



**University of South Carolina**

**Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC)**

**Marine Enlisted Commissioning Education Program**

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## UNIT CONTACT INFORMATION

<p>MOI (803) 777-4150 AMOI (803) 777-4162 <a href="http://www.sc.edu/nrotc/">http://www.sc.edu/nrotc/</a></p>	<p>Naval ROTC 513 Pickens Street Columbia, SC 29208</p>
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## OVERVIEW

The Gamecock Battalion is made up of students attempting to complete a degree and commission in the United States Navy and Marine Corps. MECEPs will be a part of the battalion which usually totals about 90 students.

The NROTC Unit Commanding Officer is a Navy Captain, with a staff that includes an Executive Officer, Marine Officer Instructor (MOI), Assistant Marine Officer Instructor (AMOI), and Navy Lieutenants as advisors. The AMOI will be your Staff Non-Commissioned Officer in charge. It is your responsibility to keep the AMOI advised of any issues pertaining to you while in the program. You will also have regular counselings with the MOI and must keep him informed of all academic issues immediately as they occur. All interaction with the staff will be consistent to the customs and courtesies Marines are expected to adhere to.

MECEPs are not midshipmen and will not be treated as one. The rank you have earned will be respected while in the unit. MIDN will address you by your rank and the unit staff will expect you to conduct yourself appropriately. MECEPs are expected to maintain a regular schedule in line with completing their degree and be a positive example to the rest of the battalion. As a student at the University of South Carolina you will see and interact with the MIDN on a routine basis. They look to you as mentors and rely on your experience to better their understanding of the military lifestyle.

The Gamecock Battalion is divided up into platoons with billets assigned to students for the duration of one semester. Students are rotated through various billets throughout their time in the battalion in order to fully prepare them for future service in the Navy or Marine Corps. There will be a chain of command in place separate from your AMOI. MECEPs will have a younger MIDN in the chain of command giving orders at times. Adherence to the structure used is important to the professional development of every student in the battalion.

The battalion is made up of a few different types of students. Upon graduation, all students are commissioned as Ensigns or Second Lieutenants in the United States Navy or Marine Corps. Different classification of students is outlined below:

Midshipmen. Midshipmen (MIDN) are categorized in two ways, scholarship and college program. They are divided up as Navy option or Marine option depending on which service they desire a commission.

Scholarship students are awarded through a competitive selection process and provided tuition and book stipends. Scholarship students are assigned to NROTC units and sent on summer training programs throughout their time in NROTC to better prepare them for future service in the US Navy and Marine Corps.

College program are students who are assigned to the NROTC program and not on scholarship. This program exists for students who desire to be commissioned, but did not apply or get accepted for a scholarship. Application are submitted to the unit, screened, and selected by the unit staff. College program have until the end of their sophomore year to gain a scholarship or advanced standing. If not selected, they must be disenrolled from the program and authorized to pursue other options to commission.

Officer Candidates (OCs). OC's are active duty Navy personnel that have been selected to the Seaman to Admiral-21 (STA-21) Program and assigned to the NROTC unit. OC's wear a similar uniform to the MIDN and are referred to as "OC", but retain active duty pay and benefits. They have 3 years to complete degree requirements and commission as an Ensign in the United States Navy.

Marine Enlisted Commissioning Education Program (MECEP). MECEPs are active duty Marines that have been selected through a highly competitive selection process and afforded the opportunity to complete a degree program and commission as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Marines Corps. MECEPs are integrated into the unit along with the MIDN and wear the USMC Service uniform when required. MECEPs retain full active duty pay and benefits and will be referred to by their appropriate rank.

## **DAILY/WEEKLY ROUTINE**

There are minimal requirements for NROTC students, to include MECEPs, throughout the academic semester. There will be a few PT sessions and a weekly leadership lab during the semester. The remainder of your day is based upon the academic schedule you set in place. Assigned billets will require more time from students in order to fully accomplish their responsibilities. Every MECEP can expect to be assigned a semester-long officer type billet while enrolled in the unit.

The Gamecock Battalion only wears uniforms once a week on Tuesdays from 0600-COB. On Fridays, if you are in the unit for any reason you will be expected to wear the appropriate seasonal uniform. All other days you will wear civilian attire to your classes.

This program is extremely flexible with the ultimate goal of obtaining degrees in the fastest amount of time possible while maintaining the required academic hours. The goal is for you to be able to focus on your studies and prepare for your upcoming training once you commission. We understand that most MECEPs will bring a family along with them and any family issues are easily managed. Communication with the MOI/AMOI is key in this process.

## **MECEP REQUIREMENTS**

**Academic.** MECEPs will be required to complete their degree program in the least amount of time while maintaining the required hours of a full time student at the university, including the summer semesters. MECEPs must keep the MOI advised of all issues regarding academics. Class attendance is mandatory, but your schedule is completely driven by your degree plan. Throughout your time in the MECEP program you will be required to take a few Navy courses that must be worked into your degree plan. MECEPs must remain in a good academic standing with a GPA above a 2.5. Credits from SMART transcripts will most likely fulfill certain electives in your degree plan, but do not expect core requirements to be met. It will also take approximately a full semester, until you have a standing GPA, for the university to fully review the SMART transcript. Transfer credit from other universities should not be expected until the university has completed your transfer review of all incoming credit hours. Simply stated, be patient with the university while they process all of your transfer credits.

**Physical Training (PT).** A MECEP's ability to maintain a high level of fitness while in the program is extremely important for your future at TBS and in order to reinforce the positive image of an active duty Marine. PT sessions are from 0600-0715 on Monday and Thursday with the entire battalion. Wednesday morning from 0600-0715 is designated as remedial for all required. The standards set to stay off remedial are 275 or above PFT and 285 or above CFT. These standards exist to better prepare Marines and MIDN for the rigors of OCS and TBS after commissioning. Each semester will have an initial and final PFT/CFT depending on the time of year. The final scores will also be recorded for semi-annual requirements in your official record. The PT program is built to suit the entire battalion, so MECEPs are encouraged to stay involved in a fitness routine beyond the unit requirements.

**Leadership Lab.** Every Tuesday the entire battalion meets for their weekly Leadership lab from 0600-0800. Attendance in this period is mandatory for MECEPs and MIDN. Uniform for the lab period will always be the appropriate seasonal uniform unless prescribed differently by the AMOI. Every week the plan of the week (POW) and letter of instruction (LOI) will be released in order to prep all members of the unit for the lab. Topics will range from service specific training to US Navy/Marine Corps policies and general military subjects. All MECEPs will be part of Semper Fi Society, which contains all Marine option MIDN as well. During the times Semper Fi meets we will cover OCS/TBS related topics and training. MECEPs will be used on occasion to assist the MOI/AMOI instructing the MIDN through small group practical application or teaching classes. The goal of Semper Fi Society is to prepare MIDN for successful completion of OCS.

**Professionalism.** MECEPs retain the rank and respect they deserve as an SNCO/NCO in the United States Marines Corps. The MIDN will refer to you by your appropriate rank and

return the respect they show all active duty in the unit. However, MECEPs will be mixed throughout the battalion in order to provide guidance and mentorship to younger MIDN. MECEPs are required to be a positive example of an active duty Marine within the battalion ranks at all times. You will have MIDN billets over you that will be in your chain of command and your cooperation is important in order for them to accomplish their duties.

### **CHECK-IN PROCEDURES**

To check-in you will need to report to the AMOI's office in your Service "A" uniform. After checking in with the command you will be directed to the I&I for admin check in purposes. A copy of your orders and your records must be retained for use at Fort Jackson medical and dental.

There are plenty of housing options available. The towns of Lexington and Northeast Columbia seem to be common choices for Marines with families due to the better school systems. You also have the option of on base housing at Fort Jackson approximately 10-15 minutes from our campus. You will need your orders when you visit the housing office to sign up for a residence. The information for the housing office is below:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Fort Jackson Housing Office</b> 855-969-3795 <b>Office Hours:</b> Monday-Friday: 7:30am-6:00pm Saturday: 10:00am-4:00pm <b>Location:</b> 520 Brown Avenue Fort Jackson, SC 29207</p>
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The items listed above are the bulk of the check-in process you will need to prepare for. Any remaining time will be used to get registered on campus. You will be required to attend an orientation as a transfer student, which will be coordinated through the university. If you would like to schedule a visit to the NROTC unit prior to your report date, contact the AMOI. Once your orientation is complete you will be able to register for classes with the university and set up your degree plan. A finalized copy will be submitted to the MOI after all registration for your first semester is complete.

All TMO must be coordinated prior to your PCS. You are advised to take the advances offered to assist in the moving cost. Save all records of the move for final TMO claim. You will submit the final claim through MARFORRES and it may take some time for the process to be completed.

## **UNIT ACTIVITIES**

The Gamecock Battalion will have several different events that take place every semester. MECEPs are allowed and encouraged to take part in different activities offered to the students.

Every week in the battalion there will be Navy academic classes (when scheduled), PT, and a leadership lab. Attendance at all these events is mandatory. MECEPs are not required to take Navy academic classes every semester. The MOI will cover specific classes that must be taken once you arrive. PT and lab will be conducted as previously described, and must remain a part of your weekly schedule.

Battalion Clubs. The battalion divides up into service assignment specific clubs during the semester. Approximately 3 lab periods each month will be in the club format. All MECEPs and Marine option students belong to Semper Fi Society. Semper Fi will train numerous times at Fort Jackson and conduct a spring field training exercise (FEX) at MCRD Parris Island. Training plans for Semper Fi will be developed towards preparing MIDN for OCS. Navy clubs are as follows: Cockpit Club, Nuclear Club, and Blue & Gold Society.

Drill Team. The Gamecock Drill Team travels to different competitions during the academic year. MECEPs are authorized to participate on the drill team. They generally practice in the morning for a few weeks prior to each event. MECEPs will also be used as drivers on occasion to and from drill competitions.

Color Guard. Color Guard performs at numerous military, university, and civilian events throughout the year. At a minimum, Color Guard will compete in drill competitions, perform for home football games at Williams Brice Stadium, and other ceremonies requested through the AMOI. Color Guard has performed at university athletic and ceremonial events as well. Color Guard is generally comprised of 5 MIDN, but MECEPs are also authorized to participate.

Endurance Team. The endurance team is made of MIDN with a high level of physical fitness. MIDN of the Gamecock Battalion will compete in NROTC events and other competitions they wish to register for. Often times the endurance team will travel to events with the drill team to compete.

Shooting Team. The shooting team competes in competition when available. With a limited number of weapons and ammunition, the entire battalion does not shoot on the team. Shooting is open to MIDN that have displayed a significant level of marksmanship skill. Due to NROTC unit involvement, shooting competitions are limited.

Community Service. The Gamecock Battalion does not have any requirement for community service hours for students. However, every semester the battalion will coordinate a service day in the schedule arranged with a few different agencies. Community service opportunities outside of this are based on the individual.

University of South Carolina NROTC Alumni. Every fall there will be a Pass-in-Review Ceremony held for the alumni of the unit. This is their opportunity to honor and recognize members of their alumni association each year. In the spring semester, members of the battalion assist in the running of the alumni annual golf tournament. Participation in these events is mandatory due to the amount of support the alumni give the battalion for student scholarship and activities.

Williams Brice Stadium Cleanup/Tally Ho. Every fall semester during football season the NROTC tailgate (called Tally Ho) starts 4 hours prior to kickoff of home games. All members of the battalion and families are invited to attend. The MIDN put together a team to execute the event, but MECEPs are able to help as well. The battalion also conducts stadium cleanup for every home game. The entire battalion will meet the morning after the game and assist in the cleanup of the stadium. All money earned from stadium clean up goes back into the battalion and pays for all student events (mentioned above) during the year.

### **TUITION/FINANCIAL AID**

Prior to your arrival at the NROTC unit there are a few steps that are vital to your academic success. First, contact the university's Veteran Affairs Office. The VA will be your primary point of contact for all matters pertaining to your GI bill. MECEPS utilize either Chapter 30 or 33 benefits for tuition. The choice of which benefits to use is completely up to the individual Marine. The University of South Carolina offers an active duty tuition rate, which is cheaper than in-state tuition, regardless of your state of residence. In addition, it is highly recommended that you apply for the Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at [www.fafsa.ed.gov/](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/). MECEPs are not permitted to use the Marine Corps Tuition Assistance Program. If there are any remaining questions regarding tuition, contact the financial aid office.

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