



THE BLUE AND GOLD BOOK

Introduction

[United States Naval Academy \(https://www.usna.edu/homepage.php\)](https://www.usna.edu/homepage.php)

As the undergraduate college of our country's naval service, the Naval Academy prepares young men and women to become professional officers and leaders of sailors and Marines. Naval Academy students are midshipmen on active duty in the U.S. Navy. They attend the Academy for four years, graduating with bachelor of science degrees and commissions as ensigns in the Navy or second lieutenants in the Marine Corps. Naval Academy graduates serve at least five years in the Navy or Marine Corps.

Around the Yard

The scenic Naval Academy campus, known as the Yard, is located in historic Annapolis, Md., where the Severn River flows into the Chesapeake Bay. With its combination of early 20th-century and modern buildings, the Naval Academy is a blend of tradition and state-of-the-art technology that exemplifies today's Navy and Marine Corps. Throughout the Yard, tree-shaded monuments commemorate the bravery and heroism that are an inherent part of the Academy's heritage. Buildings and walkways are named for Naval Academy graduates who have contributed to naval history and their nation.

The Naval Academy also is the final resting place of Revolutionary War naval hero [John Paul Jones](https://www.usna.edu/Chaplains/virtualTour/crypt.php), whose words, "I have not yet begun to fight," have inspired generations of naval officers. His crypt is located beneath the Academy chapel. Tourists and midshipmen also appreciate downtown [Annapolis](http://www.annapolis.com/), which lies just outside the gates of the Academy.

[History \(https://www.usna.edu/USNAHistory/\)](https://www.usna.edu/USNAHistory/)

Secretary of the Navy George Bancroft laid the foundation for the Naval Academy when, in 1845, he established the Naval School at Fort Severn in Annapolis. Commander Franklin Buchanan served as the first superintendent. His faculty consisted of four officers and three civilian professors. There were 50 students. Initially, the academic and professional instruction required five years—the first and last at Annapolis, with the intervening three at sea.

In 1850, the Naval School became the United States Naval Academy. The following year, the Academy adopted its current course of instruction which includes four consecutive years at Annapolis, with at-sea training provided during the summers.

The Naval Academy moved to Newport, R.I., during the Civil War. In 1865, it was re-established at Annapolis under the leadership of Vice Admiral David Dixon Porter. During these early years, the Academy was one of the few institutions of higher learning offering a sophisticated undergraduate course in technical education.

The late 19th century saw immense changes in naval technology with the conversion from sail-powered, wooden ships to steam-powered vessels of steel, which also resulted in rapid developments in naval weaponry and tactics. With the Spanish-American War in 1898, the United States became a world naval power, and early Naval Academy graduates like George Dewey and Alfred Thayer Mahan made significant contributions to our national heritage.

The new century saw the nation's undergraduate naval college grow in size and academic prowess. The Class of 1895 had produced 41 graduates. By World War I, there were nearly 200 graduates each year, along with 2,500 reserve officers who received their training at the Academy.

With the entry of the United States into World War I, courses were shortened to three years, a program which remained in effect until 1921.

Between the two world wars, the curriculum and training equipment were modernized to keep pace with rapid advances in the naval profession and American education. In 1930, the Association of American Universities accredited the Naval Academy, and in 1933, an act of Congress authorized the Naval Academy to confer the degree of bachelor of science on graduates, beginning with the Class of 1931. Congress authorized award of the degree to all living graduates in 1939. The Middle Atlantic States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools first accredited the Academy in 1947.

During World War II, summer sessions were instituted and the course was again shortened to three years. As during World War I, reserve officers, along with reserve midshipmen, also trained at the Academy.

In 1963, the Academy initiated the Trident Scholar Program, under which a number of exceptional students are permitted to pursue independent research during the first class (senior) year.

The 1964-65 academic year saw the civilian positions of academic dean and dean of admissions established and far-reaching changes made to the curriculum. The number of required core courses was reduced and, for the first time, each midshipman was allowed to pursue academic areas of individual interest for minor or major. Additional changes, introduced in the 1969-70 academic year, now require every midshipman to complete a major.

In 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed legislation authorizing admission of women to the service academies. The first women midshipmen entered the Academy in July 1976 and graduated with the Class of 1980.

[Mission \(https://www.usna.edu/About/mission.php\)](https://www.usna.edu/About/mission.php)

The Naval Academy has a unique clarity of purpose, expressed in our mission:

"To develop midshipmen morally, mentally and physically and to imbue them with the highest ideals of duty, honor and loyalty in order to graduate leaders who are dedicated to a career of naval service and have potential for future development in mind and character to assume the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship and government."

Our mission forms the basis for everything we do at the Academy. It also encourages a sense of spirit and pride found at few other schools.

Program

Developing midshipmen morally, mentally and physically contributes to producing outstanding naval officers of competence, character, and compassion - men and women privileged to lead sailors and Marines who have also volunteered to serve our country."

[Moral Development \(https://www.usna.edu/LEL\)](https://www.usna.edu/LEL)

Moral development is a fundamental element of all aspects of the Naval Academy experience. As future officers in the Navy or Marine Corps, midshipmen will soon be responsible for the priceless lives of young sailors and Marines and multi-million dollar equipment. From Plebe Summer through graduation, the Naval Academy's Officer Development program is a four-year integrated continuum that focuses on the attributes of integrity, honor, and mutual respect.

<https://www.usna.edu/Academics>

Every midshipman's academic program begins with a core curriculum that includes courses in engineering, science, mathematics, humanities and social science. The goal is a broad-based education to qualify graduates for practically any career field in the Navy or Marine Corps. At the same time, our majors program provides the opportunity to develop a particular area of academic interest.

<https://www.usna.edu/Athletics>

Developing confident, highly effective leaders is the basis for everything we do here at the Naval Academy. Our sailors and Marines deserve and expect nothing less. We strive for all midshipmen to develop the resilience and competitive drive fundamental to all successful military leaders. The duties of Navy and Marine Corps officers often require long, strenuous hours in demanding situations.

<https://www.usna.edu/Admissions/Military-Preparation/index.php>

We don't just tell you about life in the Navy and Marine Corps, you live it. After four years at the Naval Academy, the life and customs of the naval service become second nature.

About Our Midshipmen

It takes a special kind of young man or woman to handle the Naval Academy's demanding program, but that doesn't mean all midshipmen are alike. Midshipmen come from all 50 states, U.S. territories and several foreign countries.

To see what this year's class looks like, Please see our [USNA Class Portrait Page](#) 

Our Commitment

Setting apart the Naval Academy from almost every other college and university in the country is our commitment to the total development of our students. Some other colleges offer more majors in academics. Some put more emphasis on intercollegiate athletics. But nowhere else will you find a better opportunity to grow intellectually, personally and physically than at the Naval Academy. If you are chosen to enter the Naval Academy, we believe you can complete this tough, four-year program. In fact, we are committed to the principle of helping every midshipman succeed. We back up that commitment with:

- *Small class size.* Most classes have no more than 22 students. When you are an upperclassman, some courses in your major may have only five to 10 other students.
- *Low student-to-faculty ratio.* Faculty members get to know you personally in and out of the classroom. They also are available to help with extra instruction or special projects. It's not unusual to find professors and midshipmen burning the late-night oil together in an Academy research lab or in a classroom.
- *Protected study time.* Evening study period is reserved from 8-11 p.m. Sunday through Friday to help all midshipmen keep up with their courses. Additionally, Nimitz Library, computer labs and other facilities are open for midshipmen use all day and evening, seven days a week.
- *Academic advising.* To help you plan your curriculum, group and individual counseling is available as well as an academic adviser early in plebe year. A permanent faculty adviser is assigned when you select your major.

- *Leadership and counseling.* Your company officer, senior enlisted advisor, and upperclass midshipmen in leadership positions also guide, monitor and evaluate your progress in academics, military performance and conduct. They also are ready to help if you need assistance as are the Academy's staff of chaplains and professional counselors.
- *A sponsor program.* Hundreds of families in the Annapolis area sponsor newly-arrived midshipmen, offering a home away from home and a place to relax off campus. Every midshipman has the opportunity to be sponsored by a local family. These contacts often grow into deep friendships that last a lifetime.

Your Commitment

Becoming a midshipman at the Naval Academy is a big step. It's not like starting your freshman year at a civilian college. You make a commitment to something larger than yourself. You take an oath of office, promising to be loyal to your country and to defend it if necessary. You agree to be honorable in everything you do and say. You're also expected to work harder than you've ever worked before and to push yourself well beyond your perceived limits. This is how we prepare you for the challenging responsibilities of service as a naval officer and the opportunities of a lifetime.

This is an official **U.S. Navy Web Site**. URL: <https://www.usna.edu>
