

GUIDE TO BEING A SUCCESSFUL STUDENT
WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF YOUR

*Veteran
Administration
Educational Benefits*

Thank you for choosing Hillsborough Community College for your educational and career goals. These educational benefits are certainly one of the most valuable benefits afforded to Veterans and qualifying dependents.

The purpose of this handbook is to assist you using V.A. Educational Benefits at Hillsborough Community College.



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GENERAL INFORMATION

Welcome to Hillsborough Community College (HCC). Veterans/Dependents educational benefits are designed to provide eligible individuals with an opportunity for educational and career growth. Veterans have earned the right to use their educational benefits for themselves and their qualified dependents. We at HCC are pleased to assist you in utilizing your benefits to your best advantage.

The purpose of this handbook is to assist you in using your Veterans Administration (VA) educational benefits at Hillsborough Community College. It is designed to assist in your understanding and utilization of VA benefits and HCC policies and procedures. Please read through this booklet thoroughly and ensure that you have it available for future reference. Doing so will help minimize misunderstanding of benefit uses and restrictions. Our responsibility is to interpret, explain and administer VA regulations surrounding the various VA educational benefit programs as they apply to your degree program at Hillsborough Community College.

HELPFUL POINTS OF CONTACT

- www.gibill.va.gov – **This web site offers answers to most commonly asked questions about the various VA programs. You will also initiate, change or update benefit information on this web site.**
- Atlrpo@vba.va.gov – this email address is general education inquiry help line of the Veteran Affairs regional office responsible for certifying VA students under Chapters 30, 32, 35, and 1606. Response time averages 10 working days.
- <https://www.gibill.va.gov/wave/default.cfm> – This web site allows VA students (MGBI and Selected Reserves) to send their monthly verification of attendance to VA over the internet. It also allows students to find information regarding pending benefits claims.
- **1-800-827-1000 – General VA questions.**
- 1-877-823-2378 – MGBI and Selected Reserves (only) Enrollment Verification only.
- 1-877-838-2778 – MGBI and Selected Reserves (only) direct deposit center. Use this telephone number to help set up a direct deposit account with VA.

PROCEDURES

APPLYING FOR ADMISSION AND VA BENEFITS

All students that plan on using Veterans Administration (VA) benefits at Hillsborough Community College (HCC) must complete the following steps:

1. Complete and submit an HCC on-line application located at <http://www.hccfl.edu/ssem/admissions/apply-online.aspx>. While there is a \$20 non-refundable admissions application fee, for your convenience payment is not required until your first registration at HCC.
 - a. A VA student must be degree seeking; that is, planning to graduate with an Associate in Arts (AA), Associate in Science (AS) or Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree, College Credit Certificate (CCC) or Post-Secondary Adult Vocational (PSAV).
2. Complete and submit the appropriate VA application for your eligibility category (see eligibility categories for a brief description, pp. 10). While it is recommended that you complete your application on-line at www.gibill.va.gov, the VA will also accept paper applications which can be printed from the previously mentioned web-site. Submitting paper applications can extend the process by 6-8 weeks.
3. Submit transcripts.
 - a. A VA student must submit an official high school transcript or passing GED scores within 30 days after the start of the first term of attendance. If the official transcript has not been received within 30 days of the start date of the first term of attendance, the student will not be allowed to conduct any further registration activity at Hillsborough Community College until that transcript is received.
 - b. A VA student that has previously attended other post secondary institutions (college or university) is required to submit an official transcript from each institution attended within 30 days after the start of the first term of attendance.

NOTE: All transcripts must be received within 30 days after the start of the first term of attendance. Registration activity and VA certification will be restricted until transcripts are received.

4. Determine college placement.
 - a. First time in college students (FTIC):
 - i. First time in college VA students must provide the college with a copy of SAT/ACT scores completed within the past two years or
 - ii. Complete the HCC college placement test (CPT).
 - b. Transfer students (TRFR):
 - i. Transfer VA students must provide the college with a copy of their previously attended institution transcripts to determine the need for college placement testing.
5. Register for and attend new student orientation.
 - a. All VA students are required to attend new student orientation. Students can register for available new student orientations in the test center after completion of their college placement test or at the information desk located in any campus Student Services Building.
6. Register for classes.

7. Meet with a Campus VA representative.
8. You will need to bring a copy of the following documentation to your meeting with the VA representative (see documentation requirements for detailed information on documentation requirements for each VA program, pp. 15):
 - a. A copy of your Certificate of Eligibility or a copy of your application showing your VA application has been submitted,
 - b. A copy of your DD-214,
 - c. A copy of your notice of basic eligibility (NOBE) for all applicants coming in as an MGIB-SR, and
 - d. Purple Heart Kicker documentation.

TRANSFER OF MONTGOMERY G.I. BILL BENEFITS TO DEPENDENTS

***ELIGIBLE Military Occupational Specialties (MOSs): Soldiers must be currently serving in and reenlist in one of the MOSs identified in the current Regular Army Active Component Selective Re-enlistment Bonus (SRB) Program. ALSO NOTE "IMPORTANT" section below!**

The following procedures and guidance are established to facilitate implementation of the expanded FY07 Army pilot program for the purpose of transferring MGIB benefits to dependents. The pilot program is authorized under Title 38, U.S. Code, Chapter 30 (amended by PL 107-107), and the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB). The department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) manages the MGIB and is responsible for all matters pertaining to payment and program specifics of individuals applying for benefits under this program. HQDA DCS, G-1 has overall responsibility for policy, procedures, and guidance matters pertaining to identifying eligible Soldiers and managing the program within the Army.

IMPORTANT! All eligible Soldiers desiring to participate in the program must complete a DD Form 2366-2, Montgomery GI Bill Act of 1984 (MGIB) Transferability Program. This applies even in cases where a dependent is not designated at the time of re-enlistment to receive benefits. The form serves as an election form and proof of participation in the program. Participants will complete a new form each time a change or addition is made in block 2 (Family Member Data) of the form.

Because this program is bound by law to retention of critical skills, Soldiers must elect to participate at the time of re-enlistment, and must re-enlist for a minimum of 4 years. Soldiers who don't select the MGIB Transferability option at the time of re-enlistment will not be eligible to participate in the program until subsequent re-enlistment period.

Participant Responsibility, Eligibility, and Acceptance

Participants must ensure they meet the following eligibility requirements and take the following actions to participate in the program:

- MGIB-era Soldiers who are eligible for MGIB must have enrolled in the MGIB on DD Form 2366 upon initial entry to active duty. This can be verified by viewing the Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) online at the Army Knowledge Online (AKO) website at <https://www.us.army.mil>. The DD Form 2366 should be found under the category "General Administrative" or in the initial enlistment contract. If the DD form 2366 is not found, the current procedure is for the soldier to visit his/her Army Education Center for assistance in determining MGIB eligibility only. Retention Career Counselors will determine eligibility to transfer MGIB benefits to include enrollment.
- Completed at least 6 years of service in the Armed Forces at the time of reenlistment.
- Re-enlist for a period of at least 4 years and complete DD Form 2366-2 with their servicing Army Retention Career Counselor.
- Qualify for a MOS Specific Selective Re-enlistment Bonus (SRB) and entitled to a Zone B or Zone C at the time of reenlistment.

Dependents Eligible for Transfer of Entitlement. The following individuals may receive transfer of entitlement:

- The spouse of the individual making the transfer;
- One or more of the children of the individual making the transfer; or,
- A combination of the individual referred above.

Purpose of the DD Form 2366-2 (Montgomery GI Bill Act of 1984/Transferability Program). This document serves as proof of participation in the pilot. Once an eligible Soldier decides to participate in the program, they must contact their Retention Career Counselor and complete a DD Form 2366-2 at the time of re-enlistment.

Participant Processing

The following procedures are designed to ensure proper counseling, enrollment, and processing of eligible Soldiers electing MGB transferability.

DCS, G-1, Director of Military Personnel Management (DMPM).

- Provide policy guidance and oversight of program.

Army Human Resources Command (AHRC), Alexandria, Force Alignment Division

- Oversee re-enlistment process, provide retention community with program information, and coordinate Soldier eligibility issues.
- Receive and track elections of eligible Soldiers through receipt of DD Form 2366-2s. Maintain master list of participants and provide participation data to the DVA. Maintain copies of DD Form 2366-2.

Retention Career Counselors.

- Widely publicize the pilot program through Commander's Calls, newspapers, Daily Bulletins, etc.
- At the time of re-enlistment, if the Soldier is entitled to a Zone B or Zone C SRB under current messages, the Retention Career Counselor will counsel Soldiers on their options to in clued transferability of MGB entitlements to their dependents. A key element of that counseling will include an explanation that if the Soldier elects MGB Transferability, their SRB will be reduced in order to fund the actuary per capita cost of transferring benefits. Ultimately, these funds will be deposited into the DoD Education Benefits Fund by DFAS.
- Confirm participant is enrolled in the MGB and eligible for re-enlistment prior to completing a DD Form 2366-2.
- Complete the re-enlistment process in accordance with AR 601-280.
- If the Soldier elects to participate, but chooses not to designate a dependent at the time of reenlistment, blocks 1 and 4 are completed. Designations can be made later by completing a new DD Form 2366-2.
- If the Soldier elects to participate and designates a dependant(s) at the time of re-enlistment, blocks 1-2 are completed. The Career Counselor then completes blocks 3 and 4 after verifying that the Soldier's dependants are in DEERS and that the Soldier is eligible for transferability.
- Once completed, the Career Counselor provides a copy to the Soldier, while copies are sent via USPS or facsimile to the Army Human Resources Command (AHRC), Alexandria, Force Alignment Division (FAD), the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS), and a copy is forwarded with the re-enlistment contract to the Enlisted Records and Evaluations Center (EREC).
- The form will be maintained at Human Resources Command (AHRC), Alexandria, and Force Alignment Division (FAD). The participant is responsible for providing the DVA with a copy of the form when applying for education benefits. AHRC will subsequently maintain and forward the following information to the DVA as DD Form 2366-2 are received:
 - Transferor (Full Name)
 - SSN
 - Transferee (Full Name)
 - Transferee SSN
 - Transferee DOB
 - Months of Entitlement Transferred (Up to 18 Months)
 - Start Date
 - End Date

MAINTAINING VA BENEFITS ELIGIBILITY

It is the veteran/dependent's responsibility to use the College resources (Student Services Staff, Career Center, College Catalog, College Website, Student Handbook, Veteran Handbook, Class Schedule, etc) to obtain information regarding policies, procedures and student accountability. These resources are available to all students and can provide you with the information you need to select a desired degree program, enroll in the appropriate classes and maintain VA benefits.

Registration

1. VA students receive benefits based on registration, therefore is it important to be diligent when registering for classes and making adjustments to your schedule. You must notify the VA representative of any adjustments (drops, adds and withdrawals) that you make to your schedule once you have been certified each term. Certification will start after the drop/add period for the term for which you are registered.
2. VA students are only certified for courses that are applicable toward their degree; therefore it is important to meet with an academic advisor to ensure that you are registering for the appropriate classes each term. It is the VA student's responsibility to notify the academic advisor that they are receiving VA benefits. The academic advisor can assist you with determining the appropriate classes and understanding the advising guide for your program. The advising guide serves as a guideline to determine the classes needed in order to graduate.

Deferment

All VA students are eligible to utilize the deferment process once an academic year (each academic year runs fall thru summer). Students wishing to utilize the deferment option must come to the campus to request the deferment. This is not initiated by the campus VA representative and can only be used one time per academic year (no exceptions).

Change of Dependant Status

Whenever the student has an addition or loss of a dependent, the VA must be notified of the change. A copy of the legal document to substantiate a dependent (e.g. birth certificate, divorce decree) must be provided.

When dependents reach the dependent eligibility cut off (as determined by the VA), they may no longer be claimed for VA benefits unless the dependent is a full-time student. If the dependent is a full-time student, contact the VA to fill out the appropriate documentation.

Non-matriculated Students (e.g. Applied for any allied health or nursing program)

Students applying to the Allied Health or Nursing Programs will be considered as non-matriculated students until the appropriate program has selected them. These students are accepted into a program based on their GPA for prerequisite courses.

1. If selected by a program, the student's degree status will be changed from non-matriculated to degree seeking.
2. If not selected, student must complete a change of program to declare a different major by filling out VA Form 22-1995 or, if Chapter 35, VA Form 22-5495.

Transient or Cross-enrolled Students

If the VA student has completed their AA degree and would like to continue to take courses at HCC in order to meet the requirements admission/degree seeking requirements at a four-year institution, the student must adhere to the following procedures:

1. The VA student must apply for admissions to the four-year institution and

2. Submit a letter to the Hillsborough Community College VA representative on school letterhead of the four-year institution with the signature of a designated official which includes the following items:
 - a. Student name,
 - b. List of specific course credits that will be granted for them,
 - c. Course will be accepted in partial fulfillment of graduation requirements for the bachelor degree
 - d. The form must indicate approval as a VA student.

Upon receipt of the transient or cross-enrolled form, HCC will certify the VA student and forward paperwork to the Veterans Administration. In this situation, HCC would be considered the supplemental school.

Change of Address

If the VA student has a change of address, he/she should notify the VA at once by going to WAVE www.va.gov, by calling 1-800-827-1000 or complete form 20-572 (available through your campus VA Representative). Failure to notify the VA by any of these means may result in a significant delay in payment. The Post Office generally will not forward Treasury checks. Contact the VA Representative in the Admissions Office to fill out VA Form 20-572, which will be sent to the VA. It is also important to correct the address with the Admissions Office.

Attendance

VA students must comply with attendance requirements established by the instructor. If the VA student withdraws from class, the last date of attendance in that class will be reported to the Veterans Administration. Students receiving FX grades may have their attendance reflect the start of the term.

Faculty is required to report any student that has not attended classes. A copy of the withdrawal is given to the VA Representative to notify the VA of the change due to non-attendance.

Repeating Courses

The VA will only pay benefits for courses in which students have earned a satisfactory grade. A "D" is considered satisfactory except when a "C" is required to continue in the sequence or to satisfy the "Gordon Rule" requirements for graduation. When in doubt about the necessity of repeating a class, contact an academic advisor concerning the forgiveness policy (see catalog). Remember it is the student's responsibility to notify the academic advisor that they are receiving VA benefits.

Audited Coursework

Education benefits are not payable for audited courses. Under no circumstances will the VA pay for the courses taken for audit.

Irregular Terms

The VA student must contact the VA representative if registering for a class that begins after the regular term start date. Otherwise, a significant delay in benefits may occur.

Graduating Term

If the VA student is in his/her LAST TERM (graduating term), and has a less than full-time credit course load, he/she may register for any other class (es) of their choice to be certified, as long as at least one class is a requirement toward the degree at HCC. The student may use any credit hour course except those courses that have been completed with a passing grade.

NOTE: A "D" will be considered a passing grade except when a "C" is required. A "D" can be used as an elective.

Education Benefits Payment

Applicable for all programs except the Post 9/11 Bill.

12 or more hours	Full time – 100%
9 to 11 hours	3/4 time - 75%
6 to 8 hours	1/2 time - 50%
1 to 5 hours	less than 1/2 time - only eligible for cost of course

For non-standard sessions of irregular terms such as those offered at MacDill, the VA will determine training time and pay accordingly. The number of hours required for shorter terms (six to eight weeks), special courses, and spanning courses may vary according to the schedule.

Note: Taking regular courses and irregular courses in the same term may cause the amount of your monthly VA check to vary substantially.

Post 9/11 GI Bill

Students utilizing benefits under the Post 9/11 GI Bill receive benefits based on a calculation of entrance into the military, service time, type of discharge and current course load. Student will receive between 40% and 100% of the benefits based on these calculations.

Monthly Verification of Enrollment “WAVE”

All chapter Montgomery GI Bill and 1606 students must verify enrollment on a monthly basis either by using the web site at www.gibill.va.gov/wave and then go to the WAVE link, or by IVR (telephone verification) calling toll free **1-877-823-2378**. Verification letters will no longer be mailed to claimants.

Evaluation of Military Credit

The Transcript Evaluation Office can award credit for military experience. To have military experience evaluated, the VA student will need to furnish a certified copy of either the DD-214 or DD-295 (evaluation of military experience). Credit can be awarded for Army, Coast Guard, Marine, and Navy experience as well as for Department of Defense courses. Courses administered by the Air Force are all shown on an official copy of the Community College of the Air Force Transcript. Transcripts should be sent to the HCC Campus in which you are applying (campus addresses information is located at <http://www.hccfl.edu/campus-information.aspx>).

Credit for Prior Training

One of the criteria for approval of any school for veteran's training is that it reviews all prior credit and grants credits as appropriate to the VA student's current degree program the Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Applied Science (AAS), Associate in Science (AS), College Credit Certificate (CCC) or Post-Secondary Adult Vocational (PSAV). When giving prior credit, the school will grant credit for courses that specifically apply to the graduation requirement of the VA student's current degree program.

ALL prior college transcripts must be received before the evaluation is considered complete. The VA can pay education benefits for up to 2 terms without prior credit information, but may not if records indicate that a student might have a significant amount of credits to transfer. In such cases, a student may be currently registered for classes that may turn out to be "repeats" or exceed elective requirements and the student might have to reimburse the government for VA benefits collected for those courses.

NOTE: HCC requires all transcripts to be in 30 days after the start of the first term of attendance. After 30 days, a HOLD for missing transcripts is posted on the student record and students will not be able to register for classes until they are received.

Unsatisfactory Progress

Students receiving VA benefits must remain in good standing, which is defined as maintaining a 2.0 grade point average (GPA). A VA student who is not in good academic standing (below 2.0 GPA) will be granted two probationary terms to re-establish a 2.0 average. VA students who remain below 2.0 GPA for two probationary

semesters will be reported to the VA. This will result in termination of benefits. VA students who are so reported will be referred immediately to an HCC Counselor for assessment, interests and future academic goals.

A VA student who desires reinstatement at HCC must submit a petition to the Academic Standards Committee, which will be accompanied by the Counselor's recommendations regarding program, course, and credit hour restrictions. VA students who are reinstated by the Academic Standards Committee will then have their enrollment recertified to the Veterans Administration.

Debt Prevention- Misuse of VA funds

There are times when the VA overpays the student for benefits. Possible reason for overpayment:

1. Registering for courses that do not apply towards the student's HCC degree.
2. Student is reported for non-attendance ("WN" by his/her instructor.)
3. Student withdraws (W) from class(es).
4. Repeating a course that has received a passing grade.
5. Auditing a course that student expects to be certified.
6. Receiving an incomplete grade ("I").
7. Receiving a not reported grade ("NR").
8. Receiving a no credit grade ("N"). Can only be forgiven for Prep courses.
9. If electives are transferred in upon receipt of your prior credit(s), these electives will always be used first toward your degree. If you are planning on taking elective course(s), be sure not to go over the maximum number of credits allowed for your specific degree in the catalog you are following.
10. FX – Failure – Stopped attending. NOTE: FX – Means stopped attending and will be treated like and “F” grade. The last date of attendance must be recorded whenever and FX is awarded for submission to the VA. The VA will then determine whether payment is awarded or not. NOTE: The College will automatically notify the VA of any change in a veteran student's enrollment, which affects the rate of benefits.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Initial Check for First Time Applicants

Generally, HCC cannot certify a new student until after the drop and add period ends for the term. The VA requires eight to sixteen weeks to process an award and begin payment. The amount of your monthly VA educational award may be prorated if necessary. All payments are retroactive to the beginning of the class.

Note: Certifying Officials do not know the amount of any payment you are to receive. In order to get this information you must contact Veteran's Affairs or go to their website.

Mail and E-mail Correspondence

Utilization of VA Educational Benefits will generate a continuous stream of College and VA correspondence. All correspondence is important and should be read carefully upon receipt. Any misunderstandings or discrepancies should be brought to the attention of the HCC Admission Office/VA Representative immediately for clarification or correction when appropriate. We urge you to create and maintain a file for all VA and College correspondence. It is also recommended you keep a photocopy of each award letter received. In addition, we ask that you provide your VA representative with a copy of any documentation that you receive from the VA.

Enrollment certifications contain information about the classes you are taking. Pay particular attention to the dates and hours reported. If any information is incorrect, please notify the HCC Admissions Office/VA Representative immediately. **(Notices of Change in Student Status are usually sent to the VA after an initial enrollment certification has been sent. These forms reflect a change in hours either as a result of purging, dropping a class or being dropped from a class by the instructor.)** Please contact the VA Representative so the information can be explained or corrected.

VA DEFINITIONS AND DOCUMENTATION

NOTE: Detailed information describing each of the below programs is available from the DVA website http://www.gibill.va.gov/GI_Bill_Info/benefits.htm. If after review of the categories you are still unsure of your classification, call the VA at 1-888-442-4551. It is important to correctly identify your eligibility category so that HCC can send the appropriate VA paperwork to the proper location. Mis-classification may substantially delay VA benefits.

ELIGIBILITY CATEGORIES

Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty, MGIB – AD (Chapter 30)

Eligibility Criteria - Individuals may be eligible if they have an Honorable Discharge, **and** a High School Diploma or GED or in some cases 12 hours of college credit, **and** meet the requirements of one of the categories below:

Category 1

- Entered active duty for the first time after June 30, 1985
- Had military pay reduced by \$100 a month for first 12 months
- Continuously served for 3 years, OR 2 years if that is what you first enlisted for, OR 2 years if you entered the Selected Reserve within a year of leaving active duty and served 4 years ("2 by 4" Program)

Category 2

- Entered active duty before January 1, 1977
- Served at least 1 day between 10/19/84 and 6/30/85, and stayed on active duty through 6/30/88, (or 6/30/87 if you entered the Selected Reserve within 1 year of leaving active duty and served 4 years)
- On 12/31/89, you had entitlement left from Vietnam-Era GI Bill

Category 3

- Not eligible for MGIB under Category I or II
- On active duty on 9/30/90 AND separated involuntarily after 2/2/91,
- OR involuntarily separated on or after 11/30/93,
- OR voluntarily separated under either the Voluntary Separation Incentive (VSI) or Special Separation Benefit (SSB) program
- Before separation, you had military pay reduced by \$1200

Category 4

- On active duty on 10/9/96 AND you had money remaining in a VEAP account on that date AND you elected MGIB by 10/9/97
- OR entered full-time National Guard duty under title 32, USC, between 7/1/85, and 11/28/89 AND you elected MGIB during the period 10/9/96, through 7/8/97
- Had military pay reduced by \$100 a month for 12 months or made a \$1200 lump-sum contribution

Benefits - This benefit is payable based on the type of training, length of service, category, and if DOD put extra money in your MGIB Fund (called "kickers"). Generally benefits are payable for up to 10 years. Benefits are paid directly to the student.

Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserves, MGIB – SR (Chapter 1606)

Eligibility Criteria - Individuals may be eligible if they are a member of the Selected Reserve (the Selected Reserve includes the Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve and Coast Guard Reserve, and the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard.) and meet the following requirements:

- Have a six-year obligation to serve in the Selected Reserve signed after June 30, 1985. If you are an officer, you must have agreed to serve six years in addition to your original obligation. For some types of training, it is necessary to have a six-year commitment that begins after September 30, 1990;
- Complete your initial active duty for training (IADT);
- Meet the requirement to receive a high school diploma or equivalency certificate before completing IADT. You may not use 12 hours toward a college degree to meet this requirement;
- Remain in good standing while serving in an active Selected Reserve unit

Benefits - This benefit is payable based on the type of training, length of service, category, and if DOD put extra money in your MGI B Fund (called "kickers"). Generally benefits are payable for up to 10 years. Benefits are paid directly to the student.

Vocational Rehabilitation (Chapter 31)

Eligibility Criteria - VR&E's primary benefit program is vocational rehabilitation services for veterans who have a service-connected disability. To receive services a veteran must be found both eligible and entitled by meeting the following requirements:

- Service on or after September 16, 1940 **AND**
- Service-connected disabilities (SCD) are rated at least 20% disabling by VA **AND**
- Vocational Rehabilitation is needed to overcome an employment handicap **AND**
- It has been less than 12 years since VA notified you of your qualified SCD

Benefits - This benefit is payable based on the need for training, VA will pay costs, such as tuition and fees, books, supplies, equipment, and, if needed, special services. While in training, VA will pay a monthly benefit to help with living expenses, called a subsistence allowance.

Post-Vietnam Veterans Education Assistance Program – VEAP (Chapter 32)

Eligibility Criteria - Individuals may be eligible if they have elected to make contributions from their military pay to participate in this education benefit program. The contributions are matched on a \$2 for \$1 basis by the Government. Benefits may be used for degree, certificate, correspondence, apprenticeship/on-the-job training programs, and vocational flight training programs (in certain circumstances, remedial, deficiency, and refresher training may also be available) if the individual meets the following requirements:

- Entered service for the first time between January 1, 1977, and June 30, 1985;
- Opened a contribution account before April 1, 1987;
- Voluntarily contributed from \$25 to \$2700;
- Completed your first period of service; and
- Were discharged or released from service under conditions other than dishonorable.

Benefits - This benefit is paid based on individual contribution. Entitlement is 1 to 36 months depending on the number of monthly contributions. Individuals have 10 years from release from active duty to use VEAP benefits. If there is entitlement not used after the 10-year period, your portion remaining in the fund will be automatically refunded.

Post-9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33)

Eligibility Criteria - Individuals may be eligible if they have at least 90 days of aggregate service on or after September 11, 2001, or individuals discharged with a service-connected disability after 30 days. Note: You must have received an honorable discharge to be eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Benefits - This benefit is payable only for training at an Institution of Higher Learning (IHL). *If you are enrolled exclusively in online training you will not receive the housing allowance. If you are on active duty you will not*

receive the housing allowance or books & supplies stipend. This benefit provides up to 36 months of education benefits, generally benefits are payable for 15 years following release from active duty. Benefits include:

- Tuition & fees (paid directly to the school and are not to exceed the maximum in-state tuition & fees at a public Institution of Higher Learning.)
- Monthly housing allowance (paid directly to the student based on the Basic Allowance for Housing for an E-5 with dependents at the location of the school. *For those attending foreign schools (schools without a main campus in the U.S.) the BAH rate is fixed at \$1,333.00 for 2008.*)
- Annual books & supplies stipend (paid directly to the student proportionately based on enrollment up to \$1000.)
- Rural benefit (payment for eligible individuals a one-time)

Transfer of Post-9/11 GI Bill Benefits to Dependents (TEB). Eligible Service members may transfer up to the total months of unused Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits, or the entire 36 months if the member has used none. Refer to the DoD transferability application website to determine if your dependents are eligible to receive the transferred benefits. This website is only available to military members.

Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program (DEA) (Chapter 35)

Eligibility Criteria - Dependents' Educational Assistance provides education and training opportunities to eligible dependents of certain veterans. Individuals must be the son, daughter, or spouse of:

- A veteran who died or is permanently and totally disabled as the result of a service-connected disability. The disability must arise out of active service in the Armed Forces.
- A veteran who died from any cause while such service-connected disability was in existence.
- A service member missing in action or captured in line of duty by a hostile force.
- A service member forcibly detained or interned in line of duty by a foreign government or power.
- A service member who is hospitalized or receiving outpatient treatment for a service connected permanent and total disability and is likely to be discharged for that disability. This change is effective December 23, 2006.

Benefits - This program offers up to 45 months of education benefits. These benefits may be used for degree and certificate programs, apprenticeship, and on-the-job training. If you are a spouse, you may take a correspondence course. Remedial, deficiency, and refresher courses may be approved

Vietnam Era G.I. Bill

This program has been discontinued but certain Vietnam era veterans may still be eligible for benefits or increased benefits.

Activated Reservists (REAP) (Chapter 1607)

Eligibility Criteria - Individuals may be eligible after serving 90 consecutive days on active duty after September 11, 2001. The Secretaries of each military service, Department of Defense, and Department of Homeland Security (Coast Guard) will determine eligibility and establish the program to provide educational assistance to members of the Reserves of the armed forces who are called to duty for 90 days or more.

Benefits - The benefit payable under REAP is a percentage of the Chapter 30 three-year or more enlistment rate (\$1,101.00 as of 10/1/07). This benefit provides up to 36 months of full time entitlement at your given rate, generally benefits are payable for 10 years following separation from Selected Reserve.

- If you serve 90 days but less than 1 year, you will receive 40% of active duty rate.
- A service period of 1 year but less than 2 years of active duty will pay 60% of the active duty rate.
- New legislation has made the 80% of the active duty rate available to anyone who was mobilized for at least 2 continuous years of active duty OR served multiple mobilizations totaling 3 years or more. All

qualifying mobilization periods beginning on or after 9/11/2001 may be used to determine eligibility for the 80% rate.

- Members on active duty are only entitled to be reimbursed for the actual cost of the tuition and fees of the courses take (not to exceed the statutory rate.)

Note: This benefit is retroactive to September 11, 2001. A reservist attending school will be paid a percentage of the MGIB three-year rate in effect during the time in which he/she was enrolled. For example: The three-year full time MGIB rate in June of 2002 was \$800. Someone being paid the 40% rate for school enrollment in June 2002 would receive \$320 for full time monthly benefits

Purple Heart or Superior Combat Decorations (Senate Bill 122)

Students who received a DD-214 acknowledging the Purple Heart or other combat decoration superior in precedence status may qualify to receive this waiver.

OTHER VA EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

Accelerated Payment for MGIB-D

The VA will make a lump sum payment of 60% of tuition and fees for certain high cost, high tech programs. To qualify, individuals must be enrolled in a high tech program and must certify that they intend to seek employment in a high tech industry as defined by VA. Accelerated payment is paid instead of Montgomery GI Bill benefits that the individual would otherwise receive.

National Testing Program

The VA will reimburse a person for required test fees, VA has no authority to reimburse a person for any optional costs related to the testing process.

Test fees that VA will reimburse include

- registration fees
- fees for specialized tests
- administrative fees.

Tutorial Assistance Program

The VA will provide tutorial assistance if the individual is receiving VA educational assistance at the half-time (or more) rates and have a deficiency in a subject making tutoring necessary.

Work-Study Program

This program is available to any student receiving VA education benefits who is attending school three-quarter time or more. An individual working under this program may work at the school veteran's VA Regional Office, VA Medical Facilities, or at approved government employment offices. Work-study students are paid at the Federal minimum wage.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

Listed below are the forms required for each program. All forms can be accessed from the DVA website. For on-line access to VA forms go to www.gibill.va.gov/GI_Bill_Info/education_forms.htm

GI Bill

1. If VA Benefits have never been used, VA application form 22-1990 or Certificate of Eligibility.
2. If benefits have been used at another college, VA application form 22-1995 instead of a 22-1990.
3. A copy of the student's DD-214.

Vocational Rehabilitation

Veterans in this program must apply on-line and are approved through the VA Regional Office. VA will send HCC the proper paperwork to certify the veteran.

Vietnam Era G.I. Bill

1. If VA Benefits have never been used, VA application form 22-1990 or Certificate of Eligibility.
2. If benefits have been used at another college, VA application form 22-1995 instead of a 22-1990.
3. A copy of the student's DD-214.

Post 9/11 GI Bill

1. If VA Benefits have never been used, VA application form 22-1990 or Certificate of Eligibility.
2. If benefits changing from current VA program, VA application form 22-1995.
3. A copy of the student's DD-214.

Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program (DEA)

1. If VA Benefits have never been used, VA application form 22-5490 or Certificate of Eligibility.
2. If benefits have been used at another college, VA application form 22-5495 instead of a 22-5490.
3. A copy of dependent's birth certificate.

TRANSCRIPT FOR IN-SERVICE EDUCATION AND TRAINING

MILITARY CREDIT

GED

For Programs completed through USAFE PRIOR TO July 1, 1974 or tests other than the GED taken through the military after July 1, 1974 (CLEP, etc), call 1-800-257-9484 or www.getcollegecredit.com or write to:

THOMSON PROMETRIC
ATTENTION: DANTES-DODDS
2000 LENOX DRIVE 3RD FLOOR
LAWRENCEVILLE, NJ 08648

For GED programs completed after July 1, 1974 OVERSEAS, write to :

GED Testing Service

1 Dupont Circle
Washington, DC 20036

IN THE US: Write the State Department of Education in the state in which the test was given.

Air Force

To request transcripts from the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF), write to:
CCAF Call (334) 954-2794
100 South Turner Blvd
Gunter Annex, AL 36114-3011

CCAF transcript link: www.maxwell.af.mil/all/ccaf/transcripts.asp

SMARTS/MARINE

To request transcripts from Sail/Marine (NETPDTC), write to:
Navy College Center Fax to 1-850-452-1281
Code N 27
6490 Saufley Field Road
Pensacola, FL 32509-5204

Questions: 1-877-253-7122, option 2

WWW.NAVYCOLLEGE.NAVY.MIL

Army

To request transcripts from the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF), write to:
AARTS Operation Center Call 1-866-297-4427
298 Grant Avenue Fax (913) 684-9497/9499
Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-1254
Army website <https://aarts.army.mil/>

HELPFUL HINTS

1. Processing time for first time applications is 90-100 days. The VA Representative will begin certification as soon as the drop/add period is over. This certification process can take up to 30 days. After the certification is sent to the VA it generally takes 6 to 8 weeks.
2. If you plan to take a course that does not meet your requirements for degree completion at HCC, but does meet requirements for admission/degree completion at the bachelorette level, the VA will not pay for the course. If it does not apply toward your HCC degree, we cannot certify it. There is one exception. If the term you're taking the course is your graduation term and you are also taking a requirement for your degree, we can certify the course. This can only be done once, however, if you fail the required course, we will not certify additional courses the following term.
3. You will need to fill out an address change for the VA as well as HCC. The VA requests that you submit all change of address information on-line.
4. If you still need assistance after receiving your VA benefits you can see an academic advisor or counselor about a DreamKeepers emergency scholarship.
5. All students utilizing VA educational benefits must maintain certain standards of progress as detailed in the HCC catalog. VA regulations allow students to attend school under a probationary status for two consecutive terms while they continue to receive benefits. However, benefits will be terminated following the second consecutive term of attendance under probationary status if the student's cumulative GPA does not meet the college's published standards of progress.
6. Veteran students must be degree seeking. The student must either be seeking an AA Degree or an AS/AAS Degree. If seeking an AS/AAS Degree, which has an option, the specific option must be indicated. Students cannot be certified for Certificate Programs.
7. Benefits will be paid only for courses which apply toward the declared educational program.
8. Be sure to submit all official transcripts within 30 days from your first term. If the student has attended more than one college, transcripts from each college or university must be submitted.
9. Benefits are not earned for courses in which a non-punitive grade is received, such as "FX", "W", "WN", "N" and "U".
10. An "I" (Incomplete grade) which has not been removed by the end of the eighth week of the following term after the grade has been given (excluding Summer Sessions) will be changed to an "F" grade on student's permanent record. The VA will recover benefits paid for such courses unless the student submits mitigating circumstances acceptable to them.
11. Veteran students must comply with attendance requirements established by each instructor.
12. Check your college calendar and make a note of the drop date and the last day to withdraw.
13. Veteran students must maintain at least a 2.0 GPA.
14. Auditing courses will not be certified for benefits.
15. CLEP or Credit by Exam will not be certified.
16. Courses with passing grades cannot be repeated. Etc. those noted as repeated (see catalog)

17. When talking with an Advisor or Counselor, be sure to mention that VA benefits will be used. As a degree-seeking student, HCC can only certify the student for classes that apply toward the chosen degree. Course(s) outside the curriculum will not be certified. Refer to your academic advising guide to identify the correct classes for registration.
18. After the elective credit limit for an AA degree has been reached, students will not be certified for any more elective credits unless the course is a pre-requisite for another course that is required toward the chosen degree at HCC, or unless it is their graduating term.
19. Veteran students will be notified when issues are found during the certification period.
20. VA students are urged to furnish a statement of mitigating circumstances along with their notification of reductions and terminations. The VA makes the determination on payments. This form will be provided by the Veteran's Administration.
21. If student has missed a year and plans to return, they must notify the VA representative in the Admissions office to update the information by completing a 22-1995 & 22-5495(change of place of program).

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

AUDITED COURSE

Classes taken for no credit. DVA education benefits are not payable for pursuit of such courses.

AWARD LETTER

The official written notice from the Department of Veterans Affairs to a student of his or her monthly rate of payment, the inclusive dates of payments, and remaining entitlement at the end of the award period.

CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY

A Form 22-1993A which is issued to an applicant showing approval to pursue a stated program of education at a particular institution, the remaining entitlement of the student, and the ending date of the student's eligibility.

CERTIFYING OFFICIAL

The person at an institution who has been delegated authority to sign enrollment certifications, other certification documents, and reports relating to DVA benefits.

CHANGE OF PROGRAM

A change of program consists of a change in the educational, professional, or vocational objective for which the veteran or eligible person entered training and a like change in the type of courses required to attain a new objective. Generally, veterans and eligible persons are able to change their programs.

CHANGE OF SCHOOL

There is no limit or restriction on change of schools for continued pursuit of the same course of program provided the veteran or eligible person is making satisfactory progress and there is no material loss of credit.

DD FORM 214

The Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty which is prepared at the time an individual completes a period of active duty in one of the Armed Forces.

DROP/ADD PERIOD

A designated time period during which students can drop or add classes and make adjustments in their schedule without penalty or cost. Irregular courses may have shorter Drop Periods.

MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

Unanticipated and unavoidable events *beyond a student's control* which are responsible for the student's inability to complete a course or courses or which result in the student's receipt of a non-punitive grade for a course that the student did complete. Generally, a student will be required to submit corroborative evidence to substantiate his or her reasons for being unable to complete the course(s) with a creditable grade(s).

NON-PUNITIVE GRADE

The term means any grade assigned for pursuit of a course, whether upon completion of the course or at the time of withdrawal from the course, which has the effect of excluding the course from any consideration in determining progress toward fulfillment of requirements for graduation, i.e., "W" or "WN" grades. A student will be charged with an overpayment of the benefits received for those courses in which a non-punitive grade is received unless he or she presents evidence of acceptable mitigating circumstances to explain the grade assigned.

NON-STANDARD TERM

A term that is of a shorter or longer length (i.e., weeks and days) than a standard quarter or semester. Courses offered in Non-standard Terms are often called "Irregular Courses".

PRIMARY INSTITUTION

The institution which will confer or grant the current degree sought, or certify that the student has completed the program qualifying him or her for the current object sought, will be the principal or primary institution.

NOTICE OF BASIC ELIGIBILITY (often called the "NOBE")

DD Form 2384, Selected Reserve Education Assistance Program, which the Selected Reserve member obtains from his or her National Guard or Reserve component unit stating his or her eligibility.

Tuition Assistance (TA)

Armed Forces Tuition Assistance (TA) is a benefit paid to eligible members of the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Coast Guard. Congress has given each service the ability to pay up to 100% for the tuition expenses of its members.

Equal Access/Equal Opportunity and Educational Equity

HCC is an equal access/equal opportunity employer that makes employment and education-related decisions without regard to race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, disability or marital status or any other bias that is or may be prohibited by laws. In addition, the college does not discriminate in our employment practices or in the admission and treatment of students. HCC is committed to equitable treatment of all students and employees and to working towards a learning and working environment free of discrimination and harassment for current as well as future students and employees. The college provides equal educational opportunities of qualified individuals with disabilities and complies with and fully supports the Americans with Disabilities Act.

HCC's Interim Diversity Officers ensure compliance with federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination.

Employees who believe they have been a victim of discrimination or sexual harassment should contact:

Dr. Joan B. Holmes
Special Assistant to the President for Equity and Special Programs
District Administrative Offices
39 Columbia Drive, Room 718
Tampa, FL 33606
Telephone: 813-253-7043
Email: jholmes16@hccfl.edu

Students who believe they have been a victim of discrimination or sexual harassment should contact:

Dr. Kenneth Ray, Jr.
Vice President of Student Services and Enrollment Management
District Administrative Offices
39 Columbia Drive
Tampa, FL 33606
Telephone: 813-253-7054
Email: kray6@hccfl.edu