

MAJOR SELECTION

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From: W. C. Miller, USNA Academic Dean and Provost

Major Selection for the Class of 2007 and Subsequent Background

The Secretary of the Navy the Honorable Gordon England and the Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Vern Clark have expressed a need for a larger number of newly commissioned ensigns who have completed technical majors in college in order to prepare these new officers for subsequent assignments in the world's most technically advanced Navy. At the Naval Academy, this increasing demand for technically educated ensigns will be reflected in increasing percentages of USNA graduating classes selecting technical majors; that is, those offered by the Divisions of Engineering & Weapons and Mathematics & Science.

Class of 2007 Guidance:

At least 64% of the midshipmen in the current midshipman fourth class will be required to select technical majors when members of the class select their academic majors in March 2004. Every effort will be made to give each midshipman his or her first choice in academic major; nevertheless, if fewer than 64% of midshipmen in the class select technical majors as their first choice in March, some midshipmen will be required to enroll in their second choice of major. For example, earlier this month almost 200 members of the fourth class selected Political Science as their initial preference for an academic major. The Naval Academy does not have the resources to teach that many students in a single major, so some of those midshipmen in 2007 who selected Political Science as their initial preference must find another major.

Selecting an Academic Major:

In considering which academic majors to indicate as your first and second choices in March, ensure that you give careful consideration to both choices and that at least one of your preferences is from among the technical majors offered at USNA. Consider your performance in courses you have already taken at the Academy, as well as your SAT test performance, as indicators of your potential strengths. Honestly appraise your interests: Are you going to enjoy spending the majority of your subsequent Naval Academy time studying either one of these majors? If your first choice is a non-technical major, have you selected as your second choice a technical major in which you can succeed at USNA? Talk to your academic advisors. Visit the departments you are considering; most of them are planning open house presentations of information that could prove very useful to you, but you are welcome anytime. Make a thoughtful choice. While I encourage you to discuss options with your upper class midshipmen, be aware that the classes of 2006 and earlier have selected majors and will complete their studies under a different set of rules. We will provide you more information on this topic as you approach the time to make your selection.

W. C. Miller

Academic Dean and Provost