



UNITED STATES  
**AIR FORCE ACADEMY**

Instructions to Pre-candidates

March 15, 2021

Class of 2026



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## Utilizing the Instructions to Pre-Candidates

The Instructions to Pre-Candidates will serve as your guide throughout the initial phase of the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) application process. Please be sure to read the instruction booklet carefully, as it is an essential aid in the journey to become a Candidate for USAFA Class of 2026. If there are any questions about the application process or the pre-candidate phase, please contact the Admissions Counseling Team for your area. This information can be found on page 1.

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## Admission Events

Students interested in pursuing an appointment to the United States Air Force Academy are encouraged to visit the campus for one of our admissions events. Our admissions events are restricted to those students who are eligible and interested in applying to USAFA and their guests. Tours are intended for students in eighth grade and up. These events can help prospective applicants gain a deeper understanding of the USAFA environment.

The Admissions Office offers two types of recurring events: Discover USAFA and Explore USAFA. Discover USAFA includes our admissions briefing, Q&A session and a guided walking tour of the immediate cadet area. Explore USAFA includes our admission briefing and Q&A session. Afterwards, our guests can explore the campus on a limited self-guided tour. This tour does not include access to the secured cadet area.

Admissions events are held in the Barry Goldwater Visitor Center unless otherwise noted. They are normally held on Mondays and Fridays at 2 pm MST with some exceptions. Virtual events are being held at this time and will continue to be an option for those who cannot visit. For a full list of dates and times for our admissions events, please visit <https://www.academyadmissions.com/meet/admissions-events/>.

USAFA is continually monitoring the spread of the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic and taking actions to mitigate threats to community health and impacts to mission. Throughout the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, USAFA Admissions is offering virtual events and will post regular updates to the above website to ensure the most up-to-date information about our programs is available.

# Pre-candidate Time Table

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- March 15 to January 31:** Contact your Members of Congress for a nomination. This means contact both your senators and the house representative from your district. Each member may have a different deadline so apply as soon as possible in all categories for which you may be eligible. **The deadlines for most congressional offices are on or before October 31** and most congressional members will conduct interviews before Thanksgiving. Please go to page 6 for other nomination categories for which you could be eligible to apply. **Do not wait for a nomination to complete your application. You should be working on both (nomination and application) at the same time.**
- December 31:** Deadline to submit the initial application/Pre-candidate Questionnaire (PCQ)
- January 31:** Deadline for Airmen to submit AF Form 1786 for a Regular or Reserve nomination. Forms will not be accepted prior to 1 July.
- January 31:** Deadline for nomination requests sent to the Vice President and for all military affiliated nominations.

## Contacting Your Admissions Counseling Team

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When contacting the Admissions Office please address your inquiries to the appropriate geographical Team listed below:

<b>If your Congressional District is located in:</b>	<b>Please call:</b>
<b>Team Blue – US States East of the Mississippi River</b> AL, CT, DE, FL, GA IL, IN, KY, MA, MD, ME, MI, MS, NH, NC, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, SC, TN, VT, VA, WI, WV, Washington DC, Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands	(719) 333-3801
<b>Team Silver – US States West of the Mississippi River</b> AK, AR, AZ, CA, CO, HI, IA, ID, KS, LA, MN, MO, MT, NE, ND, NM, NV, OK, OR, SD, TX, UT, WA, WY, Guam, American Samoa	(719) 333-3802

If you can't reach your counseling team directly, call 1-800-443-9266. You can also find contact information on your USAFA application portal.

### Admissions Office Mailing Address:

HQ USAFA/RRS  
2304 Cadet Dr. Ste 2300  
USAF Academy, CO 80840-5025

# Pre-candidate Questionnaire (PCQ) Instructions

## Basic Eligibility

To be eligible for an appointment you must:

- Be a United States Citizen (United States citizenship must be finalized prior to entering USAFA).
- Be at least 17 and not have passed your 23rd birthday on July 1 of the year you enter (this age requirement is public law and cannot be waived).
- Be unmarried without dependents. Dependents include a spouse by marriage, having a birth child, step child, or adopted child whether or not you provide support to said dependent. Furthermore, if admitted to USAFA you may not acquire any dependents while a cadet. If a marriage or paternity/maternity were to occur while a cadet but not be known to Air Force authorities until after graduation, you may be subject to disciplinary or administrative action as an officer.
- Be of good moral character.

## General Instructions

The deadline for submitting the Pre-candidate Questionnaire (PCQ) is **December 31**. Most pre-candidates will complete the PCQ (initial online application) by the beginning of their senior year. We encourage the PCQ be completed well before the deadline due to the complexity of the application process. It is your responsibility to ensure your e-mail address is kept up to date and any e-mail from our address does not go to your spam folder. You should access your application portal on a **weekly** basis to check your status regardless of whether you receive an e-mail notification from us.

If you applied for Summer Seminar and did not choose to opt in for your Summer Seminar application to be used as your application to USAFA, you must still complete a new PCQ for the class entering in June 2022. The Summer Seminar application **DOES NOT** take the place of the PCQ unless you selected that option while completing your Summer Seminar application.

We use the PCQ as a guide to inform you of your potential to become a candidate for admission to USAFA and base qualifying guidelines on our experience with previous classes. The PCQ is an initial evaluation and can be modified as you send us additional or updated information (i.e. test scores, high school transcript, school profile).

Submission and verification of your Social Security Number (SSN) Card takes place during the completion of the PCQ. This will allow for streamlined processes between the USAFA application and the medical application. If you do not have access to your SSN card, you may upload a copy of your parent's tax returns or a copy of your application to request a new SSN card. Please redact any identifying information for your parents or other family members.



*In-processing Day*

## Active Duty, Air National Guard, and Reserve Airmen

Airmen should refer to AFMAN 36-2032 *Military Recruiting and Accessions* for additional requirements to apply to USAFA via the Leaders Encouraging Airmen Development (LEAD) program. LEAD information can be found at <https://www.academyadmissions.com/prepare/enlisted/>.

## Enlisted Personnel Applying from Other Services (Active Duty, National Guard, Reserve)

Enlisted personnel from other services may apply to USAFA. However, they are not eligible for a nomination under the LEAD program and must secure a nomination like any civilian candidate. Additionally, the enlisted member must receive a positive recommendation from their unit commander and secure approval for release from their service. If appointed, a DD Form 368, *Request for Conditional Release*, must be completed by the individual's unit commander (See AFMAN 36-2032, paragraph 8.4.4.). Inability to secure a release from their service prior to June 1 of the year of in-processing, incomplete or incorrect documentation of release, or the inability to report to USAFA in-processing by the stated date (typically the end of June) will result in cancellation of the appointment.

Enlisted members from other services seeking a commission through a service academy must first consult their service's policies and programs. The Army, Navy, and Coast Guard may have restrictions and limitations on applying to USAFA. The Army and Navy also have programs similar to the Air Force LEAD program that are designed to access enlisted members into the United States Military Academy and United States Naval Academy. These programs may be more appropriate for enlisted members from other services.

## Discharged Enlisted Personnel

Enlisted members discharged from any service are eligible to apply provided they meet basic eligibility guidelines, received an honorable discharge, and there are no restrictions on reenlistment. A DD Form 214, *Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty*, is required to establish proof of honorable discharge and eligibility. Other service documents may be required and commanders may be contacted during the application process.



*Cadet Area*

# **Pre-candidate Evaluation**

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If you meet basic eligibility criteria you will become a candidate for admission and be asked to complete a more extensive admissions application.

## **Test Scores (ACT or SAT)**

In order to process your PCQ, you must enter SAT or ACT test scores; however, we will consider PSAT and Pre-ACT scores in this initial application phase. If entered into the candidate phase, official SAT or ACT scores are **required**. If you have not taken either of these tests, see your high school counselor for help in registering for the next test date, or visit your base's Education Office if enlisted. You can also go to [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) (SAT) OR [www.act.org](http://www.act.org) (ACT) for national test dates and information. **Please note:** Scores over five years old are not valid. The SAT code for USAFA is 4830 and the ACT code is 0530. Be sure to enter the codes for USAFA on your registration form the day that you take the test.

Pre-candidates and candidates are encouraged to take the ACT and/or SAT multiple times as USAFA utilizes super scoring. Through super scoring, the best combination of all SAT scores and the best combination of all ACT scores will be evaluated. **We do not combine SAT and ACT scores.** Test scores must be achieved under national testing conditions on a national test date. State-required test scores will also be accepted. Please note, each subtest of the ACT and SAT must be taken (SAT includes both the Evidence Based Reading and Writing section and the Math section; ACT includes English, Math, Reading, and Science Reasoning). Stand-alone subtest scores will not be accepted. **We do not accept nonstandard (extended time) or special scores.** Active Duty Airmen can take the SAT and ACT through their Base Education Office if they have that capability. All Airmen are encouraged to retake the SAT or ACT.

In general, students who score below 31 on the Reading test and below 29 on the Math test of the SAT and below 24 English/Reading and 25 Math/Science Reasoning on the ACT will normally not be competitive for an appointment directly into USAFA but may be eligible for one of our preparatory programs.

**NOTE: Homeschooled and Nontraditional Students:** Each year a number of homeschooled and nontraditional students seek admission to USAFA. Most students are able to meet the academic requirements. While not necessary, we highly recommend these students attend college or junior college for a year before entering USAFA. Taking a full academic load as determined by the college and participating in the classroom environment will enhance your chances of adapting quickly and easily to the highly structured life of a cadet should you receive an appointment. Because the homeschool and nontraditional curriculum is often tailored to the particular student, we recommend you contact the Admissions Office to discuss your specific situation.

## **Admissions Counseling Team**

These individuals are the subject matter experts on the USAFA application process. They will serve as your point of contact for questions directly related to all components of your application, except for DODMERB and medical concerns. Keep in touch with your Admissions Counseling Team to ensure your file is complete and current. The contact information of your Admissions Counseling Team can be found on your USAFA application portal.



*T-53 (Cirrus SR20)*

## Mentor Admissions Liaison Officer (ALO)

All applicants will be assigned a Mentor ALO once they achieve candidate status. This individual mentors and motivates current year applicants to complete the admissions process and prepare for the AF Form 4060 evaluation. The name and contact information for your ALO can be found on your application portal. You are required to contact your Mentor ALO at least once during the application process. For in-depth questions about the application process please contact your Admissions Counseling Team. Your assigned Mentor ALO will not conduct your evaluation.

## Admissions Factors

If you meet our candidate guidelines based on this PCQ, you'll become a candidate and be provided instructions on completing the remainder of the candidate forms. You will find these instructions on the application portal where you completed your initial Pre-candidate Questionnaire. You will be required to complete the Candidate Fitness Assessment (CFA). Specific preparation guidelines for the CFA events are listed on pages 10-17 of this booklet. You will also need to complete a medical examination through the Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DoDMERB). Your medical exam will be scheduled after completion of your candidate kit. An Evaluator ALO will be assigned after you have completed your candidate kit; this individual will conduct your ALO Evaluation.

**NOTE: Being a candidate does not guarantee a nomination or an appointment. Competition for nominations is separate from appointments. Offers of appointment will be made only to the most qualified candidates who complete an application, receive a nomination, and are medically qualified.**

To be competitive for an appointment, **you should strive to earn at least the mid 50% ranges listed below**, obtain a nomination, be active in extracurricular activities, satisfactorily complete the CFA and DoDMERB medical exam, and interview with an ALO. The application process can be complex, so we recommend you pay close attention to the items which need to be completed and prepare for success.

**(Rank in Class) Top 6% - Top 1%**

**AND**

**Scores Mid-50% Range\***

**ACT**

**English 29-35**

**Mathematics 28-33**

**Reading 30-35**

**Science Reasoning 28-34**

**OR**

**SAT**

**SAT Math Test 33-38**

**SAT Reading Test 33-35**

\*These are the scores of the mid 50% of the cadets entering USAFA. This means 25% of the incoming cadets had higher scores and 25% of them had lower scores. Most students took their tests more than one time to get their scores to this point.

# Nomination Categories

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Completion of the Pre-candidate Questionnaire is only the first stage in the admissions process for USAFA. You must also obtain a nomination in one of the authorized nominating categories listed below. If you have not already applied for a nomination, do so immediately. **NOTE: To increase your chances of receiving an appointment, you should attempt to obtain a nomination in ALL of the categories for which you are eligible.**

The Vice President and each U.S. Senator and U.S. Representative are authorized to have a maximum of five cadets each attending USAFA at one time. For each cadet vacancy, Members of Congress may nominate up to 10 candidates to be considered for appointment. A nomination does not ensure an appointment.

## Congressional Nominations

You should request a nomination from both of your U.S. Senators and U.S. Representative from your district. Contact them via their website or follow the format on page 8 of this instruction booklet. You must be domiciled in the state and congressional district in which you are applying, but it is not necessary to know your Member of Congress personally. They want to nominate outstanding individuals who will have the best chance to qualify for an appointment. Check with your congressional office for domicile requirements as these vary state to state.

**You can access your Senators and Representative at [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) or [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov). Each congressional office has its own procedures and closeout dates for accepting nomination requests. Most congressional offices prefer you contact them in the spring or summer of the year before you desire to enter USAFA and complete an application for a nomination before October 31. Some deadlines are as early as September. Members of Congress may submit their nominations to USAFA as late as January 31; however, the majority of nominations are received before this deadline.** If selected for a nomination, you will likely receive a notice from the Member of Congress first. After the Member of Congress has submitted the nomination to USAFA, the Admissions Office will post your nomination(s) on your application portal.

**Vice Presidential:** The Vice President of the United States may nominate candidates from the nation at large. (All Pre-candidates are eligible.) If you wish to request a nomination from the Vice President you can do so at the following website: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/service-academy-nominations/>. The deadline to request a nomination from the Vice President is no later than January 31. **Do not mail your request for a Vice Presidential nomination to USAFA.** USAFA will make recommendations to the Vice President, based upon your application.

## Military Affiliated Nominations

If you are eligible to apply in the Presidential, Children of Deceased or Disabled Veterans, or Children of Medal of Honor Recipients categories, use the format on page 8 of this booklet. **The deadline for military affiliated nominations is January 31.** Send military affiliated nominations requests to:

HQ USAFA/RRS  
2304 Cadet Drive, Suite 2300  
USAF Academy, CO 80840-5025

**Presidential:** Vacancies allocated to the President of the United States have been reserved for children of career military personnel. This includes enlisted, warrant, and commissioned members of regular and reserve components who are on active duty (other than for training) and who have served continuously on active duty for at least eight years; and military retirees either living or deceased who have received retired or retainer pay. Reservists must be serving as members of a reserve component and be credited with at least eight years of service computed under Section 12733 of U.S.C. Title 10 (at least 2880 points); or who died while they would have been entitled to retired pay under Chapter 1223 of U.S.C. Title 10 except for not having attained 60 years of age. Stepchildren of career military parents are not eligible for a Presidential nomination unless they have been adopted by the military stepparent. For adopted children, the adoption proceedings must have begun before their 15th birthday.



**Children of Deceased or Disabled Veterans:** Vacancies are available for the children of deceased or 100% disabled armed forces veterans whose death or disability was determined to be service connected; or children of military personnel or federally employed civilian personnel who are in a missing or captured status. If you are eligible in this category, you will NOT be considered in the Presidential category.

**Children of Medal of Honor Recipients:** Vacancies have been reserved without appointment limit for the children of Medal of Honor recipients who served in any branch of the armed forces. If candidates meet the eligibility requirements and qualify on entrance requirements, they will be appointed to USAFA.

**Air Force Regular and Reserve Components: Deadline to receive Air Force regular and reserve nominations (AF Form 1786) is January 31.** Vacancies are available for enlisted members of Regular, Reserve and National Guard components of the Air Force. Air Force Manual 36-2032 provides instructions for applying. Additionally, Table 10.6. includes additional eligibility requirements for the LEAD program. Airmen should submit a Pre-candidate Questionnaire first. Next, they must submit an AF Form 1786 no earlier than July 1 through their unit commander for an endorsement, to their MPS for assignment availability code, and then to USAFA's Admissions Office. The AF Form 1786 may be obtained online at the Air Force E-Publication website or on our website at <https://www.academyadmissions.com/prepare/enlisted/>. Regular Airmen are required to submit the SURF at this time. Reserve and National Guard Airmen are required to submit the Career Data Brief at this time. Special instructions for Airmen can also be found at this website.

**Honor Military Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) Schools and Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFROTC):** Honors with Distinction military schools are designated by the Department of the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy to nominate USAFA candidates annually from among their honor students. Each honor unit may nominate five students to compete for the vacancies. Five students from each AFROTC detachment may be nominated to compete for the authorized vacancies. Air Force ROTC students should apply for a nomination to their professor of aerospace studies or aerospace science instructor who will recommend nominees to the head of the institution where the candidate is currently enrolled.



*Cadet Honor Guard*

## FORMAT OF REQUEST FOR CONGRESSIONAL NOMINATION

**(Most Representatives and Senators require you to use their online application. This is intended as a guide if an online application is not available. Apply to your Representative and Senators separately. You can access each Senator and Representative at the following websites [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) or [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov).)**

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Date

Honorable (Name of Appropriate Authority)  
(Visit website listed above for correct address for your  
Senators and Representative)

Dear Representative OR Dear Senator (Name)

I want to attend the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) and to serve in the United States Air Force. I request that I be considered as one of your nominees for the class that enters USAFA in June 2022.

My pertinent data is:

Name (print name exactly as it appears on the birth certificate, or if legally changed, attach a copy of the court order):

Social Security Number:

Permanent Address (street, city, county, state, zip code):

Temporary Address (if applicable):

Permanent Phone Number and Area Code:

Temporary Phone Number and Area Code (if applicable):

Name of Father:

Name of Mother:

Date and Place of Birth (spell out month):

Name and Address of High School:

Date of Graduation:

Approximate grade point average (GPA); rank-in-class; PSAT, PACT/PRE-ACT, SAT and ACT if you have taken these tests. Include Critical Reading and Math scores for the PSAT and SAT tests; and English, Math, Reading, and Science Reasoning for the ACT test and PACT/PRE-ACT composite.

Extracurricular Activities:

Reasons for Wanting to Enter USAFA:

Thank you for considering me as one of your nominees to USAFA.

Sincerely,

Signature

**FORMAT OF REQUEST FOR MILITARY-AFFILIATED NOMINATION**

**(Use this format for any of these categories: Presidential, Children of Deceased or Disabled Veterans, or Children of Medal of Honor Recipients.)**

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Date

HQ USAFA/RRS  
2304 Cadet Dr., Suite 2300  
USAF Academy, CO 80840-5025

Dear Chief, Selections Division

I want to attend the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) and to serve in the United States Air Force. I request a nomination under the **(name of appropriate category)** for the class that enters USAFA in June 2022.

My pertinent data is:

Name (print name exactly as it appears on the birth certificate, or if legally changed, attach a copy of the court order):

Social Security Number:

Permanent Address (street, city, county, state, zip code):

Temporary Address (if applicable):

Permanent Phone Number and Area Code:

Temporary Phone Number and Area Code (if applicable):

Date and Place of Birth (spell out month):

If Member of Military, Include Rank, Regular or Reserve Component, Branch of Service, and Organizational Address Including PSC Box Number:

If Previous Candidate, Indicate Year:

Parental Information - Name, Rank, Social Security Number, Component and Branch of Service:

**In the Candidate phase, you will be asked to upload all Presidential Nomination documentation through your application portal as one packet. You will need the following documentation: If your parent is on active duty, a statement of service dated and signed by current personnel officer specifying all periods of active duty and any breaks therein. If your parent is in the Air Force, they can access a statement of service online at their virtual MPF. If your parent is retired, attach a copy of the DD 214 (member copy 4), or retirement orders. If your parent is deceased, a copy of the casualty report. If your parent is disabled, the Veterans Administration (VA) benefits letter that includes claim number and VA office where the case is filed. If your parent is retired or deceased, documents can also be accessed at <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/> regardless of their branch of service. If your parent is a reservist, a copy of the document that shows their total point's credit or a copy of their notice of eligibility letter that states they are eligible to receive retired pay upon reaching 60 years of age.**

Sincerely,

Signature

# Preparation for Candidate Fitness Assessment

## Service Academies Admissions Requirement

The following information is provided to help you prepare for the Candidate Fitness Assessment (CFA), which will be required if you are entered into the Candidate Phase. You cannot take and submit CFA scores during the Pre-candidate Phase but **it is expected you will practice the assessment multiple times**. You can view the CFA video instructions at <https://www.academyadmissions.com/requirements/physical/>.

The CFA is a test of strength, agility, speed and endurance. It is used to predict a candidate's aptitude for the physical program at the Service Academies. The results of this test are very important in the overall assessment of your admissions file, so you should become familiar with the six events in the CFA and practice before actually taking the test. The assessment consists of the following events: basketball throw (from kneeling position), pull-ups or the flexed arm hang (women's option), a shuttle run, modified sit-ups (crunches), push-ups and a one-mile run. **A low overall score or a poor score in an individual event may be disqualifying.**

## Advice to the Candidate

In order to qualify for admission, you must successfully complete the CFA. Your score is a combination of your best efforts on each of the six events in one complete test administration. Strive for excellence and the highest possible score. **You should strive to meet or exceed the goals listed in Table 2. Do not take the test if you are ill, have a recent injury or if you are having inclement weather (too hot, too cold, too windy, rainy, snowy, etc.). Please reschedule your test as long as it isn't the last day to take it.** We strongly advise you to plan accordingly and don't wait until the last minute to do this important piece of the application. Any or all of the events mentioned above have kept candidates from testing and completing their application by their due date. You cannot skip an event and it is your responsibility to notify your assigned Admissions Counseling Team if there is a testing problem/concern.

Your examination may be administered by **any PE-certified teacher, athletic coach, an AFJROTC instructor, service academy liaison officer, a non-family member who is in the military, or another service academy representative**. Service members may have any active duty commissioned officer or the NCOIC of their base gym administer the CFA. Any active duty commissioned officer or non-commissioned officer may administer the CFA for service members. It is your responsibility to arrange for a qualified person to conduct your examination and to have a facility that has the equipment required (pull-up bar, 1-mile track, etc.) to complete testing.

Candidates should wear clothing and shoes appropriate for physical training such as shorts, T-shirts, socks, and running shoes (tennis/basketball shoes are not recommended for the 1-mile run). Any item that gives a candidate an unfair advantage is not permitted during the CFA. Wearing devices such as weight belts or elastic bandages may or may not provide an advantage; however, for standardization purposes, such additional equipment is not authorized unless prescribed by medical personnel. Exceptions are appropriate cold weather apparel while running outdoors.

TABLE 1. Maximum performance scores by event and gender.

	Basketball Throw	Pull-Ups	Flexed Arm Hang	Shuttle Run	Modified Sit-Ups	Push-Ups	1-Mile Run
Male	102	18	N/A	7.8	95	75	5:20
Female	66	7	39	8.6	95	50	6:00

TABLE 2. Goals/Comparable to average candidate performance scores by event and gender.

	Basketball Throw	Pull-Ups	Flexed Arm Hang	Shuttle Run	Modified Sit-Ups	Push-Ups	1-Mile Run
Male	68	13	N/A	8.7	81	61	6:31
Female	42	4	28	9.6	80	41	7:38

Candidates who have taken the CFA as an applicant for the U.S. Military Academy, U.S. Naval Academy or during one of their Summer Seminar programs can ask them to email the results of the exam to [USAFA\\_RRS.ORGMAIL@USAFA.EDU](mailto:USAFA_RRS.ORGMAIL@USAFA.EDU) or fax us a copy of the exam. Our fax number is (719) 333-3012. Please make sure you did well on the assessment by checking to see if your scores are close to the goals posted on page 10 before you have them sent. **Your CFA must be completed by the specific deadline for your application. If the first test is passing, we will not accept additional scores. If the test is disqualifying and it is your first CFA entered for USAFA we will request for you take it a second time as long as you took the first test on or before your specific deadline (NOTE: If your first CFA is disqualifying we will not take a Summer Seminar program CFA as the second test). If both tests are disqualifying we will close your file. If you submit your first CFA after January 31 and it is disqualifying, your file will be closed.**

## Test Administration

The test must be administered properly and to the standards required so as to accurately reflect a candidate's physical and motor fitness and to be fair to all candidates. **The CFA Administrator may be any PE-certified teacher, athletic coach, an AFJROTC instructor, service academy liaison officer, a non-family member who is in the military, or another service academy representative.** The test must be administered according to the directions with strict adherence to the time schedule. Practice tests are highly encouraged to familiarize the candidate with the "pace" and stamina required to complete the entire test battery; however, the officially reported score must come from a single test administration.

## Support Personnel

Additional personnel will be needed to facilitate the administration of certain events, in particular the basketball throw. It may also be prudent to have control and/or medical personnel on site during the test; however, they are not required. At a minimum, the test administrator will have an emergency action plan for getting medical help if needed. **Note: Due to COVID restrictions, candidates are encouraged to take a family member with them to aid in social distancing of test administrator and candidate. The family member must reside in the same household and may assist with holding feet during modified sit-ups. Family members will not otherwise interfere with CFA administration.**

## Duties of Test Personnel

The test administrator will prepare the test site with the required equipment in advance of testing (Figure 1). The test administrator and assistant(s) will have a printed copy of the event order/instructions and will be totally familiar with all testing procedures and time limits. The test administrator will announce the event instructions immediately before each event is performed. Test administrators will have a clipboard and a pencil to record the results on the candidate's scorecard and must maintain strict professional standards.

## Equipment

The following list of equipment is required to administer the CFA:

- 1 sit-up mat
- 1 100 foot tape measure
- 2 stop watches (minutes/seconds/tenths)
- 1 regulation men's basketball
- 1 pull-up bar
- 1-mile flat running surface

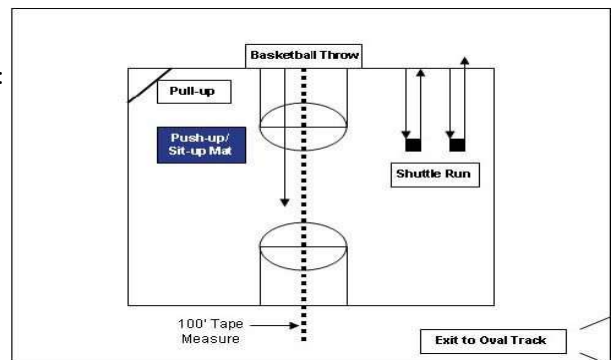


Figure 1

## Test Site

From a conceptual standpoint, the CFA is designed to be administered in two adjacent venues: an indoor gymnasium and an outdoor track. The gymnasium will be of sufficient size to permit testing the basketball throw. The space needed is approximately 100 linear feet (slightly longer than a regulation basketball court). The pull-up bar will be of sufficient height (approximately 8 feet) that the candidate's feet will not touch the floor at full extension. The bar diameter will be no greater than 2 inches. The test administrator will prearrange the first five events prior to the start of the testing.

The 1-mile run is the last event administered in the CFA. Although it may be administered in an indoor gymnasium or stadium, an 8-minute time period has been allotted for transition to an outdoor track. Regardless of the 1-mile run course, the running surface will be flat and free of debris. In either the indoor or outdoor facility, it is imperative the 1-mile distance be measure accurately.

## Test Procedures

On test day, the candidate should be encouraged to spend 20-30 minutes in active warm-up and stretching prior to beginning the test. The test battery must be completed according to the timeline instructions and candidates are not permitted to warm-up, rest, or practice other than during the time officially allotted. The test administrator will read the instructions printed here in large type verbatim to the candidate:

*“YOU ARE ABOUT TO TAKE THE UNITED STATES SERVICE ACADEMIES’ CANDIDATE FITNESS ASSESSMENT. THIS TEST WILL MEASURE YOUR MUSCULAR STRENGTH AND ENDURANCE, CARDIORESPIRATORY ENDURANCE, AND MOTOR FITNESS. THE RESULTS OF THIS TEST WILL BE USED IN THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS AT EACH SERVICE ACADEMY BY DEMONSTRATING YOUR LEVEL OF PHYSICAL AND MOTOR FITNESS. LISTEN CLOSELY TO THE TEST INSTRUCTIONS. YOU MAY CEASE WORK WHEN YOU HAVE SCORED THE MAXIMUM FOR ANY INDIVIDUAL EVENT. OTHERWISE, DO YOUR BEST ON EACH EVENT. AFTER YOU COMPLETE EACH EVENT, THE TEST ADMINISTRATOR WILL RECORD YOUR RAW SCORE. IF AT ANY TIME YOU CANNOT CONTINUE TO MEET THE TIMED REQUIREMENTS, THE TEST WILL BE TERMINATED.”*

## Testing Instructions

The following paragraphs describe the equipment, facilities, personnel, instructions, administration, timing techniques, and test administrator's duties for each event. You can view the CFA video instructions at <http://www.academyadmissions.com/video/cadet-fitness-requirements/>.

**Testing Sequence:** The test sequence will follow the order of the events listed below. The order of events cannot be changed. There are no exceptions to this sequence of timing.

Events	Test Start Time	Testing Time	Rest	Total Time
<b>Basketball Throw</b>	0 Minutes	2 Minutes	3 Minutes	5 Minutes
<b>Cadence Pull-ups</b>	5 Minutes	2 Minutes	3 Minutes	10 Minutes
<b>Shuttle Run</b>	10 Minutes	2 Minutes	3 Minutes	15 Minutes
<b>Modified Sit-ups</b>	15 Minutes	2 Minutes	3 Minutes	20 Minutes
<b>Push-ups</b>	20 Minutes	2 Minutes	8 Minutes	30 Minutes
<b>One Mile Run</b>	30 Minutes	<b>Until Completed</b>		<b>Until Completed</b>

## **Basketball Throw**

The basketball throw measures the ability to generate shoulder girdle power, total body coordination, and balance from a stationary position.

### **The candidate must:**

- Keep his/her knees parallel to and behind the baseline and on the floor during the event. May use a mat to cushion the knees.
- In an overhand throwing motion, throw a men's basketball as far as possible (Figure 2). The non-throwing hand may be used to steady the ball before throwing, but only one hand can be used to throw the ball
- Not touch the floor beyond the baseline with any part of the body until the basketball has landed.
- Execute three trials within a 2-minute time period.



*Figure 2*

### **The test administrator will:**

- Extend the 100 foot tape measure the length of the testing area, perpendicular to the throwing baseline.
- Start the event at 0 minutes.
- Mark the point of impact with a pointer/yardstick for all three trials.
- Measure the perpendicular distance from the marked point of impact to the center-line tape.
- Record the score to the nearest foot for the trial with the greatest distance.

## **Cadence Pull-ups**

Cadence pull-ups measure muscular strength and endurance of the shoulder and back.

### **The candidate must:**

- Mount the bar with a pronated grip (back of the hands facing the candidate) with arms fully extended in a "dead hang" (Figure 3).
- Not swing, kick, or bicycle legs during upward movement.
- Raise the body until the jaw line is parallel to the ground and above the bar (Figure 4).
- Return to a "dead hang" position to complete each repetition.
- Execute each repetition in cadence (command).



*Figure 3*



*Figure 4*

The test administrator will:

- Start the event at 5 minutes elapsed time.
- Before giving the command “GO,” ensure the candidate’s elbows are fully extended and shoulders are relaxed in a “dead hang.” If a candidate needs to use a chair to grip the bar, pull the chair away and take the time to ensure the candidate is in a straight-armed, relaxed shoulder “dead hang” before beginning. Do not allow candidates to jump off the ground or a chair to gain momentum for the first repetition. Require a short “dead hang” period before giving the command “GO.”
- On the command “GO,” start the event. When the candidate’s chin rises above the bar and is parallel to the ground, verbally announce the repetition number (e.g. 1, 2, 3,). The verbal repetition number is the candidate’s cue to start the downward movement. When the candidate’s arms are fully extended in a dead hang position, give the command “UP.” At the end of two minutes, give the command “STOP” and record the number of correctly executed repetitions.
- Be permitted to steady the candidate when they are at the resting/dead hang position by extending an “arm bar” in front of the candidate, but must not be touching the candidate when they are attempting a pull-up.
- Monitor each repetition to ensure the candidate’s chin is parallel to the floor and ‘over’ the bar in the “up” position and the arms are fully extended in the “down” position. Repeat the repetition count for any pull-up attempt that does not meet the standards (e.g. 1..2..3..3..3..4).
- Give the command “STOP” and record the maximum score if a candidate reaches the maximum number of repetitions in less than two minutes (18 for men; 7 for women). Otherwise, at the end of two minutes, give the command “STOP” and record the number of correctly executed repetitions.

**Flexed Arm Hang – Women Only**

The flexed-arm hang is an alternative measure of muscular strength and endurance for women who are unable to execute one correct cadence pull-up. If a woman can successfully perform one correct cadence pull-up, it is to her advantage on the scoring scale to take the cadence pull-up test. The scale score (0-100) for one cadence pull-up is higher than any length of flexed-arm hang.

The candidate must:

- Climb steps, mount box/platform or ladder (or may be boosted up to the bar by an assistant) until her chin is above the bar (Figure 5).
- Mount the bar with a pronated grip (back of the hands facing the candidate) with chin parallel to the floor and above the bar.
- Step off the platform.
- Not swing, kick, or bicycle legs during the event.
- Maintain a flexed-arm position with chin above the bar and the jaw line parallel to the ground throughout the event (Figures 5a and 5b).



Figure 5



Figure 5a



Figure 5b



The test administrator will:

- Start the event at 5 minutes elapsed time.
- Give the command “GO” to start the event and the stopwatch.
- Monitor body position to ensure the chin remains above the bar and the jaw line is parallel to the floor.
- Record the score in seconds/tenths of seconds.

## **Shuttle Run**

The shuttle run measures the ability to move rapidly while changing directions, which is an indicator of anaerobic power, agility, and quickness.

The candidate must:

- Begin the test with his/her entire body behind the start/finish line (Figure 6).
- On the command “GO,” the candidate will sprint 30 feet to the turnaround line. His/her foot and hand must simultaneously touch the floor on or beyond the turnaround line (Figure 7). The candidate will then sprint back to the start/finish line, touch on or beyond the start/finish line and turn, sprinting back to the 30-foot line. The candidate will touch on or beyond the turnaround line and then sprint back across the start/finish line.
- Execute two trials with a 1-minute rest between trials.



*Figure 6*



*Figure 7*

The test administrator will:

- Start the event at 10 minutes elapsed time.
- Measure the shuttle run course of 30 feet (equates to 10 yards for a running total of 40 yards) from the baseline.
- Give the command “GO” to start the event and start the stopwatch. Monitor the candidate to ensure he/she touches on or beyond the turnaround line and the start/finish line with their hand and foot; failure to do so terminates the event.
- Stop the watch when the candidate crosses start/finish line on the second pass.  
Record the better of the two trials in seconds/tenths of seconds.

**Note:** Shuttle run times of less than 6.0 will not be accepted.

## **Modified Sit-ups**

The modified sit-ups event measures abdominal/core body muscular strength and endurance.

The candidate must:

- Assume a supine (back on floor), bent-knee position (approximately 90 degrees) on a mat with arms crossed, fingers extended and back touching the floor/mat (Figure 8).
- Upon the command “GO,” flex from the hip, raising the elbows so they touch the front midpoint (or higher)

of the thigh with the finger tips staying in contact with the top of the shoulders at all times (Figure 9); then recover by extending from the hip until the shoulder blades touch the floor/mat (Figure 9).

**Note:** Once the test begins, candidates may only rest in the “up” position with finger tips in contact with the shoulders at all times (Figure 10).



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10

The test administrator will:

- Start the event at 15 minutes elapsed time.
- Monitor the “start position” to ensure the candidate’s shoulder blades are touching the mat, fingers are touching the shoulders, knees are bent approximately 90 degrees, and an assistant is properly holding the candidate’s feet (hands only on top of each ankle or foot).
- Give the command “GO” and start the stopwatch for the 2-minute trial.
- Verbally count one repetition each time the candidate’s elbows touch the thigh. (e.g. 1...2...3...).
- Monitor body position making sure during each repetition the buttocks stay in contact with the mat, knees are bent approximately 90 degrees, fingers remain in contact with shoulders, elbows make contact with the mid-thigh or higher, and shoulder blades touch the floor/mat.
- Repeat the previous score count for any repetition that does not meet the criteria listed above. (e.g. 51...52...52...52...53...54...)
- Terminate the modified sit-up event if the candidate continuously fails to attempt to execute a repetition or rests in the “down” position.
- At the 2-minute mark, give the command “STOP” and record the number of correctly executed repetitions.
- End the event and record the maximum score if a candidate reaches the maximum number of repetitions in less than 2 minutes (95 for men and women). Otherwise, at the end of 2 minutes, give the command “STOP” and record the number of correctly executed repetitions.

## **Push-ups**

Push-ups measure upper body muscular endurance.

The candidate must:

- Assume a prone (belly towards the ground) position supported on one knee on a mat or floor (Figure 11).
- On the command “GET SET,” assume the front-leaning rest position (arms extended) by placing your hands just outside the shoulders with fingers facing forward; your feet may be together or up to 12 inches apart; when viewed from the side, your body will form a straight line from your shoulders to your ankles. (Figure 12).
- On the command “GO,” begin the push-up event by bending your elbows and lowering your entire body as a single unit until your upper arms are at least parallel to the ground (90 degrees) (Figure 13); return to the starting position by extending your arms and raising your entire body as a single unit until your arms are fully extended (Figure 13).

**Note:** The candidate may rest in the “up” position, flexing or bowing the back as long as he/she does not lift a hand/foot off the floor/mat, or touch any other body part on the floor. The candidate must return to the straight body, front leaning rest position before attempting another repetition.

The test administrator will:

- Start the event at 20 minutes elapsed time.

- Give the command “GO” and start the stopwatch for the 2-minute trial.
- Monitor each repetition making sure the body remains rigid in a generally straight line, moving as a single unit; the upper arm is parallel to the floor in the “down” position; and the arms come to full extension in the “up” position.
- Verbally count the repetition number each time the candidate returns to the “up” position. Repeat the previous score for any repetition that does not meet the criteria listed above. (e.g. 1..2..2..2..3..4..).
- Terminate the event if the candidate lifts a hand or foot off the ground or touches the ground with any body part other than hands and feet.
- End the event and record the maximum score if a candidate reaches the maximum number of repetitions in less than 2 minutes (75 for men; 50 for women). Otherwise, at the end of 2 minutes, give the command “STOP” and record the number of correctly executed repetitions.



Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13

## **1-Mile Run**

The 1-mile run measures aerobic capacity or the ability to use oxygen to do physical work.

### The candidate must:

- Assume a starting position behind the 1-mile start line (Figure 14).
- On the command “GO,” the candidate will run continuously for 1 mile (walking is allowed although strongly discouraged).

### The test administrator will:

- Start the event at 30 minutes elapsed time.
- Certify the 1-mile run distance.
- Give the command “GO” and start the stopwatch.
- Monitor the candidate to make sure he/she does not: receive physical help during the event (pushed, pulled, picked up, or carried) or leave the designated running course for any reason.
- Not permit pacing by another person.
- Stop the watch as the candidate crosses the finish line and record the score in minutes/seconds. (e.g. 5:32).



Figure 14

Any questions the examiner or candidate may have regarding this examination should be sent to the address below or call your counselor at their number listed on page one.

HQ USAFA/RRS  
2304 Cadet Drive, Suite 2300  
USAF Academy, CO  
80840-5025

# Medical Information

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The following information is provided to help you understand the medical examination process, which will be required if you are entered into the Candidate Phase. You cannot schedule the official medical exam while you are in the Pre-candidate Phase.

## Scheduling

Once you have entered into the Candidate Phase, you will need to complete your candidate kit before your name will be forwarded to the Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DoDMERB). During the completion of the PCQ, you were prompted to enter and upload a copy of your Social Security Number Card for verification. Please ensure your social security number in your application is correct to prevent any scheduling delays.

## Timing

The medical examination may be the longest part of the application process. Ensure you complete it as soon as possible after you enter the Candidate Phase. See your Instructions to Candidates booklet for more information once you enter the Candidate Phase. **USAFA will not normally make an offer of appointment until a qualifying medical status is established.**

## Medical Standards

The Medical Standards for Appointment, Enlistment, or Induction into the Military Services can be accessed at <http://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/613003p.pdf>. Should you have any questions regarding causes for disqualification, please email [usaf.dodmerb.helpdesk@mail.mil](mailto:usaf.dodmerb.helpdesk@mail.mil) or call (719) 333-3562. Visit the website: <https://dodmerb.tricare.osd.mil> for additional information.



# Commitment

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When you arrive at USAFA, you will be asked to take the Oath of Allegiance and sign an agreement that you will fulfill the following obligations: **(Failure to take the oath will cancel all entitlements to travel expenses to USAFA as well as travel expenses back to your home.)**

- a. Complete the course of instruction at USAFA and serve on active duty as a commissioned officer at least five years after graduation.
- b. If authorized to resign from the Air Force before the eighth anniversary of your graduation, serve as an officer in the Reserve Component until that eighth anniversary.
- c. The active duty commitment for those disenrolled prior to graduation varies according to the manpower needs of the Air Force and the number of years the cadet has attended USAFA.

Failure to perform the required period of active duty may incur a liability to reimburse the United States government for an appropriate portion of the cost of your USAFA education.



# Application Tips

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It is important to start your application early as the process includes the USAFA application, the medical examination and the nomination process. These are three separate components that should occur simultaneously. Start practicing the Candidate Fitness Assessment early to be in optimal condition for the timed assessment. Be sure to keep in contact with your Admissions Counseling Team as they are able to answer any application questions or concerns that may arise. Most of all, remember to relax, enjoy the application process and have a great year! The Admissions Office would like to wish all pre-candidates the best of luck in the application process. **GOOD LUCK!!!**



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**ACADEMY**

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