

**From the Battlefield to the Classroom:
Facilitating Veterans and Servicemember
Transitions**

**Understanding the
Needs of
Transitioning
Servicemembers**

Poll Question

- What category best describes your primary work focus within college student personnel:

Poll Question

- Generally speaking, how many military students/veterans are enrolled at your institution? (yearly enrollment)

**Military Students and Veterans:
Subpopulation of Adult Learners**

- **Active-Duty Military**
- **National Guard and Reservists**
- **Veterans in the Community**
- **Family Members (spouses and adult family members)**

Each segment of the military and veteran student population may have varying and unique educational needs and benefits dictated by type of military service

**Veteran Student
Demographics...in general terms**

- 70% of those eligible for education benefits use some portion of them (17-18 months)
- Average age of claimants, 20-34 years of age (74%)
- 30% are aged 25-29, 24% are aged 20-24, and 20% are aged 30-34
- Gender: 68% male, 32% female
- Marital status: 51% never married, 37% married

Military Student Characteristics

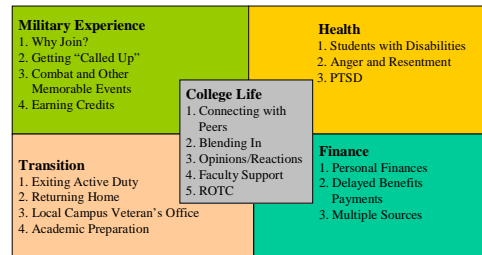
Excellent candidates for college recruitment/retention:

- **Serious, motivated, goal-oriented**
- **Focused on career goals—and for many, earning a degree IS the pathway toward those goals**
- **Have money and educational benefits for college**
- **Mature and motivated to complete goals—may have different priorities than 18-20 year old cohorts**
- **Have been in disciplined job environment, responsible individuals with proven work ethic**
- **Possess leadership skills**

College Support of Servicemembers

- Develop academic policies and procedures that help servicemembers pursue education opportunities and complete degrees
- Adjust existing policies and making accommodations as appropriate for military students who withdraw for a call to active duty
- Develop policies and practices that encourage re-enrollment and aid transition back to the classroom for servicemembers and veterans returning from military service

Conceptual Framework for Understanding Student-Veterans



From the research of David DiRamio (Auburn U), Robert Ackerman (U Nevada, Las Vegas), and Regina Mitchell (Central Michigan U). "From Combat to Campus: Voices of Student-Veterans." *NASPA Journal*, 2008, Vol. 45, No. 1, pp 73-102. Used with permission.

Barriers Preventing Student Veterans from Enrolling and Staying in College

- **Informational Barriers**—easy access to good information about transfer credit, financial aid, orientation for adult learners
- **Cultural Barriers**—helping them feel comfortable on campus
- **Injury and/or Trauma-Related Barriers**— providing services and support for the needs of disabled veterans; mental health issues affect enrollment and student success
- **Financial Barriers**—tuition waivers and financial assistance until GI Bill funding kicks in, grants and loan eligibility

Source: AASCU Perspectives, Summer 2008, "When Johnny (or Janelle) Comes Marching Home": National, State and Institutional Efforts in Support of Veterans' Education by Lesley McBain; <http://www.aascu.org/media/index.htm>

Federal/State Tuition Assistance and Other Financial Assistance Info

- **Financial assistance programs**
 - Federal Tuition Assistance
 - GI Bill Programs
 - Army National Guard State-funded education programs
 - Federal Loans
 - Scholarships
 - Grants
- **60-70% enlist for education benefits**

GI BILL CHAPTER 30 RATES (As of 8-1-2008)	
Full-Time Student:	\$1,321.00 per month for 36 months
3/4 Time Student:	\$ 990.75 per month
1/2 Time Student:	\$ 660.50* per month (<1/2 Time but >1/4 Time \$660.50**)
1/4 Time Student:	\$ 330.25** per month
** Tuition and Fees ONLY. Payment cannot exceed the listed amount.	
GI BILL CHAPTER 1606 RATES (As of 10-1-2008)	
Full-Time Student:	\$329.00 per month for 36 months
3/4 Time Student:	\$246.00 per month
1/2 Time Student:	\$163.00 per month
1/4 Time Student:	\$ 82.25 per month
RESERVE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (REAP) CHAPTER 1607 RATES (As of 8-1-2008)	
Full-Time Student:	\$528.40/mo (90-364 days); \$792.60 (1+ yrs); \$1,056.80 (2+ yrs) for 36 months
3/4 Time Student:	\$396.30/mo (90-364 days); \$594.45 (1+ yrs); \$792.60 (2+ yrs)
1/2 Time Student:	\$264.20/mo (90-364 days); \$396.30 (1+ yrs); \$528.40 (2+ yrs)
<1/2 but >1/4 time:	\$264.20**/mo (<91 days); \$396.30** (1+ yrs); \$528.40** (2+ yrs)
1/4 Time Or Less:	\$132.10**/mo (<91 days); \$198.15** (1+ yrs); \$264.20** (2+ yrs)
** Tuition and Fees ONLY. Payment cannot exceed the listed amount.	
APPRENTICESHIP/ON THE JOB TRAINING GI BILL CHAPTER 1606 RATES (AS OF 10-1-08)	
First 6 months:	\$246.75
2nd 6 months:	\$180.95
Remainder of the Program:	\$115.15
ARNG KICKER	
ARNG Kicker:	\$200 per month-Maximum \$7,200.00/36 months (Selected MOSs & Units)
ARNG Kicker:	\$350 per month-Maximum \$12,600.00/36 months (Selected MOSs & Units)
FEDERAL TUITION ASSISTANCE (FTA)	
Maximum:	\$4,500.00 annually including:
100% of tuition and fees COMBINED up to \$250.00 per Semester Hour (SH); up to \$167 per Quarter Hour (QH)	

Poll Question

- Does your institution currently have programs and services specifically designed for service members and veterans?

Challenges Before Deployment

- **Family-/job-related issues take precedence over school concerns**
 - Psychological/financial stresses precede and follow
- **Rapid deployments can complicate official withdrawal from school**
- **Financial aid/tuition refund issues**
 - Confusing rules for submitting refund requests
 - Potential hardship if tuition not waived
 - Family members resolving problems/tying loose ends
- **Grading issues**
 - Incompletes converted to “F”
 - Students/professors overestimate feasibility of completing coursework while deployed

Challenges During Deployment

- **Impact of duty location, military job, OPTEMPO**
- **Being away from the “home” college**
- **Distance from family**
- **Changes in rules governing tuition and enrollment**
- **Adjusting to course delivery through distance learning**
- **Internet connectivity**

Educational Challenges After Deployment

- **Returning to a degree begun earlier, with a break in attendance or studies**
- **Adjusting from the military environment to the campus/civilian environment**
- **Coping with Service-related impacts**
 - Physical
 - Psychological
 - Financial
 - Social

Student Veterans’ Wish List for Colleges/Universities*

- **Develop a Veterans Support Committee to improve campus climate for veterans (lessons learned from campus veterans, surveys)**
- **Develop Student Veterans Club on campus and/or provide meeting space**
- **Determine if institution is eligible for VA Work Study (assign Work Study student to assist entering veterans with concerns/provide information)**
- **Publicize campus information on Vet-Friendly Website (one-stop resource guide)**
- **Educate faculty, staff, and administrators about student veteran needs and concerns**

*Campus Kit for Colleges and Universities, Student Veterans of America

Support Services for Families and Dependents

- **Military family support programs**
- **National Military Family Association (NMFA)**
- **DoD Yellow Ribbon Initiative - support and outreach services to Reserve Component service members, their families, and communities throughout the deployment cycle**
- **Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts**
- **Examples of special programs/services for military family members:**
 - Ft. Bliss Youth Education Support Services
 - Kentucky Military Families’ Bill of Rights
 - Minnesota Veteran - Web Site for National Military Family Support Orgs

How are colleges and universities in your state(s) responding?

How Some Colleges are Responding

- Priority registration for returning military students
- Simplified/expedited application process for readmission
- Extended/flexible enrollment deadlines
- Course schedules adapted for transitioning active-duty servicemembers
- Academic and counseling services targeted to military students
- Special Web pages for returning military students
- Support groups
- Veteran centers and lounges
- Scholarship opportunities
- Deferred tuition payment plans (to accommodate TA and VA paperwork lags)
- Academic research focusing on needs of returning servicemembers

Resources for Severely Injured Servicemembers

- Severely Injured Servicemember and Spouse Scholarship Opportunities
 - Information available through DANTES
 - Lists and provides links to institutions that have scholarships for severely injured servicemembers
 - Purpose: to connect the potential student to an institution's special programs and scholarship opportunities
 - Web site allows colleges to add their institutions to the list
 - <http://www.dantes.doded.mil/sfd/index.asp>

Resources for Severely Injured Servicemembers

- Severely Injured Military Veterans: Fulfilling Their Dreams
 - American Council on Education (ACE)
 - Provides direct support to veterans with severe injuries and their families; aligns their career goals with educational opportunity
 - Combines individualized academic advising with campus advocacy
 - Program access at four military hospitals: Bethesda Naval Hospital in Bethesda, MD; Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, DC; Naval Medical Center San Diego (Balboa) in San Diego, CA; and Brooke Army Hospital in San Antonio, TX.
 - <http://www.acenet.edu/Content/NavigationMenu/ProgramsServices/MilitaryPrograms/veterans/index.htm>
 - Web site also provides a list of other resources

Resources for Severely Injured Servicemembers

- Severely Injured Servicemember Assistance
 - Severely Injured Joint Operations Center established by DoD in February 2005
 - Operates under the direction of the Office of Military Community and Family Policy
 - 1-888-774-1361 (24 hours/day and 7 days a week) - supports all the Services
 - Personalized assistance in:
 - Medical care and rehabilitation
 - Education, training, and job placement
 - Personal mobility and functioning
 - Home, transportation, and workplace accommodations
 - Personal, couple, and family issues counseling
 - Financial resources

Military Spouse Career Advancement Account Demonstration Project

Department of Labor (DOL) and the Department of Defense (DoD) partnership to address the education and credentialing challenges of military spouses. Time-limited demonstration for spouses of service members assigned to designated military installations in CA, CO, FL, GA, NC, WA.

The goals of the demonstration are to:

- Provide targeted military spouses with financial assistance to pursue education, training, and credentials/licenses required for obtaining/retaining employment and advancing in their careers during multiple relocations;
- Provide highly-skilled, well-trained workers to employers in high-growth, high-demand industries and sectors;
- Increase the financial stability of military families; and
- Support the retention and readiness of the U.S. Armed Forces.

Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges



- SOC was established in 1972 to expand and improve voluntary postsecondary education opportunities for servicemembers worldwide.
- SOC is funded by the Department of Defense (DoD) through a contract with AASCU managed for DoD by the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES).
- The SOC Consortium, comprised of more than 1750 college and university members, enrolls hundreds of thousands of servicemembers, their family members, and veterans annually in associate, bachelor, and graduate-level degree programs.

Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) Mission

- **Serve as vehicle to help coordinate postsecondary educational opportunities for servicemembers**
- **Strengthen liaison and working relationships among military and higher education representatives**
- **Advocate for flexibility needed to improve access to and availability of educational programs for servicemembers**

Contact Us



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