Class of 2025

**Academic Advising & Orientation (AAO)**

Associate Provost for Academic Affairs

Samara L. Firebaugh, Ph.D.
firebaug@usna.edu
410-293-1581
You’ve Come A Long Way
Purposes of the AAO session

• Discuss the results of your validation and placement exams
• Become better acquainted with the USNA academic program
AAO Session Outline

• APAA Brief (~15 minutes)

• Meetings of individual platoons with their plebe year academic advisers in separate sessions (~90 minutes)

• Q & A Sessions
  Opportunity to meet with the Academic Advising leadership team and math department representatives for specific questions (~15-20 minutes per platoon)
Normal Academic Load

• Five to seven courses and 15 to 20 credits each semester:
  – Minimum = 15 credits
  – Maximum depends …
  – Average of one professional course
    (leadership, ethics, law, seamanship, navigation, …) each semester
  – Remember, 1 credit = 3 hrs/week of effort

• Academic challenge! 15-20 credits = 45-60 hrs/week of academics alone.
“Standard” plebe year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Spring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calculus I</td>
<td>Calculus II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry I</td>
<td>Chemistry II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English I</td>
<td>English II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Naval History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seamanship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership I</td>
<td>Cyber I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE</td>
<td>PE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18 credits

17 Credits
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engineering &amp; Weapons</th>
<th>Math &amp; Science</th>
<th>Humanities &amp; Social Sciences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aerospace Eng*</td>
<td>Chemistry*</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Eng*</td>
<td>Computer Science*</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical Eng*</td>
<td>Cyber Operations*</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Eng*</td>
<td>Data Science*</td>
<td>Foreign Area Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Eng*</td>
<td>General Science*</td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nav Arch &amp; Marine Eng*</td>
<td>Mathematics*</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear Eng*</td>
<td>Math w/ Econ*</td>
<td>Quant Econ*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ocean Eng*</td>
<td>Operations Resrch*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robotics &amp; Control Eng*</td>
<td>Oceanography*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physics*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = STEM Major
Major Selection Limits

• Resource limits and needs of Navy factor into major assignment.
• When major seats are limited, a lottery system is used for placement.
• Stats from last year:
  – 92.1% 4/C got their 1st choice
  – 7.6% 4/C got their 2nd choice
  – 0.3% 4/C got their 3rd choice
  – Last year’s limited majors: FAS, FQE, FPS, SME
• Take your 2nd and 3rd choices seriously!
Major Selection Schedule

• Sept/Oct: Plebe Briefs (by School)
• Nov/Dec: Majors Scavenger Hunt
• Jan: Majors Fair
• Feb: Majors Open Houses
• March 7-11: Major Preference Declaration (top 3 choices)
• Late March/early April: Majors Assigned
Plebe Seminar Pilot

• USNA is piloting a different plebe academic advising model based on a freshman seminar system.

• Involves a 1-hr/week 0-credit course (i.e. no homework) taught by your plebe adviser covering
  – advising & student life issues
  – an introduction to the family of majors that you’ve expressed interest in

• 9 sections running this year, with students selected at random

• If selected, you can’t drop it. If not selected, you can’t add it. I’m sorry. (We’re trying to run a good experiment so we have to remove volunteer bias)
Your Academic Program

• Graduation Requirement: complete every course in a matrix (core + major courses) with overall QPR ≥ 2.0.

• Matrices provide feasible paths through the curriculum for any midshipmen in any major, regardless of pre-USNA preparation.

• But what if you want to get ahead?
  – Summer School (in place of leave)
  – Overload (not an option for 4/C in the Fall)
  – Course Validations
Your Fall Semester Courses

• Your adviser has a list of the courses you are scheduled to take in the fall semester, based on
  – Placement results
  – Known validations
  – Plebe seminar pilot placement

• Completing academic requirements is the #1 priority!

• Doing well in your required academic program is the best way to access special academic opportunities
Validation Advantages

• Creates space in your academic program, which you can then use to...
  – Lighten your load in a future semester (but not lighter than 15 credit hours)
  – Take additional courses without overloading or summer school
  – Earn a language minor or second major
  – Make room for VGEP, Independent Research, or pre-med courses
  – Study abroad or participate in a service academy exchange
  – More easily recover from medical, physical, emotional challenges, or course failure
Validation Concerns

• Plebe year is demanding; why not redo familiar work and get an easy grade?
  – Sometimes an “easy A” is not so easy, especially if you are bored

• What if I find I’m in over my head? (Perhaps validation was achieved without solid foundation or prerequisite course was taken a while ago.)
  – Talk to your adviser
Validation Policy

• Varies by department & course. Influenced by:
  – Placement test(s)
  – AP score(s)
  – Transcript(s)
  – Interviews

• Validations generally tied to college-level course work

• Your academic advisers will discuss in detail
Language Validations

• Extent of validation based on AP score depends on language

• Testing is also used for placement

• Language minors have a “residency requirement”
  – You can only apply two course validations towards the language minor (which is normally 6 courses), beyond that you must complete the coursework at USNA, starting from your level of placement.
History Validations

- **HH104** may be validated only on the basis of having earned a B or better in a US Naval History course taken through NROTC.
- **HH215** may be validated by successfully completing an equivalent course at a 4-year college or by taking and passing a validation exam.
- The only history course that may be validated by an AP test is **HH216**: The West in the Modern World. A score 5 is required on the World History AP exam plus a 5 on either the American History or the European History AP exams.

- Any history course, other than HH104, may be validated by earning a B or better in an equivalent course at a baccalaureate degree granting college or by passing a validation exam. Talk with your adviser and then visit with History Chair or History Senior Adviser to arrange for an exam.
Government Validations

• **FP130** may be validated on the basis of having earned a 4 or 5 on the American Government AP exam.

• Other questions? Talk with your adviser.
Other Validations

• To seek validation of college courses or other courses for which no opportunity was provided this summer …

  – Talk with your adviser

  – Visit with the department concerned, typically after classes begin
Academic Expectations

• You are expected to be **professional** toward and **responsive** to faculty members

• **Remember your courtesies** in Addressing Faculty members:
  – Military and Civilian Faculty
  – Address Faculty by their appropriate title – avoid generic “Mr.”/“Mrs.”/”Ms.”
    • “Prof”/”Professor” – Assistant/Associate/Full Professors
    • “Dean” or “Provost” – Assistant/Associate/Academic Dean & Provost
    • Military Titles

• **Communication**

• **Effort**
Getting Help

• Extra Instruction ("EI") – contact your professor
• Center for Academic Excellence ("Academic Center" or "AcCenter")
  – Extra Help Classes ("XS")
    (Math, Chemistry, Physics, others)
  – Learning Skills Program
  – Evening Tutoring
  – Writing Center: Nimitz Library
  – MGSP — Peer Group Study
• Department Resources:
  – Chemistry Resource Center: MI100
  – Math Lab: CH130
• Chaplains, MDC, Medical

“Do. Or do not. There is no try.”

Master Yoda

from https://yodaquotes.org/
Basic Academic “Do”s and “Don’t”s

DOs:
- Meet with your adviser(s) regularly
- Get Information from the appropriate source
- See your instructor(s) for EI first as needed
- Know your own strengths & challenges (study habits?)
- Remember priorities
- Believe in your abilities

DON’Ts:
- Don’t be afraid to talk to faculty, DON’T BE SHY!
- Don’t rely on info from poor sources or believe RUMORS
- Don’t think you have to “do it on your own”
- Don’t be embarrassed to ask for help
- Don’t forget the requirements
- Don’t give up
Questions?

Link for reporting a validation that you think we missed:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdl3YBS0XOSdr3yU0kPljvyk1xfG0fGeKzFeV2d63jmvuPDxg/viewform?usp=sf_link