

FAQ: What you should know about the U.S. Service Academies

What is a federal service academy?

The service academies are four-year colleges that are sponsored by the United States government. Upon graduation, each student receives a Bachelor's Degree, a commission as an officer, and a guaranteed job. Students have a five-year obligation after graduation to serve in the Armed Forces, Coast Guard, or maritime commerce industry.

How much does it cost?

The service academies are **tuition-free** and include full room and board. Additionally, every student receives a monthly stipend.

How many service academies are there?

There are five service academies. Three are located less than 120 miles of New York City.

U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, Great Neck, NY – 5 miles from Queens, 15 miles from the Bronx

U.S. Military Academy, West Point, NY – 51 miles

U.S. Coast Guard Academy, New London, CT – 111 miles

U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD – 227 miles

U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, CO – 1,785 miles

Why should I go?

This is an opportunity to receive a free undergraduate degree from some of the most prestigious colleges in the nation. The academies produce a disproportionate number of Rhodes Scholars, business leaders and CEOs, general and admirals, and political leaders. Presidents Grant, Eisenhower, and Carter were all graduates of the service academies.

What do I have to do to get in?

A student interested in the service academies must meet certain academic and physical standards to be eligible for admission. The student needs to be medically qualified for military service. One must also receive a nomination from a congressional office.

How does the nomination process work?

Every member of the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate can award ten nominations to each of the service academies. Every office has its own process, so contact your Congressperson and Senators.

When do I apply?

Students must apply both to the academy and to their congressional delegation. Students should begin their applications no later than September of their senior year. Those who apply in their junior year may be selected to attend summer leadership sessions hosted by the academies. Students have expressed great satisfaction with the summer programs and report that the programs have heightened their interest in attending the academies.

What if my grades are not competitive?

Students who demonstrate leadership potential, but who lack the current academic capacity to handle the rigors of the academy, may be selected to attend a one-year preparatory program at no cost. Moreover, the academies are particularly eager to receive applications from NYC students, as both urban and minority candidates are underrepresented as officers in the United States military, and it is important that our nation's leadership reflect the diversity of its people.

U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand

<http://www.gillibrand.senate.gov/help/academy-nominations>

