

Military Connected Review for Advisors:

The University of La Verne serves over 400 Military Connected students. These students are Veterans, Active Duty, Reserves, National Guard, their Spouse/ registered domestic partners, dependents and survivors. In 2022-23. Tuition and fees paid on their behalf totaled: \$5,783,589. Two-thirds of our MC students are GI Bill users. We'll start with these definitions before reviewing those specific to the Active Duty student population.

Each semester or session in which a VA student enrolls in classes and chooses to utilize their GI Bill benefits to pay tuition/fees, they must submit a GI Bill Certification of Enrollment Request to the University's (school) Certifying Official (SCO): Jennifer Brace jbrace@laverne.edu (Interim)

The SCO must then make various determinations before submitting this authorization to the VA for payment of tuition/fees. The certification also ensures the student gets paid a monthly allowance (MHA), in accordance with their benefit eligibility. Many of our VA students rely on this payment to maintain their household budgets while pursuing their degree here at La Verne. As such, it is our responsibility to understand our role in the process.

An Advisor's role includes assisting the SCO in determining that the courses in which the student is enrolled are APPLICABLE to the degree plan in which they are pursuing. A course that is not indicated as REQUIRED to graduate, cannot be certified. **It is in the best interest of the student that the Advisor be aware of some basic qualifying rules regarding course loads so students can choose how to utilize their benefit to the fullest degree possible. Students who have questions about their specific eligibility should be directed to contact VA at 888-GIBILL-1**

VA Education Chapters:

(Not a complete list. A comprehensive review can be found at: <https://www.benefits.com/veterans-benefits/va-education-benefits>)

Chapter 33: This benefit is available to those who served on or after September 11th, 2001, for at least 90 days of active duty service. (An active duty service member or veteran may choose to transfer their Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to their military spouse or child).

Chapter 31: Certain Veterans and those with service-connected disabilities. This student population has a case manager to assist and requires additional paperwork (at initial application). An advisor would refer to the SCO and/or Veteran Student Success center for assistance when assistance with specific forms are requested directly from the student.

Chapter 35: Survivors and dependents of qualified or deceased Veterans.

Chapters rarely used outside Military bases/ rules vary by student current military status:

Chapter 30: Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty (MGIB-AD)

Chapter 1606: Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR)

The Yellow Ribbon GI Education Enhancement Program: This program allows an institution of higher learning to voluntarily enter into an agreement with the VA to fund tuition expenses that exceed the highest public in-state undergraduate tuition rate. La Verne is a participating school.

Factors in maximizing a VA student's applicable benefits: Rate of pursuit within a Period of Enrollment, course modality and applicability of courses to their degree pursuit.

Definitions:

Monthly housing allowance (MHA)

Issued directly to the VA beneficiary during periods of enrollment. This benefit can be reduced/ prorated or eliminated based on the student's rate of pursuit and course modality within a period of enrollment.

Rate of Pursuit (RoP) & Full Time enrollment:

The VA calculates rate of pursuit per "enrollment period" (not cumulatively per Semester).

For example: in 8-Week SESSIONS, "Full Time" for VA purposes for Undergrads is currently calculated as 6-units or 4 Units for Graduates, per SESSION (not calculated cumulatively). These calculations may change at any time.

Period of Enrollment (PoE)

Period of time encompassing when a **COURSE** begins and ends; this means per EACH individual Semester or Session: **Fall/Spring/Summer Semester** and/or Session: **Fall 1, Fall 2, January Session, Spring 1, Spring 2, Summer, Summer 1 and 2.**

Rate of Pursuit (RoP)

Student's level of attendance (Full-time, part-time $\frac{3}{4}$ etc.) The definition of FT attendance *may* differ from the definition used by "ULV" Financial Aid specifically when enrolled in 'non-standard' Sessions (ie., less than 17-week semesters). To maximize benefits, a VA student must enroll "full-time" in each period of enrollment. **Refer to Examples in charts below****

A few programs have FT definition exceptions. Advisors for those programs can be briefed separately*

Course applicability - The most important factor for Academic Advisors to be aware of: Courses that are not on student's degree plan cannot be certified. **(See Rounding Out for exception).** Course changes will require the student to submit an updated certification request and additional course applicability review by advisors.

Rounding Out

If a VA student is at the end of their degree program and is enrolled in less than full-time RoP in their LAST period of enrollment, additional courses may be deemed applicable to enable full-time RoP consistent with the following: Courses must be within their degree program UNLESS all courses within their program have already been completed or are unavailable in the student's final term.

Modality

In addition to 'full time' enrollment, a student must enroll in at least one 4 (UG) or 3 (GR) - unit course, defined as 'in-residence, on-ground' per period of enrollment, to maximize their VA, MHA benefit. (Exception: Chapter 35)

- **"In-residence/On Ground"**: is a course that is listed on the class schedule as Directed Study, Lecture (in person), Hybrid (% in person), or Telepresence (host or guest campus). These modalities require 'in person' attendance at the campus for which the student is enrolled. Per VA, 'Directed Study' courses 'imply' in-person connection and is considered an 'on ground' modality.
 - **Per Faculty approved memo (8/2023), Telepresence is defined as** *"Instruction and interaction takes place 100% in a University of La Verne approved classroom where the instructor and students meet. Video conference technology allows additional students from off-site locations to interact with the class at the University designated classroom using video, audio, and text. Students from off-site locations have specific technology requirements such as access to a computing device and internet connectivity"*.
- **"Distance"**: Synchronous, Asynchronous modalities as listed in the class schedule. If ALL a student's courses within the enrollment period are Asynchronous and/or Synchronous, they will receive a drastically reduced MHA; even if they are Full-time enrolled.

Notes:

The modality of classes taken in an enrollment period determine eligibility for MHA, however - a student's rate of pursuit (RoP) determines the percentage of that benefit to be paid for the period.

MHA is based on zip code of course site, or, a preponderance of courses taken at a site's zip code. MHA may be affected by classes in different zip codes.

A course that starts as ASYN/SYN but changes to an "In-residence/On Ground" modality - before the end of the Session/Semester - is then considered 'in residence' for VA purposes.

Students with questions about how their benefits are being calculated should be directed to contact the VA at 888-GIBILL-1.

****Period of enrollment and examples & Charts:**

- A student enrolled ONLY in SEMESTER courses, will be considered FT enrolled based on the catalog definition of FT, for the entire 17- week enrollment period and per specific program.
- A student enrolled ONLY in SESSION courses, will be considered FT enrolled based on the catalog definition of FT, for the single, 8-week enrollment period and per specific program. For graduate programs, if there is no FT definition, the Certifying Official will calculate the FT rate of pursuit.
- A student enrolled in both SESSION and SEMESTER courses will be considered FT enrolled based on the catalog definition of FT, for EACH PERIOD OF ENROLLMENT: # of units enrolled during each 8-week interval within the 17-week Semester.

Undergraduate

<p>SEMESTER: 17 weeks</p> <p> ----- </p>	<p>Full-time RoP = enrolled in 12 or more units for the entire period of enrollment</p>
<p>SESSION: 8 weeks</p> <p> ----- </p> <p>Full-time RoP: 8 units per Session</p>	<p>Disclaimer: in Undergrad/Sessions, RoP is officially calculated by the VA per certification. Currently, (6) or more Units PER Session is commonly calculated as FT.</p>
<p>COMBINED:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">17wks</p> <p> ----- ----- </p> <p style="text-align: center;">8wks 8 wks</p> <p>FT is observed as any combination of units that keeps the student enrolled in <u>6 or more units, during each period of enrollment, within the entire 17 Week semester.</u></p> <p>4-Week sessions: 4-units for UG is FT. The same rule applies for students enrolled in concurrent 8-week classes (i.e. Summer Sem & Summer Sessions)</p>	<p>Example 1: Semester: enrolled in 8 UG units Session 1: enrolled in 4 UG units</p> <p>The student would be FT enrolled in Session 1 ONLY and $\frac{3}{4}$ time for the remainder of the Semester.</p> <p>Example 2: Semester: enrolled in 4 units Session 1: enrolled in 4 units Session 2: enrolled in 4 units</p> <p>Example 3: Semester: enrolled in 4 units Session 1: enrolled in 4 units Session 2: enrolled in 2 units</p> <p>The student would be FT enrolled for the entire period of enrollment.</p>

Graduate

<p>SEMESTER: 17 weeks ----- </p> <p>Full-time RoP: 9 units</p> <p>+See addendum for grad program exceptions</p>	<p>Example 1: Semester: enrolled in 6 units Session 1: enrolled in 3 units</p> <p>The student would be FT enrolled in Session 1 ONLY; $\frac{3}{4}$ time for the remainder of the Semester.</p>
<p>SESSION: 8 weeks ----- </p> <p>Full-time RoP: 4 units</p>	<p>For Grad/Sessions, FT RoP = (4) Units.</p> <p>(3) units equates to $\frac{3}{4}$ time – which is an important distinction for MHA calculation.</p>
<p>COMBINED:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">17wks ----- ----- 8wks 8 wks</p> <p>4-Week sessions: 3 for GR is FT. The same rule applies for students enrolled in concurrent 8-week classes (i.e. Summer Sem & Summer Sessions)</p>	<p>Example 2: Semester: enrolled in 3 units Session 1: enrolled in 3 units Session 2: enrolled in 3 units</p> <p>The student would be FT enrolled for the entire period of enrollment.</p>

Other factors can cause disruption to the benefit issuance process such as:

- **DROP vs withdrawals; Appeals for late drop/withdrawals; WF vs. F.** An approved retroactive WD or DROP can cause an overpayment if the adjusted schedule falls below FT in the enrollment period. It's imperative that every effort be made to contact a VA student prior to administrative drop or WD.
 - A VA student is not financially impacted by failing a class. Nor do they pay back tuition paid on their behalf for **earning a D or F grade.**
- **Grade Change/Timeliness of INC or NG updates** (if adjusted to WF or late WD/drop).
- **On-ground course change of modality to SYN or ASYN.** is an ADVERSE change to the VA student, if the change causes their schedule to be fully asyn/syn. Conversely, changing ASYN/SYN to DIRECTED STUDY – can benefit the VA student (if they did not otherwise have a qualifying class).
- **Course Applicability: 4+1 programs;** a student can enroll in applicable classes if they are used as substitution in Major. Otherwise, a Graduate course can be used to 'round out' in their last Semester/Session AND have approval to enroll in a graduate level course.
- **Change to Class Schedule after VA Certification Submission** – Class schedule & certification must always match. A new Certification is required anytime a schedule has changed in class title, units and/or modality.

ACTIVE DUTY & TUITION ASSISTANCE

The other significant population under the Military Connected umbrella. Though Spouse & dependents may be eligible to the Military rate (excluding TUG, doctoral, or Law programs), they typically do not qualify for TA. In many cases, they may use VA benefits that have been transferred.

TA students enroll in classes then submit a voucher request to their branch education office. Course applicability is verified by their education office. If approved, the TA voucher is generated. The student submits the approved TA voucher to La Verne via online submission. La Verne is paid directly. TA covers Tuition only.

- **TA cannot be requested sooner than 30 days prior to the start of the enrollment period.**
- **TA cannot be approved sooner than 14 days prior to the start of an enrollment period**
- **A TA voucher must always match a student's enrollment. A voucher can be amended through the branch education office, at any time.**

GRADES / Withdrawals: A TA student will be financially impacted for withdrawing from a class after the add/drop period. TA must be refunded to the DOD, in accordance with ULV & MOU policy. Therefore the student will owe the % payable to the University. A student who does not successfully complete a class, must pay TA back for tuition paid on their behalf for that class.

Military Connected General Advising:

- **JST & CCAF Transcripts** – Exempt from 45 days requirement for add-work; Active Duty students can accrue additional elective units after admission (up to 21 for AA & up to 44 for Bachelor's degrees)
- **Grade Reporting** – All students utilizing military TA in a Semester or Session are subject to grade reporting, currently completed manually by the SCO for each branch of service. Therefore, Grade changes for Military Connected students should also be reported to the SCO.
- **Appeal for Reactivation after Leave** - Active Duty students do not need to appeal to reactivate their record after an absence, so long as they are within the 4/5/7 year timeline of their admitted program. <https://catalog.laverne.edu/academic-information/#registrationinformationtext>
- **Appeal for Extension of time** – Active Duty students will appeal directly to the Registrar with Appeal form, personal statement, application for graduation & support from the Advisor. Extensions up to 3 additional years are implied and subject to review of individual circumstance. Appeal fees are waived for causes related to AD service.
- **VA & TA Tuition & Refund Policy** - <https://catalog.laverne.edu/financial-information/>
- By statute, under MOU agreement, Active Duty, Reserves, National Guard are allowed per policy to be accommodated for time missed in class, due to deployed or temporary duty assignment. **Students who cannot successfully be accommodated must be allowed a late drop and full-refund of tuition paid or paid on their behalf**
- **Per 23-24 Catalog: Military Connected Student Priority Registration** (1 day prior to ticketed time): <https://catalog.laverne.edu/financial-information/>
- **Application for Advanced Standing & Application for Graduation** – emphasis should be made to do this early enough so that the fee and process be applied/completed PRIOR to the planned Session of enrollment. *VA students can request graduation fees to be paid at the time of Certification.*

- **Encourage students to enroll in courses for entire Semester**, and/or both Sessions at same time so SCO and VA can see full time for entire 16 week period.
- **If advisor is away or not available, always please identify temporary advisor** in email responses. Delays often impact access to financial support, books and supplies.

Any academic advisor questions regarding the VA benefit information provided here, should be directed to the SCO, or the Veteran Student Success Center administrator. At no time should questions regarding VA benefit eligibility, be directed to a non-VA representative:

- If MHA is not amount expected, student should email the SCO at vareg@laverne.edu to inquire regarding missed forms, modality or rate of pursuit certification. If all is correct then student should contact the VA for Chapters 33 or 35, or VRE Counselor for Chapter 31.
- VA benefit users should access the VA's Comparison Tool first for MHA.
- Chapter 33 (Post 9/11 can be veterans, spouses, dependents) rounds up MHA to nearest percentage (100% - 51%). 50% receives \$0 MHA.
- Chapter 31 (Veteran Readiness & Employment or VRE, is for veterans with service related injuries of 100% to 10%) pays MHA in increments of 100%, 75% and 50% only.
- Chapter 35 (Dependents/Spouses/occasionally veterans) pays a lesser monthly stipend. It will be prorated per rate of pursuit from 100% to less than 50%.

GI Bill hotline (888) 442-4551

VA.gov/Education Resources - <https://www.va.gov/education/about-gi-bill-benefits/>

La Verne (School) Certifying Official: Jennifer Brace 805-986-6903 jbrace@laverne.edu

Abraham Center for Veteran Student Success: <https://laverne.edu/veterans/>, Coordinator
Diana Towles dtowles@laverne.edu

Addendum/Notes

- **MAT/Credential courses; This is a graduate level program.** A student must be in 9 units for FT enrollment when taking semester only classes. Required courses in this program are (3 and 4 units each). Students will receive prorated MHA if taking less than 9 units in the semester. Students should be informed at time of admission counseling (per law) so he/she can decide to move forward and/or prepare for less funding.
- Stand alone **Credential and Certificate programs** can differ based on students status and other criteria.

Course issues/ Common complaints - pass it on!

- Because VRE pays for all books via PO system, please inform Bookstore early of necessary books for upcoming semester so books are in prior to the start of classes.
- Course syllabi should include notation of required equipment, software, tests, etc so students can prepare financially and/or VA will reimburse for items.
- Blackboard AND Syllabus should be available at least one week prior to classes so students can read, note additional needs and timing to be prepared at start of classes.
- By statute, under MOU agreement, Active Duty, Reserves, National Guard are allowed per policy to be accommodated for time missed due to deployed or temporary duty assignment. Students who cannot successfully be accommodated must be allowed a late drop and full-refund of tuition paid or paid on their behalf.

University of
La Verne