



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Naval ROTC Program

Many prospective and current Oregon State University students, who were interested in finding out more about the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) Program, have asked specific questions about NROTC in an attempt to determine whether they were suited to the program and vice versa. If you or your parents have questions about the NROTC program, take the time to read this paper; it may help you to understand who and what we are and whether the NROTC program is for you. Read the whole paper; there may be some questions that you haven't even thought of yet. Following are the most frequently asked questions about the NROTC program and their answers.

Q. What is the purpose of the NROTC program?

A. Our purpose, here at OSU and at other universities with NROTC Programs, is to train college students for leadership roles as commissioned officers in the Navy and Marine Corps.

Q. Why do most students join the NROTC?

A. There are a variety of good reasons for joining, and each student has his/her own personal reasons. Some students want to take advantage of the scholarship benefits. Some students join because they want to be Navy or Marine Corps officers and prefer NROTC to attending the Naval Academy. Some students know that they want careers in aviation or nuclear power, and join to be able to receive advanced training in those fields that cannot be gained anywhere else.

Q. What are the NROTC scholarship benefits?

A. The scholarship covers full tuition at Oregon State University for four or three years depending on when the student applies for a scholarship.

In addition, educational fees, uniforms, and a \$250 per month tax-free subsistence allowance are paid by the Navy for midshipman on scholarship while in attendance at the university as a freshman (+\$50/month each additional year; i.e., \$300, \$350, and \$400). The students are also given \$750 textbook stipend per year, which is deposited in equal payments at the beginning of each academic term.

Q. Are there any benefits for the non-scholarship (College Program) students?

A. Yes. Students who enter the junior year in College Program status will begin receiving the \$350 per month tax-free subsistence allowance (\$400/month senior year). Also, during the entire four years, they are given use of the uniforms they need, and their naval science textbooks. They also receive pay during summer cruise between their junior and senior years.

Q. Does the scholarship cover room and board expenses?

A. No. Those expenses must be borne by the individual families. Students who find that room and board payments represent a financial hardship should investigate OSU's financial aid program.

Q. What is the obligation period?

A. We have two categories of students. Our scholarship students are obligated for a minimum of four years of active duty after graduation, depending on service selection. They accept the obligation at the beginning of the sophomore year. Our College Program (non-scholarship) students are obligated for three years of active duty after graduation. They accept the obligation at the beginning of their junior year.

Q. Does that mean that there is no obligation incurred by incoming freshmen when they join the program?



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A. Correct. Scholarship students have a year, and College Program students have two years to experience the NROTC program before they have to decide whether to remain in the program and to incur the obligation, or to leave the program without obligation. What does this mean in laymen's terms? A year of books, \$250/month stipend, and full tuition with no obligation.

Q. If I join the NROTC program, what kind of military duties should I expect after graduation?

A. Most of our students, male and female, will graduate as "line officers." That means that they will be expected to go on to further training in aviation, submarines, or conventional or nuclear powered surface ships. There are a very limited number of medical school scholarships (about 25 nationwide). Those who choose (and are accepted for) the Marine Corps can go into aviation or ground officer assignments.

Q. Do scholarship and non-scholarship students receive identical assignments after graduation?

A. Yes. Assignments are made on the basis of the student's choices, qualifications, and performance. Scholarship status is not a factor in the assignment process.

Q. As a scholarship applicant, how do I know whether I am being selected as a Navy or Marine Option candidate?

A. When you send in the initial scholarship application form, you will have checked either the Navy or Marine Corps box on the form. The box you check will determine the route that your application will then take. You will be contacted by a Navy or Marine Corps recruiter to complete your application processing, according to the box you checked. If you are processed by a Navy recruiter, then you will be eligible for a Navy Option scholarship. The Navy and Marine Corps conduct their own scholarship selection boards to consider their own candidates.

Q. Can I be guaranteed flight school after graduation?

A. The Navy does not give such a guarantee. However, experience has shown that a solid academic performance at OSU, and high scores on the aviation aptitude exam, plus being physically qualified for aviation, will give a Midshipman an excellent chance of getting his aviation choice. The Marine Corps does offer flight guarantees, which can be granted by meeting the requirements any time up to 90 days before graduation.

Q. What about graduate school? Is there any way to go directly to graduate school, and to serve the obligated military service after graduate school?

A. That is a possibility, but not a very likely one unless you have an exceptional record of undergraduate academic work. A few top students are selected each year to go on to graduate school, but the vast majority will be expected to enter the military after graduation. Keep in mind, though, that the Navy and Marine Corps have their own Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, and you would be eligible for assignment there, after your first three or four years of active duty, to obtain a graduate degree in the field of your choice while receiving full pay.

Q. Is medical school in that same category? Can I go from the NROTC program directly into medical school, and then serve my obligated time as a Navy doctor?

A. Maybe. At this time, a maximum of 25 NROTC Midshipmen nationwide are given permission to apply to medical school each year. If admitted to medical school, they would attend immediately following graduation. Under this program, students would begin to serve their obligation following



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their residency. To enter this program, the student must gain acceptance into a medical school. You are not guaranteed permission to go to medical school until the start of your senior year.

Q. Do I have to major in some particular subject if I join the NROTC?

A. No. Any of the available majors at OSU are allowable. We encourage our students to pursue some form of technical major, but that is not a requirement. Those who major in non-technical subjects will have to take a few technical courses, namely calculus and physics, to prepare them for the technological environment that they will encounter in their military service. These technical courses, even for non-tech majors, will count toward degree requirements because all majors require some math and science course work.

Q. Would I be allowed to change my major once I am in the NROTC program?

A. Certainly, provided that you can still graduate on time. If, by changing majors, you would be forced to graduate behind your contemporaries (more than four years of academic work), you would have to pay the educational costs beyond the four year point and have the extra time approved.

Q. How does the Marine training differ from Navy training?

A. In most respects, it is the same. Marine option students are not required to take calculus and physics courses. Marine option students take different Naval Science courses in their junior and senior years, and in the summer after their junior year they take part in the Officer Candidate School (OCS) training program "BULLDOG" at Quantico, Virginia. They are guided in their development by our Marine Officer Instructor, and upon graduation they are commissioned as Second Lieutenants in the U.S. Marine Corps.

Q. If I already have some college credits, or if I attend summer school, can I graduate and be commissioned in less than four years?

A. Possibly, individuals in these situations should come in and discuss their personal situation with an advisor. In addition to the four years of Naval Science courses that must be completed, our scholarship students participate in summer training cruises for four to six weeks each summer. Although we may be able to tailor a course of study for you, it would likely involve doubling up on your Naval Science courses and taking your final cruise after graduation, but prior to commissioning. College Program students would have less of a problem since they only take one summer cruise between the junior and senior years.

Q. What does one do on a summer training cruise?

A. There are three different cruises. The first summer cruise, after the freshman year, gives all scholarship students the chance to learn about the four basic "line officer" specialties. The students spend one week at each of four locations to receive indoctrinations in aviation, submarine, surface ships, and Marine Corps amphibious operations. The second summer cruise, which all scholarship students take after the sophomore year, is aboard either a surface ship or submarine (student's choice) and is geared toward experiencing the Navy from an enlisted viewpoint. The summer cruise after the junior year provides junior officer training aboard ships or submarines for the Navy students, and at the Marine Corps Base at Quantico, Virginia for the Marine Corps students. College Program students only take one summer training cruise; their cruise is the same as their scholarship student counterparts' after the junior year.

Q. Some people need to work during the summer. Are there any allowances for this?



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A. The summer cruises are part of our curriculum and must be attended. However, we will allow you to state your preference for when you would like to take the cruise. The cruises are only four to six weeks long, so you should still be able to work for part of the summer. Also, the Midshipmen are paid about \$550 per month during the duration of the cruise.

Q. Where do we go during summer cruise, and who pays for our transportation?

A. Our students travel all over the world on cruises. The Navy pays for your travel expenses from school or your home to the cruise site and your return to home each summer. Our juniors have many options available to them. They can request Aircraft Carrier or Patrol Squadron cruises and special training with Navy Seals.

Q. Do NROTC graduates have the same opportunities as Naval Academy graduates when it comes time for duty assignments after graduation?

A. Yes. NROTC and Academy graduates have identical opportunities to go into the fields of their choice. When it comes time to state duty preferences and to be selected for duty assignments, the students with the higher academic and aptitude rankings, regardless of where they go to school, will be most likely to receive their first choice of assignments.

Q. Do NROTC Midshipmen wear uniforms to classes every day like they do at the Naval Academy?

A. No. NROTC Midshipmen are only required to wear the uniform on Lab day, which is once a week throughout the school year. Uniforms may be worn more frequently if desired. Lab, otherwise known as drill, may consist of military formation, guest lecturers, classroom sessions, or general briefings.

Q. Are NROTC Midshipmen housed together on campus?

A. No. Each student makes his or her own arrangements with the university for housing. Students may live in university dormitories, or later in fraternities or sororities, at their option. Some upperclassmen choose to live in, and share the expenses of, nearby apartments.

Q. How do I go about applying for an NROTC scholarship?

A1. The application is done through the Naval ROTC website, <https://www.nrotc.navy.mil>. You can begin the application process at the end of your junior year of high school. You must have your ACT or SAT scores sent to the scholarship board, and they must arrive before December 31st. All aspects of the application process, including the interview and medical exam, are scheduled by the Navy recruiter in your area.

A2. After your arrival as a college freshman, students can be nominated for scholarships by staff after fall or spring term. If you are awarded a scholarship and accept it, you incur the same obligation as a four year scholarship student entering their sophomore year.

Q. Is there any particular advantage in applying for the NROTC scholarship before the 1 December deadline?

A. **Absolutely.** The earlier you apply, the earlier you can be selected for a scholarship. The Marine Corps holds two scholarship selection boards each year: an early board in November, and a final board in February. If you finish your application processing in time to be considered by the early board, you can be picked months earlier than those who wait until the last minute to apply. The Navy conducts a continuous selection process from September through March. Navy Option students are considered for scholarship selection as soon as their completed application packages are received by the board.



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Knowing your scholarship selection status in the fall can be a big advantage in helping you to make decisions about which universities you can afford and to which you should apply. By all means, apply for the scholarship as early as you can. You have everything to gain and nothing to lose.

ALSO, APPLY TO ALL THE SCHOOLS YOU ARE INTERESTED IN, REGARDLESS OF COST, SINCE IT IS LIKELY THAT THE UNIVERSITY APPLICATION DEADLINE WILL PASS BEFORE YOU KNOW YOUR SCHOLARSHIP RESULTS.

Q. What are the basic qualifications needed to join the NROTC program?

A. You must be a U.S. citizen; you must be at least 17 years old as of September 1st of the year you enter the program; and you must be able to graduate by age 25. Age waivers are available for those with previous military service. College Program students can join at the age of 16 and must be able to graduate by the age of 27 1/2. You must be a high school graduate and you must be medically qualified. Men must be between 62 and 78 inches tall (66 to 78 for Marines); women between 60 and 78 inches tall (same for Marines). Weight should be proportionate to height. Vision must be correctable to 20/20 with refractive error not exceeding +6.0 diopters (+7.0 diopters for nurses). Normal color vision is required for Navy students. There is no color vision requirement for Marine Option students. There can be no severe hay fever or chronic rhinitis, and no history of asthma since the 12th birthday. Positive HIV is disqualifying. Those whose eyes require correction to 20/20 will require a physical waiver.

Q. Will my scholarship selection be held up if I have trouble passing the medical exam?

A. The scholarship selection process is completely independent of the medical examination. Scholarship selection is based on academic performance, extracurricular activities, and demonstrated leadership potential. You can be selected as a scholarship nominee even before you take the medical exam; but, no funds will be paid out until the medical exam is passed. The importance of completing and passing the medical exam cannot be over-emphasized. It is up to you to do all that you can to complete the medical exam in a timely fashion. If follow-on exams or inputs from your local doctor are required, then you must ensure that these requirements are met.

Q. If I require a physical waiver, would that jeopardize my chances for a scholarship?

A. It might in some cases. Congress limits us, so if you are one of the last students to be offered a scholarship, the Congressional limitation could impact on your chances.

Q. If I am notified that some physical problem will disqualify me from scholarship eligibility, is there anything I can do?

A. That depends on the nature of the problem. There are physical issues, such as a minor eye correction, that can be waived. Other problems, such as having had certain childhood diseases, or a family history of diabetes, may cloud your medical record to the point that additional medical evidence is required to substantiate your qualification. Unless you are told that your condition is absolutely disqualifying, you should do all that you can to obtain medical certification. Letters from family doctors or your local specialists can help to show that your condition should not be disqualifying. When in doubt, ask for a medical waiver.

Q. In addition to the medical exam, is there a physical fitness exam required for scholarship selection?

A. Marine Option students are required to pass a physical fitness exam to be eligible for scholarship selection. Navy Option students do not take this exam as a prerequisite to selection. Once in the



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NROTC program, all Midshipmen are required to pass a semi-annual physical readiness test, which for Navy option students, consists of push-ups, sit-ups, and a 1.5 mile run. Points are awarded for each exercise, and a minimum passing grade is established for each exercise and for the total points earned.

All Midshipmen are encouraged to seek excellence in their physical fitness, and to do more than the bare minimum in their fitness tests. Marine option students take a slightly different test that consists of pull-ups, sit-ups, and a 3 mile run.

Q. How are the scholarships awarded?

A. The scholarship selection board meets bi-weekly from October through March of each year in Pensacola, Florida. This board is made up of different groups of NROTC Unit Commanding Officers (Navy Captains). Because of the rolling nature of the board, you could be awarded a scholarship anytime from November through April. If you are ever in doubt as to the status of your scholarship application package, visit the NROTC website: <https://www.nrotc.navy.mil>.

Three year scholarship awardees will be notified over the summer between freshman and sophomore year.

Q. If I missed the January 1st deadline for the scholarship application, is there any way that I can still obtain an NROTC scholarship?

A. Yes, but not through the process that I just described. Students can become eligible for the award of a scholarship by joining their NROTC Unit in the College Program (non-scholarship) status. After one academic term, in which the student's academic performance and aptitude can be assessed, the student can be recommended for scholarship status to the Chief of Naval Education and Training, who is empowered to award scholarships to promising College Program students. In general, if you can earn better than a 2.5 GPA in your first academic term, achieve a "B" or better in Calculus, and demonstrate a high aptitude for Naval Service, you would have a good chance for a NROTC scholarship.

Q. What does the term "board eligible" mean?

A. When you initially apply for the NROTC scholarship, you must release your SAT or ACT scores to the scholarship board. When your scores have been received, and they are high enough to qualify you for the NROTC program, then you become "board eligible". At that point, your recruiter will schedule you for your interview, aptitude test, physical exam, and anything else that needs to be completed. In order to have your record appear before the scholarship selection board, you must complete all aspects of the application procedure, with the exception of the physical exam, which can be accomplished later.

It is up to you to ensure that all of this is being accomplished in time for the selection board. At the latest, you should have submitted the paperwork portion of the application by mid-January.

Q. If I join the NROTC program, would I be considered to be in the military, or would I still be a civilian?

A. NROTC Midshipmen are given the same status as "inactive reservists." You would have a "reserve" military ID card, but you would be a civilian during all but the summer training cruise periods of your curriculum. The summer training is performed in an active duty "reserve" status.

Q. If I am given an NROTC scholarship, does that guarantee that I will be admitted to Oregon State University?



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A. No. The scholarship selection process is **TOTALLY INDEPENDENT** of the OSU admission process. You must, on your own, seek admission to OSU or some other NROTC university. Remember that the NROTC scholarship cannot be awarded to you until you have been accepted for admission at an NROTC school. It is a good idea for NROTC scholarship applicants to apply to more than one NROTC school to ensure acceptance to at least one NROTC school.

Q. Can you offer any hints regarding what the scholarship selection board looks for in making its selections?

A. Yes. The NROTC scholarship selection board will consider the "whole person", including College Board scores, grades, class standing, athletics, participation in extracurricular activities, recommendations, interview results, and perceived potential. We are looking for the future leaders of the Navy and Marine Corps. We want well rounded students who are intelligent enough to excel in academics, athletic enough to meet the physical challenges of military service, and who are personable and dynamic enough to assume roles as military leaders. It is not enough to be only bright, or only athletic, or only personable. It takes a combination of the three qualities to be a successful Naval Officer. Officer candidates must also be of high moral character. Students with criminal records or who have gone beyond experimentation with illegal drugs are not likely officer candidates.

Care should be taken in selecting those who will provide written recommendations for you. If a candidate is depicted as being just an average run-of-the-mill student, it will detract from the board's assessment of the individual. The application interview with your local recruiter is also vitally important. Look sharp and present yourself well. College Board scores can be a positive factor for the student, but only insofar as they are supported by actual academic achievement. A student with high SAT or ACT scores, but mediocre grades and class standing, is less desirable than a student with moderate scores and high grades and standing. One is coasting and the other is a hard working achiever.

Q. What would happen if I decided not to continue in the NROTC program after I have started the sophomore year and incurred an obligation for active duty?

A. There are several reasons and circumstances for leaving the NROTC program. To reinforce what was said before, there is no obligation at all if you quit before the sophomore year. If, after the start of the sophomore year, you decide to quit, then you would be held liable for either monetary repayment of tuition expended, or for active military service in enlisted status immediately if you drop out of college, or upon graduation if you stay in college. If a medical problem develops that would preclude you from being commissioned, then the obligation would most likely be erased. If you are dropped from the program because of your own misconduct or inaptitude, you could be required to reimburse the Navy for your tuition and book expenditures at the discretion of the Secretary of the Navy.

Q. Could I avoid the obligated service if I simply repay the Navy for my tuition and book expenditures?

A. The Secretary of the Navy reserves final determination for either recoupment or active military service if you are disenrolled.

Q. If I start out as a Marine Option student, can I switch to be a Navy option student, or vice versa?

A. You can change from one option to the other, but it is not automatic, it is on a case by case basis at the approval of the Professor of Naval Science. The changing of option after the sophomore year



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is discouraged because it involves making up the specialized courses that are begun for Navy and Marine option students beginning in the junior year.

Q. Is there an orientation for new NROTC students where we can learn how to be Midshipmen?

A. Yes. Every year, just prior to the beginning the fall quarter begins, the OSU NROTC Unit hosts a new student orientation (NSO) program. At the orientation, the freshmen are introduced to military discipline, fitted for their uniforms, learn basic seamanship and undergo a variety of activities to prepare them to become members of the Midshipman Battalion. They receive physical fitness training and tests, swimming tests, marching instruction and some classroom instruction. By the time that school starts, the freshmen will be fully functioning and knowledgeable members of the Unit.

Incoming active duty members also participate in NSO in order to fully integrate them into the OSU NROTC unit with their midshipman counterparts.

Q. Can you describe how a Midshipman fits into the overall picture at a university?

A. An NROTC Midshipman is a college student, but one who is held to a higher standard. He or she is pursuing his or her own academic degree in a normal university environment, in the same manner as a non-Midshipman would. The only difference is that the Midshipman takes a series of Naval Science courses, similar to minoring in a specific field beyond the intended major, and he or she wears the uniform to class once a week as well as participating in other unit activities (such as physical training) during the week. Midshipmen are also held to the same high moral and ethical standards as all Naval and Marine Corps officers. Midshipmen are free to join fraternities or sororities, and enjoy all aspects of campus life. You will blend in with and participate in the campus activities of your choice. When you graduate, you will serve with pride as a Navy or Marine Corps officer.

Q. I have no experience with the military; how do I know if I will fit in?

A. You don't know, and neither did any of us who are in the military now. You have to join the program and experience it for yourself. That's why the first year is without obligation. We are looking for intelligent and physically fit men and women of high moral character who can be trained to assume positions of leadership and great responsibility in the Navy and Marine Corps. If you fit that description, and if you prefer to be a leader rather than a follower, then you owe it to yourself to give it a try.

4-Year Navy/Marine Corps Scholarship Website:

<https://www.nrotc.navy.mil/>

- Apply as early as your junior year!

Oregon State University NROTC Website:

<http://nrotc.oregonstate.edu/>

- College Program – Competes for scholarships while enrolled.