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## GI Bill Policies and Procedures for Requesting and Processing GI Bill Benefits

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**REVIEW-REVISIONS**

DATE	TYPE of CHANGE	PAGES AFFECTED

## I. INTRODUCTION

Lone Star College System provides GI Bill support for over 2,100 veterans and other eligible persons. This manual is provided for Lone Star College System students and those in need of information pertaining to the processes and procedures for requesting, processing, and/or receiving GI Bill education benefits at Lone Star College System.

This manual provides information collected from the Department of Veterans Affairs, Texas Veterans Commission, and Lone Star College System (LSCS).

Additional resources pertaining to GI Bill benefits can be found on the Department of Veterans Affairs website at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov). Any questions or concerns may be directed to the LSCS Veterans Affairs Center at 281-290-2922 or via email at [GIBill@lonestar.edu](mailto:GIBill@lonestar.edu)

This manual is evolving as new changes are received from the Department of Veterans Affairs and updates in System policies, or other regulatory agencies. Please check for updates and revisions at <http://www.lonestar.edu/veteransaffairs>

## II. LONE STAR COLLEGE SYSTEM GI BILL PROCESSING RESPONSIBILITIES

### Campus Veteran Advisor's Role in the GI Bill Process

Veterans and other eligible persons using GI Bill education benefits should meet with the Campus Veteran Advisor prior to enrolling at LSCS to ensure VA eligibility requirements. Campus Veteran Advisors play a key role in assisting students in obtaining their GI Bill benefits. The Campus Veteran Advisors will assist Veterans and other GI Bill eligible persons with:

1. Acquiring and evaluating all academic and military transcripts
2. Ensuring the KINE 1111 (Kinesiology or Health & Physical Education) credit is awarded and applied for all service members
3. Completing the [PLA process](#) (Prior Learning Assessment), the evaluation of military transcripts
4. Ensuring that the Student Responsibility Form is completed and submitted to the LSCS Veterans Affairs Center
5. Assisting students in identifying and registering for classes that meet the student's degree plan identified on the Student Responsibility Form and LSCS system
6. Completing a change of degree plan and the re-evaluation of academic and military transcripts

### Student's Roles and Responsibilities in the GI Bill Process

Students who are eligible for VA education benefits should contact the Department of Veterans Affairs or visit their website at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) to learn about eligibility and VA requirements.

#### Steps for New Students wishing to use GI Bill benefits:

1. New students must first apply for admission to Lone Star College System at <http://lonestar.edu/admissions-application.htm>
2. Contact the campus Veteran Advisor
3. Complete the Student Responsibility Form
4. After the above information is completed and all necessary forms are provided to the Veterans Affairs Center, the student must send an email to [GIBill@lonestar.edu](mailto:GIBill@lonestar.edu) and request for certification

#### Steps for Continuing GI Bill Benefits

1. Students wishing to receive GI Bill benefits for subsequent semesters are required to send an email to [GIBill@lonestar.edu](mailto:GIBill@lonestar.edu) after registration for the subsequent semester.
2. Students who have a change to the degree plan will need to complete a new Student Responsibility form and meet with their Campus Veteran Advisor prior to receiving GI Bill Certification.

- 3 Students requesting continuation of GI Bill benefits will need to ensure all official transcripts, DD form 214, DD Form 2385, Certification of Eligibility, and PLA applications are submitted prior to their request for VA Certification.

## School Certifying Official (SCO) Responsibilities

LSCS School Certifying Officials manage the reporting requirements for VA eligible persons.

1. SCO will review and process GI Bill benefits starting four weeks prior to the semester start date. It will take approximately 4 to 6 weeks to process benefits for all Veterans.
2. Students who are eligible for Chapter 33 benefits will receive initial certification of enrollment hours only. The tuition and fees will not be reported to the VA until after LSCS add/drop period.
3. SCOs process GI Bill benefits after verifying that the student has provided the following documentation:
  - Student Responsibility Form
  - All official transcripts including military transcripts
  - Evaluated transcripts posted to student's degree plan
  - DD Form 214 (not needed if a dependent of a service member)
  - Completed PLA form for military transcript evaluation
  - DD Form 2384 (Chapter 1606 and 1607 only)
  - Certificate of Eligibility
  - Parent Institution Letter (guest students only)

### **Tip**

Tutorial assistance is available if you are receiving VA educational assistance at the half-time or greater rate and have a deficiency in a subject making tutoring necessary. Visit

[Gibill.va.gov](http://Gibill.va.gov)

**Note:** *In past semesters, students were given one semester to provide all transcripts and DD Form 214. Effective March 7, 2012, all new and returning students using GI Bill benefits must provide all applicable documentation to the Veterans Affairs Center before any GI Bill certifications are processed.*

4. Submit Enrollment Certification (VA Form 22-1999) to report required enrollment information.
5. Notice of Change in Student Status (VA Form 22-1999b) to report changes to enrollment information.
6. Monitor the courses pursued by a student to certify to the VA only those courses that apply to the student's program.
7. Monitor the student's grades to ensure s/he is making satisfactory progress and report when a student was terminated due to unsatisfactory progress.
8. Monitor the student's conduct and report when a student is suspended or dismissed for unsatisfactory conduct.

SCO will ensure the student's VA file contains:

1. Copies of all VA paperwork

2. LSCS transcripts, grade reports, drop slips, registration slips (for those courses dropped during drop/add), tuition and fee charges, transcripts from previous schools with evaluations of same, student's school application, records of disciplinary action, and program outline.

### III. GI BILL BENEFIT PAYMENTS

Students are responsible for paying tuition and fees when due.

#### Chapter 33 Benefit Payments

1. Depending on the student's situation, Chapter 33 benefits can include payment of tuition and fees, a monthly housing allowance, and a stipend for books and supplies. Each type of payment is issued separately, with some payments made directly to LSCS and others directly to the student.
2. Chapter 33 students will receive certification for the credit hours during the initial certification process. Tuition and Fee payments will not be submitted to the Department of Veterans Affairs until the end of the add/drop period. Eligible students have an option to receive a "Do Not Drop" hold placed on their student account to prevent being dropped during the semester for non-payment.
3. Students who are eligible to receive the Post 9/11 GI Bill benefit, and have provided ALL required documentation, may request to have a "Hold" placed on their student account. Students wishing to receive a "Do Not Drop" hold must have their benefit request submitted to [gibill@lonestar.edu](mailto:gibill@lonestar.edu) one month prior to payment deadlines. The hold will allow the student to attend class with a tuition and fee balance. If the student is only eligible to receive a portion of Chapter 33, Post 9/11 GI Bill education benefits, then the student is required to pay the percentage not covered by Chapter 33 and then the remaining balance can be held until the VA remits payment. In the event the VA does not pay the tuition and fees, the "hold" will be removed from the account and the student will be responsible for the balance.
4. Public Law 111-337 changes the amount of tuition and fee charges which should be reported to the VA. The actual net cost for in-state tuition and fees assessed is applied to the program of study after the application of any waiver, reduction, scholarship, or other Federal, State, institution or employer based aid or assistance (excluding loans and title IV funds).
5. If the student is charged out-of-state tuition, the VA requires SCOs to report the in-state tuition on enrollment certification. Some veterans and their dependents may be eligible to receive a waiver for in-state tuition and fee charges. Eligible students must contact their campus Business Office for more information.

## IV. COURSE CERTIFICATION ELIGIBILITY

### Selecting or Changing Degree Program

1. Students will only receive VA certification for classes that fit the degree plan on file with the Veterans Affairs Center (VAC). Any student that changes their degree plan must first meet with the Veteran Advisor and change the degree plan with LSCS. Any student requesting GI Bill Certification will need to resubmit the Student Responsibility Form to the VAC identifying the change of degree program. **Students will not be certified for any courses that do not match the degree plan on record with the VAC.**
2. Any student who changes their selected degree program must work with their Veteran Advisor to resubmit an evaluation of their military and academic transcripts. When a student changes his or her program, the change must be made according to LSCS academic regulations – a credit evaluation (all previous credit, including LSCS's credit) for the new program should be completed. All credit certified following the change must apply to the new program.
3. Only courses that satisfy requirements outlined in the student's degree plan will be certified for VA purposes. **If a student takes a course that does not fulfill the degree plan on file, it cannot be certified.**

### Repeat Courses

1. Courses that are failed or for which the grade does not meet minimum requirements for graduation may be certified for VA purposes if they are repeated. Courses that are successfully completed may not be certified for VA purposes if they are repeated unless they do not meet degree plan requirements.

### Developmental / Remedial Courses

1. VA regulation does not allow certification for any developmental course that is taken online, hybrid, or distance learning.
2. Student's TSI or SSI test results must support the student's need for remedial and deficiency courses. SCO must place test results in students VA file prior to GI Bill certification.

## **V. PRIOR CREDIT**

1. All GI Bill students must provide an official transcript from all prior schools attended regardless of accreditation, and an official copy of military transcripts. Title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 21.4253 (d) (3) and 21.4254 (c) (4) requires schools to have, and enforce, a policy with regard to transfer courses, credits, and previous experience. Whenever a student initially enrolls or changes programs, a credit evaluation must be completed.
2. All military transcripts must receive a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) evaluation. The student and his/her Veteran Advisor will complete PLA forms for military experience and forward them in accordance with the PLA processes outlined in the [PLA Manual](#).

## **VI. REDUCTIONS AND WITHDRAWALS**

Title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 21.4203 requires that all changes in enrollment credit must be reported within 30 days of the change in enrollment. Any student receiving GI Bill benefits must report adds/drops immediately to the Veterans Affairs Center at [Gibill@lonestar.edu](mailto:Gibill@lonestar.edu) .

## **VII. UNSATISFACTORY PROGRESS, CONDUCT AND ATTENDANCE**

1. The law requires that educational assistance benefits to veterans and other eligible persons be discontinued when the student ceases to make satisfactory progress toward completion of his or her training objective.
2. Students will not be certified for any courses if on Academic Suspension. A student with a continuing history of low academic performance is placed on academic suspension when the student: 1) has been on academic warning and probation and; 2) has a cumulative GPA below 2.0 and; 3) has a semester GPA below 2.0. An academic suspension will result in a student being denied enrollment for a minimum of one spring or fall semester. Students desiring to appeal a suspension must follow the appeal process set forth in LSCS Board Policy. For more information on appealing a suspension, students may contact their college counseling center.

## VIII. RESOURCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact	Location	Phone / Email
<b>LSCS Veterans Affairs Center</b> Shannon Hilts, Director VACANT, GI Bill Coordinator Diana Diaz, Business Coordinator Julie Harrell, Department Assistant Trish O'Brien, SCO Judy Ronnander, SCO Claudia Greenhaw, SCO VACANT, SCO Marcos Aguilar, SCO Denise Leininger-Flin, SCO Nancy Neri Tielve, SCO	20515 SH 249 NRB, Room 200 Houston, Texas 77070	Phone: 281-290-2922 Fax: 281-290-2911 Email: <a href="mailto:gibill@lonestar.edu">gibill@lonestar.edu</a>
<b>LSCS-North Harris</b> Layton Gill, Veteran Advisor	2700 W.W. Thorne Blvd. Houston, Texas 77073	281-765-7880 <a href="mailto:layton.gill@lonestar.edu">layton.gill@lonestar.edu</a>
<b>LSCS-Cy Fair</b> Jerry Brandyburg, Veteran Advisor	9191 Barker Cypress Rd. Cypress, Texas 77433	281-290-3432 <a href="mailto:Jerrolyn.B.Brandyburg@lonestar.edu">Jerrolyn.B.Brandyburg@lonestar.edu</a>
<b>LSCS-Kingwood</b> Shawn Stevens, Veteran Advisor	22000 Kingwood Dr. Kingwood, Texas 77339	281-312-1465 <a href="mailto:Shawn.S.Stevens@lonestar.edu">Shawn.S.Stevens@lonestar.edu</a>
<b>LSCS-Montgomery</b> Valerie Shepherd, Veteran Advisor	3200 College Park Dr. Conroe, Texas 77384	936-271-6137 <a href="mailto:Valerie.B.Shepherd@lonestar.edu">Valerie.B.Shepherd@lonestar.edu</a>
<b>LSCS-Tomball</b> Pat Seibert, Veteran Advisor	30555 Tomball Parkway Tomball, Texas 77375	281-351-3391 <a href="mailto:Patricia.A.Seibert@lonestar.edu">Patricia.A.Seibert@lonestar.edu</a>
<b>LSCS-University Park</b> Diana Doughman, Veteran Advisor	20515 SH 249 Houston, Texas 77070	281-401-5332 <a href="mailto:Diana.L.Doughman@lonestar.edu">Diana.L.Doughman@lonestar.edu</a>

## **IX. DEFINITION OF TERMS**

### **Auditing a Course**

Approval to visit or audit a course may be granted by the instructional vice president or designee during the last week of registration for the class. Students are not required to participate in class nor fulfill any course requirements while auditing a course, and must abide by course policies as relates to classroom decorum.

### **Certificate of Eligibility (COE)**

Letter issued to an applicant showing approval to pursue a stated program of education at a particular institution, the remaining entitlement of the student, and the ending date of the student's eligibility.

### **DD Form 214**

The Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty that is prepared at the time an individual completes a period of active duty in one of the Armed Forces. Former members of the Public Health Service (PHS) and of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) do not receive a DD Form 214, but they do receive comparable documents that provide necessary information concerning their active duty service. Veterans should be advised to submit Member-4 copy of their DD Form 214 with a claim for VA benefits. A certified copy may also be submitted. A DD 214 can be requested from the National Archives eVetRecs website (<http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/>).

### **Drop Period**

The brief period at the beginning of an LSCS semester officially designated for dropping courses without academic penalty.

### **Enrollment Period**

An interval of time during which a veteran or eligible person is enrolled in an educational institution and is pursuing his or her program of education. This term applies to each unit course or subject in the veteran's or eligible person's program of education; that is, quarter, semester, or full school year.

### **Kinesiology**

Kinesiology is a course offered at Lone Star College and is the study of human kinetics.

### **KINE 1111**

The credit earned with a DD Form 214 or military transcripts showing at least six weeks of service (regardless of discharge status). The Department of Veterans Affairs requires

schools to award a student kinesiology credit for basic military training. The student must supply their advisor with a copy of the DD Form 214, or military transcripts to send to Information Services and have the credit posted to the student's LSCS transcript.

### **Military Transcripts**

U.S. Service members acquire extensive training and experience while serving in the military and this information is captured in the form of a transcript. Service members may be eligible for college credit and are required to have the military transcript evaluated.

Information about military transcripts and how to request the transcripts is available from the Army and Navy as shown below:

- Army (AARTS transcript): <http://aarts.army.mil>
- Navy and Marine Cors (SMART Transcript):  
<https://smart.navy.mil/smart/welcome.do>

### **NOBE**

Members of the Selected Reserve are given a Notice of Basic Eligibility (DD Form 2384, commonly referred to as a NOBE, pronounced no-be) by their National Guard or Reserve unit stating they are eligible for the Montgomery GI Bill – Selected Reserve. The primary source VA uses to establish Chapter 1606 eligibility is a Department of Defense (DoD) computer link, the Chapter 1606 DoD Data Record. The NOBE is an alternative or supplemental document for establishing eligibility that's primarily used to verify eligibility for 120 days after the date it is issued.

### **Non-punitive Grade**

A non-punitive grade is a grade that doesn't count as earned credit and isn't considered in progress standards for graduation. A withdrawal after the drop period is non-punitive if it isn't calculated into the student's GPA or it isn't considered in academic progress criteria like probation and suspension. Non-punitive grades have the same effect as an audit. If a student withdraws after the drop period, or completes the term with non-punitive grades, the non-punitive grades must be reported to VA.

### **Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)**

PLA is the process of evaluating academic or technical competencies in a non-traditional education environment, including training in a corporation, licensure/certification programs, career experience, self-directed learning environments, coursework and

training through military experience. Additional information about PLA can be found at <http://www.lonestar.edu/learning-assessment.htm>.

### **Punitive Grade**

A punitive grade is a grade that doesn't count as earned credit, but is used in determining a student's progress toward graduation requirements. The common punitive grade is "F." Punitive grades, unlike non-punitive grades, factor into the progress standards and the cumulative GPA.

### **Remedial/Deficiency Courses**

These terms refer to training and are intended to assist students in overcoming weaknesses in specific areas of study such as composition, mathematics, writing, and reading.

### **Tuition and Fees**

The term "tuition and fees" is the total cost for tuition and fees for a course an academic institution charges all students whose circumstances are similar to veterans enrolled in the same courses. "Tuition and fees" does not include the cost of supplies or books that the student is required to purchase at his or her own expense.