

## Regulations for Military Student Success

This regulation provides a framework for the constituent institutions of the University of North Carolina to develop and maintain a comprehensive network of services for military-affiliated students seeking to meet their educational goals. This regulation implements the requirements of UNC Policy Manual, Section 700.7.1 and intends to promote the general welfare of service members, veterans, spouses, and dependent family members at the constituent institutions.

I. Admission of Active Duty Service Members and Veterans. For purposes of undergraduate admission, all persons having completed a minimum of three years of active duty service<sup>1</sup> will be considered transfer students in the admissions process pursuant to UNC Policy Manual, Section 700.1.1.2[R], with the branch of service functioning as the institution of transfer. Applicants in this profile shall be required to submit the high school transcript or GED, college transcript(s) (if applicable) and relevant military transcript for evaluation.

A. For applicants who have completed a minimum of three years of active duty service, but do not meet the campus specific transfer admission requirements, constituent institutions are encouraged to develop academic contracts<sup>2</sup> to assure admission for a future term. Upon successful completion<sup>3</sup> of college-level courses required for admission as outlined in the academic contract, these students will be admitted subject to campus safety policies and procedures.<sup>4</sup>

B. Application Fees for Active Duty Service Members. Campuses are encouraged to waive the admissions application fee for all service members if they are in an active duty status at the time of application.

II. Data Collection and Reporting on Military-Affiliated Students. Consistent with the recommendations contained in the *UNC SERVES April 2010 Report to the President* and the intent of the President of the United States' Executive Order 13607, "Establishing Principles of Excellence for Educational Institutions Serving Service Members, Veterans, Spouses, and Other Family Members" issued April 27, 2012, University of North Carolina constituent institutions shall establish a section in their undergraduate and graduate admissions application entitled, "Military Status for Financial Aid and Residency Determination."<sup>5</sup>

The General Administration will work with the constituent institutions to create space in the Student Data File for the information and develop an annual report of this information.

Campuses must develop appropriate protocols to assure the security of all information related to status of active-duty students and students eligible to be activated.

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<sup>1</sup> Years of service should be calculated on a calendar years basis from date of enlistment to present (if still enlisted) or exit date (if discharged or retired). Student should provide proof of enlistment and exit date (if discharged or retired) by submitting one of the following:

- Most recent Leave and Earnings Statement (enlisted)
- DD214 (discharged or retired)

<sup>2</sup> See UNC Policy Manual, Section 700.7.1[G].

<sup>3</sup> A minimum GPA of no less than 2.0 defines "successful," but does not guarantee admissions.

<sup>4</sup> Required checks for campus safety will be performed.

<sup>5</sup> The questions posed in this section are detailed in UNC Policy Manual, Section 700.7.1[G].

### III. Residency Status for Military-Affiliated Students.

A. Campuses shall clearly articulate the process for military-affiliated students to establish residency. All campus processes shall comply with State law and the North Carolina State Residence Classification Manual. The procedures shall be publicized as part of both undergraduate and graduate recruitment and admissions. Campuses shall publicly publish a clearly articulated appeals process that includes the rights and responsibilities of the student as outlined in the North Carolina State Residence Classification Manual (section V. Procedures, subsection D. Student Appeals to Residence Appeals Board).

B. Campuses shall train the appropriate staff to provide accurate and adequate information on these issues to military-affiliated students. Professional advisors and faculty should be alerted to the continuous enrollment provisions in order to assist military-affiliated students in making the best decisions about their academic program choices.

### IV. Campus Support Structures for Military-Affiliated Students

A. Campus-Based Military Affairs Committee. Campuses are encouraged to create a Military Affairs Committee to assist military-affiliated students in successfully transitioning to and succeeding in the educational environment.<sup>6</sup>

#### B. Financial Support

1. Tuition, fees, books. UNC campuses shall create policies that guarantee that undergraduate and graduate military-affiliated students using United States Veterans Administration (VA) educational benefits are held harmless from VA processing delays that prevent timely payment of their educational benefits. These policies shall include provisions:

- a. Granting forgiveness of late payment fees on students whose VA educational benefits are delayed; and
- b. Maintaining students' course registrations until such delayed payments are received.

Campuses are encouraged to develop a policy providing undergraduate and graduate students using GI Bill benefits with "bridge loans," payment plans, tuition deferments, vouchers or some combination of these items to cover tuition, fees, housing, books, and other expenses related directly to university life as defined by campus policy until payment is received from the VA.

2. Scholarships and grants. UNC campus development offices are encouraged to create, fund, and maintain scholarships and grants for undergraduate and graduate military-affiliated students.

3. Campus employment. UNC campuses are encouraged to recruit veterans, when appropriate, for on-campus VA work study.

C. Faculty and Staff Support Training. Campuses are encouraged to provide and/or make available support for faculty and staff training on issues military-affiliated students encounter. This training should conform to best practices guidelines.<sup>7</sup>

D. Campus Organizations and Communication. Campuses are encouraged to support Student Veteran Organizations and/or other Military-Affiliated Student Organizations. The student organization advisor is encouraged to communicate updates on veterans and military affairs on campus as well as topics and announcements related to any military-affiliated student groups.

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<sup>6</sup> See UNC Policy Manual, Section 700.7.1[G].

<sup>7</sup> See UNC Policy Manual, Section 700.7.1[G]

E. Academic Support

1. Orientation/transition seminar. To the extent practicable, campuses shall provide break-out sessions focused on military-affiliated students as part of their regular orientation programs. When possible, the resources of this session should be made available online. Campuses offering a credit-bearing introduction to the university course should consider providing a section or sections exclusively for military-affiliated students.
2. Priority enrollment. When possible, campuses should recognize the scheduling challenges and the limitations on the benefits of active duty students using Armed Forces Tuition Assistance (TA), as well as those students who are released from active duty for a specific amount of time to attend college through a military degree completion program, and provide such students with priority enrollment.
3. Academic Assistance. Campuses shall evaluate, review, adapt, and monitor academic assistance, including mentoring and tutoring, to its military-affiliated students. Reports of challenges and successes should be made to the campus Military Affairs Committee.
4. Military Science courses and tuition surcharge. Campuses should refer to the tuition surcharge exception list that is part of UNC Policy 100.1.5[G].
5. Service cords. Campuses are encouraged to provide service cords for graduating student veterans, active-duty, members of the National Guard, and reservists. Campuses shall communicate to these students a process for acquisition of the cord. These cords shall be provided free of charge, when possible. Campuses shall consider officially recognizing these graduates in the printed program and/or during the ceremony.

V. Military Learning and Academic Credit

A. General Principles. The University of North Carolina seeks to maximize and make consistent the transfer of credit from the military to UNC campuses. The following general principles will apply:

1. If a campus determines that military learning is equivalent to academic credit then that credit shall be applied consistently to all students who have acquired the same military learning.
2. Campuses shall establish equivalence mapping for courses frequently seen on military transcripts (Joint Services Transcript and Community College of the Air Force transcripts) and, if applicable, for credit by exam (CLEP, DSST, and Defense Language Institute exams) to assure students receive consistent and fair transfer of credit.<sup>8</sup>
3. Campuses shall publish these equivalencies online in a manner accessible to military-affiliated students.
4. Campuses shall establish and publish a process for active duty military, reservists, and veterans to receive credit for or a waiver of the general education health and/or physical education requirements based on military recruit training.
5. Campuses are encouraged to train admissions counselors, registrars, academic advisors, department chairs or heads, and deans in military credit transferability.<sup>9</sup>
6. Campuses shall exempt transfer credits resulting from military learning from the tuition surcharge calculation.

B. Language Requirements. Campuses shall accept foreign language coursework completed through the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) as transfer credit.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>See UNC Policy Manual, Section 700.7.1[G].

<sup>9</sup>See UNC Policy Manual, Section 700.7.1[G].

Campuses are encouraged to establish a process for students to demonstrate proficiency and, potentially, to waive campus language requirements for other foreign language skill development outside of DLIFLC. Examples include: CLEP credit, Defense Language Proficiency exams, continuing education mission specific language training, etc.

C. Military Learning. Campuses shall evaluate the military transcript to determine if any military learning applies toward a program of study. The American Council on Education (ACE) credit equivalency recommendations serve as the standard reference work for recognizing learning acquired in the military. Nothing in this policy prevents constituent institutions from evaluating military learning independent of the ACE evaluation. Credit shall be awarded in a consistent manner and a schedule of such awards should be developed, published, and updated regularly.

D. College-Level Examination Program (CLEP). Campuses awarding academic credit for CLEP shall establish and publish a chart with the minimum allowable score (no lower than 50) and the credit/course equivalences.

E. DANTES Standardized Subject Tests (DSST). Campuses awarding academic credit for DSST exams shall establish and publish a chart with the minimum allowable score and the credit/course equivalencies.

## VI. Service Member Call to Duty

A. Military Withdrawal. Students called to active duty (and/or their spouses and dependents) may need to withdraw from coursework during the course of a semester.

As stated in UNC Policy Manual, Section 400.1.5[R], students are expected to complete all the courses for which they are registered at the close of the Course Adjustment Period *unless* withdrawal is permitted due to extenuating circumstances or military service.

Campuses shall develop policies that permit an undergraduate or graduate student to withdraw from a course or courses at any time and without academic penalty due to their military service.<sup>11</sup> Campuses may extend some or all components of this policy to apply to the spouse or child of a person called to active duty if they demonstrate sufficient cause for consideration due to changed circumstances<sup>12</sup>. These policies must:

1. Be published in the appropriate sections of the university catalogue and website;
2. Describe the process by which the student (or an appropriate officer of the Armed Forces or official of the DOD) gives advance written or verbal notice of call to duty to the designated campus body or official;<sup>13</sup> and
3. Describe the process by which the student informs the appropriate campus body or official of intent to return to the institution upon completion of period of service.

B. Refund of Tuition, Fees, and Other Expenses. Enrolled undergraduate and graduate students called to active duty during the semester and who complete a military withdrawal from

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<sup>10</sup>The DLIFLC is a regionally accredited higher education institution. In terms of transfer, courses completed through this institution should be evaluated and academic credit awarded under the same criteria as any other regionally accredited college or university.

<sup>11</sup>See UNC Policy Manual, Section 700.7.1[G].

<sup>12</sup>Campuses may choose to process family requests under the extenuating circumstances provision of their policies, as outlined in the UNC Policy Manual, Section 400.1.5[R]. Alternatively, campuses may choose to process family requests under documentation and review requirements set up for persons called to active duty.

<sup>13</sup>No notice is required if the giving of such notice is precluded by military necessity, such as a mission, operation, exercise, or requirement that is classified or a pending or ongoing mission, operation, exercise, or requirement that may be compromised or otherwise adversely affected by public knowledge (HEA Sec. 484C(c)(1)(A)(B)(C)).

their course(s) shall be afforded special consideration with regard to refunds of tuition, fees, and other expenses. Campuses shall develop policies that direct:

1. All tuition and fee charges to be waived with:
  - a. Personal payments refunded,
  - b. Financial aid adjusted as required by law,
  - c. Financial aid refunds paid by student, if appropriate;
2. A full refund for textbooks purchased through the university bookstore for the semester in progress is available by presenting the textbooks, the receipt, and a copy of the applicable military orders;<sup>14</sup>
3. A per-diem refund of room rent in a campus residence facility will be issued based on the student's official check-out date;<sup>15</sup>
4. Board fees will be prorated from the opening date of the dining hall for the term;
5. Unpaid account balances will be subject to a payment plan formulated with the student; and
6. No collection actions will occur during a deployment.

C. Academic Credit

1. Campuses must have a separate transcript notation appropriate for students who withdraw for active or reserve military service. Such withdrawals will not count in the calculation of the GPA or tuition surcharge.
2. Campuses shall develop policies that permit a student called to active duty, as circumstances are presented, either to:
  - a. Receive the "I," or incomplete, grade and adjust the date for resolving the incompletes accordingly, including in a post-deployment return to the university and for students who do not return to the university within three years post-deployment<sup>16</sup>, any "I" assigned for a call to duty should convert to a military withdrawal;<sup>17</sup> or
  - b. complete the coursework, when possible, online, by testing out early, or through an academic contract with the faculty member(s)<sup>18</sup>

D. Deferral of Enrollment. Campuses will allow admitted undergraduate and graduate students to defer admission if they are called to active duty before the start of a term. Campuses should consider, in cases of a national emergency or crisis, allowing a deferral of enrollment for students who enlist in the United States Armed Forces prior to enrolling. Campuses shall:

1. Describe the process by which the student (or an appropriate officer of the Armed Forces or official of the DOD) gives advance written or verbal notice of call to duty to the designated campus body or official;<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Campuses with a rental program should consider a refund or a pro-rating of the rental fee.

<sup>15</sup> If the student is receiving a BAH benefit from the VA for housing, they are entitled to keep all funds through their last date of attendance (as certified on campus). Any funds received after the last date of attendance become a student debt.

<sup>16</sup> A student upon the completion of a period of service in the uniformed services, notifies the institution of the intent to return no later than three years after the completion of the period of service. HEA Sec. 484C (c)(4)(A)through (c)(4)(C).

<sup>17</sup> There will be no refund of tuition, fees, or books in this case.

<sup>18</sup> For courses completed, policies on refunds will be adjusted accordingly.

2. Describe the process by which the student informs the appropriate campus body or official of intent to return to the institution upon completion of period of service;
  3. Publish the details of the process in the appropriate sections of the university catalogue and website;
  4. Include provision for a full refund on all deposits paid by the student; and
  5. Clarify the notification process of all relevant offices on campus.
- E. Military Leave of Absence for Graduate Students. Campuses shall develop policies permitting graduate students called to duty to take a military leave of absence from their program of study. These policies should:
1. Be published in the appropriate sections of the university catalogue and website;
  2. Describe the process by which the student (or an appropriate officer of the Armed Forces or official of the DOD) gives advance written or verbal notice of call to duty to the designated campus body or official;<sup>20</sup>
  3. Describe the process by which the student informs the appropriate campus body or official of intent to return to the institution upon completion of period of service;
  4. Describe the process of resumption of study;
  5. Establish the process for adjustment of any time clocks for degree completion; and
  6. Describe a process that recertifies the currency of all graduate degree requirements that may be beyond allowed time limits, including review in the case of required repetition of course work that might be outdated.
- F. Readmission to the University. All campuses shall readmit undergraduate and graduate students who were called to active duty. Campuses shall:
1. Readmit students who were in good academic standing at the time of their call to duty and seek readmission no later than three years after the completion of the period of service;<sup>21</sup>
  2. Waive any new application process or fees;<sup>22</sup>
  3. Describe the process by which the student informs the appropriate campus body or official of intent to return to the institution upon completion of period of service;
  4. Adjust the registration window for students to allow for early registration, if possible;
  5. Clarify variations in regulations for readmission for students:
    - a. Who were on academic probation or suspension

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<sup>19</sup> No notice is required if the giving of such notice is precluded by military necessity, such as a mission, operation, exercise, or requirement that is classified or a pending or ongoing mission, operation, exercise, or requirement that may be compromised or otherwise adversely affected by public knowledge (HEA Sec. 484C(c)(1)(A)(B)(C)).

<sup>20</sup> No notice is required if the giving of such notice is precluded by military necessity, such as a mission, operation, exercise, or requirement that is classified or a pending or ongoing mission, operation, exercise, or requirement that may be compromised or otherwise adversely affected by public knowledge (HEA Sec. 484C(c)(1)(A)(B)(C)).

<sup>21</sup> A student hospitalized or convalescing from an illness or injury during the performance of service shall notify the institution of the intent to return no later than two years after the end of recovery. A student who fails to apply for readmission within the period described shall not automatically forfeit such eligibility for readmission to the institution of higher education, but shall be subject to the institution's established leave of absence policy and general practices. (HEA Sec. 484C (c)(4)(A)through (c)(4)(C)).

<sup>22</sup> Required checks for campus safety will be performed. Campuses will incur the fee.

b. Who were away longer than three calendar years following completion of service; and

6. Indicate a process for reinstatement to a specific undergraduate program of study.

F. **Scholarship Status.** When possible and depending on availability of funds, undergraduate and graduate students receiving university scholarships at the time of their call to duty should be able to receive the remainder of the scholarship upon their return. Campuses shall develop policies related to the impact of call to duty on the scholarships they award. These policies must:

1. Include provisions to notify students about the status of their scholarships at the time of a military withdrawal or leave of absence; and

2. Describe the rules related to reinstatement of scholarships and the process to initiate reinstatement when possible.

G. **National Guard and Reserves**

1. Campuses are encouraged to accommodate students who are required to participate in weekly or monthly meetings, weekend drills, annual trainings, military schooling or other training or official military events as members of the National Guard or Reserves.

2. Students should be advised to inform their course instructors that they are members of the National Guard or Reserves and to avoid registering for courses that will significantly and substantially impact their academic learning by missing more than one-third (1/3) of the class meetings.

3. If a student seeks to be excused from class for Guard or Reserve duty, he/she is encouraged to provide a copy of orders or a letter from the unit command to the course instructor and inquire about making up missed course work. The course instructor is encouraged to permit the student a reasonable amount of time to make up missed assignments. Whether or not students are allowed to make up missed assignments or tests relies upon faculty discretion.