

III 14 03 RECRUITMENT, ENROLLMENT, AND READMISSION OF SERVICE MEMBERS and RESERVISTS

Purpose

Volunteer State Community College (VSCC) participates in the Department of Defense (DoD) Tuition Assistance (TA) Program by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) conveying the commitments and agreements between the institution and DoD. This policy articulates that the College (1) refrains from high-pressure recruitment tactics for the purpose of securing enrollments of Service Members and Reservists (2) directs prospective students who are eligible Service Members, intending to use TA to receive approval from an Education Services Officer (ESO) or military counselor prior to enrollment, and (3) allows Service Members and reservists to be readmitted to a program of study if they are temporarily unable to attend class or have to suspend their studies due to service requirements.

Definitions

- **Appropriate Officer:** A warrant, commissioned, or noncommissioned officer authorized to give such notice by the military service concerned.
- **Armed Forces:** the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. Active duty-full-time duty in the active military service of the United States. Active duty includes full-time training duty, annual training duty, and attendance, while in the active military service, at a school designated as a service school by law or by the Secretary of the military department concerned. Active duty does not include full-time National Guard duty.
- **Education Services Officer:** Person assigned the responsibility for advising servicepersons of the educational opportunities available to Active-Duty Personnel.
- **Military Service (or service in the uniformed services):** Voluntary or involuntary service in the armed forces, including service by a member of the National Guard or Reserve on active duty, active duty for training, or full-time National Guard duty under federal authority, for a period of more than 30 consecutive days under a call or order to active duty of more than 30 consecutive days. This does not include National Guard service under state authority.
- **Reservist:** A person who is a member of a military reserve force. They are otherwise civilians, and in peacetime have careers outside the military.
- **Service Member:** Someone who is a member of, applies to be a member of, performs, has performed, applies to perform, or has an obligation to perform, service in the uniformed services.
- **Tuition Assistance (TA):** Military Tuition Assistance is a benefit paid to eligible members of the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force and Coast Guard.
- **Undue hardship:** An action requiring significant difficulty or expense considering the overall financial resources of the institution and the impact of such action on its operation.

A. Recruitment of Military Affiliated Students

In accordance with federal laws, regulations, and the Department of Defense (DoD) Voluntary Education Partnership Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), VSCC:

1. Bans the payment of any commission, bonus, or other incentive payment based directly or indirectly on securing enrollments or federal financial aid (including TA funds) for Service Members to any persons or entities engaged in any student recruiting, admission activities, or making decisions regarding the award of student financial assistance.

2. Refrains from high pressure recruitment tactics such as making multiple unsolicited contacts (3 or more), including contacts by phone, email, or in-person, and engaging in same-day recruitment and registration for the purpose of securing Service Member enrollments.
3. Bans inducements, including any gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, transportation, lodging, meals, or other item having a monetary value of more than an insignificant amount to any individual or entity, or its agents including third-party lead generators or marketing firms other than salaries paid to employees or fees paid to contractors in conformity with all applicable laws for the purpose of securing enrollments of Service Members or obtaining access to TA funds.
4. Allows educational institution sponsored scholarships or grants and tuition reductions available to military affiliated students.

B. Enrollment of Service Members

VSCC is approved to enroll eligible Service Members who apply to utilize TA. Military Tuition Assistance 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. Each service has its own criteria for eligibility, obligated service, application process, and restrictions. This money is usually paid directly to the institution by the individual services.

The Office of Adult Learners and Veterans Affairs at VSCC directs eligible Service Members to receive approval from an ESO or military counselor within the appropriate Military Service for TA funding prior to enrolling in classes at VSCC.

Service Members who fail to receive approval for TA prior to enrollment will be obligated for the amount due for the costs of tuition and fees.

Employees of the College are not responsible for the submission and approval of TA requests made by Service Members.

C. Readmission of Service Members

VSCC will promptly readmit service members with the same academic status they had when they last attended the institution or were accepted for admission prior to deployment. This readmission applies to any student unable to attend school due to military service.

The Office of Adult Learners and Veterans Affairs is the designated office of VSCC that a student will contact to provide both notification of service and notification of intent to return.

1. Student Responsibilities:

- a. Student must notify the Office of Adult Learners and Veterans Affairs of their military service and intention to return to school.
- b. Student or an appropriate officer of the armed forces or official of the Department of Defense must give oral or written notice of such service to the school as far in advance as is reasonable under the circumstances. This notice does not have to indicate whether the student intends to return to the school and may not be subject to any rule of timeliness. Timeliness must only be determined by the facts in each case.
- c. Student may submit an attestation of military service that necessitated the absence from school at the time of readmission.

- d. Student is not required to provide notice if precluded by military necessity, such as service in operations that are classified or would be compromised by such notice.
 - e. Student must give oral or written notice of their intent to return to the school within three years after the completion of the period of service.
 - f. Student must notify the school within two years after the end of the period needed for recovery from hospitalization or convalescing due to an illness or injury incurred or aggravated during the performance of service.
 - g. Student who fails to apply for readmission within the required periods outlined in section C, subsections e and f, does not automatically forfeit eligibility for readmission.
2. VSCC Admission Process:
- a. The College must admit the student to the same program to which the student was last admitted or, if that exact program is no longer offered, the program that is most similar to that program, unless the student chooses a different program.
 - b. The College must admit the student at the same enrollment status, unless the student wants to enroll at a different enrollment status.
 - c. The College must admit the student with the same number of credit hours completed during prior enrollment. However, if the student chooses, upon readmission, a different program, all completed credit hours may not apply to the new program chosen upon readmission.
 - d. The College must admit the student with the same academic standing (e.g., with the same satisfactory academic progress status) the student had prior to readmission.
 - e. The cumulative length of the absence and of all previous absences from the institution for military service may not exceed five (5) years. Only the time the student spends actually performing service is counted.
3. VSCC Responsibilities:
- a. The College will assess the tuition and fee charges for the first academic year (if student is readmitted to the same program) that the student was or would have been assessed for the academic year during which the student left the school. However, if veteran education benefits or other service member education benefits will pay the higher tuition and fee charges that other students in the program are paying for the year, the school may assess those charges to the student as well.
 - b. The College will assess no more than the tuition and fee charges that other students in the program are assessed for that academic year if the student is admitted to a different program, and for subsequent academic years for a student admitted to the same program.
 - c. The College will make reasonable efforts at no extra cost to the student to help the student become prepared or to enable the student to complete the program if determined that the student is not prepared to resume the program with the same academic status at the point where the student left off or will not be able to complete the program. This includes providing remediation and allowing the student to retake a pretest at no extra cost.
 - d. The College is not required to readmit the student if it determines that there are no reasonable efforts it can take to prepare the student to resume the program at the point the student left off. After making reasonable efforts (those that do not place an undue hardship on the institution) to enable the returning student to complete the program, and it is determined that the student is not prepared to resume or complete the program, the institution is not required to readmit the student in that particular program.