

Regulation for Military Student Success

I. Purpose. This regulation provides a framework for the constituent institutions of the University of North Carolina System (UNC System) to develop and maintain a comprehensive network of services for military-affiliated students seeking to meet their educational goals. This regulation implements the requirements of Section 700.7.1 of the UNC Policy Manual, and serves to promote the general welfare of United States (U.S.) military service members, veterans, spouses, and dependent family members at the constituent institutions.

II. Data Collection and Reporting on Military-Affiliated Students. The UNC System Office shall establish appropriate and uniform data collection guidelines and procedures that will enable the tracking of academic progress of military-affiliated students, and that will support the enactment of the recommendations contained in the *UNC SERVES April 2010 Report to the President*.

III. Application Fees for Active Duty Service Members. Constituent institutions are encouraged to waive the admissions application fee for all service members if they are in an active duty status at the time of application.

IV. Tuition Rates for Military-Affiliated Students. Constituent institutions shall clearly articulate the process for military-affiliated students to establish eligibility for the in-state tuition rate pursuant to state and federal law, and to the guidelines of the Residency Determination System. Information regarding eligibility for in-state tuition shall be publicized as part of both the undergraduate and graduate recruitment and admissions processes.

V. Faculty and Staff Support Training on Issues Affecting Military-Affiliated Students. Constituent institutions shall provide support for faculty and staff training on issues that are unique to, or commonly encountered by, military-affiliated students. This training should conform to best practice guidelines. Professional advisors and faculty should be well-versed in continuous enrollment provisions in order to assist military-affiliated students in making the best decisions about their academic program choices.

VI. North Carolina National Guard Tuition Assistance Benefit. The North Carolina National Guard Tuition Assistance benefit shall be applicable to students at UNC constituent institutions seeking to achieve a two-year associate degree, a four-year baccalaureate degree, or a graduate degree. It shall also be applicable to students enrolled in a program granting a graduate certificate, and to students enrolled in a professional certification program recommended by the director of the North Carolina National Guard Education and Employment Center and approved by the North Carolina National Guard Education Services Officer.

VII. Campus-Based Support Structures for Military-Affiliated Students. Constituent institutions are encouraged to create campus-based military affairs committees to assist military-affiliated students in successfully transitioning to and succeeding in and beyond the educational environment. To ensure effectiveness, these committees should, at the minimum, be charged with:

A. Facilitating awareness and communication between key departments with regard to constituent institution-based services for military-affiliated students;

- B. Coordinating and evaluating programs and services for military-affiliated students;
- C. Factoring military-affiliated students into institutional planning, particularly with regard to diversity; and
- D. Ensuring institutional compliance with standards based on policy implemented by the Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs.

VIII. Financial Support of Military-Affiliated Students

A. Constituent institutions shall create policies that guarantee that undergraduate and graduate military-affiliated students using United States Veterans Administration (VA) educational benefits are held harmless from VA processing delays that prevent timely payment of their educational benefits. These policies shall include provisions:

1. Granting forgiveness of late payment fees on students whose VA educational benefits are delayed; and
2. Maintaining students' course registrations until such delayed payments are received.

B. Constituent institutions are encouraged to develop a policy providing undergraduate and graduate students using GI Bill benefits with "bridge loans," payment plans, tuition deferments, vouchers, or some combination of these items to cover tuition, fees, housing, books, and other expenses related directly to university life, as defined by campus policy, until payment is received from the VA.

C. Scholarships and Grants. Development offices at constituent institutions are also encouraged to create, fund, and maintain scholarships and grants for undergraduate and graduate military-affiliated students.

IX. Campus Employment. Constituent institutions are encouraged to recruit veterans and eligible family members, when appropriate, for on-campus VA work study.

X. Organizations and Communication. Constituent institutions are encouraged to support student veteran organizations and/or other military-affiliated student organizations. The student organization advisor is encouraged to communicate updates on veterans and military affairs on campus, as well as on topics and announcements related to any military-affiliated student groups.

XI. Academic Support for Military-Affiliated Students

A. Orientation/Transition Seminar. To the greatest extent possible, constituent institutions shall provide break-out sessions focused on military-affiliated students as part of their regular orientation programs. When possible, the resources of this session should be made available online. Constituent institutions offering a credit-bearing introduction to the university course should consider providing a section or sections exclusively for military-affiliated students.

B. Priority enrollment. Active duty students using Armed Forces Tuition Assistance (TA) and students who have been released from active duty for a specific amount of time to attend college

through a military degree completion program often face unique scheduling challenges. Whenever possible, constituent institutions should recognize such challenges by providing these students with priority enrollment.

C. Academic Assistance. Constituent institutions shall evaluate, review, adapt, and monitor academic assistance, including mentoring and tutoring, for their military-affiliated students. Reports of challenges and successes should be provided to the institution's Military Affairs Committee.

D. Military Science Courses and Tuition Surcharge. Constituent institutions should refer to the tuition surcharge exemption list that is part of Section 1000.1.5[R].

E. Service Cords. Constituent institutions are encouraged to provide military service cords for graduating student veterans, active-duty members, members of the National Guard, and Reservists. Institutions shall communicate to these students a process for acquiring these cords. Service cords shall be provided free of charge, when possible. Institutions shall consider officially recognizing these graduates in the printed program and/or during the ceremony.

XII. Military Learning and Academic Credit

A. The University of North Carolina System seeks to maximize and make consistent the transfer of credit from military training and experience to constituent institutions.

B. As mandated by Section 3 of Session Law 2014-67, the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina and the State Board of Community Colleges have jointly developed a plan (the Plan) for implementing a uniform system of granting course credits for military training and experience to all students enrolled in constituent institutions of the University of North Carolina System, and the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS).

C. Military Credit Advisory Council

1. Pursuant to the Plan, the UNC System Office, in conjunction with the North Carolina Community College System Office, will create and maintain a Military Credit Advisory Council (MCAC). The MCAC will be comprised of faculty, staff, and administrators from UNC System and NCCCS institutions, and of representatives from both system offices. It may also include representatives from North Carolina's business sector, state government, and military installations.

2. The MCAC shall provide guidance to and share information with the constituent institutions on all issues related to the awarding of academic credit for military training and experience.

3. The overall purpose of the MCAC is to ensure that military training courses and occupational experiences are evaluated by faculty members from UNC System and NCCCS institutions in an independent manner and by use of standard levels of objectivity and academic rigor.

D. Military Training Course and Occupational Experience Evaluation Panels

1. The MCAC shall ask constituent institutions to nominate faculty representatives to sit on academic discipline-specific panels for the purpose of evaluating additional military training courses and occupational experiences for academic credit. Panels may be comprised solely of faculty members from constituent institutions of the UNC System, or of faculty members from both the UNC System and NCCCS.
2. While conducting these evaluations, faculty panel members will use commonly-accepted levels of academic objectivity, validity, and rigor. The MCAC shall provide training and orientation to faculty panel members on the unique aspects of this evaluation process.
3. The MCAC shall forward credit recommendations made by faculty panels to the UNC System Office senior vice president for academic affairs for final approval.
4. The MCAC shall publish credit recommendations that have been made by faculty panels and approved by the UNC System Office senior vice president for academic affairs in an accessible system that informs current and prospective veteran students as well as faculty and staff who routinely assist them.
5. Constituent institutions shall publicize and adhere to credit recommendations made by faculty panels and approved by the UNC System Office senior vice president for academic affairs.
6. In the event that an academic department at one of the constituent institutions does not concur with one or more of these credit recommendations, the department head shall submit the rationale for the disagreement through the campus provost to the MCAC. The MCAC will forward the rationale to the UNC System Office senior vice president for academic affairs for further review and for a final determination.

E. UNC Constituent Institutions. Constituent institutions:

1. Shall establish and publish a process whereby active duty military, reservists, and veterans receive credit for, or a waiver of, the general education health and/or physical education requirements, based on military recruit training.
2. Shall accept foreign language coursework completed through the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) as transfer credit.¹ Institutions are also encouraged to establish a process for students to demonstrate proficiency and to waive campus language requirements for other foreign language skill development outside of DLIFLC. Examples include: College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) credit, Defense Language Proficiency exams, continuing education mission specific language training, etc.
3. Are encouraged to develop equivalence mapping for credit by exam for CLEP and DANTES Standardized Subject Tests (DSST), and to publish a chart showing the minimum allowable CLEP and DSST scores (no lower than 50 for CLEP) and the credit/course equivalences.
4. Are encouraged to train admissions counselors, registrars, academic advisors, department chairs or heads, and deans on the principles and practices of military credit

transferability. The MCAC will provide training and consultation, as requested or required.

5. Shall exempt transfer credits resulting from military learning from the tuition surcharge calculation.

6. Shall consult with the UNC System Office director for prior learning assessment and military credit on any questions regarding evaluation of military training and experience not covered in the sections above.

XIII. Call to Duty

A. Military Withdrawal. Students called to active duty, and subsequently, any family members who are students, may need to withdraw from coursework during the course of a semester.

1. As stated in Section 400.1.5[R] of the UNC Policy Manual, students are expected to complete all the courses for which they are registered at the close of the course adjustment period *unless* withdrawal is permitted due to extenuating circumstances or military service.

2. Constituent institutions shall develop policies that permit an undergraduate or graduate student to withdraw from a course or courses at any time and without academic penalty due to their military service. Institutions may extend some or all components of this policy to apply to the spouse or child of a person called to active duty if they demonstrate sufficient cause for consideration due to changed circumstances.² These policies must:

a. Be published in the appropriate sections of the university catalogue and website

b. Describe the process by which the student (or an appropriate officer of the Armed Forces or official of the Department of Defense (DOD)) gives advance written or verbal notice of call to duty to the designated campus body or official,³ and

c. Describe the process by which the student informs the appropriate campus body or official of intent to return to the institution upon completion of period of service.

B. Refund of Tuition, Fees, and Other Expenses. Enrolled undergraduate and graduate students who are called to active duty during the semester, and who complete a military withdrawal from their course(s), shall be afforded the following special considerations. Constituent institutions will:

1. Issue a full refund of all payments made by or on behalf of the student, and/or adjust the student's financial aid account, as appropriate.

2. Issue a full refund for textbooks purchased through the university bookstore for the semester in progress. The student being called to military service should present the textbooks, purchase receipt(s), and a copy of the applicable military orders.⁴

3. Issue a prorated refund of room rent for a campus residence facility. This refund will be based on the student's official check-out date.⁵

4. Issue a prorated refund of board fees. This refund will be prorated from the opening date of the dining hall for the term during which the call to active duty occurs.

5. Allow unpaid account balances to be subject to a payment plan formulated with the student. No collection actions will occur during a deployment.

C. Academic Credit. Constituent institutions must have a separate transcript notation appropriate for students who withdraw for active or reserve military service. Such withdrawals will not count in the calculation of the GPA or tuition surcharge.

D. Deferral of Enrollment. Constituent institutions will allow admitted undergraduate and graduate students to defer admission if they are called to active duty before the start of a term. Constituent institutions should consider, in cases of a national emergency or crisis, allowing a deferral of enrollment for students who enlist in the United States Armed Forces prior to enrolling. Constituent institutions shall:

1. Describe the process by which the student (or an appropriate officer of the Armed Forces or official of the Department of the Defense (DOD)) gives advance written or verbal notice of call to duty to the designated campus body or official;⁶

2. Describe the process by which the student informs the appropriate campus body or official of intent to return to the institution upon completion of period of service;

3. Publish the details of the process in the appropriate sections of the university catalogue and website;

4. Include provision for a full refund on all deposits paid by the student; and

5. Clarify the notification process of all relevant offices on campus.

E. Military Leave of Absence for Graduate Students. Constituent institutions shall develop policies permitting graduate students called to duty to take a military leave of absence from their program of study. These policies should:

1. Be published in the appropriate sections of the university catalogue and website;

2. Describe the process by which the student (or an appropriate officer of the Armed Forces or official of the DOD) gives advance written or verbal notice of call to duty to the designated campus body or official;⁷

3. Describe the process by which the student informs the appropriate campus body or official of intent to return to the institution upon completion of period of service;

4. Describe the process of resumption of study;
5. Establish the process for adjustment of any time limits for degree completion; and
6. Describe a process that recertifies the currency of all graduate degree requirements that may be beyond allowed time limits, including review in the case of required repetition of course work that might be outdated.

F. Readmission to the University. All constituent institutions shall readmit undergraduate and graduate students who were called to active duty. Constituent institutions shall:

1. Readmit students who were in good academic standing at the time of their call to duty and who seek readmission no later than three years after the completion of the period of service,⁸ subject to campus safety policies and procedures.⁹
2. Waive any new application process or fees.¹⁰
3. Describe the process by which the student informs the appropriate campus body or official of intent to return to the institution upon completion of the period of service.
4. Adjust the registration window for students to allow for early registration, if possible.
5. Clarify variations in regulations for readmission for students:
 - a. Who were on academic probation or suspension; or
 - b. Who were away longer than three calendar years following the completion of service.
6. Indicate a process for reinstatement to a specific undergraduate program of study.

G. Scholarship Status. When possible, and depending on the availability of funds, undergraduate and graduate students receiving university scholarships at the time of their call to duty should be able to receive the remainder of the scholarship upon their return. Constituent institutions shall develop policies related to the impact of call to duty on the scholarships they award. These policies must:

1. Include provisions to notify students about the status of their scholarships at the time of a military withdrawal or leave of absence; and
2. Describe the rules related to reinstatement of scholarships and the process to initiate reinstatement when possible.

H. National Guard and Reserves

1. Constituent institutions are encouraged to accommodate students who are required to participate in weekly or monthly meetings, weekend drills, annual trainings,

military schooling or other training or official military events as members of the National Guard or Reserves.

2. Students should be advised to inform their course instructors that they are members of the National Guard or Reserves. Furthermore, they should try to avoid registering for courses in which their academic performance and learning will be substantially and negatively impacted by absences due to military commitments.

3. If a student seeks to be excused from class for National Guard or Reserve duty, the student is encouraged to provide a copy of orders or a letter from the unit command to the course instructor, and to inquire about making up missed course work. The course instructor is encouraged to permit the student a reasonable amount of time to make up missed assignments.

I. Excused Absence for Time Missed Due to Being Placed on Active Duty by the North Carolina National Guard or Reserves. Any undergraduate or graduate student enrolled in a constituent institution who is a National Guard service member, or a member of the Reserves, and who is called to either state or federal active duty not requiring withdrawal during an academic term shall:

1. Be given an excused absence for the period of time the student is on active duty;

2. Be given the opportunity to make up any test or other work missed during the excused absence;

3. Be given the option, when feasible to continue classes and coursework during the academic term through online participation for the period of time the student is placed on active duty;

4. Be given a temporary grade of incomplete (I) for any course that the student was unable to complete as a result of being placed on active duty; however, the student must complete the course requirements within the period of time specified by the constituent institution in order to avoid receiving a failing grade for the course; and

5. Be permitted to drop, with no penalty, any course that the student was unable to complete as a result of being placed on active duty status.

XIV. Other Matters

A. Effective Date. The requirements of this regulation shall be effective on the date of adoption of this regulation by the president.

B. Relation to Federal and State Laws and Policies. The foregoing regulation as adopted by the president is meant to supplement, and does not purport to supplant or modify, those statutory enactments, regulations, and policies which may govern or relate to the subject matter of this regulation.

¹The DLIFLC is a regionally accredited higher education institution. In terms of transfer, courses completed through this institution should be evaluated and academic credit awarded under the same criteria as any other regionally accredited college or university.

²Campuses may choose to process family requests under the extenuating circumstances provision of their policies, as outlined in Section 400.1.5[R] of the UNC Policy Manual. Alternatively, campuses may choose to process family requests under documentation and review requirements set up for persons called to active duty.

³ No notice is required if the giving of such notice is precluded by military necessity, such as a mission, operation, exercise, or requirement that is classified or a pending or ongoing mission, operation, exercise, or requirement that may be compromised or otherwise adversely affected by public knowledge (HEA Sec. 484C(c)(1)(A)(B)(C)).

⁴Campuses with a rental program should consider a refund or a prorating of the rental fee.

⁵If the student is receiving a BAH benefit from the VA for housing, they are entitled to keep all funds through their last date of attendance (as certified on campus). Any funds received from the VA for any period after the last date of attendance become a VA student debt.

⁶No notice is required if the giving of such notice is precluded by military necessity, such as a mission, operation, exercise, or requirement that is classified or a pending or ongoing mission, operation, exercise, or requirement that may be compromised or otherwise adversely affected by public knowledge (HEA Sec. 484C(c)(1)(A)(B)(C)).

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⁸A student hospitalized or convalescing from an illness or injury suffered during the performance of military service shall notify the institution of the intent to return no later than two years after the end of recovery. A student who fails to apply for readmission within the period described shall not automatically forfeit such eligibility for readmission to the institution of higher education, but shall be subject to the institution's established leave of absence policy and general practices. (HEA Sec. 484C (c)(4)(A) through (c)(4)(C)).

⁹Required checks for campus safety will be performed.

¹⁰Required checks for campus safety will be performed. Constituent institutions will incur the fee.