



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY AT GALVESTON

Texas A&M Maritime Academy

**MART 350/MARE 350 and Engine  
Internship Ashore (in lieu of Sea Term),  
Commercial Sea Term Process**

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	2
<b>Eligibility Requirements</b> .....	3
Requirements to apply for Commercial Sea Term (CST) .....	3
Requirements to Sail on CST .....	3
<b>Application Phase</b> .....	4
CST Application action steps for cadets.....	4
<b>Evaluation Phase</b> .....	5
Evaluation Requirements.....	5
Process for Scoring and Ranking.....	6
<b>Acquisition and Assignment of Billets</b> .....	8
Billet acquisition.....	8
Assignment of Billets.....	9
<b>Administrative Actions, post-assignment</b> .....	9
<b>FINAL NOTES</b> .....	10

# Texas A&M Maritime Academy

## Commercial Sea Term

### Introduction

The Texas A&M Maritime Academy (TAMMA) is committed to providing quality experiential learning opportunities for all cadets. To accomplish this, we encourage our license option cadets who have completed MART/MARE 200 to apply for Commercial Sea Term (MART/MARE 350) in lieu of Summer Sea Term (MART/MARE 300). The commercial sea term immerses cadets into an operational environment on a commercial vessel for an extended period and is an outstanding vehicle for personal and professional growth. **A competitive application and evaluation process is used to evaluate candidates to participate in this program, with a goal of ensuring all cadets have an equal opportunity to compete for a commercial billet based on individual merit and performance. Selection and subsequent assignment to a billet for commercial sea term is not guaranteed.** Each cadet will be evaluated for academic performance, professionalism, personal conduct, pursuit of leadership, and demonstration of Aggie Core Values. This process document outlines the eligibility requirements for application and program selection, rubric for cadet evaluation, billet acquisition and assignment, and other related training and administrative process steps.

The United States Coast Guard, Maritime Administration, and the University require TAMMA to scrutinize each company and opportunity to ensure compliance with regulatory, operational and academic suitability, and that minimum tonnage and horsepower requirements are met to satisfy program objectives. We strive to match cadets to companies or vessel types that fit their future career interests, including niche areas such as Tankers, DP, Tugs, or LNG.

Please note each of the following points:

1. Vessels must exceed 100 GRT and 1,000 HP (deck) or 100 GRT and 4,000 HP (engine) for time spent onboard to count towards an unlimited license. Assignment to vessels below the unlimited tonnage/horsepower threshold shall be done on a case-by-case basis.
2. The availability of billets with specific companies or on specific vessel types vary each commercial sea term and are not guaranteed. **Cadets must be prepared to sail with the Academy for MART/MARE 300 if insufficient billets are available for assignment.** Eligible cadets who are subsequently matched to a commercial billet will be registered into MART/MARE 350 by their respective academic department.
3. The commercial sea term is meant to be performed at sea to gain valuable experience working in your future craft. **Shoreside internships for MARE students of any kind are not a substitute for at-sea training and cannot count as vessel days toward your license.**
4. Deck cadets should anticipate spending between 85-100 calendar days onboard their vessel during MART 350. Engine cadets should anticipate spending a minimum of 72 days onboard their vessel for MARE 350.
5. **TAMMA does not guarantee that you'll receive the required amount of sea time sailing on a commercial vessel in lieu of sailing with the Academy for a summer sea term.** The

Academy will assist on a case-by-case basis where insufficient sea time was accrued through no fault of the cadet.

## Eligibility Requirements

### Requirements to apply for Commercial Sea Term (CST)

The following minimum requirements must be met to apply for initial entry into the commercial sea term program:

- 1) **Academic:**
  - a) Cadets must have passed the first sea term MART/MARE 200 and its prerequisite courses with a grade of “C” or better.
  - b) Cadets must pass the pre-requisites for MART/MARE 300 with a grade of “C” or better.
  - c) Undergraduate cadets must have a cumulative GPA greater than 2.750 at time of application.
  - d) Graduate level or post-baccalaureate cadets must have a cumulative GPA greater than 3.000 at the time of application.
- 2) **Corps:**
  - a) Cadets must be in good standing with the University and the Corps of Cadets at the time of application. The definitions for Standing are found in Student Rule 27.1.
    - i) Standing will be verified when an application is received. Cadets under Conduct Review are considered to be in Good Standing.
- 3) **Ship Operations:**
  - a) Cadets must have completed >75% of required maintenance hours for each semester in a deck or engine license option program. Maintenance progress will be verified at the time of initial application.

### Requirements to Sail on CST

The following requirements must be maintained to receive sailing clearance for the MART/MARE 350 commercial sea term. All criteria will be validated by the Commercial Sea Term Director in conjunction with the respective department.

- 1) **Academic, all levels:** all course prerequisites for MART/MARE 350 must be complete (full eligibility) or projected to be completed (provisional eligibility) with a grade of “C” or better by the end of the Spring Semester prior to sailing. Cumulative GPA must be maintained above 2.75 to be eligible for assignment to a vessel. The Commercial Sea Term Director shall verify projected grades with the academic department as close to the end of the semester immediately before sailing as is practical.
  - a. Deck cadets must have a cumulative GPA of 2.750 or higher to cadet ship onboard a commercial vessel. Failure to meet this standard will result in assignment to the summer sea term onboard the training ship.
  - b. Engine cadets with a GPA of 2.500-2.749 will be evaluated by their academic department for the potential of an appropriate shoreside internship. Engine cadets with cumulative GPA below 2.750 are not eligible to sail on a commercial vessel.
- 2) **Corps:** must remain in Good Standing with the University and Corps of Cadets.
- 3) **Ship Operations:** must have completed 100% of required maintenance hours for each semester of participation in a deck or engine license option program at the time of sailing. The

Commercial Sea Term Director will verify progress with the License Program Manager or Second Mate at the end of the semester. **Failure to complete 100% of all required maintenance hours will result in loss of billet and reassignment to the appropriate 300-level sea term with the Academy.**

- 4) **TAMMA:** all administrative documentation must be submitted and completed by stated milestone dates to meet multiple process requirements. All active holds preventing registration must be cleared. Failure to clear all holds may result in delays to registration or loss of the 350-level sea term.

## Application Phase

### CST Application action steps for cadets

The cadet application process occurs in two steps:

- **Step 1** requires completion of an online application to register interest and gather required information.
- **Step 2** is an in-person meeting to deliver all required documentation. Cadets will be able to schedule the meeting from the Maritime Academy → Cadet Resources webpage.

Announcements and requirements for both steps and their deadlines will be made via Canvas notifications, verbal announcements through chain of command, and by email when applicable. Efficiency demands that all necessary documentation be up-to-date and physically present for the in-person meeting. Cadets are 100% responsible for ensuring the application packet contains all required documents and information, regardless of those items having been previously submitted to TAMMA or the University for any other purpose. **Incomplete packets will not be accepted- failure to fully complete both steps by their respective deadlines will result in removal from the commercial sea term process and re-assignment to the next Academy training cruise.**

The submission packet for the step 2 meeting must contain the following:

- 1) Resume and cover letter (template available upon request)
  - a) Cover letters should be written to a prospective employer and not to Academy staff. Cover letters should be grammatically correct and free from spelling and punctuation errors. Resumes should include previous and current leadership positions held in the Corps of Cadets or another student organization on campus.
- 2) The following documents must be presented during the meeting, those with expiration dates must be valid for six months after the end of the commercial sea term:
  - a) TWIC
  - b) Passport
  - c) Driver's license
  - d) Vaccination record
  - e) Merchant Mariner Credential and medical certificate
  - f) USCG Form-719K physical: the previous sea term physical may be submitted with the understanding that a new physical valid through at least the end of the commercial sea term must be submitted to receive sailing clearance.
    - i) New physicals must be submitted in time to support administrative processes for TAMMA and the vessel operator.

- g) Notification of submission to Commandant for waiver request (if applicable): any conduct waiver request must be submitted to the Commandant via direct military letter and shall not be routed through cadet chain of command. The Commandant will inform the Academy of the grant or denial of any waiver requests as part of the formal evaluation.
- i) The waiver request is not a required item for the submission packet, but it must be received by the Commandant prior to the announced Step 2 deadline. More information on waivers is found in the next section (Evaluation Phase, Evaluation Requirements, #3).

Cadets that miss the Step 1 or Step 2 deadlines, or who fail to provide complete documentation for subsequent deadline dates will be notified in writing of their removal from the CST process and assignment to the upcoming summer sea term with the Academy. After the step 2 meetings are concluded, TAMMA will contact the academic and operational departments to request evaluations of each cadet and will proceed to score and rank the candidate group.

## Evaluation Phase

### Evaluation Requirements

At the end of the academic semester of application for CST, evaluations will be sent to the following departments requesting the following information:

- 1) Ship Operations: audit of maintenance hours completed by each cadet and recommendation of suitability to sail CST.
  - a) *Career maintenance to date must be 100% complete at the time of evaluation to move forward.*
- 2) Academic departments (MART and MARE): cumulative GPA, prerequisite course completion status, evaluation of professional conduct in the classroom, and finding of eligibility to sail CST.
  - a) At the time of evaluation, deck cadets must have a cumulative GPA of 2.750 or higher to continue onward in the process.
  - b) At the time of evaluation, engine cadets with cumulative GPA of 2.500-2.749 will be evaluated by the MARE department for suitability to seek an appropriate shoreside internship but will not move forward for potential assignment to a commercial vessel.
  - c) Cadets must have completed all MART/MARE 350 course prerequisites, or be on track to complete those courses, to remain in the process after evaluation is complete.
- 3) Commandant: merit/demerit balance, current Corps leadership position(s) held, evaluation of professional conduct in the Corps of Cadets, and current University/Corps standing. Cadets will be removed from the commercial sea term process if found to be currently under University or Corps sanction for any of the following conditions:
  - a) Conduct Probation or Restrictions
  - b) Loss of Campus Housing Privilege
  - c) Deferred Loss of Campus Housing Privilege or Campus Housing Probation
  - d) Is currently under an Interim Suspension or Interim Restrictions pending the conclusion of the conduct investigation process.
  - e) Letter of enrollment block which has not been cleared.

**Waiver Requests:** If a cadet was previously sanctioned under one of the conduct violations listed above AND the specified term of the sanction expired prior to start of the current application cycle, the cadet may petition the Commandant for a waiver based on subsequent conduct using a military letter routed directly to the Commandant outside of normal cadet chain of command. The cadet must submit this

waiver request prior to their in-person application meeting. The Commandant will review the request and decide whether to grant or deny the waiver request and will indicate that decision on the evaluation.

**NOTE:** if a cadet has been found responsible for an offense resulting in suspension, expulsion, or an Aggie Honor Code violation resulting in F\* at any time during their academic career, and an appeal of the finding and sanction is denied, they will be ineligible to apply for or participate in a commercial sea term. If the finding is overturned through the University appeals process, cadets may petition the Commandant for a waiver via direct military letter IF any other terms of sanction assigned for that offense have been completed at the time of application.

### Process for Scoring and Ranking

TAMMA uses a holistic evaluation to objectively assess candidates for commercial sea term. Each cadet will be evaluated, scored and ranked using the assessment criteria and numerical values shown below- the highest scores are earned by cadets who best demonstrate the Aggie Core Values of Respect, Excellence, Loyalty, Leadership, Integrity, and Selfless Service.

- 1) **Excellence in Academic Performance:** Academic performance will be scored based on the cadet's overall GPA. A minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75 is required to move forward after formal evaluation and GPA's will not be rounded up. *A maximum of 20 points may be awarded for academic excellence.*

GPA	Points awarded
2.750	0
2.813	1
2.875	2
2.938	3
3.000	4
3.063	5
3.125	6
3.188	7
3.250	8
3.313	9
3.375	10
3.438	11
3.500	12
3.563	13
3.625	14
3.688	15
3.750	16
3.813	17
3.875	18
3.938	19
4.000	20

- 2) **Respect, Loyalty, and Integrity** as demonstrated by Corps of Cadets Standing:

- a) For every one (1) merit a Cadet has received during their *academic career* at the Texas A&M Maritime Academy, the Cadet will be issued one half point (+.5) with a maximum of five positive (+5) points awarded.
  - b) For every one (1) demerit *beyond 5 demerits* a Cadet has received during their *academic career* at the Texas A&M Maritime Academy, the Cadet will be issued negative one (-1) point with no maximum on negative points.
  - c) Career merit/demerit balance for each applicant will be requested from the Commandant or designated staff representative at the time of formal evaluation.
- 3) **Leadership** as demonstrated in Position(s) Held: Ranking is based on the Cadets current leadership assignment within the Corps of Cadets or other university student leadership position(s) *at the time of formal evaluation*. The Commandant will identify leadership positions held within the Corps; the Commercial Sea Term Director will confirm leadership positions held in student organizations with the organization's faculty advisor. If multiple positions are held within TAMUG/TAMMA, only the position granting the highest overall point value will be used for scoring.
- a) leadership value points = 1: Company/Battalion/Special Unit NCO (i.e. squad leader, chaplain, academic, PT), Orientation Week Cadre or StuGov representative; 2-bar
  - b) leadership value points = 2: Company/Battalion Senior Chief, Corps Lower Staff; student organization Historian, Parliamentarian, Secretary; 3-bar
  - c) leadership value points = 3: Company/Special Unit CO/XO, Battalion/Corps Master Chief or Corps Upper Staff officer below castle; student organization or Student Government Committee Treasurer/Chair/Vice Chair/Co-Chair; 4-bar
  - d) leadership value points = 4: Battalion CO/XO, Student Organization Vice-President, Maroon Delegate, Team Captain; 5-bar
  - e) leadership value points = 5: Corps Staff Officer (castle positions), Student Organization President/Director.
  - f) *A maximum of five points may be awarded for Leadership.*
- 4) **Selfless Service** to the Corps of Cadets:
- a) Corps Service: For every semester of participation in a Corps of Cadet organization (Hearn Honor Guard, Color Guard, Drill Team) at the time of evaluation, a cadet will be issued one (+1) point with a *maximum allowed of three (+3) points*.
- 5) **Professionalism**: An evaluation of each candidate will be requested from the respective academic Department Head and the Commandant. Each evaluator will be asked to evaluate a cadet's professional performance in their area of practice, using the scale below. Professionalism is defined as the "demonstration of competence and integrity in the subject matter of their academic program, or professional judgement and commitment to excellence in matters involving the Corps of Cadets." *A maximum of six (+6) points may be awarded for professionalism.*

Observations are graded as follows:

- a) -3 points: Unsatisfactory. Does not meet expectations for professionalism.
- b) -1 points: Below average. Rarely meets expectations for professionalism.
- c) 0 points: Average. Usually meets expectations for professionalism.
- d) 1 points: Above average. Often exceeds expectations for professionalism.
- e) 2 points: Superior. Always exceeds expectations for professionalism.
- f) 3 points: Exceptional. Demonstrates the highest of standards for professionalism.



- 6) Lastly, any significant departure from the Aggie Core Values will negatively impact a cadet's ranking for commercial cruise. A lack of Respect, Integrity, and/or Loyalty to the ideals of the Corps of Cadets resulting in significant university or corps sanctioning will reduce overall points:
- a) Deferred Suspension, Conduct Probation, or Campus Housing Probation. Cadets may submit a conduct waiver appeal after the conclusion of their sanction, but their score will reflect negative four (-4) points for *each* semester included in the sanction (fall, spring, and summer).
  - b) Conduct Review or Restrictions. Cadets may submit a conduct waiver appeal after the conclusion of their sanction, but their score will reflect negative three (-3) points for each semester included in the sanction (fall, spring, and summer).
  - c) Letter of Reprimand. Score will reflect negative two (-2) points for *each* Letter of Reprimand received during their academic career.

A maximum of 39 points is possible using this rubric. After scoring and ranking is complete, the scores will be tabulated and the cadets will be ranked in order of total score; in the event of a tied score(s), GPA will be used to determine cadet ranking. Cadets will also be assigned an eligibility status of either Fully Eligible, Provisionally Eligible, or Ineligible. **To remain in the commercial sea term process after evaluations are complete, cadets cannot have a negative score.**

Each cadet will receive a formal letter notifying them of their eligibility status and next steps; cadets determined ineligible will be notified that they are being removed from the commercial sea term process with subsequent assignment to MART/MARE 300 on the next summer sea term. Those cadets with full or provisional eligibility will move forward to billet matching and selection and receive further instructions at that time.

## Acquisition and Assignment of Billets

### Billet acquisition

TAMMA partners with leading companies in the maritime field offering cadet shipping opportunities for our cadets. Because several of our partners utilize their own HR application process to select cadets or ask TAMMA to identify and submit candidates matching certain criteria, the billet matching and selection process is done in three parts. To be considered for a company-specific billet, a cadet *must* complete that company's application process in addition to TAMMA's administrative and application processes.

Please note the following points:

- The Academy has robust partnerships with vessel operators across multiple operational communities. For cadets hoping to sail with a company we don't have a relationship with, they are permitted no actions beyond making introductions between the company and the Director/CST lead.
- Cadet shipping billets with ANY potential cadet shipping partner will be exclusively requested by the Commercial Sea Term Director. **Cadets are not permitted to bring or procure their own billet, or otherwise suggest that a company "specifically request their assignment."** All eligible cadets have an equal right to compete for a commercial billet, and as such special consideration or preference will not be given.
- All companies and billet opportunities are subject to review by TAMMA to ensure the operator and their vessels meet MARAD, USCG, and University/Academy requirements.
- Companies and/or vessels hosting TAMMA cadets must either be approved for EMBARC by the Maritime Administration and the Office of Cadet Training At-Sea Safety OR be evaluated under the Safer Seas Safer Ships (4S) program for the state maritime academies and be approved by TAMMA. Companies not meeting either standard cannot host TAMMA cadets.

- Cadet billets will further be evaluated to ensure that the total experience meets academic and licensing expectations to allow successful completion of the internship.

## Assignment of Billets

Cadets will be assigned to billets in the following manner:

- Part 1, external process: Eligible cadets will first be given the opportunity to apply to companies that have their own selection process. Information will be provided to support those processes and their respective timeframes. Cadets are allowed to participate in multiple HR processes until such time as TAMMA is notified of their selection status by one or more companies.
  - Selection of cadets using external application processes is independent of rank order and shall take place prior to assignment of billets. Those selected by a company are expected to sail for that company- refusal of billet will result in cadets being designated for either general assignment under part 3 below or to sail with the Academy for the 300-level summer sea term.
- Part 2, direct placement: Cadets not selected by the above will then be evaluated for direct placement with companies that have specific criteria for cadet shippers OR who request that the Academy make the determination for placement. Direct placement of cadets will be determined by the Commercial Sea Term Director, based on having the required qualifications for a specific operator and in consideration of their rank after evaluation. Final placement is subject to approval of the vessel operator.
  - Cadets may request placement based on geographic preference on a case-by-case basis, when such placement is warranted based on their qualifications, rank, and availability of billets.
- Part 3, rank-based assignment: Cadets not selected for parts 1 or 2 above will be assigned to any remaining billets by the Academy in rank order by the Commercial Sea Term Director. Assignments will be made based on the indicated preferences for vessel type and/or company during the Step 1 online application.

Please note the following:

- **Assignment to tanker**: Completion of MART 313 prior to embarkation is mandatory for deck cadets seeking assignment to a tanker.
- **Assignment to LNG**: Completion of MART 213 prior to embarkation is mandatory for deck and engine cadets seeking assignment to an LNG carrier.
- **Military Sealift Command**: cadets with full or provisional eligibility may apply to sail with MSC regardless of program, major, or final ranking. Cadets wishing to sail with MSC must request the application process from the Director no later than 60 days before the end of the academic semester immediately prior to sailing and must complete mandatory additional training and vaccination requirements. Cadets must complete all training, application, and medical requirements no later than 45 days before the end of the academic semester immediately prior to sailing or they will be re-assigned to the upcoming summer sea term onboard the training ship.

## Administrative Actions, post-assignment

TAMMA will support the administrative processes and transfer of required documents to each vessel operator and will make every effort to fill all available billets with eligible cadets. Cadets must remember that working in the maritime domain requires flexibility due to circumstances and conditions beyond your

or the Academy's control. Cadets should notify TAMMA staff immediately if personal circumstances change or if they encounter issues working with their selected company prior to reporting for their assignment. If this should occur, TAMMA will assist in seeking an appropriate outcome to the problem.

During a commercial sea term, the cadet is both a student with academic requirements and potentially a short-term employee of the company. **Expect to be treated as a member of the ship's crew and to be held to the vessel operator's standards for performance and conduct, in addition to meeting expectations of the University and Academy for performance and professionalism.** Cadets will conform to the vessel schedule and should not expect or request the company to take extraordinary measures to accommodate individual scheduling requests.

Cadets receiving a billet must complete the following tasks to receive clearance to report to a vessel:

- 1) SASH training:
  - (a) All cadets are required to complete annual Academy SOCP SASH training and submit proof of completion via Canvas and by email to the Director/CST lead. Specific timing requirements vary and will be communicated each shipping cycle. Cadets must also attend enhanced 4S (Safer Seas Safer Ships) training with senior Academy staff- failure to complete either training will result in loss of billet and reassignment to the training ship for the upcoming summer sea term.
    - (i) Cadets sailing with MSC must also complete MSC SAPR and EEO training, in addition to the above.
- 2) TAMMA paperwork:
  - a) Cadets must complete and submit all required Academy paperwork and update requested Academy medical or documentation requirements. Failure to do so may result in loss of billet and reassignment to the training ship for the upcoming summer sea term.
- 3) Company HR paperwork and processes:
  - (a) Cadets will complete all required paperwork and remote training required for their company assignment prior to reporting to a shore facility or vessel for onboarding. Each company has slightly different processes, specific requirements shall be communicated as appropriate. Failure to promptly complete any required paperwork or training may result in loss of billet and reassignment to the training ship for the upcoming summer sea term.
- 4) Company medical requirements:
  - a) Depending on the assignment or operator, some cadets will be requested to complete additional medical testing or receive additional vaccinations. Cadets needing to complete these additional items will be informed on an individual basis; the cost of all additional medical testing or vaccination shall be borne by the cadet.
- 5) Commercial Sea Term Advising:
  - (a) Cadets must complete commercial sea term advising with either a Commercial Sea Term Advisor (CSTA) for their academic department or for the Academy. This advising meeting will provide additional tools and resources to each cadet and formalize the expectations for communications and conduct for cadets while on commercial sea term. Failure to attend CSTA advising will result in loss of billet and reassignment to the training ship for the upcoming summer sea term.

## FINAL NOTES

Cadets should take notice of the following statements:

- In the event a billet is unexpectedly withdrawn, or there is a possibility of significant delay in joining a vessel that jeopardizes getting the necessary number of vessel days, all cadets with commercial assignments **MUST** be prepared academically and financially for re-assignment to the training ship for summer sea term. Not receiving the required amount of sea time has significant impact to progress toward license and will be avoided to the maximum extent possible- **if this is seen as a distinct possibility, affected cadets WILL be reassigned to summer sea term in time for pre-cruise.**
- **WARNING:** The Texas A&M Maritime Academy reserves the right to disqualify cadets for gross violations of conduct at any point of their participation in the commercial sea term process, or to request their removal from their assigned vessel if embarked. Cadets serve as ambassadors of the Academy and University and are expected to uphold the Aggie Core Values at all times.