

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY PETER SECCHIA MILITARY AND VETERAN RESOURCE CENTER

Checklist For Students Transitioning from the Military to GVSU

Congratulations on your acceptance to Grand Valley State University — you're a Laker now! We created this checklist to help make your transition to GVSU as seamless as possible!

Have questions or need support?

Contact the Military and Veteran Resource Center. We're your one-stop shop for everything related to GVSU, VA Benefits, on-campus and off-campus resources, academic resources, and more.

- Allendale campus: Laker Military Resource Center, located in Kirkhof Center, room 0072.
- Downtown campus: Secchia Family Military Center, located DCIH 110

If you have any questions about anything at all, please reach out!

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1. Apply to GVSU

- a. It's free for veterans and military dependents! Apply at gvsu.edu/apply

(Don't worry if your high school GPA is lower than what you would like. Once you've applied for admission, we'll help you figure out how to best prepare for success — for example, Veterans Upward Bound is a great starting point for many student veterans!).

Once you've been accepted...

2. Start your VA benefits

- a. Visit the VA's Online Portal (va.gov/education/how-to-apply/) to get your Certificate of Eligibility (COE). GVSU accepts these VA-connected education benefits:
 - i. Chapter 33 – Post-9/11 GI Bill®
 - ii. Chapter 30 – Montgomery GI Bill® – Active Duty
 - iii. Chapter 1606–Selected Reserve
 - iv. Chapter 35 Survivors' and Dependent Educational Assistance
 - v. Chapter 31 Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E)
 - vi. Michigan National Guard State Tuition Assistance Program (MINGSTAP)

3. Submit your COE

- a. GVSU needs a copy of your Certificate of Eligibility (COE) for our records — don't forget to list GVSU as your school of choice!

If you are having any issues, please contact our Records Office at vetrec@gvsu.edu or (616) 331-3327.

Email your COE to vetrec@gvsu.edu

NOTE: It could take up to 2 months to receive your COE from the VA. The COE is sent directly to you and not to GVSU. You do NOT have to wait for your COE to continue through the remaining steps on this list.

4. Register for orientation

- a. **It's crucial that you attend the Veteran Orientation as you make the transition to Grand Valley.** This full-day team building / informational session will not only provide you with what you need to know to be successful as a Laker but will also introduce you to important POCs from the University who can help you with your career and give you the chance to meet and connect with other veterans who share a similar experience as you.

Watch your email for your invitation!

5. Sign up for Academic Advising.

- a. Veterans at GVSU receive priority enrollment — so be sure to sign up for an academic advising session with an advisor ASAP. This person can confirm your transfer credits (including Military Credits earned) and help you build a preliminary schedule for your first semester.

<https://www.gvsu.edu/admissions/orientation/transfer-orientation-15.htm>

6. Submit Your Class Schedule

- a. Once you have 1) applied for your VA benefits (va.gov/education/how-to-apply) and 2) enrolled in classes (gvsu.edu/registrar/registration-61.htm), you then need to submit your course schedule to the Registrar to qualify for VA benefits.

This will initiate your VA Enrollment Certification for your monetary benefits and can be completed by emailing your schedule to vetrec@gvsu.edu

IMPORTANT: You must submit your course schedule for VA benefits EVERY TERM and resubmit the form if you make any changes i.e. add/drop classes. If you do not submit your course schedule via vetrec@gvsu.edu, the VA will not be informed of your enrollment in school.

NO CERTIFICATION = NO MONEY

Dropping a class: If you drop a class after the add/drop date, you must email us with the name of the class(es) you are dropping and the reason. There may be financial implications associated with dropping class(es) after the add/drop date. Contact the Records office at vetrec@gvsu.edu or (616) 331-3327 for guidance in this process.

If you are using Ch. 33 Post 9/11 benefits, the VA pays Tuition and Fees directly to Grand Valley. Grand Valley will defer your tuition due date for the tuition and mandatory fees portion of your balance AFTER you certify your classes.

Your BAH and book stipend are paid directly to the bank account you set up when you applied for VA benefits.

You will need to pay GVSU directly for any fees outside of tuition/mandatory fees such as meal plans, housing charges, transportation fee, etc.

If you are using Ch. 30, Ch. 1606 or Ch. 35 benefits, the VA ONLY pays a monthly stipend directly to you through your bank account which you set up online.

If you are using MINGSTAP, GVSU will defer your payment deadline until 60 days after the last day of class, giving you enough time to receive your reimbursement and pay back the university for your tuition.

7. Apply for Financial Aid

- a. All students should complete the Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA) at studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa. FAFSA determines your eligibility for Federal Student Loans as well as state/federal grants, and also is a requirement for many scholarships. Even if you don't think you need to fill out this form because of your income or other factors, we still recommend you do it. You may qualify for scholarships or other programs that you otherwise might not know about!

Questions? contact GVSU's Financial Aid office at finaid@gvsu.edu or 616-331- 3234 and they will walk you through the process.

8. Submit Your Transcripts (if you haven't already)

- a. You likely have already submitted transcripts as part of your initial GVSU admission application, but in case you haven't, login and access your transcripts have them sent to GVSU:
 1. Joint Services Transcripts: jst.doded.mil/jst/
 2. Community College of the Air Force: airuniversity.af.edu/Barnes/CCAF/

Official transcript(s) can be sent electronically to GVSU by your previous school through an electronic delivery service such as Docufide, Naviance, E Scrip-Safe. The GVSU email address to send transcripts to is adm-transcripts@gvsu.edu.

Official transcripts and test scores must be received directly from the issuing institution.

Official transcripts not submitted online should be sent to:
Grand Valley State University
Admissions Office
1 Campus Drive
Allendale, MI 49401

****Military Transcripts will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.**

9. Get Connected

- a. **Reach out to the Secchia Military and Veteran Resource Center:** The MVRC serves as the University's single point of entry for all veteran and military connected students, programs and initiatives. Contact us for a tour or if you have any questions about Grand Valley. Email: scheresh@gvsu.edu | Phone: 616-331-8447
- b. **Join our Facebook Group:**
facebook.com/groups/gvsustudentveteransorganization (Be sure to answer the qualification questions so our administrator knows you're a new student.)
- c. **Join the Laker Vets,** GVSU's chapter of Student Veterans of America (SVA). Sign up through LakerLink (gvsu.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/studentveterans-of-america) to become a member. This is a registered student organization on campus to support and promote the veteran perspective on campus. You will receive emails highlighting our monthly social and university events. You can also find us on Facebook.
- d. Consider [Veterans Upward Bound \(VUB\)](#): This federal program helps eligible veterans jump-start in their academic careers. Refresh your academic skills, as well as learn time management, financial literacy, and study strategies. Phone: (616) 331-2597 veterans@gvsu.edu | gvsu.edu/vub
- e. **Connect with a seasoned student veteran** to show you the ropes through the Peer Advisors for Veteran Education (PAVE) Program. Email MVRC Director Shane Scherer at scheresh@gvsu.edu and we'll connect you with another veteran student based on your academic field of interest.