (Character Education, Leadership Skills, and Holistic Health) described on page 16 emphasize individual development. However, other contextual factors influence a person's behavior. A person may know what to do, have the skills to act, and possess the capacity for right action, but the environment could be an obstacle. *Stewardship and Accountability* remind Cadets that their actions impact the Team. *Stewardship* inspires Cadets to take the long view of preserving the honor of the Academy and the Army Profession. *Accountability* motivates Cadets to develop habits that ensure honorable living in themselves and others. A *Professional Climate*, absent the fear of ostracization or retaliation, enables honorable action by all members of the West Point Team. Finally, effective *Primary Prevention* education seeks to develop knowledge, skills, and abilities to reduce harmful behaviors that erode trust, cohesion, and respect among teammates.

As every Cadet completes the West Point experience shown in Figure 2 on page 11, they complete developmental experiences for each of these six CCD components. The desired outcome of this comprehensive integrated approach to character development is that every graduate can make the connections between these various experiences and understand how they enable a graduate to be a commissioned leader of character who lives honorably, leads honorably, and demonstrates excellence. While our graduates will never be perfect, they are prepared for continued character growth for the rest of their lives, always striving to strengthen their own character.

## V. INTEGRATION OF CADET DEVELOPMENT

As discussed in Chapter II, WPLDS provides the structure for the integration of efforts in the development of commissioned leaders of character. Because of the importance of integration in developing these leaders, this chapter defines effective integration within WPLDS and sets expectations for everyone.

Integration occurs when faculty, staff, and coaches form, coordinate, or blend disparate core developmental experiences (Figure 2 on page 11) along with extracurricular experiences (those not part of a required activity) into a unified whole that achieves an effect greater than the sum of the parts. As stewards of West Point's precious resources, its leaders must seek, identify, and follow through on opportunities to achieve effective integration of character development.

Effective integration requires some additional effort by those responsible for development activities. However, these efforts result in significant impacts as they:

- Reinforce critical and complex concepts that require multiple learning experiences.
- Synchronize supplemental and reinforcing experiences.
- Identify gaps in the achievement of stated outcomes.
- Gain efficiencies in Cadet development by eliminating unneeded redundancies.
- Facilitate everyone's understanding of how one activity or experience contributes to the intended overall outcomes as well as related activities and experiences (second and third order effects of integration).

Although integration of every Cadet development activity with another related activity is optimal, West Point prioritizes the integration of character development activities. This prioritization manifests in the integration of CCD experiences. The academic, military, and physical programs integrate character developmental experiences from Cadet Basic Training (CBT) to graduation, and the Academic Board (AB) is the mechanism for ensuring effective integration.

To effectively integrate Cadet development, leaders at all echelons must:

- Understand how their programs (or activities) contribute to the higher echelon's outcomes.
- Identify areas of redundancy (and connections) in and across programs and determine if these are intentional and appropriate.
- Assess if and how desired outcomes can be better achieved through integration within or across existing programs and efforts.
- Draw upon existing assessments to guide future progress; establish, as appropriate, measures of performance (MOPs) and measures of effectiveness (MOEs). (Refer to the Glossary for the definition of each.)
- Carefully and deliberately analyze the impact of their activities on integration with other activities.

# DEVELOPING LEADERS OF CHARACTER

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Examples of character integration are provided below for the institution and program levels:

## ***Institution*** (across programs)

- Faculty, staff, coaches, and Cadets discuss with Cadets examples of both strong character and ethical/moral shortfalls by historical figures in challenging situations, particularly when these are discussed in other character development activities at USMA (e.g., Thayer Award speech, Cadet Oath Ceremony, etc.)
- The instructors of plebe academic courses reinforce and build on character concepts taught during CBT.
- Following Leader Challenges or Inspiration to Serve events, instructors of courses attended by these Cadets take class time to reinforce development.
- Tactical scenarios utilized during CFT, CLDT, etc. include situations that deliberately challenge the judgment and ethical decision-making of Cadets as they lead operations. During these scenarios, Cadets, trainers, and facilitators reinforce concepts discussed in previous character education classes during the academic year.
- Faculty, staff, and coaches understand the content within MX400, Officership, and coordinate with MX400 faculty to connect to and reinforce character development topics.

## ***Program*** (within academic, military, and physical development)

- Informed by assessments, each program or directorate clarifies and reinforces difficult character development concepts taught within that program or directorate.
- Instructors appropriately integrate character concepts taught in one lesson to concepts in other lessons and from other courses within the major or core program. The Character Thread is one formal effort in this regard, but all instructors are charged with this opportunity, given topics of study-in-depth courses, the ethical component of any discipline, the ethical responsibilities emphasized in a discipline's accreditation, etc.
- Faculty, staff, and coaches provide formal or informal opportunities for Cadets to reflect on and share experiences that illuminate character concepts already learned in their activity.
- Capstone and/or Integrative Experience instructors coach their Cadets to connect their research to development within the CCD.

## VI. STEWARDSHIP

The primary professional responsibility of all faculty, staff, coaches, and Cadets is to develop commissioned leaders of character. Character development occurs across all programs and in every environment. While all are expected to set the example as role models who foster a positive environment, every member of the West Point Team also has a unique role related to Cadet development and stewarding West Point's culture of character growth.

The leaders and groups below have a primary role in our shared responsibility to develop and mentor Cadets to become commissioned leaders of character.

- The ***Superintendent*** is the senior character development leader and integrator, being ultimately accountable for the development of commissioned leaders of character.
- The ***Academic Board*** (AB) advises the Superintendent and serves as the supervisory and integrative body of the academic, military, and physical programs, all grounded within West Point's culture of character growth.
  - The *WPLDS Committee* promotes and assesses the effective implementation of WPLDS, in particular the WPLDS outcomes, and makes recommendations on any needed improvements to the AB.
- The ***Policy Board*** (PB) advises the Superintendent on comprehensive and integrated planning, resourcing, implementation, and assessment efforts which enable effective implementation of the USMA Strategy.
- The ***Dean of the Academic Board***
  - Ensures that faculty and staff meet institutional expectations (see the Superintendent's Letter and the Introduction).
  - Clearly defines, plans for, and assesses academic program outcomes to ensure that they support the WPLDS outcomes.
  - Ensure that character development activities are appropriately integrated within the Academic Program and across program boundaries.
  - Ensures that adequate time is allocated on the AB agenda to routinely discuss matters related to character development.
  - Identifies and addresses impacts that any program changes have on other programs and on character development.
  - Ensures that specified programs maintain program accreditation.
  - As part of the annual report process, updates the Superintendent on character development integration.



# DEVELOPING LEADERS OF CHARACTER

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- The **Commandant:**

- Ensures that Cadets, faculty, and staff meet institutional expectations (see the Superintendent's Letter and the Introduction).
- Clearly defines, plans for, and assesses military and physical program outcomes to ensure that they support the WPLDS outcomes.
- Oversees the effective implementation and integration of character development throughout the directorate and across program boundaries. This includes oversight of the honor education program.
- Provides oversight of the Honor System.
- Identifies and addresses impacts that any program changes have on other programs and on character development.
- As part of the annual report process, updates the Superintendent on character development integration.

- The **Athletic Director:**

- Ensures that coaches and APWAD staff members meet the expectations described above, instill a commitment to West Point over individual and team goals and accolades, and train and inspire teams to compete to win with honor and sportsmanship.
- As part of the annual report process, updates the Superintendent on character development integration.



## VII. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

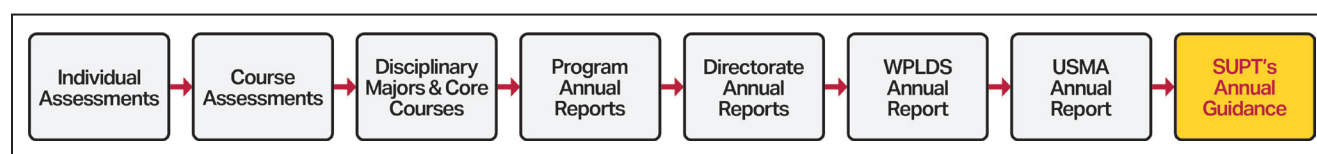
If we are not improving, we are stagnating. As the world's preeminent leader development institution that provides the leaders of character the Army and Nation need, West Point must continuously improve at every level of Cadet development.

Continuous improvement begins at the **individual** level where faculty and staff provide Cadets feedback on meeting desired outcomes and through numerous methods, e.g., daily feedback given to a Cadet by the instructor, Cadet Chain of Command, or Tac Team, and feedback on formal assessments.

An essential part of continuous improvement for every developmental activity is to know what the desired end state is. An end state for Cadet development is often referred to as a learning outcome (LO). All development activities at West Point should have a desired end state or a LO. Course, program, and WPLDS outcomes then take advantage of a curriculum map which shows the activity and outcome relationship; "after examining assessment results, the curriculum map is the first place to look."<sup>25</sup> An effective map also ensures appropriate coverage of development to achieve the LO.

When assessing LOs and/or activities, faculty and staff routinely use MOPs and MOEs to identify what works and what does not work during developmental events. MOPs are used to determine if faculty and staff are doing to standard what they say they are doing. MOEs are used to determine if the provided programs and experiences are achieving the desired outcomes. Use of USMA's MOEs is most effective when they are used to assess longitudinally desired outcomes so that Cadet development is assessed as it progresses. Assessing learning outcomes can be challenging when the outcomes are broad and intangible. In these cases, it is essential for the activity to have a solid theoretic foundation for what, why, and how it is being done. It is also important that the MOPs indicate that the activity is conducted as planned.

**Individual assessments** in the classrooms or activities lead to assessing a **course** or activity's LOs which then inform the annual assessments of **disciplinary majors and core courses**, and then of the **programs** (academic, military, and physical) (Figure 7).



**Figure 7:** Summary of USMA's Annual Assessments of Cadet Development

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Annual program assessment reports inform **directorate**<sup>26</sup> annual reports which provide assessments on the USMA Strategy's Lines of Effort.<sup>27</sup> The content of directorate annual reports specific to Cadet development include:

- Updates on contributions and assessments to the *USMA Strategy* and the Superintendent's Annual Guidance.
- Assessments of program outcomes.
- Updates on and assessments of character integration efforts, including the directorate's contributions to Comprehensive Character Development (Chapter IV).

USMA accomplishes its Mission when its graduates live honorably, lead honorably, and demonstrate excellence. Thus, at the **institution** level, there is a systematic assessment of the WPLDS outcomes and processes using multiple internal and external indicators. Since all program outcomes are aligned with the WPLDS outcomes, program assessments directly support the assessment of the WPLDS outcomes. Through these assessments, West Point determines if the programs and experiences are achieving the desired outcomes.

Using multiple internal and external indicators (see the box below), the WPLDS Committee completes the **WPLDS Annual Report**. This Annual Report is a major component of the overall **USMA Annual Report**, which is the culmination of the USMA annual assessment process. The USMA Annual Report informs the Superintendent's Annual Guidance for the upcoming academic year.

### Example sources used to assess the WPLDS outcomes:

- Academic, military, and physical program assessments
- Executive summaries of core courses and disciplinary majors
- Periodic Development Reports (PDRs) and Cadet Observation Reports (CORs)
- Numerous external (national, DOD, Department of the Army) Cadet and faculty surveys
- Internal surveys and focus groups with Cadets, faculty, staff and coaches.

A more comprehensive description of USMA's assessment processes is in USMA Regulation MA-19-02, Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (SPIE) Processes.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

USMA is dedicated to developing leaders of character who are prepared to serve the Nation with character, competence, and commitment. The comprehensive and integrated approach to character development outlined throughout *DLC* distinguishes West Point as the preeminent leader development institution and requires a culture that prioritizes character growth throughout the pursuit of academic, military, and physical excellence. This holistic development is achieved through WPLDS.

WPLDS promotes Cadet development by integrating the three developmental programs and Comprehensive Character Development at the institutional, program, course, and activity levels. At the institution level, USMA leaders ensure the required experiences sufficiently cover and reinforce the WPLDS outcomes. At the program level, integration occurs when leaders ensure courses or activities intentionally connect learning across experiences, especially those contributing to Comprehensive Character Development. Staff and faculty find meaningful ways of integrating some facet of character development into their efforts. All faculty, staff, and coaches provide formal or informal feedback; many also systematically plan for and assist in structured reflection at critical points throughout the Cadet's experiences.

Character development at West Point is not confined to a single program or course; rather, it is woven into the fabric of the entire Cadet experience. The primary professional responsibility of all members of the West Point Team is to develop leaders of character. While every member has a unique role related to Cadet development, all are expected to set the example as role models who foster a positive leader development environment.

A shuttle driver here at West Point challenges the Cadets each time he drops them off at Library Corner: "Okay Future Sirs, Future Ma'ams – I need you to do one thing today if you get nothing else done: Find a mirror and remind yourself how awesome you are." The Cadets often smile in relief, having dreaded one further task coming from such a surprising source. This driver was not told by his supervisor to make this comment with each half-hour loop around post. Nor is it in the driver's job description. Furthermore, if saying this line to Cadets was a directive, it would lose its effectiveness. Instead, this driver has grasped the impactful future of his passengers, as well as their current hardships in preparing for that future. While fulfilling the specific need of transportation, he bolsters it with the general need for a little inspiration, for setting a tone that helps steward the culture so essential to West Point's Mission. The driver provides an example of understanding the purpose of this place and letting it steer his daily work.

This driver also illustrates the opening idea of this document: it exists to empower the West Point Team in living out the charge to grow leaders of character. If you, the reader, are on this team, then you need to provide your own example. It is not enough for you to merely mimic the driver's words; it would ring just as hollow as if he had been directed to say them. You must find your own way of advancing West Point's purpose in your own role. Your unique position enables a unique contribution. Do you really think there is no contribution you can make? Is there no modeling of good character that Cadets might catch from you? Is there no insight or standard that you might teach them?

You must discover your own way of advancing and integrating Cadet development. Find yourself in the preceding chapters and fulfill your part.

## Appendix: GLOSSARY

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### Terms in Mission Statement:

**Build.** USMA prioritizes resources to identify, compete for, and develop the most talented cohort of cadet candidates (typically high schools seniors) with the potential to become commissioned leaders of character. These efforts begin with marketing to potential candidates through the application process and finally to R Day. Concurrently, USMA continuously seeks to build the best possible team of faculty, staff and coaches dedicated to developing Cadets and serving as exemplars of good character.

**Educate.** Education is a structured process to impart and utilize knowledge through teaching and learning to enable or enhance an individual's ability to perform in unknown situations.<sup>28</sup> More specifically, USMA educates Cadets so they can think critically, internalize their professional identity, and employ their education to help build the Army and the Nation's future.

**Train.** Training increases the capability of individuals to perform specified tasks in well-defined situations.<sup>29</sup> USMA trains Cadets to develop the military, intellectual, and physical skills needed for future warfighting. Training extends beyond military, intellectual, and physical skills to include leadership and character skills, enhancing the ability to attain higher levels of expertise by applying what is learned through educational efforts.

**Inspire.** Through the professional excellence of its faculty, staff, and coaches, USMA imbues in Cadets the passion and commitment to achieve the WPLDS outcomes. The West Point Team immerses Cadets in the history, traditions, and values of the Army and West Point to inspire their stewardship of the Army Profession. And finally, the West Point Team inspires Cadets through professional mentoring relationships.

**Commissioned Leader of Character.** In the execution of our Mission through WPLDS, USMA defines this leader as a commissioned officer who lives honorably, leads honorably, and demonstrates excellence.

**Army Values.** Loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage. The Army Values are the core of the Army Ethic, which includes the set of enduring moral principles, values, beliefs, and laws that guide the Army profession.

### General Terms Used Throughout:

**AB.** Academic Board – see page 20.

**Acceptance Day Ceremony.** This event recognizes the completion of Cadet Basic Training. New Cadets are formally welcomed and accepted into the U.S. Military Academy Corps of Cadets and become Cadets. At this ceremony, Cadets take their first of three oaths to support the U.S. Constitution.

**ACFT.** Army Fitness Test is the six-element assessment for the physical domain of the Army's Holistic Health and Fitness System.



**Affirmation Ceremony.** This event recognizes each Cadets commitment to the Profession of Arms. Cadets take their second oaths to support the U.S. Constitution. This oath which occurs the evening prior to the first academic class of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Class obligates them to serve in the active Army for a minimum of five years.

**Cadet Honor Code and System.** The Cadet Honor Code states that, “A Cadet will not lie, cheat, steal, or tolerate those who do.” The Honor System encompasses USMA’s (a) formal Honor education, (b) formal processes of reviewing and determining the accountability of Cadets accused of violating the Code, ensuring due process, and (c) remediation programs for Cadets found of committing Code violations in (b).

**CBT.** Cadet Basic Training, occurring during the summer before the new Cadets’ first academic year, is focused on the New Cadets’ socialization and acculturation. CBT uses basic military training to expose new Cadets to the institution’s ideals and values to facilitate their transition to USMA and service in the Army.

**CCD.** Comprehensive Character Development is the set of Cadet developmental experiences that create the capacity for Cadets to demonstrate trustworthy character.

**CCEP.** Cadet Character Education Program is a collaborative effort between the SCPME and BTM to provide basic character education focusing on the Army Values, leadership skills, and holistic health and fitness. CCEP is provided for all four classes and usually occurs during Commandant’s Hours.

**CDR.** Cadet Development Reports. To assign a Military Development grade to members of the Corps of Cadets. Similar to the Officer Evaluation Report (OER), the CDR is the primary feedback tool for the Chain of Command to communicate performance and potential to rated Cadets by way of a grade.

**CFT.** Cadet Field Training is a three- to four-week program of instruction third class Cadets go through at Camp Buckner during their second summer.

**Character Thread.** The Character thread is embedded within the Academic Program. It identifies character connections across academic core courses and enables integration with the Cadet Character Education Program (CCEP), the prevention curriculum, and other character development activities at USMA.

**CLDT.** Cadet Leader Development Training is a three-week program that trains and assesses basic leadership skills focusing on Troop Leading Procedures, effective communication, and tactical decision making.

**Club OIC.** Club Officer in Charge refers to a USMA staff or faculty member, civilian or military, who serves as the general supervisor of the Cadet club.

**CTLT.** Cadet Troop Leadership Training (CTLT) provides every Cadet an opportunity to serve with an active army unit for several weeks. This experience exposes them to life and work in the Army.

**CO.** Commanding Officer leads a unit larger than a platoon or squad.

**COR.** The Cadet Observation Report is an online form which can be filled out by any Cadet, staff, and faculty member that is designed to highlight both positive and negative Cadet behavior.

**CST.** Cadet Summer Training is the direct military developmental experience, varied according to class, for Cadets which takes place during the summer at West Point as well as at Army installations throughout the United States

**CTLT.** Cadet Troop Leadership Training provides every Cadet an opportunity to serve with an active army unit for several weeks. This experience exposes them to life and work in the Army.

**Directorate.** USMA’s directorates are Dean; United States Corps of Cadets; Admissions; the Army Athletic Association; Band; and the U.S. Military Academy Preparatory School.

**DLC.** Developing Leaders of Character is the definitive document specifying and explaining the processes, procedures, and elements utilized by USMA to develop Cadets into commissioned officers of character for the US Army.

## General Terms Used Throughout (cont.'d)

**DLGM.** The Deliberate Leader Growth Model demonstrates the interrelationships between factors and timeframes utilized by USMA for Cadet experiences which, combined, establish a culture in which character development occurs.

**IAD.** Individual Advanced Development occurs during the summer and provides Cadets an opportunity for in-depth development outside the classroom. IAD's are provided for academic, military, physical, and character development.

**IOCT.** The Indoor Obstacle Course Test is an 11-event test of full-body functional physical fitness administered by the Department of Physical Education (DPE) at the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York.

**Inspiration to Serve.** The yearling class visits the West Point Cemetery to reflect on examples of West Point graduates who committed themselves to a lifetime of service and sacrifice. This event occurs just before Cadets decide to affirm their commitment to the Army Profession upon graduation.

**Leader Challenge.** A forum where Cadets conduct platoon-level professional development sessions based on real-world scenarios.

**LO.** A Learning Outcome is a statement of what a Cadet should be able to do or know because of engagement in a particular educational or developmental experience.

**LOEs.** Lines of Effort are general lines described in the USMA Strategy.

**MOEs.** Measures of Effectiveness are indicators of how well outcomes, goals, or objectives have been reached.

**MOPs.** Measures of Performance are indicators of the amount and quality of activities taken to achieve stated outcomes, goals, or objectives.

**PB.** Policy Board. See page 20.

**PDR.** The Periodic Development Review is a multi-faceted assessment of leader competencies and attributes. Every Cadet receives a PDR each semester from a faculty member to assess individual character traits to develop individual Cadets.

**PSG.** A Platoon Sergeant is a Cadet who serves a facilitating role in running a Cadet platoon.

**Reflection.** The deliberate, guided, and structured thinking about choices that enables one to make sense of their challenging experiences, applying the feedback they have received, and develop ways to enhance their future performance.

**Ring Weekend.** First Class Cadets receive their class rings during a Ring Ceremony.

**SL.** The Cadet Squad Leader has a direct leadership role, over a small number of Cadets during Summer military training.

**SPIE.** Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness [unknown—SJC]

**Sponsors.** This is a voluntary program in which senior military or civilian employees volunteer to sponsor Cadets during their time at USMA. Sponsors provide Cadets with support, guidance, and a view of military life.

**Tactical NCO.** Tactical Non-Commissioned Officer

**Team CPT.** Team Captain is a Cadet who is in charge of an athletics or military unit.

**USMA.** The United States Military Academy at West Point is an undergraduate institution of higher learning which produces Bachelor's degree holding 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenants for Active Duty service in the US Army.

**WPLDS.** The West Point Leader Development System is the integrated mechanism of USMA's academic, military, and physical developmental programs which enables Cadets to graduate as commissioned 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenants and leaders of character.

## Character Education Terms:

Chapter IV provides a basic framework for comprehensive character development (CCD), but it does not provide definitions of the virtues which are listed here.

**Virtues:** Each virtue in these five domains is a disposition to enact the behavior described. The disposition includes the awareness to recognize and attend to situations that call for that virtue, appropriate emotions that motivate and flow from enacting the virtue, and a good sense of how to perform the virtue in different contexts. Army Values become virtues when an individual internalizes the value and consistently demonstrates the value with their actions, behaviors, words, and attitudes.

**Higher-order Virtues:** Character traits that help determine appropriate virtues for specific circumstances and how to combine them well.

- **Judgment:** Judgment is the foremost meta-virtue that integrates and applies all the virtues to a particular situation. Officers are required to demonstrate good judgment in all situations.
- **Honor:** upholding the ethical standards as defined by West Point, the Army Profession and Ethic. Adherence to the virtues in these five domains makes a person honorable within the Army Profession.
- **Integrity:** Applicable to all people, integrity is exhibiting consistency between personal values and actual behaviors.

**Moral Virtues: Character traits that respect the humanity of ourselves and others.**

- **Respect:** responding affirmatively to others' human dignity, legitimate authority, or demonstrated excellence.
- **Honesty:** being truthful, authentic, and sincere.
- **Empathy:** Ability to identify with and enter into another person's feelings and emotions; propensity to experience something from another person's point of view.
- **Kindness:** acting thoughtfully and pleasantly to benefit others.
- **Gratitude:** feeling and expressing thankfulness for some gift or benefit.
- **Humility:** accurately judging your own abilities, limitations, and contributions to achievements.

**Civic Virtues: Character traits that serve the common good.**

- **Justice:** treating others fairly, giving them what they deserve.
- **Civility:** interacting with others with tolerance, respect, and politeness.
- **Loyalty:** feeling an internal obligation to support a person, group, or principle.
- **Stewardship:** preserving things of value for future generations.
- **Responsibility:** willingness to be held accountable for one's conduct and performance.
- **Selfless Service:** prioritizing team goals and others' welfare ahead of your self-interest.

**Intellectual Virtues: Character traits that enhance thinking, learning, & decision-making.**

- **Curiosity:** proactively seeking new information and explanations.
- **Creativity:** producing original ideas or behaviors.
- **Perspective:** seeing systems as a whole and from different viewpoints.
- **Prudence:** examining the potential consequences of your actions.
- **Critical Thinking:** analyzing information objectively.
- **Love of Learning:** readily seeking and mastering frequently new knowledge and skills.

## Character Education Terms (cont.'d):

### **Performance Virtues: Character traits that enable challenging goals to be accomplished.**

- Discipline: regulating your thoughts, emotions, and behaviors for a goal.
- Confidence: believing that you can accomplish a goal.
- Composure: maintaining emotional calmness and presence of mind.
- Perseverance: continuing your efforts despite difficulties or discouragement.
- Resilience: adapting to adversity and recovering quickly from hardships or failures.
- Grit: demonstrating passion and perseverance toward long-term goals.

### **Martial Virtues: Character traits that must be exceptionally well-developed in the profession of arms.**

- Duty: fulfilling your obligations and responsibilities.
- Candor: speaking forthrightly and honestly.
- Courage: overcoming fear to do what is right.
- Patriotism: loving your country and its ideals.
- Obedience: assenting to legitimate authority without undue hesitation or resistance.
- Initiative: acting to support an intent without being told.
- Sacrifice: willingly accepting hardship, suffering, and even death for the greater good.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Moore, H. & Guardia, M. (2017). Hal Moore on Leadership. Blackstone Publishing.

<sup>2</sup> Primary Army references used that articulate the complexity of future warfare and define leader requirements include: ADP 1, The Army, 31 July 2019; TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1, The U.S. Army in Multi-Domain Operations 2028, 6 December 2018; ADP 6-22 Army Leadership and the Profession, 31 July 2019; FM 6-22, Developing Leaders, 01 November 2022; ADP 6-0, Mission Command, 31 July 2019; and FM 7-22. Holistic Health and Fitness, 01 October 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Different from DLC, the USMA Strategy articulates how USMA can improve in achieving its Mission and Vision through five LOEs, areas in which USMA seeks to transform, adapt, or improve.

<sup>4</sup> West Point consists of all tenant units on the installation: USMA; U.S. Army Garrison; Keller Army Community Hospital; Dental Command; the Logistics Readiness Center; and Fort Hamilton.

<sup>5</sup> ADP 6-22 Army Leadership and the Profession, 31 July 2019.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 1-15.

<sup>7</sup> Adapted by Boberg, M. and Meindl, P. with the inclusion of the MAP model from the original Lewis, P., Forsythe, G. B., Sweeney, P., Bartone, P. T., & Bullis, C. (2005). Identity development during the college years: Findings from the West Point longitudinal study. *Journal of College Student Development*, 46(4), 357-373.

<sup>8</sup> Dweck, C. S., & Yeager, D. S. (2019). Mindsets: A view from two eras. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 14(3), 481-496.

<sup>9</sup> Bandura, A. (1982). Self-efficacy mechanism in human agency. *American Psychologist*, 37(2), 122-147.

<sup>10</sup> Ericsson, K. A., Krampe, R. T., & Tesch-Römer, C. (1993). The role of deliberate practice in the acquisition of expert performance. *Psychological Review*, 100(3), 363-406.

<sup>11</sup> Jackson, J. J., & Wright, A. J. (2024). The process and mechanisms of personality change. *Nature Reviews Psychology*, 3(5), 305-318.

<sup>12</sup> Carver, C. S., & Scheier, M. F. (1982). Control theory: A useful conceptual framework for personality-social, clinical, and health psychology. *Psychological Bulletin*, 92(1), 111-135.

<sup>13</sup> Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (2002). Building a practically useful theory of goal setting and task motivation: A 35-year odyssey. *American Psychologist*, 57(9), 705-717.

<sup>14</sup>Oettingen, G., & Gollwitzer, P. M. (2010). Strategies of setting and implementing goals: Mental contrasting and implementation intentions. In J. E. Maddux & J. P. Tangney (Eds.), *Social psychological foundations of clinical psychology* (pp. 114–135). The Guilford Press.

<sup>15</sup>Dewey, J. (1933) *How We Think*, Revised Edition.

<sup>16</sup>Arthur, J., Kristjánsson, K., Thompson, A., & Fazel, A. (2023). *The Jubilee Centre Framework For Virtue-Based Professional Ethics*, The Jubilee Center For Character & Virtues.

<sup>17</sup>USMA Strategy 2024.

<sup>18</sup>USMA Regulation 15-1 The Cadet Honor Code, the Honor System, and the Honor Community, 6 November 2024.

<sup>19</sup>Arthur, J., Kristjánsson, K., Thompson, A., & Fazel, A. (2023). *The Jubilee Centre Framework For Virtue-Based Professional Ethics*, The Jubilee Center For Character & Virtues.

<sup>20</sup>ADP 6-22 Army Leadership and the Profession, 31 July 2019.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>FM 7-22 Holistic Health and Fitness, 1 October 2020.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Fulcher, K.H, Good, M.R., & Sanchez, E.R.H. (2024). *Assessment 101 in higher education: The fundamentals and how to apply them*. Taylor & Francis.

<sup>26</sup>USMA's directorates are: Dean; United States Corps of Cadets; Admissions; the Army Athletic Association; Band; and the US Military Preparatory School.

<sup>27</sup>The required content of the directorate reports, which are presented annually to the Superintendent, is codified in USMA Regulation MA-19-02 Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Processes, 1 May 2019.

<sup>28</sup>Army Regulation (AR) 350-1, Army Training and Leader Development, 10 December 2017, 239.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.



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**DLC Writing Team:** Dr. Marc Boberg, Dr. Kevin Cutright, Ms. Jo Dempsey, COL Chad Foster, Dr. Rebecca Jones-Kellogg, Dr. Jerry Kobylski, COL Brian Novoselich, Dr. Jeffrey D. Peterson, and Dr. Emily Warren.

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