

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

CONGRESSIONAL ACADEMY NOMINATION GUIDELINES

ACADEMY PROCEDURE AND TIMELINE

U.S. Senators and Representatives can make nominations toward one vacancy per year at each of the four Service Academies: U.S. Air Force Academy (Colorado Springs), U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (Kings Point), U.S. Military Academy (West Point), and U.S. Naval Academy (Annapolis).

If you are interested in the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, you need to apply directly to the Academy by writing to: U.S. Coast Guard Academy, Admissions Office, New London, Connecticut 06320-4195. You can also contact LCDR Octavia Poole, Director of Recruiting, U.S. Coast Guard Academy Admissions, at (860) 701-6783. A Congressional nomination is not required.

In order to qualify for entrance into a Service Academy, you must:

- be a United States citizen;
- unmarried;
- not be pregnant;
- have no legal obligation to support children or other dependents;
- be at least 17 years old but not have passed your 23rd birthday as of July 1st of the year of admission to the Air Force, Navy, or West Point Academy; applicants to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy must not have passed their 25th birthday.

You are encouraged to seek a nomination from your two U.S. Senators, your Congressional Representative and the Vice President of the United States beginning in the spring of your junior year in high school. You can obtain more information about the Vice President's process at http://www.whitehouse.gov/vicepresident/vice_presidential_nominationpacket.pdf.

One final option for which you may be eligible is a service-related nomination. The President may select for appointment children of: members of the Armed Forces who are currently on active duty, are retired from active duty, or Medal of Honor winners. Attached is a sample letter for this type of nomination.

At the same time, it is also best to contact each Academy you are interested in so you can open a candidate file and begin the application process. You should keep in mind that each Congressional office has its own application form and packet of instructions. You should start this process early in order to meet all deadlines.

A complete application generally consists of the application form, an official high school transcript, proof of a set of ACT and/or SAT scores, short essay of 200 words or less about why you want to attend an Academy, list of outside activities and honors (i.e. sports, community outreach) and three letters of recommendation from a non-relative (family member). Each Congressional office has been assigned a separate code for the ACT and SAT. You should contact your Congressional offices prior to taking the test to obtain these codes so a copy of the official scores will be mailed directly to those offices. One set of ACT or SAT scores are required by the application deadline. If you retake the test and want to update your scores, the Senators' offices prefer to receive these scores prior to the interviews.

For Senators Kohl and Feingold, the deadline for completed applications is always the third Friday in October. Any applications that are incomplete or received after the third Friday in October

deadline will not be considered for a nomination. As we learned a few years ago, mail delivery problems in Washington, D.C. may cause delays so you are strongly encouraged contact the Academies and Congressional offices to which you are applying to ensure your application has been received and is complete. In addition, please do not mail your applications to the Members' Washington, DC offices unless instructed to do so. This will delay their receipt to the Academy Coordinators who are generally in Wisconsin. This responsibility belongs to the applicants.

As you consider applying, an option most of the Academies (Air Force, Military and Navy) offer is the summer seminar program offered the summer before you enter your senior year in high school. It provides an opportunity to visit the Academy for one week during the summer. These programs are very competitive. There is no Congressional nomination required. Here are the links to the web pages for the Academy summer seminar programs:

U.S. Air Force Academy

<http://www.academyadmissions.com/admissions/summerseminar/>

U.S. Naval Academy

<http://www.usna.edu/Admissions/nass.htm>

U.S. Military Academy <http://admissions.usma.edu/moreinfo/summer.cfm>

INTERVIEW PROCESS

Interviews for qualified applicants with the Senators' offices generally take place between November and early December. The Senators' offices try to notify applicants as to whether they have received a nomination by the end of December at the latest. Although this is the timeline for Senators Kohl and Feingold, the Congressional offices may have different deadlines and may conduct their interviews sometime between November and January. It is extremely important that you know these deadlines and closely track them. An offer of appointment will be sent directly to the applicant from the Academy sometime between February and May, but offers of appointment could be extended until right before Induction Day in late June.

Only the candidates who meet all requirements set forth by each Academy will be interviewed. A selection committee or board will assist the Senators' offices in interviewing and screening applicants. The purpose of the interview is to accurately and impartially evaluate, conduct comparative analysis, and advise the Senators on each candidate's potential as a commissioned officer in the Armed Forces. The committees are made up of, but are not limited to, retired military personnel, business representatives, community activists, educators and Academy graduates.

This is a key element of the process. Each committee generally consists of 2 or 3 members and each interview should last 15-20 minutes. Applicants should be aware that the Congressional offices might conduct their interviews differently. The selection committees are looking for these qualities in the applicants:

1) Academic Record:

- High school transcripts and college transcripts if applicable as well as scholastic scores
- A solid college preparatory program in high school is strongly recommended.

2) Leadership Qualities:

- Participation in athletics, class government, religious and community activities, and work experience

- 3) Motivation:
 - Candidate's personal and independent initiative in attending an Academy and serving as an officer in the Armed Forces.
- 4) Confidence and Self-expression:
 - This can be gauged through a candidate's answers during the interviews.

In addition to these qualities, the Academies also consider the following:

- 1) Good Moral Character
- 2) Physical Aptitude:
 - Each Academy has its own test requirements to determine each candidate's readiness to undertake the rigorous athletic and physical education program. They measure strength, endurance, agility and coordination.
- 3) Medical Fitness:
 - Those candidates who meet the basic scholastic standards will be scheduled to take the Academy's qualifying medical exam. The exam is scheduled and evaluated by the Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DODMERB). If you are concerned about any medical condition, you should discuss it with an Academy representative.

NOMINATION METHODS

There are three types of nominations and Members of Congress may use any of these methods at their discretion. Each office submits a list of 10 nominees to each Academy per vacancy.

- 1) Competitive: Most offices use this method including Senators Kohl and Feingold. A list is provided to each Academy in alphabetical or random order and the Academy chooses the best candidate.
- 2) Principal with Competing Alternates: This method provides for the designation of a principal nominee and the other nine unranked nominees are submitted to the Academy for evaluation and compete as alternates. If the principal is fully qualified, he or she will be appointed to fill the vacancy.
- 3) Principal with Numbered Alternates: Here the principal nominee is designated and the Member ranks the alternate nominees in order of preference. If fully qualified, the principal nominee receives the appointment to fill the vacancy. If the principal nominee is not qualified, then the first alternate is considered for the appointment and so on down the list for the remaining 2-9.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NOMINATION AND OFFER OF APPOINTMENT

A *nomination* is your introduction to the Academy for consideration. It does not mean you are accepted – it is the first step in the Academy appointment process. Each U.S. Senator and Representative may have a maximum of five cadets or midshipmen charged to their office at each Academy at one time. You only need one nomination per academy. In addition to those nominees selected to fill the Members' vacancies, it is possible that one or more additional nominee(s) may be successful in gaining appointments under the qualified alternate or additional appointment categories.

These appointments are charged against the Academies, not the Member of Congress. Each Member is charged for one nominee per vacancy no matter how many candidates are selected each year.

An *offer of appointment* is a formal offer from the Academy. Candidates who the Academies feel are exceptionally qualified are often offered a letter of assurance. The Academy is expressing a strong interest in offering an appointment if the candidate remains qualified scholastically, medically, physically, and pursues a nomination through the normal channels. If you receive a letter of assurance (LOA), you still must receive a Congressional nomination.

COORDINATION OF NOMINATIONS

The goal of the Congressional offices is to see as many qualified Wisconsinites nominated as possible. We are blessed in Wisconsin with some of the best-educated and most motivated young people in the country. Therefore, the Congressional offices coordinate their nominations to a certain extent. For example, Senators Kohl and Feingold work closely to coordinate nominations to reduce the number of duplicate nominations. This means that if you receive a nomination from one office, you may not receive one from another office. Every office tries to nominate the candidates to their first choice. It is extremely important that you rank your preference of the Academies in the same order when submitting your application to each office. In addition, you should only rank those Academies from which you will accept a nomination.

We also want to make all candidates aware of two recent reports about the military academies. If you are interested in attending one of the academies, we want you to be aware of these findings. You can find the reports:

Headquarters USAF Religious Climate Review Report on the USAFA website -
www.af.mil/pdf/HQ_Review_Group_Report.pdf

DOD Inspector General Service Academy Sexual Assault and Leadership Survey -
www.dodig.mil/Inspections/IPO/evalreports.htm

Thank you for your interest in the opportunities offered by our U.S. Service Academies. We look forward to you participating in the nomination process. Our very best wishes to you in your pursuit of a higher education. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact the following academy coordinators:

Office of Senator Herb Kohl
Marlene Mielke
4321 W. College Ave, Suite 235
Appleton, WI 54914
(920) 738-1640

Office of Senator Russ Feingold
Michelle Murray
1600 Aspen Commons, Room 100
Middleton, WI 53562
(608) 828-1200

Joylynn Gilles
14 W Mifflin St, Suite 207
Madison, WI 53703
(608) 264-5338

PRESIDENTIAL OR MILITARY NOMINATIONS

Use this format for any of these categories: Presidential, Children of Deceased or Disabled Veterans, Military or Civilian Personnel in a Missing Status, or Children of Medal of Honor Recipients.

Date:

Air Force

Director of Admissions
HQ USAFA/RRS,
2304 Cadet Dr., Suite 200
USAF Academy CO 80840-5025

Navy

U.S. Naval Academy
Office of Admissions
117 Decatur Rd
Annapolis, MD 214025019

Army

U.S. Military Academy
Director of Admission
646 Swift Rd
West Point, NY 10996-1905

Dear Sir:

I wish to attend _____ Academy and to serve in the United States _____. I request a nomination under the (name of appropriate category) for the class that enters the Academy in June 20__.

My pertinent data is:

Name (print name exactly as it appears on the birth certificate, or if legally changed, attach a copy of the court order):

Social Security Number:

Permanent address (street, city, county, state, zip code):

Temporary address (if applicable):

Permanent phone number and area code:

Temporary phone number and area code (if applicable):

Date and place of birth (spell out month):

If member of military, include rank, regular or reserve component, branch of service and organizational address including PSC Box Number:

If previous candidate, indicate year:

Information on parents:

Name, rank, social security number, component and branch of service:

If your parent is on active duty, attach a statement of service dated and signed by current personnel officer specifying all periods of active duty and any breaks therein. If your parent is retired or deceased, attach a copy of the retirement orders or casualty report; include Veterans Administration (VA) claim number and VA office where the case is filed, if appropriate; include brief statement with date and circumstances of Medal of Honor award, if appropriate.

Sincerely, (sign the letter below)

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4904

Rev 2/1/07

USEFUL WEB PAGE ADDRESSES

Academies

U.S. Air Force Academy Summer Seminar <http://www.usafa.af.mil/>
<http://www.academyadmissions.com/admissions/summerseminar/>

U.S. Coast Guard Academy** <http://www.cga.edu/>
**There is no Congressional nomination to the Coast Guard Academy and you apply directly to them.
They encourage applicants to apply on their website.**

U.S. Merchant Marine Academy <http://www.usmma.edu/>

U.S. Naval Academy <http://www.usna.edu/>
Summer Seminar <http://www.usna.edu/Admissions/nass.htm>
Catalog <http://www.usna.edu/Catalog/>

U.S. Military Academy at West Point <http://www.usma.edu/>
Summer Seminar <http://admissions.usma.edu/MoreInfo/summer.cfm>

Wisconsin Congressional Delegation

Senator Herb Kohl <http://www.senate.gov/~kohl/>

Senator Russ Feingold <http://feingold.senate.gov>

1st CD - Congressman Paul Ryan <http://www.house.gov/ryan/>

2nd CD - Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin <http://tammybaldwin.house.gov/>

3rd CD - Congressman Ron Kind <http://www.house.gov/kind/>

4th CD - Congresswoman Gwen Moore <http://www.house.gov/gwenmoore/>

5th CD - Congressman James Sensenbrenner <http://www.house.gov/sensenbrenner/>

6th CD - Congressman Tom Petri <http://www.house.gov/petri/>

7th CD - Congressman David Obey <http://www.house.gov/obey/>

8th CD - Congressman Steve Kagen <http://kagen.house.gov/>

Other Web Pages

Vice President of the United States http://www.whitehouse.gov/vicepresident/vicepresidential_nominationpacket.pdf

ACT <http://www.act.org/>

SAT <http://www.collegeboard.com/>