DEBTS WITH VA EDUCATION PROGRAMS GUIDELINES

As a reminder to all of our students utilizing VA education benefits, changing your enrollment with the school, especially those changes occurring after the school’s schedule adjustment period, may cause an overpayment requiring the student to repay the VA some or all of the benefits paid.

If you decrease your training time (i.e. drop classes, leave school, etc.) and the VA has already processed a payment for tuition and fees, an overpayment will occur. When the School Certifying Official (SCO) notifies the VA of a change, a debt is created against your account. The school will issue any refunds in accordance with its internal policy, which may not fully cover the debt with the VA. If the amount refunded by the school does not satisfy the debt, you are responsible for the remainder.

- If the school refunds money directly to the VA, the VA will credit your account any amount the school refunds.
- If the school refunds money directly to you, you must clear the debt with the VA.

A decrease in your credit hours could also result in changes to your housing allowance and books & supplies stipend. If the VA has already issued you a payment for the term, a debt will be created on your account.

You are responsible for keeping track of your tuition and fee account balance and payments. Visit the school’s financial office regularly to review your account, ensure the charges are correct and that payments and refunds are processed correctly, contact the school’s SCO to ensure the certification information they send to the VA matches your schedule.

VA HOUSING BENEFITS GUIDELINES

As a reminder to all our veteran students who attend courses on ground, you must meet the VA requirements to be eligible for the full Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA). In order to be eligible to receive your full housing allowance, you must attend at least one on-ground course at the school for the entire length of the term and be enrolled at least full time, or 12 credits per term; the MHA is not payable to individuals on active duty or those enrolled at half time or less.

Students enrolled at more than half-time but less than full-time will have their housing allowance prorated based on the number of classes they are taking (also called rate of pursuit). This amount will be rounded to the nearest tenth. For example, a student enrolled with a rate of pursuit of 75% would receive 80% of the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) rate.

Per the new GI Bill, effective August 1, 2011, the amount payable for the Monthly Housing Allowance is:
• **U.S. In-Residence**: The applicable BAH rate will be multiplied by the rate of pursuit rounded to the nearest multiple of 10.
  - Example: An individual at a rate of pursuit of .54 will receive 50% of the applicable BAH rate while an individual at a rate of pursuit of .85 will receive 90%

• Basic eligibility requirements for MHA benefits (e.g. veterans with a rate of pursuit >.50) remain unchanged.

• The amount payable for the Monthly Housing Allowance for any academic year (beginning on August 1) will be based upon the BAH rates effective on January 1 of that year.

• The MHA is based on the BAH for an E-5 with dependents at the location of the school.

Source is [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov)

**For students with VA benefits who are enrolled in courses that are self-paced, mastery-based programs**: Self-paced, mastery-based programs allow students to work at their own pace to complete the course. This model allows students to finish the material as soon as they are able, including finishing prior to the end of the term.

For students with VA benefits, it may not be in the student’s best financial interest to finish a course early as the last day of attendance in a course is reported to the VA. Since the MHA is paid based on the reported beginning and end dates of a class, this may lead to reduced MHA benefits or no benefits depending on the student’s rate of pursuit for the reporting period. Students receiving VA benefits should remain focused on their learning and pace themselves to complete the coursework at the end of the term so as not to experience this potential financial impact.

Students are responsible for monitoring their VA military educational benefit eligibility as well as assuring their completion of an on-time graduation. There are a fixed number of months that the student may receive these benefits. Not taking a sufficient number of courses (which may mean you must take more than a minimum full-time load) or withdrawing from courses or failing a course due to ceasing attending the course may negatively impact the student’s financial and academic situation. If ceasing attendance from a course or courses will take the student down to half-time status, the student will have to pay back some of the monthly housing allowance received, either back to the day the student stopped attending the course(s), or all the way back to the beginning of the term, depending on the student’s circumstances. If the student will still be a full-time student after withdrawal of the course(s), the withdrawal of course(s) may not affect the student’s MHA but may impact Satisfactory Academic Progress.

Students should contact their school's School Certifying Official (SCO) to ensure the certification information the school is providing to the VA matches with their schedule.