

VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE
Lexington, Virginia

GENERAL ORDER)
NUMBER 87)

5 January 2024

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The following policy governs the eligibility, nomination for, and participation in VMI-sponsored professional development opportunities.

1. **PURPOSE.** The Institute continues to challenge itself to run an unsurpassed leadership development program. Besides the Corps of Cadets, this program applies to members of the Institute staff, faculty, and classified workforce. The Institute, its departments and directorates, and each individual employee share responsibility for professional development. By design the program will reinforce VMI culture; provide attendees with enhanced self-awareness; teach some base-line leadership skills common to both staff and faculty; and offer repetitive opportunities for critical thinking/reflection. The program provides commonality of purpose and will help grow a bench of capable staff and academic leaders for the Institute.
2. **ELIGIBILITY.** All full-time VMI employees are eligible for participation in the various programs included in this policy, to include the Alumni Agency. The specific target audience will be established in the program tiered overview.
3. **OVERVIEW.** VMI will execute a tiered progressive professional development program for staff (AP), faculty (TR), and classified employees. The program will consist of three parts: an Institute-dictated core program, departmental and directorate directed opportunities, and individual self-study.
 - a. **Institute-directed Core Program(s):**
 - i. **Tier 1:**
 1. **Newcomers Orientation and Briefings.** All newly hired VMI employees are required to attend the appropriate new employee orientation sessions. There are two Newcomer Orientations; one for AP/TR members and one for classified employees. The program assists new members in acculturating and assimilating into the VMI culture. The orientation provides an overview of VMI history and traditions, key organization processes, an overview of cadet life, the cadet honor system, wearing of the VMI uniform, military customs and courtesies, and a chance to network with VMI community members. Departments will conduct additional briefings with specific organizational requirements to supplement the Newcomers' Orientations.
 2. **Lean Forward: Accelerating Personal and Professional Growth** delivers basic knowledge of key interpersonal skills fundamental to personal and career growth.

These skills serve as a foundation for quality interactions with cadets, peers, and supervisors in and out of the classroom/workplace. The target audience is all newly hired faculty (TR) and uniformed staff (AP). Note: This program is offered in conjunction with the Newcomers' Orientation.

3. **Supervisor Training** is designed to provide first-line and mid-level supervisors with improved interpersonal and managerial skills to lead teams and small groups at VMI. This opportunity is open to AP and classified personnel.

- ii. **Tier 2: Emerging Leaders Course** is designed to build a bench of mid-grade leaders within each academic and administrative department. The program focuses upon key leader and follower skills that will enhance each participants effectiveness in leading committees or executing departmental duties. Throughout the course, participants will gain greater self-awareness, refine their abilities to influence other people, and understand VMI's key systems. The target audience for this course are the teaching faculty and administrative /professional staff with 6+ years of experience at VMI who are nominated by their respective department head and approved by their respective Institute Executive Committee leadership.

- iii. **Tier 3: Marshall Leaders Seminars** is designed for new Department Heads or Administrative Directors to provide more in-depth discussion of VMI systems, processes, strategic planning, and the leadership skills needed to administer and lead departments/staff directorates. This program is individually tailored for each participant. The Center's Director will assist and coach participants in this program. Note: This program may include off-Post executive leadership opportunities to supplement these seminars.

- iv. **Department and Directorate – Directed Opportunities.** These developmental opportunities support members specialized skills, leader, and educational advancement in support of the Department's/Directorate's mission. Center provided training includes:
 1. **Train-the-Trainer Certification.** This program is designed to improve the VMI community by building trainers across the organization that will be able to train other employees in their respective departments. This opportunity is open to any VMI employee.

 2. **Beyond the Walls – Lunch and Learn Seminars.** This program is designed to move training to the department spaces that request the training. The focus of the desired seminars are interpersonal and managerial skills to lead teams and small groups at VMI. This opportunity can be requested by any department.

- v. **Individual Self-Development** refers to an individual's efforts to add to his/her duty related expertise. These activities include but are not limited to professional reading programs; attendance at conferences symposiums, or skills training sessions related to his/her VMI duties, and continuing education classes.

4. ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROGRAM

a. General Responsibilities:

- i. The Institute's Senior Executives (Deputy Dean for Academics and Dean of the Faculty; Deputy Superintendent Finance and Support; Commandant of the Corps of Cadets; Chief of Staff; Director of Athletics and Chief Information Officer) are responsible for the professional development of their respective staff members. Senior executives will review and approve their subordinate departments' professional development plans for their employees. They are the approving authority for departmental nominees to attend the Institute's core professional development.
- ii. The Superintendent has designated the Executive Director, Center for Leadership and Ethics (CLE) as the action agent for coordinating and conducting the Core Professional Development program.
- iii. Departments and Directorates are responsible for developing professional development plans for their organizations in accordance with the appropriate VMI Handbook (AP, Faculty, Classified). Department Heads and directors will brief their plans to their respective Senior Executive on an annual basis. They will also consider and include professional development accomplishments in annual efficiency ratings for their individual employees.
- iv. Individual employees are responsible for identifying any efforts to add to their duty related expertise. Employees should discuss their self-development needs and plans with their supervisor. The appropriate Department Heads will consider individual professional needs and assist where possible with appropriate resources and time. Specific guidance for Educational Assistance is covered in GO #74.
- v. Departmental heads / supervisors interested in the CLE programs Beyond the Walls: Lunch and Learn or Train-the-Trainer certifications should contact the Center at least two weeks in advance of the desired training to request and schedule the training.

b. Specific Responsibilities:

i. Deputy Superintendent for Academics / Dean of Faculty

- 1. Appoint members to the Newcomers' Orientation Committee, which is responsible for planning, coordinating, and conducting the AP/TR Orientation program.

2. Review and approve faculty members nominated for core professional development and external development opportunities recommended by academic departments.
 3. Provide requested subject matter experts/facilitators as requested by the Center.
- ii. Deputy Superintendent for Finance, and Support.**
1. Oversee and approve budget requests to fund the core professional development program.
 2. Provide requested subject matter experts/facilitators as requested by the Center.
- iii. Chief of Staff**
1. Oversee the attendance of staff members at the core professional development program; update the Superintendent.
 2. Serve as a subject matter expert and provide insights to selected courses as requested by the Executive Director of the Center.
 3. Ensure the Human Resources Department tracks attendance in professional development programs across the Institute and places certificates of completion are placed in the respective employee's personal files.
- iv. Executive Director, Center for Leadership and Ethics.**
1. Plan, coordinate and conduct VMI's core professional development program (Tier's 1-3).
 2. Ensure the schedule for all course offerings is coordinated through the Assistant Superintendent of Operations and Planning and is published on the Institute and Academic calendars. Brief the Institute Policy Committee and Academic Board on class schedules as requested.
 3. Provide Human Resources certificate of achievement/accomplishment upon completion of programs for inclusion in employee personnel file.
- c. Coordinating Instructions**
- i.** Tier 1 Supervisor Training is traditionally held off-site during summer furlough. Senior Executives will identify, select, and inform the attendees and the Center by April.

- ii.** Annex A describes the process/timeline for identifying attendees for Emerging Leaders training program.
- iii.** Professional development accomplishments will be noted on annual performance evaluations, and copies of course completion documentation will be provided to the Human Resource Office for inclusion in an individual's personnel file. Completion of Emerging Leaders should be considered when selecting staff and faculty for leadership positions on committees and within departments.
- iv.** Once enrolled in a course, it is an employee's responsibility to attend the directed training. The training is the employee's required place of duty until the completion of the training.

FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT:

John M. Young
Colonel, Virginia Militia
Chief of Staff

Annex A: Core Professional Development Process Timeline / Steps

1. Identify nominees:
 - a. What: Senior Executives coordinate with their respective departments to nominate attendees for the next Academic Years Emerging Leader Program.
 - b. When: December, prior to Christmas Furlough

2. Attendees selected:
 - a. What: Senior Executives select and notify attendees, Department Heads and Executive Director CLE.
 - b. When: February (Before the Registrar solidifies the Fall teaching schedule)

3. Attendees educated
 - a. What: Executive Director, CLE provides attendees with syllabus to include training dates, times and location.
 - b. When: August of new AY.

4. Attendees recognized
 - a. What: Executive Director, CLE notifies Human Resources of attendees' completion of professional development
 - b. When: April, following the last Emerging Leader session.