

# **ADVICE TO STUDENTS**

## **SEEKING AN APPOINTMENT TO U.S. SERVICE ACADEMIES**

### **SECTION I: THE “60%, 20%, 20%” RULE**

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ACADEMIES EVALUATE CANDIDATES USING THE “60/20/20” RULE, MEANING THAT ROUGHLY 60% OF THE EVALUATION IS BASED UPON ACADEMICS, 20% IS BASED UPON LEADERSHIP, AND 20% IS A COMPOSITE OF THE FITNESS ASSESSMENT, INTERVIEW WITH THE ACADEMY LIAISON OFFICERS, AND A PERSONAL ESSAY (ALTHOUGH CANDIDATE SCORING MAY DIFFER SLIGHTLY AT EACH ACADEMY).

#### **ACADEMICS – 60%**

U.S. SERVICE ACADEMIES ARE CONCERNED WITH TEST SCORES, CLASS RANK, GPA, MATH COURSES, AND ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) COURSES.

STUDENTS SHOULD START TAKING THE ACT/SAT COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS EARLY AND OFTEN. STUDENTS SHOULD WORK HARD TO IMPROVE SCORES AND SHOULD CONSIDER TAKING THE PREP CLASSES THAT ARE OFFERED TO STUDENTS TO IMPROVE SCORES. IT IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED THAT STUDENTS TAKE BOTH THE ACT AND SAT AS SOME STUDENTS PERFORM BETTER ON ONE OVER THE OTHER.

STUDENTS NEED A THOROUGH UNDERSTANDING OF ALGEBRA AND ALGEBRA II, NOT JUST GOOD GRADES IN ALGEBRA. ACADEMY PANELS ALSO LIKE TO SEE AP CLASSES. IN THE SENIOR YEAR, ACADEMIES ARE LOOKING TO ENSURE THAT STUDENTS ARE MAINTAINING A CHALLENGING CORE CURRICULUM AND NOT JUST COASTING.

ALL ACADEMY GRADUATES WILL RECEIVE A BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE, REGARDLESS OF ONE’S MAJOR. AS A RESULT, ACADEMIES ARE SPECIFICALLY INTERESTED IN HIGH MATH SCORES BECAUSE THE ACADEMIES’ CORE CURRICULUM CONSISTS OF STEM COURSES—OR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND MATHEMATICS COURSES.

#### **LEADERSHIP – 20%**

ACADEMIES ARE LOOKING FOR ORGANIZED TEAM ATHLETICS, WHICH CAN BE FOOTBALL, BASEBALL, BASKETBALL, TRACK AND FIELD, WRESTLING, SWIMMING, ETC. ACADEMIES GIVE LEADERSHIP POINTS FOR EAGLE SCOUT, CAPTAIN OF SPORTS TEAMS, CLASS OFFICER, OR ANY OTHER LEADERSHIP POSITION A STUDENT HAS HELD.

STUDENTS CAN ALSO ATTEND BOYS STATE/GIRLS STATE IN THE SUMMER OF THEIR JUNIOR YEAR. DOING SO WILL GIVE STUDENTS AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP PUBLIC SPEAKING AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS, AS WELL AS GAIN A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS. CONTACT AMERICAN LEGION OR A HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR TO RECEIVE A RECOMMENDATION FOR BOYS STATE/GIRLS STATE.

## **FITNESS, ACADEMY INTERVIEW & PERSONAL ESSAY – 20%**

THE FINAL 20% OF EACH CANDIDATE’S SCORE IS A COMPOSITE OF THE FITNESS ASSESSMENT, THE INTERVIEW THE STUDENTS WILL CONDUCT WITH AN ACADEMY LIAISON OFFICERS, AND A PERSONAL ESSAY.

THE CANDIDATE FITNESS ASSESSMENT (OR CFA) IS IN THE SCHOOLS’ MANUAL. PREPARATION FOR THE ASSESSMENT MAY BEGIN IN HIGH SCHOOL.

ALL CANDIDATES WILL TAKE AN EXAM THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE MEDICAL EXAM REVIEW BOARD (AKA “DODMERB”). DURING THE APPLICATION PROCESS, IF DODMERB REQUESTS INFORMATION FROM A STUDENT’S DOCTOR, IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT THE REQUESTED DOCUMENTS ARE SUBMITTED IN A TIMELY MANNER. PHYSICAL INJURIES (ESPECIALLY CONCUSSIONS) DURING TEAM SPORTS OR FITNESS TRAINING MAY RESULT IN A DELAY OR REJECTION OF A CANDIDATE’S APPLICATION, DEPENDING ON THE SEVERITY OF THE INJURY.

THE PERSONAL ESSAY ON THE ACADEMY APPLICATION IS VERY IMPORTANT. CANDIDATES ARE ADVISED TO DRAFT ALL ESSAYS AND SEEK THE GUIDANCE OF AN ENGLISH TEACHER TO REVIEW AND EDIT ESSAYS PRIOR TO SUBMISSION. APPLICATION ESSAYS REMAIN IN THE STUDENT FILE FOR THE ENTIRETY OF THE STUDENT’S FOUR YEARS AT THE ACADEMY.

## **SECTION II: TIMING, NOMINATIONS, AND OFFERS OF APPOINTMENT**

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### **TIMING**

STUDENTS MUST OPEN A “CANDIDATE FILE” BY GOING TO THE WEBSITE FOR EACH ACADEMY THEY WISH TO ATTEND. THE ACADEMIES WILL THEN START THE APPLICATION PROCESS BY MAILING AN APPLICATION PACKET DIRECTLY TO THE CANDIDATE. IT IS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE TO APPLY TO MORE THAN ONE ACADEMY.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, COMPLETE THE APPLICATION, FITNESS ASSESSMENT AND THE DODMERB EXAM AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE. MEDICAL ISSUES CAN DELAY THE PROCESS, SO THE EARLIER THEY ARE RESOLVED, THE BETTER. STAY IN CONTACT WITH YOUR ADMISSIONS COUNSELOR TO VERIFY THE STATUS OF YOUR APPLICATION.

### **NOMINATIONS**

IT IS ALSO HIGHLY RECOMMENDED THAT YOU APPLY TO ALL NOMINATION SOURCES. APPLYING TO ALL NOMINATING SOURCES WILL INCREASE THE OPPORTUNITY TO OBTAIN AN OFFER OF APPOINTMENT.

THE FOLLOWING OFFICES OFFER OPPORTUNITIES FOR A NOMINATION:

1. U.S. SENATOR JOHN BOOZMAN
2. U.S. SENATOR TOM COTTON
3. YOUR DISTRICT CONGRESSMAN
  - CONGRESSMAN RICK CRAWFORD - IF YOU LIVE WITHIN THE FIRST DISTRICT
  - CONGRESSMAN FRENCH HILL - IF YOU LIVE WITHIN THE SECOND DISTRICT
  - CONGRESSMAN STEVE WOMACK - IF YOU LIVE WITHIN THE SECOND DISTRICT
  - CONGRESSMAN BRUCE WESTERMAN - IF YOU LIVE WITHIN THE FOURTH DISTRICT
4. THE PRESIDENT OR VICE PRESIDENT, IF QUALIFIED.

## **OFFERS OF APPOINTMENT**

OFFERS OF APPOINTMENT ARE MADE TO QUALIFIED CANDIDATES AFTER THE STUDENT'S APPLICATION IS COMPLETED, SUBMITTED, AND BROUGHT BEFORE THE ACADEMY'S APPLICATIONS PANEL FOR REVIEW. MOST APPOINTMENTS ARE OFFERED BEGINNING IN THE SPRING OF A STUDENT'S SENIOR YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL.

STUDENTS WHO RECEIVE APPOINTMENTS DO NOT ALWAYS RECEIVE OFFERS FROM ALL OF THE ACADEMIES TO WHICH THEY APPLY; THUS, TO INCREASE YOUR CHANCES OF ATTENDING A MILITARY ACADEMY, CONSIDER APPLYING TO MORE THAN ONE.

IT IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED THAT ALL APPLICANTS ALSO CONSIDER APPLYING THROUGH COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ROTC PROGRAMS, AS MOST CANDIDATES WHO APPLY TO THE ACADEMIES ARE ALSO SEEKING ROTC SCHOLARSHIPS AS A "PLAN B". LIAISON OFFICERS WANT TO SEE A STRONG COMMITMENT TO SERVE IN THE U.S. MILITARY, NO MATTER THE CAPACITY IN WHICH ONE CHOOSES TO SERVE.

## **SECTION III: SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS**

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### **SUMMER SEMINARS**

THE ACADEMIES HAVE "SUMMER SEMINARS" WHICH DEVELOPS THE STUDENT'S STRENGTH OF INTEREST IN ATTENDING AN ACADEMY, AS WELL AS FOR THE ACADEMIES TO GET TO KNOW POTENTIAL CANDIDATES. REGISTRATION FOR SUMMER SEMINAR STARTS IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY OF THE STUDENT'S JUNIOR YEAR FOR THE SUMMER OF THE STUDENT'S JUNIOR YEAR.

IF A STUDENT IS UNABLE TO ATTEND SUMMER SEMINAR, WE RECOMMEND THAT STUDENTS SCHEDULE A "CANDIDATE VISIT" TO THE SCHOOL. CONTACT THE RESPECTIVE ACADEMY ADMISSIONS OFFICE TO REQUEST MORE INFORMATION, TIMES, AND DATES.

### **ACADEMY BOOKS FOR CANDIDATES**

BOOKS ARE AVAILABLE FOR THE ACADEMIES, AND STUDENTS ARE ADVISED TO CONSIDER PURCHASING BOOKS FOR THE ACADEMIES IN WHICH THEY ARE MOST INTERESTED. THE BOOKS INCLUDE ADVICE FOR PARENTS, ACADEMY PROFILES, AND FEATURE DETAILED INTERVIEWS WITH CADETS, MIDSHIPMEN, PROFESSORS AND CAREER MILITARY.

EXAMPLE BOOKS AVAILABLE FOR CANDIDATE GUIDANCE: \*  
THE AIR FORCE ACADEMY CANDIDATE BOOK  
THE NAVAL ACADEMY CANDIDATE BOOK  
THE WEST POINT CANDIDATE BOOK

(\*ALL BOOKS MENTIONED ABOVE BY SUE ROSS & ARE PUBLISHED BY SILVER HORN BOOKS. THEY CAN BE FOUND AT THE ACADEMY BOOKSTORES OR ONLINE.)