

Senator Mike Rounds Service Academy Day



Office of Senator Mike Rounds

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Nomination vs. Appointment

- **Nomination**: Received from a Congressional or Senatorial office.
 - Required in order to receive an appointment.
 - Applying for a nomination is a separate process from applying to the academy.
- **Appointment**: Received from the academy itself.

Appointment Criteria

- Appointment and nomination criteria are established by statute and regulations issued by each of the academies.
- The U.S. Military, Naval, and Air Force Academies are overseen by the three military branches of the Department of Defense.
- The U.S. Merchant Marine Academy is governed by regulations issued by the Department of Transportation.

Congressional Nomination Guidelines

- **Air Force, Naval, and Military Academies:** Each U.S. Senator and Member of Congress may have a maximum of five appointees at each academy at any one time.
- **Merchant Marine Academy:** Each U.S. Senator and Member of Congress may nominate ten young men and/or women to enter statewide competition for four places at the Merchant Marine Academy.
- **Coast Guard Academy:** There are no Congressional nominations to the Coast Guard Academy. Application should be mailed directly to:

Superintendent
United States Coast Guard Academy
31 Mohegan Avenue
New London, CT 06320

Academy Preference

- All academies provide a similar academic experience, therefore it may be beneficial to apply to all academies. This allows the board to potentially nominate you to more than one academy.

Eligibility

- Must be a citizen of the United States and a legal resident of South Dakota.
- Must be unmarried, at least 17 years of age, nor past your 23rd birthday by July 1st of the year that you would be admitted into the academy.

Multiple Applications

- It is recommended to apply for an appointment through other nominating sources: Senator John Thune, Representative Dusty Johnson, and Vice President Mike Pence. Please consult their offices for their procedures.



Qualifications

- You must generally be in the top half of your class.
- For purposes of our nomination, Senator Rounds requires ACT or SAT scores be submitted.
 - ACT Code is 7182 and SAT Code is 6599
- Applicants should have outstanding records of extracurricular activities in schools and communities.
 - The academies stress the importance of leadership, character, and motivation.
- Each academy will have strict standards regarding the physical qualifications.

Application Procedure

- **Step 1**: Contact the academy of your choice directly to open a pre-candidate file.
- **Step 2**: Complete our application, provide all items from the checklist and mail or email your entire application form in **ONE PACKET by October 1** to our Sioux Falls office.
 - **Postmarked by October 1, emailed by October 1.**
 - An application will be **considered complete** when all items on the checklist are compiled and sent as **one packet**. Your ACT/SAT score may be the only exception.
 - **Please do not send any applications to my Washington, D.C. office. This will result in a delayed application process.**

• Step 3: Checklist

• ACT/SAT SCORE

- Please note that your **highest** ACT/SAT score will be reported to the interview board for consideration.
- Your ACT/SAT score may be **the only document sent in separately** of your complete packet.

• Submitting Your Score to my office

- If you have taken the ACT/SAT, provide your score sheet in your packet.
- If your high school reports your ACT/SAT score on your official transcript, that will be acceptable to include in your packet.
- If you have not taken the ACT/SAT or are planning to take it, send your score directly to us. Use code **7182** for ACT and code **6599** for SAT to submit scores.

• Step 3: Continued

• **Letters of Recommendation**

- Please include in your compiled packet **three letters of recommendation**, with at least one written by a teacher or administrator. Letters should be signed by the recommender. If letters appear manipulated or tampered, they can be thrown out from your packet.

- **Be sure to include all items on checklist (see application).**

- **Step 4:** When your entire application is complete, you will receive an email notifying you. There is no need to contact our office in the meantime.

Timeline

- **Spring**: Contact the academies of your choice and open a pre-candidate file.
 - You can also begin collecting the necessary data and documents to submit to our office for nominations.
- **October 1**: **Senator Rounds completed application packet due.** Only completed packets received by October 1 will be accepted.
- **Mid-October**: Letters and email will be sent to you notifying you of your interview time and location.
- **November**: Interviews with Senator Rounds Nomination Advisory Board may be conducted.
- **No Later Than December 31**: You will receive notification of nominations.

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Military Academy Nominations - FAQ

Frequently asked questions for those seeking a Military Academy nomination.

What is a nomination?

Members of Congress may nominate applicants who meet the eligibility requirements established by law. A candidate may seek a nomination from the following:

- Both U.S. Senators from his or her state
- A member of the U.S. House of Representatives who represents the congressional district in which the candidate resides
- The Vice-President of the United States

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:

- Age: Must be at least 17 years old, but not have passed the 23rd birthday
- Citizenship: Must be a U.S. citizen
- Marital Status: Must be unmarried, not pregnant, and without legal obligation to support children or other dependents
- Residence: Must reside within the boundaries of the state of South Dakota.
- Skill / Fitness: Must meet the medical, physical, and academic requirements of the Academy

Who do I contact to request an application?

Contact the Sioux Falls Office at (605) 336-0486 to request an application or go to Senator Rounds' official website (rounds.senate.gov) under Constituent Services.

What is the deadline for completing a nomination file?

The deadline for submitting a nomination packet and all other required forms to Senator Rounds' Sioux Falls Office is October 1, 2020. Only the candidates who have fully completed and submitted their application packets and required supporting material by this deadline will be considered. Please contact Tyler Tordsen in the Sioux Falls Office at (605) 336-0486 for more information.

What must be included in my nomination file?

A complete nomination file consists of the following items:

- Senator Rounds' application
- American College Testing Program (ACT) results and/or College Board Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) results
- Resume of extracurricular activities
- An essay stating why you want to attend a service academy (500 words or less)
- High school transcript
- Three letters of recommendation

What happens after I have completed my nomination file?

Applicants who submit a completed nomination file and meet or exceed the strict standards set by each service academy will be contacted with their mandatory interview time slot with the Senator's Service Academy Advisory Board. Interviews will take place most likely in November.

How are the nominations for South Dakota determined?

Senator Rounds' nomination process is very competitive and is led by his Service Academy Advisory Board, a 7-9 member board of community leaders from throughout South Dakota. The board meets with applicants to interview them in person and then present nomination recommendations to the Senator for each open slot.

What criteria is used in selecting candidates?

Nominations are based on a "whole person" evaluation. Factors such as academic achievements, extra-curricular activities, leadership skills, physical aptitude, character and motivation are all taken into consideration and compared with other applicants.

How many academies are there?

There are five service academies.

- U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York
- U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland
- U.S. Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs
- U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, New York
- U.S. Coast Guard Academy at New London, Connecticut

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. Visit the academy of your choice via the websites noted for each academy's particular admissions qualifications. It is not necessary to seek a nomination to the Coast Guard Academy, as the U.S.C.G.A. accepts candidates based on their own testing criteria.

Who should I ask to write a letter of recommendation on my behalf?

Some of the people applicants typically seek recommendations from include:

- Teachers
- Counselors
- Employers
- Coaches
- Clergy
- Scout Leaders

A specific recommendation form is not required. A letter of recommendation is sufficient.

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 an offer of admission (an appointment) directly from the academy.

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.

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

Academies will begin to notify candidates of their admission status in February. All offers of appointment are generally sent out by May.