



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY
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USNAINST 1531.63
2/ADMR
28 Sep 2026

USNA INSTRUCTION 1531.63

From: Superintendent, U.S. Naval Academy

Subj: BOWMAN SCHOLAR PROGRAM

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 1520.23C Graduate Education
(b) USNAINST 1520.2AB Graduate Education Programs for Midshipmen

1. Purpose. To establish procedures for the execution of the Bowman Scholar Program.
2. Cancellation. PROVOSTINST 1531.69B.
3. Scope and Applicability. This instruction applies to all U.S. Naval Academy (USNA) midshipmen applying to or participating in the Bowman Scholar Program, as well as all academic faculty, company officers, and administrative personnel involved in the selection, oversight, and execution of the program.
4. Background. The Admiral Frank Bowman Scholar Program (BSP) began in 2003 to provide enhanced undergraduate academic experiences and some graduate opportunities to a select group of midshipmen who are seeking initial service assignment in the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program. Each year the BSP will select approximately 25 Second Class (2/C) midshipmen applicants who show significant academic, leadership and research potential in their undergraduate work to date, who are willing to commit to nuclear service, and who subsequently pass a nuclear service entrance interview with the Director of Naval Reactors (NR). In addition to early selection to the nuclear propulsion program, a Bowman Scholar will be afforded the following: USNA-approved internship during First Class (1/C) Summer, research project experience guided by a USNA faculty member of their choice during 1/C year, and an opportunity for immediate graduate education at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) after graduation and commissioning for qualified individuals.
5. Eligibility
 - a. Application to the BSP is open to Naval Academy 2/C midshipmen who have attained an overall quality point rating of 3.2 or better and who are in the top 50 percent of their class by military order of merit at the end of the first semester of 2/C year. Waiver of the military order of merit requirement may be requested by individuals who have current military performance grades of A or B, and support of their chain-of-command.

b. Midshipmen with academic majors in any of the three schools (Engineering, Computing, and Weapons; Mathematics and Science; or Humanities and Social Sciences) are eligible to apply for appointment as Bowman Scholars. However, research projects must be technical in nature (STEM-based) since graduate education opportunities at NPS are limited to technical master's programs. Applicants must be on schedule to graduate including the required research course (XX495/496 or honors equivalent). Trident Scholar Program applicants and Voluntary Graduate Education Program applicants are eligible to be appointed as Bowman Scholars.

c. During the spring semester of 2/C year, each BSP candidate must be interviewed by NR for acceptance into the nuclear power training pipeline and, if accepted, the midshipman must commit in writing to a service assignment in the submarine or nuclear surface community following graduation from the Naval Academy.

d. Midshipmen approved for study-abroad programs who will not be available for spring nuclear interviews must notify the Associate Director of Midshipman Research (ADMR) early in the fall semester of 2/C year, no later than 1 Oct. Provisions for early application review and a fall interview are possible, with advanced notification.

e. To remain eligible to participate in the program, Bowman Scholars are expected to maintain the same high level of performance during the remainder of their time at the Naval Academy and subsequent graduate education assignments. Midshipmen guilty of honor or conduct violations may be removed from the program.

6. Action

a. BSP Applicants

(1) Research Course Project. The BSP requirement for the research course project is met via a one-semester research course (XX495 or XX496, or honors equivalent) or via appointment as a Trident Scholar. Each BSP applicant must consult with a prospective faculty research adviser to plan their technical-based research project and prepare the BSP application in the spring semester of 2/C year. NOTE: Design courses or capstone courses may not be substituted for the required research course. Two-semester research courses are encouraged, but not required.

(2) Summer Internship

(a) During the fall semester of 2/C year, BSP applicants should seek out and consult with USNA faculty members who are knowledgeable about summer internship opportunities. These faculty members may be in the midshipman's academic major department, but an internship coordinator may also be associated with another department (e.g., faculty members in the USNA Physics Department serve as coordinators for various internship opportunities at

Department of Energy national laboratories). The “Internships” link on the USNA Academic Research site provides useful information including a list of previous internships. A candidate’s research adviser may also have suggestions for internships and should be prepared to identify possible funding sources to cover the project and internship experience.

(b) The proposed internship must be USNA-approved and integrated with the candidate’s proposed research project. The BSP application for the proposed internship must include, but is not limited to:

1. Internship host name and location
2. Duration of internship and summer block
3. Description of internship project
4. Projected expenses associated with proposed internship (e.g., travel to and from the location, meals per diem, lodging per diem, et cetera.)
5. Level and type of financial support available from the host institution, laboratory, or government office for the internship, or from the USNA research project adviser
6. Level and type of expenses not covered by any source.

(c) During the spring semester of 2/C year, each BSP candidate, working in conjunction with his or her research adviser, company officer, and the USNA Internship Coordinator, is responsible for the coordination of 1/C summer plans as appropriate to their requirements and desires for training blocks, leave time, internship logistics, travel, et cetera. The Bowman candidate must adhere to all procedures and deadlines published by the USNA Internship Coordinator.

(3) BSP Application. Instructions and templates for the documents required for a BSP application will be provided in the fall semester via the BSP webpage. The application process involves two phases: an initial electronic screening and an invited white paper submission. Initial application to the BSP (typically in January of 2/C year) is accomplished through an electronic application via a BSP module in the USNA Programs section of MIDS. The electronic application registers the applicant with the ADMR, and provides applicant information to Bowman Scholar Committee members who will screen all electronic applications. Those that have a successful screening will be invited to submit a written “white paper” that: (1) describes the project that will be undertaken in the XX495/496 (or honors equivalent) research course; and (2) describes the integration of the proposed research, proposed internship and graduate education plan of study. White papers will be due to the ADMR by a published date (typically in mid-February) announced annually in a Provost Notice.

(4) Graduate Education

(a) Once approved, Bowman Scholars must consult with the USNA Graduate Education Program Manager to identify current graduate opportunities at NPS and, if desired, at civilian universities via scholarships for qualified applicants. Bowman Scholars can apply to both NPS and USNA-approved civilian graduate schools but Bowmans are expected and encouraged to consider NPS, the Navy's primary source of graduate education. Each Bowman is responsible for their own graduate education applications in the Midshipman Information System (MIDS) (typically due in January of 1/C year) as well as applications to other graduate schools, if desired.

(b) Curricula for Bowmans at NPS are specified by the Nuclear Officer Program Manager. After successful completion of the accelerated one-year master's degree program at NPS, Bowmans earn an "I-Code" subspecialty. Obligated service requirements are detailed in reference (a). More information about graduate education programs can be found in reference (b).

b. Bowman Scholar Advisers. A faculty member who agrees to mentor a Bowman Scholar is expected to aid the candidate in preparation of their BSP application as well provide support for the research project and required research course elements (report, presentation). Bowman Scholar advisers should also guide candidates in identifying appropriate internships and should be prepared to identify possible funding sources to cover the project and internship experience.

c. Provost

(1) BSP Application Review. The Provost will review the Bowman Scholar Committee's ranked list of midshipman applicants recommended for the requisite interviews with NR. The Provost (through the ADMR) will provide a list of midshipmen approved to continue in the BSP selection process to the USNA Nuclear Accessions Officer.

(2) Conclusion of BSP Review Process. Upon acceptance of the BSP applicants by NR for subsequent nuclear service, the Provost will finalize a list of the 2/C midshipmen recommended for appointment as Bowman Scholars for the next academic year. This list will be presented to the Naval Academy Superintendent for review and official appointment as Bowman Scholars.

d. Bowman Scholar Committee

(1) Duties. During the application review process, the committee will evaluate each application, considering the specifics of the proposed research project, proposed internship, and proposed graduate education plan of the applicant. In addition, academic and military credentials of the applicant and any supporting materials will be considered by the committee.

Following review and deliberations, the committee will provide the Provost with a ranked list of midshipmen applicants recommended for subsequent spring semester interviews with NR.

(2) Membership. The committee will consist of USNA faculty members with special interests in midshipman scholarship and research, naval nuclear service, or graduate school opportunities. The committee will typically be comprised of at least one faculty representative from each of the three academic schools, a representative from the graduate education office, and the USNA Nuclear Accessions Officer.

e. ADMR. The ADMR will serve as the chair of the Bowman Scholar Committee, and the BSP manager on all administrative and financial matters involving BSP candidates until their 1/C year, at which point the Graduate Education Program Manager or a designee will manage the graduate education process for the appointed Bowman Scholars.

f. Department Chairs. As part of the academic department's endorsement of its BSP applicant and application, the department chair will affirm that the applicant meets all department requirements to enroll in and register for a XX495/496 research course (or honors equivalent), with projected on-time graduation.

g. USNA Nuclear Accessions Officer

(1) Nuclear Interviews. Using the list of 2/C midshipman applicants approved by the Provost, the Nuclear Accessions Officer at the Naval Academy will coordinate scheduling of the selected Bowman applicants for interviews with NR. Following the completion of all interviews in the spring semester of 2/C year, the Nuclear Accessions Officer will provide the Provost, via the ADMR, with an executive summary of the outcomes of the interviews.

(2) Service Commitments. After the Superintendent has approved the midshipmen to be appointed as Bowman Scholars, the Nuclear Accessions Officer will obtain the formal, written commitments to a service assignment in the submarine or nuclear surface community following graduation from the Naval Academy from each BSP prospective appointee.

h. U.S. Naval Academy Superintendent. The Superintendent will review the Provost's list of recommended nominees for formal designation as BSP appointees. The Superintendent will appoint that year's Bowman Scholars from among the Provost's nominated group of midshipmen. The formal announcement is anticipated by late April each year.

i. Graduate Education Program Manager. The USNA Graduate Education Program Manager will assist BSP applicants and appointees in identifying current graduate opportunities at NPS and other institutions. The Graduate Education Program Manager will serve as liaison to NPS for each Bowman Scholar as the midshipman's graduate education schedule is developed.

j. Company Officers. As part of the BSP white paper application, a letter of recommendation from a candidate's company officer is requested. Endorsement of a BSP candidate should be based on a candidate's suitability for nuclear service and potential for success in graduate school. Company officers should also work with BSP candidates in coordinating 1/C summer plans, particularly in scheduling military and professional training, and the required BSP internship.

7. Records Management

a. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of format or media, must be maintained and dispositioned per the records disposition schedules located on the DON Assistant for Administration, Directives and Records Management Division portal page at <https://www.secnave.navy.mil/doni/Records%20Management%20Schedules/Forms/AllItems.aspx>.

b. For questions concerning the management of records related to this instruction or the records disposition schedules, please contact your local records custodian or the USNA Records Manager.

8. Review and Effective Date. Per OPNAVINST 5215.71A, the ADMR will review this instruction annually on the anniversary of the issuance date to ensure applicability, currency, and consistency with Federal, Department of Defense, Secretary of the Navy, and Navy policy and statutory authority using OPNAV 5215/40 Review of Instruction. This instruction will be in effect for 10 years, unless revised or canceled in the interim, and will be reissued by the 10-year anniversary date if it is still required, unless it meets one of the exceptions in OPNAVINST 5214.17A, paragraph 9. Otherwise, if the instruction is no longer required, it will be processed for cancellation as soon as the need for cancellation is known following the guidance in OPNAV Manual 5215.1 of May 2016.



M. J. BORGSCHULTE

Releasability and distribution:

This instruction is cleared for public release and is available electronically only via the USNA Issuance Website, <https://www.usna.edu/AdminSupport/Inst/>