

**Marine Corps War College**  
*Leadership and Ethics*

**Leadership and Ethics: Course Overview**

*Men make history and not the other way around. In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress occurs when courageous, skillful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better.*

President Harry S. Truman

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** The Marine Corps War College faculty recognizes your status as a mature, experienced professional. The fact you are here strongly suggests that you already know much about the subject of leadership and ethics, have excelled as a leader at the tactical and possibly operational levels, and have the potential to rise to senior leadership positions. This course is an opportunity for you to take the competencies you already have and examine them in light of the new roles and responsibilities you will encounter in future assignments. It asks you to think deeply about strategic leadership – leadership in the complex and uncertain interagency, joint and international environments. It also asks you to think about developing new skills in addition to those you already possess in order to thrive in the complicated strategic environment where there are often no right answers, only difficult decisions.

Leaders at the strategic level are a diverse breed, but share many successful traits. Among these, we emphasize: 1. strategic perception, 2. critical thinking, 3. effective advocacy, and 4. the ability to operate in ambiguity. The Leadership and Ethics (L&E) Course provides the student tools he or she will use in the other courses within in the MCWAR curriculum and throughout a career. Linkages among the many courses are deliberately developed and designed to challenge students “at the next level.” Make no mistake – as a Senior War College graduate you will soon find yourself assisting a senior leader making strategic decisions. Study of critical thinking and historical decisions, for example, will improve the quality of your advice and your actions when you become a strategic leader.

**LEADERSHIP AND ETHICS LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Each lesson will contribute to the students achieving the following Learning Outcomes:

1. Evaluate effective strategic leadership.
2. Assess the ethical and moral dilemmas strategic leaders face.
3. Evaluate the impact of legal and ethical considerations associated with the use of military force in a complex and dynamic security environment.

**TEACHING METHODOLOGY:**

1. **Overview.** The L&E curriculum is designed to expand on the solid leadership experience and education of War College-level students by blending the study of theory with discussions with senior military and civilian practitioners of strategic leadership. The course is organized conceptually into three blocks: (1) Thinking, (2) Ethics and (3) Leadership. The blocks intertwine to provide the students with a broad understanding of leadership at the strategic level.

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The L&E course begins with the Thinking block where we will seek to improve our critical and creative thinking. After the Thinking Block, we will move into the Ethics Block where we will explore the profession of arms, ethical decision-making and the impact of command climate at the operational and strategic level. The Leadership Block will run concurrently with the other blocks and primarily consists of discussions with senior leaders. The Executive Assessment and Development Program (EADP) is a key component of the Leadership Block and will begin in the fall (see lesson card 8521 for more information). The Strategic Negotiation Exercise is an L&E lesson that also supports the Diplomacy and Statecraft learning objectives.

**2. Lesson Sequence.** Potentially, topics are subject to change due to guest speaker availability and current events. Although these changes will be flagged, it is the students' responsibility to regularly check the MCWAR calendar for updates.

<b>LEADERSHIP AND ETHICS LIST OF CLASSES</b>	
8502	Human Dimension of War
8503	Critical Thinking
8504	Leadership and High Command
8505	Introduction to Systems Theory
8506	Meta Cognition
8507	Thinking, Ethical Blind Spots, and Atrocities
8508	Profession of Arms and Ethics
8509	Ethical Use of Military Force
8511	Ethical Challenges for Strategic Leaders in the Profession of Arms
8515	Introduction to Strategic Negotiations
8516	Perspectives on Leadership
8517	Strategic Negotiations: Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands Practical Application
8519	Creative Thinking
8520	Ethics of Strategy: Holocaust Museum Field Study
8521	Executive Assessment and Development Program (EADP)
8522	Recognize Change and Lead Transition (Next Jump Academy Field Study)
8523	Law of Armed Conflict
<b>Assessments</b>	
8599A	Leadership and Ethics Fall Assessment
8599B	Leadership and Ethics Spring Assessment

**3. Summary Course Hours.** All hours are approximate and subject to change. See individual lesson cards for specific hours.

Lecture	Seminar	Practical Application	Field Study	Exam	PSPT	Total
1.50	41	15.5	7		117	182

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**ASSESSMENT MEASURES:** Student grades will be calculated as follows:

- Fall Student Seminar Contribution and Discussion Boards<sup>1</sup> (20%)
- Spring Student Seminar Contribution and Discussion Boards<sup>2</sup> (20%)
- Strategic Leadership Paper<sup>3</sup> (25%)
- Ethics Essay<sup>4</sup> (35%)

**STUDENT COURSE EVALUATION:** This program is very attentive to what many educators call “Institutional Effectiveness” – that is, how well we achieve our objectives. Critiques enable students to register views on the methodology for each segment of the course. All participants are required to contribute their constructive criticism and their suggestions for improvements. Surveys are electronically tallied, studied by faculty and members engaged in courseware revision, and eventually archived for use in future institutional research.

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<sup>1</sup> In seminar contributions, quality is of greater importance than quantity; likewise, sustained contribution is more important than sporadic involvement.

<sup>2</sup> In seminar contributions, quality is of greater importance than quantity; likewise, sustained contribution is more important than sporadic involvement.

<sup>3</sup> Each student will complete a 4-6 page paper on a leadership topic due in October.

<sup>4</sup> Each student will complete a 3-5 page paper on an ethics topic due in January.