

Military Academy: Merchant Marine Academy

Introduction

Congress passed the landmark Merchant Marine Act in 1936, and two years later, the U.S. Merchant Marine Cadet Corps was established. The first training was given at temporary facilities until the Academy's permanent site in Kings Point, New York was acquired in early 1942. Construction of the Academy began immediately, and in 15 months it was completed. The Academy was dedicated on September 30, 1943, by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who noted that "the Academy serves the Merchant Marine as West Point serves the Army and Annapolis the Navy."



Most recently, Merchant Marine Academy midshipmen and graduates have been involved in many facets of the war in Iraq. Many graduates were involved in the transportation of supplies during the buildup to the war in 2003. Many graduates in the Naval Reserve have been called to serve supporting naval roles in ports in Iraq and Kuwait. Graduates who have entered other branches of the service have had more direct roles in Iraq.

In addition to requiring strong GPA and SAT/ACT scores, the Academy, along with all of the other federal service academies except the United States Coast Guard Academy, requires that the Due to the service of Midshipmen in every major conflict the country has been involved in since World War II, the regiment is privileged to carry a regimental battle standard. The Merchant Marine Academy is the only Federal Service Academy granted the right to do so, and the standard is carried with the colors at all times. Campaign ribbons from all the conflicts Midshipmen have taken part in help to dress the battle standard, and bring honor to the academy

Admissions

In addition to requiring strong GPA and SAT/ACT scores, the Academy, along with all of the other federal service academies except the United States Coast Guard Academy, requires that the candidate be nominated by a U.S. Representative or U.S. Senator.

Applicants are required to write an essay, obtain letters of recommendation from three sources (including one from their guidance counselor), take the DoDMERB (Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board) physical, and take the Candidate Fitness Assessment (CFA) to assess their physical fitness.

Organization

The Academy is funded by the US Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration and is administered by the United States Maritime Service.

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The entire student body is referred to as the Regiment of Midshipmen. The Regiment is subdivided into two battalions and six companies: First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Band, with First and Second Companies making up First Battalion and Third, Fourth, and Fifth Companies making up Second Battalion. Company assignment is random, although candidates who admit to having experience playing a musical instrument when they report to the Academy are steered towards joining Band Company.

Curriculum

Freshmen, known as plebes, start in early July where they begin a two and a half week indoctrination period, also known as "indoc." Indoc is functionally run by upperclassmen but is overseen by officers of the United States Maritime Service who are part of the Commandant of Midshipman's staff. This high stress period involves physical training, marching, and an intensive introduction to regimental life at the academy. After the indoctrination period is completed, the academic year begins. In September, first year students officially become Midshipmen upon taking the oath of office into the U.S. Navy Reserve on Acceptance Day. Until "recognized" later in the academic year, plebes continue to be required to adhere to stringent rules affecting most aspects of their daily life.

Academy students, known as midshipmen, focus on one of two different ship transport areas of education: marine transportation or marine engineering. Transportation students learn about ship navigation, cargo handling, navigation rules and maritime law. Engineering students learn about the function of the ship's engines and its supporting systems. There are currently six different academic majors available to midshipmen. Three of them are referred to as "Deck Majors" because in addition to a Bachelor of Science degree in the major field of study: Marine Transportation, Logistics and Intermodal Transportation, and Maritime Operations and Technology; they sit for and upon successful completion of the examination are issued a Third Mate (Deck Officer) License of Steam or Motor Vessels, Unlimited Tonnage, Upon Oceans. The other three available curricula are referred to as "Engine Majors"; they are: Marine Engineering, Marine Engineering Systems, and Marine Engineering and Shipyard Management. "Engine Majors" sit for and upon successful completion of the examination are issued Third Assistant Engineer (3 A/E - Engineering Officer) Licenses Steam and Motor Vessels, Any Horsepower. Maritime Operations and Technology majors, also referred to as "Shoppers", are eligible to seek and obtain certification as "Qualified Members of Engine Department" (QMED) - the highest unlicensed rating in the engine department. Marine Engineering Systems and Marine Engineering Systems & Shipyard Management graduates are also qualified to sit for the Engineer In Training (EIT) examination administered by the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES).

For part of sophomore and junior year, known at the Academy as third class and second class year, students work as cadets on regular American merchant ships. Midshipmen are typically paired two to a ship, one engineering cadet and one deck cadet. Midshipmen work and function as part of the crew and gain an opportunity for generous amounts of hands-on experience as well as the opportunity to travel abroad to many different foreign ports. The average midshipman travels to 18 countries during this period, which totals a minimum of 300 days. Due to this absence from the Academy, the remaining three academic years span from late July, through mid-June.



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Toward the end of 1st class (senior) year, midshipmen prepare for exams to be licensed as either [Third Assistant Engineers](#) (steam and motor unlimited HP) or [Third Mates](#) (any gross tons, oceans). All American merchant marine officers must be licensed by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Midshipmen at Kings Point have a wide variety of options upon graduation. Unlike the nation's other military academies, graduates of USMMA are required to fulfill their service obligation on their own by providing annual proof of employment in a wide variety of occupations as approved by [MARAD](#) for a specified period of time.



Graduates may elect to fulfill their service obligation by working as licensed officers on U.S. flagged merchant vessels, as civilians in the maritime industry, **or as active duty officers in any branch of the armed forces of the United States.** Regardless, graduates are required to maintain their US Coast Guard issued merchant marine officer's license for a period of at least 6 years.

Those graduates electing to enter the civilian work force in the Maritime Industry, and those sailing in the Merchant Marine, are also required to maintain their Naval Reserve commission (or another reserve component commission) for a period of at least 8 years and are required to serve in the maritime industry for at least 5 years following graduation.

- On average about 1/3 of each graduating class goes to sea working in the United States Merchant Marine as officers serving on ships in overseas trade, inland & near-coastal transportation, research vessels, and other types of vessels.
- Another 1/3 generally go to work in the maritime industry ashore working in commercial shipping, ship broking, intermodal logistics, marine engineering, maritime law, maritime insurance or defense contracting.
- And, about 1/3 enter the military as active duty Commissioned Officers. Of those going on active duty most enter the US Navy as [Naval Aviators](#) or [Naval Flight Officers](#). Some midshipmen enter [Marine Corps](#) and [Coast Guard](#) aviation, while a small number enter the [US Air Force](#) and the Air [Reserve](#) or Air [National Guard](#) components. Midshipmen may also apply for commissions in the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) (NOAA) with the [NOAA Commissioned Corps](#).

For more information use the links below.

Links to UAMMA information click below:

<http://www.usmma.edu/>

<http://www.usmma.edu/academics/curriculum/default.shtml>

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Links to additional information click below:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Merchant_Marine

All academy entrance scores:

[All Academy entrance scores Fact Sheet](#)

Courtesy: {USMMA, Wikipedia}

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