

Maritime College Engineering Department Administrative Policy

Title: Character Reference Letters for USCG Licensure

No. 10-02

Date: 09.23.2010

Applicants for USCG original licenses are required to submit three official character reference letters. The Code of Federal Regulations requires, in part, that when an applicant for an original USCG license applies "...through an approved training school, one of the character references must be an official of that school.¹" In practice, all three of the references for our cadets are issued by officials of Maritime College.

1. Notwithstanding any statements of policy given hereinafter, it is hereby asserted that issuance of a character reference letter is a matter governed by the personal integrity of the writer of such a letter, and in no case should a faculty or staff member be compelled to issue such a letter against his or her will.
2. Since the personal integrity and good character of a cadet must be judged by his or her actions prior to licensure, such matters as the cadet's conduct, academic integrity, and legal standing are germane to the decision to issue a character reference letter to the U.S. Coast Guard, and should be considered by the writer of a character reference letter.
3. If any engineering cadet is found to have been in violation of the College Academic Integrity Policy by final action of a faculty member, the Academic Integrity Board, the Provost, or the President, then the Chairman of the Engineering Department and any other Engineering Department faculty member empowered to issue a character reference letter to the U.S. Coast Guard shall withhold the issuance of such a letter for a period of approximately one calendar year.
4. The Chairman of the Engineering Department and other Engineering Department faculty members empowered to issue a character reference letter to the U.S. Coast Guard are not thereby obligated to issue such a letter by withholding it as described in No. 3 above, but may also, after some period of the time stated in No. 3 above, issue the letter provided that the cadet has demonstrated a sincere commitment to remediation of his or her behavior.

¹ See 46CFR10.205(f).