

Veteran Student Handbook

Prepared by the Shawnee
State Office of Military
and Veteran Services



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Veterans Handbook

One important task of the Office of Military and Veteran Services is to assist you in applying for and receiving Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) Educational Benefits. Our role is that of a liaison between the student veteran and the Department of Veteran Affairs. The purpose of this handbook is to provide information on topics we think you should be aware of, not to act as a substitute for the college catalog. Read and understand the information it contains. Failure to adhere to the information contained in this handbook may result in delays of certification, overpayment and unnecessary termination of educational benefits. If you have questions beyond the scope of this handbook, please feel free to contact Eric Ramaekers at 740-351-4441.

Applying for VA Benefits at Shawnee State University

If you intend to use VA Educational Benefits while attending SSU you should be sure to provide all required documentation so that we can better serve you. The following steps outline the procedure for how to get started. You should:

1. Apply for the college at <http://www.shawnee.edu/offices/admission/apply.aspx>
2. Complete the Application for DVA Education Benefits (VONAPP) at <http://www.gibill.va.gov/> (Click on "Apply for benefits") Bring your Certificate of Eligibility to the Office of Military and Veteran Services when you receive it (processing time 30-45 days). If you have already applied, bring a copy of your Certificate of Eligibility/Notice of Basic Eligibility to the Office of Military and Veteran Services.
3. Submit a copy of your DD-214 (member 4) to the Office of Military and Veteran Services.
4. Send all previous college transcripts, including military transcripts, joint transcripts to the Admissions Office. All transcripts must be on file by the end of the semester. Students who are pending transcripts will not be certified for future semesters.
5. Take College Assessment exams if needed.
6. Meet with your academic advisor for an Academic Plan and a VA Semester Worksheet.
7. Submit a copy of your Veteran Services Registration form to the Office of Military and Veteran Services.

Military Credit Evaluation

To receive credit for your military experience, you must request your Joint Service Transcript at <http://jst.doded.mil>. Those who served in the Air Force may obtain their transcripts at <http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/Barnes/CCAF/>. Once your transcript is received, an advisor will review and evaluate it for possible college credit.

Getting Your DD-214

All Chapters of the GI Bill, except Chapter 31 (Voc-Rehab) and Chapter 1606 (Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserve) are required to submit a copy of their DD-214 (Member 4) to the Certifying Official in order to obtain benefits. If you do not have your DD-214, you can get a copy by going to www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits-portal and creating a premium account. This will give you access to your military documents, including your DD-214. You can also get a copy by going to www.archives.gov/veterans/ and requesting it.

Post 9/11 GI Bill for Veterans Duty and Dependents – Chapter 33

Eligibility

- Service member must have completed at least 90 days of aggregate service on or after September 11, 2001 or be discharged with as service connected disability after 30 days.
- Service member received an honorable discharge.
- Spouse and dependents must have DEERS issued certificate of Transfer of Eligibility and have completed the application for DVA Education Benefits (VA Form 22-1990).
- Benefits expire 15 years from the date of discharge/separation.
- For detailed information on eligibility requirements, please visit the DVA website at www.gibill.va.gov

Benefits

- Provides up to 36 months of education benefits.
- Includes reimbursement of tuition and fees.
- A Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) that is generally the same as the military Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) for an E-5 with dependents. The student's MHA is based on the zip code for your school. The housing allowance is paid directly to the student at the beginning of each month for the previous month's enrollment.
- Individuals using the Post 9/11 GI bill are eligible for up to \$1000 per VA academic year for books and supplies. This amount is paid proportionately based upon the student's enrollment.

Rate of Pursuit

- To be eligible for the BAH rates, the student's rate of pursuit must be greater than 50% (more than half-time enrollment)
- Students attending less than full time will only receive partial housing allowance based on the rate of pursuit. Current payment rates can be viewed online at www.gibill.gov
- Student will only be certified for approved courses as identified on the Academic Plan on file.

Distance Learning and BAH

- Students enrolled exclusively in distance learning (online courses) are eligible for monthly housing allowance equal to 50% of the national BAH average and your rate of pursuit.
- If a student's enrollment is a combination distance learning and on-campus and the rate of pursuit is greater than 50% the student may be eligible to receive the local BAH rate.

Montgomery GI Bill for Veterans (MGIB) – Chapter 30

Eligibility

- Benefits expire 10 years from date of discharge/separation.
- Veteran was active duty personnel.
- Veteran has received an honorable discharge
- For detailed information on eligibility requirements, please visit the DVA website at www.gibill.va.gov

Benefits

- Provides up to 36 months of education benefits.
- Students are paid a monthly stipend at the beginning of the month for the previous month's enrollment certification.
- Current payment rates can be found at www.gibill.va.gov

Vocational Rehabilitation – Chapter 31

Eligibility

- Served on or after September 16, 1940.
- Has service connected disabilities rated at least 20% by the DVA.
- Is in need of vocational rehabilitation because his or her disability creates an employment handicap.

Benefit

- Services include: vocational and personal counseling, education and training, financial aid, and job assistance.
- Services generally last up to 48 months, but can be extended in certain instances.
- To apply: complete VA Form 28-1900, Disabled Veterans Application for Vocational Rehabilitation and mail it to the VA Regional Office that serves your area. You can also apply online at <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp> or visit:

VA Regional Office
420 North James Road
Columbus, OH 43219

Dependents Educational Assistance (DEA) Program – Chapter 35

Eligibility for dependents of veterans:

- Service member was released from active duty due to permanent and total disability as a result of active duty services in the Armed Forces.
- Service member who died while serving on active duty or is Missing in Action (MIA) or was a Prisoner of War (POW).
- Children of service members between the ages of 18 and 26.
- The spouse of a service member may begin to use benefits during the eligibility period provided he/she has not remarried.

Benefits

- DEA offers up to a total of 45 months of educational benefits.
- DEA benefits may be used for college degree and/or certificate programs.
- Students are paid a monthly stipend based on credit loan at the beginning of the month for the previous month's certification.
- Current payment rates can be viewed online at www.gibill.va.gov.

Monthly Verification Procedures

Students receiving Chapter 30, 1606 or 1607 Educational Benefits must verify their enrollment at the end of each month. Students can verify their enrollment through the VA's Web Automated Verification of Enrollment system (WAVE) website at www.gibill.va.gov/wave or by calling 1-888-442-4551. This is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Students receiving benefits under Chapter 33-Post 9/11 educational benefits are not required to verify their enrollment.

Advanced Payment

Shawnee State University participates in the advance payment program with the DVA. New students and continuing students with 30 or more days break between semesters are eligible. If you elect advance pay, you will be paid in advance for the first month or fraction thereof in, which the semester begins, plus the amount payable for the following month. Requests for advance pay should reach the DVA Processing Regional Office at least sixty (60) days before the start of the semester.

NOTE: If you receive an advance payment, it will take approximately 3 months before you receive another benefits check. Those receiving Post 9/11 benefits are ineligible for advanced payments

Direct Deposit

Those receiving VA Education Benefits can choose to have their VA payments directly deposited into a checking or savings account of their choice. Those Interested should create a profile at www.ebenefits.va.gov.

Repeat Courses

The VA will not pay for repeated courses which were successfully completed. If a class in your program requires a specific grade and you did not meet that requirement, VA will pay for you to repeat the course. For example, if you successfully completed a course and received a C but the program requires a B or higher in the course, VA will pay to repeat the course.

Kickers, College Funds, Additional Contributions

Students eligible for a Kicker/College Fund under Chapter 30 or 1606 may receive the Kicker/College Fund under Chapter 33 (Post 9/11). The Kicker/College Fund will be prorated by the student's rate of pursuit percentage and paid monthly to the student. The student will need to send a copy of the Kicker/College Fund document to the student's VA Regional Processing Office. This document was signed with the enlistment contract.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

All students receiving VA educational benefits are required to maintain satisfactory academic progress according to published standards established and enforced by the university. Shawnee State's Standards of Progress have been approved by the State Approving Agency (SAA) and accepted by the VA. Title 38, United States Code, Section 3474 and 3524 requires that education assistance benefits to veterans and other eligible persons be discontinued when the student ceases to make satisfactory progress toward completion of his or her training objective.

Remedial and Deficiency Courses

Remedial and deficiency courses are typically intended to assist individuals in overcoming weaknesses in particular areas of study. Often, institutions will require the completion of certain deficiency courses without granting credit toward graduation. Basic English language or mathematics courses are authorized only when the need for training has been established by accepted testing methods. These courses must be taken in the classroom in order to receive VA benefits.

Parent (Visiting) School Letters

Parent school letters are issued to students taking courses simultaneously at more than one school. The home school that is granting the degree is the student's "parent" school. All other institutions are "secondary" schools. Even when a student is taking classes at another institution the classes must still be part of the student's degree plan. The "home" school will supply the "secondary" school with a letter stating what classes are authorized. If a student is seeking a degree from another institution and taking classes at SSU, the student must have prior approval from their degree granting institution.

Break Pay

The VA does not pay for any break in instruction for more than eight (8) days in duration. For example, if winter break in December is eight days, the VA will only pay for 22 days (VA always counts a month as 30 days, regardless of the actual number of days in the month).

Overpayment

An overpayment is a charge of indebtedness to the U.S. Government. An overpayment must be repaid. Failure to comply with overpayment letters from the VA could result in legal proceedings. An individual with an overpayment has the right to request a waiver or repayment of debt in monthly installments. In both cases the VA will make the final decision. See a representative from the Office of Military and Veteran Services for the procedure of this type of request. Please keep in mind that you will be charged interest and possible administrative fees on any overpayment with the VA. Listed below are some possible causes for overpayment, their solution or possible ways to avoid them:

- **Cause:** Enrolling in courses not required on your degree plan.
- **Solution:** Always review your degree plan prior to enrolling for courses, make sure they are required.

- **Cause:** Enrolling for courses for which credit was previously granted from prior colleges/universities attended or military experience.
- **Solution:** DO NOT ENROLL FOR A COURSE if you have the slightest feeling that you have taken a similar course before or earned credit based on past military experience.

- **Cause:** Withdrawing from a course or courses during a semester.
- **Solution:** If at all possible, try to avoid this. It is recommended that a statement be submitted to the VA identifying your reason for the withdrawal. If your reasons are accepted by the VA, it will reduce the amount of the overpayment.

Audits, Repeats, Withdrawals & Non-Required Courses

The DVA will not authorize payment for the following:

- Withdrawals/drops
- Audits
- Courses which are not applicable to a declared degree objective
- Courses for which a grade assigned is not used in computing requirements for graduation
- Repeating a course with a grade of “D” or better unless a higher grade is required
- A course you stopped attending

Note: Payment will be authorized for repeating required courses for which you have failed.

Financial Assistance

The major categories of financial assistance programs for undergraduates include loans, grants, scholarships and student employment. Loans from federal government sources or from private lenders must be repaid; however, the interest rate is usually low and the repayment period is extended. Grants and scholarships do not have to be repaid, nor does the income earned through student employment.

We encourage all veterans to complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) to see if they are eligible to receive the Pell Grant, the Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG), Federal Work Study, or the Ohio Instructional Grant (For Ohio residents only). The FAFSA should be submitted as early as possible beginning in October preceding the academic year. Federal recipients must have a complete financial aid file, including necessary verification documents.

After your FAFSA needs analysis and other documents have been received and reviewed for accuracy, you are notified through your MySSU account of any award for which you are eligible. If you are denied grants, you are encouraged to continue in the process to be considered for supplemental forms of assistance such as student loans.

If the applicant’s income has decreased from the previous year, they can complete a Special Condition form to show change of income. Once completed, this change of income may enable the student to be eligible for grants.

Should you need further information concerning the financial aid process, stop by the financial aid office or contact them at 740-351-4243.

Training Time Chart

Fall and Spring Semesters

(Chapters 33, 30, 32, 35, and 1606)

Undergraduate		Graduate	
Full time	12 or more credits hrs	Full time	9 credit hrs
¾ time	9 – 11 credits hrs	¾ time	7 -8 credit hrs
½ time	6 – 8 credit hrs	½ time	5 -6 credit hrs
< ½ time	4 – 5 credit hrs	< ½ time	1 – 4 credit hrs

10 Week Summer Semester

Undergraduate	
Full time	7 or more credit hrs
¾ time	5 – 6 credit hrs
½ time	3 – 4 credit hrs
< ½ time	1 – 2 credit hrs

5 Week Summer “A” and Summer “B” Semesters

Undergraduate

Full time	4 credit hrs
¾ time	3 credit hrs
½ time	2 credit hrs
< ½ time	1 credit hr

Student Veterans of America

SVA is a coalition of student veteran groups on college campuses across America. These member chapters help veterans reintegrate into campus life and succeed academically. Each chapter is a student group officially recognized by the institution that can provide a peer-to-peer network for veterans. Please contact the Office of Military and veteran Services for more information at 740-341-4441.

Important Campus Phone Numbers

Office of Admission – 740-351-4778

Clark Memorial Library – 740-351-3323

Counseling and Health Services – 740-351-3608

Campus Security (Non-Emergency) – 740-351-3243

Campus Security (Emergency) – 740-351-3232

Accessibility Services – 740-351-3276

Financial Aid – 740-351-4243

Health Clinic – 740-351-4362

Student Business Center – 740-351-4357

Student Life – 740-351-3549

Student Success Center – 740-351-3594

University Housing – 740-351-3222



Office of Military and Veteran Services Registration Form

Student Name: _____ SSU ID# _____

Program: _____ Is this a new Program this term? Yes No

Please check the VA Educational Benefit election

- Chapter 30 Montgomery GI Bill® - Active Duty
- Chapter 1606 Montgomery GI Bill® - Selected Reserves338
- Chapter 33 Post 9/11 GI Bill® - Entitlement Percent _____
- Chapter 31 Vocational Rehabilitation- Case worker email _____
- Chapter 35 Survivors & Dependents' Assistance- VA File number _____

Semester: Fall _____ (yr) Spring _____ (yr) Summer _____ (yr)

- I am currently a service member or have served in the military.
- I am a dependent of a service member or someone who has served in the military.
- **After registering** the form should be taken to the Office of Military and Veteran Services, Massie Hall 145 or email to eramaekers@shawnee.edu.
- **No student will be certified until this form has been received by the Office of Military and Veteran Services.**

COURSE	BEGIN AND END DATE	CREDIT HOURS	REQUIRED FOR DEGREE		IS THIS A SUBSTITUTE COURSE		IS THIS A REPATED COURSE	
			Advisor must check		Advisor much check		Advisor must check	
			Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Date: _____ Advisor Signature: _____

DO NOT SUBMIT THIS FORM TO THE OFFICE OF VETERAN SERVICES, MASSIE HALL 145, UNTIL AFTER YOU REGISTER.

Statement of Understanding

Students: Please read and initial each of the items listed below, sign and date where indicated.

_____ I understand that I must maintain satisfactory academic progress in order to continue receiving VA benefits.

_____ I hereby certify that I have not received credit for any course for which I am registered.

_____ I agree to report immediately ANY enrollment changes; including any class changes, withdrawal from school, withdrawal and/or add/drop from courses to the veterans Rep at Shawnee State University, and failure to do so may result in termination of my VA benefits.

_____ I understand that Veteran Affairs will not award benefits for courses that are not accredited to my degree.

_____ It is my responsibility to notify the VA (And the VA Rep at SSU) if I change my program of study (major), change my address, or take testing that will give me additional earned credits.

_____ If I am transferring from another school, or have prior credits to submit for additional credit hours, I must submit all transcripts, including military transcripts, before the end of my second semester at SSU. I am aware that if this information is not on record, VA regulations allow payments for two semesters only.

_____ I understand that monthly housing allowance benefits are paid based on rate of pursuit.

_____ I understand I must submit a Registration Certification form to the Office of Military and Veteran Services at the beginning of each semester or change in enrollment status in any way; adding, dropping, withdrawing, etc.

Student Signature _____ Date _____