

Unit Commanders Course

Director/Instructor Guide

Director Preface

Thank you for taking part in the Civil Air Patrol Unit Commanders Course. Whether you are directing the school or are teaching a segment, you are helping to develop CAP's leadership for tomorrow. Your time and effort will be rewarded when your students assume positions of responsibility - and eventually command - of their units.

Philosophy

This course is designed to give new and potential unit commanders the *skills* needed to be effective as leaders of their units. There isn't a great deal of time spent describing the different staff positions within a unit, nor does the course seek to make the commander an expert in all squadron staff functions. In depth descriptions of the different staff positions are provided both in the Squadron Leadership School and in CAPM 20-1, *CAP Organization*. While the course will briefly touch on staff areas, the focus will be on what staff officers can provide for the commander and what the commander needs to do to support them.

This school will endeavor to show students specific areas which require command emphasis, to provide basic management skills, and to show command relationships which take place both vertically and laterally. Students will learn about processes to solve problems, save time, and keep the focus on the mission.

Participant and Course Requirements

Student Requirements

As outlined in CAPR 50-17, *Senior Member Training Program*, enrollment in CAP senior activities is on a voluntary basis. To apply, Commanders' Course applicants must forward a CAP Form 17, *Application for Senior Member Activities* through their unit commander to the course director. The senior member must have completed Level I, be currently enrolled in one or more specialty tracks with at least a Technician level, and have previously completed a Squadron Leadership School. ECI-13, *CAP Senior Officer Course* completion is preferred, though not mandatory.

The Unit Commanders Course Director

The success of the Unit Commanders Course depends in large part on its director. The director has the responsibility for selecting and supervising highly qualified and efficient staff members who will perform their duties in a professional manner. The director cannot personally accomplish every detail of the Commanders' Course and must delegate duties whenever possible and follow up to ensure responsibilities or duties are accomplished.

The director also has the responsibility for selecting safe, suitable, and appropriate facilities and accommodations. The right location and facility will encourage participation in this event and can make the event more meaningful and enjoyable for members who attend.

The following list describes the responsibilities of the UCC director:

- ✓ Select an assistant director to deal with "housekeeping" details. The director's responsibility is to monitor the overall quality of the course.

- ✓ Ensure staff members are prepared and proficient in presentation of assigned material.
- ✓ Monitor the flow of events during both the planning and execution phase.
- ✓ Keep the instructors on schedule according to the curriculum.
- ✓ Maintain clear and accurate financial records of the UCC.
- ✓ Submit closing reports, critiques, and financial accounting within 7 days of the close of the UCC activity to the wing Director of Senior Programs.
- ✓ Ensure that any training materials issued from the wing are returned to the Wing Director of Senior Programs.
- ✓ Conduct the course in a manner that not only protects the interests of the facility where the UCC is held but also the interests and integrity of Civil Air Patrol in general.

Location

The location can make all the difference in the success of the UCC.

Possible facilities that directors should consider in choosing a location include:

- ✓ Military installations
- ✓ Educational institutions
- ✓ Established conference centers
- ✓ Motel/hotel
- ✓ Church meeting area
- ✓ Community facility (City Hall, Council Room, Airport)

The Wing Director of Senior Programs must approve the facility. The Course Director should submit a request in writing to the facility manager/owner outlining the date, time, number of students and staff, etc. The director must follow up to obtain written permission to use the facility.

When selecting a facility, consider arrangements for:

- ✓ *Housing.* Rooms must have adequate space and furnishing. The rooms must have air conditioning/heating, and the facility should have low noise levels in order for the students to study.
- ✓ *Food.* Students should have easy access to a dining facility. Preferably, directors can work with the LO to choose a location with a dining facility in it or within walking distance of it (if on a military installation). Because the students will probably use the facility more than once over the length of the course, the dining facility should be affordable to the students. Inform the facility manager of the number of students and what time the students will eat.
- ✓ *Classrooms.* Have sufficient space to permit comfortable seating. All classrooms need adequate lighting and functional equipment.
- ✓ *Parking area.* Select a facility with convenient parking, not too distant from the facility.
- ✓ *Accessibility.* Choose a convenient location, i.e., a place convenient for all students and easy to find.
- ✓ *Military Support Authorizations (MSA).* Obtain MSA for students and staff from the Wing Liaison Officer when using a military installation.
- ✓ *Notify Security Forces.* Notify Security Forces of the course in writing when using a military installation, and provide a copy of the MSA.
- ✓ *Time constraints.* Time is an important factor for the instructors as well as the student. **Prepare a schedule that utilizes time wisely.** You should consider pre-class assignments along with a working supper. (This could be pot-luck, a cookout, pizza, etc.) This allows time for students to interact socially.

Staff

Civil Air Patrol wants every student to have a positive and beneficial learning experience. Choose knowledgeable staff members who have good rapport with people. Consider using current and past unit and wing commanders at a minimum. **Select staff members based on their instructor skills, staff position, knowledge, and proficiency in the performance of their CAP duties.**

When choosing the staff, consider the professional image of each staff member. Staff members may wear any of the authorized Civil Air Patrol uniforms. However, they must meet the required standards for that uniform. Look over

the staff members before presentations and make corrections as needed. The director and staff members should recognize they **set the example** for CAP members. Civil Air Patrol wants its members to portray a professional image. Speakers and staff members can lose credibility quickly if students detect uniform violations, because they may assume the performance of the staff members will be similar to their appearance.

Discuss time allotments with staff members. All staff members must know the importance of adhering to the schedule! Ask staff members to rehearse their presentation to ensure familiarity and competency with the subject. Remind them that the length of their presentation affects other instructors and activities.

The following positions constitute the basic staff for the Unit Commanders Course:

- ✓ **Assistant Director** - The Director and Assistant Director should serve in the same unit, if possible, to provide maximum coordination and assistance.
- ✓ **Administrative Assistant** - The administrative assistant helps in keeping attendance records for the course. S/he aids members in "signing-in" and checks the credentials of each person attending for current membership status and completion of required prerequisites. S/he can also ensure refreshments are provided, the building is in good order, the diplomas are prepared and correct, and adequate student records are kept.
- ✓ **Seminar leaders** - The seminar leaders are critical to the success of the UCC. Seminar leaders should be current on practices, procedures and regulations regarding their field of expertise.

The UCC directors may choose their staffs from their own wings, or they may enlist the help of members from other wings. The Director may request assistance from region personnel. If the director wishes to use region personnel for his/her staff, a request is sent to the Wing and Region Directors of Senior Programs.

Alternate Staff Members

The UCC director may choose alternate staff members who can step in at the last minute in the event an instructor becomes unexpectedly unavailable.

Publicity

Ensure that the Unit Commanders Course receives wide publicity within the wing. Develop a flyer explaining:

- ✓ Subject
- ✓ Purpose and objectives of the course
- ✓ Dates
- ✓ Place
- ✓ Application information (CAPF 17, applications must have the approval of both the squadron and wing commanders if the UCC is held outside the individual's wing)
- ✓ UCC director's mailing address, telephone number, e-mail address, and radio call-sign
- ✓ Enrollment fee

Also send a letter to each unit commander requesting maximum publicity for the school. The director can also request the staff to make announcements over the wing radio net and post the notification on the wing's World Wide Web page.

Informing the Students

Once the applications are submitted and accepted, the director sends an information letter to each participant. This letter serves as the director's initial contact. Certain elements appear in this "welcome" letter:

- ✓ How to contact the director (e-mail, phone, fax, address)
- ✓ Welcome comments
- ✓ Time of class
- ✓ Location of class
- ✓ Parking accommodations
- ✓ Sleeping accommodations

- ✓ Uniform requirements
- ✓ Dining schedule and location
- ✓ Telephone contact during the school
- ✓ Mail address
- ✓ Time and date of graduation
- ✓ Map and directions to the facility
- ✓ Information about what students should bring

Consider attaching selected student materials (such as the course outline) to the welcome letter. This will better prepare students for the course.

Registration

Each member attending the school will sign in so the director can develop a roster and complete the CAPF 11 *Director's Report*, or other form of official record. The director will arrange to have the registration booth at a central point with an adequate number of tables and chairs for those registering. If possible, the director should arrange to have light refreshments (coffee, doughnuts, juice, etc.) at the registration point. Students receive the following items at registration:

- ✓ UCC study materials not sent in the welcome package
- ✓ List of UCC staff members
- ✓ Handouts developed for the course
- ✓ Schedule
- ✓ Smoking instructions
- ✓ Dining Instructions
- ✓ Course critiques

Orientation

The orientation includes welcome comments from the director and representative of the institution or facility, introduction of staff members, presentation of the course schedule, and a review of the course objectives and curriculum. During the orientation, students receive information on smoking policies, the location of restroom and break facilities, and lunch arrangements and other important information.

Presentations

The course director is responsible for the overall quality of the presentations during the UCC. No CAP senior member should be expected to attend a session where the instructor is not adequately prepared to present the material.

The UCC lasts 16 contact hours. Core requirements fill nine hours of the required time. The director may choose from the elective requirements listing for the remaining seven classroom hours.

Most CAP presenters, given the instructor materials and guidance beforehand, will conscientiously prepare to teach their portion of the UCC. However, no matter how experienced an instructor may be, the director should discuss the instructional objectives and go over the outline and other materials with the instructor. Ensure instructors are trained to operate presentation equipment and the quality of the presentations are maintained at the highest level. The students who come to training programs such as the UCC deserve nothing less.

Feedback

The course director or assistant course director should closely monitor each classroom presentation to ensure quality and to provide feedback to presenters. Feedback may be formal (with an evaluation sheet) or informal (verbal feedback on the session.) Feedback should include any significant remarks from the end-of-course critique, both positive and negative, when this data is available. After the course conclusion, the director and staff review and discuss the critiques.

Closing

At the end of the course, students fill out the course critiques. The director will ask students to provide constructive feedback and remarks for future versions of the UCC. The director or, if possible, the wing commander may present course diplomas during an awards ceremony.

STAFF ASSIGNMENTS

Director: _____ phone: (H) _____
(W) _____

Ass't Director: _____ phone: (H) _____
(W) _____

Instructors:

1. Name: _____ phone: (H) _____
Assignment: _____ (W) _____

2. Name: _____ phone: (H) _____
Assignment: _____ (W) _____

3. Name: _____ phone: (H) _____
Assignment: _____ (W) _____

4. Name: _____ phone: (H) _____
Assignment: _____ (W) _____

5. Name: _____ phone: (H) _____
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6. Name: _____ phone: (H) _____
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7. Name: _____ phone: (H) _____
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9. Name: _____ phone: (H) _____
Assignment: _____ (W) _____

10. Name: _____ phone: (H) _____
Assignment: _____ (W) _____

11. Name: _____ phone: (H) _____
Assignment: _____ (W) _____

12. Name: _____ phone: (H) _____
Assignment: _____ (W) _____

13. Name: _____ phone: (H) _____
Assignment: _____ (W) _____

14. Name: _____ phone: (H) _____
Assignment: _____ (W) _____

UNIT COMMANDERS COURSE CHECKLIST

60 DAYS PRIOR TO CLASS START

- ☐ Select and schedule meeting location
- ☐ Set date and time

45 DAYS PRIOR TO CLASS START

- ☐ Obtain course materials
- ☐ Select and notify instructor and support staff
- ☐ Distribute flyers to wing units to publicize the course

30 DAYS PRIOR TO CLASS START:

- ☐ Study the Instructor Guide and review Student Guide
- ☐ Personalize instructor guide for local unit
- ☐ Notify those selected to attend the class

15 DAYS PRIOR TO CLASS START

- ☐ Verify availability of meeting location and number of students
- ☐ Obtain supporting materials and supplies
- ☐ Fine tune instructor guide
- ☐ Update instructors and support members as required
- ☐ Make copies of Student Guide and distribute one to each student

10 DAYS PRIOR TO CLASS START:

- ☐ Make arrangements for TV and VCR (if desired), Power Point capability
- ☐ Obtain instructor materials such as overhead projector and white board
- ☐ Review lesson materials for quantity and quality
- ☐ Obtain administrative supplies
- ☐ Finalize instructor guide and presentation materials
- ☐ Conduct a practice session(s) with an audience if possible

5 DAYS PRIOR TO CLASS START:

- ☐ Make final adjustments to the lesson plan based on feedback from practice sessions
- ☐ Advise staff members of uniform requirements

1 DAY PRIOR TO CLASS START

- ☐ Check availability and operation of all equipment
- ☐ Assemble and distribute all lesson materials to classroom
- ☐ Verify arrangements for refreshments (if provided)

DAY OF CLASS

- ☐ Set up and final check all equipment
- ☐ Ensure classroom environment is conducive to learning (heat, lights, noise, etc.)
- ☐ Prepare or ensure access to refreshments (coffee, sodas, snacks, etc.)
- ☐ Inspect staff members and have someone greet class members as they arrive
- ☐ Enjoy the rewards of a well planned and presented Unit Commanders Course

The director should specifically delegate these steps when possible; but will be available.