Military and Veterans' Information

Military Personnel

The University of West Florida recognizes that many active duty military personnel face formidable barriers in the pursuit of a college degree. As part of the University’s continuing commitment to educational opportunities for military personnel, in the fall of 2011, UWF opened a center dedicated to supporting all military and veteran-affiliated students, including spouses and dependents. This center is the Military and Veteran’s Resource Center (MVRC) (http://uwf.edu/mvrc), located in building 38, room 147 on the Pensacola campus. The primary goal of the MVRC is helping military and veteran students successfully make the transition from the military environment to campus life. Transition coaches are available to assist students with GI Bill benefits, the University process, support services, counseling & tutoring, etc. A computer center is housed within the MVRC for use by veterans for coursework. For further information, contact the MVRC at mvrc@uwf.edu or 850-474-2550.

Many departments have agreed to offer degrees through a system tailored to the specific needs of active duty military personnel. Previous college credit, work experience, service schools, and other forms of nonacademic experiences will be considered for college credits. For further information, contact the Graduate School (http://uwf.edu/graduate).

UWF VetSuccess on Campus

The VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC) program is a collaborative effort between the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the University of West Florida (UWF). The goal of the program is to help military veterans and eligible dependents of military veterans make a smooth transition to university life and to successfully complete their educational goals. Our VetSuccess Coordinator can assist all students with all things related to VA.

Military Transcripts

Instructions for ordering transcripts for each of the various branches of service can be found at the following locations:

- Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Navy (Active Duty, Reserve and Veterans): https://jst.doded.mil/smart/welcome.do

Veterans Benefits

The University of West Florida is approved by the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) for the education of veterans, active duty personnel, reservists, and eligible dependents under current law. The Military and Veteran’s Resource Center (MVRC) (http://uwf.edu/militaryveterans) is the point of contact for students receiving benefits from the DVA. The office has a professional staff augmented by veteran transition coaches to assist in providing information about entitlements, filing claims to the DVA, and certifying enrollment. The MVRC monitors the academic progress of students receiving DVA educational benefits. Students who receive DVA benefits are subject to different academic regulations and should be aware that auditing courses, enrollment status, withdrawals, repeating courses, changing degree programs, adding majors, and other actions may affect eligibility for educational benefits. For further information, contact the MVRC at mvrc@uwf.edu or 850-474-2550.

Educational Objective

To receive educational benefits from the DVA, the student must be pursuing a VA-approved degree, or be enrolled in a VA-approved certificate program at the University. VA will only pay benefits for classes required for graduation or for completion of an approved certificate program. Required courses must be identified in the student’s degree audit before their course can be certified for VA benefits. Course substitutions to their degree audit must be made prior to VA certification. To avoid delays in a certification, it is a student’s responsibility to ensure that certification is requested only for required courses. Failure to make this confirmation may prohibit certification of classes in future semesters. Students who do not have an online degree audit must submit a signed Program Description Sheet (PDS).

Yellow Ribbon

The University of West Florida is an approved participating Yellow Ribbon Institution for the 2018-2019 catalog year. The Yellow Ribbon program is designed to help non-Florida residents cover the cost of their education that exceeds the in-state tuition and fees. It is only available to those individuals eligible for the maximum benefit rate (100%) of the Post-9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33), and also to those who are not eligible for the Congressman C.W. “Bill” Young Veteran Tuition Waiver. Yellow Ribbon will be granted to the first 250 qualified students on a first-come, first-served basis.

Congressman C.W. “Bill” Young Veteran Tuition Waiver Program

UWF students who are honorably discharged Veterans of the United States Armed Forces, the United States Reserve Forces, or the National Guard, who physically reside in Florida, in addition to dependents who are physically residing in Florida and currently using VA education benefits, are eligible for a waiver of out-of-state fees. The student must present to the Military and Veterans Resource Center a copy of the Department of Defense Form 214 (DD-214; veterans only) and/or Certificate of Eligibility (COE), documentation of their residence, and completed C.W. “Bill” Young Tuition Waiver Application. The form to request the waiver is completed through MyUWF (https://my.uwf.edu). Students will remain eligible under the waiver as long as they are continuously enrolled at UWF. Dependents must be actively using benefits to remain eligible.

VA Tuition Deferment

VA students are provided a VA tuition deferment to help reduce/prevent a student's chances of accruing late fees and/or a student from being dropped from classes for non-payments. VA status is determined after individuals have submitted a request to use VA benefits (via their MyUWF account), and after providing proof of VA benefits through a VA application form 1990, 1990e, 1995, 5490, or 5495. Deferred payment status for tuition and registration fees may be granted upon application by the student on the following grounds. The University reserves the right to deny deferment status to students who have established an unfavorable credit rating. Students receiving financial aid are ineligible for deferments.

Deferred eligibility is granted to students receiving veterans' educational assistance benefits from federal or state assistance programs if aid is
Veterans and other eligible degree-seeking students receiving benefits on active duty and under Chapters 30, 32, 33, 35, 1606, and 1607, U.S.C., are eligible for one deferment each academic semester. A 90-day deferment will be issued for the spring and fall semesters and a 30-day deferment will be issued for summer and mini-terms. An additional deferment extension may be issued if there is a delay in the receipt of benefits provided the extension is requested prior to the deferment due date and not after the last day of the semester.

Tuition and fees must be paid by the last day of a semester. VA deferments do not extend beyond the posted semester dates.

A veteran may request a deferment (promissory note) via their VA Enrollment Certification Form found in their MyUWF account (https://my.uwf.edu) or at the Military and Veteran's Resource Center (MVRC) for the amount of tuition and fees. The MVRC will submit the approved promissory note to the University Cashier prior to the fee payment deadline. Failure to make payment by the deferment due date will result in a $100 late payment fee. Students who do not submit payment or request a deferment may be dropped from all of their courses for non-payment. Students who are dropped from courses due to non-payment may appeal for reinstatement and will be assessed a $200 reinstatement fee.

Any change in a VA deferment to a National Guard or other military billing status after the fee payment deadline will result in the assessment of the late payment fee of $100.00.

A University withdrawal does not cancel the veteran's responsibility to pay the deferment. A veteran must submit a fee appeal explaining the circumstances behind the request. This is not an automatic approval.

### Academic Progress

University academic standing is discussed in the Academic Policies section (http://catalog.uwf.edu/graduate/academicpolicies/general/#academicstanding) of the Catalog. However, students receiving veterans' benefits must meet the requirements listed below, consistent with UWF's academic policies.

Students will be notified formally by U.S. mail and/or via email (UWF email account) when placed on VA Academic Probation, Suspension, and/or Termination.

#### VA Academic Probation

Graduate students will be placed on probation by the VA Certifying Official upon completion of the semester during which the cumulative GPA falls below 3.0.

Placing students on VA Academic Probation provides students notification of their need for immediate attention to academic improvement or risk losing eligibility for VA educational benefits.

#### VA Academic Suspension

A student with two (2) consecutive semesters of cumulative GPAs below a 3.0, will be placed on VA academic suspension. VA Academic suspension will remove the students VA educational benefits until the following action is completed:

- The student must enroll in the MVRC mentoring program and follow the prescribed plan provided by the MVRC mentor program coordinator.
- The student must obtain written counseling from his or her academic counselor and provide that written documentation to the MVRC.

#### VA Termination

A student’s VA benefits will be terminated if the student’s cumulative GPA remains less than a 3.0 for three (3) consecutive semesters. The MVRC will notify the DVA of unsatisfactory progress and educational benefits will be terminated.

#### Advance Payment

Advance payment of DVA benefits may be available to new students and those students who were not enrolled in the previous semester. Applications should be made through the Military and Veteran’s Resource Center no later than 45 days before the first day of classes of the anticipated enrollment semester.

#### Reporting Requirements

Re-certification of benefits is not automatic and must be requested each semester. To prevent overpayment and subsequent indebtedness to the Federal Government, it is the responsibility of each student to notify the Military and Veteran’s Resource Center immediately of changes that may affect the student’s eligibility for benefits, including:

- **Class Registration**
  
  After registering for classes, eligible students should request VA certification via the VA Enrollment Certification Form, found in their MyUWF account (https://my.uwf.edu). Students who do not have a MyUWF account should print the VA Enrollment Certification Form (http://uwf.edu/militaryveterans/documents/VA_interview_enrollment_certification_form_3_12.pdf) found on the UWF MVRC website (http://uwf.edu/militaryveterans/vet_svcs.cfm).

  The earlier a student registers and provides the registration information to the MVRC, the earlier certification paperwork can be forwarded to the DVA. For further information or assistance, students may visit UWF Military and Veteran’s Resource Center in building 38, room 147 on the Pensacola campus or email mvrc@uwf.edu.

- **Changes to Schedule**

  Any additions, drops, withdrawals, or other interruptions must be immediately reported to the Military and Veteran’s Resource Center by the student.

- **Class Attendance**

  Routine class attendance is required for those receiving DVA benefits. It is the student’s responsibility to inform the instructor(s) of absence from class(es) prior to, or as soon as possible after the absence. Students must check with their respective instructor(s) regarding the attendance policy for each class. Students who are unable to attend class(es) for an extended period of time should notify the instructor(s) and the UWF MVRC. If a student receiving DVA benefits is found in violation of the policy, the DVA will be notified and benefits may be reduced accordingly.
Courses Not Eligible for Benefits

Students will receive an automated email whenever they enroll in a course that does not meet degree requirements. The email will give them directions to contact their advisor and what they can do if the course can be used for graduation.

Courses not meeting University requirements for graduation cannot be certified to the DVA for benefits payment. Although not all-inclusive, the following list reflects types of courses that will not be certified to the DVA:

- Courses not on the student’s degree audit or Program Description Sheet (PDS), unless an addendum is provided before the last day of the drop/add period;
- Repeated courses that have been previously completed with a grade of “D-” or higher, unless the student’s program requires a higher grade; this includes courses transferred from other colleges;
- Courses are taken to fulfill requirements at another institution unless a transient authorization is received;
- Courses are taken on an audit or noncredit basis, or courses in which the permanent grade is “non-punitive,” (e.g., “W” or “V”);
- Courses for which an “I” or “I*” was assigned, but not changed to a letter grade (A through F) within one year of the completion of the semester; in this case, the DVA will be notified retroactively;
- Remedial and deficiency courses offered by independent study;
- Distance Learning classes designed for career enhancement or continuing education

Change of Address

If a student’s address changes, both the DVA and UWF must be notified. Students can update their address via MyUWF (https://my.uwf.edu). All students, except chapter 35s, can contact the MVRC Office VetSuccess Counselor to change their address. Chapter 35 students must still contact the VA at 888-442-4551 to change their address.

Certificate Programs

Not all certificate programs are certified for VA benefits. Check with the Military and Veteran's Resource Center (http://uwf.edu/mvrc) for further information.

Part of Term Courses

Part of Term courses are those beginning and/or ending on dates other than the regular semester dates. These are referred to as Part of Term 5, Part of Term 6, Part of Term 7, Part of Term 8, and Part of Term 9.

The Part of Term designation is determined by which month in the semester the course begins. For example, a course starting in the first month of the semester but beginning/ending on a non-standard date would be identified as Part of Term 5. Students should be aware that the Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) review is made on a term-by-term basis and not by semester. Taking Part of Term courses may affect the student’s training time or rate of pursuit for pay purposes; since this varies by benefit chapter, students should contact the MVRC to determine their training time and qualifications for full benefits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester (Year)</th>
<th>1 Term</th>
<th>2 Term</th>
<th>3 Term</th>
<th>4 Term</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>8/27-12/15</td>
<td>8/27-10/19</td>
<td>10/22-12/7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring 2019</td>
<td>1/7-5/4</td>
<td>1/7-3/1</td>
<td>3/4-4/26</td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Non-Standard Term Certification to VA Policy

Department of Veterans Affairs Educational Beneficiaries

This policy applies only to students receiving VA Educational Benefits (all chapters). It is not representative of the official enrollment status reported to the National Student Clearinghouse. This policy is only for purposes of reporting to the Veterans Affairs Administration.

Graduate Students

Graduate students receiving VA Educational Benefits will have training time or rate of pursuit certified to the VA according to the length of the term session. The University of West Florida offers one standard term and eight non-standard parts of a term, many of which are accelerated. Graduate full-time for the standard term (Term 1) is 6 or more semester hours for all UWF semesters.

The UWF catalog determines full-time based upon the total number of hours enrolled within a semester, which meets the certification requirements of lenders, insurance companies, sponsors, and the National Clearinghouse. To meet the requirements of VA, however, certifications are based upon the training time of each individual term (vice semester total), which is why school certifying officials are required to report the beginning and end dates of each individual course enrollment. When taking a course in an accelerated non-standard term, fewer credits may be required in order to be considered full time by the VA.

It is important to know that VA pays education benefits that are earned one day at a time. As a consequence, a monthly benefit check reflects the sum of benefits earned each day within the month. The benefit earned each day depends upon the total training time (or rate of pursuit) in which the student is enrolled for that day. VA is prohibited by law from paying for days of non-enrollment within a semester.

By certifying terms (vice semester) and reporting the equivalent full time or training time for each term certified, the VA is able to comply with federal law while accommodating the myriad of institutional enrollment models that report to VA.

The training time that UWF certifies to the VA is based upon the University classification of enrollment policy applied to a standard term and the Term Equivalent Full-Time Table (Table 1). The VA refers to the adjusted full time credit hour for non-standard terms as “equivalent credit hours”. For students subject to Chapter 33 certification, VA will calculate rate of pursuit based upon the equivalent full-time that UWF certifies for the term, and will (for all chapters) determine the sum of training time for each day of overlapping terms. The below table shows the UWF “equivalent credit hours” based upon the total number of weeks in a term. (Rounding is in accordance with VA guidelines).

Graduate students must be enrolled in graduate or pre-requisite courses that are part of the student graduate degree plan. All CO-OP, Thesis, and Dissertation courses will be reported to the VA as full-time, regardless of the number of individual course credit hours. The full-time certification to VA only applies to the individual course for the course enrollment period as described by the course start and end dates.
Graduate Enrollment Classification (http://catalog.uwf.edu/graduate/academicpolicies/registration) that Registrar reports to the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) is based upon total undergrad hours enrolled in the semester. Please note that VA certifications are based upon each individual term, and the Registrar certifications are based upon total hours in each semester.

Withdrawals

Military Duty

In the case of a student called to active duty military service or change of orders due to military conflict within a semester, the student must contact the Office of the Registrar and provide a copy of military orders immediately. Students should also contact the MVRC before withdrawing. Students will have the option of withdrawing with a complete refund, withdrawing with a grade of "W," or accepting incomplete grades to allow the student to complete the course at a later date. Students are asked to notify UWF of their desired option. The transcripts of students who have contacted the Office of the Registrar as stated above and are subsequently withdrawn, awarded refunds, or given incomplete grades will be annotated with an appropriate statement indicating actions taken was due to military active duty service.

Students who are eligible for Military Duty Withdrawal are:

1. Students who are currently on active duty with any unit of the U.S. Armed Services who receive orders that will require them to be reassigned to a different duty station or be absent from class for an extended period of time during the semester in which they are enrolled.
2. Students who are members of a National Guard, Air National Guard, or other military reserve unit who receive orders calling them to active duty for operational or training purposes during the semester in which they are enrolled, excluding any regularly scheduled weekend and summer training duty.
3. Students who are veterans of the U.S. Armed Services and who are recalled to active duty during the semester in which they are enrolled.
4. Students who enlist in any branch of the U.S. Armed Services and whose induction date falls within the semester in which they are enrolled.

Official Withdrawal Date: The date you officially withdraw from a course.

Unofficial Withdrawal Date: Students who stop attending courses and receive NF grades are considered to have unofficially withdrawn.

Medical Withdrawal

Medical withdrawals are processed by the Dean of Students. Students who may qualify for a medical withdraw should submit the Request for Medical Withdrawal and supporting documents to the Dean of Students Office.

Active Duty, DoD Civilian, Military Spouse

Active Duty Non-Resident Waiver

According to Florida Statute Title XLVII, K-20 Education Code, Chapter 1009.26 Educational Scholarships, Fees and Financial Assistance, Section (14)(a): All active duty members of the Armed Forces who are residing or are stationed outside the state of Florida shall have all out of state fees waived by the university. To apply for this waiver, contact the Military and Veterans Resource Center at 850-474-2550 or mvrcta@uwf.edu.

Active Duty and Active Duty Dependents Residing in Florida

Active Duty Military and their dependents stationed in Florida are eligible for temporary residency for tuition purposes. For more information, contact the Military and Veterans Resource Center at 850-474-2550 or mvrcta@uwf.edu.

Military Active Duty and Civilian General Tuition Assistance Information

Service members and civilians of the U.S. Armed Forces are eligible for Tuition Assistance (TA) programs, which pay for voluntary higher education. General military tuition assistance information is available from the Military Tuition Assistance Information Center (http://www.militaryta.com). Tuition assistance information for each specific service is available from the following links:


Tuition Assistance Information

Submit completed and approved Tuition Assistance Vouchers to the MVRC (mvrcta@uwf.edu, 850-474-2550) before the end of regular registration (day before classes begin). In addition, login to your MyUWF (https://my.uwf.edu) account, complete, and submit the Enrollment Certification Form (ECF) after you have enrolled in your courses.

If you have courses within the semester that start in a later term, the application window for your branch of service may not yet be open for that term. If so, review the deferment request on the ECF form in your MyUWF (https://my.uwf.edu) account to determine if you would like the Cashier's Office to defer your tuition.

Make sure that the dates on your TA voucher match the dates for the course(s) in which you are enrolled. If you have courses in more than one Part of Term within the semester, you will need to submit a
separate TA Voucher for each term. **Vouchers with incorrect dates or course information cannot be processed.**

You may submit the TA voucher by:

- **Email:** mvrcta@uwf.edu
- **Fax:** Attn: Certifying Officials to 850-474-2671
- **Mail:** UWF MVRC, Attn: Certifying Officials, 11000 University Parkway, Building 38, Room 147, Pensacola, FL 32514

**MyCAA Scholarship**

The Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts (MYCAA - Spouse Tuition Assistance) is a Department of Defense program administered by the Air Force. Program eligibility is limited to spouses of service members on active duty in pay grades E-1 to E-5, W-1 to W-2, and O-1 to O-2, who have received approval for coursework while their military sponsor is on Active Duty military orders. Spouses married to members of the National Guard and Reserve Components in these same pay grades are eligible. This scholarship assists military spouses in pursuing licenses, certificates, and certifications, or associate degrees necessary to gain employment in high-demand, high-growth, portable career fields and occupations.

**TA Regular Withdrawals**

As participants in the Department of Defense Voluntary Education Partnership Memorandum of Understanding, the University of West Florida is required to calculate the TA earned when a military student using TA withdraws. Students who officially or unofficially withdraw from a course before completing more than 60 percent of the semester have not earned 100% of the amount of their voucher for the withdrawn course.

The University is required to return the unearned portion of the TA funds to the military service that provided the TA funding. Unearned TA funds that are returned to the appropriate military branch of service will become a debt that the student owes the university. This amount will be placed on the student's account and a "hold" will be placed on the student's account preventing registration, grades, and transcripts until the debt is paid.

If a student is eligible to receive a refund from the University for tuition and fees, the University will apply the refund against the debt that results from unearned TA.

**Official Withdraw Date** - Students who stop attending and receive NF grades, or a combination of NF, W, and I (Incomplete) grades, are considered to have unofficially withdrawn. UWF will use the last date of participation to determine if the service member completed at least 60 percent of the course.

The calculation used to compute the amount of refund can be found at the TA withdrawal [calculator](http://uwf.edu/offices/financial-services/student-financial-services/student-accounts-cashiers) Select the Third Party Authorization & Waivers dropdown.

For clarification or questions, contact the MVRC at mvrcta@uwf.edu or 850-474-2550.