

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY



MISSION

United States Air Force Academy provides instruction and experience to cadets so that they graduate with the knowledge and character essential to leadership and the motivation to become career officers in the US Air Force. The Academy combines military training, academics, and athletics to develop the Air Force leaders of the future.

The Superintendent, United States Air Force Academy: reports directly to the Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force; exercises administrative and operational control over assigned personnel, including cadets and preparatory school cadet candidates; implements the Secretary of the Air Force policy.

The cadet student body is designated the Cadet Wing. The wing is composed of four groups consisting of 10 squadrons each, with about 110 cadets assigned to a squadron. Each squadron consists of members of all four classes.

The United States Air Force Academy offers a four-year program of instruction and experience designed to provide cadets the knowledge and character essential for leadership, and the motivation to serve as Air Force career officers. Each cadet graduates with a bachelor of science degree and a commission as a second lieutenant in the Air Force.

Cadets are exposed to a balanced curriculum that provides a general and professional foundation essential to a career Air Force officer. Special needs of future Air Force officers are met by professionally oriented courses, including human physiology, computer science, economics, military history, astronautics, law and political science.

The core curriculum includes courses in science, engineering, social sciences and humanities. Cadets take additional elective courses to complete requirements for one of 25 major areas of study. About 60 percent of the cadets complete majors in science and engineering; the other 40 percent graduate in the social sciences and humanities. Some of the most popular majors include management, astronautical engineering, international affairs and political science, history, behavioral science, civil engineering, aeronautical engineering, electrical engineering and engineering mechanics.

The majority of the academy's nearly 600 faculty members are Air Force officers. They are selected primarily from career-officer volunteers who have established outstanding records of performance and dedication. Each has at least a master's degree and more than 35 percent have doctorates.

In addition to imparting knowledge, each faculty member must assist with the development of character and qualities of leadership essential to future Air Force career officers and the motivation of service to country. To provide greater contributions by a diverse faculty, the academy has several distinguished civilian professors and associate professors who serve one or more years. Officers from other services are members of the faculty as well, and a small number of officers from allied countries teach in the foreign language, history and political science departments. Distinguished civilian and military lecturers also share their expertise with the cadets during the academic year.

The academy's athletic program is designed to improve physical fitness, teach athletic skills and develop leadership qualities. To achieve its goals, the academy offers some of the most extensive physical education, intramural sports and intercollegiate athletic programs in the nation. Cadets take at least three different physical education courses each year.

An aerospace-oriented military education, training and leadership program begins with basic cadet training and continues throughout the four years. Seniors are responsible for the leadership of the cadet wing, while juniors and sophomores perform lower-level leadership and instructional tasks. Cadets are projected into as many active leadership roles as possible to prepare them to be effective Air Force officers.

Fundamental concepts of military organization drill, ethics, honor, Air Force heritage and physical training are emphasized the first summer during basic cadet training. Freshmen then study the military role in U.S. society as well as the mission and organization of the Air Force. Sophomores receive instruction in communicative skills, and juniors study the combat and operational aspects of the Air Force. Military studies for the senior class focus on military thought.

The academy offers courses in flying, navigation, soaring and parachuting, building from basic skills to instructor duties. Cadets may fly light aircraft with the Cadet Flying Team. Those not qualified for flight training must enroll in a basic aviation course. Astronomy and advanced navigation courses also are available. Students bound for pilot training enroll in the flight screening program at the academy and fly the DA-20 Katana.

Summer training for cadets is divided into three, three-week training periods. There are a variety of programs available, and each cadet is required to complete two training periods each summer with leave during the other period. All new cadets take six weeks of basic cadet training in their first summer.

Combat survival training is a required three-week program during cadets' second summer. For other second-summer training periods, cadets have options such as working with young airmen in an operational unit at an Air Force installation, airborne parachute training, soaring or basic free-fall parachute training.

During their last two summers, all cadets are offered leadership training as supervisors or instructors in summer programs, such as basic cadet training, survival training, freefall parachuting and soaring.

Extracurricular activities also are an integral part of the education program. The cadet ski club, drum and bugle corps, cadet chorale and forensics are a few of the programs available.

Nominations to the academy may be obtained through a congressional sponsor or by meeting eligibility criteria in other categories of competition established by law.

LINEAGE

United States Air Force Academy established, 27 Jul 1954

Activated as a separate operating agency, 14 Aug 1954

Status changed from that of an SOA to that of a direct reporting unit, 1 Sep 1978

STATIONS

Lowry AFB, CO, 14 Aug 1954

USAF Academy, CO. Colorado Springs, CO, 20 Jul 1959

SUPERINTENDENTS

Lt Gen Hubert R. Harmon, July 27, 1954

Maj Gen James E. Briggs, July 28, 1956

Maj Gen William S. Stone, Aug. 17, 1959

Maj Gen Robert H. Warren, July 1, 1962

Lt Gen Thomas S. Moorman Sr., July 1, 1965

Lt Gen Albert R Clark, Aug. 1, 1970

Lt Gen James R.Allen, Aug. 1, 1974

Lt Gen Kenneth L. Tallman, June 28, 1977

Maj Gen Robert E. Kelley, June 16, 1981

Lt Gen Winfield W. Scott Jr., June 16, 1983

Lt Gen Charles R. Hamm, June 26, 1987

Lt Gen Bradley C. Hosmer, July 1, 1991

Lt Gen Paul E. Stein, July 8, 1994

Lt Gen Tad J. Oelstrom, Aug. 1, 1997
Lt Gen John R. Dallager, June 9, 2000
Lt Gen John W. Rosa Jr., June 1, 2003
Brig Gen John A. Weida (Acting Superintendent), 10 April 2003
Lt Gen John W. Rosa Jr., 9 July 2003
Lt Gen John F. Regni, 24 October 2005
Lt Gen Michael C. Gould, #2010
Lt Gen Michelle Johnson, 2013

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jan 1968-31 Dec 1969

1 Jul 1970-30 Jun 1972

Air Force Organizational Excellence Awards

1 Jan 1985-31 Dec 1986

1 Jan 1987-31 Dec 1988

1 Sep 1992-31 Aug 1994

1 Sep 1994-31 Aug 1996

1 Sep 1996-31 Aug 1998

1 Jul 1999-30 Jun 2001

1 Jan 2005-31 Dec 2006

EMBLEM



The emblem is symbolic of the Air Force Academy. Against a shield divided horizontally into three sections, white representing clouds, azure blue representing sky, and black indicating outer space, two geometric forms (symbolic of the upward motion of flight and the dual mission of Educational Development and Training for Military Leadership) pointed upward to the North Star symbol, which represents the ultimate achievement.

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

The United States Air Force Academy was established on 1 April 1954, the culmination of an idea that had been years in the making. Air power leaders, long before the Air Force was a separate service, had argued that they needed a school, dedicated to war in the air, at which to train the country's future airmen. After October 1947, when the Air Force was established as a separate service, this idea finally had the legitimacy of the new service behind it.

In 1948, the Air Force appointed a board of leading civilian and military educators to plan the curriculum for an Air Force academy. The idea made little progress outside the Air Force, until 1949 when Secretary of Defense James Forrestal appointed a board of military and civilian educators. This board headed by Dwight D. Eisenhower, then president of Columbia University,

and Robert L. Stearns, president of the University of Colorado, was tasked to recommend a general system of education for the Army, Navy and Air Force.

In 1950, this board found the needs of the Air Force could not be met by a desirable expansion of the older service academies. The board recommended that an Air Force academy be established without delay and proposed that, in peacetime, not less than 40 percent of the regular officers taken into each service should be academy graduates.

Congress authorized creation of the Air Force Academy in 1954. Harold E. Talbott, then secretary of the Air Force, appointed a commission to assist him in selecting the permanent site.

The permanent location of the projected Air Academy had been a crucial question. Political leaders, in and out of Congress, as well as air officers, had differing opinions and motives for the siting of the Academy. Locations in Texas, especially Randolph Field, attracted favorable attention for many years. Locations in the midwest and along the Pacific coast had many supporters, including many senior Air officers. Chambers of commerce spearheaded the drives from time to time to promote the attributes of their own particular location by producing vast quantities of brochures, statistical tables, and diagrams. Over the years, nearly six hundred locations were offered as proposed homes for the Air Academy.

In November 1949, when it appeared that Congress was going to act favorably upon the Academy legislation before it, Secretary of the Air Force Symington decided that the time had come for the appointment of an Air Force Academy Site Selection Board. The Chairman of the House Armed Forces Committee, Carl Vinson, strongly believed that the enactment of the legislation would be enhanced if the thorny question of location were solved, or even if positive efforts were being made in that direction. Secretary Symington, acting on that assumption, appointed recently retired Chief of Staff Carl Spaatz as the chairman of the board. Other members included General Harmon, Brigadier General Harold L. Clark, and Dr. Bruce Hopper of Harvard University. Lieutenant Colonel Arthur E. Boudreau was appointed as recorder for the Site Selection Board.

The board studied the advantages and disadvantages of 354 possible sites in twenty-two states. These sites had been proposed by members of Congress, by chambers of commerce, and by interested individual citizens. The board used as standards many of the criteria developed by the Air Force Academy Planning Board. The primary factors to be considered included acreage, topography, community aspects, climate, water supply, utilities, transportation, cost, and flying training. The board was free to call upon the advisory services offered by the Chief of Engineers of the U.S. Army, the office of the Director of Installations of the Air Force, and other governmental agencies. It also obtained detailed reports from a leading Chicago architectural firm, Holabird, Root, and Burger, which had been hired by the Air Force previously to survey the sites and to recommend an order of priority. This rigorous process of selection eliminated all of the sites except for twenty-nine.

The members of the board personally visited the remaining sites. As a result of their inspection visits, the board soon narrowed the list to eight sites. These were Camp Beale, California; Colorado Springs, Colorado; Charlotte and Salisbury, North Carolina; Grapevine, Texas; Madison, Indiana; Randolph Air Force Base, Texas; and Grayson County, Texas.

While the board did not officially announce a top choice, the Colorado Springs area was the place members of the board believed was most suitable. A memorandum to this effect was drawn up and placed in the sealed file of the Secretary of the Air Force by General Harmon. Several years later in 1954, at General Harmon's suggestion, this memorandum was removed from the file and

shown to Secretary of the Air Force Harold E. Talbott. The Site Selection Board was dissolved on December 16, 1952. The board's preliminary surveys and related data, were utilized in 1954 when the Site Selection Commission was appointed by Secretary Talbott.

Colonel Boudreau shed some very interesting light on the activities of the Site Selection Board while inspecting the Colorado Springs site. It appears that the Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce had proposed two different sites for the board's consideration. One of these sites was adjacent to Camp Carson, south of the city and east of the Broadmoor area. The other area was north of the city and directly east of U. S. Highway 85-87. (This proposed site became known as Falcon Estates, Chapel Hills, and the Briargate sub-division.) At this time, Camp Carson was in the process of being closed, and the Chamber of Commerce members thought that the Camp Carson area would be favorably received by the board. But as pointed out by Boudreau, neither of these sites impressed the members of the board because the sites failed to meet the aesthetic, scenic beauty requirement.

The members of the board spent the weekend at the Broadmoor Hotel while waiting for an Air Force plane to return them to Washington on Monday morning. Boudreau, decided to drive north to Boulder to visit with Dr. Stearns at the University of Colorado. While driving north of Colorado Springs, Boudreau said he became "impressed by the beauty and grandeur of the area on the west side of the highway south of Husted and Monument." He went on to tell Colonel Holt, "On the same day, I informed representatives of the Chamber of Commerce of my favorable impressions of the Pikes Peak site area and stated to them that there might be a chance that this would be acceptable to the Site Selection Board."

The officials of the Chamber of Commerce made a hasty survey of the area on Sunday. The officials contacted General Spaatz and urged him to delay the departure of the board on Monday until they had an opportunity to visit the area west of the highway. Boudreau said, "Representatives of the Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce were, at first, reluctant to change their sponsorship of sites from those first considered to that suggested by me, but I pointed out that if they adopted it as their choice, it might stand a chance of adoption by the Air Force." The chamber people respected Bud Boudreau's opinions because they knew that he was a key member of General Harmon's staff and that he had handled most of the correspondence dealing with sites all over the country.

On 11 July 1955, the same year construction began in Colorado Springs, the first class of 306 men were sworn in at a temporary site, Lowry Air Force Base, in Denver.

On 29 August 1958, the wing of 1,145 cadets moved to its permanent site from Lowry. (AFHRA list an "official PCS date as 20 Jul 1959). Much of the move of the Cadet Wing was symbolic. A large part of the academic complex was still under construction. Only specified areas of Fairchild Hall could be used for instructional purposes. The cadet quarters, Vandenberg Hall, was mostly completed and the cadets were made comfortable. Mitchell Hall, the dining area, was also mostly finished so that the cadets were assured of being properly fed. The upper floors of Fairchild Hall, would not be completed for another year so the Dean and the faculty members had to make do

with whatever office space they could find. The north wing housing the Commandant of Cadets complex and the Academy Library were to be the last parts of Fairchild Hall to be completed in late 1958. The Senior Officers' Quarters in Douglass Valley were completed and the families moved from the Denver area in mid-August 1958. Other family housing in Pine and Douglass valleys would not be completed for another year.

June 3, 1959, was a historic day. Two hundred and seven members of the Class of 1959 received their diplomas and commissions. Secretary of the Air Force James Douglas was the principal speaker. The graduation was held in Arnold Hall before 3,000 proud parents, relatives and Air Force leaders. Tears of joy filled the eyes of many of the spectators.

The Academy's flag insignia combines the crest from the Department of the Air Force seal with that of the Academy shield. The Air Force eagle, cloud formation and heraldic wreath surmount the Academy shield. The American bald eagle symbolizes the United States and its airpower; the wreath beneath the eagle, composed of six alternate folds of metal and color, repeats the principal metal and color used in the Air Force Shield--white (representing silver) and light blue. The cloud formation behind the eagle depicts the creation of the Department of the Air Force. The eagle and clouds are in their natural colors. Underneath the wreath is the Air Force Academy shield, and beneath it the traditional scroll black letters on a gold background. The 13 encircling white stars represent the original 13 colonies.

The Class of 1959, the first to enter the Academy, chose the falcon as the mascot of the Cadet Wing on 25 September 1955, feeling that it best characterized the combat role of the U. S. Air Force. They did not specify any particular species; thus, any falcon can serve as mascot. Some of the characteristics that led to its selection are: Speed---Falcons can attain velocities exceeding 100 miles per hour in swoops or dives on their prey. Flight---Powerful and graceful, falcons fly with strong, deep wing beats and maneuver with ease, grace, and evident enjoyment. Courage---Fearless and aggressive, falcons fiercely defend their nest and young against intruders. They have been known to unhesitatingly attack and kill prey more than twice their size. Keen eyesight---Falcons have vision about eight times sharper than man's. With its alertness, regal carriage, and noble tradition, the falcon makes an ideal mascot. On 5 October 1955 a splendid peregrine was the first falcon presented to the Cadet Wing. It was named "Mach 1," referring to the speed of sound. Many other falcon mascots have followed "Mach 1" since. The falcon is also used as the Academy's "heraldic device," and is represented as a 12-inch gyrfalcon in flight attack profile with bared

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources

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Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.
The Air Force Academy, An Illustrated History. George V. Fagan. Johnson Books. Boulder, CO. 1988.