



UNIVERSITY PARENT
GUIDE

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**United States
Air Force Academy**

CAMPUS RESOURCES – LOCAL INSIGHT – HELPFUL INFORMATION

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About Our Guides

University Parent Media works closely with institutions around the country to bring together the most relevant, timely information into one all-inclusive resource.

We have published this guide with the mission of helping you easily navigate the university and its surrounding community. Ultimately, we hope these resources help nurture your connection and involvement in your student's college years!

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Welcome from the Director of Admissions

Your son or daughter is about to embark upon one of the most significant transitions of their life by entering college. We are thankful for their interest in attending the U.S. Air Force Academy and want to provide all the means possible in helping you and your child understand all the Academy has to offer.

As a parent, you are one of the most important counselors while your son or daughter researches educational institutions. The Academy is rather unique from most colleges, and we hope this guide will help you understand the vast array of opportunities at the Academy and after graduation. While here, your son or daughter will experience our airmanship programs, gain valuable leadership training and experience, earn one of the best educations in the

nation, form friendships that will last the rest of their lives, and have the opportunity to serve their country after graduation, all while earning a monthly salary. This only vaguely touches upon a cadet's Academy experience.

The Academy mainly focuses on producing Air Force officers of character with emphasis on academics, leadership, military training, athletics and character development. This

brochure explains the Academy in detail and also provides important phone numbers and websites, information about the local area, and an academic calendar with yearly highlights. We hope we're able to answer most of your questions, communicate the mission and purpose of the Academy, and describe the numerous valuable opportunities the Academy has to offer your child. Best of luck and warmest wishes on your child's educational journey! ■



Col. Carolyn A.M. Benyshek
Academy Class of 1987
United States Air Force Academy
Director of Admissions

USAFA History

As the youngest of the four service academies, the Air Force Academy's history is less extensive than the others since powered flight only began in 1903 with the Wright Brothers' first powered and sustained heavier-than-air human flight.

As aviation advanced, the nation's military aviation service followed a constantly growing lineage from 1907 until 1947, when the Air Force finally became a separate service under the National Security Act. Officials had discussed the establishment of an aeronautical academy much earlier, but it wasn't until after 1947 that initial plans began.

After some time and planning, Congress passed legislation in 1954 to begin construction of the Air Force Academy. Several locations were considered and were eventually narrowed down to three: Alton, Illinois; Lake Geneva, Wisconsin; and the chosen site near Colorado Springs, Colorado. The main question of concern for the Colorado location was if flight training would be affected by the mountains or their wind currents. Famous aviator Charles Lindbergh rented a light plane and flew over the proposed site. After his analysis, he declared it fit for flying.

When it came time for the first class to enter in 1955, construction was incomplete. Therefore, Lowry Air Force Base in Denver was designated

as a temporary site. The cadet wing moved to the present site in 1958, and less than a year later, the Academy received academic accreditation.

The first graduating class designated the falcon as the mascot and established the Honor Code, which is still a vital segment of Academy life.

The Air Force Academy Preparatory School, located approximately five miles from the Academy's cadet area, was established in May 1961 for applicants who did not receive a direct appointment to the Academy. The Prep School is a 10-month program that prepares cadet candidates academically, athletically and militarily and is designed to develop skills and character necessary for success at the Academy.

In October 1975, President Gerald Ford signed legislation authorizing women to enter all U.S. service academies. In June 1976, the first 157 women entered the Air Force Academy with the class of 1980.

Now, 53 classes have graduated, and the Academy has produced more than 42,000 officers prepared to serve our nation. ■



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Academics

The Air Force Academy is a fully accredited institution of higher learning and is recognized as having one of the most prestigious and respected academic programs available. Each cadet completes a balanced sequence of core curriculum, which includes courses in sciences, engineering, humanities, social sciences, military studies and physical education. Cadets choose a main academic path from 31 majors, and they also have the option to minor in a foreign language or philosophy. The Academy education is tailored to develop future Air Force officers with innovative, analytical and resourceful minds.

Here is a list of the majors and minors from which cadets may choose:

Majors

- ▶ Aeronautical Engineering
- ▶ Astronautical Engineering
- ▶ Basic Science
- ▶ Behavioral Science
- ▶ Biology
- ▶ Chemistry
- ▶ Civil Engineering
- ▶ Computer Engineering
- ▶ Computer Science
- ▶ Economics

- ▶ Electrical Engineering
- ▶ English
- ▶ Environmental Engineering
- ▶ Foreign Area Studies
- ▶ General Engineering
- ▶ Geospatial Science
- ▶ History
- ▶ Humanities
- ▶ Legal Studies
- ▶ Management
- ▶ Mathematical Sciences
- ▶ Mechanical Engineering
- ▶ Meteorology
- ▶ Military Strategic Studies
- ▶ Operations Research
- ▶ Physics
- ▶ Political Science
- ▶ Social Sciences
- ▶ Space Operations
- ▶ Systems Engineering
- ▶ Systems Engineering Management

Minors

- ▶ Philosophy
- ▶ Foreign Language



The faculty consists of approximately 550 professors and instructors who are under the direction of the Dean of the Faculty. The composition of the academic faculty consists of Air Force officers, sister service officers, foreign officers, permanent civilian faculty and visiting professors from civilian institutions. The Academy's faculty is composed of approximately 70 percent military and 30 percent civilian professors.

The academic chance to succeed is presented readily to every cadet. With a student to faculty ratio of 8:1, learning is more specialized and convenient. Consequently, the average class size is between 15-20 cadets, which makes discussion more practical and ensures each cadet has the chance to receive additional explanations if needed. When not teaching a class, instructors make themselves constantly available for extra instruction.

The main academic building, Fairchild Hall, houses the academic classrooms, laboratories, research facilities, faculty offices and the Robert F. McDermott Library. Many of the academic departments have their own specialized state-of-the-art laboratories.

But academic opportunity doesn't end here. A number of graduate scholarships and fellowships are awarded every year to include, Rhodes, Marshall, NCAA, Guggenheim, Gerhart and more. Also, up to three percent of each graduating class is selected to attend medical, nursing or dental school. Additionally, the Air Force offers 100 percent tuition assistance to those who would like to pursue their master's degree at a later time. ■

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Leadership

The cadet wing simulates the same structure and organization as an operational Air Force wing. The 4,000 cadets are organized into four groups, with about 1,000 cadets per group. Each group contains 10 squadrons, with about 100 cadets per squadron.

The class designation is somewhat different from a traditional college. Instead of freshmen, the first-year cadets are referred to as four degrees or fourth-class cadets; the sophomores are referred to as three degrees or third-class cadets; juniors are referred to as two degrees or second-class cadets; and seniors are referred to as first-class cadets or firsties.

The Air Force Academy forms the leadership foundation cadets will carry into and continue to build upon in the operational Air Force as commissioned officers. Each squadron houses members from all four classes, and each class has a different degree of responsibility that is tailored to slowly build one's leadership skills.

As a four degree, one has a loyal followership role. The purpose of that role is so one can learn to support the mission, chain of command and standards, while also being designated time to master primary responsibilities, skills and knowledge. During three-degree year, one focuses on being a coach and role model for the four degrees while preparing to take on training responsibilities in the cadet wing. As a two degree, one provides supervision and training for the lower two classes. And lastly, as a firstie, one holds various primary roles while providing leadership, motivation and direction for the cadet wing.



Each cadet has a different leadership position every semester and fulfills duties that exist in active-duty Air Force squadrons, such as: squadron commander, operations officer, first sergeant, element leader, etc. The cadet wing is run solely by cadets with each squadron supervised by an Air Officer Commanding (AOC) and two Academy Military Training (AMT) noncommissioned officers.

The AOCs are active-duty Air Force majors, and they counsel cadets on leadership and military career issues, oversee military training, and serve as role models for the future officers. The AMTs are active-duty Air Force senior noncommissioned officers who provide feedback and mentorship and coach cadets on situational circumstances. ■

About the Academy

The United States Air Force Academy is a four-year military service academy, located just north of Colorado Springs, Colorado, where cadets earn a Bachelor of Science degree in one of 31 majors.

Upon graduation, cadets are commissioned as second lieutenants in the U.S. Air Force. Typically, more than 50 percent of each graduating class is designated a pilot slot. There are numerous other career fields the Air Force offers, ranging from engineering and acquisitions to intelligence and public affairs.

The mission of the Academy is:

To educate, train and inspire men and women to become officers of character motivated to lead the United States Air Force in service to our nation.

The Academy's core values are:

Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All We Do

The Honor Code states: "We will not lie, steal or cheat nor tolerate among us anyone who does."

Academy mascot: Falcon

Unofficial Academy song: "The Air Force Song" ■

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Athletics

In addition to managing a full academic load, cadets must maintain physical conditioning and participate in athletic competitions. The Academy's extensive athletic program includes intercollegiate and intramural sports, physical education courses and physical fitness tests. These programs help prepare cadets for Air Force leadership by building confidence, emotional control, physical courage, and the ability to perform under pressure.



Intercollegiate Sports

The Academy has 10 women's and 17 men's National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) teams that compete at the highest level, Division I. Most sports are members of the Mountain West Conference.

The men's teams include:

- ▶ Baseball
- ▶ Basketball
- ▶ Boxing
- ▶ Cross Country
- ▶ Fencing
- ▶ Football

- ▶ Golf
- ▶ Gymnastics
- ▶ Ice Hockey
- ▶ Lacrosse
- ▶ Rifle
- ▶ Soccer
- ▶ Swimming and Diving
- ▶ Tennis
- ▶ Track and Field
- ▶ Water Polo
- ▶ Wrestling

The women's teams include:

- ▶ Basketball
- ▶ Cross Country
- ▶ Fencing
- ▶ Gymnastics
- ▶ Rifle
- ▶ Soccer
- ▶ Swimming and Diving
- ▶ Tennis
- ▶ Track and Field
- ▶ Volleyball

Intramural Sports

Each cadet must participate in an intercollegiate or intramural sport each semester. The intramural sports include: basketball, men's boxing, cross country, flag football, flicker ball, racquetball, men's rugby, women's rugby, soccer, softball, team handball, tennis (singles and doubles), ultimate Frisbee, volleyball and wally ball. Each squadron produces a team for each sport, and squadrons compete against each other until group intramural championships, which then leads to the wing intramural championship.



Physical Education Courses

Cadets must complete 10 physical education courses during their time at the Academy. All cadets must complete certain core classes which include: boxing (males only), self defense (females only), swimming, water survival, physical development and unarmed combat I and II. After taking the required courses, cadets may take the following: basketball, golf, racquetball, scuba, soccer, softball, tennis or volleyball.

Physical Fitness Tests

Besides team sports, two fitness tests are administered each semester. The first, the Physical Fitness Test (PFT) tests overall strength and endurance and includes pull-ups, a standing long jump, sit-ups, push-ups and a 600-yard run. The second, the Aerobic Fitness Test (AFT), a one-and-a-half mile run, tests aerobic fitness levels.

Maintaining physical fitness is important to not only pass the fitness tests, but the program promotes maximum fitness among the cadet wing, develops a foundation for a lifetime of fitness, and recognizes cadets who excel in personal fitness. Cadets who receive a score above 450 on the PFT or AFT are exempt from taking that particular test the following semester.

Facilities

The Academy maintains some of the finest athletic facilities in the nation. The athletic complex includes the Cadet Gymnasium, the Cadet Field House, the Falcon Athletic Center and a number of outdoor playing fields. In addition, a 92,000-square-foot indoor training facility is slated for completion in 2011. ■



Clubs

Although it may seem like a cadet's schedule is too rigid to accommodate personal interests, most cadets find time to partake in the Academy's clubs. The Academy offers more than 80 active cadet clubs to develop talents and satisfy hobbies. Not only do the clubs serve the purpose of gratifying one's interests, but they also foster friendships, personal development and character development. The clubs fall into four separate categories: recreational, competitive, professional and mission clubs.

Here is a partial list of the clubs. For a more comprehensive list, visit academyadmissions.com.

Recreational clubs

Amateur Radio, Bluebards, Car Club, Chess, Equestrian, Ice Sports, Karate, Jazz Band, Los Padrinos, Marathon, Model Engineering, Native American

Heritage Club, Orchestra, Pacific Rim, Paintball, Rodeo, Show Choir, Ultimate Frisbee and Way of Life

Competitive clubs

Cycling, Fast Pitch Softball, Women's Lacrosse, Men's Rugby, Women's Rugby, Ski-Alpine, Ski-Nordic, Team Handball, Triathlon, Men's Volleyball and Women's Water Polo

Professional clubs

Physics/Astronomy, Aviation, Chemistry, French, History, International Club, Operations Research, Psychology, Russian, Space Society and Spanish

Mission clubs

Chorale, Drum and Bugle, Falconry, Flying Team, Honor Guard, Saber Drill, Soaring and Wings of Blue ■



United States Air Force Academy

Exposure to the World

The Air Force Academy offers several programs that give cadets the opportunity to see more of the world and learn from the experience. Cadets may experience the traditions and cultures of foreign countries by participating in one of the following programs:

Foreign Academy Visits

For this particular program, cadets, faculty and staff travel to international academies on short-duration exchange visits. Typically, each trip consists of four cadets and one faculty escort. The trips normally last seven to 10 days and provide cultural immersion and familiarization with foreign militaries. In recent years, cadets visited more than 40 different countries.

Cadet Semester Exchange Abroad Program (CSEAP)

Each academic year, interested Academy cadets have the opportunity to attend international military academies in Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Japan or Spain for the entire semester.

Cadet Semester Study Abroad Program (CSSAP)

Interested and selected cadets studying Arabic, Chinese, Russian or Spanish may experience a semester-long study abroad program at foreign civilian universities. Current programs exist at Nanjing University in China, Seinan Gakuin Daigaku in Japan, Voronezh State University in Russia and Mexico National Technical University.

Cadet Summer Language Immersion Program

Each summer, more than 300 cadets and select faculty escorts participate in four- or six-week language immersion programs in Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. Partner countries include: Argentina, Brazil, China,

Egypt, France, Germany, Japan, Jordan, Mexico, Morocco, Peru, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Russia and Spain.

Olmsted Language and Cultural Immersion

During spring break and summer periods, cadets may participate in one of several one- to three-week cultural immersion trips to locations in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Latin America and Russia. In 2010, 71 different cultural immersion trips were funded through the Air Force and Olmsted Foundation, giving 318 cadets and 73 officer escorts the direct experience of other cultures and languages, spanning more than 50 countries. Language Immersion Programs combine on-site classroom language instruction with immersive cultural learning and language application in a real-world environment. In 2010, 294 cadets and 34 faculty escorts participated in Language Immersion Programs in 8 languages in 15 diverse countries around the world. Additionally, about 70 cadets participate each year in semester-length study at one of 8 civilian institutions or as part of exchange programs with 6 allied forces service academies.

Interservice Exchange

For the duration of the fall semester, a small selection of second-class cadets exchange places with counterparts from West Point, Annapolis and the Coast Guard Academy. The exchange provides a better understanding of the other services and develops uniformity among programs at all the service academies. ■

Airmanship Programs

The Air Force Academy's airmanship programs form a vital part of the curriculum and further distinguish it from other institutes of higher learning. The airmanship courses entail basic and advanced instruction in parachuting, gliders, powered aircraft and unmanned aircraft. All airmanship operations are conducted simultaneously at the Academy's airfield.

Parachuting Programs

More than 700 cadets complete the basic freefall parachuting course each year. To earn the basic parachutist badge, each cadet must complete five jumps dropping from 4,500 feet while administering proper procedures for employing the parachute to proper landing techniques.

Cadets who earn the basic parachutist badge are eligible for the advanced training necessary to possibly upgrade to the Academy parachute team, the Wings of Blue. The advanced training consists of more than 150 freefall jumps that teach cadets the techniques required to control their bodies in freefall. This training allows jumpers to perform such maneuvers as turns, front and back loops, barrel rolls and relative work formations.



The Wings of Blue is divided into a demonstration team and a competition team. The competition team has been one of the most outstanding parachute units in the nation during the past two decades. Since 1967, cadets have dominated national intercollegiate parachuting championships, typically winning decisively over 40 other schools. Additionally, the demonstration team performs at about 50 local, national and international public events annually, including sporting events, ceremonies and air shows.

Soaring Program

Basic soaring training includes instruction in the TG-10B glider, and after approximately 10 flights, depending on the level of proficiency, cadets may be qualified to fly solo. The basic soaring course trains about 550 cadets annually.

Additionally, each year approximately 75 cadets are chosen to enter a semester-long instructor pilot upgrade course. After an average of 80 training flights and many hours of strenuous ground school, the cadets are ready to wear the instructor pilot wings and become qualified instructor pilots in the TG-10B.

Two advanced programs that field teams to compete regionally and nationally are available for those cadet instructor pilots who excel, the Aerobatics Team and the Cross-Country Soaring Team. The Aerobatics Team conducts exhibitions across the nation and competes in four regional competitions. The Cross-Country Team competes in regional and national competitions and strives for state and national records.

Powered Flight Programs

The Powered Flight Program provides exposure to U.S. Air Force flying operations, and in certain cases, an opportunity for cadets to solo. This capstone aviation program is designed to allow cadets to integrate what they have learned in their previous academic and airmanship programs. The Air Force Academy Flying Team is a select group of 16 to 18 cadets who hold a Federal Aviation Administration Private Pilot Certificate or higher. The team uses T-52A aircraft to compete against 144 colleges nationwide in regional and national competitions. They compete in nine demanding ground and precision flying events, such as aircraft identification, flight computer accuracy, short field landings and cross-country navigation.

Remotely Piloted Aircraft

These newer airmanship courses have three separate classes that build off of each other. Because of a steadily growing demand in the Air Force, cadets are introduced to unmanned aircraft and learn to control them from the ground. The classes develop cadets' understanding and practice of Air Force unmanned aviation by focusing on situational awareness, weapon and sensor platform capabilities and systems, mission applications, operational risk and crew resource management. The courses also delve into the complexities of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.

Aero Club

Cadets can learn to fly club-owned aircraft during their free time at the Academy's Aero Club. As a member of the club, cadets receive discounts and privileges on certain aviation activities, including the chance to earn Federal Aviation Administration ratings. ■

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Life at the Academy

Every cadet's time at the Academy begins with Basic Cadet Training (BCT), or more familiarly called "beast." This 38-day training program run by upper class cadets is very physically, emotionally and mentally challenging for all, regardless of background.

The first three weeks of BCT take place at the cadet area, and basic cadets are taught marching, saluting, customs and courtesies, uniform wear, honor lessons, team exercises and much more. The second half of BCT begins with a march to Jacks Valley, training grounds about five miles from the cadet area. Here, cadets set up large tents which will be their homes for the next two weeks. The culmination of BCT is a swearing-in ceremony, when the basic cadets are accepted into the cadet wing.

After BCT, the fourth-class cadets transition to their assigned squadrons and prepare for the academic year. Each cadet has a roommate and lives in one of two dormitories. Rooms must be kept in first-rate order, and everybody must wear the uniform of the day throughout duty hours.

A typical weekday as a cadet is extremely busy. Cadets attend breakfast, classes, lunch, military training time, more classes, intercollegiate or intramural sports, dinner and then academic call to quarters until lights out. Cadets awake the next morning to begin the cycle again.

After the academic year is over, cadets partake in summer programs which are divided into three-week periods. Cadets participate and complete programs



like global engagement, combat survival training, jump, soaring, cultural immersions and operations Air Force.

Cadets reach many rewarding milestones in between the demanding days. Some of the milestones are BCT graduation, Parent's Weekend, Recognition, 100's Night, Ring Dance, and ultimately ending with the main goal of Graduation Day. Each milestone represents another step closer to graduation and a celebration of past hard work and dedication.

As a fourth-class cadet, freedoms and liberties are granted minimally, but as each year progresses, cadets gain more freedom to enjoy what the local area and Colorado have to offer. The Academy's location makes camping, hiking, horseback riding, mountain climbing, skiing, snowboarding and white-water rafting highly accessible. The immediate area hosts numerous types of restaurants, the latest movies in theaters, plenty of malls with the latest fashions, and a downtown area with many quaint establishments. Cadets are also assigned sponsor families who provide a home away from home. In addition to Thanksgiving, winter and spring break leave, most cadets will be granted three weeks of leave each summer. ■

Why the Academy?

Not only do Air Force Academy cadets receive a world-class education, learn and experience valuable leadership skills, further define and sharpen their character and hone their physical fitness capabilities. But in addition to all of these factors, cadets are provided for as much as possible while they are here so they can focus on their coursework, daily military tasks and athletic competitions.

To begin, the Academy provides a full scholarship. In addition to free-tuition, cadets receive free room and board, meals and medical and dental care. As a result, cadets have less stress in terms of renewing scholarships, worrying about future student loans or maintaining after-school employment. Each cadet is also entitled to a monthly stipend. ■



After the Academy

Sometimes finding a job after college can be difficult, and sometimes so can sustaining a job after college with the uncertainty of job security. Upon graduation from the Air Force Academy, your son or daughter will receive a Bachelor of Science degree and is guaranteed a profession as an officer in the United States Air Force. There are several varied specialties from which to choose. Many cadets will go on to become pilots, navigators, contracting officers, public affairs officers, intelligence officers, doctors, engineers, special forces...the list goes on and on. The post-graduation Air Force commitment is five years for most career fields, but the commitment for pilots and navigators is based on the needs of the Air Force following graduation.

In addition to regular pay, officers receive a monthly tax-free housing and food allowance based upon rank and geographic cost of living. All military members receive 30 days of paid vacation each year and comprehensive medical and dental care.

Air Force officers are eligible for retirement after 20 years of service, one of the earliest retirement plans available.

The Air Force Academy experience in itself provides a world of new opportunities. After the Academy, graduates are set on individual paths where the number of experiences is immeasurable. Ask any graduate. Each has a completely unique story, with different paths, opportunities, and the only limitations are those set by the individual. ■

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of Basic Cadet Training (BCT)?

The BCT program tests cadets' mental and physical abilities and helps them transition from civilian to military life. This foundational leadership training helps develop alertness, physical endurance, emotional stability, self-reliance and individual initiative.

Are parents permitted to contact cadets by phone during BCT?

No, parents should refrain from calling during BCT. Cadets are instructed to write home soon after BCT begins to give parents the name and phone numbers of their Air Officer Commanding, or AOC, who directly supervises their squadron. Cadets and parents are strongly encouraged to communicate through cards and letters.

When can I send my cadet care packages?

Cadets going through BCT are not allowed to receive care packages.

However, upon completion of training, they are allowed to receive care packages from family or friends at any time.

Are cadets counseled on the selection of a major?

Yes, cadets are guided by academic advisors who discuss the academic majors in relation to career areas and opportunities in the Air Force. After selecting a major, cadets are assigned to a faculty advisor who will assist with course selections, schedules and other academic matters.

How accessible are the instructors?

The instructors at the Academy maintain office hours Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Unless teaching or in a meeting, instructors are available for extra instruction. Additionally, most teachers will provide a contact number and e-mail address for after-hours questions.

Is it possible to be recruited for a sport by the Academy?

Yes, it is possible to be recruited for an intercollegiate sport, but recruited athletes receive the same general scholarship as every cadet. By receiving a general scholarship, if you should ever become injured while playing a sport and can no longer participate, you will not lose your general Academy scholarship.

Where can cadets go if overwhelmed, stressed-out or having difficulty adjusting to the Academy?

Cadets have access to many helpful agencies, including the Academy's Peak Performance Center. The center provides a full range of counseling and performance enhancement services to meet the developmental, emotional, psychological and leadership needs of the cadet wing. Students often experience transitional stress due to new challenges or face difficult decisions regarding a wide spectrum of normal developmental issues. In addition, each squadron has two cadet PEERs, Personal Ethics and Education Representatives, to help address concerns and seek professional guidance.

When and where are cadets permitted to practice their faith of choice?

Worship attendance at the cadet chapel is voluntary. The chapel has dedicated worship areas for Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim and Buddhist faith groups, as well as an all-faiths room for other worshiping traditions. In addition, an outdoor area for Earth-based religions was recently added near the cadet area. The cadet chapel releases weekly worship schedules, and cadets are also permitted to attend a place of worship of choice in the local community. Cadets may participate in other religious activities including choirs, study groups, daily worship and fellowship organizations.

How can parents help their son or daughter excel in the cadet wing?

Parents can encourage cadets to put forth their best efforts in all areas, and particularly, to abide by cadet wing regulations, take responsibility for their actions, and be accountable to themselves and their supervisors. Parental support has been found to be a strong motivator toward positive performance. Conversely, parents who condone violations will undermine the Academy's efforts and leave their son or daughter open to punishment and possible disenrollment.

What leave periods do cadets have?

Cadets have a leave period over Thanksgiving, two-and-a-half weeks for winter break, and one week in the spring semester. During the summer, most cadets have approximately three weeks of leave.

As a parent, is there a local support group I can join?

There are more than 90 Air Force Academy parent clubs in the United States, with every state having representation. For more information, please call (719) 333-3828 or (877) 268-3383.

Do graduates have a chance to obtain an advanced degree?

Graduates can receive scholarships to attend civilian graduate schools immediately after graduation. Graduates in the top 15 percent of their class are typically prime candidates for post-graduate education programs. Other graduates may also have opportunities for graduate education through the Air Force Institute of Technology program.

Can graduates enter medical school?

The Academy may send up to three percent of each graduating class directly to medical, nursing or dental school. ■



Communication

The Air Force Academy years will be an interesting time in your son or daughter's life to say the least. Even immediately after BCT, your son or daughter will call home with greater maturity, an increased sense of responsibility and expanded insight. They will have many acronyms mixed throughout their speech, which might be hard to understand at first, but with time you will learn what they're saying.

Cadets lead very busy lives. Practically every moment of their day is accounted for from the moment they awake until the moment they go to bed. And if they're not active with academics, athletics or military duties, they're busy fitting in personal interest time.

Even though contact may be sparse at times, it's important for parents to stay involved in their cadet's life, communicate and remain supportive. Receiving a simple letter or card from friends and family during BCT can sometimes lift spirits to the top of the world, at least for a moment. Even if cadets are unable to reply to letters because of time restraints, they still yearn for letters from you. It's a way for them to have communication from the outside world, which sometimes becomes minimal with the strict Academy routine and demands. After BCT, e-mail is probably the quickest way to communicate with



your child since their personal computers become a huge part of their daily lives. Many cadets are allowed cell phone privileges after BCT four-degree year.

This is an essential time for growth and independence in your child's life. Parents can become easily discouraged with the possible lack of regular contact with their son or daughter. A child's safety is a concern for all parents. The Academy maintains precise accountability of contact phone numbers, and if the safety of your child is ever in question, you will be the first one we call. In case of a family emergency and you need to contact your child immediately, it's important to have your child's squadron AOC contact information handy. ■

Websites & Phone Numbers

Websites

academyadmissions.com	the USAFA information center
facebook.com/academyadmissions	Facebook page
airforce.com	general Air Force information
csmng.com/AcademySpirit/	the base newspaper
goairforcefalcons.com	the athletic information center
todaysmilitary.com	general military information
usafa.af.mil	the Academy's homepage
usafa.org	the Association of Graduates

Phone Numbers [Note: The Academy's area code is (719)]

Admissions:	1-800-443-9266	For guidance, you will be directed to your USAFA counselor. Your last name and address will be required.
Command Post:	(719) 333-2910/11/12	
Medical Status:	(719) 333-3562	Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DODMERB)
Parent's Club Liaison:	(719) 333-3828 or (877) 268-3383	
Preparatory School:	1-800-443-9266	Regional area counselor
Student Record Status:	1-800-443-9266	Regional area counselor

Tours of USAFA for candidates/students and parents during the academic year Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays at 9 a.m., excluding final exam weeks, holidays and spring break. Ten days advance notice is requested. 1-800-443-3864, option 1 ■

Academic Year 2011-12 Calendar

July 30	BCT ends – Cadet Wing returns 1900
August 1-3	Transition period
September 2-4	Parent's Weekend
September 3	Air Force vs South Dakota football game (home)
September 5	Labor Day, no classes
September 7	Cadet Wing UCI begins
September 10	Air Force vs TCU football game (home)
September 17	Cadet Wing UCI ends
September 24	Air Force vs Tennessee State football game (home)
September 30	No classes
October 1	Air Force vs. Navy football game (at Navy)
October 8	Air Force vs Notre Dame football game (at Notre Dame)
October 10	Columbus Day, no classes
October 12-14	Falcon Heritage Forum
October 13	Air Force vs San Diego State football game (home)
October 14	No classes
October 22	Air Force vs Boise State football game (at Boise State)
October 29	Air Force vs New Mexico football game (at New Mexico)
November 5	Air Force vs. Army football game (home)
November 11	Veteran's Day, no classes
November 12	Air Force vs Wyoming football game (home)
November 18, 21, 22	Commandant's Training Days, (no classes)
November 22-27	Thanksgiving leave
November 24	Thanksgiving Day
November 28	Cadet Wing returns 1900
December 3-4	Dean's weekend
December 10-11	Study days
December 12-16	Finals
December 17-Jan 1 2012	Winter Break
January 2	Cadet Wing returns 1900
January 3	Transition day
January 16	Martin Luther King Holiday (no classes)
February 17	President's Day

February 22-24	National Character & Leadership Symposium (no classes)
March 8-10	Recognition Training
March 16-24	Spring Break
March 25	Cadet Wing returns 1900
April 11-13	Falcon Heritage Forum
May 5-6	Dean's Weekend
May 7-11	Finals
May 14-17	Summer Prep Week
May 18-22	Graduation Week
May 23	Graduation Day
May 24-26	Summer transition
May 26	1st Summer Period begins
May 28	Memorial Day Holiday

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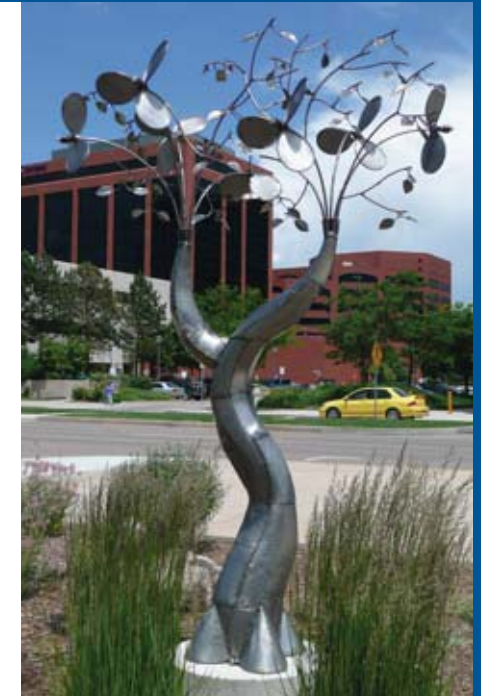
America's Mountain-Pikes Peak. Rock climb the infamous red spires of Garden of the Gods, brave the Arkansas River in a kayak canoe or tour-guided raft.

Due to an eclectic mix of past residents and benefactors, we have a rich and truly unique heritage. This collection of residents each contributed to the lifestyle that is Colorado Springs today, and why the city was named a Dozen Distinctive Destination by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 2011. The first inhabitants of the region were American Indian tribes such as the Ute, Arapahoe and Cheyenne. The discovery of gold in the Pikes Peak region brought the area's gold rush of more than 100,000 miners and pioneers. After the Civil War, William Jackson Palmer founded his dream "resort town" in 1871, and as a result, many European travelers flocked to the area.

Explore our culture and history at the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum,

The Western Museum of Mining and Industry, the Manitou Springs Heritage Center, Cripple Creek Heritage Center and the Garden of the Gods Visitor & Nature Center. Arts and culture is all over the city, literally. Art on the Streets showcases various sculptures that are scattered through Downtown. The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center just celebrated its 75th anniversary. Established in 1936, it is home to world-class art galleries and Broadway-worthy live theatre. Award-winning performances take place year-round at Stargazers Theatre and the Colorado Springs World Arena.

Another recognition: MSNBC's Best Cities to Live, Work and Play. We couldn't agree more. Some can't-miss attractions include: Garden of the Gods, Pikes Peak Highway, The Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, The Pikes



Peak Cog Railway, The Air Force Academy, Royal Gorge Park & Bridge, Manitou Cliff Dwellings and Seven Falls. Colorado Springs, CO is also home to the United States Olympic Committee and Olympic Training Center. The Visitor Center offers a close look at the facilities and athletes training ground with free tours throughout the year.

Dining varies from the local inexpensive haunt to the upscale Penrose Room at the Broadmoor. The Broadmoor is where many of Colorado Springs current restaurant owners were trained and mentored as culinary artists. Downtown Colorado Springs, Manitou Springs and Old Colorado City have a lot to offer your taste buds. There's so much to see, do, taste and experience in Colorado Springs, but no worries – we keep it all in one safe place – www.VisitCOS.com. No matter what you like to do or see, we'll help you find it. ■

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