WCU Student Veteran Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Update: 3/24/2020

Will my GI Bill Education Benefits be affected by the change in modes of instruction to remote delivery?

- Post 9-11 recipients will not see a change to their Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) stipend for the spring 2020 semester only. Their classes will be considered hybrid (combination of on-line and in-class/on campus delivery modes) and VA will continue to pay housing stipends as certified. If students elect to take all, on-line classes for subsequent semesters, BAH will be reduced to ½ the national average (currently $850.00).

- Per Guidance from the Philadelphia office, Vocational Rehabilitation recipients will continue to receive Chapter 31 residential rate if the class was already certified as residential for the remainder of the term.

- VA notified School Certifying Officials (email dated 3/13/20, subject: impact of COVID-19) that Congress has introduced legislation that, if enacted, will alleviate the impact to GI Bill beneficiaries for a switch to pursuit solely through distance education. VA will provide further guidance by Wednesday, March 18, 2020.

  - VA notified School Certifying Officials (email dated 3/18/2020, subject: update to impact of COVID-19) that the legislation is still pending regarding COVID-19 and how it may impact GI Bill students. Their email further stated the Education Service Office has determined that students who have started their enrollment period and attended at least in part as resident training are eligible to continue to receive the Military Housing Allowance (MHA) at the in-resident rate for the entire enrollment period. Guidance will be provided in the coming days based on Congressional action. Students having questions about their GI Bill can contact the
VA notified School Certifying Officials (email dated 3/19/2020, subject: Important GI Bill update: Congress Pass New Legislation Due to COVID-19) with the following information:

- Over the past two weeks, VA has worked with Congress to preserve GI Bill benefits for impacted students during this difficult time. The Senate and House passed S.3503 and the bill will be headed to POTUS to sign, which will give the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) the authority to continue GI Bill payments uninterrupted in the event of national emergencies. The new law allows for VA to continue to pay benefits regardless of the fact that the program has changed from resident training to online training. Also, students will continue to receive the same monthly housing allowance payments that they received for resident training until January 1, 2021, or until the school resumes normal operations of resident training. VA is working to immediately implement the new changes to address current and future school terms to ensure students continue to receive their education benefits.

- **What should GI Bill Students know?**

  - There is no action required from a GI Bill student. VA has scheduled several training sessions with all VA approved schools and training facilities over the next couple of days to provide further guidance. We will work closely with schools to ensure enrollments are accurately certified and processed timely.
- We are committed to providing regular updates to you through direct email campaigns and social media about VA’s effort to implement these new changes.

- If you have questions about your specific circumstance, please contact the Education Call Center at: 1-888-442-4551 between 8 AM and 7 PM Eastern Time, Monday-Friday.

- VA will host a webinar on March 19 for School Certifying Officials to discuss the impact of COVID-19. Please continue to refer to Student Veteran FAQs for updates.


- VA Debt Management shared the following information on 3/24/2020:

  - Greetings from the VA Debt Management Center (DMC),

    If COVID-19 is affecting someone’s ability to repay their debt with the DMC, they can reach out to the DMC to request assistance. Please feel free to share this message widely within your organization.

    We’ve also placed this message on our website:

    **Attention Veterans and Family members who have a VBA overpayment.**

    If you are affected by the COVID-19 (CORONA VIRUS), have a VBA benefit debt and need temporary financial relief, please contact DMC at 1-800-827-0648 to request assistance.

    Thank you for your partnership in serving Veterans and their families in this challenging situation.
Sincerely,

The VA Debt Management Center Outreach Team

Will I be able to use the Veterans Center?

➢ No, the Veterans Center will be closed to protect the health, safety, and welfare of our students, faculty and staff.

WCU Veterans Center Programming impacts for the Spring 2020 semester

➢ In keeping with the Center for Disease Control’s guidance to limit social distance, the University is taking proactive measures to minimize social contact. As a result, University sponsored events and gatherings have been cancelled for the remainder of the spring semester, including the Flyers Game scheduled for March 29, 2020 and the Military Banquet scheduled for April 23, 2020. (reference Health Update: 3/10/2020 for details)

How will I be able to contact the Veterans Center staff?

➢ You will be able to reach the Center staff via email and phone. Contact information follows.

Zsa Zsa Alston, Graduate Assistant, ZA874845@wcupa.edu
Samantha Korman, Graduate Assistant, SK743640@wcupa.edu
Mrs. Morrison, Coordinator, lmorrison@wcupa.edu

Feel free to call the Center at 610.436.5866 for any questions or concerns. You can reach Center Staff Monday through Friday, 8:00 am - 4:00 pm via email and Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 8:00 – 11:00 am via phone.
Who should I contact for questions involving the certification of my benefits?

- WCU has two School Certifying Officials. The first is Kristy Slusser, Assistant Director of Financial Aid. The second is Mrs. Morrison, Veterans Center Coordinator. If your last name falls between A – L, Mrs. Morrison will be your School Certifying Official. If your last name falls between M – Z, Kristy Slusser will be your School Certifying Official. You can reach Kristy via email at kslusser@wcupa.edu and Mrs. Morrison at lmorrison@wcupa.edu.