Admissions

Each year, the Academy selects approximately 275 to 300 young men and women for entry into the Plebe Class. They come from every State of the Union, as well as from backgrounds reflecting every facet of American life. The Academy encourages diversity and recognizes the value of a Regiment of Midshipmen representing all races, colors, creeds, and ethnic backgrounds found in this nation. Students from minority groups are strongly encouraged to apply for admission.

Certain general eligibility requirements for admission to the Academy do exist. Candidates must be of good moral character. They must be at least 17 years of age and must not have passed their 25th birthday before July 1 in the year of entrance. They must be citizens of the United States either by birth or naturalization, except for a limited number of international midshipmen specially authorized by Congress. Candidates must also meet the physical, security, and character requirements necessary for appointment as U.S. Navy Reserve, Merchant Marine Reserve midshipmen. Candidates must obtain a Congressional nomination to the Academy; submit a completed application; and qualify scholastically. The Admissions Office evaluates each candidate’s high school record and class rank, SAT or ACT standardized scores, recommendations from school officials, history of extracurricular activities, ability to pass a Candidate Fitness Assessment (CFA), and other evidence of character, leadership and potential for academic achievement. Admission to the Academy is based on all the above factors. The application deadline is March 1 (February 1 for international students).

Definition of Terms

The terminology listed below will be used frequently in this section on admission to the Academy. Candidates should familiarize themselves with these definitions:

- **Nominating Authority**: A member of the U.S. Congress (House of Representatives or Senate). Each Representative and Senator may nominate 10 candidates to the Academy each year. The President and Vice President are not nominating authorities for the Academy. In addition, the U.S. Delegate for Guam, the Virgin Islands, the District of Columbia, and the Northern Mariana Islands, as well as the Resident Commissioner from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, may nominate 10 candidates annually.

- ** Applicant**: A man or woman applying to a member of Congress for a nomination to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

- **Nomination**: Submission by a nominating authority of an applicant’s name as a nominee for consideration for appointment to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy. The applicant must be a resident of the same state or territory as the nominating authority. Students should apply to the Academy at the same time that their nomination request is being evaluated.

- **Candidate**: A man or woman who has applied to the Academy and has been designated as under consideration for admission.

- **Qualified Candidate**: A candidate who meets the minimum requirements on the standardized entrance examinations and fulfills the other minimum criteria for admission consideration.

- **Principal Candidate**: A candidate who has been found scholastically qualified and who will be admitted to the Academy contingent upon the completion of prescribed medical, security, and midshipman, USNR, MMR program requirements.

- **Alternate Candidate**: A scholastically qualified candidate who would replace
principal candidates who decline or fail to qualify for a final appointment, or who do not meet the requirements of the midshipman, USNR, MMR program.

**Remedial:** Term used to define the physical conditions requiring correction and/or compliance determined necessary by the U.S. Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DODMERB) in order to be medically qualified. (Example: Removal of impacted wisdom teeth.)

**Scholastic Requirements**

Candidates should pursue studies in high school that will prepare them for the Academy’s rigorous program. The quality of work is important. Ninety-two percent of the Class of 2016 ranked in the top 40 percent of their high school class.

To be appointed to the Academy, candidates must have satisfactorily completed their high school education at an accredited secondary school or its equivalent. They must have earned at least 18 units of credit. Four of these credit units must be in English; three units in mathematics (from Algebra, Geometry and Trigonometry); and one unit in Physics or Chemistry with a laboratory. These requirements are minimal. The Academy strongly recommends that candidates take four years of mathematics and both Physics and Chemistry. Courses in mechanical drawing and machine shop are also desirable. Successful completion of Pre-Calculus or Calculus satisfies the Trigonometry requirement.

By March 1 of the year in which they are seeking admission, candidates must submit evidence with their official application showing the completion of all academic requirements. All required courses must be completed by June 15 or by the date of graduation from high school. Time extensions will not be granted.

**Testing**

All candidates are required to take either the standardized College Board’s Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT I) or the standardized American College Testing Program’s test (ACT) on scheduled dates at convenient testing centers throughout the country. Required testing must be completed by the first test date of the year in which admission is sought, unless permission is requested and received, in writing, from the Academy’s Director of Admissions. All tests should be taken within 16 months prior to the month of enrollment. The minimum standardized SAT I or standardized ACT qualifying scores for admission will be determined by the Academy for each entering class. The Academy does not accept the non-standard, or un-timed, administration of the SAT or ACT.

It is the candidate’s responsibility to register for the examinations. Registration instructions are contained in information bulletins available at no cost to most secondary schools. Members of the U.S. Armed Forces should find copies available in their units’ education offices. Bulletins may also be obtained by writing to:

- College Board
  P.O. Box 592
  Princeton, NJ 08541
- College Board
  P.O. Box 1025
  Berkeley, CA 94701
- American College Testing Program
  P.O. Box 168
  Iowa City, IA 52240

Testing and registration information is also available through the Internet at [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) (for the College Board’s SAT) or [www.act.org](http://www.act.org) (for the American College Testing Program).

In the event that you have any questions concerning test requirements, or if you are unable to meet the established examination deadline date, contact the Academy’s Admissions Office.

Candidates must request the testing agency to submit their test scores to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, Kings Point, New York 11024-1699. The cost of the examination must be borne by the individual candidate. The Academy’s SAT code number is 2923; its ACT code number is 2974.

**Nominations**

Candidates must be nominated to the Academy by a U.S. Representative or Senator (see...
previous definition). Candidates may only be nominated by qualified authorities from their State or Territory.

Nominating authorities select their nominees by any methods they wish, which may include a screening interview. This screening may be administered as early as July of the year before appointment is sought. Nominees must reside in the State or Territory that the nominating official represents, or have a “home of residence” in the State or Territory represented by the nominating official.

A candidate should apply for a nomination early. Some nominating authorities establish deadline dates for the receipt of nomination requests in order to allow adequate time for processing and evaluating requests. The ideal time for a candidate to apply for a nomination is in May of junior year in high school.

Nominating authorities must submit the names of their nominees to the Academy by January 31 of the school year in which admission to the Academy is sought.

You may request a nomination as a candidate for admission to the Academy by writing a letter and addressing it to an appropriate nominating authority. Be sure your full name is typed or printed legibly. A typewritten letter is preferred.

Visiting the Academy

Visits to the Academy are available and strongly encouraged for prospective midshipmen. There are two types of visits available while Academy classes are in session.

Day Visit - For high school juniors and seniors only. Includes an admissions briefing and an escorted campus tour. Students must arrive at the Admissions Office no later than 10:15 a.m. At that time, they may meet with an admissions officer who will provide information and answer questions. At 12:00 noon, visiting students are paired with
midshipman escorts for lunch with the Regiment of Midshipmen in Delano Hall. They then attend afternoon classes and activities with their escorts and finish at approximately 4 p.m.

**Overnight Visit** - For high school seniors and graduates only who have submitted at least Part I and Part II of their application to the USMMA. This consists of an admissions briefing and accompanied overnight stay. Students must arrive at the Admissions Office by 10:15 a.m. At that time, they will meet with an admissions officer who will provide information and answer questions. At 12 noon, visiting students are paired with their midshipman escorts for lunch with the Regiment of Midshipmen in Delano Hall. They then attend regular afternoon classes and early evening activities, such as sports practices and club meetings. Visiting students will have dinner with in Delano Hall and will stay overnight in the midshipman escort’s room. The following morning, they will have breakfast in Delano Hall, and attend morning classes with their escort. Their visit will conclude at approximately 12:00 noon (they do not have lunch again with the Regiment).

Parents and family members (maximum of two) who arrive with the student are invited to participate in the admissions briefing. However, only the visiting student may attend meals and classes. Parents and family members may continue to tour the Academy on their own. Meals are available in the Seafarer Canteen. Overnight accommodations can be arranged at local hotels.

There are several periods during the year when escorted visits to the Academy are not available (although a briefing with an admissions officer is possible):

- The weeks immediately before and after trimester final exams.
- The week of trimester break and the first week after midshipmen return from trimester break.
- The weeks of the winter holiday break.
- The period from the Friday before Memorial Day weekend until the middle of August.
- Several “blackout” dates during the course of the academic year due to special campus events.

During the periods when escorted visits are not available, students may still arrange a “Briefing Only” with an admissions officer. Note that this option is not available during the period in July when Indoctrination of incoming freshmen (plebes) is underway. The Academy campus is closed to visitors during Indoctrination.

Students who are high school sophomores, or younger, may visit the academy for a “Briefing Only” session, but may not participate in the Day or Overnight Visit programs until they have reached the higher grades detailed earlier. Students interested in visiting the Academy should call, toll free, 1-866-546-4778, or 516-726-5644 (x5643 and x5646) to schedule an appointment. All visits must be scheduled at least one week in advance.

**International Students**

The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) permits the appointment of midshipmen from nations other than the United States. By law, no more than 30 international students may attend the Academy at any one time.

International students interested in applying to the Academy must contact the Admissions Office to obtain an International Application Package. They may **not** use the on-line application found on the Academy’s website.

To obtain an International Application Package, send an e-mail to: admissions@usmma.edu, or write: Admissions Office, U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, 300 Steamboat Road, Kings Point, NY 11024-1699, USA, Att: International Applications.

All international applicants must take either the standardized SAT or the ACT. Applicants for whom English is not a native language must also take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) examination.

All completed International Applications must be received no later than February 1 of the year of enrolling at the Academy. In order for an application to be complete, the Academy must receive Parts I, II and III of the application; a biographical essay; all high school/secondary school (pre-university) and college/university transcripts (in English);
letters of recommendation; your passing (at or above minimum) SAT and/or ACT scores; and your passing (at or above minimum) TOEFL scores (if required). If your original transcript is not in English, you must also provide a certified translation of your transcript in English, with your other application paperwork.

If the Academy does not receive all of the above information by February 1, the application for admission will be denied.

All International Applicants must also supply the Admissions Office with the results of a full medical examination, in English, or accompanied by a certified English translation. All Academy midshipmen, as required by regulation, must be physically qualified to sit for the U.S. Coast Guard-administered merchant marine officer license examinations, before completing their studies and graduating from the Academy. Medical disqualification is a cause for rejection of admission to the Academy.

The United States does not offer any scholarships, grants or other financial assistance or aid to international students for attending the Academy. All expenses are the student’s responsibility. Their ability to pay for an Academy education must be demonstrated in order for them to receive an appointment to the Academy.

The Academy does provide enrolled international students with the same required uniforms, textbooks and transportation allowances that U.S. citizen midshipmen receive.

Security Clearance
In order to receive a commission at graduation as an officer in a reserve component of the U.S. Armed Forces, you will be required to complete an electronic form for a security clearance upon enrollment at the Academy. All questions must be answered accurately and truthfully so that your clearance is not delayed. To verify your place of birth, you will be asked to submit a certified copy of your birth certificate. Please address any inquiries about the security clearance to the Admissions Office. (Note: Students must comply with security clearance requirements necessary to obtain Transportation Worker Identity Cards.)

Dual Citizenship
The possession and use of a foreign passport in preference to a U.S. passport may raise doubts about your allegiance to the United States. A security clearance will be denied or revoked unless the foreign passport is surrendered.

Anyone indicating the possession of a foreign passport will be instructed to return that document to the appropriate country’s embassy or consulate, requesting a return endorsement, which is required for the security clearance determination.

Anyone having dual U.S./foreign citizenship, without possessing a foreign passport of another country, most abrogate that country’s citizenship.

Failure to comply with these instructions will result in a denial of a security clearance, of entry to the U.S. Navy Reserve or another Armed Forces reserve component, and in disenrollment from the Academy.

Applications
You should request an application and complete it prior to the March 1 application deadline. You are strongly encouraged to complete this application early even before receiving a nomination from your nominating authority. Early filing of an application will expedite processing your admission file.

Apply On-Line
U.S. candidates for admission to the Academy may apply on-line via the Internet. Go to the Academy’s website, www.usmma.edu. Click on “Admissions” and then click on “Apply On-Line.”

Candidate Reply Date
The Academy ascribes to the universal candidate reply date of May 1. All principal, and conditional appointees, and those designated as alternates, are required to notify the Academy either of accepting or declining their status by that date.

Medical Requirements
A candidate for admission to the Academy must meet the medical requirements for appointment as a U.S. Navy Reserve midshipman. Medical examinations are conducted by a service academy examining
facility designated by the U.S. Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DoDMERB), and a final decision on a candidate’s medical qualifications is made by that board. All candidates must be medically qualified for appointment by DoDMERB by April 16 of the year of entrance.

It is the candidate’s responsibility to pursue medical processing to its conclusion in a timely manner. If, for any reason, an individual does not receive written or telephone notification from DoDMERB approximately 30 days after submitting an application to the Academy’s Admission Office, he or she must contact DoDMERB’s Scheduling Department at 1-800-841-2706 to obtain a medical appointment date. Please notify DoDMERB if you have completed a physical examination for any other federal service academy.

Non-Swimmers
It is recommended applicants learn to swim before entering the Academy. Fourth classmen must demonstrate the capability of swimming 100 yards using two basic strokes and 15 minutes of flotation. This requirement must be fulfilled prior to a midshipman’s first shipboard training period.

Appointments
Candidates are appointed competitively by the Academy for the vacancies allocated to their State or Territory. Each State has an assigned number of appointees proportionate to its representation in Congress. After the Academy has selected its principal appointees, the remaining qualified candidates will be designated as alternates, to be appointed in order of merit should openings occur within their respective states.

In the event that a State fails to satisfy its allotment, appointments to fill the unfilled vacancies are determined from the national list of alternates, ranked in order of merit as described in the previous paragraph.

A candidate’s competitive standing is established by test scores on the standardized SAT I or ACT examination, high school class rank, academic record, evidence of leadership potential, interest in a maritime career, and other factors that are considered effective indicators of motivation and probable completion of training. Bonus points are awarded to candidates with at least six months of sea service aboard merchant or naval vessels.

Rolling Admission
Highly qualified candidates with a completed application (Parts I, II, III, essay, high school transcript, letters of recommendation, school profile, and senior courses in progress) will receive early notification of their appointment after a thorough evaluation of their qualifications. All other candidates will be notified of their status no later than April of the year in which they seek admission. Late appointments may be offered after 1 May in order to fulfill the incoming class size requirement.

Orientation/Briefing Day for Principal Candidates
All principal candidates may be invited to visit the Academy on a selected date in mid-April for a briefing program (if one is able to be scheduled). Candidates have an opportunity to meet and discuss the Academy’s program with midshipmen, faculty and administrative personnel. Attendance is strictly voluntary. Travel arrangements and expenses must be borne by the candidates.

Armed Forces Enlisted Personnel
An individual who enters the Academy in an enlisted status in a component of the U.S. Armed Forces or U.S. Coast Guard will not have their existing military service obligation (MSO) terminated. However, attendance at the Academy may or may not be credited towards fulfillment of an MSO, depending on the circumstances of each case and the military department involved. Disposition of enlisted members of the U.S. Armed Forces who are admitted to the Academy and accept appointment as Midshipman, MMR, USNR, is addressed in Title 10 United States Code, Section 516, as well as in applicable service regulations. An enlisted member of the U.S. Armed Forces seeking admission to the Academy should obtain additional details and guidance from their command personnel office or career counselor.
Summary

Here, in summary, are the steps necessary for admission to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy:

1. Request a nomination by contacting a U.S. Representative or Senator, preferably in May of your high school junior year.

2. Request, complete and return to the Academy your application as soon as possible, along with your high school transcript and required letters of recommendations. This material must reach the Academy no later than March 1 of your high school senior year. Applications completed early receive early attention.

3. You must pass a physical and medical examination administered by a central medical review board once the Academy receives your completed application. You must be physically and medically qualified by DoDMERB by June 1.

4. You must take either the College Board’s standardized SAT I or the American College Testing Program’s standardized ACT examination no later than the first test date of the year you are seeking admission. The Academy does not accept the non-standard or untimed administration of the SAT or ACT.

5. You must successfully complete the CFA (Candidate Fitness Assessment exercise regimen) by March 1. Candidates are permitted two (2) attempts at passing the CFA, as long as the results of both are received by the Academy by 1 March. Submitting CFA results from your first attempt right at/around the 1 March deadline will likely prevent you from re-taking the CFA if you do not pass all items on the first attempt.

6. On or before April 10, if your application was complete and received by March 1, you will be notified either of your selection as a principal, conditional or alternate candidate, or of your failure to meet the requirements.

7. Alternate candidates are subsequently notified if and when they are designated as principal candidates.

8. For a full explanation of Academy admissions requirements and candidate terminology, please refer to the previous pages in this section.

9. The plebe class enters the Academy in early July.

Additional information may be obtained from:
Admissions Office
U.S. Merchant Marine Academy
300 Steamboat Road
Kings Point, New York 11024-1699

Telephone: (516) 726-5644 (x5643 or x5646)
Toll Free Number: 1-866-546-4778
E-mail: admissions@usmma.edu
FAX: (516) 773-5390
Website: https://www.usmma.edu