The course is designed to provide junior regular SAF officers with an introductory-level appreciation of the science and practice of military leadership, i.e., key concepts and issues related to military leadership from a social-behavioural science perspective (especially military psychology and sociology) as articulated and applied in contemporary military doctrines and organisations. The focus will be on “direct-level” or “team leadership”. It has three main themes: (1) the human dimension of military operations and organisation; (2) the main approaches to direct or team-level leadership as they relate to the SAF Leadership 24-7 framework (i.e., “Self”/trait-approach and “Values”/ethical leadership, “Styles” and “Behaviours”); (3) the challenges of leadership in 21st century military operations, organisations and the 21st century military profession.

Besides learning key leadership-related concepts and issues, students will also be exposed to key events, institutions and social-behavioural scientific research programmes that have shaped contemporary military leadership doctrines and systems (e.g., leadership selection, leadership and team training and development, organizational learning and change, etc).

The geopolitical region of Southeast Asia is Singapore’s security environment in times of both peace and war. This largely decolonized patchwork of 10 nation-states still strives to overcome by “nation-building” the deeply-ingrained limitations of traditional ways of organizing society and government, as well as divisive legacies of Western colonialism, which previously strategized to secure the regions resources against rival powers both global and local. Ironically, the modern and competing nationalisms that defined these nation-states would at times worsen the climate of insecurity and conflict. Crucially, this context has shaped not only the security perceptions and priorities of defence planners in Singapore, but also the developmental trajectories of the Singapore Armed Forces from its inception to today’s Third-Generation force. Galvanized by the political forces that continue to transform Southeast Asia, the
The evolving security landscape presents new security challenges that the Singapore Armed Forces must respond to.

This course enables students to appreciate why Southeast Asian states cannot divorce their international relations from their indigenous context of pursuing development amid political and economic struggle. The nature of Southeast Asian regionalism today bears these hallmarks of domestic politicization, even as external powers contend with regional states for leadership. Equally, preparing for war in times of peace, students acquire a proper contextual understanding of the Singapore Armed Forces, its evolving shape, and likely missions and challenges.