

VA INFORMATION

Federal law and Department of Veterans Affairs regulations are specific and rigid regarding eligibility to receive veterans' educational benefits. To be eligible, a veteran/dependent must be pursuing an "educational objective". An "educational objective" for community colleges is defined by VA regulations as one that leads to a standard college degree (Associate or Associate of Applied Science degree) or certificate. Students are not permitted to receive educational assistance from VA for "recreational" purposes.

In order to assure compliance with VA regulations, Dyersburg State Community College adheres to the following conditions for certifying eligibility for veterans' educational benefits:

1. Each veteran/dependent must be fully accepted for admission by the Office of Admissions and Records.
2. Each veteran/dependent must designate a program of study that will lead to an Associate or Associate of Applied Science degree or certificate listed in the Dyersburg State Community College general catalog. This program of study must be approved for VA benefits by the State Approving Agency. If a veteran/dependent changes programs or catalogs, they must notify the VA Certifying Official.
3. The VA Certifying Official will certify only those courses that are included in the student's program of study. Certification of elective courses will be limited to the number of electives permitted in the designated program. Electives, for VA purposes, may be satisfied by courses for which the student received prior college credit and credit for previous military or civilian training or experience. Veterans/dependents should consult with the VA Certifying Official before elective courses are selected.
4. **VA will not pay for Remedial/Developmental classes offered on-line. They must be taken in a classroom setting.**
5. Once the veteran/dependent starts receiving benefits, satisfactory attendance, conduct, and progress, as set by the school, must be maintained. Class attendance will be monitored. If a veteran/dependent does not meet the standards set by the school (stated under General Academic Retention Standards in the Dyersburg State Community College general catalog), the VA Certifying Official must notify VA. VA will stop benefits if the school reports unsatisfactory attendance, conduct, or progress toward a degree.
6. The veteran/dependent is responsible for studying the college general catalog and selecting appropriate courses. Faculty advisors are available to assist with the

- selection of classes. If there is a question whether or not a class can be certified for VA payment, consult the VA Certifying Official.
7. If a veteran/dependent has attended college prior to enrollment at Dyersburg State Community College, official copies of all academic transcripts must be on file in the Office of Admissions and Records and have been evaluated for prior credit. Admissions requirements must be completed before an enrollment certification can be submitted to the Department of Veteran Affairs. The Admissions and Records Office must also have a copy of each veteran's member 4 copy DD-214 for evaluation of proper credit.
 8. A veteran/dependent who wishes to change their program of study must notify the VA Certifying Official and officially change their program with the Office of Admissions and Records. The student, the VA Certifying Official, and the Office of Admissions and Records must be in agreement at all times on the course of study being followed.
 9. A repeat of any passed course will not be certified for VA educational benefits just to improve a passing grade. A repeat **can** be certified if a minimum passing grade is required for the veteran's/dependent's program of study. Incomplete courses cannot be re-certified unless the "I" has been changed to an "F".
 10. CEU (Continuing Education Units) and audited classes cannot be certified for VA benefits as such courses do not count toward any degree.
 11. Any time a veteran/dependent drops a course or withdraws from school, an over-payment will be declared back to the beginning of the semester unless mitigating circumstances are presented to VA. Any veteran/dependent who withdraws and feels he/she has mitigating circumstances should notify the VA Certifying Official at the time of drop or withdrawal so that this information can be included in the Notice of Change of Status which is sent to VA.

Mitigating circumstances include, but are not limited to the following:

- a) Serious illness of the eligible veteran or dependent
- b) Serious illness or death in the eligible veteran's or dependent's immediate family
- c) Financial obligations which require a change in terms, hours, or place of employment which preclude pursuit of a course
- d) Active duty military service
- e) Any other circumstance beyond the student's control which hampers pursuit of a course.

In order for classes to be certified for VA benefits in a timely manner, the following procedures are necessary:

1. Veterans/dependents who expect to receive payments from VA should pre-register any time the opportunity presents itself, and let the VA Certifying Official know that they have done so.
2. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the VA Certifying Official each semester immediately upon registering for classes to ensure that the courses in which they are registered are eligible for certification. If there are problems with the student's classes, the VA Certifying Official will send an email to the student's Dyersburg State email account advising the student of actions the student is required to take. If no response is received within 7 calendar days, the VA Certifying Official will certify those eligible courses for which the student is registered. In cases where another form of response is required, no certification will be done until all deficiencies are met.
3. The VA Certifying Official will certify classes in the earliest possible time frame; however, by law, all institutions have until 30 days after classes begin to certify a student's enrollment to VA.
4. Any time there is a change in enrollment status VA must be notified within 30 days. Changing your class schedule after initial registration may delay your certification to VA and in some cases result in an overpayment.
5. Any course substitutions must be officially approved by the department dean, have all required signatures, and be on file in the Office of Admissions and Records before the course will be certified for VA benefits.

Any time a veteran/dependent has questions about certification, they should contact the VA Certifying Official at 901/475-3147 or www.wooten.edu.

What must be reported to VA by the VA Certifying Official within 30 days of occurrence:

1. All drops during drop-add period when withdrawal is not recorded on the student transcript
2. All drops after drop period when punitive and non-punitive grades are assigned. If the grade is non-punitive (E, AU, W) mitigating circumstances are an issue.
3. Terminations when student totally withdraws either officially or unofficially from school. Last date of attendance is reported.

If a veteran/dependent has questions about eligibility or the amount of VA educational benefits, they can reach a counselor at the Veterans' Toll-Free Number 1-888-442-4551.

In order to receive monthly benefits under Chapters 30, 1606, and 1607 students must certify their enrollment on or after the last day of the month. This certification can be done either by calling Toll-Free 1-877-823-2378 which is available 24 hours a day/7days a week or by logging on to the W.A.V.E. web site at http://www.gibill.va.gov/resources/verify_attendance/ and following log-on instructions.

The above telephone numbers and web site can be found on the Dyersburg State Community College web site:

<http://www.dsc.edu/content/default.asp?ppid=12&spid=180>

I hereby certify that I have read and fully understand the above information and accept responsibility for fulfilling all requirements.

Signed: _____

Date: _____