Character Thread in the Academic Program
United States Military Academy

The character thread is a multi-disciplinary effort embedded within the Academic Program's core curriculum that fosters character development through the content and instructional method of academic core courses. The purpose of the character thread is to support USMA's character-development efforts by identifying and reinforcing character connections across eleven academic core courses and enabling integration with the Cadet Character Education Program (CCEP), prevention curriculum, and other character-development activities conducted across USMA. Faculty members teaching courses in the thread will develop a shared understanding of cadets' strengths and opportunities for improvement related to USMA's character development goals as well as the way thread courses support character development.

The character thread comprises *core thread courses* and *supplemental thread courses*. The thread's core courses have course learning outcomes that directly support USMA's character development goals; supplemental courses contain content that supports USMA's character development goals.

Character thread core courses:
- The Army of the Republic: Leading Citizen Soldiers (HI101)
- General Psychology for Leaders (PL100)
- Philosophy & Ethical Reasoning (PY201)
- Military Leadership (PL300)
- Officership (MX400)

Character thread supplemental courses
- Computing Fundamentals (CY105)
- Literature (EN102)
- Physical Geography (EV203)
- American Politics (SS202)
- History of the Military Art (HI302)
- Constitutional & Military Law (LW403)

The character thread is one element of USMA's common character experiences, which include components of the Academic, Military, and Physical Programs along with prevention activities and Academy events (see appendix a). Common character experiences are developmental opportunities designed to prepare cadets to live honorably, lead honorably, and demonstrate excellence. The character thread promotes development both within a given year (e.g., plebe year) by connecting the thread's courses to simultaneous common character experiences and across its eleven academic core courses by reinforcing character-related content.

Character thread courses support USMA's character development goals by:

1. Introducing cadets to the concept of character writ large and within the specific context of service as an Army officer.
2. Teaching cadets to think critically using different disciplinary approaches that are useful in assessing moral dilemmas.
3. Fostering productive discomfort as cadets learn how to navigate complexity, ambiguity, and opposing perspectives.
4. Preparing cadets to critically reflect on, and civilly discuss, urgent issues facing the nation and the world.
5. Modeling and providing opportunities for cadets to demonstrate, and see the benefits of, empathy and emotional intelligence.
6. Modeling, studying examples of, and providing cadets opportunities to exercise intellectual courage and moral strength.
7. Modeling and encouraging intellectual and ethical humility.
8. Providing opportunities for cadets to explore the professional obligations of U.S. Army officers, the nature of the society in which they serve, and what it means to commit to a lifetime of service to the Army and the nation.
9. Providing cadets opportunities for self-discovery and growth.
10. Providing opportunities for cadets to imagine the probable and possible and to identify the implications of those scenarios.

Administration

Directors of core thread courses and supplemental thread courses will participate in thread meetings (three per year) to identify opportunities to reinforce connections and address institutional focus areas across their courses and within a given cadet year. Leaders of common character experiences not within the Academic Program will also be invited to thread meetings. Course directors, and leaders of these common character experiences will share assessments to create a shared understanding of cadets' strengths and opportunities for improvement related to USMA's character-development goals. Thread leaders will produce a document each year that shares course assessments related to USMA's character-development goals, identifies focus areas for the next academic year, and highlights connections made within the thread and with other common character experiences. This document will be informed by course annual executive summaries that include a section on thread contributions that identify new or existing connections with other thread courses or other common character experiences as well as relevant assessment results and character assessments in other programs.

Course directors of core thread courses and supplemental thread courses will share information about the character thread with faculty members teaching thread courses prior to the start of each semester. At a minimum, course directors should share the purpose of the character thread; their course's contributions to the character thread; and the connection of the course's content to other character thread courses, the Cadet Character Education Program (CCEP), prevention curriculum, and other USMA

character-development activities. Syllabi of thread courses will specify that the course is part of the character thread.

The attached appendix depicts USMA's common character experiences (Appendix A).

Appendix A: Common Character Experiences

Common Character Experiences
UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY WEST POINT
"A common path towards living and leading honorably"

Plebe	Yearling	Cow	Firstie
Followership	Lead Your Soldier	Lead the Corps	Lead the Army
Cadet Summer Training (CST)			
AY Commandant's Time			
Military Science Sequence			
Physical Program Sequence			
Academic Program Sequence (Core)			
Academic Program Sequence (Supplement)			
Primary Prevention Plan			
Academy Traditions			

Common Character Experiences
UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY WEST POINT
"A common path towards living and leading honorably"

	Plebe	Yearling	Cow	Firstie
	Followership	Lead Your Soldier	Lead the Corps	Lead the Army
CST Character Focus	CBT Squad30 CBT Team Day	CFT Squad30 CFT Peer Review Leader Dev Academy	CST Cadre and LTP	CST Cadre and LTP CLDT Peer Review
Commandant's Time	CCEP ACFT	CCEP Inspiration to Serve ACFT	CCEP Leader Challenges (4) ACFT	CCEP Leader Challenges (4) ACFT
Military Science	MS100	MS200	MS300	MX400
Physical	PE116, PE215	PE117, PE32x	PE450, PE360, IOCT	PE2xx, IOCT
Academic Core	HI101, PL100	PY201	PL300	MX400 (MCC)
Academic Supplement	EN102, CY105	SS202, EV203	HI302	LW403
Prevention	Theme Weeks Deep Dives Bystander Training	Theme Weeks Deep Dives Bystander Training	Theme Weeks Deep Dives Bystander Training	Theme Weeks Deep Dives Bystander Training
Academy Events	R-Day and A-Day PPW Recognition	CFT Graduation - CPL YWW	Affirmation Ceremony 500th Night	Ring Weekend 100th Night Grad Wk Ceremonies

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