



Supporting Student Success for Active Military and Veterans

March 14, 2011, 2:15 p.m.

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Session Objectives

Discuss challenges that face student veterans in the transition from soldier to student

Present an alternative approach to supporting student veterans

Critique of the network model

Use of MAP-works for early intervention to increase veteran retention and success



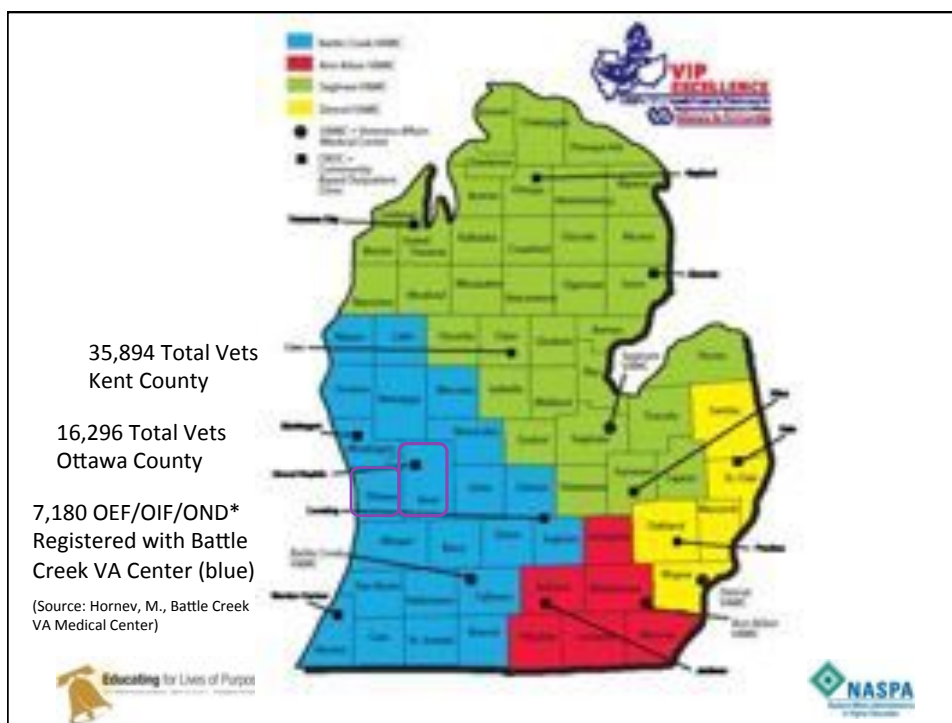
About Grand Valley State University

Public, Master's Large Comprehensive

Urban and Rural Locations

Student Body

Student Veteran Population



National Data: MAP-Works 2010

Sherry Woosley, Ph.D.
Director of Analytics & Research
EBI



Data Source

Instrument

- Map-Works Fall 2010 Transition Survey

Population

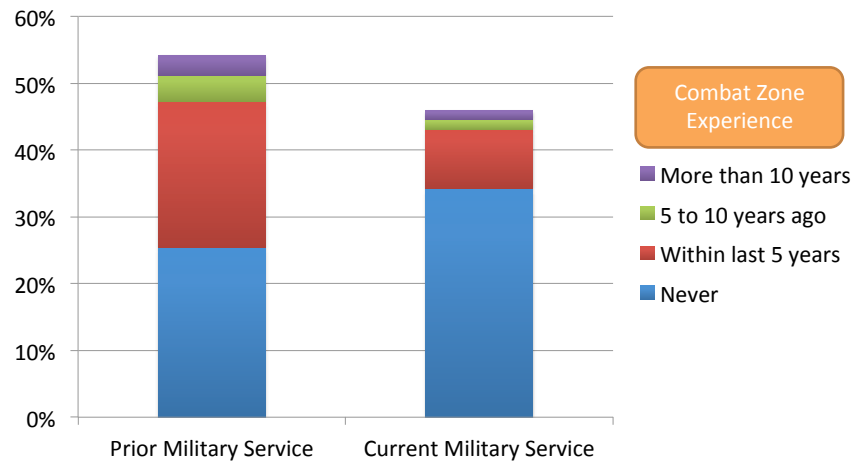
- 79 four-year institutions
- 58 institutions asked students about their military

Student Sample

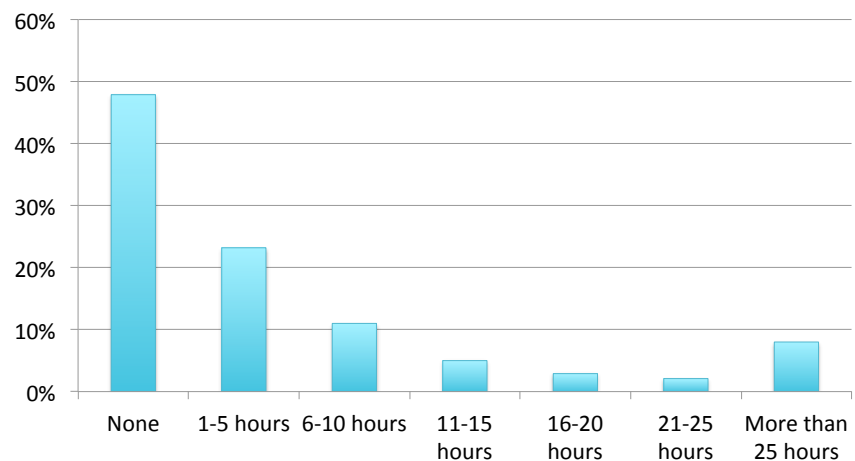
- Determined by survey question: "Have you every served in the military"?
- 72.3% response rate
- 733 students (1% of respondents) indicated yes



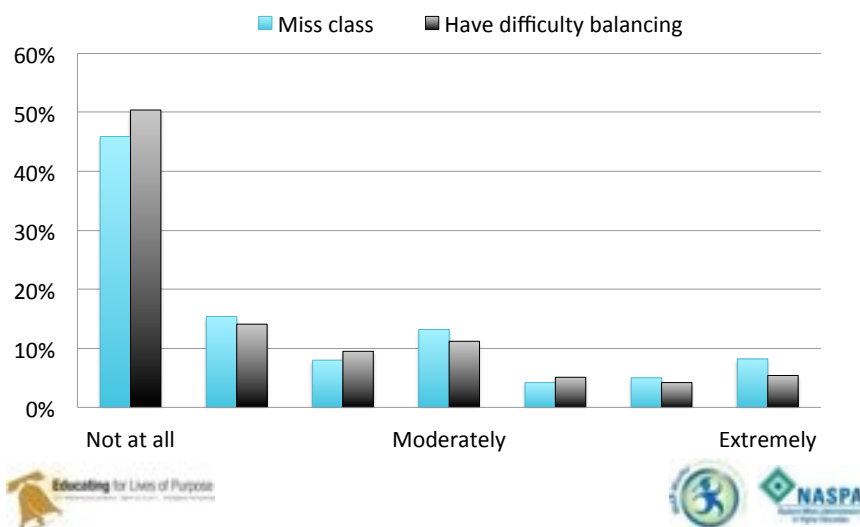
What Military Experiences have these Students had?



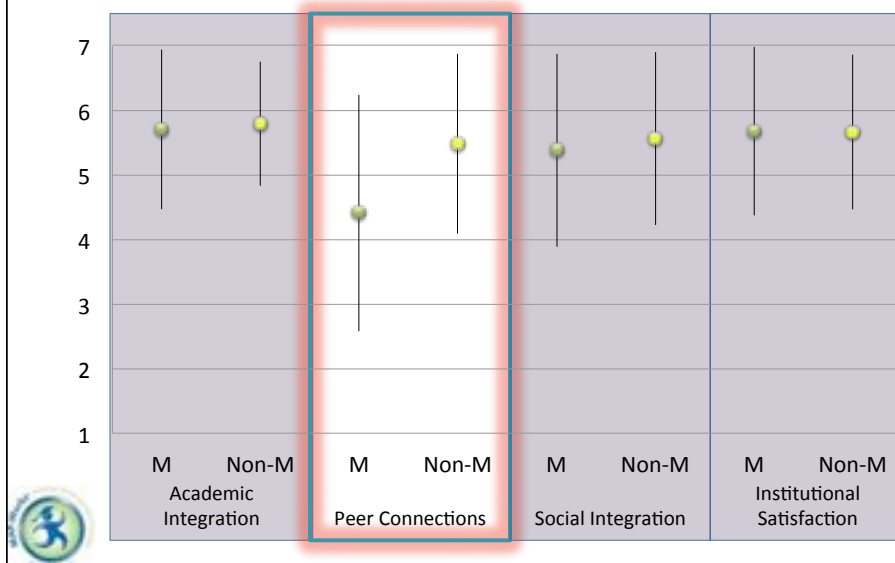
Hours per Week in Military-Related Activities



Likelihood of Conflicts between Academic & Military Obligations



Transition Comparisons



What is the most difficult aspect of being a student with a military background at this institution?





Theme 1 - Nothing

Nothing

- I am retired military and find nothing difficult about being here.
- I haven't found any difficulties. I've met quite a few other veterans at this school.
- no disadvantages!!!!
- none the military has taught me alot on discipline and maintaining good study habits
- Nothing. The GI Bill pays for my tuition. Without that I would not be able to attend.
- So far the other students seem to respect the fact that I was in the military, and often ask questions about what it was like. Overall been nice to be here as a student/veteran.
- There is no difficulty, its pretty well balanced and the only military activity i participate in is one weekend a month, for now.

Nothing – Not visible

- Most people don't even know I am in the military, but the people that do know are very respectful and thankful for what I do for our country.
- None. No one knows that I have been in the military.



Theme 2 - Peers

Respect / Maturity / Work Ethic

- Being older than most of the student in classes and having a completely different mind-set and work ethic. When I am paired with someone for a project/group activity it can be very frustrating because of the age difference and mind-set.
- I think it is harder for a veteran because fresh out of high school students seem to have no respect. Texting during class or cell phones ringing, showing up late, all of this is very disruptive.
- Not relating to other students because they are younger and less mature.
- the students are disrespectful to professors and show no respect bc they don't know what hard work is

Viewpoint

- also your outlook on things is a lot different from a lot of college students who only seem to care about facebook, social status, and other things of little importance.
- being in classes with all younger students fresh out of high school because i feel like i cant talk to them about anything with stuff that I've seen and been through compared to them.
- Everyone is younger, completely different background/views on topics.
- having a different outlook on the world then most of the other students. a more realistic view on world events and effects.



Theme 3 – Adjustment / Transition

To civilian life

- Just the transaction from military life to civilian life is different, then from that to student life and trying to remember stuff from high school is hectic. It's been a challenge, but so far mission accepted and mission going smoothly
- Transitioning from a military mindset to a civilian mindset.
- You are used to getting things done and asking questions later. The military has more discipline. It's hard to get a group to work together and get things done.

To academic life

- Adjusting to the slower tempo, but higher academic responsibilities. For example, i spend less time at college than i would on duty, but I'm required to produce higher quality material than would be required of me in the Navy.
- As most freshmen are fresh out of high school, I have not been in a classroom for 8 years. The adjustment from Military Life to Student Life is in itself a culture shock.
- i forgot a lot of math. and teachers expect me to be up to par with students straight out of high school.
- I haven't been in a school mind set for over five years.

Other Themes

Balancing

- Missing class due to military obligations.
- Hard to balance being in the military and being a student
- teachers not understanding that i may miss two weeks because of the national guard, which i MUST go to

PTSD

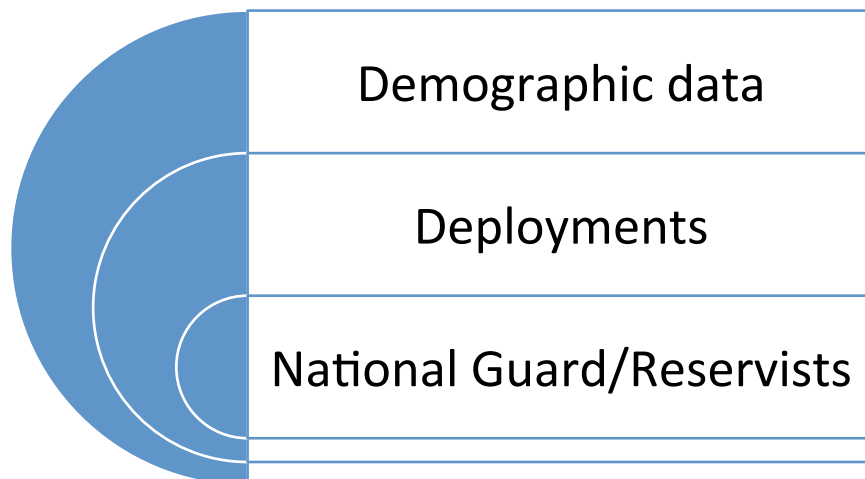
- large classrooms agitate me and kinda triggers my ptsd. also being that i have not done certain academic things in the last 6 years makes come classes a little more difficult
- PTSD and an inability to sleep

Treatment

- being treated like a kid fresh out of high school
- In general just being treated as younger or more ignorant than I am. It was difficult to go from working with people with a certain level of maturity and moving to an environment where I am perceived as much less intelligent and responsible than I am.



GVSU Student Veteran Characteristics



Characteristics continued:

Coming Home

- Common Struggles
 - Family
 - Social adjustment
 - Academic adjustment
 - Financial adjustment
 - \$3048.17 to \$1056.00



Serving GVSU student Veterans

Support

- Veterans
- Families

Resources

- On-campus
- Off-campus

Advocacy

- Institutionally
- Individual students

Opportunities

- Socially
- Service-based



Defining the Veterans Network

Description

Origins

Operating Philosophy



Aligning with the Strategic Plan

GVSU Goal 2:

Grand Valley provides a rich inclusive learning and working environment that attracts, retains, and supports a diverse community.

Objective 2.7:

By 2012, increase services designed to support non-traditional students, including veterans, students older than average, and other adults in transition.



Theoretical Basis

Tinto (1993)

- Retention

Schlossberg
(1989)

- Marginality and Mattering

Schlossberg
(1995) and
Goodman (2006)

- Transition



Theoretical Basis

**Reynolds
and Pope
(1991)**

- **Multidimensional
Identity Model (MIM)**



Veterans Network Structure

Departmental Liaisons
(heart of the network)

Services

Training

Funding



Creating Community

Peer Support

Website &
Social Media

Recognition and
appreciation





What works well...

Capitalizes on existing expertise

Integrates “no wrong-door” approach

Efficient solution requiring minimal resources



What works well...

Relies on embedded expertise throughout

Faculty/staff
education

Policy advocacy

Student Veteran
advocacy



Room for improvement...

Lack of Presence
and Visibility

Coordinator is
not a veteran

Lacks full-time
role

Limited funding



Other Resources



Where to begin?

Use data to establish need (internal and external)

Assess the existing expertise and resources

Is a network model the right approach?

Is there institutional will to assist student veterans?

Identify gaps and training opportunities

Connect with community resources

Establish presence and ensure visibility



at Grand Valley State

Early alert and intervention

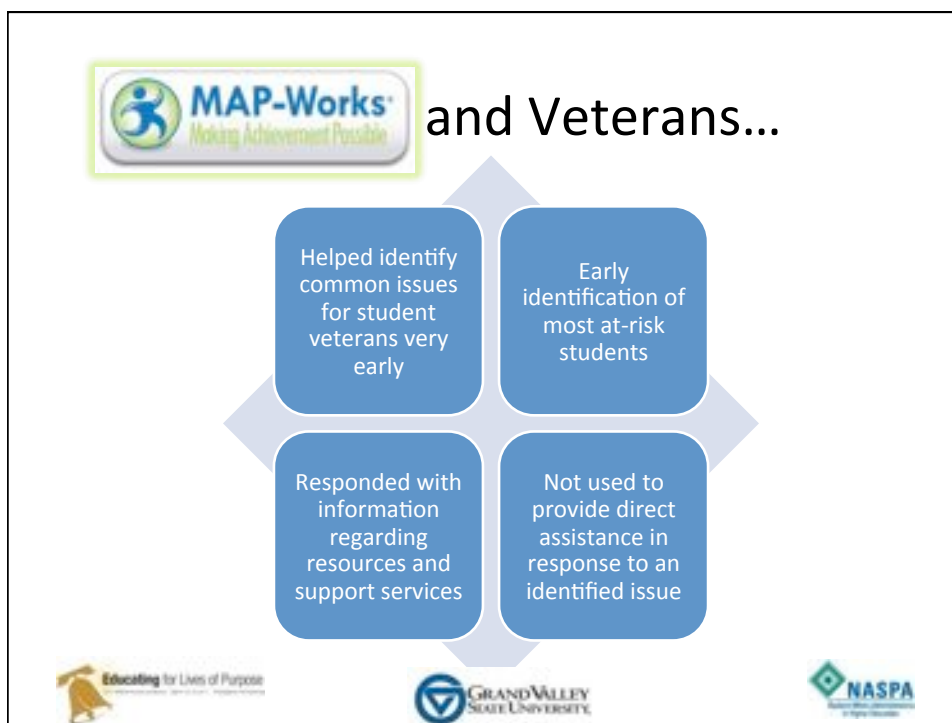
Student self-awareness

Partnership with student

Understanding student trends/needs

Increasing student success and retention





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