



VETERANS GUIDE AND STANDARDS

FOR

STUDENTS RECEIVING

VA EDUCATION BENEFITS



MGA



Veterans Certifying Officials

vacerts@mga.edu

Cochran Campus:

vacerts@mga.edu

Macon Campus:

vacerts@mga.edu

478.471.2900

MGA

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NOTICE: THE ABUSE OF VA EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS IN ANY FORM IS PROHIBITED; THE BENEFITS ARE SUBJECT TO BE DISCONTINUED WHICH MAY RESULT IN REPAYMENT.

INTRODUCTION

Recipients of VA Educational Benefits at Middle Georgia State University should know and understand that Federal Laws, Rules, and Regulations pertaining to Veterans and other eligible persons who receive VA Educational Benefits will change.

These standards represent one of our many attempts to keep our students informed, and they should be received as helpful guidelines to ensure that their stay on campus is pleasant and academically rewarding.

Please read the guidelines and follow them carefully. These guidelines are not intended to answer all questions about the VA Educational Benefits but they are an attempt on our part to deal with those questions, issues and other problems that are most frequently brought to our attention.

The staff of Middle Georgia State University's VA Certifying Office is not employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Our office does not determine eligibility for educational benefits. Therefore, the staff cannot make decisions for the VA, control the regulations for the VA, or control the regulations that have been made by the Veterans Administration or Congress. However, our office can assist Veterans and Dependents by certifying their enrollments and serve as a liaison between them and the VA.

Eligible educational benefits recipients will receive a Certificate of Eligibility (COE) letter from the VA stating the approved educational chapter benefit. The VA generally will process and deliver a COE in 30 days upon receipt of completed application. A copy of the COE should be submitted to our office. As a temporary measure, students can sign into their eBenefits account (www.ebenefits.va.gov) and provide a print screen of their eligibility status. Failure to provide proof of eligibility could result in a delay in certification.

Additionally, students should provide our office with a copy of their DD-214. However, submittal of the DD-214 will not delay processing their certification.

CONTACTING THE VA

The Veterans Administration toll free number is 888.442.4551 and the Fax number is 918.781.7863.

ENROLLMENT VERIFICATION

The earliest you can verify your enrollment is the last calendar day of each month.

If you are receiving the Active Duty, Reserve or REAP educational benefits, use the Web Automated Verification of Enrollment (WAVE) or call the toll free interactive Voice Response Line at 877.823.2378.

If you receive Dependents Education Benefits and you are enrolled in a non-degree program, you can verify your attendance by calling 888.442.4551.

STANDARDS OF PROGRESS

In addition to the Rules and Regulations that are set forth in this guide, it is the student's responsibility to read, understand, and observe the Rules, Regulations, and Policies of Middle Georgia State University as published in the University Catalog.

The VA Rules and Regulations require that a Veteran or other eligible person who receives VA Educational Benefits must declare a degree program.

Class attendance and academic progress will be monitored, and the Middle Georgia State University VA Certifying Official reports irregularities to the VA.

WITHDRAW, DROPPING A COURSE, TERMINATION AND ACADEMIC DISMISSAL

The VA Certifying Official must be notified immediately of discontinued enrollment at the University. This is necessary to prevent VA overpayments. This includes any course or term drops or withdrawals.

CERTIFICATION FOR BENEFITS

It is the student's responsibility each semester to contact the VA Certifying Official at Middle Georgia State University to ensure that enrollment is certified for the term as early as possible to decrease delays in payment processing.

- Send a copy of your Certificate of Eligibility (COE) to the VA Certifying Official at the University.
- When applicable, send a copy of your DD214 or Active Duty Orders for active duty personnel.
- Student must notify the VA Certifying Official at the University that you are ready to be certified upon registration NO LATER than the first week of **each semester** you are requesting to utilize your benefits. Middle Georgia State University does not automatically certify students as a student may elect to not use their benefits. Student must send an email to vacerts@mga.edu to request certification.
- To ensure the timely receipt of monthly benefits, notify the VA Certifying Official at the University if enrollment has changed or credit hours have increased or decreased. Failure to notify this office immediately will cause a delay in the processing.
- Students can only be certified for courses required for to complete their approved program.
- Transient students must bring a copy of their Transient Letter to the VA Certifying Official at Middle Georgia State University.

PRIORITY REGISTRATION

Middle Georgia State University students are allowed to register in priority order. That means that athletes, seniors, and veterans can register first (see academic calendar for registration dates). Students are scheduled with a time ticket to allow them to participate in priority registration.

Priority Registration Schedule:

- Athletes, Veterans and Seniors will be able to register beginning on the first day when registration becomes available*.
- Juniors register on the second day
- Sophomores register on the third day
- Freshmen register on the fourth day

PRIORITY REGISTRATION (CONTINUED)

All other student groups including any brand new students, Transient, and Transfer are not assigned a ticket; therefore, they must wait until the fifth day in which registration opens up to begin the registration process.

Academic Calendar: <https://www.mga.edu/academics/calendars/index.php>

** Students in their first semester with MGA will be assigned to the fifth day of registration as a new student. The priority registration system applies to returning students.*

PAYMENT INFORMATION

VA Educational Benefits are based on the number of semester hours taken, as recorded by the Registrar's Office. During accelerated mini terms, the benefits will be paid for the period of time that the Veteran actually attends class, not over the duration of the full "regular" semester.

Except for the accelerated mini term, VA Educational Benefit rates are based on enrollments as follows (for undergraduate):

Fall , Spring & Summer

12 semester hours: Full Time*

9 - 11 semester hours: 3/4 Time

6 - 8 semester hours: 1/2 Time

4 - 5 semester hours: <1/2

1 - 3 semester hours: <1/4

*12 semester hours is considered full time for undergraduate programs.

For graduate students the rates are as follows:

Fall, Spring, and Summer

9 semester hours: Full Time

6 - 8 semester hours: 3/4 Time

4 - 5 semester hours: 1/2 Time

3 semester hours: 1/4 Time

"Kickers" are authorized Department of Defense payments to individuals to encourage enlistment or retention in the Armed Forces, usually in specialized areas. "Kickers" are added to the basic rate of pay.

ADVANCE PAYMENT

Middle Georgia State University does not participate in Advance Payment.

REGULAR PAYMENT

Regular payments are received by the student through direct deposit following the end of each month, if the student has verified his/her enrollment.

Example:

September's payment will be received at the beginning of October.

PAYMENTS FOR BREAKS

VA Benefits do not pay for periods of break after a term ends. The VA only pays for the start date of the term through the end date of a term.

PAYMENT FOR REPEATING A COURSE

VA Benefits are NOT PAID for courses in which credit has already been received. Courses in which an "F" grade is earned and major field of study courses in which a "D" grade is earned may be retaken.

PAYMENT OF AUDITED COURSE

VA Benefits will not be paid for courses that are audited.

PAYMENT FOR COURSES THAT DO NOT FULFILL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Benefits will not be paid for courses that cannot or will NOT be used to satisfy graduation requirements.

LAST SEMESTER RULE BEFORE GRADUATION

Veterans and Dependents entering the final semester who may need less than 12 credit hours to meet requirements for graduation may register for 12 or more credit hours to receive full-time benefits.

PAYMENT FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION CREDITS

Veterans with 12 or more months of active duty may be granted 2 Physical Education credits. To obtain these credits, Veterans should submit a copy of their DD-214 to the VA Certifying Official at the University. However, PE is not a degree requirement at Middle Georgia State and the course will not be certified for VA payment.

VA does not authorize payments to Veterans for additional physical education courses, unless the Veteran's major is Physical Education.

PAYMENTS DURING ACCELERATED PERIODS OF ENROLLMENT

The University's semester term of enrollment may include several terms such as 1st session and 2nd session. The duration of these terms may cover the first half of the regular semester (4 to 8 weeks) or second half of the regular semester.

The Veterans Administration considers all short terms as an accelerated term and payments are adjusted to compensate for the extended time in class during accelerated periods of enrollment.

Therefore, the benefits will be paid for that period of time when the Veteran is actually attending class and not the duration of a 15-week semester.

Consistent with the VA Rules and Regulations pertaining to accelerated terms, this Office reports the Veteran's enrollment in each of the University's enrollment periods according to the Registrar's record.

Again, it should be clear that the VA Educational Benefits are based on how many hours are taken in a given session of the semester, and after any short session is completed, the benefits for that session will be discontinued.

OVERPAYMENTS

Recipients who completely withdraw from the University or who drop a course will be required to return payment to the VA. When returning a payment to the VA, include your name, claim number and the reason for the return.

Checks or money orders should be returned to the VA Office by registered mail and return receipt. Receipts should be kept as proof until the matter is resolved.

Overpayments should be mailed to:
Muskogee Regional Benefit Office
125 South Main Street Muskogee, OK 74401

OTHER INFORMATION

You should promptly notify your school's Veterans Certifying Official and the VA if there is any change in enrollment. You are responsible for all debts resulting from reduction or terminations of your enrollment even if the payment was submitted directly to the school on your behalf.

Generally, we cannot certify you for:

- Courses you do not attend
- Courses from which you withdraw
- Courses you complete but receive a grade that will not count towards graduation

The logo for MGA (Muskogean Graduate Association) features a stylized purple flame or leaf shape above the letters 'MGA' in a bold, purple, sans-serif font. The background behind the text is a light purple and grey abstract shape.



YOU MAY NOTIFY THE VA VIA:

Internet

www.ebenefits.va.gov

Telephone

Call toll-free at 888.442.4551.

Postal Mail

Send correspondence to: Muskogee Regional Office
125 South Main Street
Muskogee, OK 74401

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mga.edu/registrar/veterans

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