

## Procedures for G.I. Bill Educational Benefits Certification (non-Chapter 33)

### Prepare for Out-of-Pocket Expenses

For Chapters 30, 35, 1606 and REAP students, the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs pays benefits to the student at the end of each month. These payments may not be sufficient to cover full tuition and fee costs.

**Therefore, student-veterans must be prepared to pay at least your first quarter's expenses (i.e., tuition and fees, textbooks, supplies, etc.) out of pocket.**

University of Cincinnati makes available a three-part payment plan. For information regarding your options, visit the One Stop Student Service Center (University Pavilion, 2nd floor; telephone #: 513-556-1000).

If you have not yet applied for financial aid, visit or contact the One Stop Student Service Center to request assistance in applying or apply on-line ([www.FASFA.gov](http://www.FASFA.gov)). Receipt of VA educational benefits **does not** necessarily exclude you from additional financial aid monies.

### Step 1: Apply for Admission to University of Cincinnati

Apply for formal admission to University of Cincinnati by following the procedures outlined by either the office of [Undergraduate Admissions](#) or [Graduate School](#), as appropriate.

U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs regulations require that **all** previous coursework be evaluated by the student's current college no later than three-quarters or two semesters. This includes any college-level study completed prior to applying for (or becoming eligible for) VA educational benefits. Student-veterans seeking college credit for military training should provide the military training record to University of Cincinnati **at the time of application for admission**.

Each time a student begins a new degree program when receiving VA benefits, all study prior to beginning the new program must be evaluated for applicability to the new requirements in a timely manner. Students should be careful not to register for classes they may be awarded transfer credit for from past study.

### Step 2: Confirm Your Degree Program and Major

To successfully apply for your veteran education benefits, you **must** be certain of both the specific degree (e.g., associate, bachelors, masters, etc.) that you will be pursuing upon entry to University of Cincinnati **and** the major discipline of study within that degree (e.g., biology, accounting, nursing, history, computer science, etc.). Your college office will notify you of its admission decision. If you are admitted, the college will provide you with information regarding the specific degree requirements for your particular major. The college also will evaluate any prior study you have completed and will advise you in selecting the appropriate classes for registration.

After you receive notification from University of Cincinnati confirming that you have been admitted to your UC college, be sure to formally accept the offer of admission and pay any required matriculation fee by the deadline.

**Please be aware that registering for classes does not mean you are accepted by and matriculated into a degree program.**

If you have any doubts as to whether or not you are matriculated into a degree program, check with the UC Admissions Office, the Graduate School, or your UC college office.

**Important Note:** as required by U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs regulations, to be certified at University of Cincinnati for VA educational benefits, you **must** be matriculated in an approved program of study.

For a list University of Cincinnati programs approved by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, follow these steps:

Go online to <http://www.gibill.va.gov/>;

- Under "Educational Benefits" in left-hand menu, click "Search for Approved Programs";
- On the resulting page, click "here";
- On the resulting page, enter 'University of Cincinnati' into the "institution name" box. **Do not** click Ohio on the U.S. map;
- On the resulting page, click the link "University of Cincinnati Vet Certification"; and
- On the resulting page, click the link "Programs" in the grey box placed at the top of the page.

**If your program is not included on this list, immediately contact the Registrar's Office, Veteran Education Benefits area at 513-556-6811.**

### **Step 3: Contact or Visit the Registrar's Office, Veteran Education Benefits Area**

**Immediately after you have been officially admitted to a UC college and degree program**, contact the Registrar's Office, Veteran Education Benefits area. The Registrar's Office is located on the 5th floor of the University Pavilion building (telephone: 513-556-6811; operating hours are Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time).

When you contact the office, you will be asked to provide information such as your military status, educational background, current and permanent address, etc. The Veteran Education Benefits area will use this information to prepare a document "packet" tailored specifically to you that contains the required VA benefits application, general benefits information, and Registrar's Office procedures and policies regarding benefits processing that **you will need to know** while pursuing your degree at University of Cincinnati. **Your packet will be mailed to you at the address that you provide.**

**The Veteran Education Benefits area also will provide you with information that will aid you in completing the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs Veterans ON-line APPLICATION (VONAPP).**

**Note:** it is critical that you contact the Registrar's Office, Veteran Education Benefits area **as soon as you have been admitted**. Both the Registrar's Office **and** the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs will require time to process your benefits application. Initiating the eligibility certification process as soon as possible is critical to minimizing the time it will take for your education benefits to be certified and disbursed.

## Step 4: Complete the Veterans ON-line APPlication (VONAPP)

Once you have completed Step 3 above, go online to the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs "Veterans ON-line APPlication" (VONAPP) at <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp>. Follow the instructions to apply for your education benefits.

**Where the VONAPP application asks you to name identify a specific VA regional office to which to electronically submit your benefits application, be certain to enter "Buffalo, New York VA Regional Office."** This is the regional office affiliated with University of Cincinnati.

Print **two** copies of your VONAPP application: one copy for your records and one copy that you will submit to the Registrar's Office, Veteran Education Benefits area.

Following its successful processing of your benefits application, the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs will issue a "[Certificate of Eligibility](#)" to you by mail. The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) currently estimates that processing will require twenty-eight calendar days. **University of Cincinnati cannot be responsible for complications or delays in benefit awards due to VA delays in application processing.**

**Once you have received the VA "Certificate of Eligibility," you will submit that certificate to the Registrar's Office, Veteran Education Benefits area, by following Step 5.**

## Step 5: Schedule a Veteran Education Benefits Orientation Appointment

Completion of a Registrar's Office Veteran Education Benefits area orientation session **is required**. Students are required to schedule an orientation appointment **prior** to attending a session.

This orientation session will provide you with updated information specific to your benefits eligibility and the steps you must take each term to ensure that your education benefits are disbursed by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs in a timely manner.

When you receive your packet by mail, thoroughly read all included materials. Bring your packet with you to your orientation session. **Do not** return mail the packet to the Registrar's Office Veteran Education Benefits area. Also, **do not** mail the packet to the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs.

Once you have obtained the required eligibility documentation for your specific benefit chapter, as indicated by the packet's cover letter (e.g., the VONAPP application and "Certificate of Eligibility" noted in Step 4 above, a copy of your DD214 (member copy 4), a copy of your DD2384 (NOBE), copy of marriage or birth certificate, etc.), call the Registrar's Office, Veteran Education Benefits area at 513-556-6811 to schedule an Orientation appointment.

At the orientation appointment, you will: 1) review the packet data information with a Veteran Education Benefits area staff member — asking whatever questions you may have about your benefits and the certification process; and 2) complete additional required forms.

## **Step 6: Check Your Eligibility for Ohio In-State Tuition through the "Ohio G. I. Promise" and Apply if Appropriate**

Effective Summer Quarter 2009, veterans of the U.S. Armed Services, their spouses, and dependents, may qualify for immediate classification as Ohio residents-for-tuition-purposes. For details, go to [http://www.uc.edu/registrar/residency\\_Ohio\\_GI\\_Promise.html](http://www.uc.edu/registrar/residency_Ohio_GI_Promise.html)

## **Step 7: Work With a College Advisor to Select Appropriate Courses**

Contact your college advisor to arrange an advising appointment. Work with the advisor to select classes required for completing your degree program. Keep in mind that the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs will pay benefits only for classes that progress you toward graduation in your **current** degree program or classes that are required refresher / pre-requisite courses approved for VA benefit payment. So, be sure to register carefully.

**Be sure to consult the Registrar's Office Veteran Education Benefits area prior to registration to determine if a course is approved for VA benefits.**

If you have questions about the steps outlined above, contact the Registrar's Office, Veteran Education Benefits area. The Registrar's Office is located on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of the University Pavilion building.

The Veteran Education Benefits area's operating hours are Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time). The area's telephone number is 513-556-6811.