



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
OFFICER CANDIDATES SCHOOL
TRAINING COMMAND
2189 ELROD AVENUE
QUANTICO, VIRGINIA 22134-5033

IN REPLY REFER TO:
1900
C475-CO

From: Commanding Officer, Officer Candidates School
To: MECEP and ECP Selectees

Subj: WINTER 2015 OCS PREPARATION GUIDANCE FOR ENLISTED TO OFFICER
CANDIDATES

Ref: (a) NAVMC 3500.18C CH4 (T&R Manual for Officer Candidates/Midshipman)

1. Congratulations on your selection to attend Officer Candidates School (OCS). The intent of this letter is to provide a framework for your preparation in order to allow you to excel at OCS. In addition to the information presented in this letter, reference (a) provides additional insight on itemized training standards and events designed to ensure candidates have the moral, intellectual, and physical qualities required for commissioning.

2. Leadership. At 50% of your grade, it is the most important part of the evaluation process. While there is no one single leadership style required for success, you need to come to OCS prepared to practice good selfless-leadership and to tactfully interact with your peers. The four areas evaluated during leadership events are decision making, command presence, communication, and leading subordinates. We recommended you practice leading your fellow Marines and asking for honest, candid feedback on these four components.

a. One of the main stumbling blocks for enlisted to officer candidates is humility. You need to prepare yourself to be a candidate, not a Sergeant or Staff Sergeant of Marines but a candidate. Your peers will look to you for guidance and leadership based off of your knowledge and experience but will quickly tune you out if you come off as arrogant.

3. Academics. Academics makes up 25% of your grade, and is written and tested at the 10th grade level. Exams are conducted with little sleep and study time, and therefore, are more difficult than you would expect. You should focus on general military knowledge, test taking skills and the following areas of.

a. OCS is entry level training, but focuses on leadership and basic Marine knowledge. You should have an understanding of the Leadership Traits and Principles, the 11 General Orders, and basic weapons handling.

b. 5-Paragraph Order. You should be familiar with the 5-paragraph order. You should be able to draft a skeleton 5-paragraph order, receive a basic order, and issue an order to a subordinate (fire team or squad) unit in a compressed amount of time.

c. Land Navigation. You should be able to determine an azimuth and back azimuth, plot points on a map, and navigate using a lensatic compass.

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Having a basic knowledge of land navigation will pay dividends during land navigation events and field training events.

4. Physical Fitness. Physical Fitness composes 25% of your grade, and sets the foundation for many of the tested events. You need to be in good overall shape and able to maintain a high level of output over the 10 week course. Recommended pre-OCS physical fitness preparation is as follows:

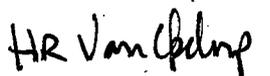
a. PT in boots. You should be able to run in boots and utilities as easily as green on green and go-fasters; the major PT events here at OCS are in boots and utilities with LBV, two canteens, and a rifle. It is highly recommended that you get comfortable running with this equipment for a minimum distance of 3 miles.

b. Pull-ups. The ability to do pull-ups will help with normal PT, the Obstacle Course and Endurance Course. A recommended minimum for female candidates is three pull-ups. All candidates must pass the Obstacle and Endurance Courses in order to graduate, and these events require dynamic upper body strength similar to what is required to do a pull up.

c. Hiking. Candidates will conduct 6.5k, 10k and 15k conditioning hikes, two 6.5k individual movements and numerous administrative moves, under loads from 45-55 lbs at an average pace no faster than 3.6 miles per hour. If you haven't been hiking often, it is recommended that you work up to hiking four miles in 50-60 minutes with a 45 lb pack.

5. Mentorship. You are encouraged to seek out a company grade officer, who displays excellent leadership, and utilize that officer as a mentor during your preparation. As a recent OCS and TBS graduate, a company grade officer will be the best suited to focus your preparation on the skill sets you need to excel here.

6. For any further assistance please contact Coordinator of Student Activities, Captain Katie R. Petronio at katie.petronio@usmc.mil or (703) 784-3223.


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