

Air University

Executive Summary of the Quality Enhancement Plan 2019-2024

Leadership and Ethics across the Continuum of Learning

The Air University and the Air Force have highlighted the need to enhance and reinvigorate the development of leaders in the Profession of Arms. As “The Intellectual and Leadership Center of the Air Force,” Air University is uniquely positioned to evaluate existing Air Force Leadership Development and to develop enhancements to leadership development. Air University can place the realities of modern warfare in the context of deliberate leadership development to prepare the leaders of today for the world of tomorrow. Air University has elected to approach the formation of a Quality Enhancement Plan as the first step in a long-term commitment to support the enhanced development of leadership at all Air Force levels.

Air University’s Quality Enhancement Plan focuses on the development of a sound conceptual and theoretical basis for the development of leadership. Informed by an intensive leadership and ethics literature review, Air University has developed a conceptual QEP framework to integrate the intersection of ethical and strategic leadership. The framework is designed to create a deliberate and comprehensive leadership development program for the University and the Air Force. The framework focuses on three specific strategic capacities that are foundational traits and skills necessary to create leaders who understand and display ethical leadership within the demanding Air Force mission. These capacities—absorptive, adaptive and decision-making—can be structured for the continuum of learning elements of training, education, and experience. The QEP framework will focus on the ethical and strategic leadership development of Air Force leaders in the context of individual/self, team/group, and organization/enterprise.

The QEP will consist of elements to support student learning, faculty development and the development of subject matter expertise. The first key element is the engagement of faculty and curriculum developers to enhance expand or add courses, curriculum elements and instructional practices in leadership, leader development and ethics. A second key element is the development of case studies and a database to provide tools to capture the complexity of a case for assessment, analysis and evaluation. The third key element is the creation of an annual forum for theorists, researchers and practitioners in leadership and ethics.

Leadership development is a University-wide endeavor across all centers, schools and major programs. In the first year of QEP implementation, the QEP Director will establish both a standing working group and advisory board with representatives from the major centers, schools and programs. In order to develop curriculum that facilitates the development of leadership competencies for each Air University student, the QEP begins by creating a baseline of existing knowledge of Air University students and over the five years of the QEP, will facilitate the design of curriculum appropriate at each level of an Airman’s education. At the end of the QEP, the University will determine if and how the ethics and leadership curriculum impacted the overall state of the Air Force.

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