

# Student Veteran Guidebook

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## Information for Veterans, Service Members, and Their Families Attending the University of Utah

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200 South Central Campus Drive  
A. Ray Olpin Union Building, Room 418  
Salt Lake City, UT 84112  
[www.veteranscenter.utah.edu](http://www.veteranscenter.utah.edu)  
[vetcenter@sa.utah.edu](mailto:vetercenter@sa.utah.edu)  
801-587-7722

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### ABOUT THIS GUIDEBOOK

This guidebook provides general information to assist veterans, service members, and their families who are attending the University of Utah. It provides information regarding the most common processes, policies, services, and resources applicable to military-affiliated students, but it is not all-encompassing. Because many of the resources and services discussed are administered by entities outside of the VSC, this guidebook is not an authoritative document and the information herein may be out of date. For authoritative and most current information, contact the office that governs the program of interest.

## THE VETERANS SUPPORT CENTER

### Our Mission

Our mission is to improve and enhance the individual and academic success of student veterans; to help them receive the benefits they earned; and to serve as a liaison between the student veteran community and the university.

### Who We Serve

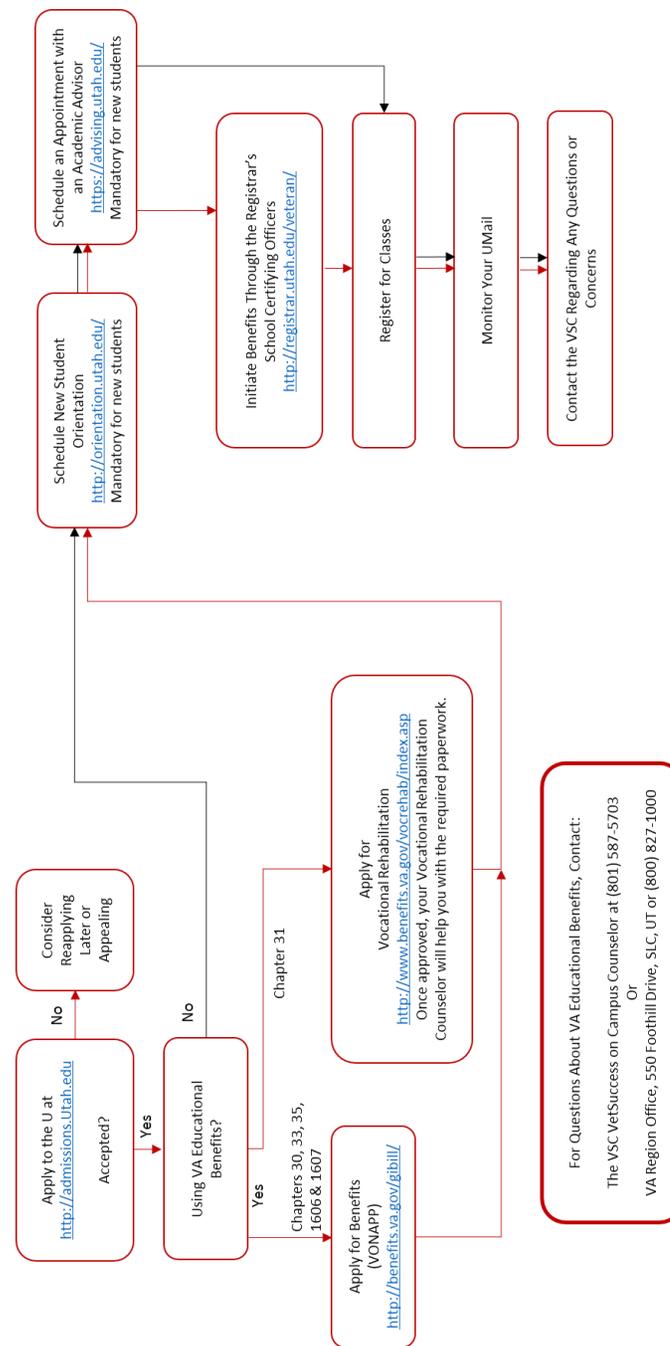
We serve “student veterans,” which is a collective term used for students who are active duty, reserve, National Guard, traditional veterans who were not dishonorably discharged, and their spouses and dependents.

### What We Do

The VSC provides a one-stop shop for student veterans to find services, support, advocacy, and camaraderie. The VSC office is manned by VSC, Registrar, Veterans Affairs, peer mentoring, and Career & Professional Services personnel. Some of the services offered through the VSC include:

- GI Bill/VA educational program services
- VA counseling and benefits advising
- Career coaching
- Peer mentoring
- Free tutoring
- Free SWAG, coffee, and refreshments
- Free printing and computer lab with CAC card readers
- Veteran-only lounge and study area
- Scholarship and financial aid assistance
- Work-study opportunities
- Free textbook loan library
- And more!

### Basic Admissions & Registration Roadmap



## GETTING STARTED: APPLYING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

(Note: If you are applying for admission to a graduate program, see your college's website for application information and skip to Part II of this checklist after applying.)

### PART I

- Determine if the University of Utah offers the academic degree that you want to earn:

Undergraduate Degrees: <https://advising.utah.edu/majors/quick-look/index.php>

Graduate Degrees: <http://gradschool.utah.edu/prospective-students/explore-graduate-degrees/>

- Apply for admission and pay the application fee: <http://admissions.utah.edu/apply/>

For those who served/are serving, see also:

<http://admissions.utah.edu/apply/veterans/index.php>

- Send your school transcripts to the Office of Admissions:

Paper transcripts should be mailed to: Office of Admissions, 201 S 1460 E, Room 250S, Salt Lake City, Utah 84112. The U accepts official electronic transcripts from the following agencies only: SENDeDu, Docufide by Parchment, National Student Clearinghouse, AVOW, Credentials Solutions, and Scrip-Safe. Have electronic transcripts sent to [admisstranscripts@sa.utah.edu](mailto:admisstranscripts@sa.utah.edu).

- Send your military transcripts to the Office of Admissions. Request them here:

Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Coast Guard:

<https://jst.doded.mil/smart/welcome.do>

Air Force: <http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/Barnes/CCAF/>

- Monitor your mail for an Admissions decision.
- Information about appealing an admissions decision can be found here:  
<http://admissions.utah.edu/apply/undergraduate/appeal/index.php>

### PART II

- Apply to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for VA Educational Benefits:

GI Bill: <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/apply.asp>

Vocational Rehabilitation (Chapter 31): Contact a VA Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor to determine your eligibility for this program and to apply for benefits. VA Office: 550 Foothill Drive, Salt Lake City, UT 84113; (800) 827-1000.

- Apply for Financial Aid:

Fill out a FAFSA: <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>

Find scholarships and aid: <https://financialaid.utah.edu/>

## GETTING STARTED: AFTER SELECTION FOR ADMISSION

(Note: If you were accepted into a graduate program, ensure that you have applied for VA Educational benefits as discussed in Part I, then contact your college regarding next steps.)

### PART I - If you haven't already:

- Apply to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for VA Educational Benefits:

GI Bill: <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/apply.asp>

Vocational Rehabilitation (Chapter 31): Contact a VA Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor to determine your eligibility for this program and to apply for benefits. VA Office: 550 Foothill Drive, Salt Lake City, UT 84113; (800) 827-1000.

- Apply for Financial Aid:

Fill out a FAFSA: <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>

Find scholarships and aid: <https://financialaid.utah.edu/>

### PART II

- Create your Campus Information Services (CIS: [cis.utah.edu](https://cis.utah.edu)) account with the University ID (UNID) and password in your admissions letter.
- Activate your University E-mail (UMail) using your UNID and new password. Check this account frequently – **all official university communication will be sent to your UMail account**. You can access UMail from the CIS page after you log on.
- Submit a Housing Application, if you choose to live on campus: [housing.utah.edu](https://housing.utah.edu).
- Pay the \$300 enrollment deposit or request an extension at [admissions.utah.edu/confirm](https://admissions.utah.edu/confirm). The deposit will be applied to your tuition. If you are on the GI Bill or Voc Rehab program, contact the VSC if this will cause a hardship.
- Register for New Student Orientation at [orientation.utah.edu](https://orientation.utah.edu). You cannot register for classes until you have completed mandatory orientation. Student veterans are eligible for priority registration only after completing an in-person or online orientation program. For access, contact the Center for New Student and Family Programs at (801) 581-7069 or [orientation@utah.edu](mailto:orientation@utah.edu) and indicate your veteran status. Family members are not eligible for veteran priority registration.
- Submit proof of immunizations. Complete and return the forms you receive at Orientation. Additional information can be found here: <https://studenthealth.test.utah.edu/services/immunizations/index.php>.
- If you did not speak to an advisor during orientation, contact your advisor for an appointment at <https://advising.utah.edu/academic-advising-appts.php> and then register for classes.
- Stop by the VSC as soon as possible to turn in your Request for Benefits form which can be found here <https://registrar.utah.edu/veteran/forms.php>. Also, stop by the VSC to learn about the benefits available at the VSC, on campus, the VA, and in the community.

## **USING YOUR GI BILL**

The Registrar's School Certifying Officers (SCOs), who certify enrollment for students eligible for VA educational benefits, are located in the Veterans Support Center. For GI Bill questions or to start your benefits, please contact them at vetservices@utah.edu or (801) 581-6945.

### **Documents Needed**

The documents you will need are listed below; however, you might need others, depending on your individual situation and benefit entitlements.

### **Certificate of Eligibility**

If you are applying for the Yellow Ribbon Program, you will need this document, which can be obtained by applying for benefits at [www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/get\\_started.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/get_started.asp). If you complete the form online, notify the SCOs as soon as possible. This statement must be on file in the Registrar's Office in order to receive your benefits. Contact the SCOs for more information.

### **DD214**

The DD214 is an important document for all veterans requesting any veterans' benefits. You can request your DD214 here: [www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/](http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/).

### **Request for Benefits**

This is a university form that must be printed, completed, and submitted to the SCOs. You can get the form at [registrar.utah.edu/\\_pdf/va-request-for-benefits.pdf](http://registrar.utah.edu/_pdf/va-request-for-benefits.pdf). **The form must be submitted every semester in order to receive benefits.** Enter the Campus Information System (CIS) ([gate.acs.utah.edu](http://gate.acs.utah.edu)) and click on the "Request VA Benefits" link in the "Financials" box on your student page. You can fill it out for an entire academic year (up to 3 semesters at a time), but make sure that you fill it out completely and that the years are accurate.

## **GI Bill Transfer Students**

You must submit VA Form 22-1995 *Request for Change of Program or Place of Training* to the School Certifying Officers (SCOs), Union Building, Room 418.

Chapter 35 students will fill out VA Form 22-5495 *Dependents Request for Change of Program or Place of Training*.

### **Reactivated Benefits**

If you have not been enrolled for a year or more, you must fill submit VA Form 22-8873 *Supplemental Information for Change of Program or Reenrollment After Unsatisfactory Attendance, Conduct or Progress* to the SCOs, Union Building, Room 418.

### **Approved Courses**

The GI Bill only funds classes that are required for your degree and not those that are only "recommended." Your advisor and the SCOs can help you determine which courses are required and will be funded. Closely monitor your UMail for any alerts from the SCOs.

### **Dual Major/Minor**

Several majors and minors do not require approval, while others do. The SCOs can help you understand which ones don't and help you apply for those that do.

### **Change of major**

If you want to change your major, the SCOs can assist you with filling out the proper forms and processing your request.

### **Dual Enrollment**

Assistance is available for requesting a Primary School Letter and processing it with the U of U and the secondary institution.

### **Tutorial Assistance**

Tutoring is available if you are receiving at least half time VA education assistance. Visit the VSC for more information.

### **Repeating Courses and “E”, “EU”, “W” Grades**

The VA will only pay for you to repeat a course if you failed the course or did not meet the minimum course grade to receive credit through your major. They will not pay for repeated courses to boost GPA or to keep you at full-time status.

In most cases, if you fail a course (receive an “E”), you will not be required to repay the VA. However if you receive an “EU” or “W” grade, the VA may require you to repay money. “EU” grades are typically given when a student stops attending a course. The “W” grade is given when a student drops a course after the drop deadline.

### **Financial Aid Verification**

If you are receiving financial aid, you must print out a Web Automated Verification of Enrollment showing your VA benefits and take it to the Financial Aid Office.

### **Work-Study**

If you are attending school at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  time, you may be able to work part-time at the VSC, VA Regional Office, or VA hospital and receive non-taxable earnings. See page 12 for additional information.

### **Advance Pay**

Chapter 30, 35, 1606, and 1607 students may be eligible for advanced pay. In order to qualify, you cannot have received benefits the previous semester and your signed request must be submitted at least thirty-five days prior to the beginning of the semester. Advanced pay covers the first (partial) and the second (full) month of the semester. Subsequent payments will occur as regularly scheduled. Contact the SCOs for more information.

### **VETERANS' VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (CHAPTER 31)**

The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program (VR&E, Chapter 31, or “Voc Rehab”) assists veterans with service-connected disabilities to prepare for, find, and keep suitable jobs. These services include counseling, training, education, job placement assistance, and more.

For veterans whose service connected disabilities prevent them from immediately considering suitable work, VR&E offers services to improve their ability to live as independently as possible.

#### **Eligibility**

Veterans

To be evaluated for qualification for the program, a veteran must:

- Have received a discharge that is other than dishonorable,
- Have a service-connected disability rating of at least 10% from the VA.

Active Duty

To be evaluated for qualification for the program, a service member must:

- Expect to receive a discharge that is not dishonorable upon separation from active duty,
- Obtain a memorandum rating of 20% or more from VA.

#### **Applying**

To be evaluated for the program, apply on the VA VONAPP website at <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp>

More information about the program can be obtained by visiting or calling the U’s VetSuccess on Campus Counselor at the Veterans Support Center or (801) 587-5703, or by visiting the VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment website, or calling (800) 827-1000.

## UTAH VETERAN TUITION GAP PROGRAM

The Tuition Gap program provides up to one year of undergraduate tuition for qualifying Utah veterans. The program only pays tuition; it does not provide funding for fees and books or a basic allowance for housing.

Student veterans at the U who qualify for this program may apply through the VSC. To be eligible, a student veteran must be seeking his/her first baccalaureate degree and:

- Be a Utah resident or exempt from paying the nonresident portion of total tuition; and
- Be a veteran under the state's: an individual who served in the U.S. Armed Forces for at least 180 days: on active duty; or in a reserve component, including the National Guard; or incurred an actual service-related injury or disability while in the Armed Forces regardless of completing 180 days; and separated or retired under honorable or general conditions; and
- Be enrolled in good standing at the U on at least a half-time basis; and
- Have no federal veterans' educational benefit available (exhausted, expired, or never qualified for one).

Contact the VSC for the full eligibility requirements, process for applying, and an application form.

## PURPLE HEART TUITION WAIVER

Residents of the State of Utah who received the Purple Heart for combat wounds can receive a waiver to their undergraduate and graduate tuition. To initiate the Purple Heart Tuition Waiver, bring your DD214 to Financial Aid and provide a letter requesting the waiver. For questions pertaining to this process, contact the Scholarship Office at 801-581-6211 or [scholarship@sa.utah.edu](mailto:scholarship@sa.utah.edu).

## SCHOLARSHIPS

Even if you are using the GI Bill, you may qualify for more financial aid. In addition to those available to all students, many scholarships and grants are available to current and former military personnel and family members. Check the scholarship information on the VSC website for some of them.

To qualify for scholarships and grants, you should first complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA at [fafsa.ed.gov](http://fafsa.ed.gov) ). To find scholarships, check visit the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid website ([financialaid.utah.edu](http://financialaid.utah.edu)) and visit their office.

## DEPLOYMENTS

For students who are called to active military duty without prior notice, the U offers the following combination of options:

- At the discretion of the instructor, students may make arrangements to receive an incomplete (I) grade for one or more classes. Refer to the U's Student Handbook ([registrar.utah.edu/handbook/index.php](http://registrar.utah.edu/handbook/index.php)) for a detailed description of the incomplete grading policy.
- When appropriate, students may make arrangements with an instructor to complete the course work for a grade prior to a departure for active duty.
- Students may request a total or partial withdrawal.
- Students may request to delete one or more classes.

You will need to **complete the proper paperwork**. See our deployment checklist on the VSC website (FAQs) to get started. If you have any questions, contact the VSC.

## **RESIDENCY**

Under Utah House Bill 124, all Veterans, and their families, who have separated from the military under conditions other than dishonorable, and take steps toward establishing immediate residency in Utah, are eligible for in-state tuition.

If you have already been classified as a non-resident and want to be reclassified as a resident, submit an *Application for In-State Tuition Based Upon Military Service Exceptions*, along with required supporting documentation. Forms are available at [admissions.utah.edu/apply/residency](https://admissions.utah.edu/apply/residency).

## **GETTING INVOLVED**

The U provides a wide variety of programs, resources, and events in support of veterans, service members, and their family members who are attending the U. We also encourage you to take advantage of student leadership opportunities that will help enrich your U Vet experience.

### **Student Veterans at Utah**

The SVU organizes social events, service projects, and friendship and provides the voice of student veterans to the U administration. SVU membership is open to all students and alumni who are currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces, who are veterans of any era who were not dishonorably discharged, or who have an interest in student veteran issues. You can find out more about the SVU on the VSC website or at [www.facebook.com/groups/70176981001/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/70176981001/)

### **Work-Study Employment**

As noted on page 8, eligible U Vets may be able to work part-time under the VA work-study program. The program pays tax-free minimum wage for up to 25 hours a week. Applications are accepted each semester at the Veterans Support Center. Stop by the VSC for more information.

## **Crouching Veteran, Hidden Scholar Yoga**

Studies have found that yoga can be beneficial in the treatment of PTSD, anxiety, and depression; can improve sleep quality, and concentration; and can reduce physical discomfort. The VSC provides a free yoga program to help increase in their quality of life and general health. For more information, stop by the VSC.

### **The Veterans Support Center**

The VSC provides a wide range of social, educational, and professional development opportunities. Stop by the office and keep an eye on the VSC website, newsletter, and Facebook page for announcements.

## **OTHER RESOURCES**

### **Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership (VITAL)**

VITAL is a VA program that helps student veterans succeed through collaboration between the VA Medical Center and the U. A psychologist from the VA is in the VSC each week to provide counseling and facilitate access to VA medical services. For more information, visit the VSC or call (801) 828-6787.

### **VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC)**

The VSOC program provides veterans who have service-connected disabilities with services such as vocational counseling, training, career placement, and special rehabilitation services. A VSOC counselor is in the VSC to provide these services and offer help regarding general VA benefits. For more information, visit the VSC or call (801) 587-5703.

### **Career & Professional Development Center**

C&PDC staff can help you develop a network of employer contacts, skills, and resources to obtain an internship, summer job, or start a great career after graduation. C&PDC and the VSC provide a Career Coach to assist student veterans. For more information, go to [careers.utah.edu](https://careers.utah.edu), call them at (801) 585-5065, or contact the VSC.

## VA Regional Office and Medical Center

The U is fortunate to be located across the street from a VA regional office and medical center and a state VA office.

- VA Regional Office: 550 Foothill Drive, SLC, UT 84113, (800) 827-1000
- VA Medical Center: 500 Foothill Drive, SLC, UT 84148, (801) 582-1565
- State of Utah VA Office: 550 Foothill Drive, Suite 105, SLC, UT 84113, (800) 894-9497, veterans@utah.gov, veterans.utah.gov.

### **A FINAL NOTE**

There are over 1,100 student veterans at the U. We have veterans from every branch of the military, and “U Vets” can be found in classrooms in every undergraduate and graduate college. Our community is growing at the U. In the last academic year, the VSC had more than 7,500 visits from student veterans who know that it is a place for them to be themselves, enjoy camaraderie, and find support.

The VSC staff will go to the ends of the earth to support our brothers and sisters in arms and their family members. We can’t solve every problem and we don’t have all the answers, but we will do everything that we possibly can to help. All you have to do is ask.



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*A nation that makes a great distinction between its scholars and its warriors will have its laws made by cowards and its wars fought by fools.*

*—Sir William Francis Butler (1889)*