

FAA AIRCRAFT DISPATCHER CERTIFICATE (ADX)

Mt. San Antonio College, Aeronautics Department
www.mtsac.edu/aeronautics
(909) 274-7500

OVERVIEW

Mt. SAC Aeronautics Department offers an FAA Aircraft Dispatcher Certificate Course available to students who have completed the Commercial Pilot Program and the multi-engine/turbine aircraft course. (None of the general education classes are required for this course.)

This course is eight weeks running Monday through Thursday each summer for 3.5 hours each day. The cost of materials for the course run approximately \$150. The cost of the FAA Knowledge Exam is approximately \$170, and the FAA oral/practical exam is approximately \$500. The oral/practical will be given at the college by the FAA and will take place during the ninth or tenth week (depending on class size). Study outside of class is required for successful completion. Those who choose not to take the knowledge exam and the oral/practical exam may still complete the course for four college credits.

This is an intense course that reviews all that you have learned in the Commercial Pilot Program (regulations, aerodynamics, air space, equipment, navigation and facilities, performance, weight and balance, flight operations, emergencies, hazards, safety and human factors, advanced meteorology and large aircraft systems). You will learn flight planning for large jet aircraft in cross-country flights. The student will be required on their own time to study for and take the Aircraft Dispatcher Knowledge Exam. Those who have not passed this exam will not be eligible to be recommended for the Aircraft Dispatcher Practical/Oral exam administered by a Designated Aircraft Dispatch Examiner (DADE).

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM REQUIRMENTS

1. The applicant must be at least 21 years of age (23 years of age to work as a dispatcher)
2. The applicant must have successfully completed the following prerequisites in the Commercial Pilot Program:
 - Primary Pilot Ground School
 - Aviation Weather
 - Federal Aviation Regulations
 - Commercial Pilot Ground School
 - Air Transportation

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- Aviation Safety & Human Factors
 - Aircraft & Engines
 - Navigation
 - Instrument Ground School
3. The applicant must take as an immediate prerequisite or co-requisite this course:
- Multi-engine Turbine Aircraft Operations
4. Be able to read, speak, write, and understand the English language;
5. Pass the required knowledge test prescribed by FAR Sec. 65.55;
6. Pass the required practical test prescribed by FAR Sec. 65.59; and
7. Comply with the requirements of FAR Sec. 65.57.
8. Job applicants must have good vision, good hearing, speak the English language with suitable enunciation as to be easily understood over aviation radios.

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

What is an Aircraft Dispatcher?

An aircraft dispatcher is certificated airman that is certified by the Federal Aviation Administration. The job is highly technical as the aircraft dispatcher is jointly responsible with the captain for the safety and operational control of the flight or flights under his or her guidance.

Job Description

- The aircraft dispatcher has joint responsibility with the captain for the safety and operational control of flights under his/her guidance.

Job Description, continued

The aircraft dispatcher authorizes, regulates and controls commercial airline flights according to government and company regulations to expedite and ensure safety of flight.

- The aircraft dispatcher is also responsible for economics, passenger service and operational control of day to day flight operations.

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- The aircraft dispatcher analyzes and evaluates meteorological information to determine potential hazards to safety of flight and to select the most desirable and economic route of flight.
- The aircraft dispatcher computes the amount of fuel required for the safe completion of flight according to type of aircraft, distance of flight, maintenance limitations, weather conditions and minimum fuel requirements prescribed by federal aviation regulations.
- The aircraft dispatcher prepares flight plans containing information such as maximum allowable takeoff and landing weights, weather reports, field conditions, NOTAMS and many other informational components required for the safe completion of flight.
- The aircraft dispatcher prepares and signs the dispatch release which is the legal document providing authorization for a flight to depart.
- The aircraft dispatcher delays or cancels flights if unsafe conditions threaten the safety of his/her aircraft or passengers.
- The aircraft dispatcher monitors weather conditions, aircraft position reports, and aeronautical navigation charts to evaluate the progress of flight.
- The aircraft dispatcher updates the pilot in command of significant changes to weather or flight plan and recommends flight plan alternates, such as changing course, altitude and, if required, en-route landings in the interest of safety and economy.
- The aircraft dispatcher originates and disseminates flight information to others in his/her company including stations and reservations. This is the source of information provided to the traveling public.
- The aircraft dispatcher has undergone extensive training to have earned the Aircraft Dispatcher's certificate having taken and passed both an extensive oral examination and the comprehensive Dispatch ADX test, administered by the Federal Aviation Administration. These tests are equivalent to the same Air Transport Pilot (ATP) written and oral examinations that an airline captain must successfully complete.
- The aircraft dispatcher participates in frequent and detailed recurrent training courses covering aircraft systems, company operations policy, meteorology and Federal Aviation Regulations as required by the FAA. (1)

Opportunities for Advancement

Flight dispatchers can move into this position from jobs as dispatch clerks, junior flight dispatchers, radio operators, meteorologists, or station managers. Large airlines employ senior dispatchers who specialize in coordinating the finances

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of every flight. Promotion is from within. Experience as an airline dispatcher may be used in qualifying for a job as an air traffic controller with the Federal Aviation Administration or as an airport director. (2)

Salary

Dispatcher's salaries vary greatly among airlines with senior dispatchers at major airlines easily earning over \$100,000 per year. Senior dispatchers at major airlines typically work 4, 10-hour shifts a week and enjoy 4 days off each week between these 40 hour, 4 day weeks.

Entry level positions at smaller carriers however start in the \$30,000 per year range and feature 8 hour shifts, 5 days a week. Dispatchers can expect to work "shift work" and should plan on occasionally working midnight shifts and holidays, especially when junior in their respective offices. (3)

Sources:

1. <https://www.dispatcher.org/dispatcher/job-description>. January 19, 2019
2. https://www.avjobs.com/careers/detail.asp?Job_Title=Flight+Dispatcher&Category=Airline&Related=Non%2DFlying&RecID=72. January 19, 2019
3. <https://www.dispatcher.org/dispatcher/salary>. January 19, 2019