



# National Fire Academy

**R05201 – Exercise of Executive Leadership: Self  
Version: May 2024**

**ACE Credit: In the graduate degree category, 3 semester hours in leadership.**

**Length of Course: 9 Days (71 hr., 50 min., Monday – Friday; Monday – Thursday)**

**Curriculum: Executive Fire Officer Program  
Training Specialist: Ed Kensler**

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## Course Description (Catalog)

This course is the first of four residential experiences in the Executive Fire Officer (EFO) Program. It provides the EFO with an immersive, educational experience that focuses on an introduction to the program and key concepts. This component provides learning and practice opportunities that foster the exploration of personal leadership philosophy, life-work balance, theoretical aspects of leadership, and the value of ethics and integrity. This course introduces research practices and communication skills amidst leadership challenges.

The purpose of “Exercising Executive Leadership: Self” (R5201) is to create a learning environment that allows students to deeply explore their personal adaptive challenges associated with striving for a life/work balance and opportunities to effectively exercise leadership for others and community. The executive will develop personal insights and competencies that support the exercise of leadership for self, organization, and communities. Academically, the executives will perform at a graduate level of education.

Students will receive pre-coursework approximately 8 weeks prior to the resident course to complete extensive required reading and two pre-course assignments.

## **Required Textbooks**

The EFO Program requires use of the textbooks throughout the program to ensure continuity and academic rigor. Students are expected to purchase either electronic or bound copies of the texts below.

- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (5th ed)*. SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Heifetz, R., Grashow A., & Linsky, M., (2009). *The practice of adaptive leadership: Tools and tactics for changing your organization and the world*. Harvard Business Review Press.
- Heifetz, R., & Linsky, M., (2017). *Leadership on the line: Staying alive through the dangers of change*. Harvard Business Review Press. (If you've already purchased the 2002 version you may use that.)
- Northouse, P. G. (2021). *Leadership: Theory and Practice (8th ed.)* SAGE Publications Inc.
- American Psychological Association (2020). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association: The Official Guide to APA Style, (7th Edition)*.

Students are expected to complete the following required reading prior to arriving for the resident portion of "Exercise of Executive Leadership: Organization" (R5202):

- Leadership on the Line (2017)
- The Practice of Adaptive Leadership (2009)
- Leadership: Theory and Practice (2021)

## **Student Qualifications**

Students must be formally accepted into the EFO Program to attend this course.

## **Course Scope (Goal)**

The goal of all the EFO Program courses is to provide cohesive and unique approaches to create a rich and substantive executive learning experience. Thematic threads of terminology and thought applied throughout the curriculum include:

- ethics and integrity
- strategic thinking
- integrated planning and execution
- political acuity
- inclusive community
- equity and diversity
- change/adaptability
- development of others and self
- creativity and innovation

## **Course Objectives (Course Learning Outcomes – TLOs)**

After successfully completing this course, students will be empowered to accomplish the following:

- Integrate life events and personal leadership motto within the context of personal and professional growth.
- Formulate leadership lessons observed during application of the adaptive leadership case consult methodology.
- Create a learning environment which incorporates an adaptive leadership holding environment through use of balancing inquiry with advocacy.
- Construct strategies for successful life/work balance.
- Hypothesize the concepts of leadership as a science and leadership as an art.
- Create and present a synopsis of assigned elements of the adaptive leadership framework.
- Create a personal leadership Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats, Trends (SWOTT) analysis as part of a Personal Development Plan (PDP).
- Conduct scholarly research in a digital platform.
- Express the elements of ethical and moral awareness, decision-making, intent, and action within leadership challenges.
- Distinguish the skills and techniques associated with influence from those associated with persuasion.
- Formulate a strategic approach to transitioning from leadership for self to leading others.

## Course Delivery Method

This course is designed to meet the American Council on Education (ACE) standards for graduate-level credit recommendation so that EFO Program students potentially qualify for credit at colleges and universities.

This is a 9-day resident course with substantial pre-course reading and writing. These activities serve as assessment tools for students who may have been out of academia for a significant period of time. These tools provide new students writing and critical thinking feedback before they submit graded assignments- to position students for success.

Learning methodologies employed throughout the resident course include:

**Socratic methodology:** Through contributions to deep inquiry, students will gain understanding and draw on underlying assumptions. This method of dialogue allows for deeper learning. This will be heavily applied and graded throughout the resident portion of this course. Students are expected to keep an open mind throughout class, to seek and gain deeper understanding of concepts through thoughtful dialogue.

**Professional writing:** Students will prepare written work that demonstrates critical thinking related to the subject matter and conforms to accepted academic standards for professional papers. Assessment tools culminate in one final paper that must reflect original work and give appropriate credit through citations for ideas belonging to the author, and other authors, publications, or organizations. All written work is expected to be free of grammatical and syntax errors and should adhere to the style guidelines in the American Psychological Association's (APA) *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association: The Official Guide to APA Style* (7th ed., 2020).

**Professional speaking:** Students present to the class numerous times during the resident experience and will practice how to comport themselves to establish trust and build partnerships. This skill is essential to effect change as an executive officer and recognized community champion.

**Personal journaling:** Journaling will be used as a means of reflection. Students will use a provided bound journal or an electronic equivalent in which to record private thoughts. Students will receive and respond to journal prompts throughout the program to maximize this unique and powerful leadership development tool. Students will maintain control of the journal throughout the program and are not required to share those thoughts and entries.

## Course Schedule

The purpose of the course schedule is to give you, at a glance, the required preparation, activities, and evaluation components of your course. Lunch breaks are one hour. The schedule is only subject to modification by the instructors when approved by the training specialist. Unit blocking within days and times is approximate and subject to change based on individual course delivery needs. Evening sessions may be required as determined by the course facilitators.

TIME	DAY 1	DAY 2
AM	Unit 1: Introduction to Exercising Leadership: Self	Unit 2: Adaptive Case Consults
	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
PM	Unit 1: Introduction to Exercising Leadership: Self (cont'd)  Unit 5: The Art and Science of Leadership*  Unit 6: The Adaptive Leadership Framework**	Unit 3: Creating a Leadership Learning Environment

\*Unit 5 preparation: On day 1, students shall be put into groups and assigned a topic(s). Each group is to prepare an interactive 30-minute instructional activity on the assigned topic(s) that will be present on day 5. Preparation for the activity will be completed outside the normal daily class hours.

\*\*Unit 6 as listed is for the demonstration of the Adaptive Case Consult. The balance of Unit 6 (6 hours 30 minutes) is allotted for the executives' case consults which are conducted outside the normal daily class hours. Executives will self-schedule these sessions with all sessions to be completed by Day 8.

<b>TIME</b>	<b>DAY 3</b>	<b>DAY 4</b>
AM	Unit 3: Creating a Leadership Learning Environment (cont'd)	Unit 4: Getting to Know Self: Life/Work Balance (cont'd)
	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
PM	Unit 3: Creating a Leadership Learning Environment (cont'd) Unit 4: Getting to Know Self: Life/Work Balance	Unit 4: Getting to Know Self: Life/Work Balance (cont'd)
	Adaptive Case Consults	Adaptive Case Consults

\*Students are expected to work on adaptive case consults in the evening, outside of class.

<b>TIME</b>	<b>DAY 5</b>	<b>DAY 6</b>
AM	Unit 5: The Art and Science of Leadership	Unit 7: Personal Leadership Behaviors: Influence and Perspectives
	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
PM	Unit 5: The Art and Science of Leadership (cont'd)	Unit 7: Personal Leadership Behaviors: Influence and Perspectives (cont'd)
	Adaptive Case Consults	Adaptive Case Consults

<b>TIME</b>	<b>DAY 7</b>	<b>DAY 8</b>
AM	Unit 8: The Scholarly Application of Research	Unit 9: Leading Self Ethically
	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
PM	Unit 8: The Scholarly Application of Research (cont'd)	Unit 10: Influence and Persuasion
	Adaptive Case Consults	Adaptive Case Consults

<b>TIME</b>	<b>DAY 9</b>
AM	Unit 11: Transitioning from Personal Leadership to Leading Others
	<i>Lunch</i>
PM	Unit 11: Transitioning from Personal Leadership to Leading Others (cont'd)

## **Course Resources (Instructional Materials)**

Students should bring a copy or have electronic access to *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (Northhouse, 2021), *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership* (Heifetz et al., 2009) and *Leadership on the line: Staying alive through the dangers of change* (Heifetz et al., 2017) for the resident portion of class.

Students are provided instructor bios and a student manual prior to arrival.

## **Assessment and Grading**

A comprehensive assessment of the individual executive's demonstration of knowledge related to achieving the course terminal objectives. Students are encouraged to thoroughly review the assessment tools and associated rubrics prior to course start and seek clarification as needed.

There are eleven total assessments within this course:

- Individual. There are ten written essay assignments. Each assignment contains a specific evaluation rubric to communicate performance expectations. Individual essays will be compiled into a final course submission that will be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. 10 days after the course conclusion.
- Group. Assessment Tool 5 is a small group presentation that will be presented and evaluated on Day 5 of the course.

Executives are encouraged to journal and take notes throughout the course to assist with written assignments. Work may begin on individual assignments as soon as the relevant course content is covered.

## **Final Course Submission**

Essays will be collated into a final course submission. This paper should include:

- name of course
- title of paper
- name
- date of submission
- authenticity statement

The final course submission should be formatted using the 7th edition of the *APA Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association: The Official Guide to APA Style*, as a style guide



All of the summative and formative activities are intended to evolve and measure the executive's analysis of complex, nuanced issues and challenges and to provide academic writing experience and feedback. These activities require reference to assigned readings as well as independent research.

A minimum score of 80% is required for successful completion of this course. The total course score is derived from the following assignments:

<b>Assessment Tool</b>	<b>Points Possible</b>	<b>Percent of Final Grade</b>
1	100	9.09
2	100	9.09
3	100	9.09
4	100	9.09
5	100	9.09
6	100	9.09
7	100	9.09
8	100	9.09
9	100	9.09
10	100	9.09
11	100	9.09
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1100</b>	<b>100%</b>

Rubrics are provided prior to course start.

### **Academic Honesty**

Students are expected to exhibit exemplary ethical behavior and conduct as part of the NFA community and society as a whole. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, deliberate falsification, and other unethical behaviors.

Students are expected to report academic misconduct when they witness a violation. The instructor shall report all cases of academic misconduct to the Training Specialist.

If a student is found to have engaged in misconduct and the allegations are upheld, the penalties may include, but are not limited to one or a combination of the following:

1. Expulsion.
2. Withholding of stipend or forfeiture of stipend paid.
3. Exclusion from future classes for a specified period; it could range from one to 10 years, depending on the severity.
4. Forfeiture of certificate for course(s) enrolled in at National Emergency Training Center (NETC).

Refer to NFA-specific Standard Operating Procedure 700.1, Conduct on the NETC Campus at [https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/nfa/nfa\\_policies.pdf](https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/nfa/nfa_policies.pdf) for more information.

## Course Outline

### Unit 1: Introduction to Exercising Leadership: Self (Day 1)

TO 1	The executive officer will be able to integrate life events and personal leadership motto within the context of personal and professional growth.	Evaluated Assessment 1
EO 1	Construct significant life events from childhood, teen years, and adulthood as influences on an aspired state.	Activity 1.1
EO 2	Create a personal leadership motto.	Activity 1.2

### Unit 2: Adaptive Case Consults (Day 2)

TO 1	The executive officer will be able to formulate leadership lessons observed during application of the adaptive leadership case consult methodology.	Evaluated Assessment 6
EO 1	Summarize an adaptive leadership challenge currently being experienced.	Pre-course Activity
EO 2	Express to a peer group an existing adaptive leadership challenge using the case consult model.	Activity 2.1

### Unit 3: Creating a Leadership Learning Environment (Day 2)

TO 1	The executive officer will be able to create a learning environment which incorporates an adaptive leadership holding environment through use of balancing inquiry with advocacy.	Evaluated Assessment 2
EO 1	Compare and contrast philosophical and theoretical approaches to learning.	Class Exercise/Dialogue
EO 2	Differentiate between critical thinking and thinking critically.	Class Dialogue
EO 3	Categorize elements of a holding environment for use in periods of disequilibrium.	Class Dialogue
EO 4	Hypothesize the meaning of leadership within the learning environment.	Activity 2.1

### Unit 4: Getting to Know Self: Life/Work Balance (Day 3)

TO 1	The executive officer will be able to construct strategies for successful life/work balance.	Capstone Essay
EO 1	Compare the differences between role and self.	Group Dialogue
EO 2	Assess personal values and compose an overview of core beliefs.	Activity 3.1
EO 3	Assess personal life/work balance in the context of strategies for overcoming disequilibrium.	Activity 3.2
EO 4	Propose health and wellness strategies for sustaining a successful life/work balance.	Activity 3.3
EO 5	Facilitate a reflective dialogue of constructive feedback on a colleague's Personal Development Plan (PDP).	Activity 3.4

### Unit 5: The Art and Science of Leadership (Day 5)

TO 1	The executive officer will be able to hypothesize the concepts of leadership as a science and leadership as an art.	Evaluated Assessment 4
EO 1	Analyze common traits exhibited by successful executive leaders, given case studies.	Activities 4.1 and 4.2
EO 2	Evaluate personal leadership challenges in the perspective of common executive leadership traits.	Activity 4.2
EO 3	Evaluate leadership approaches, traits, and application to personal philosophy of leadership, given case studies.	Activities 4.3 and 4.4
EO 4	Evaluate the elements of leadership as an art or as a science within the context of adaptive challenges.	Activity 4.5

### Unit 6: The Adaptive Leadership Framework (Day 1)

TO 1	The executive officer will be able to create and present a synopsis of assigned elements of the adaptive leadership framework.	Evaluated Assessment 5
EO 1	Analyze the adaptive leadership framework.	Activity 5.1
EO 2	Summarize key elements of the exercise of adaptive leadership.	Activity 5.1

### Unit 7: Personal Leadership Behaviors: Influence and Perspectives (Day 6)

TO 1	The executive officer will be able to create a personal leadership Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats, Trends (SWOTT) analysis as part of a Personal Development Plan (PDP).	Evaluated Assessment 7
EO 1	Evaluate personal biases for strategies to suspend judgment.	Activity 7.1
EO 2	Assess personal traits of leadership.	Activity 7.2
EO 3	Compare and contrast fixed versus growth mindsets in relationship to personal leadership.	Activity 7.3
EO 4	Assess personal behaviors related to concepts of emotional intelligence (EI).	Activity 7.4
EO 5	Rate their personal level of risk tolerance.	Activity 7.5
EO 6	Reframe concepts of vulnerability in context of self-leadership.	Large Group Dialogue
EO 7	Assess personal levels of resilience through HardiAttitudes.	Activity 7.6
EO 8	Conduct an initial personal leadership SWOTT analysis.	Activity 7.7

### Unit 8: The Scholarly Application of Research (Day 7)

TO 1	The executive officer will be able to conduct scholarly research in a digital platform.	Evaluated Assessment 8
EO 1	Describe the components and requirements for the Executive Fire Officer (EFO) Program Applied Research Project (ARP).	Activity 8.1
EO 2	Differentiate between general research and scholarly research.	Activity 8.3
EO 3	Conduct searches on full-text scholarly databases, given a topic.	Library Orientation
EO 4	Conduct searches using the NETC Library's online library catalog, given a topic.	Library Orientation

### Unit 9: Leading Self Ethically (Day 8)

TO 1	The executive officer will be able to express the elements of ethical and moral awareness, decision-making, intent, and action within leadership challenges.	Course Capstone Project
EO 1	Infer the meaning of ethics, morals, moral reasoning, bounded ethicality, and principles.	Large Group Dialogue
EO 2	Deduce levels of moral development.	Activity 9.1
EO 3	Justify decisions made by the actors in the case, given case studies.	Personal Assessment (ELSQ)
EO 4	Compare personal results of the Ethical Leadership Style Questionnaire (ELSQ) to defined ethical perspective.	Activity 9.2
EO 5	Examine components that may permit or prevent the dark side of leadership.	Video Analysis/ Large Group Dialogue
EO 6	Weigh the constructs of moral awareness, decision-making, intent, and action in the exercise of leadership.	Activity 9.3

### Unit 10: Influence and Persuasion (Day 8)

TO 1	The executive officer will be able to distinguish the skills and techniques associated with influence from those associated with persuasion.	Evaluated Assessment 10
EO 1	Analyze the use of influence.	Activity 10.1
EO 2	Describe the four components of a successful persuasion approach.	Activity 10.1
EO 3	Analyze the effective application of the four key components to situations where persuasion is critical to leading effectively.	Activity 10.1

### Unit 11: Transitioning from Personal Leadership to Leading Others (Day 9)

TO 1	The executive officer will be able to formulate a strategic approach to transitioning from leadership for self to leading others.	Evaluated Assessment 11
EO 1	Analyze the challenges and risks associated with transitioning from leading self to the exercise of leadership for others.	Activity 11.1
EO 2	Compile concerns and fears associated with the dangers of leading others.	Activity 11.1
EO 3	Assess concepts and theory of servant leadership.	Activity 11.2
EO 4	Consider concepts of seismic shifts in transitioning to the exercise of executive leadership.	Activity 11.3
EO 5	Collaborate with colleagues to establish means to weather the storms associated with the exercise of leadership.	Activity 11.4

## **Policies**

Specific Standard Operating Policies (SOPs) pertaining to the NFA may be reviewed at [NFA-Specific SOPs \(fema.gov\)](https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/nfa/nfa-specific-sops.pdf).

### **Class Attendance and Cancellation Policy**

#### **Attendance**

- You are required to attend all sessions of the course.
- If a student needs to depart campus early and miss any portion of the course and/or graduation, they must submit a written request to the NFA training specialist. The training specialist, in collaboration with the superintendent, may waive the attendance requirement in order to accommodate extraordinary circumstances. If all course requirements are met and a student is approved to depart early, they are required to forward the approval to the Admissions Office to ensure the travel stipend is not jeopardized.

#### **Cancellations or No-Shows**

EFO Program students are expected to notify the program administrator in advance if they cannot attend a course or risk being withdrawn from the program.

#### **Course Failure**

Students who receive a final grade below 80% will fail this course and must retake the course to remain in the program.

#### **Student Code of Conduct Policy**

Students, facilitators and staff are expected to treat each other with respect at all times. Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and may result in removal from campus and denial of stipends. Students are to familiarize themselves with the following FEMA Policy and Directive.

[FEMA Educational and Training Participant Standards of Conduct \(FEMA Policy 123-0-2\)](https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/nfa/fema-policy-123-0-2.pdf) <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/nfa/fema-policy-123-0-2.pdf>

[Personnel Standards of Conduct \(FEMA Directive 123-0-2-1\)](https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/nfa/fema-directive-123-0-2-1.pdf)  
<https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/nfa/fema-directive-123-0-2-1.pdf>

## **Writing Expectations**

Student writing will conform to the generally accepted academic standards for college papers. Papers will reflect the original work of the student and give appropriate credit through citations for ideas belonging to other authors, publications or organizations. Student written work should be free of grammatical and syntax errors, free of profanity or obscene language or ideas, and reflect critical thinking related to the course subject matter. The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition) (APA) will serve as the style guide for all writings.

## **Citation and Reference Style**

Students will follow the APA, 7th edition, as the sole citation and reference style used in written work submitted as part of coursework to NFA. Assignments completed in a narrative essay, composition format, abstract, and discussion posts must follow the citation style cited in the APA, 7th edition.

## **Late Assignments**

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments on time and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As executive officers, students are expected to adequately manage their time for pre-coursework, resident coursework, and final paper submission. Any paper submitted after the deadline will receive a "0" grade for that assignment.