



UNITED STATES MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY
KINGS POINT, NEW YORK 11024-1699



August 7, 2018

The United States Merchant Marine Academy is a national treasure with seventy-five years of distinguished service to the American people developing leaders of exemplary character who serve the United States as officers in the Merchant Marine and the Armed Forces. In January 2017, the Academy embarked on the transformational process of creating a long-term, executable strategic plan to set the course for the Academy for the next five years. The effort was guided by federal statutes and regulations, accreditation standards, and requirements for licensing officers in the Merchant Marine and commissioning officers in the Armed Forces. The Academy carried on an extended open and honest dialog with stakeholders along the way. The resulting *U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Strategic Plan 2018-2023: Navigating Towards the Future Together* is a concise and articulate description of the strategic priorities that will guide the institution for the next five years and beyond.

The *Strategic Plan* belongs to every stakeholder and interested constituent of the Academy. It is your plan. You told us what is important at USMMA. You told us the essence of this venerable institution and what it should focus on in the future. We heard you! This plan is a compendium of your suggestions. It is direction provided by those of you who hold the Academy closest to your hearts.

The level of research and inclusive dialog during the development process for the *Strategic Plan* was unparalleled. The planning staff started by gathering viewpoints from over seven hundred Midshipmen, faculty, staff, and stakeholders including the maritime industry, the military, and parents and alumni. Following analysis of this information, the Academy held a two-day, off-site planning summit with over 160 participants representing all of the above groups. The *Strategic Plan* follows from hundreds of relevant data points from interviews, surveys, sensing sessions, and the summit. It is, in its truest sense, an Academy plan produced by the Merchant Marine Academy community and family, focused on launching the Academy towards its centennial in 2043.

The plan's six strategic priorities and their supporting goals, objectives, and metrics are the framework for the actions required to implement each. They are specific, measureable and consistent with the federal law and regulations, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education standards, and requirements for Merchant Marine officer licensing and commissioning in the Armed Forces. We have formed teams for each strategic priority to develop and lead implementation of the necessary action plans. Even now, these teams are hard at work.

The 2017-18 academic year was one of the most successful in the Academy's history. The Academy received full reaccreditation by Middle States. The Class of 2018 achieved a first time pass rate of 90% on their Coast Guard licensing examinations. We continued to make progress on facilities and infrastructure. The Regiment of Midshipmen launched the *Be KP* campaign to strengthen the Academy's culture. Our athletic teams were stellar, winning the Secretaries' Cup, the Chapman Bowl, the Skyline Conference President's Award, five conference championships, and hundreds of individual awards and numerous Academy team and individual records. The Class of 2022 entered the Academy with outstanding qualifications as well as the highest percentage of women ever. On the eve of celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Academy's dedication, we are postured to go to even greater heights. The *U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Strategic Plan 2018-2023* charts our course for navigating towards the future together.

We jointly present you this plan and look forward to the voyage together.


Mark A. Byler
Maritime Administrator


Superintendent

***The U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Strategic Plan 2018-2023:
Navigating Towards the Future Together***

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The U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Strategic Plan 2018-2023: Navigating Towards the Future Together

MISSION

To educate and graduate leaders of exemplary character who are inspired to serve the national security, marine transportation, and economic needs of the United States as licensed Merchant Marine Officers and commissioned officers in the Armed Forces.

VISION

To be a diverse and welcoming community of leaders, professionals, and scholars who are dedicated to collaboration inside and outside of Vickers Gate. To live and work in a place where everyone is inspired to give his or her best every day. To be known as a center of excellence for Midshipman development and maritime innovation.

VALUES

Respect. Promote an environment where inclusion, multiculturalism, and diversity are encouraged and valued. Communicate effectively and engage in healthy relationships. Maintain the highest level of professionalism as it relates to behavior and interpersonal skills.

Honor. Be honest and trustworthy, and maintain the highest level of integrity. Take responsibility and accountability for your actions and for those you lead. Demonstrate courage and stand up for the honor of others.

Service. Generate the highest levels of trust, unity and pride in all Academy undertakings. Consider the needs of others before your own self-interest. Engage in leadership opportunities that contribute to our Nation's maritime and military interests, and our community.

INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

Leadership. Leaders of exemplary character are mentally strong, physically tough, and morally sound, especially under pressure. Graduates must be capable decision makers, communicators, and critical thinkers who reflect on and embrace the challenges of leadership and service.

Professional Expertise. Professionals are inspired to continuously develop and advance to increased levels of responsibility. Graduates must possess the knowledge and skills to perform junior officer duties in the Merchant Marine and Armed Forces.

Lifelong Learning. Leadership and professional development are lifelong undertakings. Graduates must be able to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills through self-directed learning, so they can be lifelong leaders for the Nation.

Global Understanding. Officers in the Merchant Marine and the Armed Forces operate in a global environment. Graduates must possess the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to analyze and understand a global, multicultural society.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Administer an integrated, enriching, and relevant Educational Program for Midshipmen that focuses on excellence in curriculum and delivery through seamless collaboration across academic, regimental, co-curricular, and extra-curricular Academy functions.

Goal 1: A Midshipman Educational Program that fulfills the mission of the Academy and provides the foundation for life-long professional growth for graduates

- Create a rigorous, coherent, and flexible Educational Program that provides balance for Midshipmen and focuses on development of the whole person and a well-rounded educational experience.
- Center the Midshipman development process on the Institutional Learning Outcomes and emphasize leadership and character development throughout.
- Integrate the academic and regimental curricula, other training programs, and extracurricular opportunities to create synergy in the learning that occurs inside and outside of the classroom.
- Demonstrate excellence in teaching and incorporate best practices in higher education.
- Ensure on-going relevance of the Educational Program through sustained engagement with the maritime industry and the military (Strategic Priority #5).

Goal 2: A culture of continuous assessment and improvement in educational effectiveness and Midshipman development

- Assess student learning to demonstrate that Midshipmen have achieved the Institutional Learning Outcomes across the Educational Program and communicate the results of this assessment to stakeholders.
- Integrate assessment results and input from Midshipmen, graduates, industry, and the military for continuous improvement of the Educational Program.
- Ensure optimal infrastructure (facilities and technology) to support educational effectiveness and Midshipman development (Strategic Priority #3).
- Demonstrate planning and resource allocation aligned to support educational effectiveness (Strategic Priority #4).

Metrics:

Academic performance (GPAs, academic honors, deficiency rates, summer school attendance)

Success rate for Midshipmen on academic alerts; retention and graduation rates (overall, by gender, ethnicity, and major)

Assessment of Institutional and Program Learning Outcomes

USCG license pass rates

Survey results (Graduate, Alumni, *National Survey of Student Engagement*, *Student Ratings of Instruction*)

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE

Cultivate an institutional culture in which every Academy community member is respected, valued, and can fulfill his or her maximum potential as a leader of exemplary character.

Goal 1: An Academy community that embodies the institution's Core Values as the guiding principles that define who we are

- Infuse core values into all aspects of Academy life.
- Instill a sense of personal responsibility and build shared ownership across the Academy for contributing to the desired institutional culture.
- Institutionalize a positive campus culture through social campaigns led by Midshipmen, faculty, and staff.

Goal 2: A supportive campus community that is welcoming and rich with diversity

- Foster a climate of respect amongst students, faculty, staff, and administration from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives.
- Recruit and retain highly qualified faculty, staff, and Midshipmen from a variety of backgrounds whose values align with those of the institution (Strategic Priority #4).
- Develop a comprehensive Enrollment Management Plan with aligned admission criteria.
- Demonstrate commitment to student retention and success by providing an effective support system that contributes to the educational experience of all Midshipmen.
- Ensure a supportive environment for all community members, especially those from underrepresented groups.

Goal 3: A culture of trust and respect where new and creative ideas are cultivated

- Build and align the Academy's leadership and management team across all levels of the institution (Strategic Priority #4).
- Ensure honest and transparent communication through regular engagement with internal and external stakeholders (Strategic Priority #5).
- Engage in continuous interdepartmental communication and collaboration (Strategic Priority #5).
- Provide opportunities for engagement among all members of the Academy community that will enhance inclusion, integration, and interpersonal communication and understanding.

Goal 4: An Academy community that demonstrates cultural competence grounded in the understanding that diversity adds value to the campus environment and the Midshipmen's educational experience

- Integrate elements of diversity, equality, and inclusion into the Educational Program for Midshipmen (Strategic Priority #1).
- Provide professional development programs for faculty, staff, and administration that enhance inter-cultural awareness and appreciation for diversity (Strategic Priority #4).

Metrics:

Survey results (*National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)*, Graduate, Alumni, *Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS)*, *Service Academy Gender Relations (SAGR)*)

Number of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaints and number substantiated

Midshipman participation in extra-curricular activities

Percentage of minorities and women among Midshipmen

Percentage of minorities and women among faculty, staff, and administrators

Retention and graduation rates (overall, minorities, and women)

Learning outcomes assessment on the *Leadership* and *Global Understanding* Institutional Learning Outcomes

Availability/participation in professional development opportunities for faculty and staff

Availability/participation in diversity-related educational opportunities for Midshipmen

Availability/participation in SASH-related educational opportunities for Midshipmen, faculty, and staff

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: INFRASTRUCTURE

Engage in effective planning, management and utilization of Academy infrastructure that will enable Midshipman success, provide a safe, productive, and efficient work environment for Midshipmen and employees, and facilitate stewardship and sustainability of Academy resources.

Goal 1: Campus buildings, grounds, utilities, vessels, and equipment that are safe, in a good state of repair, and in full compliance with applicable standards and regulations

- Create a Campus Master Plan that incorporates modern technology, addresses emerging priorities, and enables institutional goals.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive service delivery mechanism to accomplish deferred, preventative, and corrective maintenance in a cost effective, timely manner with high quality workmanship.
- Implement a service delivery program to accomplish Capital Improvement Program projects in a timely and efficient manner in collaboration with the internal community and external stakeholders.
- Ensure safety of Midshipmen, employees, and visitors, and security of buildings, grounds, and resources through a comprehensive security plan.

Goal 2: A comprehensive, unified plan to ensure the availability of modern technology infrastructure to support the Academy's mission and goals

- Develop an Academy-wide Technology Plan that incorporates instructional and administrative hardware and software, information management systems, and infrastructure necessary to support effective and reliable availability of technology.
 - Instructional technology: classrooms, labs, simulators
 - Management information systems under Academy control
 - Infrastructure to ensure connectivity, campus security, and morale, welfare and recreation needs of Midshipmen (i.e. Wi-Fi, cellular connectivity, etc.)

- Maintain well-defined processes for managing integration and administration of existing technology, selecting and implementing new technology, and providing support to users across the Academy.
 - Ensure integration and interoperability of systems.
 - Establish centralized management of systems.
 - Ensure appropriate approvals and controls are in place to ensure information security and compliance with federal information technology requirements.
- Ensure Midshipmen and employees have the technology and information systems expertise required to perform their duties in a highly effective manner.

Metrics:

Time to deliver Capital Improvement Program projects

Progress to reduce the deferred maintenance backlog

Compliance with federal and other regulatory standards (facilities and IT)

Time to act on service tickets (facilities and IT)

First-time ticket resolution (facilities and IT)

Reliability of access to information systems and technology

Customer satisfaction surveys

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP, AND ADMINISTRATION

Govern and lead the Academy in a manner that allows it to achieve its mission and goals in a way that benefits the institution, its Midshipmen, and the other constituencies it serves. Administer the Academy with appropriate autonomy as an institution of higher education and Federal Service Academy having education as its primary purpose.

Goal 1: Transparent alignment of Academy resources – money, people, and development opportunities – to the mission

- Create and promulgate a Human Capital Plan aligned to the mission and goals of the Academy and ensures continuity of appropriately qualified personnel.
- Ensure transparent and timely availability of information to stakeholders:
 - Fiscal expenditures by division and high-level justifications for resource allocation decisions (at appropriate budget cycle intervals)
 - Hiring priorities and status of filling positions (monthly)
 - Status of infrastructure projects (CIP and FMRE) and prioritization of unfunded needs (monthly) (Strategic Priority #3)
- Clearly articulated process for collecting stakeholder input and incorporating that input into the decision-making process.

Goal 2: Shared organizational decision-making processes and structures

- Create an effective structure for shared governance that is clearly articulated and transparent and that outlines roles, responsibilities and accountability for decision-making, including a matrix of Academy committees.

- Ensure consistent implementation of a communication plan for regular, honest, and transparent engagement with the internal community with an emphasis on conveying reasons for organizational decisions whenever possible (Strategic Priority #5).

Goal 3: Active engagement with external entities and constituencies and successful integration of resulting input into decision-making

- Ensure consistent implementation of a communication plan for regular, honest and transparent engagement with external constituents (Strategic Priority #5).
- Ensure collection and integration of constituent input into decision-making processes.

Goal 4: Effective leadership at all levels, creating an environment of mutual respect, trust, and confidence among all stakeholders

- Ensure an administration with relevant experience demonstrating credentials and professional experience consistent with the mission of the Academy and their functional roles.
- Implement a process for Academy leaders to receive inter-departmental feedback on their performance from colleagues, employees in their chain of command, and Midshipmen.
- Ensure availability of time and resources for appropriate professional development opportunities for all Academy employees to ensure they have the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to perform their duties at a highly effective level.
- Promote and reinforce Academy-wide focus on issues of diversity, equality, and inclusion through integration into human resources practices and professional development programs (Strategic Priority #2).

Metrics:

Compliance with federal regulations and requirements, accreditation requirements (MSCHE and ABET), and licensing requirements (STCW), and commissioning requirements.

Survey results (*Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS)*, *National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)*, *Alumni, Graduate, Service Academy Gender Relations (SAGR)*, *Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) Climate Survey*, etc.)

Timely dissemination of administrative information that shows the link between strategic priorities and resource allocation (budgets, hiring priorities, status of infrastructure projects, accreditation reports, assessment data)

Availability of and participation in professional development opportunities for faculty, staff, and administration

Leadership engagements with the internal community and external stakeholders

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5: COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS

Establish and maintain a comprehensive communication program designed to enhance the Academy's public image, facilitate stakeholder engagement, recruit and retain the best-qualified faculty, staff, and Midshipmen, and ensure timely and transparent messaging that builds trust and instills confidence in the institution.

Goal 1: Increased public awareness and recognition of the Academy through proactive and positive public relations, branding, and outreach

- Increase awareness of the mission of the Academy as the nation's premier maritime institution and one of the five Federal Service Academies.
- Increase organizational capacity and capability to tell the Academy's story.
- Update and refine the Academy's brand and establish a marketing plan to facilitate recruitment and retention of diverse, highly qualified faculty, staff, and Midshipmen (Strategic Priority #2).

Goal 2: A comprehensive communication plan to strengthen relationships, build trust, and instill confidence among all stakeholders

- Establish a plan for regular communication with all target audiences that addresses the need for timely and transparent information (Strategic Priority #4).
- Modernize the Academy's communications technology and establish a comprehensive social media presence (Strategic Priority #3).
- Facilitate continuous engagement with the campus community and external stakeholders necessary to achieve the Academy's mission and goals.

Metrics:

Positive news items, media postings, announcements, updates, and other publications

Website visits and prospective student and employee inquiries

Posts/likes/followers on social media

Engagements with external stakeholders

Leadership visibility at events outside the Academy

Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS)

Midshipman surveys (Graduate, Alumni, National Survey of Student Engagement, etc.)

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6: ATHLETICS

Emphasize the role and value of athletics in Midshipman development and recruiting and retaining the best and brightest Midshipmen for the Academy.

Goal 1: Physical education and athletic programs that are environments of inclusivity and community, a laboratory for leadership development, and a means of instilling the importance of lifelong health and wellness

- Create an environment where 100 percent of Midshipmen are athletes through participation in NCAA varsity sports, intramural teams, club sports, and/or organized recreation programs.
- Provide education and outreach to Midshipmen and prospective Midshipmen that instills the importance of lifelong physical fitness, health, and wellness.
- Develop leadership capacity and mental resilience in Midshipmen through physical education and athletic programs.
- Leverage athletic programs to foster an environment of inclusivity and community based on the Academy's core values.
- Provide state of the art physical education and athletics facilities to support recruitment and development of Midshipmen.

Goal 2: Competitive athletic programs with winning teams and student-athletes who demonstrate exemplary leadership and achieve success both on and off the field

- Implement a recruitment plan that supports the enrollment and retention of the best and brightest student-athletes and supports the Academy's Enrollment Management Plan.
- Recruit, hire, and retain coaches and staff committed to the Academy mission and the proper role of physical education and athletics and who are leadership role models for student-athletes.
- Develop physical education and athletics infrastructure comparable to the other Federal Service Academies to recruit and retain talented student-athletes.

Goal 3: Increased awareness of the value of physical education and athletics to achieving the mission and goals of the institution and commensurate resource allocation for athletic programs

- Create a communication plan to reinforce the importance of physical education and athletics in Midshipmen development to the Academy community and external stakeholders.
- Provide adequate funding for facilities and coaches to ensure quality and safety of all physical education and athletics programs.
- Develop and utilize appropriate financial structures and processes in order to optimize the use of appropriated and non-appropriated funds consistent with procedures used at other Federal Service Academies.

Metrics

Percentage of Midshipmen involved in NCAA, varsity, club, and intramural sports

Percentage of Midshipmen who meet the Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA) standards

Percentage of Midshipmen with physical restrictions due to injury

Percentage of student-athletes from underrepresented groups

Academic performance of student-athletes (GPAs, academic honors, deficiency rates, summer school attendance)

Retention and graduation rates of student-athletes

Number of conference championships and participation in post-season tournaments

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Chronology of Key Events

January 2017	Methodology Research and Selection
March 2017	Statement of Work Developed
April 2017	Solicitation for Appreciative Inquiry Consultants
May 2017	Contractor Selected - Innovation Partners International of the Southwest, LLC (IPI)
June 2017	Contract Signed – Appreciative Inquiry Framework
August 2017	Introductory Sessions on Appreciative Inquiry
Aug/Sep 2017	Strategic Planning Team (Core Planning Team) Training
September 2017	Interviewer Training
October 2017	Data Collection Started – Interviews/Focus Groups
November 2017	Strategic Collaboration Capacity Building Sessions
January 2018	Strategic Collaboration Capacity Building Sessions External Online Interviews Launched
February 2018	Data Collection Ended; Data Analysis Began
March 2018	Two-Day Strategic Planning Summit – Off Site
April 2018	All Hands In-Progress Review – Intro New Mission, Vision, Institutional Learning Outcomes, and Strategic Priorities
May 2018	Strategic Priority Teams Created
June 2018	Strategic Priority Team Sessions
July 2018	Strategic Plan Finalized and reviewed/approved at MARAD and DoT
August 2018	Strategic Plan launched