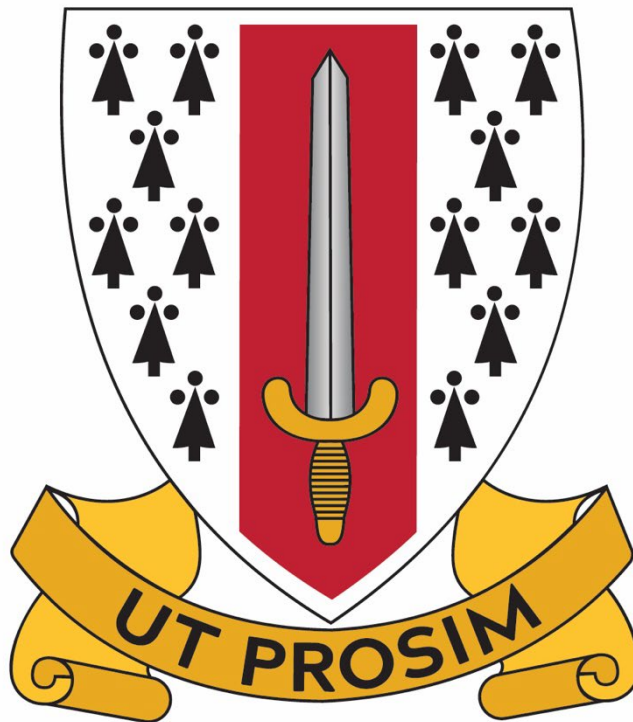


Virginia Tech[®]



Corps of Cadets

Leader Development Program

Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Leader
Development Program
2023

Guided by the university motto of *Ut Prosim*, the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets is a Four-year Leader Development Program designed to graduate leaders of exemplary character who are instilled with the values and skills essential for leadership success in service to the nation.

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Introduction

Founded in 1872 as a land grant college under the authority of the Morrill Land Grant Act, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University continues to provide the military training initially required by the Morrill Act through the Corps of Cadets. In addition, the Department of Defense has recognized Virginia Tech as one of six Senior Military Colleges in the United States. Virginia Tech supports the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets as a Military College within a larger public university setting. The Corps of Cadets, in partnership with the services' Reserve Officer Training Corps, trains leaders by creating a regimented and disciplined environment that educates and develops the whole person – mentally, morally, physically, and spiritually.

The Corps of Cadets is a military-structured leader development program that achieves this by being a distinctly organized group of students who adhere to a strict code of honor, wear a distinctive cadet uniform, live in designated cadet barracks, and train to military-inspired standards. Cadets live in a diverse joint, military-style environment that provides opportunities to lead and follow at all levels of the organization.

Beginning in 1997, the Corps implemented a series of Strategic Visions, that set the tone and tenor for the 21st Century Corps of Cadets. These visions focus on setting the Corps of Cadets apart as a nationally renowned Senior Military College. Actions to achieve that goal include expanding the Commandant's Staff, developing academic programs within the Corps, implementing the Corps Leadership Minor, and initiating the Citizen-Leader Track.¹

Cadet Regulations, which are continuously refined, govern the day-to-day activities of cadets in the Regiment including; standards for uniforms, rooms, and behavior; training requirements for First-year

¹ The most recent iteration of these strategic documents is the *Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Strategic Plan 2020 to 2025*

Cadets, disciplinary procedures, and expected activities throughout the academic year; and Corps of Cadets graduation requirements.²

This Leader Development Plan is designed as a bridge between the Strategic Vision (strategic) and Cadet Regulations (tactical). It serves to translate the vision into expectations on performance, training, and education of Cadets throughout their four years in the Corps to achieve the goal of graduating leaders of exemplary character.

Descriptive rather than prescriptive, the Leader Development Plan paints a picture of the Cadet experience from arrival during New Cadet Week, through each class year to graduation, and beyond. It also provides fidelity to the activities of Cadets and Commandant's Staff called out in the Strategic Vision. Specifically, this Leader Development Program supports the following focus areas from Strategic Vision 2025:

- Maintain a diverse and inclusive Corps of between 1,350 and 1,400 cadets to ensure full occupancy of our new residence halls.
- Ensure an environment that is nurturing and respectful to all allowing for each person being able to grow and perform at their maximum potential.
- Enhance and deepen cadets' understanding and commitment to honor and ethics.
- Grow and cultivate a professional staff to carry out the mission of the Corps.³

² Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets *Standard Regulations*,
https://vtcc.vt.edu/content/dam/vtcc_vt_edu/resources/manuals/regulations2023.pdf

³ The Continued Development of the Corps' Curriculum and Experiential Programs line of effort from Strategic Vision 2025 was used as the basis for creating Leader Development Plan 2023.

Commandant's Welcome

This Leader Development Program comes at a critical time in our history as a Corps of Cadets and our nation. The Corps of Cadets provides a myriad of experiences, numerous training activities, and formal educational activities, but when you boil it down to its most fundamental, the Corps develops character. It is character that ensures our nation's leaders do the right thing, at the right time, in the right place – all the time. It is character that provides our nation's leaders the ability to make morally correct decisions. And it is character that drives the sacrificial leadership needed in times of crisis. As uncertainty about the future reigns, developing leaders of character who are prepared to lead in that uncertainty is not only desired, but essential.

The intent of this program is to put in one place a descriptive path to build leaders of character. Focusing on Core Values and developing leaders across all four years of the Corps of Cadets, this Leader Development Program codifies practices from across the organization, bridges the gap between the Corps' strategic vision and the execution of day-to-day operations, and provides a guide for cadets to plan, execute, and evaluate cadet training and Corps operations.

Finally, this is a living document – intended to evolve as the needs of the Corps evolve. Tomorrow's leadership challenges have yet to be revealed, but we know there will be challenges. We encourage cadets to use this program to guide their actions, but we also encourage them to think creatively and identify when this program needs to advance.



Maj Gen Randal Fullhart, USAF (Retired)
Commandant of Cadets

Mission Statement and Vision

Mission

The mission of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets is to graduate leaders of exemplary character who are instilled with the values and skills essential for leadership success in service to the nation.

Vision

The vision of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets is:

Global, Ethical Leaders
Now...More than Ever

Global...where we attract people from...and where they go after they graduate.

Ethical...encompassing moral, legal, honor, ethics...doing the right thing...always.

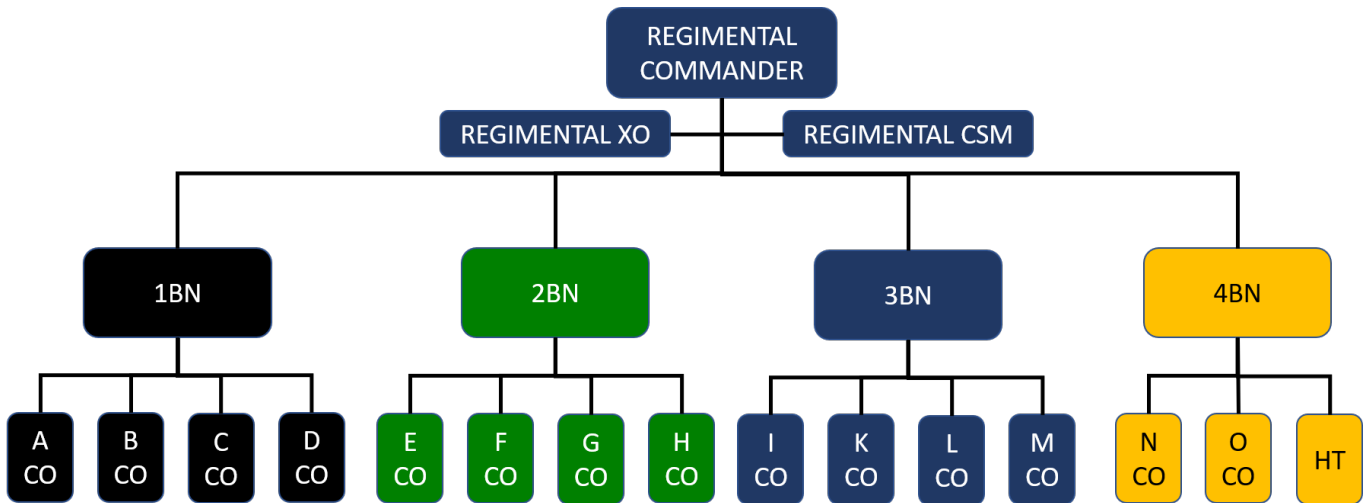
Now...More than Ever: A sense of urgency and a sense of quantity because the challenges (and opportunities) are numerous, demand our immediate attention, and drive the demand for such leaders.⁴

⁴ Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Strategic Plan 2020 to 2025

Corps Organization

The Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets is organized as a functional military-style line and staff organization. Corps regulations establish a standard organization structure using an Army regimental model.

The Corps of Cadets consists of a **cadet-led regiment** under the supervision of a Commandant of Cadets. The regiment is made up of four battalions, each under the supervision of a Deputy Commandant and a Senior Enlisted Advisor.



Cadets are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Corps. Cadets set the vision for each semester and lead the various elements of the Regiment from the Regimental Commander to Fire Team Leaders. This is done through an orders process that is planned and executed by the Cadet chain of command and advised by the Commandant's Staff. Cadets develop training objectives and plans based on the guidance provided in this and other governing documents to achieve Corps training and development goals. They then execute and evaluate those training plans in accordance with Cadet Regulations.

Four-Year Progression

The leader development program of the Corps of Cadets is a four-year, progressive program based upon a servant-leader model whose foundation is selflessness steeped in respect for others.

Each Class Year in the Corps focuses on an element of leadership that builds toward graduating global ethical leaders of character

<u>Class Year</u>	<u>Leadership Theme</u>	<u>A Cadet is Prepared to be a:</u>
First-Year	Leading Self	Fire Team Leader
Sophomore	Leading People	Cadet NCO
Junior	Leading Organizations	Cadet Officer
Senior	Leading for the Future	Junior Officer/Citizen Leader

Each year is further divided into semesters that build on the experience of the preceding semester using a learn-experience progression, with the Fall focused on learning skills that will be put into practice and reflected upon in the Spring Semester.

FR	EXPERIENCE the foundation of being a VTCC Cadet	FALL	
	LEARN how to lead small teams	SPRING	
SO	EXPERIENCE leading small teams	FALL	
	LEARN how to be a Cadet NCO	SPRING	
JR	EXPERIENCE being a Cadet NCO	FALL	
	LEARN how to be a Cadet Officer	SPRING	
SR	EXPERIENCE being a Cadet Officer	FALL	
	LEARN how to be a military/civilian leader	SPRING	

Development Themes by Class

Phase	First-year Cadets	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors
Fall Semester – Experience				
Cadre Week (1 week)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support & observe Cadre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare to train incoming New Cadets New Cadet Week ROC Drill Review & Confirm standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RWB Leader Training Lead training of Cadre
New Cadet Week (1 week)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic Military Training Room & Uniform Standards Military Drill & Ceremony 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support New Cadet Training Observe Cadre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train New Cadets Teach & model standards Develop Leadership Skills through practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set Command vision Serve as Cadet Officers Plan & evaluate training Set & enforce standards Supervise & mentor Cadre
Red Phase (6 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine skills learned in New Cadet Week Integrate academics Leading Self Develop personal standards Teamwork and Brotherhood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate into new company Refine training as FTL Internalized standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serve as Cadet NCOs Train First-year Cadets Develop Leadership Skills through practice Evaluate performance of First-year Cadets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Vision Serve as Cadet Officers Train Sophomore Cadets Lead the Corps Plan & evaluate training Set & enforce standards Supervise & mentor Cadre
White Phase (9 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop personal standards Sustain & stabilize performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assume role as FTL Train First-year Cadets Expand small unit leadership skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serve as Cadet NCOs Evaluate & counsel subordinates Supervise and mentor FTLs Professional mentoring of First-Year Cadets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Vision Serve as Cadet Officers Evaluate & counsel subordinates Supervise & mentor Cadre Plan & evaluate training
Spring Semester – Learn				
Blue Phase (15 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uphold personal standards Refine performance Prepare to be Fire Team Leaders (FTL) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serve as FTLs Train First-year Cadets Prepare to be Cadet NCOs Expand small unit leadership skills Prepare Freshman to assume FTL role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serve as Cadet NCOs Prepare to be Cadet Officers Evaluate & counsel subordinates Prepare SO to assume Corps NCO roles Professional mentoring of First-Year Cadets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Vision Serve as Cadet Officers Evaluate & counsel subordinates Prepare Juniors to assume Corps Leadership roles Prepare for post-graduation goals

Annual Training Cycle

Training Phases

Phase	Start	Finish	Milestone Events	Key Events
Fall Semester – Experience				
Cadre Week (1 week)	~2 Weeks before Start of Classes	~1 Week before Start of Classes	New Cadet Move-in Rehearsal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RWB Student Leader Training Cadre Level of Knowledge Train the trainer training
New Cadet Week (1 week)	1 Week before College Orientation	Day prior to College Orientation	New Cadet Parade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Cadet Move-in VTCC Introduction Weeks of Welcome
Red Phase (6 weeks)	First Day of Classes Fall Semester	Friday Prior to Last Day to Drop Classes	Caldwell I Sophomore Red Phase Culminating Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition to Academics Sophomore Integration Class-specific Training Football Games Homecoming PIR FTL Selection
White Phase (9 weeks)	Completion of Caldwell I	Last Day of Classes Fall Semester	First-year Cadet White Phase Culminating Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NC Promotion to Cadet Class-specific Training Integration of FTLs Mentor Night Football Games Spring Change of Command
Spring Semester – Learn				
Blue Phase (15 weeks)	First Day of Classes Spring Semester	Change of Command PIR	Caldwell II Change of Command Pass-in-Review Graduation & Commissioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Banquet Military Ball Ring Dance Platoon Tactical Challenge FTL Training (FR) Advanced Leader Course (SO) Cadet Officer Training (JR)

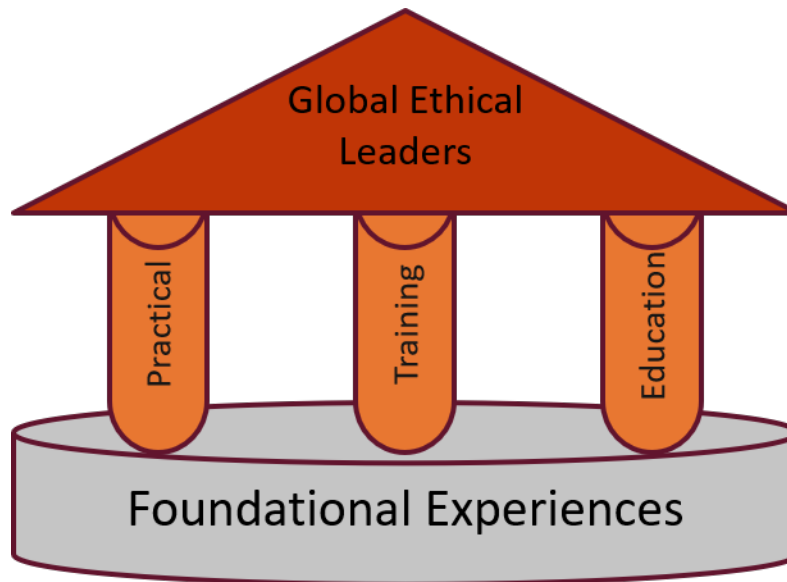
Leader Development Program Goals

Graduate leaders of exemplary character who are instilled with the values and skills essential for leadership success in service to the nation. This is achieved by:

- Instilling Foundational Values
- Developing and Refining Leadership Skills
- Inspiring a Sense of Service
- Molding Character through Experience

Across a four-year program designed to take in students from a wide variety of backgrounds.

Leadership is both a science and an art. Leadership can be studied and learned, but must also be practiced in order to fully comprehend and embrace its power and potential for good.



Cadets are challenged and encouraged by practical application and frequent evaluation in positions of ever-increasing responsibility within a diverse, joint, military-style leadership environment.

The program begins with developing **active followership** skills and learning to **lead one's self** in our incoming **First-year Cadets**. Elements include learning basic military skills and standards, self-development, self-understanding, college success strategies, and an introduction to studying leadership. At the end of their first year in the Corps of Cadets, Cadets are prepared to **step into the role of Fire Team Leader**.

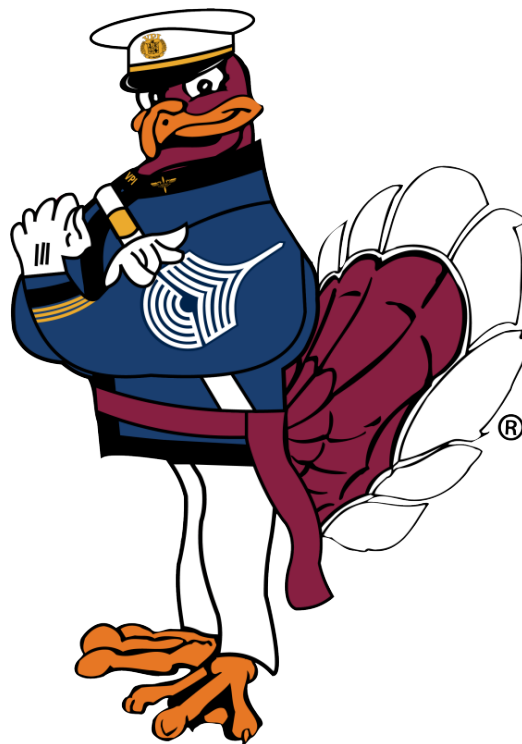
Sophomores are expected to assume the role of **frontline leaders** and begin leading others. With the focus on small unit leadership, essential skills developed during this period include mentorship, one-on-one and one-on-few training, development of subordinates, and an introduction to the conduct of counseling and evaluation of subordinates. There is a continued focus on team building as a class as they are incorporated into new units. At the end of their Sophomore year, Cadets are prepared to **step into the roles of Cadet Non-commissioned Officers** at the company, battalion, or regimental level.

The focus for **Juniors** is on **organizational leadership**. During this year cadets are fully engaged in the day-to-day operations of the Corps and see to the functioning of their organizations as well as **overseeing the growth and development of the First-year Cadets**. Juniors are also expected to mentor and take an active role in counseling and evaluating their subordinates. At the end of their Junior year, Cadets are prepared to **step into the roles of Cadet Officers** including command at all levels of the regiment and critical staff officer roles at the battalion or regimental levels.

Seniors, serving across the regiment as **Cadet Officers**, are at a transition point in their leader development with their focus at the strategic level with an eye toward building the organization for the future. First, they see to the strategic direction of their organizations to include setting specific goals that inform the actions of all other members of the Corps. Seniors are also expected to step out of the

direct training role and into a **supervisory and assessment** role in the Corps' training activities. They are also at the stage where they are preparing to **transition to their post-Corps professions** and thus should be putting the final touches on their own personal and professional development.

For this Leader Development Program to be successful, the Corps must be run by the cadets. The Commandant's Staff seeks to **empower cadet leaders** at all levels with the freedom to act within the parameters outlined in Cadet Regulations. Serving as advisors and mentors, the staff helps those leaders set the organization's vision; plan, execute, and assess training; refine and implement cadet-driven goals; plan, implement, execute, and assess Corps activities; and **provide cadets the space to make and learn from mistakes made in that process**. With a bias toward action, the staff encourages **each class of cadets to own their leadership** of the organization by setting an environment for success across the Corps.



Instilling Foundational Values

The Corps, as a fundamental part of Virginia Tech, espouses those values set forth on the Pylons: The pylons embody the values that members of the Hokie Nation hold in the highest regard and serve as a touchstone for the traditions, Honor Code, training programs, policies, and regulations of the Corps of Cadets. It is important that all understand the meaning behind each of the pylons.

- ***Ut Prosim [That I May Serve]***: Alma Mater advising her student: Forge your life on the principles I strive to teach. I cherish four major virtues: Brotherhood, Duty, Honor, and Loyalty.
- **Brotherhood**: Brotherhood is akin to the Golden Rule; let no wall be high enough to separate you from your fellow citizens in spite of dividing factors – be they geographical, political, religious, or social.
- **Duty**: Duty is a sublime word. Be faithful in the performance of your day-to-day duties aware of the larger obligation to humanity. It is your obligation to know what you ought to do and to do it.
- **Honor**: Honor is your personal integrity; your intuitive sense of what is right, and your shield against evil. The shield as a symbol of personal honor dates back to Knighthood.
- **Loyalty**: Loyalty is unswerving allegiance to family and friends, to me...your school, and to your community, state, or nation.
- **Leadership**: Cultivate the character traits of brotherhood, duty, honor, and loyalty, and you will be eligible for leadership. Only then can you raise your hand and say, “Follow Me.”
- **Service**: Be warned. Life is demanding and courageous leadership means service. The symbolism stresses the readiness to put aside the pursuit of one’s own work and career to enter into military or public service...serving one’s

country and fellow citizens.

- **Sacrifice:** And finally, service means sacrifice...even unto life itself. For leaders, it means that you must give up actions and habits that would detract from the higher calling to lead and serve others.⁵

Leader Development Program 2023 focuses on four foundational values that underpin the purpose of the organization, encompass the Pylon values, and align with service values. By focusing on these four values, all eight of the Pylon values are lived and learned.

These values will be instilled in our cadets from the beginning of their tenure in the Corps to take with them as they leave:

- Brotherhood
- Honor
- Duty
- Sacrifice



⁵ *Standard Regulations*, pp. 21-22

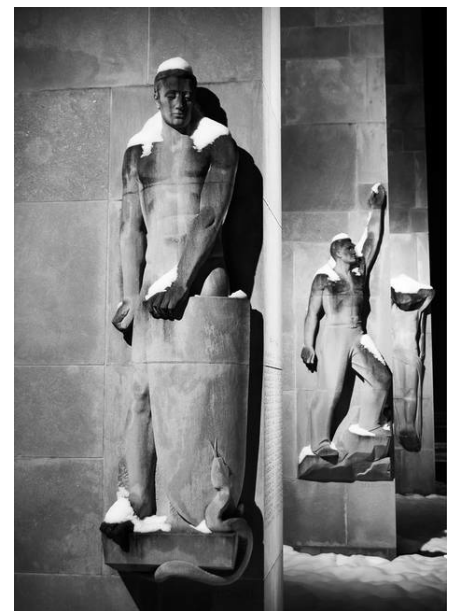


Brotherhood

- Inseparable. A belief in each other built out of respect, love, and hope that establishes an inseparable bond held together by a common purpose driven by the desire to be better.
- Shared interest and support
- A sense of belonging

Honor

- A quality of integrity and justice shown in one's beliefs and actions. Your reputation will precede you.
- Cadets are persons of integrity; they strive to choose the harder right instead of the easier wrong and are never content with a half-truth when the whole can be won.
- To be an honorable leader, one must be completely trustworthy, for leadership is built on trust, and trust is built on honor.





Duty

- The agency to act in order to fulfill your obligations regardless of risk.
- Duty means to accept and accomplish the responsibilities assigned to me including accepting the consequences associated with performance and actions.
- A call to serve others before self.
- The compulsion felt to meet one's obligations. Duty compels us to do the right thing at the right time, regardless of adverse consequences. It is the precursor of discipline and obedience.
- Duty is the obligation to perform what is required for the mission.

Sacrifice

- Service means sacrifice, even unto life itself.
- The act of subordinating your wants, desires, and interests to serve the needs of the nation, the organization, and your fellow citizens.
- Subordination with a purpose, a goal to be achieved to make the organization, and yourself better for your sacrifice



Developing and Refining Leadership Skills

The Corps provides the environment to evaluate and grow individual leadership skills. This is accomplished through practice, training, and education that includes:

- Identifying a Cadets strengths areas of struggle, then providing tools to develop those strengths and address the struggles
- Presenting various leadership philosophies and their virtues and challenges
- Providing tools to develop and refine a personal leadership philosophy
- Encouraging self-discovery and understanding one's own abilities and encouraging cadets to lead themselves first by upholding standards



In each step of this process, the Corps provides opportunities to explore and test leadership philosophies in a safe environment that allows for, complex and intelligent failure, evaluation and mentoring, and reflection.

3 quintessential types of failures:

1. Simple failures (=mistakes). These failures are the ones where we know how to do it right, but for some reason, the process didn't go right.
2. Complex failures (=accidents). In these failures, a set of factors come together in a novel way despite the reasonably familiar contexts.
3. Intelligent failures (=discoveries). These are the undesired results of thoughtful forays into new territory.⁶

⁶ "Amy Edmondson – The Science of Intelligent Failure" *Nordic Business Forum*, 03 June 2021

Inspiring a Sense of Service

Service represents an ideal of placing the needs of others above your own. This can take many forms, but in each case, service seeks to improve the situation of others. Service is something bigger than yourself, it means engaging in the organization and aiming to leave it better than you found it.

Leadership requires courageous service, in times of peace and in times of war, in a military or civilian context, and that service requires sacrifice, even unto life itself.



Molding Character through Experience

Character is defined as the complex of mental and ethical traits marking and often individualizing a person, group, or nation. Good Character refines that definition to include moral action demonstrated in all circumstances. The development of good character is the result of reasoned and willful coordination between heart and mind.

CHARACTER COUNTS! identifies Six Pillars of Character which they call “T.R.R.F.C.C.” (pronounced terrific)

- Trustworthiness
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Fairness
- Caring
- Citizenship⁷



Each of the Six Pillars of Character helps instill a positive climate and a culture of respect and empathy, making the Corps a safe environment for students to learn.

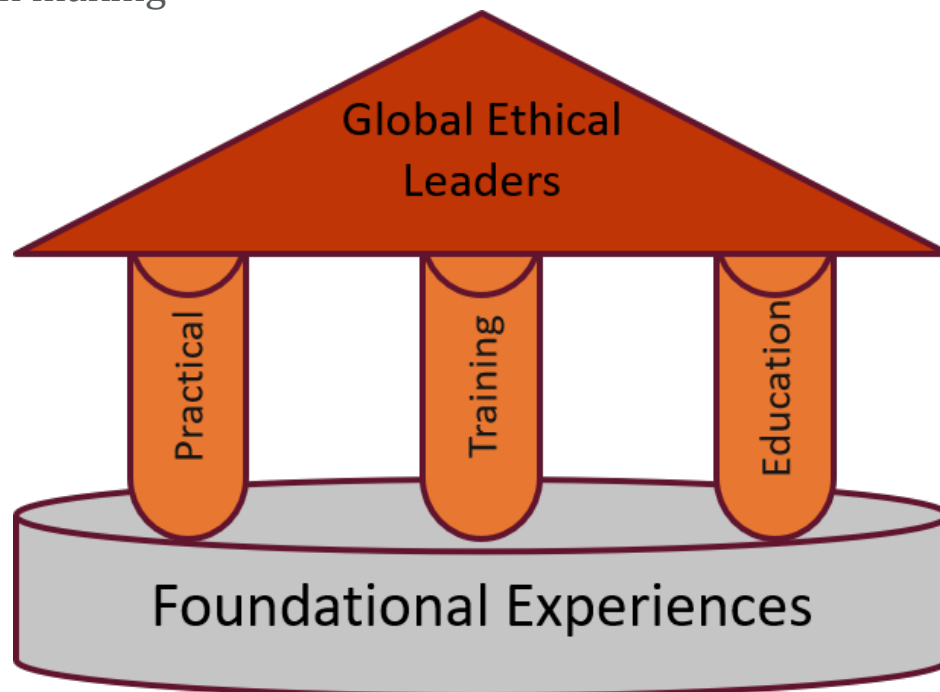
A leader of character seeks to discover the truth, decide what is right, and demonstrate the courage and commitment to act accordingly.

⁷ “The Six Pillars of Character” <https://charactercounts.org/character-counts-overview/six-pillars/>

Leader Development Program Pillars

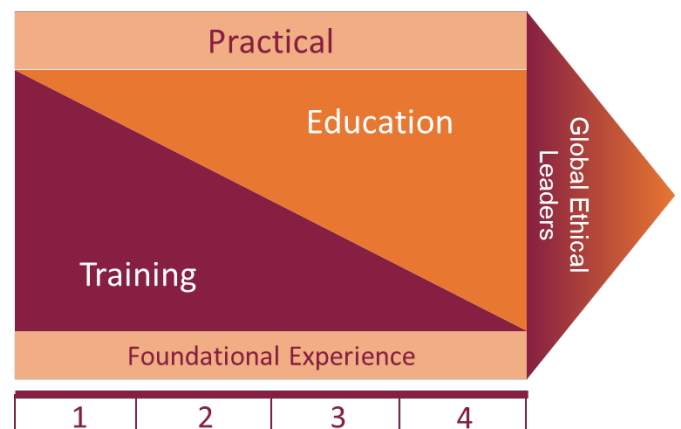
Leader Development requires a balance of:

- Practical experiences and hands-on activities
- Training in leadership techniques, position responsibilities, and communication skills
- Education to develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and ethical decision making



Over the course of the Leader Development Program that balance changes:

- Initial focus is on training on the standards and expectations for known events and activities
- As cadets mature, the focus shifts to include broader education to prepare cadets for unforeseen events



Practical – prepare for the now

The Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets is the university's original Living-Learning Community. Daily experiences in the Corps provide opportunities to practice foundational values, develop and refine leadership skills, serve others, and mold individual character.

This is achieved through:

- Living by the Cadet Honor Code on the pathway to ethical leadership
- Being a Cadet run organization with mentorship from Commandant's Staff
- Planning, executing, and assessing cadet training and activities
- Being immersed in the leadership experience 24 hours a day during the school year
- Cadet leaders, at all levels, deal with real challenges requiring real solutions
- Emphasis on personal and organizational-level accountability
- Submitting to competent authority and exercising authority when granted

Training – prepare for the future known

Training is designed to teach the skills necessary to complete assigned tasks and positions within the organization. Training is most intensive training is for First-year Cadets but also includes upperclassmen as they learn how to train underclasses and take on positions of increased responsibility.

The Corps provides planned and unplanned training opportunities throughout the academic year and across the four years of the program using a progressive training model. Planned training opportunities begin with New Cadet Week where First-year Cadets are immersed in the training environment from reveille to taps for seven days before the beginning of classes each Fall. Planned training after New Cadet Week includes morning online training and

flag formation, Corps Lab periods each Thursday afternoon, and weekend training events for First-year Cadets and sophomores. Unplanned training opportunities range from responding to unexpected requirements from the university to dealing with unforeseen circumstances in a cadet's life.

A Cadet's training experience begins with New Cadet week where they are introduced to military standards and discipline. Once classes begin, while training intensity reduces as cadets focus on their academic courses, training concentrates on preparing cadets for the next phase of the cadet experience.

The Corps of Cadets is a standards-based organization. This means that every member of this organization is expected to uphold the standards. Cadet training is an objective-based blend of ROTC/VPI/Corps activities, including assessment of training objectives, working collaboratively to develop the whole cadet that is designed to develop the skills necessary to meet standards, inspect to the standard, and maintain discipline within the organization.

Education – prepare for the future unknown

The function of education... is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically.⁸

Virginia Tech is a world-class, tier-one research institution. The educational opportunities related to a cadet's chosen major are instrumental to their future success – mentally, morally, physically, and spiritually.

To be successful in what they have chosen to do, one of the primary purposes of every cadet's attendance at Virginia Tech is to obtain an undergraduate degree. In many cases, a cadet's personal goals may depend not on the degree alone but on the grade point average (GPA). As such, special emphasis is placed on a cadet's academic performance.

⁸ Martin Luther King, "The Purpose of Education," Morehouse College, 1948

The Corps of Cadets plays a critical role in a cadet's academic success by ensuring an environment conducive to that success. Cadet activities are scheduled with consideration of cadet academic schedules. Attending classes and other scheduled academic activities takes priority over Corps activities to the maximum extent practical. Additionally, dedicated study time and residence hall quiet hours are enforced each school-day evening in the form of Evening Call to Quarters (ECQ). During ECQ cadets are afforded maximum opportunities to conduct their studies in an academically conducive environment with limited distractions.

While a cadet's major prepares them for graduation with a degree, cadets take classes designed to expand their understanding of leadership. The ROTC leader development program provides service-specific leadership education which the Corps enhances with Corps Leadership Courses, accredited through the Pamplin College of Business Management Department, aimed to expand critical thinking and creative problem-solving in leadership roles. Corps Leadership Courses are mandatory for First-year and Sophomore cadets, and offered for Junior and Senior cadets wishing to further pursue their leadership education.⁹

⁹ Further details on the VTCC Leader Development Plan Training Pillars, broken down by class, training phase, and LDP line of effort can be found in the unabridged Leader Development Plan on the VTCC Resources webpage.

LEADERSHIP FIRST

**WHEN PEOPLE FEEL SAFE
ENOUGH TO RAISE THEIR HANDS
AND SAY, "I MADE A MISTAKE"
OR "I NEED SOME HELP." THE
LEADER HAS CREATED AN
ENVIRONMENT WHERE PEOPLE
FEEL SAFE TO BE THEMSELVES.**

SIMON SINEK