

Positive Leadership



COURSE OVERVIEW

Positive Leadership: Biblical Influence & Cultural Impact is a 15-week senior elective designed to bridge the gap between biblical and classical formation and real-world leadership. Meeting twice per week for 55 minutes (approximately 29 class meetings), the course prepares seniors to lead themselves, build healthy cultures, navigate conflict, and influence the world with conviction, humility, and courage. The course draws its framework from Scripture and classical virtue, utilizing modern leadership voices — Simon Sinek, Jon Gordon, and Ryan Leak — as practical tools for application and discussion.

COURSE PHILOSOPHY

Leadership begins with purpose, is proven through service, matures through failure and conflict, and leaves a legacy through faithful influence.

The course operates under the conviction that true leadership is a form of Christian stewardship. A leader does not own his position, his influence, or his gifts — he is responsible for them before God and before others. That conviction shapes everything in this course: how purpose is defined, how trust is built, how conflict is handled, and how legacy is pursued.

Modern leadership voices provide useful language and practical habits, but Scripture remains the final authority on what constitutes a life well-lived and a leader worth following. Classical virtue provides the character framework through which all leadership concepts are evaluated. Prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance are not vocabulary words for this course — they are categories of formation that students are expected to apply personally and defend biblically.

Students are expected to think carefully, speak honestly, listen well, and apply the material to their own lives. Cheap answers, passive engagement, and lazy thinking are not acceptable. Neither is dominating the room or mocking others. The standard is high because the stakes are real.

COURSE GOALS

- 1 Ground students in a biblical understanding of servant leadership and Christian stewardship.
- 2 Equip students with practical habits for self-leadership, disciplined thought, and resilience.
- 3 Train students to build trust, shape positive culture, and take responsibility for their environments.
- 4 Prepare students to handle difficult people, failure, and conflict with truth and love.
- 5 Clarify a long-term vision for faithful influence beyond graduation.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Articulate a personal philosophy of leadership rooted in biblical worldview and classical virtue.

- Explain and apply key leadership frameworks drawn from Sinek, Gordon, and Leak, evaluated through Scripture.
- Identify the habits, attitudes, and behaviors that build or destroy trust and culture in any environment.
- Analyze real-world leadership scenarios and propose wise, courageous, and just responses.
- Demonstrate the ability to communicate honestly, listen carefully, and disagree respectfully in a group setting.
- Defend their leadership convictions biblically and logically under pressure.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Required Books

Students are expected to purchase or obtain access to all required books before the course begins. Books may be purchased in print or accessed via Audible. Students who listen on Audible should plan to take notes during listening sessions. These books are not textbooks to be discarded at the end of the semester. They are tools you will return to long after this course ends.

#	Title	Author	Primary Use in Course
1	<i>Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action</i>	Simon Sinek	Unit I — Purpose, calling, identity
2	<i>Leaders Eat Last: Why Some Teams Pull Together and Others Don't</i>	Simon Sinek	Unit II — Trust, servant leadership, culture
3	<i>The Infinite Game</i>	Simon Sinek	Unit IV — Vision, long-term thinking, legacy
4	<i>The Power of Positive Leadership</i>	Jon Gordon	Units I–IV — Practical leadership toolkit
5	<i>Chasing Failure: How Falling Short Sets You Up for Success</i>	Ryan Leak	Units I & III — Failure, courage, resilience
6	<i>How to Work with Complicated People</i>	Ryan Leak	Unit III — Difficult people, conflict, communication

Recommended purchase: [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) (print) or [Audible.com](https://www.audible.com) (audio). All six titles are available in both formats. Students who prefer print are encouraged to annotate their books throughout the semester.

A note on Jon Gordon: The course also draws from Jon Gordon's *Positive Leadership Framework Workbook*, which will be provided in class. Students do not need to purchase additional Gordon titles beyond *The Power of Positive Leadership*.

A note on Ryan Leak: Selected concepts from *Leveling Up* will be incorporated into class discussion and provided materials. Students do not need to purchase that title separately.

Additional Materials

- Bible (ESV or similar translation; students should bring this to class)
- Student Leadership Journal (A printed workbook provided by MCA containing weekly reflection prompts, Scripture connections, and application exercises)
- Selected handouts and readings (provided in class)

GRADING STRUCTURE

The course emphasizes thoughtful contribution, practical application, and clear communication. Grades reflect the quality of engagement, not simply the completion of tasks.

Category	Weight	Description
Contribution and Discussion	30%	Graded on quality, preparation, respect, clarity, and personal application — not volume
Writing and Reflection	25%	Journal entries, short essays, and reflection papers
Presentations	25%	Case studies, group presentations, and the final philosophy presentation
Exams	20%	Midterm and Final exams covering core concepts, biblical anchors, and practical application

On contribution grades: Students are not rewarded for talking the most. They are rewarded for thinking carefully, preparing honestly, engaging respectfully, and applying the material to their own lives. A student who speaks twice with clarity and conviction will outperform a student who talks constantly but says nothing.

Major Assessments

#	Assessment	Unit	Type
1	Leadership Definition Essay	Unit I	Written
2	Personal Why Statement	Unit I	Written Reflection
3	Leadership and Culture Case Study Presentation	Unit II	Presentation
4	Midterm Exam	End of Unit II	Exam
5	Group Leadership Presentation	Unit III	Presentation
6	Conflict Resolution Scenarios	Unit III	Written/Applied
7	Personal Leadership Philosophy Presentation	Unit IV	Presentation
8	Comprehensive Final Exam	End of Unit IV	Exam

There are two major exams in this course: the Midterm and the Final. Low-stakes reading checks or discussion preparation checks may be used at the teacher's discretion but will not add unnecessary assessment weight to the course.

TURN IT IN SYSTEM

Turnitin is an internet-based service and tool that promotes academic integrity and original thought from students. Turnitin screens for similarity (plagiarism) and detects unauthorized A.I. usage in writing.

Students for this class are required to submit all their major writing assignments through Turnitin.

Grades for these assignments will not be entered into FACTS/RenWeb until the student has submitted their work through Turnitin. If a required assignment has not been uploaded by the deadline, then the tutor will enter a Missing Grade into FACTS and include a comment explaining why until the paper has been properly submitted.

Tutors will use the tools and the feedback Turnitin provides to help them make a more informed decision about the integrity and originality of the students' work.

MCA Schoolwide Policies

MCA ATTENDANCE POLICY

Absence: Parents must inform the school if their student will be absent for any reason. Call the Front Office or email upperschoolnurse@mcaknights.org prior to the absence or on the morning of the absence. If a student is absent without prior notification by a parent, the school will call the parent to determine the validity of the absence. Call the office, 432-694-0995, or email upperschoolnurse@mcaknights.org.

In the event an Upper School student is absent for more than one-fourth (1/4) of the class sessions during a semester, the student's parents must meet with the tutor and Head Administrator to determine whether the student will receive credit for the class. Additional and/or make-up work may be required.

Tardy Policy: Tardies will be marked at the discretion of the individual tutors. Students or parents should contact the individual tutors to report reasons for tardies as soon as possible.

Missed Assignment Due Date Guidelines: In the event of an absence, a due date extension will be given. The extension will not exceed the number of school days missed during the absence. Due dates will be established by the class tutor. Students must complete all work assigned during their absence. However, the tutors may, at their discretion, excuse the students from any portion of the assignments missed. Students will receive full credit for submitting assigned work. Note: It is the **student's responsibility** to find out what work was assigned. In the case of extended illness, it is recommended that the student or parents contact the tutors directly to find out what assignments were or will be missed.

MCA HONESTY POLICY

All students are assumed to be exhibiting the godly fruit of self-control. We anticipate working with students who are characterized by joy, honesty, and diligence. For this reason, upon enrollment, we require that each student affirm that he or she will maintain the highest standards of honesty and behavior in all work done for Midland Classical Academy. All students will be asked to sign the following.

Pledge of Academic Honesty

I have read and understand the Midland Classical Academy Code of Conduct. I pledge my honor, with God as my witness, to commit myself to the practice and preservation of these standards of academic honesty as long as I am a student of the academy.

As such, the following actions are considered serious violations of our Honesty Policy.

1. Directly copying someone else's work visually, orally, electronically, or otherwise.
2. Use of disallowed devices on assignments such as notes, smartphones, books, etc.
3. Getting test questions or essential information from another student who has already completed an assignment that will later be taken, such as a test or quiz.
4. Any other activity that the tutor has explicitly described as cheating.

MCA MASTERY WITH HONORS (MH)

Midland Classical Academy offers honors credit, referred to as "Mastery with Honor", but we offer no "honors" classes.

Mastery with Honor credit for a class is given to those students who

- receive a minimum grade of 92.5 at the end of each semester

- receive a minimum participation grade of 85 at the end of each semester
- demonstrate character befitting an honor student (1 Corinthians 10:31)
- complete a tutor-approved, 20+ hour project that advances the student's knowledge or skills in the subject while serving either the school or the community in some capacity.

As a student fulfills these requirements in a class at MCA, they receive a Mastery with Honor designated by an "MH" for the class. Mastery with Honor applications and a nominal fee are due at the end of October. The projects themselves are due at the end of March with two scheduled checkpoints in between the application and final deadline.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (A.I.) POLICY

Artificial Intelligence programs are tools that can be used beneficially or harmfully. To the extent that MCA uses these A.I. tools, we desire to use them and instruct our students to use them beneficially. It requires the classical virtue of "Wisdom" to discern the difference between what is beneficial and what is harmful.

Among MCA's core values is "Engaging Minds". Everything we do, including our use of A.I. needs to be in harmony with this value and to cultivate within students the skill of being able to "think for themselves".

MCA offers the following principles for tutors & students to follow as they navigate A.I. in their academic domains. MCA tutors will create and clearly communicate their own instructions for A.I. usage in their classrooms and for their assignments. Students should practice integrity, honesty, and humility in their use of A.I. as in all their work.

Principle 1: *Why to use A.I.* - A.I. should only be used by a student to equip them to better understand the material and to learn in a way that facilitates their critical thinking skills.

Principle 2: *When to use A.I.* - Tutors will explicitly and clearly communicate which assignments a student may or may not use A.I. tools to assist in their learning.

Principle 3: *How to use A.I.* - Tutors will explicitly and clearly communicate the method in which it is acceptable and not acceptable for the student to use A.I. tools.