

# VA CERTIFICATION NEWSLETTER

Office of Veteran Certification  
Winter, 2008-09

5<sup>th</sup> Floor, University Pavilion  
Phone: (513) 556-6811

## **CHANGE IN OUR OFFICE HOURS:**

As usual, our office will be open during the 3/23/09-3/27/09 break week, however, effective 3/23/09 our office **hours will change to 10:00 a.m. to 4:00p.m.**, Monday-Friday. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

## **CONTINUOUS PAY FOR SPRING**

If you meet all of the following criteria (may answer "True" to each item), you will remain certified for Spring Qtr. Benefits:

- 1.) You have provided our office with an accurate "Annual Declaration of Responsibility" form for this 2008-09 standard academic school year,
- 2.) All your Winter Qtr. classes met for the entire standard quarter term (1/5-3/21/09),
- 3.) You ended Winter Qtr. with at least a ½ time pay rate with classes meeting the entire standard qtr. (Remember, "SP", "UP", "T", "NG", "W", "UW", "NP", "X", & Graduate "I" grades do not count as earned cr. and may reduce your VA pay rate),
- 4.) You are not in a UC "Distance-Learning" type of degree program **or** are not still INSERVICE,
- 5.) All of your Spring Quarter courses apply to your current degree major\* (note: AUDITED courses and non-required repeat classes do NOT apply),
- 6.) You will continue in the same UC College, degree and major,
- 7.) Your VA mailing address remains the same,
- 8.) You are not using Voc. Rehab. Benefits,
- 9.) You're not registered for all "Flexibly" scheduled or all "Open Learning" (Independent Study) type classes for Spring Qtr.,
- 10.) You are officially registered for Spring Qtr. classes as of 8 a.m. on 3/30/09.
- 11.) You are not in "Unsatisfactory Progress" status, by UC standards nor Suspended/Dismissed.
- 12.) You do not have outstanding paperwork due us.

\*A course must move you closer to graduation or be a required (VA-approved) refresher/prerequisite class.

If you do not meet ALL the above criteria, you must inform us **by 4:00p.m., Friday, April 10, 2009** in order to be certified timely and accurately for Spring Qtr. and avoid an interruption of VA benefits  
Once you have registered for Spring Quarter, 2009,

verify which of your courses are required for your **CURRENT degree** program with your advisor. If any of your classes are **NOT REQUIRED** then you need to write our office a note identifying these "N/A" classes **by 4p.m., 4/10/09**, in order to be in compliance with UC policy and remain certified for Spring Qtr. VA benefits.

## **CHANGE OF PAY RATE FOR SPRING**

**If you will not attend Spring Qtr. notify our office IMMEDIATELY, if you have not done so already, in order to minimize any VA overpayment.**

If your Spring Qtr. Enrollment will result in a different VA pay rate or includes "Flexibly" scheduled classes, then contact us as soon as you have finalized your Spring Qtr. registration on the school's database so that we may adjust our records. The sooner you finalize your schedule, the sooner we can process your paperwork; however, nothing may be submitted to the VA until it appears on the school's database.

## **SUMMARY OF WRITTEN ITEMS DUE 4/10/09:**

- Student notes identifying any "N/A" classes (this includes all Audited ("A") courses, non-required repeat classes, and surplus classes) for the current official **degree** major.
- Paperwork concerning a change in UC college and/or major (this includes changes from a single to a double major and vice versa).\*\*
- Decisions to begin or end the **CO-OP RATE**.
- A change in Co-op/Class quarter rotation.
- Decisions to not use VA benefits Spring Qtr.
- Decisions to use partial benefits Spring Qtr.
- Changes of address.

Changes in credit hour amounts and address changes may be phoned-in to our office. Do this ASAP, however, once your registration is finalized on the school's database. The other above items require paperwork. to be prepared by us.

**\*\* DON'T WAIT UNTIL CLASSES HAVE STARTED TO CONTACT OUR OFFICE CONCERNING CHANGES OF PROGRAM.**

**If these changes are effective Spring Quarter, contact our office for the required VA paperwork**

**NOW.** This **completed** paperwork must be returned to us by **4/10/09.** Paperwork concerning a change in your UC college/degree/major **effective Spring Qtr.** received **after 4/10/09** may cause an interruption of VA benefits.

**IMPORTANT GENERAL REMINDERS:**

Anyone not **officially** registered as of 8 a.m., on 3/31/09 will have benefits terminated until we receive the necessary notification/paperwork to recertify Spring Qtr. enrollment to VA.

Also, be sure to be officially registered on the school's database for **all** your Spring Qtr. classes **by 4/3/09** (**this includes ROTC and 1-credit hr. seminars, Independent Study, Ensembles, Clermont College's #34-CJTN-215 course, etc.**).

If you register for any Refresher-type courses check with our office **before** the class begins to see if the class is approved for VA pay. (Even though your college may require you to register for a class you cannot receive VA benefits for Refresher classes unless they are also approved for VA benefits at UC.)

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**Students in the following categories need to contact our office once their final Spring Qtr. class registration is "set" on the UC database:**

- students who Co-op-ed Winter Qtr. and/or will Co-op Spring Qtr.
  - students using Voc. Rehab. Benefits.
  - students in Distance-Learning programs.
  - students on Active Duty during Winter Qtr.
  - students enrolled in **all** "Flexibly" scheduled classes Winter Qtr.
  - students enrolled in **all** Independent Study classes Winter Qtr.
  - students who **ended** Winter Qtr. at 25% pay rate.
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**STUDY ABROAD:**

Typically students may **not** receive VA pay for this type of study. ANYONE registering for Study Abroad **must** contact us **BEFORE** the qtr. begins concerning this registration, in order to avoid an interruption of VA pay.

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**CO-OP Concerns**

**If** you plan to Co-op Spring Quarter and want to still receive your VA benefits, contact our office **immediately** for the Co-op Rate "request" form.

**If** you are already certified at the **Co-op Rate** but your current "request" form ended Winter Quarter, contact

our office to inform us of how you want to next be certified. We'll need to know if you want to continue the Co-op Rate or switch to the regular VA pay rate, a form may also be required for your choice.

**If** you are already certified at the **Co-op Rate** but your Co-op/Class quarter rotation has changed, contact our office **immediately** in order to redo your Co-op request form. This must be redone **by 4/10/09.**

**If** you plan to Co-op Spring Quarter and do **not** want any benefits during that quarter, contact our office **immediately** to inform us of this change in your status to minimize any overpayment of VA chapter benefits.

The above forms should be submitted to our office ASAP but not before you have completed Spring Qtr. registration and **not later than 4/10/09.** Please feel free to contact our office concerning your status or questions **you may have about the Co-op Rate of pay.**

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**SPECIAL NOTES:**

Students pursuing "**Distance Learning**" types of programs that are certified **during** each quarter, students still on **Active Duty** and **Voc. Rehab.** (Chpt. #31) students need to contact us once their Spring Qtr., 2009; class registration is "set" on the UC database to be certified for Spring Qtr., 2009.

Students pursuing "**Distance Learning**" (Independent Study") type of programs that are certified **at the end of each quarter** should remember to contact our office as soon as "A, B, C, D, F" grades are posted on the UC database for **all** their Winter Qtr., 2009 classes in order to be certified for eligible Winter Qtr., 2009 enrollment. (Remember VA takes approximately 6+ weeks to process school certification reports and has a 1-yr. limit on payment of retroactive benefits.)

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**CHPT. #31/ VOC. REHAB. BENEFITS**

To **begin** your 24 hr. notice for your Spring Qtr. bookcard you must have the following:

- 1.) Contacted us once your Spring Qtr. class registration is "set" on the UC database.
- 2.) A current authorization (#28-1905) form on file in file in our office from VA.
- 3.) An **accurate** 2008-09 UC "Declaration of Responsibility" form on file in our office, reflecting your **current official** Spring Qtr. UC College, degree and major.
- 5.) Provided us with written notification of **any** Spring Qtr. classes **not required** (These student "N/A" notes must identify the "N/A" class(es), state they

do not apply to the current degree program, **and indicate** whether or not the VA agreed to pay for the tuition, books, and fees for the “N/A” classes.)  
6.) Provided our office with any other required forms.

(Bookcards may be mailed to you if you specifically request it.) There is a limit of **one bookcard per qtr.** without additional approval from Voc. Rehab.

### **IMPORTANT VOC. REHAB. REMINDERS**

- Watch the balance-due on your school bill. If your balance is not “0” then contact the One-Stop Center (513-556-1000) to find out why you owe the school money **before** the due date to avoid late fees.
- Be sure to waive the UC health insurance by the deadline, if you do not want to pay for it yourself.
- If you are registering for **any** classes that do **not apply** to your current official degree major you should discuss them with your Voc. Rehab. Counselor **before** the term begins (see #5 above.).
- If you will **not attend UC classes Spring Qtr.** you must officially withdraw from Spring Qtr classes and then notify our office **by 4/6/09**. Failure to do this may result in you being held responsible for the tuition and fees for Spring Qtr.
- Watch the ending date on your current authorization form (#28-1905). If it expires soon be sure to contact your Voc. Rehab counselor to have a new #28-1905 sent to our office. **MAKE SURE** our Office receives the new #28-1905 at least **six weeks before** your next UC term begins. Students attending summer need to provide us this form **by early May**.

### **T.V. COURSES**

These are classes that are presented by Video-tape, CD ROM, or broadcast on cable T.V. VA requires that these types of classes go through an approval process in order for students to receive VA benefits for this type of instructional delivery mode. **If** you register for any classes taught by this method contact our office **before** the quarter begins to make sure your class is approved for VA pay. **If** the class is not approved for VA benefits for T.V. delivery mode you should change the course to a different type of delivery mode (i.e., standard classroom study or independent study), or you may drop it and add a different class altogether. **If** you remain registered in a non-approved T.V. class you **must write our office a note** identifying the class and stating you realize it will not be included for VA benefit pay. These student notes are due **by 4/10/09** in order for the student to remain certified for VA benefits.

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON NON-STANDARD (“FLEX”) CLASSES**

Several UC Colleges currently offer classes that have different begin/end dates than the standard quarter dates. These nonstandard classes are identified in the school’s database class offerings as “flexibly scheduled classes”, “Weekend College”, and “ASAP” classes. Taking “Flex” courses will usually affect your VA pay. Since VA pays benefits based on “pursuit” once the course ends, so does payment for that course in most cases. Be sure to pay close attention to the “Flex” class term dates when registering for these classes.

You may register for “Flex” courses at the beginning of the standard quarter or, in most cases, just prior to the class begin date. Registering for all your classes at the outset is the best option, but will also mean you may have a larger tuition bill to pay at the beginning of the quarter. **Students who wait to register** until later in the quarter for these classes must be sure to **NOTIFY OUR OFFICE** of the addition **BEFORE** the class begins. Also, notify us **immediately** if you withdraw from a “Flex” class.

Students registered for “Flex” classes must provide our office with their final grades **within 1-½ weeks** of the official end of the class. Our office will send you a letter stating the deadline for these “Flex” class grades. The grade report may be in the form of a letter from their instructor (on departmental letterhead) stating their grade or posted onto the UC database. (We need this because typically these grades are not officially available until after our reporting deadline.) Students not providing this documentation may create an overpayment with the VA since we’ll have to report “No Grade” (NG) awarded. VA will not pay benefits for “NG” designations. It is the student’s responsibility for making sure our office receives their grades in a timely manner. Student’s failing to comply with this policy will have to contact our office for possible **retroactive** certification for all future “Flex” classes.

If you have questions about how you will be paid when taking accelerated courses, please contact our office. Even if we cannot give you a definite answer we will be able to supply you with specific class term dates so that VA may better assist you.

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**CLERMONT POLICE ACADEMY**

Students who used VA benefits for **Part I** of the current Clermont Police Academy should make sure they receive an “A, B, C, D, F” or “**I**” grade. One of these grades must be posted on the school’s database **by 3/26/09** for **Part I** to avoid VA payment problems for that term. If assigned an “**I**” grade for Part I, students should make sure the “**I**” grade change is posted on the school’s database at the end of Part II.

Students certified for Clermont Police Academy during Winter Quarter, 2009, should also be officially registered for **Part II** on the UC database **by 3/31/09**. Students that register for **Part II** of the Clermont Police Academy as part of their Assoc. Criminal Justice Tech. (CJTNP) major must **notify our office** if any of the Police Academy credits represent repeated course-work (i.e., you already passed one or more of the ten classes included in the Police Academy during prior study). VA will not pay benefits for repeat coursework, even though you must retake it to meet Police Academy requirements. Our office will need a note from the student stating the number of repeat credit hours of **Part II** by **4/10/09**.

**CLERMONT COLLEGE “DIRECTED STUDY/ JUSTICE (34-CJTN-215) CLASS:**

**NOTE:** Students enrolling in #34-CJTN-215 for Spring Qtr. must have it posted **on the UC database by 4/3/09**. Students **must, also, provide** our office a copy of their approved “Course Substitution” form for this class **by 4/10/09**. If this class does **not apply** toward the AAS: CJNPA degree graduation requirements the student must write us a note identifying it as non-required **by 4/10/09**. Failure to meet the above deadlines will cause an interruption of VA benefits.

**“NP”, “X”, “SP”, “UP”, “NG”, “I”,  
“F” & “UW” GRADES**

Because “**NP**” and “**NG**” grades and **Graduate “SP”** and “**UP**” grades are non-punitive (do not ever figure into your GPA) VA will not pay benefits for them. (Exceptions are made for students in the Colleges of Law or Medicine and those Graduate students registered for courses titled “Thesis” or “Dissertation” Research that receive “**NG**” or “**SP**” grades.) These “**SP**” and “**UP**” grades were new at the Graduate level effective Winter Qtr., 2007, and new at the Undergraduate level effective Spring Qtr., 2007. The Undergraduate “SP” and “**UP**” grades and Graduate level “I” grade do not become punitive until one year later. VA will not pay benefits for these grades

until they lapse to “**F**” in the GPA at the end of that year, which may create a VA overpayment

The “**X**” grade was new Fall Qtr., 2005. The “**X**” grade is assigned for students who remained registered for a class but never attended the class per the instructor’s records. The “**X**” grade counts as an “**F**” in the GPA. VA will not pay any benefits for “**X**” grades because VA will not pay for non-pursuit.

“**UW**” grades are given when students simply stop attending a class without doing the proper withdrawal paperwork. VA will not pay benefits for “**UW**” grades (even though they figure in your GPA as an “**F**”) because VA will not pay for non-pursuit. If a “**UW**” grade will reduce your VA pay rate, additional paper work (mailed to you by our office), is required when students want to receive benefits for the portion of the “**UW**” class they did attend.

Depending on the number of applicable credit hours carried, students may create an overpayment with VA as a result of “**NP**”, “**X**”, “**SP**”, “**UP**”, “**NG**”, “**UW**”, and Graduate “I” grades.

Since “**F**” and Undergraduate “I” grades are punitive, VA will pay benefits for them. It’s usually better to request an “**I**” grade for an Undergraduate class, rather than get an “**NP**”, “**NG**”, “**SP**”, or “**UP**” if these grades will reduce your VA pay rate AND you plan to complete the outstanding work before the end of the following quarter.

**NOTE:** Students must notify us promptly of any grade changes (recent or past) once they are processed onto the school’s database. Accumulating 16+ credit hours of “**I**”, “**F**”, “**IP\***”, “**SP**”, “**UP**”, “**UW**”, “**X**”, or “**Y**” grades on your UC transcript will result in an interruption of VA benefits due to “Unsatisfactory Progress” status. For questions about the status of your “Unsatisfactory Progress” totals, you may contact our office or you may contact the One-Stop Center to order a transcript.

**\*This policy change for undergraduate “IP” grades lapsing to “F” in the GPA began Fall Qtr. 2003, and continued through Spring Qtr. 2007. This grade is no longer used.**

**Grades Via Website**

UC students may now view their grades on the internet. The website is [www.onestop.UC.edu](http://www.onestop.UC.edu). Click on “check my grades” under the “my classes” section on the left of the screen. Winter Qtr. (09W) grades should be available after noon on 3/26/09.

## ITEMS OF INTEREST:

### **WANT TO BE IN THE COMICS? VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

DAAP Professor Carol Tyler is working on a project to use comics and graphics to help combat veterans and their families deal with the impact of war.

She is looking for veterans of any conflict to come and tell the story of their military experience to her Spring Qtr. DAAP class. The time commitment is approximately 1 hr. Her students will then interpret the information in a comic's graphic art form.

At the end of this project participants will be invited to a reception to view the completed student art work. Each veteran gets to keep the original art that tells their story. For more information about Professor Tyler's project you may email her at [tylercl@email.uc.edu](mailto:tylercl@email.uc.edu) or may go to <http://www.uc.edu/News/NR.aspx?ID=9697> or phone her (513) 961-2835.

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### **Ohio Women Veterans Conference**

This conference is being hosted by the Ohio Dept. of Veterans Services' Advisory Committee on Women Veterans and the VA Healthcare System of Ohio. The conference will provide information and resources to attendees, as well as, honor women veterans from all branches for their service. The conference will be held at the Alladdin Shrine Center, 3850 Stelzer Rd., Columbus, OH 43219.

The **conference date is April 4, 2009** and begins at 10:00 a.m., with registration beginning at 8:00 a.m. There is a \$5.00 fee to cover lunch. The **registration deadline is March 27, 2009**.

The registration form and driving directions are at [http://dvs.ohio.gov/events\\_committees/women\\_veterans\\_advisory\\_committee/ohio\\_women\\_veterans\\_conference\\_2009.aspx](http://dvs.ohio.gov/events_committees/women_veterans_advisory_committee/ohio_women_veterans_conference_2009.aspx)

You may phone Karen Kish at (614) 752-8941 if you have questions concerning this conference.

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### **STOP BY AND VISIT**

Ms. Walters, a representative from the Cincinnati VA Medical Center will be setting up a booth at each UC campus. She specializes in services for veterans who participated in Operation Enduring Freedom and those involved in Operation Iraqi Freedom. The booth will have information about the services available at the VA Medical Center for veterans returning from deployment.

### Visit her booth at:

Main Campus (in Tangeman Univ. Center) on **4/8/09** 9am-3pm  
College of Applied Science campus on **4/15/09** 10 am-2 pm  
Clermont College campus on **5/20/09** 11 am-2 pm  
Raymond Walters College date and time are yet to be determined

You may contact Ms. Walters for more information and for the dates she'll be at Raymond Walters College by calling (513) 861-3100 (ext. 4707).

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### **VETERANS CELEBRATION**

On Armed Forces Day (**5/16/09**) there will be a "**Welcome Home Celebration**" at Lunken Airport, 4:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m. Veterans and their families may come and enjoy **free** live music, food, activities for the children, and watch skydivers. Celebrities will be there and **Anthony Munoz** is the Master of Ceremonies. Phone (513) 475-6943 or register online at: [www.CincinnatiWelcomeHome.com](http://www.CincinnatiWelcomeHome.com)

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### **LAW STUDENTS**

Students interested in using their VA benefits for Kaplan review courses should contact the Dayton Center (937) 431-9450 for information about their program. This site, located in Fairborn, OH, has this preparatory study approved for VA benefits.

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### **UC TESTING SERVICES CENTER**

This office is located on the first floor of the University Pavilion on main campus, along with the New Student Orientation Office and Career Development Center. They administer a variety of placement tests, such as English composition, Math, History, and languages, plus many more subjects. They also administer computer-based tests, such as CLEP, LSAT, GRE, MCAT, etc.

To make an appointment for testing phone: (513) 556-7173. For more information on what tests are available, etc., visit their website at:

[http://www.uc.edu/sas/testing\\_services/](http://www.uc.edu/sas/testing_services/).

This UC testing site and the one at Raymond Walters College are both approved sites by VA.

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### **VA PAY FOR NATIONAL TEST FEES**

Applicants must have applied for Chpt. #30, VEAP, Section #903, or Chpt. #35 benefits and been determined eligible for these benefits by VA to qualify for this benefit.

Section 106 of PL 108-454 allows VA reimbursement for fees charged for such tests as ACT, AP, CLEP, GMAT, GRE, LSAT, MAT. MCAT, SAT, etc. (VA will not pay for fees to take pre-tests (i.e., Kaplan test,

etc.). The VA will reimburse you for registration fees, specialized tests, and administrative fees.

To find out more about what tests are included and how to apply go to [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) and follow the link from there to this VA Educational benefit.

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### **MONEY MATTERS:**

You may also find these web sites useful:  
<http://www.military.com/> click on “scholarships”.  
<http://www.MOAA.org/Education/> This site is a link from Military Officers Assoc. of America (MOAA.)

### **UC Alumni Association Scholarships**

Visit the following website for information on the various scholarships available to eligible students. [www.alumni.uc.edu](http://www.alumni.uc.edu) and click on “scholarships”. You may also phone them at (513) 556-4344 for information. **(Deadlines range from early March to mid-May, 2009.)**

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### **COLLEGE OF APPLIED SCIENCE ONLY**

(Visit [www.uc.edu/cas/pay](http://www.uc.edu/cas/pay) for more information about various CAS scholarships.)  
Contact Sherri Cmar (513-556-6529) for information on the two CAS scholarships below.

**Continuing CAS students** interested in applying for scholarship funds for the upcoming academic school year (2009-10) may pick up application information forms at Dean Patrick Kumpf’s Office, Room #208 Administration Building, during normal office hours. These are small scholarships awarded based on academic record and need. Students need to **apply before June, 2009** in order to have awarded funds in place before Fall Qtr., 2009, begins.

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**CAS CHEMISTRY TECH. STUDENTS ONLY**  
**Sophomore women and minorities** in the CAS Chemical Technology degree major may apply now for the Women & Minorities Scholarship Program.

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### **MICHAEL J. COLLIGAN MEMORIAL VETERAN’S SCHOLARSHIP**

Through the generosity of the late Michael J. Colligan this fund is offering scholarships for veterans returning to school. The scholarship funds are for school-related expenses and the veteran must be a resident of Butler County. Applications are available in our office and at [www.hamiltonfoundation.org](http://www.hamiltonfoundation.org) or contact (513) 863-1717. Applications must be received at the Hamilton County Community Foundation **by**

**4/17/09.** The Foundation office is located at 319 N. Third Street, Hamilton, OH 45011. (E-mail is [Kbraswell@hamiltonfoundation.org](mailto:Kbraswell@hamiltonfoundation.org)) (Fax: (513) 863-2868)

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### **GENERAL FINANCIAL AID**

It is all right to estimate income and tax information. The form even allows you to indicate that you are doing so. Complete your FAFSA as soon as possible to maximize the aid available to you. The Financial Aid Office indicates that while there’s no official early deadline, additional grant monies go quickly.

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### **SAVE YOUR CURRENT 2008-09 VA AWARD LETTERS!**

**(Our office doesn’t have copies of these.)**

You may provide a copy of this 2008-09 VA Award letter to Financial Aid if they ask for a copy of your “most recent” VA Award letter, since you won’t receive your 2009-10 VA Award letter until VA processes you for 2009-10 benefits. If you lost your 2008-09 VA Award letter you may go the VA Office at 36 E. 7<sup>th</sup> St. with a photo I.D. to obtain a computer screen-print of your benefit amount. We recommend you phone ahead (513) 684-3877 before making the trip. Another option is now available to Chpt. #30, #1606 and REAP students. These students may do a screen-print for Financial Aid from the VA “WAVE” site. This site now displays the student’s last two pay periods and the amount of remaining months and days of benefits.

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### **ATTN: CHPT. #30, #1606 & REAP STUDENTS**

Students under these chapters must verify their enrollment to VA at the end of each month they’re certified in order to receive their VA check for that month just ending.

Students without any enrollment changes that affected their VA pay rate for the prior month may use either the phone verification or the VA WAVE site. Students who had a change in their enrollment that impacted their VA pay rate during the prior month must use the WAVE site to verify their enrollment to VA for that month.

**DO NOT** indicate future changes when you monthly verify with VA. Answer the questions based only on the month shown on the screen.

<b>Remember</b> VA verifications do <b>not</b> replace the need to promptly notify our office of <b>any</b> enrollment changes.
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Pay close attention to the "END DATE" under "Your School Attendance" on the VA WAVE site. This date reflects what VA has in their computer regarding your final date for VA benefits this school year. Contact our office if you have questions or concerns about the ending date shown or the pay rate indicated by VA.

**VA Phone Verification = 1-877-823-2378**  
**VA Web Verification = [www.qibill.va.gov](http://www.qibill.va.gov)**  
**then follow the links to "W.A.V.E".**

### **CONTINUOUS PAY FOR SUMMER**

Students receiving VA benefits during Spring Qtr., 2009, and will attend Summer Qtr., 2009, classes should contact our office in **early May**, **AFTER** their summer class registration is finalized on the school's database. Students seeking Summer Qtr. VA benefits must complete the summer UC "Declaration" form for our office. Beginning in May these forms will be available in our office or may be mailed to you upon request. (Voc. Rehab. bookcards will not be available for release until 5/25/09, however.)

### **SUMMER QTR. ADVANCE PAYMENT**

Students not receiving VA benefits during May, 2009, are not In-service, are not in an "open" learning, "distance" learning or "Flex" class degree program, are not Chpt. #1607, or planning to enter the Clermont Police Academy and will register for at least six credit hours for Summer Quarter are eligible for advance pay. Interested and eligible students should contact our office to apply **before noon, May 15, 2009**.

Remember these funds will not fully cover tuition expenses and may not arrive before bill payments are due. The advance check will cover 6/22/09 through the end of July in most cases. VA sends these advance checks to our office. We, in turn, notify the individual that the check is available for in-person pick-up with a photo I.D. between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., M-F. All following summer VA checks will be mailed directly to the students themselves or direct deposited for them.

We may not have all the data concerning the VA pay rates are for the various summer terms until the end of May so will include this data in our May newsletter.

### **KEEP US PROMPTLY INFORMED**

Remember to notify our office whenever you have a change in your status. We are required to report all status changes to VA in a timely manner.

Since it takes VA approximately 6+ weeks to process our reports it is important to notify our office as soon as

a change occurs. Even though you may notify the VA directly of changes you must also notify our office so we may make our official report to VA within our reporting deadline.

Contact our office if you are even thinking about making a change in your UC status. This way you will know how the change will impact your VA pay and the timing of any required paperwork ahead of time. This will greatly help your benefits to go smoothly.

### **BENEFITS ABOUT TO END?**

Recipients of Chapter #30 whose eligibility for these VA benefits will expire during the break period (3/22-3/29/09), or have approximately 12 months of Chapter #30 benefits remaining, should contact our office about the possibility of extending them, if you have not reached your ten-year limit for using these benefits. If you are receiving any VA Chapter benefits that end on or before 3/29/09, please contact our office so that we may remove you from our lists.

### **POST/911 CHAPTER #33 UPDATE:**

VA is still working on finalizing the Regulations and implementation process for these benefits beginning 8/1/09. There are still many unanswered questions and things are still changing. The VA web site [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) is still the best source for information updates on this new benefit law.

VA plans to make the on-line application available in May, 2009. Students attending programs at the University of Cincinnati should submit their application to the VA Office in Buffalo, NY, regardless of their home address.

**Please read the Regulations governing this new VA benefit chapter BEFORE applying** since your application indicates your decision to change to this new benefit Chapter and is irrevocable. If you have questions not covered on the VA web site, call VA (1-888-442-4551) or email them, to get answers before applying for Chpt. #33. It's crucial that students who apply to Chpt. #33 keep the "Certificate of Eligibility" letter VA issues to them.

A few items that have come to our attention regarding this new Chapter #33 may be of interest. One of them pertains to how VA will **compute benefit usage** for part-time students. Currently, students enrolled for 6-8 undergraduate standard credit hours are paid at a 50% pay rate per month and, therefore, use ½ month of benefits for each month they're enrolled.

Chpt. #33 requires students to be enrolled at .51 training time to be eligible for the monthly housing stipend. This means that VA has to separate the payment tiers based on the exact number of eligible enrolled credit hours. For example, students registered for 7 undergraduate standard credit hours would be considered at a .66 training time so would now use .66 of a month of benefits for each month of enrollment. Part-time students will, therefore, exhaust their allotted number of months of benefits faster.

Another item you should be aware of is the manner VA plans to pay the **\$1,000 annual book/supply money** to students. Since VA deals with thousands of schools with many different types of terms, they plan to pay this supply money based on the number of credit hours of enrollment. VA will determine a dollar amount for each eligible credit and issue payment of the book/supply funds according to the student's eligible enrollment up to a maximum of 24 credit hours per year. This means a student could reach this maximum by the end of their second school quarter and not receive any book/supply money for the rest of that school year. Students will need to plan their budgets accordingly.

The final issue of interest concerns current Chpt. #30 students. Currently, VA awards 36 months of full-time benefits for each Chpt. #1606, Chpt. #30 and REAP. Generally, if any student is eligible under more than one "chapter" of VA benefits, they may receive up to a maximum of 48 months of full-time benefits to use within their Delimiting dates.

A student currently eligible under two+ chapters will be allowed this same 48-month maximum if they apply to Chpt. #33. However, the VA web site states that a student switching from Chpt. #30 benefits to the new Chpt. #33 will only be allowed to use the number of months they have remaining under Chpt. #30.

Currently a Chpt. #30 student who is also eligible under another chapter is eligible for the 48 months of maximum VA benefits. It doesn't specify that a Chpt. #30 student who is eligible under two chapters at the time they apply to Chpt. #33 would also be allowed the 48 month maximum allotment.

Also, currently any student eligible under only one chapter of benefits is limited to the months of benefits associated with that chapter. Since students eligible for only one chapter prior to switching to Chpt. #33 will still be only eligible under one chapter (because they lose their former benefit chapter eligibility when electing Chpt. #33), they would retain their same

original months of fulltime benefits. However, this could also be the case for REAP students that have discharged from their unit but they are not sited under the limit of 36 months of benefits in the current VA information.

Nothing is finalized yet, so if you have input or questions or you want to share how these planned regulations will impact you contact your elected officials NOW. Some local elected officials:

Senator George Voinovich's (R-OH) email is:  
Voinovich.Senate.gov

Senator Sherrod Brown's (D-OH) email is:  
Brown.senate.gov

Representative Steve Driehaus' (D-OH-1<sup>st</sup> District)  
email is: Driehaus.house.gov

Representative Jean Schmidt's (R-OH-2<sup>nd</sup> District)  
Contact information is: [www.house.gov/Schmidt](http://www.house.gov/Schmidt)

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A GREAT SPRING  
BREAK!**