

AIR WAR COLLEGE

AIR UNIVERSITY

THE AIR FORCE ETHIC

by

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Biography

Lt Col Daniel Alford is a B-1 Weapons Systems Operator and Weapons Officer who most recently served as the 23rd Training Squadron Commander at Officer Training School, Maxwell AFB, AL. Originally from Lake Wales, Florida, he received his commission through the Air Force ROTC program at Florida State University in 2001 with a Bachelor's degree in Political Science. He holds a Master's in Military Studies, Asymmetric Warfare, from American Military University in 2011. His operational experiences include deployments to Qatar, Guam, and Diego Garcia in support of OIF, OEF, and the continuous bomber presence in the Pacific. Lt Col Alford is currently assigned to the Air War College, Air University, Maxwell AFB, AL.



Abstract

The challenges of the 21st century require the United States Air Force to evolve. Therefore, it is essential to provide an articulated ethic to Airmen that will act as a moral guardrail.¹ During the USAF Academic Year 2018 and 2019 Air War College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, an initiative began to determine if an articulated ethic for the Air Force was required. A team of Air War College students researched whether an Air Force ethic was needed and the methodology to go about creating one in the academic year '18. Their research determined that an ethic was required and laid out recommendations for further research and development. The second team of Academic year '19 students researched ethics from other professions and current Air Force ethical devices. They made recommendations on how to frame an ethic for the Air Force to elevate compliance-based behavior toward aspirational adherence. This paper draws on research completed by these two teams, my study, and Air Force experience, to articulate an ethic for Air Force leadership to consider for inclusion in current doctrine.

Introduction

Belonging to the profession of arms is a distinctive calling that requires the application of violence in service to the nation. The mandates of this profession may require Airmen to make ethical decisions far more ambiguous than what the average citizen experiences in a lifetime. Airmen are therefore needed to "pursue a narrow course: commitment to the mission, ethical decisions amid conflicting loyalties, and preservation of public trust in all individual and institutional actions."² The character of war is changing and along with it the character of service.³ As the United States Air Force evolves to meet the challenges of the 21st century, Airmen need a codified ethic to help navigate the environment they will face. This paper provides a recommended ethic for Air Force leadership's consideration. Airmen who internalize what the Air Force stands for ethically will make better leaders and better Airmen for our nation.

The United States Air Force is a distinctive branch of the armed services and the profession of arms. We are the subject matter experts on the application of air, space, and cyberspace. Our core values, creeds, oaths, and operating instructions tell us what the Air Force expects of us and how we should do our jobs, but the information is scattered and does not directly define what it is to be an Airman. Airmen might point to the Air Force Core Values, the Airman's Creed, or the plethora of Air Force instructions and Doctrine that dictate how we train, fight, and operate day to day as our ethical foundation.⁴ The issue with this logic is that ethics encompasses far more than the principles or regulations provided in these documents and ethical devices. Ethics is an issue of mind and heart and is at the core of who we are as a collective.⁵ The intent is to elevate Airmen beyond rules-based compliance and make the motivation aspirational. Philosophers and Theologians define ethics in many ways. For this paper, I will define the Air Force Ethic as set by the Parliament of Religions: "A Fundamental consensus on

binding values, irrevocable standards, and personal attitudes."⁶ The Air Force does not lack guidance; the issue is that the direction falls short of a "fundamental consensus" that clearly articulates what the Air Force believes and what an Airmen should be.⁷ A fundamental consensus is an aspirational statement contained in a single document that acts as the foundation for all ethical guidance.

The purpose of the Air Force Ethic is to provide a foundational ethical document that encompasses Air Force values, standards, and expected attitudes to which all Airmen can aspire. The written ethic will link the Core Values, standards, culture, and Air Force Instructions into an aspirational statement of how Airmen should carry themselves in the execution of their duties and throughout their daily lives. This ethic is relevant because an articulated and aspirational moral belief will identify what it means to be an Airmen that will lay the foundations for trust between Airmen, fellow members of the Profession of Arms, and our civilian leadership.

In this paper, I will outline why the Air Force needs an articulated ethic, the current ethical guidance the Air Force has, a proposal for an Air Force Ethic, and finally, recommendations for the implementation of the ethic institutionally.

Thesis

Today's Airmen face an evolving strategic environment where technological advances and shifting societal norms redefine long-held conceptions of just and unjust actions of service members. Airmen require a codified ethic that will elevate compliance-based behavior to an aspirational, virtue-based system to enable them to meet the uncertain and shifting environment. An articulated ethic is relevant because the operational tempo in the future threat environment will be faster paced and more complex at every echelon of command.

During academic year '18, a group of four students determined the need for an Air Force ethic. The following academic year a team of four students explored ethics employed by other professions, including the Army. This paper posits a draft ethic for consideration by Air leadership and to stand on its own without readers being familiar with the previous whitepapers.

The structure of this document begins with an argument for why the Air Force needs an articulated Ethic. I then briefly cover current Air Force doctrine regarding ethics and why that falls short meeting the needs of Airmen. The third section includes what an ethic is and how it is different, but intertwined, with values. Next, I provide the logic behind the main categories I used in the draft ethic. Finally, I have included a draft of an Ethic for the Air Force and recommendations for implantation.

The Air Force Ethic

Why is an Ethic needed in the United States Air Force? Are we falling short ethically in day to day actions? The Air Force has not experienced a public scandal in several years, why is an ethic needed now? The reality is that if you have been in the Air Force long enough, you have seen an initiative like the Airmen's Creed rolled out from the top down or a focus group in a commander's call based on some transgression in the news. These initiatives usually fall flat with most members in the squadron, "the beating heart of the Air Force",⁸ as they grapple with work schedules, currencies, training, evaluations, etc. Why is this any different, and why should we care?

Service in the profession of arms is a higher calling. General Fogelman once described it by saying, "The Air Force is not a social action agency. It is not an employment agency. ...The Air Force exists to fight and win wars—that's our core expertise. It's what allows us to be called professionals. We are entrusted with the security of our nation. The tools of our trade are lethal, and we engage in operations that involve risk to human life and untold national treasures. Because of what we do, our standards must be higher than those of society at large. The American public expects it of us and properly so. In the end, we earn respect and trust of the American people because of the integrity we demonstrate."⁹ The evolving strategic environment, rapidly changing societal norms, and the grave nature of the profession we operate in demand that Airmen have a strong understanding of who they are. Also, understanding who we are as a service and what our collective culture is a necessity for them to face these challenges and maintain the trust of the American public and be effective Airmen. Airmen require a codified ethic that elevates compliance-based actions to an educated and aspirational,

virtue-based thought process that enables them to meet this uncertain and shifting environment they will inevitably face throughout their careers.

The United States faces a strategic environment of contested international norms and persistent disorder over the next couple of decades. Revisionist powers, such as China and Russia, seek to realign the international order establishing their own rules that better favor their interests at the expense of those of the United States.¹⁰ Further, persistent disorder experienced due to the growth of increasingly destabilized regimes incapable of maintaining domestic order and governance will continue.¹¹ This competitive and turbulent environment will increasingly place the U.S. military and Airmen in situations that fall along the competition continuum at various states below the threshold of armed conflict. It will put military members in a position where what is in the rules of engagement, what is legal, and what is ethical may not be evident in the situation they face, and the results of getting it wrong carry grave consequences at the strategic level. As we look at this future environment, it is not a question of whether we are at peace or war. The real problem is where do we fall on the continuum, conflict or competition, with an opponent.

The competition continuum, as defined by Joint Doctrine Note 1-19, describes "a world of an enduring competition conducted through a mixture of cooperation, competition below armed conflict, and armed conflict."¹² This continuum informs how the Joint Force sees the environment. More importantly, the continuum identifies the problem facing Airmen at the tactical, operational, and even strategic levels of decision making and execution. How do we transition from selective engagement with actors at the cooperate level in one domain yet contest them below the level of armed conflict in another potentially without the defined rules of engagement or command and control we have enjoyed in the past? The reality is that the future

we face is one where rapidly unfolding situations along the competition continuum will require Airmen at all levels to make decisions on the spot in an ambiguous environment without clear guidance on the desired end-states. Airmen will make decisions balancing ethics, legality, morality, and mission accomplishment.

The Air Force creed states all Airmen are leaders. Leaders rarely face simple “yes or no” or “right or wrong” decisions. Leaders should have a command climate that empowers followers to make clear-cut decisions without intervention from them. Leaders find themselves making decisions when there isn't a right or wrong answer but perhaps only better or worse answers to difficult and morally complex situations. Especially leaders in the military find themselves faced with this as they operate at the edges of what society typically classifies as ethically acceptable and arguably well beyond it during combat situations. The future strategic environment indicates Air Force personnel will face complex problem sets that do not present easy ethical solutions at a growing rate with the added complexity of not being at war, but also not being at peace.

As the strategic environment changes around the globe, the cultural and societal environment inside the United States is also changing, which in turn causes friction and change inside of the Air Force. Our military and our Air Force is representative of society since the men and women who fill our ranks voluntarily come from that society. As our nation struggles with societal issues such as race and gender relations and cultural shifts in or away from various religious affiliations, the Air Force must evolve as well. Additionally, the Air Force will need to educate the volunteers that come to us on what our culture requires for membership. Topics such as diversity and fully integrating women in combat units already confront the military and the Air Force. As long-held Anglo-Saxon views on family, honor, chivalry, and morality shift in the nation, we can expect that the Air Force will also be required to evolve and adopt new ideas and

norms into our institutional practices.¹³ This evolution will not always be an easy process and requires leadership at every level that is intrinsically motivated to integrate these evolving norms proactively into our service versus reactively when dictated by outside mandates. Leaders in the military regularly make assertions that taking care of people is their job. Recognizing these societal shifts and proactively addressing them from an educated and aspirationally motivated ethical viewpoint will better take care of our most valuable treasure, people.

The evolving strategic and cultural environments mentioned above are all being confronted by an Air Force that has been conducting combat operations since Desert Storm. As a part of the profession of arms charged with the domains of air, space, and cyberspace, failure is not an option. Failure in our profession means the loss of life and strategic vulnerability to our nation. As the Air Force faces the future, we must effectively meet our mission, and the way to do that is to ensure the foundation on which we build our Airmen is solid. They must know and accept what the service stands for, what we want them to be, and what it means to be an Airmen.

Current Air Force Guidance

The Air Force provides ethical guidance in doctrine, Instructions, law, and through our oaths. Air Force members, like their counterparts in the other branches, get their first introduction to ethical guidance during the Oath of Office or Enlistment. The Air Force builds on that with instruction on the Core Values, the Airman's creed, and the Constitution of the United States during initial training.¹⁴ This training is revisited periodically during follow on professional military education opportunities for both officers and enlisted members of the service.¹⁵

Doctrine and AFIs, such as the 1-1 that outline standards of conduct and guide ethical training, are also officially published.¹⁶ AFI 1-1 "describes the action, values, and standards

each Airman is expected to live by both on and off duty.”¹⁷ This instruction covers a wide array of information for Airmen spanning topics as foundational as the mission of the Air Force to as nuanced as interaction with retirees.

The problem is that “The Air Force’s approach to ethics is episodic, too heavily focused on compliance, and is reactionary to negative events.”¹⁸ AFI 1-1 is a primary example of this problem. The document was published in 2012 and had changes incorporated in 2014. In 2012 the Air Force was rocked by a sexual assault scandal in Basic Military Training at Lackland Air Force Base.¹⁹ Again in 2014, the Air Force faced a cheating scandal in the Nuclear Missileer community.²⁰ It is telling that the creation of this document and subsequent changes coincide with embarrassing public scandals that forced the Air Force to publicly correct misconduct. Second, the material is "directive in nature and failure to adhere to the standards set out in this instruction can form the basis for adverse action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice."²¹ Third, references to Ethics in the 1-1 under military ethics in section 2.3 refers primarily to legal requirements under federal regulation.²² In other words, the instruction is compliance-based, not aspirationally motivating. Finally, the Air Forces approach to ethics is episodic because ethical training happens during Professional Military Education based on rank. Completing ethical training during PME can leave gaps of years between training and in-depth discussion on ethical matters between Air Force training institutions and our Airmen. The hope is that supervisors and commanders provide interim guidance, but are they any better prepared when their ethical training happens on the same timelines?

What is an Ethic?

Throughout history, Ethics has had different meanings to different people depending on many variables.²³ Defining and understanding Ethics in a military sense is complicated due to

the unique factors surrounding service in the profession of arms, the primary being the mandate that an Airmen may have to take a life in service to their nation.²⁴ General Sir John Winthrop Hackett observed that "The military life, whether for a sailor, soldier, or airmen, is a good life. The human qualities it demands include fortitude, integrity, self-restraint loyalty to other persons, and the surrender of the advantage of the individual to the common good...What the bad man cannot be is a good sailor, or soldier, or airmen."²⁵ This statement implies that the military is a profession that potentially requires good people to do morally questionable things to achieve the right end. Understanding at a deep level what ethics is, what it can teach, and how it can help our profession is therefore critical.

Military ethics are guided primarily by three general schools of philosophical thought. The first is virtue theory, which assumes that "there is a universal standard of good and evil."²⁶ One of the primary questions for a virtue theorist is what is the "life most worth living."²⁷ The other school is the Utilitarian theory, which is framed by three primary assertions. First, is "moral value is to be found in the consequences of an action."²⁸ The second acknowledges all people are equal, and includes the idea of subordinating personal interests for those of the group.²⁹ Finally, happiness and unhappiness are simply pleasure and suffering, respectively. This relationship also carries an understanding that while the divide between these two states is simple, the quality of the happiness or the degree of suffering must also be considered.³⁰ Not all happiness is of equal quality, and some suffering may be required to achieve the greater good. All three of these schools of thought inform military ethics. A commander debating the legitimacy of striking a target with collateral damage concerns in the area is weighing the consequences of that action. The Air Force clearly articulates in the core values that we expect service before self or the subordination of personal interests to those of the group. Finally, that

commander weighing the strike is balancing the suffering the attack will cause against the potential pain of allowing the target to remain.

Director of the International Society for Military Ethics, Dr. Bill Rhodes, states, "Making choices is at the heart of ethics."³¹ Ethics is a study of what someone ought to do. Therefore ethics attributes an idea of freedom in that decision-making process.³² Dr. Rhodes goes on to extrapolate that ethics is a discipline that "does not aim to describe the world of human conduct as it is, but rather prescribe how things ought to be, providing a roadmap for informing decisions and improving the reality of life."³³ That seems straight forward, but in a military sense, there may not be a right or wrong answer to improving the reality of life, only a better or worse one. Decisions made in the military constrained by circumstances and political considerations often leave an Airmen without a right answer.³⁴ Therefore one aspect of defining ethics is the idea that in part ethics is the study of what we ought to do, who we ought to be, and underlying all of that what should the Air Force turn you into as an Airmen when you join our ranks?³⁵

Building on this idea, Joseph Toner said ethics, "also entails acting wisely and resolutely upon judgments we make. Ethics derives from custom, from rules, goals, and circumstances. A mature, settled sense of ethics understands and incorporates all sources in wise decision-making. Achieving a mature sense of ethics requires character, which is developed by rigorous education and fixed by virtuous habit."³⁶ Knowing what we ought to do and be only takes us part of the way. Ethics is also about acting on the sum of our ever-growing knowledge base with the intent of making an ethically reasoned decision that balances the constraints of our circumstances with proper action. This balance is especially vital in our current and evolving threat environment while also being applied in our daily private and professional lives. It is also important to note

that this infers we have a duty to specifically train Airmen in ethics beyond a comprehension level understanding as they progress through the ranks.

The Parliament of Religions defines ethics as "A Fundamental consensus on binding values, irrevocable standards, and personal attitudes."³⁷ The Air Force has articulated binding values as prescribed by our core values. It's important to note that while some may feel these are the ethical foundations of the Air Force, the reality is that values are not ethics; they are elements of an ethic. Ethics refers to the system of principles for conduct that approaches answers to morality. At the same time, a value is a principle that informs a practitioner on the level of importance to a given group.³⁸ Ethics determines the rightness or wrongness of options, while values denote the level of importance.³⁹ The two are both required and deeply intertwined, but they are different. Simply stating, "This ethic is the set of values that guides the way Airmen live and perform," as the AFDD Vol 2 does, is inaccurate from an ethical philosophy perspective as the document is referring only to the core values and defining the Air Force's meaning behind them. Further, the fundamental consensus is what is lacking in our current guidance.

Specifically, in the realm of personal attitudes. Identification in the Air Force tends to revolve around an Air Force Specialty Code or technical skill set, which often leads Airmen to view themselves as their job and less as an Airmen. Gen Mosley directed the creation of the Airman's creed with the intent of instilling a warrior ethos as an attempt to degrade this tendency.⁴⁰ The Air Force needs to merge these separate ethical documents into a single one with a clear unifying theme that helps Airmen understand and internalize the ethical considerations of being an Airmen.

From these various definitions of ethics, the most applicable one at the Doctrine level is the idea that an Ethic is "A Fundamental consensus on binding values, irrevocable standards, and

personal attitudes."⁴¹ However, it is essential to acknowledge that behind that definition, the Air Force must also provide a framework to help shape an Airmen's ethical decision-making process because that is what will shape personal attitudes, which in turn reinforces the adherence to values and irrevocable standards. The overarching framework for the Air Force Ethic intertwines with the fact we are members of the profession of arms.

The Framework of the Ethic

Characteristics of a profession include special skills or knowledge, devotion to service, and a sense of collectiveness.⁴² Members of a profession receive the privilege of exercising these characteristics due to society's trust that they will honorably, efficiently, and reliably execute their duties.⁴³ The profession of arms shares these characteristics with other professions from the civilian sector. However, each profession differs in the amount of emphasis placed on value sets and aspects that define the unique skills that define their duties.

The profession of arms area of expertise is the application of military power, or as Harold Lasswell once said, "the management of violence."⁴⁴ The Air Force and the other branches of the Department of Defense share this responsibility with the Air Force, further specializing in the application of Air, Space, and Cyberspace power. This mission is unique to the Air Force, but the framework that defines membership in the profession of arms is similar between each of the branches of the Armed services. The Army has an articulated ethic outlined in doctrine that outlines a framework of service, expertise, and stewardship.⁴⁵ Due to shared membership in the profession of arms, many of the themes found in the Army ethic also apply to Air Force ethics. The framework that I have selected for the Air Force Ethic also includes service, expertise, and stewardship as defined categories.

The similarities in the framework are not a mirror of the Army Ethic; it is an acknowledgment that the overarching duty we are entrusted with, the defense of our nation, is similar and, therefore, the requirements for membership in our professions is also related from an ethical perspective. The Air Force Ethic is written to capture the culture that makes an Airman different from other members of the profession of arms. The various branches of the military form a sub-culture under the overarching ethos of the Department of Defense. Each branch has more in common with the other than a civilian profession. Therefore, many ethical considerations for a branch of the military will be similar to the others. However, there are distinct attitudes, beliefs, and priorities that define us and make us different. The following ethic attempts to capture this succinctly.



The Air Force Ethic

I am an American Airman

The Air Force Ethic expresses who we are as Airmen. It defines the moral principles that guide our decision making both on duty and in our daily lives. Our ethic seeks to internalize our adherence to the law, the core values, the creed, Air Force instructions, and oaths from merely following rules to internalizing our shared beliefs as something we do because it is part of what makes us an Airmen.

It takes more than putting on a uniform and performing a job to be an Airman. It is a profession that is intertwined in who we are and at the heart of everything we do. We may serve one tour or an entire career, but the underpinnings of that service are the ethic that binds us together as professionals, servants of the nation, and Airmen. It is a decision we make when we take the oath and something that follows us throughout the rest of our lives. Failing to live up to the Air Force ethic is a breach of trust with those we serve, serve with, and ourselves. It brings dishonor to us all and weakens us as a service.

Airmen do what others cannot. We are the experts in the application of Air, Space, and Cyberspace power serving in the profession of arms. We have sworn to support and defend our nation and its way of life with our very lives. We have also readily accepted a moral code that sets us apart. We expect an unwavering commitment to that code from of ourselves, our peers, our followers, and our leaders. Simply put, we expect them to strive, in all things, to be worthy of the title Airman.

Service focused Professionals

Oaths, our word of honor, bind us to support and defend the Constitution, the laws of our nation, and the legal and morally ethical orders of those appointed over us. We embrace civilian authority over the military and seek to strengthen that relationship by our professional conduct. We reject and will report any illegal and immoral acts by anyone in our ranks.

Service as an Airmen is a privilege that only a few achieve. We strive to be worthy of that privilege in all that we do. We will bolster our fellow Airmen in their pursuit of this ideal.

Respect and trust are the pillars of our service. We believe all peoples, even our adversaries, should be treated with dignity and respect. Heightened personal risk, difficult circumstances, or emotions do not alleviate us of this notion. They underscore the importance of it.

Experts in the application of Air, Space, and Cyberspace power

We demand competence in our duties, the enforcement of standards of our service, and those of our career field from ourselves, our leaders, peers, and followers.

We commit ourselves to develop as members of the profession of arms, in our Air Force specialties, and as leaders and followers. We desire to grow beyond our current capabilities and understanding and seek to exceed the standard and reach for mastery of our profession.

We are examples for others to follow. Our actions align with what we know is right, place the needs of others ahead of our own, and supports the mission and others around us.

Although a member of the profession of arms, our mission is the application of combat Air, Space, and Cyberspace power in defense of our nation. We accept that we may be called upon to take life as well as risk or sacrifice our own.

Stewards of the Air Force

We are the greatest Air Force on the face of the Earth, part of the most powerful military to ever exist, and we are never satisfied with our progress. Success and failure are two sides of the same coin. One that calls for us to evolve, learn, and sharpen our abilities to meet the next challenge better than the last.

Airmen past, present, and future are part of a heritage of accepting, seeking, and driving innovation. We continually look to improve our service through technology, training, refinement of processes and techniques, and the open-minded study of new ideas.

We work to enhance the effectiveness of the Joint Force by humbly advocating for the integration of Air, Space, and CyberSpace at every level of the DoD. Humble does not imply meekness. It infers resolute and reasoned advocacy to enable the Joint Force to achieve its mission, willing to take the lead or follow as the mission type dictates.

We understand our most significant contribution to the Air Force and our nation may very well be training the next generation of Airmen. The lessons we have learned, and our experience must be passed on so that future Airmen can continue the Air Force's tradition of excellence and push the boundaries of what is possible.

Recommendations

First Recommendation: Acknowledge the Need for a Codified Air Force Ethic

The Air Force currently views the Core values as our ethic.⁴⁶ The core values are an integral part of the Air Forces system of beliefs, but values convey the degree to which a principle or value matters and what is the goal. An ethic helps inform what is morally correct in a situation.⁴⁷ Understanding the current and future operating environment, the Air Force needs to ensure Airmen understand both of these concepts. I recommend that the need for an Ethic be acknowledged by the Air University Commander and taken to the AETC Commander. As the Force Development lead, the AETC/CC seems to be the correct champion for this topic at a forum such as Corona.

Second Recommendation: Route this version of the ethic for comment and adoption

The Air Force Ethic will help elevate Airmen's understanding of what the Air Force requires them to be morally. A belief that service in the profession of arms is much more than a job or specialty code and that being an Airman is more than what you do day in day out at your work center is a byproduct of that. I attempt to succinctly capture what the Air Force desires Airmen to be in a manageable document that can be used throughout a career to lead the discussion and provide a focus of debate during ethical training in Professional Military Education. I have also attempted to capture concepts beyond AFSC, Line, and non-Line, and rated versus non-rated that are universal and bind us together as Airmen. However, getting input from each of the core leads at the HAF Staff level, ensuring to include the Total Force, will help facilitate acceptance following release.

Third Recommendation: Include the Air Force Ethic in Air Force Doctrine

The Ethic should be added to documents such as the Little Blue Book as well as the AFDD Volume 1 in addition to other Air Force ethical devices. Since these documents update on relatively rigid timelines, this white paper should be sent out in a NOTAM to commanders to use as a commander's call topic in the interim. It should also be sent to AETC to begin implementation in basic training pipelines, technical schools, and all follow on PMEs.

Fourth Recommendation: Air Force Leadership Support

The inclusion of the Air Force Ethic in doctrine must be supported by Air Force leadership publicly. Ideally, the Chief of Staff, Secretary of the Air Force, and the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force would make this a focus item in their engagements throughout the Air Force. Also, CSAF should make a clear statement that an Airmen's adherence to ethics is a deciding factor in their ability to promote and lead other Airmen. The Ethic could tailor into efforts to fine-tune the Air Force promotion system, especially in the Officer Corp, by providing leaders the ability to grade their Airmen on how well they meet the ideals outlined in the ethic.

Conclusion

The United States Air Force is a distinctive branch of the armed services and the profession of arms that provides expertise on the application of Air, Space, and Cyberspace Power. Our core values, creeds, oaths, and operating instructions tell us what the Air Force expects of us and how we should do our jobs, but they do not tell us who we are. They do not link compliance-based behavior to a stronger aspirational desire.

The purpose of the Air Force Ethic is to provide a fundamental consensus on what the Air Force values and how we define being an Airman. The intent is to link the Core values, standards, culture, Air Force Instructions, and doctrine into an aspirational statement of what an Airmen is. This statement will be the cornerstone of training Airmen on what it means to be one

of us. If Airmen understand who and what the service expects them to be, internalize it, and are aspirationally motivated to achieve that, then they will exceed expectations. They will also be able to meet the challenges that await them in the complex and fast-paced operational environment they face. The Air Force ethic should be introduced in a member's accession source and built upon in greater detail during subsequent Professional Military Training opportunities exploring the differences and challenges that they will experience at various stages of service.

Notes

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- ²⁸ Rhodes, 10.
- ²⁹ Rhodes, 11.
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- ³¹ Rhodes, 2.
- ³² Rhodes, 2.
- ³³ Rhodes, 3.
- ³⁴ Rhodes, 20.
- ³⁵ Rhodes, 53.
- ³⁶ Toner, 21.
- ³⁷ Parliament of Religions, 5.
- ³⁸ Surbhi, S. "Difference Between Ethics and Values." *Key Differences*. Last modified July 15, 2017. Access Jan 1, 2020. <https://keydifferences.com/difference-between-ethics-and-values.html>
- ³⁹ Surbhi, <https://keydifferences.com/difference-between-ethics-and-values.html>
- ⁴⁰ Air Force Doctrine Document Volume 2 (AFDD Vol 2), *Leadership*, 8 August 2015, 26
- ⁴¹ Parliament of Religions, 5.
- ⁴² Richard Swain and Albert Pierce, *The Armed Forces Officer* (Washington D.C.: National Defense University Press, 2017), 19.
- ⁴³ Swain and Pierce, 19.
- ⁴⁴ Swain and Pierce, 20.
- ⁴⁵ Center for the Army Profession and Ethic. White Paper. "The Army Ethic," 11 July 2014, 11.
- ⁴⁶ AFDD Vol 1, Chap 2 pg XX
- ⁴⁷ Surbhi, <https://keydifferences.com/difference-between-ethics-and-values.html>