

NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICER ACADEMY GUIDE

NATIONWIDE GUIDANCE for NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICER ACADEMIES

Non-Commissioned Officer Academies prepare the backbone of the Cadet Program for success.

Non-Commissioned Officers are vital for the success of the Cadet Program. Cadets seeking to develop their leadership acumen will have access to a new source of leadership skills. NCOAs are designed to be conducted over a weekend or as a weeklong, leadership activity for cadets between Cadet Staff Sergeant and Cadet Chief Master Sergeant.

Mission: The purpose of Non-Commissioned Officer Academies (NCOA) is to offer, prepare, and train Cadet NCOs to effectively lead themselves and others.

Vision: The vision of the cadet Non-Commissioned Officer Academy is “to develop the leaders of tomorrow through hard work, attention to detail, and dedication.”

Philosophy: NCOs help train NCOs by giving them the responsibility to lead themselves. By allowing NCOs the opportunity to lead one another, it is possible to strengthen both the skills of the instructor and the student. Cadet NCOs are challenged to think beyond personal leadership, and to see the team as a unit to lead, mold, and build towards success. NCOAs train cadet NCOs to be strong local leaders, and forward thinking mentors, role models, and wingmen. Wings and regions retain the flexibility to modify their programs in response to local needs. Follow the spirit of this guidance; if not the letter

Goal Areas: To train and develop cadets in basic NCO skills and responsibilities.

This publication was developed by the **National Cadet Advisory Council**, in collaboration with the **National Cadet Programs Team**.



Civil Air Patrol National Headquarters

United States Air Force Auxiliary

105 South Hansell Street

Maxwell AFB, AL 36112-6332

www.gocivilairpatrol.com

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PART 1

INTRODUCTION *to the* NCOA PROGRAM

1.1 Key Program Guidance

a. Environment. NCOs help train NCOs by giving them the responsibility to lead themselves. For this reason, the students should be provided with the schedule and be responsible for keeping it. Additionally, students should act as flight sergeants for their seminar to practice drilling. For all intents and purposes, the students are their own leaders through this course.

b. Eligibility. NCOAs is recommended for any cadet who is a Cadet Staff Sergeant through a Cadet Chief Master Sergeant.

c. Duration: Schools usually are conducted over a weekend with instruction on Friday evening, Saturday, and Sunday morning.

d. Flexibility: This document is a compilation of best practices. However, wings retain the flexibility to modify their programs in response to local needs. Follow the spirit of this guidance, if not the letter.

e. Lesson Plans: This guidance includes suggested lesson outlines, but does not include the detailed, recipe-like lesson plans found in other cadet-related products. The outlines basically follow what is found in the suggested readings. Obviously, this shortcoming will require extra effort from the instructors as they prepare their lessons.

f. Graduation Requirements: As with other activities, cadets must satisfactorily complete at least 80% of the program to graduate, as judged by the activity director.

PART 2

CURRICULUM OUTLINE

2.1 Leadership

- a. NCO Responsibilities
- b. Professionalism as an NCO
- c. NCO Leadership Concepts
- d. Critical Thinking
- e. Training Intensity
- f. Leadership Evaluations

2.2 Communication Skills

- a. **Basic Instructor Course**
- b. **Resume/Cover Letter**
- c. **Electronic Communication Etiquette**
- d. **Assignment Presentations**

2.3 Drill and Ceremonies

- a. **Leading PT**
- b. **Drill Terms and Pronunciation**
- c. **Calling Commands**
- d. **Feedback Quality**
- e. **Six-Step Teaching Method**

2.4 Administrative/Non-Academic

- a. **Welcome Briefing**
- b. **Course Critiques**
- c. **Graduation**

I. Leadership

A. NCO Responsibilities

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Civil Air Patrol, [Learn to Lead](#), Chapter 4

SUGGESTED CONTENT OUTLINE:

- I. The NCO is responsible for:
 - A. Superiors
 - 1. Obeying orders
 - 2. Keeping them informed
 - 3. Using initiative
 - 4. Training
 - 5. Planning
 - B. Subordinates
 - 1. Setting the example, standards
 - 2. Training

3. Motivating
 4. Correcting
 5. Counseling
 6. Keeping them informed
 7. Evaluating
 8. Planning
 9. Conducting Drill and Ceremonies
- C. Peers
1. Keep informed
 2. Giving assistance
 3. Setting the example
 4. Counseling
 5. Motivating
- II. Respect
- A. Superiors
1. Position - responsibility
 2. Person - achievement and knowledge
- B. Peers
1. Position - responsibility
 2. Person - achievement, and knowledge
- C. Subordinates
1. Everyone has value
 2. You have your position only because they are there
 3. They are there because they want to be
- III. Honor
- A. The Honor Code
- B. Case demonstrates the use of the Honor Code
- C. The NCO Creed

POTENTIAL ACTIVITY: Have the students participate in a discussion about the most important responsibility an NCO has.

B. Professionalism as an NCO

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Civil Air Patrol, [Learn to Lead](#), Chapter 4

SUGGESTED CONTENT OUTLINE:

- I. Define what professionalism means
 - A. Discuss the conduct and aims of a professional
 - B. Relate how professionals need specialized knowledge to the responsibilities of an NCO
 - C. Have the students list attributes of a professional

POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES: Instruct the students to use at least three of the attributes they listed to form a definition of professionalism II. Have the students turn that definition into a business slogan for a company they are running III. After they have presented their slogan, have the students tell how it relates to professionalism.

C. Leadership Concepts

SUGGESTED RESOURCE:

Civil Air Patrol, [Learn to Lead](#), Chapter 5

SUGGESTED CONTENT OUTLINE:

- I. The Leadership Matrix. The skills a leader needs depend on the level they are leading at a) Leadership Arenas (Levels)
 - A. Tactical Level
 - B. Operational Level
 - C. Strategic Level
- II. Leadership Skills
 - A. Personal Leadership
 - B. People/Team Leadership
 - C. Institutional Leadership
 - D. The appropriate mix of these skills varies as an individual advances from supervisory to top management positions.
- III. Tactical Level Leadership as NCOs
 - A. NCOs
 - B. Focus on the short-term needs of individual cadets and a small team
 - C. Ensure people comply with policies, rules, and standards
 - D. Train people to do their jobs
 - E. Fulfill the goals of the team, carry out activity plans, and develop a sense of teamwork 5. NCOs get the job done
- IV. Conclusion

POTENTIAL ACTIVITY: Have students participate in a discussion to explore why leadership changes as a leader enters the strategic arena.

D. Critical Thinking

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Civil Air Patrol, [Learn to Lead](#), Chapter 5

Peter A. Facione, "Critical Thinking: What It is and Why It Counts"

SUGGESTED CONTENT OUTLINE:

- I. Introduction

- A. Basic principles
- B. Universal standards
- C. Elements of thought
- II. Core critical thinking skills
- III. Delphi method
- IV. Disposition toward critical thinking
- V. Modes of thinking

POTENTIAL ACTIVITY: Provide the students with an operations plan (or similar document) for a cadet activity. Have them evaluate that plan against the principles of project management. Further, have them use at least two creative thinking tools to identify at least two unconventional ideas that could improve the cadet activity.

E. Training Intensity

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Civil Air Patrol, [CAWG ETH](#), Chapter 4

SUGGESTED CONTENT OUTLINE:

- I. Purpose of Intensity
 - A. Yerkes-Dodson curve
 - 1. Some Stress Can Increase Performance
 - 2. Too Much Stress Can Decrease Performance
 - B. Intensity vs. Hazing
 - 1. Cap Definition Of Hazing
 - 2. Intensity At Encampment Is Not The Same At The Home Squadron
 - C. Appropriate Intensity Should Be Constantly Adjusted
 - 1. How Much Intensity A Student Can Handle Changes With Age, Maturity, And Experience
- II. Tools for intensity
 - A. Presence
 - B. Expectation
 - C. Volume
 - 1. Loudness
 - 2. Tone of voice
 - D. Formality of feedback
 - E. Time requirements

POTENTIAL ACTIVITY: Give students a variety of situations and have them explain which tools of intensity are appropriate and at what level and also which ones are not appropriate and why. Encourage critical thinking.

F. Leadership Evaluations

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Civil Air Patrol, [CAPF 60-92](#)

SUGGESTED CONTENT OUTLINE: The goal of this activity is to evaluate the cadets' level of understanding at the end of this training program.

- I. Evaluate the students on their ability to:
 - A. Teach one drill movement according to the six-step teaching method.
 - B. Write an outline describing the NCO Responsibilities.
 - C. Give a 3-minute speech on the NCO's Responsibilities.
- II. Notes:
 - A. This is designed to allow the Cadet Commander and Commandant a clear picture of student performance
 - B. This is not a pass or fail evaluation
 - C. Recommendation: Evaluation staff should not be the students' direct staff
- III. Directions:
 - A. Two evaluators should assess each student individually (unbiased opinion)
 1. Focus on objective capability and competence rather than the perception of student performance.
 2. Maintain proper military bearing at all times
 - B. Each evaluation should be no longer than 15 minutes
 1. (10 minutes assessment time, 5 minutes for instructions/feedback/questions)

II. Communication

A. Basic Instructor's Course

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Learning Management System, Professional Development

SUGGESTED CONTENT OUTLINE:

This eServices course teaches basic teaching principles and their applications in CAP. There is a lesson plan in eservices along with some additional teaching documents listed below which are invaluable to the development of this course. If this course is not possible, a class should be taught on how to outline a presentation and presenting tips.

- I. Lesson Plan / Instructor Guide
- II. Student Guide
- III. Briefing Template
- IV. Cadet Staff Handbook
- V. CAP Seminar Advisor Guide
- VI. Copyright Law

POTENTIAL ACTIVITY: There is a quiz that students can take afterward to verify their knowledge of this course and to earn a certification in this topic.

B. Resume/Cover Letter

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Civil Air Patrol, [Learn to Lead](#), Chapter 8

Civil Air Patrol, [CAPP 1-2](#)

SUGGESTED CONTENT OUTLINE:

- I. What is a resume/cover letter?
 - A. How do they work together?
 - B. What tone should they portray?
- II. Resume
 - A. Your Contact Information
 - B. Your Accomplishments
 - C. Your Experience
 - D. Your Skills
- III. Cover Letter:
 - A. Your mission
 - B. How you will do the best job
 - C. Don't use your resume topics

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY: Show students some example resumes and cover letters and have them point out problems with them.

C. Electronic Communication Etiquette

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Civil Air Patrol, [Learn to Lead](#), Chapter 8, pg. 171

Civil Air Patrol, [CAPP 1-2](#)

SUGGESTED CONTENT OUTLINE:

- I. General Etiquette
 - A. Maintaining Professional Image
 1. Emoticons
 2. Image Sharing
 3. Appropriate Screen Names, Usernames, and Email Addresses
 - B. Appropriate Language
 1. Avoiding Jargon and Abbreviations
 2. Avoiding Unnecessary Bulk in Messages
 - C. Cadet Protection
 1. CC, BCC, and Third Party Inclusion on Communications

2. Methods Available and When to Use Each
 3. Email, Text, Voice Call, Social Media Messaging
- II. Email Specific Etiquette
- A. Introductions
 1. Subject Lines
 2. Greetings
 - B. Body Formatting
 - C. Signature Blocks
 1. NHQ Copy and Paste Block
 2. Plain Text
- III. Voice Specific Etiquette
- A. Properly Timed Calls
 1. Excessively early or late night calling
 2. Avoiding excessive call length
 - B. Setting
 1. Minimal background noise
 - C. Identification
 1. Clearly identify self and all others on the call

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

- I. Mock Message Writing
 - A. Recipients and subjects should vary in levels of priority and required professionalism
- II. Personal Email Signature Building
 - A. Assist participants in developing personal email signatures

D. Assignment Presentations

SUGGESTED CONTENT OUTLINE:

- I. Each Student will be given two presentations to be given throughout the course to put their knowledge to practice.
- II. Presentation 1: Each student will be given time to prepare a 3-5 minute speech on a CAP/USAF-related topic. The students will then present to the staff who will provide feedback for improvement. This assignment is given to students after the Instructional Methods class.
- III. Presentation 2: Each student will be given time to prepare a 5-7 minute speech on any approved topic. The students will present to the staff who will provide feedback for approval. Each seminar will send the best presenter to speak in front of the school.

III. Drill and Ceremonies

A. Role of the NCO with Physical Training

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Civil Air Patrol, [CAPP 60-50](#) (1-7, 1-10)

Civil Air Patrol, [CAPP 60-33](#) (5.12)

SUGGESTED CONTENT OUTLINE:

- I. Types of Exercise and How to Balance Them
 - A. Stretches
 - B. Dynamic
 - C. Calisthenics
- II. How to Document a Physical Training Plan
- III. Types of Formations and Atmosphere
- IV. Conduct of Non-Commissioned Officers During Physical Training
- V. How to Provide Feedback to Cadets on Their Physical Fitness

POTENTIAL ACTIVITY: Have students practice leading a Physical Training session during a morning block for PT.

B. Drill Terms

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Civil Air Patrol, [CAPP 60-33](#) (1.5, 1.4)

SUGGESTED CONTENT OUTLINE:

This class should enhance the student's ability to recognize and employ drill terms in multiple situations. It is recommended that the instructor tailor the class based on the suggested resources and the following topics:

- I. Drill Terms and Pronunciation
 - A. Alignment
 - B. Base
 - C. Cadence
 - D. Center
 - E. Depth
 - F. Distance
 - G. Dress
 - H. File
 - I. Flank
 - J. Head
 - K. Interval
 - L. Pace
 - M. Rank
 - N. Unit
- II. Commanding Drill
 - A. Position Of The Commander And Demonstration
- III. Review

POTENTIAL ACTIVITY: Have students go outside to work on calling the commands with proper pronunciation and pace.

C. Calling Commands

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Civil Air Patrol, [CAPP 60-33](#) (Section 2b)

SUGGESTED CONTENT OUTLINE:

This class should cover the basics of beginning and mastering calling commands and using a command voice. Concepts should include:

- I. Commands
 - A. Calling 2-part commands
 - B. Calling combined commands
 - C. Giving supplementary commands
 - D. Informal Commands
 - E. General rules for commands
- II. Command Voice
 - A. Voice characteristics
 1. Diaphragm (Make sure you can properly demonstrate effective use of your diaphragm)
 2. Loudness
 3. Projection
 4. Distinctness (Enunciation)
 5. Inflection
 6. Snap

POTENTIAL ACTIVITIES:

- I. Diaphragm exercises (breathing)
- II. Stationary Commands Calling (Right face, about face, etc)
- III. Loudness/Diaphragm Command calling
- IV. Cadence calling

D. Feedback Quality

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Civil Air Patrol, [Learn to Lead](#), Chapter 4

Civil Air Patrol, [CAPP 60-70](#)

SUGGESTED CONTENT OUTLINE:

Instruction should introduce students to providing and receiving quality feedback in Drill and Ceremonies.

- I. Giving Feedback

- A. Positive (PPP)
 - 1. Address Person
 - 2. Recognize Performance
 - 3. Give Praise
- B. “Negative Feedback” or Critique (PPSS)
 - 1. Address Person
 - 2. Identify and verbalize Problem
 - 3. State the Standard
 - 4. Give a Solution
- II. Feedback content
 - A. Never just say “fix it” as it provides no hard meaning
 - B. Always be specific
- III. Review

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY: Encourage students to offer feedback to one another on pre-selected topics (i.e., a specific facing movement, a specific rifle movement) with both types of feedback.

E. Six-Step Teaching Method

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Civil Air Patrol, [CAPP 60-33](#)

SUGGESTED CONTENT OUTLINE:

- I. What is the Six Step Teaching Method
 - A. State
 - B. Demonstrate
 - 1. Have someone besides yourself demonstrate
 - C. Explain
 - D. Ask
 - 1. Ask specific questions
 - E. Perform
 - F. Critique
 - 1. Most important part
- II. Why use it
- III. Review

PROPOSED ACTIVITIES: Have students practice teaching a simple command during a drill lab under close supervision and have cadets divide into groups of 4 and create 4 different objectives. One by one, each NCO will teach their group their objective with the instructors evaluating the Six Step Teaching Method.

IV. Administrative / Non-Academic

A. Welcome Briefing

SUGGESTED CONTENT:

- I. Overview
- II. Environment
- III. Expectations
- IV. Safety

B. Course Critiques

- I. Ensure you get feedback from each class and activity, along with an overall program.

C. Graduation

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PART 3

PROPOSED SCHEDULE

FRIDAY

Times	Activity	Course	Uniform	Location
1800-2000	Student In-Processing		ABU	C
2000-2020	Welcome Briefing/Safety	4.1		
2020-2050	Leading PT	3.1		
2050-2130	Leadership Activity			
2130-2200	PPT		PT	B
2200	Student Lights Out			
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2130-2200	Staff Meeting		ABU	B
2200-2230	Staff PPT		PT	
2230	Staff Lights Out			

B = Barracks C = Classroom S = Seminar Rooms DP = Drill Pad MH = Mess Hall

SATURDAY

Times	Activity	Course	Uniform	Location
0600	Reveille		PT	
0600-0610	PPT			B
0610-0655	Physical Training Lab			CP
0655-0715	Showers/PPT			B
0715-0745	Breakfast		ABU	MH
0745-0815	NCO Responsibilities	1.1		C

0815-0845	Drill Terms	3.2		
0845-0915	Calling Commands	3.3		
0915-1930	Feedback Quality	3.4		
0930-1030	Drill Lab			DP
1030-1130	Basic Instructor Course	2.1		C
1130-1215	Drill Lab			DP
1215-1245	Training Intensity	1.5		C
1245-1315	Lunch			MH
1315-1400	Assignment Research 1	2.4		S
1400-1515	Assignment Presentation 1	2.4		
1515-1545	Six Step Teaching Method	3.5		C
1545-1645	Drill Lab			DP
1645-1700	Electronic Communication	2.3		C
1700-1800	Inspections Lab			DP
1800-1830	Dinner			MH
1830-2000	Assignment Research 2	2.4		S
2000-2030	NCO Leadership Concepts	1.3		C
2030-2100	Resume/Cover Letter	2.2		
2100-2130	Critical Thinking	1.4		
2130-2200	PPT		PT	B
2200	Student Lights Out			
2130-2200	Staff Meeting		ABU	B
2200-2230	Staff PPT		PT	
2230	Staff Lights Out			

B = Barracks C = Classroom S = Seminar Rooms DP = Drill Pad MH = Mess Hall

SUNDAY

Times	Activity	Course	Uniform	Location
0600	Reveille		PT	
0600-0610	PPT			B
0610-0655	Physical Training Lab			DP
0655-0730	Showers / PPT / Pack			B
0730-0800	Breakfast		Blues	MH
0800-0915	Drill Lab			DP
0915-0945	Formation Lab			
0945-1145	Assignment Presentation 2	2.4		S
1145-1215	Lunch			MH
1215-1315	Leadership Evaluations	1.6		S
1315-1345	Final Presentations	2.4		C
1345-1430	Professionalism/NCO Creed	1.2		
1430-1500	Cleanup/Course Critiques	4.2		
1500	Graduation	4.3		DP
1530	Out Processing			

B = Barracks C = Classroom S = Seminar Rooms DP = Drill Pad MH = Mess Hall