

## Program Overview

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The Ministry of Defense Advisors (MoDA) program was initiated in 2009 to create a critical new means of capacity building in Afghanistan. Prior efforts had focused heavily on improving the tactical proficiency of Afghan security forces, but often neglected ministerial capacity building. The MoDA initiative reflected the realization that effective and accountable defense institutions must sustain hard-won tactical gains. The program has since expanded to deploy advisors to partner nations around the world.

MoDA civilians typically have 15 or more years of federal service experience in defense support and enabling functions such as logistics, finance, personnel, communications, public works, public affairs, and intelligence. They come from organizations throughout the DoD system. Students receive intensive instruction in the operational environment, culture, language, advising skills, personal security, and civilian-military coordination.

The MoDA Program Management Office at the Defense Cooperation Security Agency (DSCA) manages the seven-week MoDA Training Program. The pilot training event took place in May and June of 2010. Over the course of 14 iterations of training, over 200 civilians have deployed by way of the program. In 2012 MoDA expanded to global operations. As of 2014, MoDA civilians have deployed to Kosovo, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, and Indonesia.

Training consists of a core of general advising classes supported by country-specific modules for: security; country, culture and language familiarization; and policy and programs.

The goals of the training program are to:

- Teach functional experts the necessary tools, approaches, and skills to become effective mentors, advisors, and capacity builders.
- Impart cultural, historical, and political knowledge of the host country's MoD and MoI environment.
- Prepare advisors to be safe, resilient, and adaptable during their deployment.

## Translating Requirements into Curriculum

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In-theater requirements and lessons learned from past advisory missions form the basis for course content. One challenge in meeting these requirements is to **teach both the art and science of advising**.

The guiding principles contained in the MoDA **Code of Conduct** capture much of the **art** of advising, while the **knowledge and skills topics** derived from a variety of sources represent the **science** that supports the art.

**Course, module and lesson objectives** provide an integrated, nested architecture through which Code of Conduct principles and the knowledge and skills are taught and assessed. Underpinning this academic framework is an integrated, robust assessment process. The link between the course design and assessment process are the performance standards for each lesson objective.

## Code of Conduct

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The MoDA code of conduct commits the advisor to a set of principles that allow him or her to fulfill the MoDA program's purpose. The code provides guiding principles for an advisor's plans and actions and greatly influences the design and methodologies of the MoDA training course. The tenets of the code are woven throughout each module and lesson, and fall into three general groupings: personal conduct for relationship building, capacity building, and personal responsibility. These correlate directly to the course objectives.

- **Personal Conduct for Relationship Building ---**

- Provide competent advice, with humility, empathy and respect for their host-nation counterparts and institutions.
- Uphold the highest standards of professionalism worthy of a representative of the United States Government.

- **Capacity Building ---**

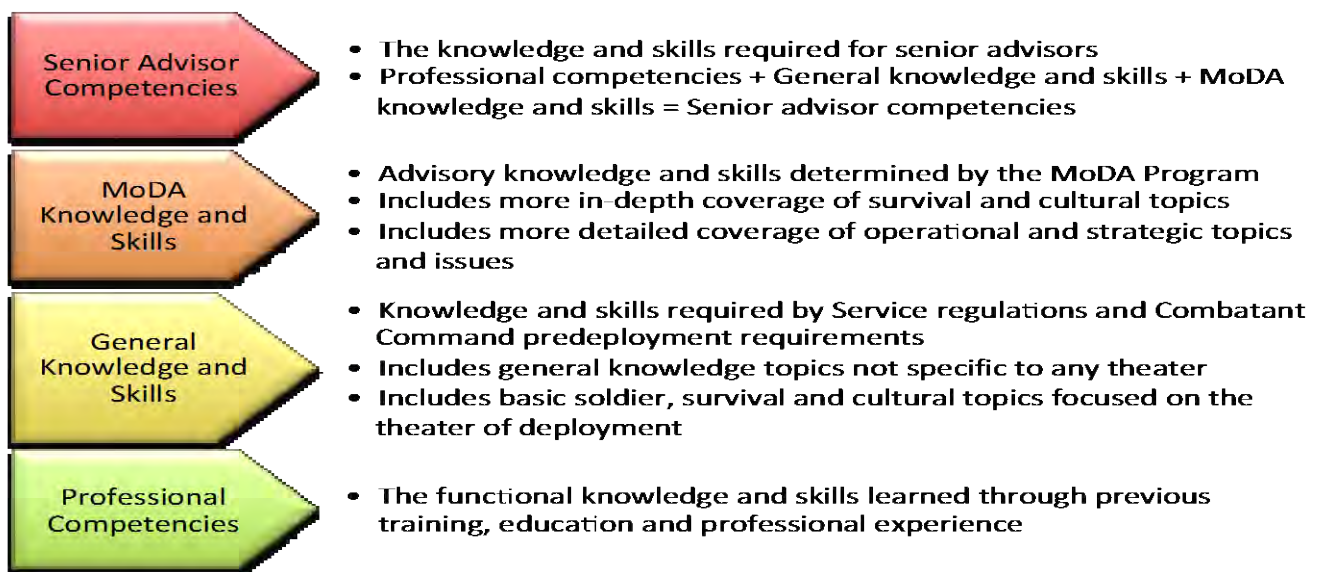
- Promote local ownership and pursue inclusive policies that place host-nation partners in the lead.
- Emphasize sustainability when building partner capacity, and prioritize actions that produce enduring benefits.
- Do no harm, by actively coordinating development activities, considering their potential effects on power dynamics, and anticipating unintended consequences.

- **Personal Responsibility ---**

- Pay due regard to their mental and physical health, and take personal responsibility for their conduct and security within the terms expressed by the relevant authorities.

## Knowledge and Skills

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A fundamental training design assumption is that students do not need training on professional competencies within their areas of expertise, but need considerable training to prepare for cross-culture advising in an impoverished, war-torn country in transition. Therefore, a primary course challenge is to provide the knowledge and skills enabling transformation of functional professional competencies into advisor competencies.

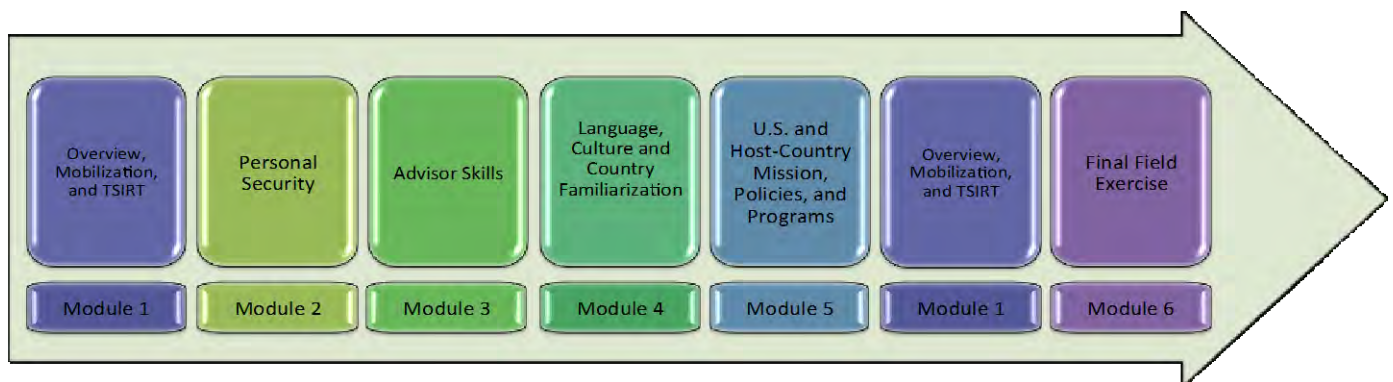
## Course Objectives

Nine course objectives provide the overarching direction for the course’s approach to prepare functional experts for the advising mission. These broad learning objectives help establish the parameters of the course’s modular design, and provide the framework for detailed module and lesson objectives and measures of performance.

- **Practice** awareness and skills to maintain personal safety and security while deployed
- **Comprehend** in overview the history, culture, demography and religion of the host nation as well as its relationships with regional actors and international institutions
- **Demonstrate** familiarity and comfort with host country language, culture and customs
- **Understand** the purpose and role of a ministerial advisor
- **Demonstrate** effective cross-culture behaviors for relationship building: listening, problem solving skills, tact, listening skills, humility, respect and empathy
- **Apply** approaches, techniques, and tools for capacity building
- **Understand** situational factors related to supporting a specific U.S. mission as a ministerial advisor
- **Develop** habits and practices for effectively operating in a foreign, stressful, austere and/or complex environment
- **Analyze** personal/team performance in problem assessment, prioritization, planning, engagement, and after-action review

## Modular Course Structure

**Course objectives are fulfilled through six modules sequenced across seven weeks**, beginning with theater-specific individual requirements training and building towards a final, immersive role-play exercise.



The modular structure allows the course to be tailored to specific operational environments.

- **Module #1** is specific to the requirements of the supported combatant command.
- The contents and duration of **Module #2**, Personal Security, depends on the security environment of the theater; contents of this module for a permissive environment, for example, would not include all of the topics required for the Afghanistan version of the course.
- **Module #3** contains the core skills of the advising mission and therefore is designed to be applicable to any deployment country with minor modification.

- **Modules #4, #5, and #6** are more country-specific, with the scope of topics within the module remaining relatively standard for any theater of deployment. Usually this is accomplished through country-specific discussions or practical exercises supporting the didactic instruction.

The first two weeks of training are dedicated to administrative pre-deployment preparation and personal security training at Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center (CAJMTC) in Indiana and nearby Muscatatuck Urban Training Center (MUTC). The focus here is on topics contained in Modules #1 and #2, illustrated in the above graphic and described in the following paragraphs. Instruction on Module #3 also begins at MUTC.



The next three weeks are classroom-based learning held in Arlington, VA, near the Pentagon. The academic focus here is on topics contained in Modules #3 and #4.

Students deploying to Afghanistan return to Indiana for two weeks to complete final pre-deployment preparation (Module #1) and participate in ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) Advisor Training (Modules #5 and #6). ISAF Advisor Training consists of refresher personal security training, the ISAF-specific mission, programs, and policies, and the final field

exercises at MUTC.

## Individual Modules

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**Module 1: Orientation, Mobilization and Theater Specific Individual Requirements Training (TSIRT)** encompasses three areas: general lessons or administrative briefings specific to the MoDA Program; mobilization actions; and online or classroom pre-deployment requirements for civilians, as determined by the Combatant Command.

**Module 2: Personal Security Training** instruction provides an introduction to topics which include: Situational Awareness, Predictive Threat Profiling, Observation Skills, Insider Threat Awareness/Drills, Personal Security Drills, Improving Human Performance and Tactical Driver Training.

**Module 3: Advisor Skills** instruction provides understanding and application of advising as well as navigating cross-cultural barriers. Topics include: Active Listening, Roles of the Advisor, Cross-Cultural Adaptability, Working with Interpreters, Negotiation and Mediation, Conflict Resolution, Risk Communication and Institutional Reform.

**Module 4: Language, Culture and Country Familiarization** instruction provides an understanding of the history and culture of the host country. Topics include an overview of the host country's Recent History, Political System, Government and Governance, Geopolitics, and (for Afghanistan) Islam and Counterinsurgency.

**Module 5: U.S. and Host Country Mission, Policies, and Programs** instruction details the current status of and issues related to the mission, national priorities, plans and programs. Topics for advisors deploying to Afghanistan include: Rule of Law, Governing Institutions, informal power structures, Ministry of Interior/Afghan National Police Organizations, Security Transition, Afghan National Security Force organization, Budgeting in Transition, and ISAF's Security Force Assistance strategy.

**Module 6: Final Field Exercises** are a culmination of all the learning that occurs throughout the course. Knowledge acquired from the other modules is applied in immersive role-play vignettes with Afghan counterparts from the Ministry of Defense or Ministry of Interior.



## Design and Methodology Characteristics

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In addition to the academic and modular structure of the course, the design includes critical characteristics that enhance the structure and content of the course. Characteristics are founded among observations from program participants and managers as well as lessons learned from surveys of similar courses.

**Participatory Learning Approach.** The academic phase consists of more than stand-alone lectures. Instructors and facilitators implement a participatory learning approach, with an aim to get the students thinking and talking. Daily student briefings, exercises, workshops, practical application and/or simulations allow students to integrate and reflect on the course material. Students analyze and discuss case studies, work in groups, present, teach and role-play.

**Practical Exercise and Vignette Philosophy.** To complement the participatory learning approach, practical exercises done within the classroom, provide the basics for applying learned skills within the larger context of complex, multi-issue field exercises.

**Tensions.** Advisors will face a variety of dilemmas --- or “tensions” --- in the course of their jobs. Rather than being presented as “either/or” choices, the complexity and competing demands of the job requires advisors to prioritize and carefully navigate situations in order to accomplish their missions successfully. Recognition of these tensions is built into the discussions and vignettes, familiarizing students before they deploy.

**Special Guest Speakers.** World-class experts and practitioners provide lunch-hour lectures, which often prove to be the highlights of the course. Current and past speakers include former U.S. Ambassadors, Department of Defense officials, Department of State officials, and retired military officers.

**Facilitators.** Senior facilitators are selected on the basis of their reputations and experience as classroom facilitators, advisors and leaders in their field. They include individuals who have served at senior levels within the government, the interagency and the military. The senior facilitator’s primary responsibility is to facilitate end-of-day group discussions in which students discuss and integrate the day’s learning.

**Advising Toolkit.** Instructors provide concrete, practical tools. The intent is that students may apply takeaways from the instructor’s sessions to the problems and challenges of high-level advising in partner security ministries. Visual representations or other memory aids for each tool are included in the student handbook.

**Community Partner Meetings.** Students are connected with a cultural partner from the host country of their deployment. They meet with their partner weekly during the academic phase of training.

**Host Nation Language Instruction.** Students receive 90 minutes of language instruction daily in small groups (three students to one native instructor) during the academic phase of training.

**Student Evaluation.** The requirement for quick, honest and comprehensive evaluation of advisors is critical. The comprehensive evaluation process evaluates students with a variety of methods, including classroom observation, appraisal of student products, academic assessments and peer assessments.

## Course Points of Contact

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