

U. S. S E N A T O R

David Vitter



Frequently Asked Questions About Service Academy Nominations

1) What is a nomination?

In order for a non-military candidate to be considered for an appointment to a Service Academy, you must have a nomination from an authorized nominating source. Title 10, U.S. Code, establishes two nomination categories. The first, usually referred to as a “congressional nomination,” includes the nomination of the Vice President and Members of the United States Senate and House of Representatives. The second, referred to as “service-connected” or “military-affiliated” nominations, includes the selections of the President and nominations of the appropriate service (i.e. Secretary of the Army for nominations to the U.S. Military Academy).

2) What are the basic eligibility requirements?

Each applicant for a nomination must meet the following eligibility requirements as of July 1st of the year of admission to an academy:

- Citizenship: US citizenship, or having obtained it by graduation
- Residency: Louisiana
- Congressional nomination: United States Air Force Academy, United States Naval Academy, United States Merchant Marine Academy and United States Military Academy
- Age: by July 1 of entering year, at least 17, but not older than 23
- Marital Status or Dependency: unmarried, not pregnant, no legal obligation to support children
- Academic: Must complete SAT-1 or ACT examinations
- Must pass academy physical requirements and medical examination
- Must be of strong moral character

3) When do I begin the process of applying for a nomination?

You begin the process in the spring of your junior year. Contact Amber Burch at (504-589-2753) or at amber_burch@vitter.senate.gov. Your application should be submitted your senior year.

4) What must be included in my nomination file?

A complete nomination file consists of the following items: Please do not send copies of certificates or commendations as only the required documents will be considered.

- 1) Application Form
- 2) Extra-Curricular Activities Worksheet
- 3) Nomination Questionnaire (5 Essay Questions)
- 4) Letters of Recommendation (**no more than five**)
- 5) SAT or ACT scores
- 6) Official Transcripts

5) What is the deadline for completing a nomination file?

The deadline for returning materials to Amber Burch in the Metairie office is October 15th of your senior year.

6) What happens after I have completed my nomination file?

Qualified applicants who meet the basic eligibility requirements and complete a nomination file by October 15th will be invited to meet with Senator Vitter's Service Academy Nomination Board.

7) Why does Senator Vitter use a nominating board?

This board evaluates applicants and recommends candidates for nomination. This well-qualified, non-partisan board will ensure a fair and impartial process.

8) What criteria does the board use in selecting candidates?

The selection of Senator Vitter's nominees are made competitively on the basis of a composite of academic factors and leadership potential, extra-curricular activities, physical fitness, character, and recommendations. The following criteria are used in this process:

- School records, class rank, and grade point average.
- Extra-curricular activities.
- College Board scores. Normally, a competitive candidate will have SAT scores above 500 on verbal and 550 on math, or ACT scores above 22 on English and 26 on math. Only scores received prior to the interview can be considered for your application.
- Each nominee should stand in the upper fifth of his or her class. The higher one's college board scores and the higher one's class standing, the greater will be the chance for a nomination, assuming qualifications in the remaining areas of consideration are equal.
- Motivation. One of the most important considerations in the selection of a nominee is motivation: the candidate's desire to attend an academy. It is also the most difficult to measure. One way to measure motivation is to observe the diligence by which the candidate completes his file. **This is one reason this office will consider no candidate unless his file is received by October 15th.**
- Recommendations and References.
- Interview. No one will be nominated without having had an interview with Senator Vitter's Service Academy Review Board. These interviews will be conducted in early December, and the Review Board will use these interviews in their assessments and recommendations.

9) What is Senator Vitter's "method of nomination?"

The preferred method of nomination is the competitive nomination. This process allows Senator Vitter to nominate up to 10 qualified candidates for each available opening. The academy itself will make the final selection.

10) How do I open an admissions file with the academies?

All applicants must directly contact the academies they are interested in attending to open an admissions file. Please refer to the Service Academy Contact Information listed below for further information.

11) How many academies are there?

There are five.

Three reside within the Department of Defense:

- The U.S. Military Academy at West Point
- The U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis
- The U.S. Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs

Two reside within the Department of Transportation:

- The U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point
- The U.S. Coast Guard Academy at New London

12) Are the requirements the same for all of the service academies?

No. Although many of the qualifications are similar, each academy operates under its own admissions guidelines. Refer to the Service Academy Contact Information for the academy of your choice and contact them directly for an academy catalog. Each academy will outline its particular admissions qualifications. You may also discuss this matter with the member(s) of the Service Academy Board who represents your academy choice(s). Senator Vitter's nominating board does not represent the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. It is not necessary to seek a nomination to the Coast Guard Academy. U.S.C.G.A. accepts candidates based on their own testing criteria.

13) Can I have family members submit letters of recommendation?

No. All recommendations must come from outside your immediate or extended family. Typical recommendations are from:

- Teachers
- Counselors
- Employer
- Coaches
- Clergy
- Scout Leaders

The list above is an example of those individuals who are qualified to submit recommendations on your behalf. Please call Senator Vitter's office if you have any questions regarding this particular requirement.

14) Do I have to have all of the required paperwork collected before submitting it to Senator Vitter?

Yes. Once you have requested a nomination packet, a file will be opened in your name. It may take time to gather the appropriate materials. It is preferred that you collect all of the pertinent information and send it in together.

15) When will I receive my nomination?

Nominations must be delivered to the academies by December 31. You will be notified some time thereafter.

16) Will I automatically be selected by the academy after I receive a nomination?

No. You will be placed among a select group of nominees, and the academy of your choice will make the final decision. If selected, you will receive a letter of appointment directly from the academy.

17) What if I choose more than one academy? Will I be limited to a single nomination?

No. You can be nominated to multiple academies depending on how well you have competed among this year's pool of candidates. It is also possible to win multiple appointments.

18) When will I know if I have been offered an appointment by an academy?

Some Academies will begin to notify candidates of their admissions as early as January. All offers of appointment are generally sent out by May.

Please do not hesitate to contact Senator Vitter's office with additional questions.

US Senator David Vitter
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Service Academy Contact Information

United States Military Academy (USMA)

Director of Admissions
United States Military Academy
606 Thayer Road
West Point, NY 10996-9902
Director of Admissions (845) 938-4041
Toll Free Number (800) 822-2769
Website: <http://www.usma.edu>

United States Naval Academy (USNA)

Candidate Guidance Office
United States Naval Academy
117 Decatur Rd.
Annapolis, MD 21402-5018
Candidate Guidance Office (410) 293-4361
Toll Free Number (800) 638-9156
Website: <http://www.usna.edu>

United States Air Force Academy (USAFA)

USAFA/RRS
2304 Cadet Drive, Suite 200
USAF Academy, Colorado 80840-5025
Toll Free Number (800) 443-9266
Website: <http://www.usafa.af.mil>

United States Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA)

Director of Admissions
U.S. Merchant Marine Academy
Kings Point, New York 11024-1699
Toll Free Number (800) 732-6267
Website: <http://www.usmma.edu>

United States Coast Guard Academy (USCGA)

Director of Admissions
15 Mohegan Ave
New London, CT 06320-4195
Toll Free Number (800) 883-USCG
Website: <http://www.cga.edu/>

*It is not necessary to seek a nomination to attend the Coast Guard Academy. U.S.C.G.A. accepts candidates based on their own testing criteria.