

# ZMU Academics - General Education

IOC Concept and Program Structure

December 2025

Restricted Access



**TRAINING AND EDUCATION  
TRANSFORMATION PROGRAM**

**This document provides an overview of the ZMU GenEd program in addition to its IOC concept, curriculum and refinements**



- 1 Provide overview of ZMU General Education (GenEd) Structure
  - 2 Define IOC GenEd Concept
  - 3 Present IOC GenEd Curriculum Overview
  - 4 Discuss IOC GenEd Feedback and Refinements

# Agenda

- 1. GenEd Overview**
2. IOC GenEd Concept
3. IOC GenEd Curriculum
4. IOC GenEd Refinements

# General Education (GenEd) is a CAA requirement to ensure that students are equipped with common knowledge and skills



## General Education Program Overview



**GenEd REQUIRES 6 COURSES**  
(18 CREDIT HOURS)

**1**  
Advanced English



**2**  
Emirati Studies



**3**  
Innovation,  
Entrepreneurship  
& Sustainability



### DEFINITION BY CAA

General Education is a broad foundation that equips every graduate with **essential skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> century** through at least 18 credits across humanities, social and natural sciences, and UAE-specific studies



### OPPORTUNITIES FOR ZMU



#### Three Elective Courses

##### Domain

- Humanities
- Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Natural Sciences
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Critical Thinking
- Health
- Sustainability
- Technology & Society

**1** Align **course content** with **ZMU leadership priorities** while fully respecting Academic Partner (AP) academic autonomy



**2** Build a shared **cross-Academic Partner curriculum** that strengthens **academic jointery and intellectual coherence**



**3** Link GenEd course outcomes that build towards **one coherent leadership portfolio** unique to each cadet



**4** Integrate academic **leadership** and skills content with **ZMU's Leadership Development System** (developed across capstone assessments)



Restricted Access

**GenEd at ZMU has been adapted to ZMU priorities to achieve the ambitions of a bespoke ZMU GenEd program**

**ZMU General Education Charter**

**Endorsed by ZMU Commandant (Jun 2024)**

Source: ZMU

**Restricted Access**



## ZMU GenEd

Foundational courses delivered to **all cadets** as part of the ZMU Academic Program - regardless of AP affiliation - based on a **ZMU-tailored curriculum** with defined learning outcomes aligned to a **military and defence context**

## **ZMU GenEd is in line with ZMU Core Guiding Principles**

Jointery



Academic Proficiency



Common Core



Pure Academic



## **ZMU GenEd Concept Benefits**

- ✓ Purpose-built **GenEd curriculum** meets the unique context of ZMU
- ✓ Centralized **partnership between ZMU and APs** on course content
- ✓ **ZMU has more agency** in defining the courses and expected course outcomes

**ZMU GenEd concept** has been aligned with the **Academic Partners** in May 2025 through **ZMU GenEd Working Group** (*detailed in appendix*)

# Agenda

1. GenEd Overview
2. IOC GenEd Concept
3. IOC GenEd Curriculum
4. IOC GenEd Refinements

# Development of ZMU IOC GenEd concept includes the list of courses with contextually relevant curricula and a process to develop courses



## ZMU IOC General Education Concept Components

Non-Exhaustive

### ZMU IOC GenEd Concept

<b>DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Existing GenEd courses adapted to ZMU IOC GenEd through minimal rework, eliminating the need for CAA re-accreditation</li><li>– Additional courses developed as ZMU IOC GenEd</li></ul> <p><i>Detailed on next slide</i></p>
<b>PROGRAM CURRICULUM</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Unified learning objectives, outcomes and reading lists finalized for adapted ZMU IOC GenEd courses, integrating military context throughout</li><li>– Adapted ZMU IOC GenEd courses planned to be delivered across different academic years within cadet program</li></ul>
<b>DELIVERY MODEL</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– ZMU IOC GenEd courses delivered individually by APs with jointery enabled through AP-aligned learning outcomes</li></ul>
<b>COURSE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS</b>		<p>Concept Development      Stakeholder Needs Identified and Aligned      Development of Academic Program      Curriculum Development and Validation      Implementation and Testing</p> <p><b>CONTINUOUS STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND ALIGNMENT</b></p>

# At IOC, two ZMU GenEd courses have been successfully implemented, and additional courses are being prepared for rollout



## ZMU IOC General Education Development Strategy

Preliminary, Non-Exhaustive

ZMU IOC GenEd Courses	Progress Update	Military Context
English 1 – Writing	<b>Implemented</b>	Focus on Leadership
English 2 – Writing	<b>Implemented</b>	Focus on Leadership
Emirati Studies		Focus on Regional Awareness and National Understanding
Innovation and Entrepreneurship	SUAD assigned to <b>design course in 2026</b> , to be piloted by <b>all APs in 2027</b>	Focus on Leadership and innovation in military relevant settings
Psychology		Focus on critical thinking in defence-adjacent environments
Philosophy		Focus on situational ethics with military relevance

### ZMU IOC GenEd Courses

### Activation Plan

English 1 – Writing
English 2 – Writing
Emirati studies
Innovation and Entrepreneurship
Psychology
Philosophy

2025			2026			2027		
Y1	Y2	Y3	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y1	Y2	Y3
✓			✓			✓		
✓			✓			✓		
			✓			✓		
				✓		✓		
					✓	✓		
						✓		
							✓	
								✓

ZMU IOC GenEd Concept and Courses agreed to by RA, KU, and SUAD

✓ Offered across all APs  
✓ Piloted by SUAD

Restricted Access

# Agenda

1. GenEd Overview
2. IOC GenEd Concept
3. IOC GenEd Curriculum
4. IOC GenEd Refinements

To ensure consistency and high-quality design, an overarching curriculum has been developed for each IOC GenEd course

ZMU IOC General Education Curriculum Components



## IOC GenEd Course Curriculum Components



### CURRICULUM COMPONENTS

#### Learning Objectives

**Knowledge, skills and competencies** acquired by cadet during the course



E.g., Develop **clear and concise writing skills** for military reports, briefs, and formal communication, ...

#### Target Outcomes

**Measurable results applied or performed** by a cadet after course completion



E.g., Cadets will write **persuasively from evidence** in a variety of formats, ...

#### Suggested Reading List

**Academic resources** providing **foundational knowledge**, reinforcing course concepts



E.g., Kidder, Rushworth, Moral Courage, ...

### TEACHING METHODOLOGY

Teaching methodologies to be defined by **respective faculty** for each Academic Partner delivering the course

Restricted Access

# Learning Objectives and Learning Outcomes are modified for a defence context ensuring ZMU GenEd supports cadets' military education (1/2)

## ZMU IOC General Education Curriculum Summary



Non-Exhaustive

### English 1

### English 2

### Emirati Studies

#### Learning Objectives

- Develop **leadership focused** foundational and complex military **writing skills**
- Strengthen **early analytical reading** for leadership engagement
- Understand **academic integrity**

- Build clear, **evidence-based arguments** in written communication
- Adapt **writing for purpose and audience** in leadership and military contexts
- Interpret complex texts using **strong analytical reading skills**
- Apply **basic research** and **integrate sources** effectively in writing tasks

- Build **foundational understanding** of UAE history and **compare diverse representations** across sources
- Connect **Emirati identity and heritage** to responsibilities of future officers
- Explore how identity and values shape **early leadership instincts**

#### Learning Outcomes

- Express **leadership ideas** with clarity and analysis
- Conduct **analysis of leadership media and text**
- Accurately **summarize and paraphrase sources** using basic evaluation skills

- Produce **structured analytical essays** using clear claims, reasoning, and evidence
- Critically **assess sources** and **address assumptions** and counterarguments in writing
- Apply **persuasive and ethical communication** in military writings, including leadership

- Explain the **evolution of UAE development, governance, and social systems**, through differing sources
- Describe how **heritage and identity influence cadet attitudes** toward service and teamwork
- Synthesize course insights through **ZMU leadership development system "My Emirati Leadership Doctrine"**

Restricted Access



# Learning Objectives and Learning Outcomes are modified for a defence context ensuring ZMU GenEd supports cadets' military education (2/2)

## ZMU IOC General Education Curriculum Summary



Non-Exhaustive

### Innovation and Entrepreneurship

### Psychology

### Philosophy

#### Learning Objectives

- Introduce design thinking to help cadets define service or defence problems clearly
- Strengthen skills in problem definition, idea generation, and solution
- Encourage initiative, adaptability, and experimentation with a leadership mindset

- Introduce core concepts in cognitive, social, and developmental psychology and link them to real cadet experience
- Strengthen cadets' understanding of bias, motivation, self-regulation and interpersonal influence to build leadership awareness
- Build ability to analyze group dynamics, cohesion and communication patterns

- Build ethical reasoning skills and examine moral traditions and perspective to analyze dilemmas in military context
- Develop competence in applying ethical frameworks to assess moral dilemmas
- Explore emerging ethical challenges to strengthen reasoning under future uncertainty

#### Learning Outcomes

- Apply design-thinking process to identify needs and generate solutions using feasibility and impact criteria
- Demonstrate teamwork, communication, and project-planning skills
- Connect a real challenge to a proposed solution through ZMU leadership development system "Innovation for Service Project"

- Explain, relate and apply psychological processes to demonstrate leadership and decision-making
- Analyze group dynamics and behavior using defined psychological concepts
- Integrate insights into personal identity through ZMU leadership development system "My Leadership Behavioral Doctrine"

- Evaluate arguments and assess competing moral claims in leadership cases
- Apply ethical frameworks to analyze dilemmas involving conflict, pressure, or new technologies
- Synthesize course value into a personal identity through ZMU leadership development system "Ethical Leadership Framework"

Restricted Access



# Agenda

1. GenEd Overview
2. IOC GenEd Concept
3. IOC GenEd Curriculum
4. IOC GenEd Refinements

# Systematic evaluation assesses whether the ZMU IOC GenEd courses deliver on their objectives

## GenEd Feedback Approach



### Purpose of GenEd Feedback

**Systematic evaluation** confirms whether the GenEd courses deliver on the learning objectives and **provide a consistent experience** across APs

### GenEd Assessment Evaluation Components

Course Delivery

Course Content

Methodology

Cadet Learning

Learning Experience

Learning Outcomes



### Feedback Domains Assessed

GenEd feedback was received by **content delivering faculty** through **structured surveys**

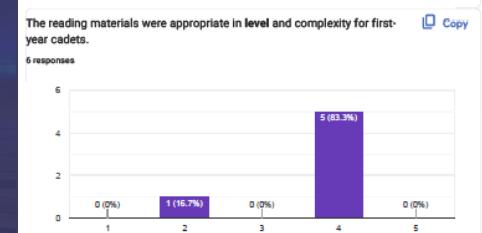
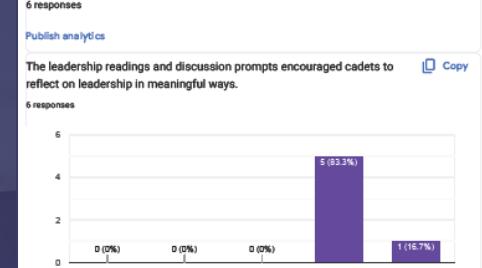
Relevance and volume of course content

Cadet engagement through delivery methodology

Cadets' perceived value and learning

Transferable practices that translate to cadet skills

#### Faculty Survey: Leadership-Themed English Courses for ZMU Cadets



Deep dive below



**The Q4 2025 survey reflects successful course delivery and cadet learning practices and identifies proposed modifications for 2026**

# GenEd 2025 Survey Results

Source: ZMU, Academic Partners

## Restricted Access



برنامنج التطوير

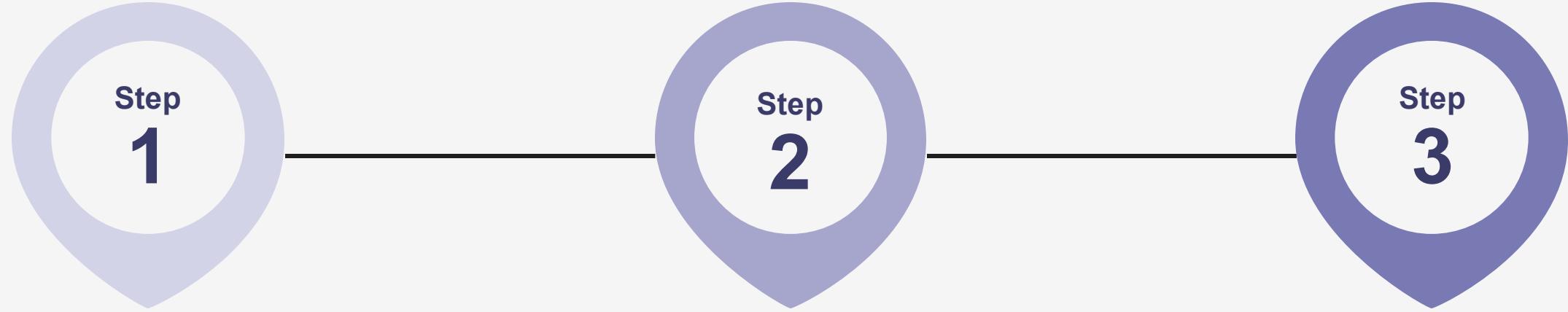
TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Course Delivery	Delivery Methodology	Learning Experience	Learning Outcomes
<p><b>COURSE CONTENT</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Cadets were drawn to <b>pragmatic topics</b> on leadership and military themes that led to personal reflection</li> <li>– Volume and pace of course content was challenging for some cadets, with feedback that <b>UAE/MENA content was limited</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>DELIVERY METHODOLOGY</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <b>Using multimodal materials</b> (case studies, podcasts etc.) <b>supported learning and writing development</b></li> <li>– Topics, such as transactional versus transformational concepts, were <b>disengaging for cadets when delivered as pure theory</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>LEARNING EXPERIENCE</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Comprehension of complex leadership <b>topics benefited greatly from shorter readings</b> followed by group discussions</li> <li>– <b>Limited alignment between cadet military training and course curriculum</b> presented a missed opportunity to unify cadets' overarching military experience</li> </ul>	<p><b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Faculty observed <b>consistency in argumentative writing, shared standard of academic integrity</b> and, analytical writing through practices like evidence-driven framework and structured paraphrasing</li> <li>– <b>Cadets perceived limited practical application</b> due to limited contextually relevant materials</li> </ul>
<h3>Proposed Modifications</h3>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Increase UAE/MENA materials, military case studies, and pragmatic course content</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Include additional visual aids and interviews with UAE military officers to enhance cadet engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Introduce workshops between Military Training Wing and APs to unify cadet learning outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Include greater contextually relevant topics like social media, technology etc. to increase cadet interest</li> </ul>

**Next steps include briefing ZMU Leadership on IOC GenEd, updating ENG1 and ENG2 course curriculum and finalizing 2026 piloted courses curricula**



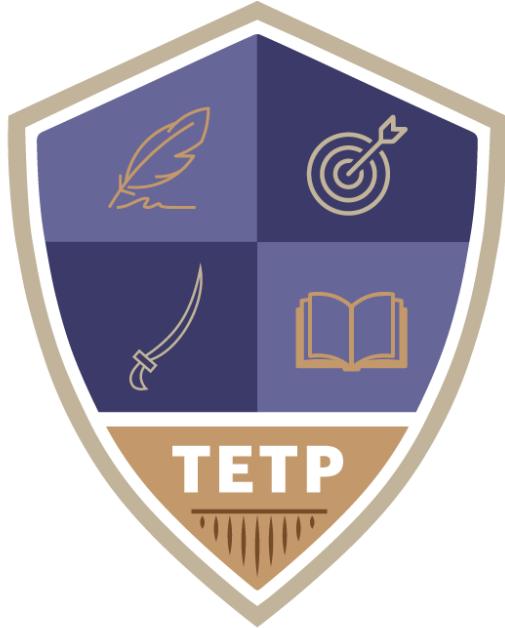
### Next Steps



**Brief ZMU Leadership on IOC GenEd update and refinements**

**Finalize English 1 and English 2 Curriculum based on faculty feedback**

**Align with Academic Partners on final curriculum for Emirati Studies and Philosophy**



# **TRAINING AND EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION PROGRAM**

Restricted Access

# **Appendix**

- ZMU General Education Working Group Overview**
- ZMU GenEd Course Curriculum**

# **Appendix**

- ZMU General Education Working Group Overview**
- ZMU GenEd Course Curriculum**

# ZMU General Education Curriculum (GenEd) Working Group has defined objectives and membership from all Academic Partners

## 2025 ZMU GenEd Working Group

Source: ZMU

Restricted Access



## ZMU GenEd Objective

*To develop and implement a unified General Education (GenEd) framework for IOC and FOC that designs core curriculum for ZMU officer cadets and develop an assessment and feedback framework for continuous improvement*

### Membership

ZMU	KU	SUAD	RA	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Dr. Shamma Al Naqbi (ZMU Directorate of Academic Affairs)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Dr. Ted Burkett (Director, General Education Program)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Proscovia Svard (Professor)</li><li>– Celia Ouali (Professor)</li><li>– Dr. Alexandra Dimitri (Project Lead ZMU)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Dr. Deena Elsori (Program Chair, General Education)</li><li>– Dr. Warren Chin (Program Chair, Defence and Security)</li></ul>	Permanent Members may invite additional functional representatives or other support as needed based on meeting agenda

# Appendix

- ZMU General Education Working Group Overview
- ZMU GenEd Course Curriculum

# English 1 builds clear, disciplined writing and early analytical skills essential for effective communication and leadership as future officers

ZMU IOC General Education Curriculum – English 1



Non-Exhaustive

## Learning Objectives



- Build foundational academic and professional military writing skills for clear communication as future officers
- Develop leadership-focused expression, helping cadets articulate ideas with clarity, purpose, considering military communication norms
- Strengthen early analytical reading and source-evaluation habits that support engagement with leadership and regional texts
- Encourage revision, reflection, and structured argumentation, preparing cadets for more complex writing, speaking, and briefing tasks in later courses
- Understand key principles of academic integrity in writing

## Learning Outcomes



- Express ideas with clarity and purpose across leadership genre, demonstrating analysis through written formats including brief reflections, personal leadership statements, and short explanatory pieces
- Analyze and contrast an array of writings and media on leadership
- Summarize and interpret texts using accurate paraphrasing, key-idea identification, and early source-evaluation techniques appropriate for first-year cadets

## Reading List for 2026



- “Sheikh Zayed: The Making of a Great Leader” (Gulf News, 2018)
- “In Praise of Followers” - Robert Kelley (HBR)
- “Why Emotional Intelligence Is Crucial for Effective Leadership” (Forbes)
- “Why Good Leaders Make You Feel Safe” - Simon Sinek (TED Talk)
- “Charisma in Politics” - Zsolt Feher (Science of Personality podcast)
- Excerpts from David Hackworth’s About Face
- Excerpts from Anton Myrer’s Once an Eagle

# English 2 strengthens cadets' ability to construct evidence-based, leadership-relevant writing for academic and military contexts

ZMU IOC General Education Curriculum – English 2



Non-Exhaustive

## Learning Objectives



- Strengthen cadets' ability to **construct clear, logical arguments** supported by evidence and sound reasoning
- **Introduce rhetorical awareness and audience sensitivity** through leadership- and military-relevant writing tasks
- **Deepen analytical reading skills** by engaging with more complex texts, viewpoints, and varied source types
- **Develop disciplined research and source-integration practices** through applied assignments, including expository writing and leadership-focused tasks

## Learning Outcomes



- **Write structured analytical essays** presenting clear claims, coherent reasoning, and well-integrated evidence across multiple sources
- **Produce writing that critically evaluates source credibility**, assesses assumptions, and responds to counterarguments with clarity and discipline
- **Apply persuasive and ethical communication skills** in leadership-oriented genres, including expository responses to military scenarios and decision briefs

## Reading List for 2026



- “Sheikh Mohammed's 10 Important Rules for Leadership” (Khaleej Times, 2019)
- “Servant Leadership” - Admiral Linda Fagan, ReThinking with Adam Grant podcast
- “Great Teams Are About Personalities, Not Just Skills” (HBR)
- “Will Your Personality Make You a Successful Employee or Leader?” (Psychology Today)
- “Transactional vs. Transformational Leadership” (Economic Times)
- “The Study of Leadership Theories: Great Leaders Are Made, Not Born” (Law Practice Magazine)

# Emirati Studies is a leadership-focused study of how Emirati identity, heritage, and national vision shape the responsibilities of future officers

ZMU IOC General Education Curriculum – Emirati Studies

## Learning Objectives



- Build foundational understanding of UAE history, society, institutions, and values, through diverse sources
- Connect heritage, unity, and national vision to the responsibilities of future officers
- Develop historical-narrative analysis skills by comparing how different sources represent the UAE and its national stories
- Explore how identity and values inform early leadership instincts, laying groundwork for later ethical, leadership, and strategic learning

## Learning Outcomes



- Explain how UAE development, governance, and social systems have evolved
- Describe how elements of Emirati history and heritage shape their early attitudes toward service, teamwork, and responsibility as cadets
- Analyze differing representations of Emirati identity across various sources
- Synthesize course insights into a personalized “**My Emirati Leadership Doctrine**,” articulating their identity, values, and leadership philosophy, grounded in Sheikh Zayed’s legacy

## Reading List



- “MOE Contemporary Emirati Studies Textbook” (2024 edition)
- UAE Vision 2021, We the UAE 2031, Centennial 2071
- Selected MOFA briefs on UAE domestic and foreign policy
- Excerpts from UAE leadership speeches on identity, unity, and service
- Government archival videos on UAE history, development, and heritage
- Curated national narratives from official media and international outlets

*Preliminary Curriculum to be piloted in 2026 by SUAD*

# Innovation & Entrepreneurship course introduces cadets to design-thinking and problem-solving

## ZMU IOC General Education Curriculum – Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Preliminary, Non-Exhaustive

### Learning Objectives



- Introduce design thinking to help cadets identify and define defence- or service-related problems with clarity and purpose
- **Strengthen skills in defining problems**, generating ideas, and evaluating solution pathways
- **Encourage initiative, adaptability, and thoughtful experimentation** in service-oriented contexts
- **Cultivate a leadership mindset** that links creativity, initiative, and service, with innovation

### Learning Outcomes



- **Apply a structured design-thinking process to identify a service or defence need**, analyze constraints, and generate a solution
- **Demonstrate effective teamwork, communication, and project-planning skills** through collaborative problem-solving tasks
- **Evaluate solution options** using criteria such as feasibility, impact, alignment with UAE priorities, and
- Produce a final **Innovation for Service Project** that links a real challenge to a proposed solution and articulates how their approach reflects their emerging leadership identity

### Reading List



- “Change by Design” - Tim Brown
- “Creative Confidence” - Tom Kelley & David Kelley
- “The Innovator’s DNA” - Jeff Dyer, Hal Gregersen & Clayton Christensen
- “The Art of Innovation” - Tom Kelley
- “Flashes of Thought” - H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum
- “Design Thinking Comes of Age” - Jon Kolko
- “Start With Why” - Simon Sinek
- “Range: How Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World” - David Epstein

**Suggested Curriculum – Pending finalization by SUAD**

# Psychology course provides cadets the core psychological tools essential for effective leadership by analyzing how people think and behave

ZMU IOC General Education Curriculum – Psychology

Preliminary, Non-Exhaustive

## Learning Objectives



- Introduce core concepts in cognitive, social, and developmental psychology that shape how individuals think, perceive, decide, and act
- Strengthen cadets' understanding of bias, motivation, self-regulation, and interpersonal influence to build foundational leadership awareness
- Develop the ability to analyze group dynamics, cohesion, and communication patterns
- Prepare cadets for advanced leadership training by linking behavioral science to real cadet-life scenarios

## Learning Outcomes



- Explain key psychological processes - including bias, motivation, and emotion - and relate them to leadership and decision-making scenarios
- Analyze team behavior and group dynamics using frameworks such as self-efficacy, group development, and psychological safety
- Apply psychological concepts to evaluate decisions made under stress, uncertainty, or social pressure
- Produce a “My Leadership Behavioral Doctrine” that integrates course insights with their identity and responsibilities as future officers

## Reading List



- “Mistakes Were Made (but Not by Me): Why We Justify Foolish Beliefs, Bad Decisions and Hurtful Acts” - Tavris and Aronson
- “Thinking, Fast and Slow” - Daniel Kahneman
- “Leadership and Self-Deception” - Arbinger Institute
- “The Social Animal” - Elliot Aronson
- “Mindset” - Carol Dweck
- “Self-Efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Chang” - Albert Bandura
- “Developmental Sequence in Small Groups” - Bruce Tuckman
- “Psychological Safety and Learning Behavior in Work Teams” - Amy Edmondson

**Suggested Curriculum – Pending finalization by SUAD**

# Philosophy course equips cadets with ethical reasoning tools to analyze various dilemmas and apply them on real-life military scenarios

ZMU IOC General Education Curriculum – Philosophy

Preliminary, Non-Exhaustive

## Learning Objectives



- Build foundational ethical reasoning skills through analysis of dilemmas involving loyalty, responsibility, and uncertainty in military contexts
- Examine diverse moral traditions and perspectives to deepen understanding of virtue, character, and leadership
- Develop competence in using structured ethical frameworks to analyze dilemmas involving loyalty, responsibility, and uncertainty
- Explore emerging ethical challenges such as AI and climate change, developing the capacity to navigate future uncertainty

## Learning Outcomes



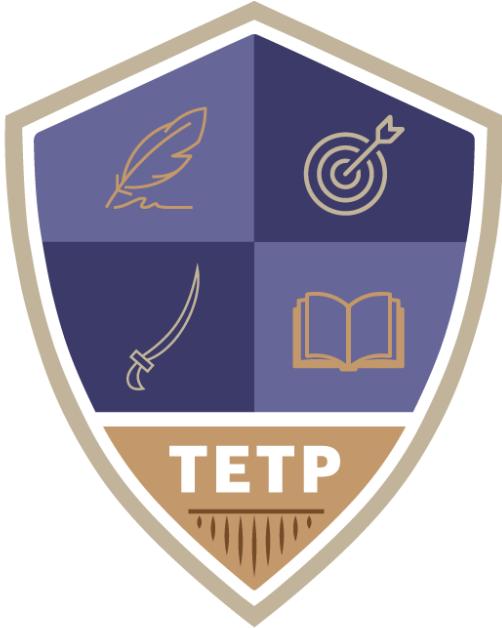
- Evaluate arguments, identify assumptions, and assess competing moral claims in philosophical and applied leadership cases
- Apply ethical frameworks to analyze moral dilemmas involving conflicting expectations, group pressures, or emerging technologies, demonstrating clarity of reasoning
- Articulate a personal “Ethical Leadership Framework” synthesizing course readings, values, and cadet identity as future UAE officers

## Reading List



- “The Coming Wave: AI, Power, and Our Future” - Mustafa Suleyman
- “Defining Moments: When Managers Must Choose Between Right and Right” - Joseph Badaracco
- “Just and Unjust Wars” - Michael Walzer (5th edition)
- “Revival of the Religious Sciences - The Formation of Character” - Al-Ghazali (Book XXII)
- “The Ethical Algorithm” - Kears and Roth
- “Moral Courage” - Rushworth Kidder
- “A Perfect Moral Storm: The Ethical Tragedy of Climate Change” - Stephen M. Gardiner

*Preliminary Curriculum to be piloted in 2026 by SUAD*



# **TRAINING AND EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION PROGRAM**

Restricted Access