

Veterans and the Classroom

**Broward College
Veteran Services**

2013

OBJECTIVES: Participants will gain a basic understanding of...

- Veterans readjustment to civilian life
- Veterans Benefits
- The experience of the veteran in the classroom
- Ways to facilitate adjustment to the classroom?

The Gulf War, codenamed Operation Desert Storm
(1990)

Operation Endurance Freedom (OEF), (2001)

Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) (2002)

FAST FACTS

- *Florida has the third largest population of veterans in the nation after California and Texas with more than 1.6 million veterans – 12 percent of the Sunshine State's population 18 and over.*
- *Wartime veterans make up about 75 percent of Florida's total veteran population (1.2 million).*
- *There are more Vietnam-era veterans than any other wartime category in Florida with more than 498,000.*
- *There are more than 231,000 veterans of Afghanistan and Iraq who claim Florida as their home of record.*
- *Florida has more than 160,000 women veterans.*
- *Florida has the largest population of World War II veterans in the nation with more than 164,000.*
- *Florida has the third largest population of disabled veterans in the nation with more than 249,000.*
- *There are more than 731,000 veterans over the age of 65 in the Sunshine State.*
- *There are 187,000 military retirees who call Florida home.*

The Sunshine State is home to the third largest population of women veterans in the nation, with more than 160,000. Women veterans are one of the fastest growing segments of the veterans' population. Of the approximately 22 million living veterans nationwide, about 1.9 million are women. They comprise nearly 10 percent of the total veterans' population and nearly 5 percent of all veterans who use VA health care services.

More than 231,000 veterans from Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom claim the Sunshine State as their home of record. Many are enrolling in Florida's colleges and universities using the new Post 9/11 GI Bill. Others are looking for employment, housing, health care and other earned services, benefits and support. Florida welcomes its returning veterans and their families.

Veterans may experience...

Marriage, relationship problems	Medical issues	Financial hardships
Endless questions from family and friends	Guilt, shame, anger	Lack of structure
Feelings of isolation	Nightmares, sleeplessness	Lack of motivation, forgetfulness

WHAT THE VETERAN BRINGS HOME

Heightened sensory awareness of sights, sounds & smells.

Identification and closeness with their military unit

Regimentation into highly structured and efficient routines.

Reconnecting with friends more difficult than expected.

Difficulties arise in trying to generate a “new normal”

Life at home/campus may not have the edge and adrenaline associated with wartime duty

These qualities insured survival during the war, but may not work in the classroom



Veterans Services

Eligibility and Entitlement

Chapter 30

Veterans who enlisted for the first time or entered active duty for the first time beginning July 1, 1985 or after:

- Must serve at least two years,
- Possess a high school diploma or GED,
- Receive an honorable discharge,
- Have paid \$1,200 into the program.

Chapter 31

Vocational rehabilitation is available for service-connected disability and discharge under conditions other than dishonorable. Veterans apply directly to the Veterans Administration Rehabilitation Offices. Payments are made for books, tuition, fees and a monthly subsistence. Veterans in this program are eligible for 12 years from date of discharge or date of rating of disability and can receive benefits for up to a total of four years full-time training.

Eligibility Process

Students are given a 1905 form from their case manager. Case managers can fax the form directly to our office, if necessary. A veterans certifying official completes the form, and sends it back to the case manager for approval and review.

Chapter 33

Post 9/11 GI Bill

Veterans who were regular active-duty must serve a minimum of 90 days honorable active duty after 9/10/2001. Reservists must serve a minimum of 90 days aggregate active duty after 9/10/2001. Full benefits are paid to those who served at least 36 months after 9/10/2001. Those who serve less time will receive a proportional benefit. VA will pay tuition and fees directly to the school. Subsistence and book allowances are paid directly to the veteran up to \$1,000 per year.

Chapter 35

Dependent benefits for a surviving spouse and/or children of a veteran who has a 100% service connected disability

The spouse has 10 years from the date of death or date of 100% disability rating in which to complete 45 months of full-time school. Children can continue to receive benefits after marrying but will be paid as single persons only until the age of 26.

Chapter 1606

National Guard and selected reserve

Veterans in this chapter are eligible once they sign a six-year obligation with their assigned unit. Benefits are available for a maximum of 36 months. Veterans are eligible for 10 years from date of first use.

Chapter 1607

National Guard and selected reserve

Veterans who were activated as a result of a national emergency are eligible once the veteran serves 90 consecutive days.

All GIBILL Benefits

Payments will be issued at the beginning of each month for training pursued the previous month. Based on enrollment for the previous month.

Fall Term	Credits reported	Equivalency of credits for Pay	
S1 - 16 wks	3 credits	3.38 credits	
S2 - 8 wks	3 credits	6.75 credits	
S3 - 13 wks	3 credits	4.15 credits	
S4 - 8 weeks	3 credits	6.75	

Fall term is August 24 through December 17th. You register for 12 credits. 9 credits in Session 1 (August 24th-December 17th) and another 3 credits in Session 4 (October 22nd-December 17th).

Session	Dates	Credits	Payment				
Session 1	August 24th - December 17th	9	3/4 pay (August)	3/4 pay (September)	3/4 pay (October)		
Session 4	October 22nd - December 17th	3			3/4 pay (October 22, then 100%)	100% (November)	100% (December)

Credit hours enrolled	Proration	Percentage rounded	BAH
1-5			\$0
6			\$0
7	$7/12=.58$	60%	\$1,170.00
8	$8/12=.67$	70%	\$1,365.00
9	$9/12=.75$	80%	\$1,560.00
10	$10/12=.83$	80%	\$1,560.00
11	$11/12=.92$	90%	\$1,755.00
12	$12/12=100\%$	100%	\$1,950.00

CH33 payment schedule submit to change at any time by VA

POST 911 GIBILL CH33 BAH

Exclusively Online Training (No
Classroom Instruction)

\$714.50

Attending classes at ½ time or less

NOT PAYABLE

Active Duty Trainee (or transferee
spouse of service member)

Not payable

A yearly books and supplies stipend of up to \$1000 paid proportionately
based on enrollment. Sent directly to student

First Day walking onto the Campus

- Don't know where to go, who to talk to
- Registration Admission requirements
- Counseling How ready are they for campus life
- Financial Up front costs, books, cost of living
- **Classes/Curriculum** Trying to fit in-dealing with the 'freshmen question
- **Connection**

Defining TBI & PTSD

■ **Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) –**

A blow or jolt to the head or a penetrating head injury that disrupts the function of the brain.

■ **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD– DMS-IV)**

An anxiety disorder that can develop in response to exposure to an extreme traumatic event (*e.g., military combat, violent personal assaults, terrorist attacks, natural or man-made disasters, or horrific accidents*).

The event, directly experienced or witnessed in another person, involves actual or threatened death, serious injury or threat to one's physical integrity.

Best Practices in the Classroom

- The classroom can be **threatening** to many war veterans.
- ***Get to know the veterans:*** this will help them connect with the goals of the academic institution and your course.
- Staff often find veteran students to be among the most **interesting and growth-capable** of all of their students.

Best Practices in the Classroom

- **Empathy** about the experiences of a wartime veteran, *without opinions about the war*, is very valuable in these situations.
- A veteran took an oath to serve the Commander in Chief and our nation for a period of time no matter the circumstances. **Sharing personal opinions can become a distraction** to their learning and to your relationship with them, and in some cases this is a **source of intense reactions and anger**.
- Unless the course content dictates, *refrain from expressing opinions about the war* in class.

Best Practices in the Classroom

- Veterans are typically serious about college
- Veterans may get frustrated by other students complaining about due dates, course difficulty, staying up late to study or hardship about "life as a student"
- *Avoid asking the Veteran to share war experiences or disclose opinions about the war*, unless a prior relationship has been developed, or prior permission has been given.

Best Practices in the Classroom

- Personal writing assignments, videos, and certain discussion topics may lead some Veterans to experience painful memories and create emotional discomfort.
- Veterans see these processes as a waste of time, but will usually learn the value of this form of teamwork if they can see the results of this collaborative effort. They will then often make good leaders in discussions
- **Flexibility:** Consider random (self-selected) rather than assigned classroom seating.
- sometimes Veterans have multiple VA appointments.

Best Practices in the Classroom

- If any veteran seems to be severely depressed, suicidal, or appears to be having other significant problems, it is important to seek consultation.
- This can be done by calling the a Vet Center. A brief discussion with a professional in the field of war trauma treatment can be extremely helpful.
- Veterans may be very reluctant to get help, but the professor's understanding can make a difference.

Advising Veterans

- Create a safe, open, and welcoming space
 - Non-judgmental
 - Privacy
 - “Safe” environment
- Build trust and understanding
- LISTEN to what is said and not said
 - Let the student talk
 - Ask open-ended questions about on-campus experience
- Let them talk...make plenty of time
- Avoid intrusive/inappropriate questions

What college campuses can do

- Survey your student veterans for their needs and concerns.
- Work with student veterans during registration periods to ensure they are able to quickly enroll in classes.
- Add “veterans sensitivity” training in faculty and staff development programs.
- Host events on campus to make sure veterans feel welcome on campus.

Resources for OEF/OIF/OND Veterans

- Pompano Beach Vet Center
- Ft. Lauderdale Vet Center
- SAP - College Counseling Center Staff
- VA Benefits Administration
- Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs
- VA Vocational Rehabilitation Program
- Workforce Alliance Veterans' Representatives

■ Pompano Beach Vet Center

- O: 954 94-1669
- 2300 W Sample Road, Suite 102
- Pompano Beach, FL 33073

□ Fort Lauderdale Vet Center

- 713 NE 3rd Ave.
- Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33304
- Phone: 954-356-7926 Or 877-927-8387

References

- *The National Center for PTSD*
- *US Department of Defense*
- *US Army Medical Department Center and School*
- *US Dept of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy*
- *Walter Reed Army Institute of Research*
- *Student Veterans of America*
- *Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America*
- *Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs*