

Welcome to Western Kentucky University's Office of Veteran's Affairs Online Orientation

Please read the following information carefully. At the end of this orientation, you will be required to answer some questions and then submit a confirmation page to the VA Office (VAO) showing you have read this information and that you understand all of the information contained herein.

This confirmation will be placed in your file in the VAO.

If you have questions regarding any of the information contained in this presentation, you may contact the VAO at 270-745-3732.

Who We Are

Throughout this presentation you will encounter the following acronyms.

VAO – VA Office at WKU

Voc-Rehab Counselor – Your Vocational Rehabilitation case manager

VA Certifying Official – The VA representative in the VA Office at WKU. The VA Certifying Officials for the Department of Veterans Affairs are your liaisons. Contact them if you encounter difficulties you can not resolve.

Admissions

The application for VA education benefits does not constitute admission to WKU. Application for admission to the university must be made through the Office of Admissions. You may contact the Office of Admissions at 270-745-2551 or online at: <http://www.wku.edu/admissions>.

You cannot be certified to the VA unless you have been admitted to the university and registered in classes.

Tuition

The VA Office at WKU will notify the Billings and Receivables office that your tuition will be paid by VA Vocational Rehabilitation. You must turn in the Certification Request Form before this process can be accomplished. If you turn your Certification Request Form in late, your tuition will not be paid until you are certified to VA.

Payment

VA pays a monthly stipend for each month that you actually attend classes. VA educational benefits are not based on the University's tuition and fees.

Training time and number of dependents dictate the monthly rate of pay. Change in training time will affect payment. Students must be certified at least half-time in order to receive a monthly stipend from VA. Your monthly stipend will be pro-rated on a 30-day month, for months when you are not in school the entire month. Training time varies in Summer due to accelerated terms. Check the list for the hours required for summer training at wku.edu/veteran. If you do not receive your monthly stipend, you should contact your Voc-Rehab Counselor.

Housing

Students that are interested in on campus housing should contact the Office of Housing and Residence Life by visiting their website or calling 270-745-4359 or visit their website at <http://www.wku.edu/housing>.

Your VA Education Benefits does not pay for housing.

Applying for Federal Financial Assistance

Veterans may be eligible for financial assistance (grants, loans, etc.) even if receiving VA Educational Benefits. The process of applying for financial aid begins with the completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). You may file via the Internet at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Federal financial aid cannot affect your VA Educational Benefits. However, your VA may reduce the amount of financial assistance you are eligible to receive.

Credit for Military Service

Credit for military training is evaluated/determined by the [WKU Transfer Center](#). In order to learn what credit may be granted, you must provide a copy of your DD214, Certificate of Training or other applicable documents. If you have served on active duty in a branch of the military for 181 days or more and earned an honorable discharge you may receive three (3) semester hours of credit applicable to category F of the general education requirements. Therefore, any course under category F of the general education requirements will not be certified to VA.

Note: WKU does not award credit for MOS training.

Certification Request Form

Every semester, upon completion of registration, you must submit a Veteran Certification Request Form to the VA Office at WKU (via your TOPNET account under the Financial Aid tab). Certification Request Forms are processed in the order in which they are received.

You will not be certified until you have submitted this form and any other documentation required to certify your courses in accordance with VA regulations.

Processing Times

The VAO requires at least 2 weeks to certify your classes to the VA after you submit your Certification Request Form. During peak times it may take longer.

Check with your VA Voc-Rehab Counselor to see when you will receive payment after the VA Coordinator certifies your enrollment. If you have questions about the status of your certification, you should call your VA Voc-Rehab Counselor.

Certification

You will receive benefits only for those courses that apply to your degree and are certified by the VA Coordinator. The VA Office at WKU will not intentionally certify courses that are not part of your declared program of study.

You may take any course you want, but VA will not pay for it unless it is listed on your degree program as a required course for graduation.

Repeat courses are not certifiable unless required by the university to make a grade of "C" or better. If you repeat the course a second time, the VA Coordinator must go back and reduce your benefits from the 1st semester in which you registered for the course. This will create an overpayment to VA.

VA will not pay for you to take an audited course.

You must be degree seeking in order to be certified to VA.

Drop/Add/Withdrawal

A [Change in Status](#) form should be submitted to the VAO when you add a class or classes after submission of your initial Certification Request Form. If you drop or withdraw, the VA Office at WKU will automatically be notified of those changes; however, any additional classes that you add must be submitted through this form.

Degree Program

While waiting to be paid your monthly stipends from the DVA, you may need to request a deferment of tuition from the Office of Veterans Affairs at WKU. If you do not request the deferment, your bill will be due up front to the university by you. DVA works with a lag time and the deferment is required in order to prevent your classes from being dropped or a late fee added. However, your Certification Request Form must be submitted (and your VA file complete by the first day of the semester) before you can request a deferment.

If you choose to request a deferment, you will have a "hold" placed on your student account until your bill is paid in full by yourself and/or DVA. This "hold" will prevent you from dropping/adding classes, receiving grades, transcripts, etc.

The Deferment Request can be submitted online on the VA Forms page.

Major/Degree Changes

A change in your major must be approved by your Voc-Rehab Counselor and reported to the VAO. If you change your major in the middle of the semester, all courses for the current semester must meet degree requirements for the new degree requirements.

Address Change

You must keep your address current. You must notify your VA Voc-Rehab Counselor if your address changes. You also need to notify the Registrar's Office.

Failure to notify these entities could result in loss of important information to the veteran.

Academic Progress

You must make satisfactory progress toward your degree objective. Specifically, your GPA must meet the guidelines detailed in the current WKU catalog.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

You must make satisfactory academic progress with the university. You must also attend the course(s) in which you enroll. If you are placed on academic suspension, your VA educational benefits will be terminated for the duration of the suspension. If you are placed on probation, the DVA will be notified.

VA Overpayment

An overpayment can result if you drop below the training time that was originally reported to VA and you fail to notify the VA Coordinator in a timely manner.

Example: You are certified full-time and then drop a class, which puts you below full-time. If VA continues to pay you at the full-time rate (even though you are below full-time), when the reduction is reported, you will receive an overpayment letter and those funds will need to be repaid to VA.

Bookcard

A bookcard to purchase books and/or supplies will be submitted to the bookstore and will be authorized by your VA Certifying Official. You must submit a Veteran Certification Request Form, and your certifying official must approve all classes before submitting the bookcard authorization to the bookstore. You will choose which campus you want your bookcard authorization submitted to, when you complete the Certification Request Form. If you charge your books to your student account, VA **WILL NOT** pay for your books.

Email Address

Upon initial registration to the university you will be issued a WKU email address. Students will be notified periodically about important information through this form of communication.

This will be the email address that the VAO will use to correspond with all veterans and dependents. If you do not know how to access your WKU email account, please read the instructions found at www.wku.edu/financialaid under "How Do I..."

TopNet

You can view the date that you are certified to your Voc-Rehab Counselor by checking your WKU TOPNET account. The date you are certified to your Voc-Rehab Counselor along with how many courses are certifiable will be posted under your account. You can view this information by logging into your account, click Student Services, Financial Aid, Awards and Veteran Information.

Reporting Changes

You must notify the VAO of ANY and ALL changes within five (5) working days. The VA Office at WKU will then notify your Voc-Rehab Counselor.

VA Office at WKU

Telephone: 270-745-3732

Fax: 270-745-6586

Email: va.questions@wku.edu

Feel free to contact the VAO with any questions that you may have. We will respond in a timely manner to assist you with your questions.

VA Forms

The Certification Request Form and the Change of Status Form is listed on the VAO website at www.wku.edu/veteran. The Change in Status form can also be located at the above website. The Change in Status Form is used after you submit your Certification Request Form, when you drop and/or add classes or if you withdraw from the university.