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Commission in future

for enlisted people mixing college, Air Force career

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Illustration by Heidi Coacht



Illustration by Heidi Couch

Another alternative for turning green to gold

Another route for people seeking a commission is the Reserve Officer Training Corps. When individuals are accepted for ROTC, they are separated from the Air Force.

"They no longer get paid nor do they have any other military benefits," Mendoza said. "It is a serious consideration for people who may not get selected for a scholarship."

Several options exist for people interested in pursuing ROTC, but, once again, the process begins with a visit to the Education Center. Mendoza said they explain what is needed to gather the application package, scholarship options and the Professional Officer Course path.

The application package is similar to the OTS package. A commander's interview is required as well as AFOQT scores and several ROTC-specific forms. Mendoza said one of the noticeable differences between the two is that a letter of recommendation is not required for ROTC. Also, future ROTC cadets are required to have a physical as well as take a physical fitness assessment. The deadlines for application are March 15 for that fall semester, and Oct. 15 for the following fall semester.

The age limit for applying for ROTC is 27. Mendoza said waivers are available based on active duty service on a year-for-year basis up to 30.

Scholarships given under the ROTC Airman Scholarship and Commissioning Program are available for two to four years, depending on whether the applicant has already completed

PROJECTED SOURCES OF OFFICER ACCESSIONS

Air Force projections of where the service plans to acquire officer candidates shows the most significant jump — 74.5 percent — is expected in the Officer Training School. The Air Force Academy is the only area where the service projects a real number decline.

Fiscal Year	Air Force Academy	Officer Training School	Reserve Officer Training Corp	AF Officer Training & Accession Sq.	Grand Total
1999	939 24.5%	974 25.5%	1,910 50%	1,910 50.0%	3,823
2000	910 21.7%	1,174 28.0%	2,102 50.2%	2,102 50.2%	4,186
2001	836 18.4%	1,700 37.5%	2,000 44.1%	2,000 44.1%	4,536
2002	900 19.6%	1,700 36.9%	2,000 43.5%	2,000 43.5%	4,600
2003	946 20.4%	1,700 36.9%	2,000 43.0%	2,000 43.0%	4,646
2004	911 19.8%	1,700 36.9%	2,000 43.4%	2,000 43.4%	4,611
2005	911 19.8%	1,700 36.9%	2,000 43.4%	2,000 43.4%	4,611

SOURCE: Air University Public Affairs



college work. The scholarship covers tuition, books and fees. Students must have a minimum grade point average of 2.65 to apply for scholarships and must name their degree and the college or university they will attend. The scholarship program stresses technical degree programs such as computer science, Mendoza said.

"About 75 percent of those selected for scholarships have a technical major," she said.

If the prospective student is not selected for a scholarship and can complete their degree in two years, they are automatically considered for the Professional Officer's Course. POC requires students to have a minimum GPA of 2.0.

When applications are reviewed for POC, applicants maintaining a 2.35 GPA are considered for the POC incentive, which is \$3,000 for

tuition and \$450 for books per academic year. The POC age limit is waivable up to 35. All POC cadets, once they contract with ROTC, receive a \$160 monthly stipend.

Getting back in the swing of school

On average, about 10 percent of the students in the POC program at AFROTC Det. 88 at California State University, Sacramento are prior service. Capt. Doug Housel, assistant professor of aerospace studies, said most prior service cadets perform well.

"Prior service students don't usually face the 'fear factor' many students deal with," Housel said. "They are already accustomed to military requirements and standards."

Freshmen and sophomores attend one 50-minute class per week taught by the cadre or the commander. They also attend physical