
Sent: Thursday, April 2, 2020 3:51 PM

Subject: Message from Deans Neto and Maier on Commercial Cruise

Hello, Cadets:

We know that you have many questions about future plans and schedules as we continue to assess and adapt to the impacts and uncertainties of the COVID-19 situation on our operations and how they may affect this summer's commercial cruise. We also realize that commercial cruise decisions will influence your college, family, and career plans going forward. As you may know, commercial cruise billets are provided voluntarily by US maritime companies in partnership with MARAD and the maritime academies, including the US Merchant Marine Academy (King's Point).

This is the current status regarding commercial cruise as of April 1: We, along with maritime agencies around the world, are working together to create as many commercial cruise billets as possible for the seven US maritime academies. Our challenge is this: King's Point midshipmen have priority (they have no training ship) and the COVID-19 virus progression requires us, and our industry billet providers, to adapt to ever-changing medical guidance. Your health and safety are the top priority of our campus leadership and of industry leadership as well. Our academy and our industry partners are making every possible effort to ensure that you complete commercial cruise requirement this summer. While some companies have postponed or canceled their billets due to COVID-19 concerns, Career Services remains in contact with them and will continue to provide information directly to the cadets affected. As the COVID-19 situation progresses, we are going to need to be patient and remain flexible – and that includes recognizing when we may need to change cruise assignments.

As we await responses from the federal government agencies and the industry partners, here are a few things we'll need you to accomplish:

1. If you were unable to pick-up your merchant mariner credential prior to departing campus, Robyn Christopher will contact you via your campus email and make arrangements to mail your credential to you.
2. Contact Wendy Higgins in Career Services if you receive any information about your billet or have specific questions. Career Services will also be communicating to cadets individually with any updates regarding commercial billets.
3. Read your CSUM emails daily- it is critically important to stay apprised of the status of your assignment or to make changes. Updates will continue to be sent out at least weekly.
4. Monitor the Cal Maritime website for additional information and correspondence from the Career Services Office and/or the USCG Licensing Office.
5. In accordance with the California Governor's Executive Order, the faculty and staff are working remotely for the time being, but we are available via email or Zoom. Please reach out when you need us.

We are working with the U.S. Coast Guard, MARAD, and the other state maritime academies to address all possible contingencies that may affect this summer's commercial cruise. There are several new measures, submitted by the state maritime academy presidents to the Coast Guard, which have either been approved or are awaiting approval that are intended to ease the current impacts on your class and to ensure that each of you receives the best possible training and experience.

In closing, we ask you to bear with us – we are making decisions based on facts and not rumors, and we are doing it in a very uncertain time. We want to assure you that the faculty and staff are standing by to assist you with questions and concerns.

Stay safe and well,
Donald Maier, Ph.D. Francelina Neto, Ph.D.
Dean - School of MTLM Dean - School of
Engineering