The Character-Based Officer Framework includes three key constructs, ranging from broad philosophical considerations to practical competencies.

These constructs provide answers to the “why?” (foundation), the “what?” (outcomes), and the “how?” (process) of developing officers of character. The foundation demonstrates through philosophical reasoning how our Constitution, Oath of Office, and Core Values mandate character-based officer-ship.

The USAFA (or Academy) outcomes, tied to the U.S. Air Force’s Institutional Competency List (ICL) that specifies competencies for all new Air Force officers upon entry into commissioned service, identifies the Responsibilities, Skills and Knowledge all USAFA cadets should possess upon graduation.

The process prescribes how USAFA organizes and integrates cadet 4-year development across the Academy experience. Cadets move through followership and leadership levels that become progressively broader and more complex as a cadet gains experience, becomes more responsible, and matures. The Officer Development System (ODS) process involves all the mission elements at the Academy and encompasses every dimension of a cadet’s life—intellectual, professional, physical, ethical, spiritual and social—while remaining focused on character development.