



Angelo State University
Operating Policy and Procedure

OP 64.02: Veterans' Education Benefits and Work-Study Program

DATE: July 24, 2019

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Operating Policy and/or Procedure (OP) is to outline policies concerning Veterans Affairs (VA) Education Benefits and the employment of students through the Department of Veterans Affairs Work-Study Allowance Program.

REVIEW: This OP will be reviewed in April every three years, or as needed, by the director of affiliated military and veteran services with recommended revisions forwarded through the vice president for student affairs and enrollment management to the president by May 1.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

1. FEDERAL VA EDUCATION BENEFITS

The Angelo State University (ASU) Veterans Educational and Transitional Services (VETS) Center will certify students using VA Federal Education Benefits. These benefits include:

- a. Chapter 30: Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty Educational Assistance Program
- b. Chapter 31: Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment
- c. Chapter 33: Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008
- d. Chapter 35: Dependent's Educational Assistance Program
- e. Chapter 1606: Montgomery GI Bill – Selected Reserve Educational Assistance Program
- f. Chapter 33T – Transfer of Post 9/11 Entitlement

ASU will follow regulations outlined by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Students qualify by meeting the rules for eligibility as outlined by the VA. All correspondence from the VETS Center will be sent using the students' ASU email address.

Title 38 United States Code Section 3679(e) Compliance

As part of the Veterans Benefits and Transition Act of 2018, section 3679(e) of Title 38, United States Code; ASU recognizes a covered individual as a fully admitted student using VA educational assistance under Chapter 31, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, or

Chapter 33, Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits and has requested Certification of Enrollment, as outlined in this policy.

ASU will permit any covered individual to attend or participate in the course of education during the period beginning on the date on which the individual provides a Certificate of Eligibility for Entitlement to educational assistance under Chapter 31 or 33 (a “Certificate of Eligibility” can also include a “Statement of Benefits” obtained from the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) website – eBenefits, or a VAF 28-1905 form) and ending on the earlier of the following dates:

- a. The date on which payment from the VA is made to the institution.
- b. 90 days after the date the institution certified tuition and fees following the receipt of the certificate of eligibility.

ASU will not impose any penalty, including the assessment of late fees, the denial of access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities, or the requirement that a covered individual borrow additional funds, on any covered individual because of the individual’s inability to meet his or her financial obligations to the institution due to the delayed disbursement funding from VA under Chapter 31 or 33.

Deadline for Certifying Benefits

The VA requires certifications no later than 30 days prior to the beginning of each term. Students receiving VA Benefits should request these benefits be certified to the VA by submitting a Request for Certification of Enrollment form after registering for classes each semester. Receipt of this form prior to the start of the semester in which courses are taken begins this process and should be submitted as follows:

- a. 30 calendar days prior to the start of the fall semester,
- b. 30 calendar days prior to the start of the spring semester,
- c. and 30 calendar days prior to the start of the summer semester(s).

Meeting these deadlines guarantees the student’s enrollment will be certified to the VA before classes begin and should prevent the student from an unnecessary financial burden. Additional documentation may be required for students establishing eligibility. Students using a benefit that pays tuition and fees directly to ASU and who have not submitted their request by the deadline may need to make secondary tuition and fee payment arrangements to the ASU Bursar.

Establishing Eligibility

New students using VA benefits should be directed to communicate with VETS Center personnel as soon as possible. Each VA Benefit-using student must apply to the VA to use his or her benefit at ASU. Approximately 30 days after the application, the student should receive a Certificate of Eligibility through the United States Postal Service. Upon receipt, the student must provide a copy to the VETS Center to be included in his or her VA School File.

Students will also complete a Statement of Understanding and Request for Certification of Enrollment. The Statement of Understanding outlines the student's responsibilities to ensure a successful academic endeavor. The Request for Certification of Enrollment is required for every semester as it authorizes ASU to certify semesters to the VA which debits a student's VA Education Benefit balance.

Reestablishing Eligibility

Students returning to ASU after an absence of enrollment of one year or more will be asked to provide a new certificate of eligibility.

Priority Enrollment

Veteran students, students certifying under Chapter 30: Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty Educational Assistance Program, Chapter 31: Vocational Rehabilitation, Chapter 33: Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008, Chapter 33: Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 FRY Scholarships, and Chapter 1606: Montgomery GI Bill – Selected Reserve Educational Assistance Program qualify for priority enrollment status at ASU. This status profile enables veteran students to register for classes on the first day of registration, after matriculation. A School Certifying Official (SCO) will enter the “VETS” code into ASU's Registrar Database to update each veteran student's profile.

Certification Process

Processing Request for Certification of Enrollment is systematic because the VA only authorizes the certification of classes that progress a student to obtain a degree in his or her declared major. Classes that do not fulfill degree requirements cannot be certified.

Exceptions are only considered if the requested class or classes both substitute and replace another published degree requirement, are needed to meet degree hour requirements, are part of a Reserve Officer Training Corps program, or fulfill an unmet elective requirement.

- a. Upon receipt, the Request for Certification of Enrollment is filed at the VETS Center until the VA certification window opens, which occurs 90 days from the start of a semester.
- b. When the certification window opens, authorized persons print a bill and schedule for each Request for Certification of Enrollment. The student's schedule is reviewed to qualify that the requested classes adhere to VA certification policies. Total terms and term credit hours are calculated and recorded on both the bill and schedule.
- c. An SCO reviews the term and term credit hours to ensure VA policies are followed. If a discrepancy is found, an SCO reviews the specific academic catalog under which the student's degree plan is published. The SCO will determine if an exception is justifiable and, if so, certifies the class. If an exception cannot be justified, an SCO will communicate via ASU email to the impacted student and certify all qualified classes to the VA.
- d. As a final step, an SCO records certifiable credit hours attempted, certified tuition and fees, and the date of activity into both Financial and Administrative databases. The SCO will communicate to the ASU Bursar and Student Accounts all account balance activity through regular reports. He or she will also communicate with and between ASU and the

VA any inconsistencies or issues regarding disbursement of tuition and fee payments.

- e. An SCO will ensure that each student's electronic record is complete and maintained in accordance with VA policies.

Changes to Course Schedule

Changes to a student's class schedule may affect benefit eligibility and monthly VA payments. Students are strongly encouraged to notify the VETS Center immediately after making changes. Upon receipt of a Student Information Change Request, the Certification process is followed to ensure changes are in accordance with VA policies.

2. TEXAS HAZLEWOOD ACT EXEMPTION BENEFITS

Qualifying students who desire to utilize the Texas Hazelwood Act Exemption (HZWD) benefit will submit the Texas Veteran's Commission (TVC) Texas Hazelwood Act Exemption Application, and all necessary supporting documentation to either Student Accounts or the VETS Center.

Student Accounts officiates the use of HZWD at ASU and the VETS Center is an authorized intake agency. VETS Center personnel are not the approving agents of HZWD but can aid students and families in the application process. The VETS Center will forward all documents received to Student Accounts for processing and administration.

Deadline for Certifying

Students wishing to utilize HZWD should request these benefits by completing in ink either the initial TVC application or HZWD Continued Enrollment form. Either form can be routed to Student Accounts or the VETS Center. Note: Documents sent directly to Student Accounts may not be retained in the VETS Center network.

One (1) HZWD Application Packet is required when the qualifying student is accepted to ASU and is sufficient to certify that semester. A HZWD Continued Enrollment form is required for each subsequent semester in which the qualifying student desires to expend HZWD benefit to pay tuition and most fees. Documents should be submitted to Student Accounts:

- a. 30 calendar days prior to the start of a fall semester,
- b. 30 calendar days prior to the start of a spring semester,
- c. and 30 calendar days prior to the start of a summer semester.
- d. Benefits cannot be applied to a semester after the last day of that semester.

Meeting these deadlines ensures the enrollment for eligible courses prior to drop-dates or payment deadlines.

A second HZWD Application may be required for students who do not maintain continuous enrollment at ASU. Eligibility of continuation of HZWD benefit use is contingent on Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policies.

[Minor revision: July 24, 2019]

3. VA WORK-STUDY PROGRAM

The Department of Veterans Affairs Work-Study Allowance Program offers a supplemental benefit allowance to students using VA benefits who are performing VA-related activities. The VETS Center administers this program and may employ VA education benefit using students at a pay rate determined by the VA. Eligibility requirements for participation in this program are determined by the VA, the VETS Center, and ASU policy.