

Who is Eligible?

Each applicant for a nomination must meet the following eligibility requirements as of July 1 of the year of admission to a service academy.

Age: Must be at least 17 years old, but not have passed the 23rd birthday. Exception - U.S. Merchant Marine Academy applicant must be at least 17 years old, but not passed the age of 25.

Citizenship: Must be a U.S. citizen.

Marital Status: Be unmarried, not pregnant, and have no legal obligation to support children or other dependents.

General Admissions Standards:

Before nominating an applicant, the Ninth District Service Academy Review Selection Committee carefully evaluates each applicant's overall qualifications, including the legal residence, to confirm that the applicant is domiciled within the boundaries of Texas' Ninth Congressional District. The academies consider evidence of character, scholarship, leadership, physical aptitude, medical fitness, goals and motivation in performing each nominee's "whole-person" evaluation. Likewise, the Ninth District Service Academy Review Selection Committee uses these criteria as the basis for its recommendations.

Character:

Absolutely critical in the course of evaluating a candidate is a positive determination of the candidate's character. Absence of good moral character is cause for disqualification. Candidates are considered to have good moral character unless evidence exists to suggest otherwise.

Scholarship:

Each element of a candidate's academic record is carefully evaluated by each service academy's admissions board. The elements evaluated include a complete high school record (and college record, when applicable), class standing and either the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT-1) or the American College Testing (ACT) scores. All strengths and weaknesses in a candidate's academic background are taken into account.

Leadership:

Participation and achievement in organized athletics, student body and class government, clubs and class extracurricular activities, scouting, church or other community-related activities demonstrate evidence of leadership potential. Candidates who have found it necessary to work to provide family support are considered to have demonstrated desirable leadership potential.

Physical Aptitude:

Measuring strength, endurance, agility, and coordination, the Army's and Navy's physical aptitude examination (PAE) and the Air Force's candidate fitness test (CFT) are designed to determine each candidate's readiness to undertake the rigorous athletic and physical education program at the academies. Each academy has its own test requirements. Results of the examination are evaluated, assigned a numerical score and included in the whole person evaluation by the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. The Air Force and Naval academies evaluate the results on a pass/fail basis.

Medical Fitness:

Candidates who meet minimum scholastic standards will be scheduled to take a service academy qualifying medical examination at a military or civilian contract facility near the candidate's home. Although medical qualification standards vary for each of the academies, only one exam is required. However, different tests may be necessary depending upon the academy. Scheduling and evaluation of the exam is accomplished by the Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DODMERB).

Motivation:

An attempt to measure motivation may be made through observation of the candidate's interest level in attending an academy and serving as an officer in the armed forces. Motivation may be measured through an evaluation of correspondence and personal contacts. Motivation is an intangible quality and difficult to evaluate; however, since it is most frequently the factor that determines an appointee's success or failure at a service academy, the effort must be made.

Whole-Person Evaluation:

All of the preceding factors are part of the "whole person" evaluation used by each of the academies. These qualities are considered essential in an individual in order to meet the challenges of the academy programs and, following graduation, as commissioned officers.

Applicant Evaluation:

Each academy uses a questionnaire to make an initial assessment of an applicant's potential for appointment. The results of this evaluation are provided by each academy to Members of Congress to assist them in screening their applicants. Soon after the applicant returns the questionnaire, the admissions office will reply to the applicant with an evaluation of the applicant's demonstrated ability to meet admissions standards. Applicants who meet the standards are declared candidates; those who do not meet the standards at that point may later submit additional test scores or information to the academy for re-evaluation. The applicant must provide the following information: academic standardized test scores (ACT, PSAT, SAT-1), rank in class and grade point average, social security number and participation in high school extracurricular activities.

Vacancies:

Each U.S. senator and Representative may have a maximum of five cadets or midshipmen at each service academy at one time. During the summer, the service academies report the number of vacancies available for the coming admissions cycle to each member of Congress. Throughout the year, our office is notified by each academy whenever additional vacancies become available because of graduations, transfers, resignations, academic failures or other reasons. Our office may nominate up to ten candidates for each vacancy.