



BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRANSFER SERVICES

TRANSFER TALK

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AN OFFICER AND A STUDENT

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Are you interested in a career that will provide you with housing, medical and dental insurance, six weeks paid vacation, tuition reimbursement and the option of retiring after twenty years? If so, then you may be interested in a career as an officer in the United States military. As a future graduate of Bronx Community College, you may be considering the possibility of applying as a transfer student to one of the four service academies that includes West Point here in New York State. While it is theoretically possible, there are requirements that may lead you to explore alternatives.

All four academies accept only freshmen, so none of your BCC credits will transfer. Admission is also rather competitive. According to West Point, in the latest year on record, they received 13,827 applicants. Of this, there were 1,257 acceptances - 1,042 males and 216 females. You also need a nomination from your representative in Congress, your US Senator, or the Vice President of the United States. Age restrictions also apply (no older than 22 on July 1st of the year you enter), and you must not be married, pregnant, or legally responsible for the support of any children. Thorough background checks are performed and you need to prove that you are in excellent physical and mental health by passing a rigorous exam.

Perhaps the most direct path to becoming an officer is to consider the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC). An ROTC program is, in essence, a simple exchange - for a paid college education as well as a monthly stipend that could equal up to \$5,000 a year and a guaranteed post-college career, students, or cadets, commit to serve in the military in the branch of their choosing (with the exception of the Coast Guard, which does not have a ROTC program). While the average enlistment period is four years, there are variable factors that could easily lengthen the term of service. For example, an air battle management officer would see their commitment increase to six years. If you choose to enroll as an Air Force Combat Systems Officer, the length of your commitment would be eight years. Each of the four military branches offers its own distinct advantages and features, and interested candidates should take a proactive approach in determining which particular branch is best suited for them.

While ROTC programs are offered on more than 1,700 campuses across the United States, the City College of New York and York College both offer them if you plan on completing your Bachelor's degree in CUNY.

There is no local ROTC program on any campus for the Navy or Marine Corps. If you choose, you can begin participating in workshops and physical education classes through ROTC while still attending BCC, with no commitment at all to the military, but once you become a junior and attend a senior college, you will be asked to sign a contract, particularly if you are going to compete for a ROTC scholarship.

Qualifications for ROTC programs in all four branches are fairly typical, with slight variations. You need to be a U. S. citizen, possess a high school diploma or its equivalent, score a minimum of 1000 on the SAT or 19 on the ACT, be between the ages of 17 and 27, have a college GPA of at least 2.5, and meet Army physical fitness standards. In addition to their regular academic workload, cadets also participate in morning physical training classes three days a week, and, as upperclassmen, also enroll in one 3 credit course a semester that meets for three hours a week. Examples of these courses are military ethics, small-unit tactics, and advanced leadership management. They also participate in one field training exercise over a weekend each semester, and, if they choose, go to a rifle marksmanship range, rappel, and train with fellow cadets from other campuses. Cadets who enroll in Army ROTC without having taken the first two years of military science classes are required to take a leader's training course.

The ultimate payoff, of course, is that, upon graduation, ROTC cadets are commissioned as U.S. Army Second Lieutenants, the exact same rank awarded to graduates of West Point. They will have learned skills pertinent to any career that involves leading, motivating people, and cultivating in themselves the type of skills that are attractive for all post-service employers. Coupled with a sense of pride, achievement, and unbound self-confidence, the potential rewards make it a journey well worth considering.

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