



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE ACADEMIC DEAN AND PROVOST
UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY
589 MCNAIR ROAD
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21402-1323

February 22, 2016

Dear Prospective Midshipman of the Class of 2020,

On behalf of the faculty at the Naval Academy, Welcome Aboard!

Congratulations on being selected to attend one of the premier institutions of higher education in the United States. We are pleased that you have chosen the Naval Academy and know that you will find your academic experience here to be challenging and rewarding.

Several important academic events have been scheduled during Plebe Summer. The purpose of these academic events is to place you in courses most appropriate to your academic background, give credit for college-level work done elsewhere, and prepare you for the Naval Academy's academic program. We refer to giving credit for college-level work done elsewhere as "validation." Immediately after Induction Day, you will begin a sequence of placement and validation tests in the following subjects: Calculus, Chemistry, Physics, English and possibly some foreign languages (Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Russian, Spanish). The particular tests that you take will depend on information we need to obtain from you. In some cases, taking a test will be optional; in other cases, exams will be required. You should bring with you an inexpensive scientific calculator that has square root, trigonometric, logarithmic, and exponential functions – this calculator will be needed for some placement or validation tests. Please be prepared for these tests. In most cases, they will be your only opportunity to validate certain courses.

It is advantageous for you to gain validation credit for as many Naval Academy courses as you can. Validation permits you to satisfy some of the requirements for graduation. As a result, you increase the choices and special opportunities available to you. For example, validating one or more courses may allow you to: take courses not otherwise available to you, make progress toward a second major, achieve a minor in a foreign language, reduce your academic load in one or more semesters, or avoid attending summer school should you encounter academic difficulty. More than half of the Class of 2020 will validate at least one course. Since the validation and placement tests begin immediately after Induction Day, the only time you will have to prepare is before you come to the Naval Academy.

To determine which tests you should take and which courses you may be qualified to validate, we must collect information from you about your academic background via the "Academic Background System (ABS)" described on the back. ABS contains several questionnaires and also some tests. Depending on your background, it may take you from 30 to 60 minutes to complete our questionnaires. You will have the option of returning to this web site to correct or complete your responses to the questionnaires.

The exams contained in ABS allow us to place you in an appropriate level of our Calculus I course or to give you validation credit for Calculus I and possibly higher-level math courses. These tests will take a couple of hours and you may take portions of them at a time. Simply follow the directions. It is very important that your performance on these tests correctly reflects your current mathematical knowledge and abilities. It is in your best interest that your work on this test is entirely yours—unaided by anyone or anything in order to place you into the most appropriate course or level of mathematics.

If you have taken or will take AP or IB examinations, be sure that the results have been or will be sent to the Naval Academy.

Congratulations once again. We look forward to your arrival at the Naval Academy!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer K. Waters".

JENNIFER K WATERS, Ph.D., P.E.
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Information About the USNA Class of 2020 Academic Background System (ABS)

The online USNA Academic Background System (ABS) for the class of 2020 will be available beginning on or about April 1st, 2020 and requests details of your prior coursework so we can determine your eligibility for validation exams and place you in appropriate classes. It also offers you valuable information about our academic programs.

To access ABS you need a computer with a current web browser with cookies enabled and an internet connection. An active email account (monitored regularly, inbox not full) is required for communicating with the webmaster.

First go to the website <http://www.usna.edu/Academics/Candidate-Information/index.php> to read general information, then follow the link to the ABS login page. You may reach this website by navigating from USNA's website ([usna.edu](http://www.usna.edu)) → Academics → Candidate Information.

**To sign in to ABS, your user ID is your candidate number
and your password is your date of birth in MMDDYYYY format.**

You do not need to finish all sections contained in ABS at once; you may return later to complete or change your entries. **You should finish entering all of the ABS requested information as soon as possible but certainly before Induction Day.**

Most users do not have any problems with the ABS system. However, some common difficulties and suggested remedies follow:

- 1. Problems logging in. Remedies: ensure that you have entered your candidate number exactly as shown in USNA correspondence. Possibly you have not yet been entered in the ABS database: there can be a lag of up to a week between receipt of your acceptance and database update, so please be patient. If you have waited over 10 days after your acceptance should have arrived in Annapolis, please email your name, candidate number and email address via the link to the webmaster for verification.*
 - 2. Part of the data submitted gets lost. Remedies: avoid timeouts by submitting your work within 30 minutes of your last submission; upgrade to latest version of your browser, or use a machine with a different internet service provider (ISP). In desperate cases, contact the webmaster for guidance.*
 - 3. Unable to access the website (USNA and/or ABS) at any time. Remedy: Try another machine with a different internet service provider (ISP). Access to USNA's website is blocked for some ISPs due to past security problems with those ISPs.*
 - 4. Browser does not accept "session cookies," which identify you to the ABS during your session. Remedy: follow the guidance on the "cookies error" webpage which appears when your browser refuses a cookie.*
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Additional information about many aspects of our Academic program is accessible from the
USNA Home Page → Academics.

Of special interest to you may be our Course Validation Policy, which is available at
www.usna.edu/Academics/Candidate-Information/Course-Validation-Policy.php