

Veteran's Handbook  
Auburn University Montgomery

July 2, 2005

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## **Veterans, Welcome to Auburn University Montgomery—AUM**

As a Veteran or dependent of a Veteran, you are entitled to certain benefits and are eligible to participate in certain programs. The following information should serve as a brief overview of these programs and provide information to guide you in obtaining the maximum benefits.

Failure to adhere to the information or instructions contained in this handbook may result in delays of certification, overpayments, inaccurate reporting of training time, and unnecessary termination of education benefits.

If you require additional information or have questions, please contact the Veteran's Affairs Counselor in the AUM Financial Aid Office, Room 126 Taylor Center.

Phone number (334) 244-3288.

### **Quick References**

#### **Veterans Administration—Atlanta**

(888) 442-4551  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
Atlanta Regional Processing Office  
P.O. Box 100022  
Decatur, Ga. 30031-7022

#### **Website**

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

#### **Enrollment Verification Information (Ch 30 And Ch 1606)**

Telephone–Interactive Voice Response  
(887) 823-2378

#### **Web Automated Verification, [WAVE](https://www.gibill.va.gov/wave/default.cfm),**

<https://www.gibill.va.gov/wave/default.cfm>

#### **Veterans Administration—Montgomery**

(800) 827-1000

#### **Veterans Vocational Rehabilitation-Montgomery**

Danny Stewart  
(334) 396-1986

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## Admissions

All admissions requirements must be complete and the VA recipient must be fully admitted and enrolled at AUM before he/she will be certified for VA benefits.

Once acceptance to the university is granted, contact the Office of Veterans Affairs to apply for benefits. The chapter under which you are filing will determine the documentation required by the VA to certify your benefits (DD FORM 214, NOBE, etc.)

If you have previously received benefits at another institution, you must submit a “Change of Place of Training” form (VA Form 22-1995) and an official transcript, and possibly other certified documentation, in the event that your marital or dependent status has changed since you last received benefits. (Most forms are located in the AUM VA Counselors Office within the Financial Aid Office, online on the AUM website [www.aum.edu/students/financial\\_information/financial\\_aid/veteran's\\_services](http://www.aum.edu/students/financial_information/financial_aid/veteran's_services), or from the VA website: [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov).)

## Transcripts

Transcripts of transfer credits **must** be received in the Office of Enrollment Services during your **first** semester at AUM.

## Tuition Payment

Payment of tuition and fees is a part of the registration process. AUM does not participate in the advanced payment program, therefore, the VA student is responsible for paying all tuition and fees, books, housing and other charges relating to attending school **before** the Drop/Delete date. Students receiving VA Vocational Rehabilitation should refer to Chapter 31 information.

## Curriculum / Degree

All VA recipients are required to declare a particular program of study or degree objective. Your program must be the same with the Admissions Office and the VA Office. You will not be certified for a course or courses that do not meet graduation requirements for your program of study. If you register for a course that is “not required in your program, the VA Office will delete the hours for that course from the semester’s certification.

If your advisor allows a “substitute or alternate course”, you must obtain a written explanation from the advisor/instructor. Your name and student id number must be included with the reason for the substitution, the course to be replaced, and the course number of the substitute course. The memo must be signed by the advisor.

**Note:** Do not repeat a course for which credit may be awarded from another college, a military evaluation, technical school, or any other source where educational credit may be received! If **transfer credit is awarded** for an acceptable course from any other source, **VA will not pay for repeating that course.**

It is the student's responsibility to verify if credit was awarded from another source!

## Double Majors and Dual Degrees

Students may be certified in *only* one program of study at a time *unless* they receive approval from the State Approving Agency (SAA) and the Department of Veterans Affairs. To pursue two programs simultaneously, a formal request for dual programs of study must be submitted through your AUM VA Counselor. Requests must be submitted to the SAA prior to your entrance into a dual objection program of study. Benefit payments for the additional courses will not be authorized until approval is received. Please be aware that this approval process can take up to six weeks.

## Class Load

Status	Course Load
Full-time:	12 or more hours
¾ Time:	9-11 hours
½ Time:	4-5 hours\
Less than 1/2 Time:	3 hours (Students at less than ½ Time will be reimbursed for tuition and fees only!)

## Summer Term Load

The VA has special rules that govern summer and non-standard terms of enrollment. Payments for such enrollment periods may not be the same as for regular Fall and Spring Terms. See your VA Counselor to discuss your summer enrollment plans to determine estimated payment eligibility.

## Payment of Benefits for Intervals between Terms

As long as you continue in the same school and the interval between semesters does not exceed 30 days, there should be no interruption or loss of benefits.

**Exceptions:** If you were less than **half time** in the prior term or if you were on **active duty**, you **will not be paid** during the interval or break between terms. If you change schools and programs at the same time, or if your benefits are about to expire and you choose not to receive benefits to conserve entitlement, benefits will be suspended.

## Active Duty Personnel

Military Personnel who wish to receive VA Educational Benefits are reimbursed for tuition and fees only, in most cases. **No additional benefits will be paid** for courses where **tuition assistance is received**.

## Short Term Courses

**Please Note:** The VA has special guidelines for mini-terms and short courses. Therefore, it is the student's responsibility to check with AUM's VA Counselor before enrolling in one or more of these courses. Failure to check with your counselor could result in overpayment, reduction of payment, or possible termination of benefits.

## Tutorial Assistance

VA-sponsored tutorial assistance is available to all veterans and dependents receiving VA benefits and who are taking six or more hours. The VA does not pay the tutor directly, however, the veteran or dependent will receive reimbursement for tutorial expenses according to the current rate. See the VA Counselor for application forms and details.

## Repeated Courses

Repeated courses in which a veteran has received a passing grade (A, B,C,D) either before, during or after military service *cannot* be used in computing class load requirements for VA benefit certification *except when the course is a prerequisite and a higher grade is required* by the school or a higher grade is required for graduation.

If students must take additional courses to raise their GPA to meet the minimum level for graduation, those courses may be eligible.

## Dropped Courses

**AUM is required to notify the VA of your withdrawal at all points during the term.** If you drop a course during the term that has been used to compute your class load and therefore affects your payment amount, you may be required by the VA to repay any benefits received for that course. If dropping a course causes you to fall below the "half-time load", you may be required by the VA to return **all benefits** received during that semester except for the actual cost of tuition and fees.

If the cause of your withdrawal from a course or all your courses is beyond your control, the VA may consider "mitigating circumstances and waive the overpayment up to the date of withdrawal—last day of attendance. Contact your AUM VA Counselor for information about applying to the VA for a waiver due to mitigating circumstances.

## Auditing Courses

The law prohibits payment for auditing a course. Students must be registered for credit for payment to be approved. Similarly, payment is prohibited for courses not required for completion of the approved program of study.

## **Student Verification of Enrollment**

Chapter 30 and Chapter 1606 recipients **must** verify their enrollment status to the VA on a monthly basis. To verify enrollment, you may call (877) 823-2378 or you may verify by web -- [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov) and select "WAVE".

**Failure to "self-verify" may result in reduction or termination of benefits!**

## **AUM Enrollment Verification**

The AUM certifying official uses the electronic certification program, *VA ONCE*, to report all pertinent information concerning your enrollment and attendance to the VA. *VA ONCE* is the official VA program that schools must use to communicate your application for benefits and supporting information. Any changes in current or subsequent enrollments will be submitted to the VA on a regular basis.

*VA ONCE* reduces the time normally required to process your benefits but there is still a 6-10 week processing time for initial eligibility and payment to be processed. Once entitlement is established and the VA makes an award, payment is authorized monthly, based on information reported by the university. Chapter 30 and 1606 recipients are also required to self-verify enrollment status on a monthly basis.

## **Payments of Benefits**

After the VA has approved the application for benefits and the AUM Enrollment Certification is processed, the VA will begin payment processing. Direct Deposit is the safest and fastest way to receive your VA benefits. You may request Direct Deposit by calling (888) 442-4551. Be sure to provide your bank's routing number, your account number, and the type of account—checking or savings. You may also request direct deposit via the VA web site at [WAVE, https://www.gibill.va.gov/wave/default.cfm](https://www.gibill.va.gov/wave/default.cfm). Direct Deposit is currently available only for Ch 30 and 1606 recipients.

## **VA Work Study Opportunities**

Veterans and Reservists enrolled  $\frac{3}{4}$  time or more and enrolled in training under VA education benefit programs may be eligible for part-time employment in AUM's VA Office. The VA will pay a non-taxable allowance equal to the federal or state minimum wage, whichever is higher. Positions are limited. Contact your VA Counselor for more information.

## **Changes in Student Status**

All students receiving VA education benefits are required by law to keep the VA informed of changes in their enrollment, degree program, dependents (CH 34), mailing address, periods of enrollment, withdrawals, and course substitutions. The AUM VA Office makes these changes on your behalf BUT the VA Counselor relies on you for those changes. Changes are reported to VA by VA ONCE.

**Veterans or Dependents are responsible** for the timely notification of these changes to the AUM VA Counselor. Failure to notify the VA Counselor of these changes could result in reduction or loss of benefits.

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress**

All students receiving VA education benefits are required to maintain satisfactory academic progress according to published standards established and enforced by the institution. (See the AUM Catalog for the Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress.)

Title 38, United States Code, Sections 1674 and 1724 requires that education assistance benefits to veterans or dependents be discontinued when the student ceases to make satisfactory progress toward completion of his or her training objective. Accordingly, the AUM VA Office must notify the VA of your failure to make satisfactory progress and must discontinue eligibility certification. The VA will determine whether payments will be terminated. The VA may also require repayment of benefits that have been paid for any period of unsatisfactory performance. Reinstatement of benefits, subsequent to the student's appeal, is at the option of the VA.

## **Supplemental Enrollment—Transient Work**

Students who need to enroll in a supplemental (second) institution to obtain needed coursework and who want to use their VA education benefits **must** first obtain approval from the AUM Office of Enrollment Services to be assured that the courses will be accepted by AUM for graduation requirements. Students must complete the *Transient Approval* form and provide a copy to the AUM VA Counselor. The second school must be approved by the VA, as eligible for participation in the VA programs. All courses must be required for completion of the AUM degree objective already approved by the VA.

The VA requires a transcript of all transient work to be submitted to AUM within two semesters –no longer than 8 months after the course credit was earned. If the transcripts are not received, AUM is required to notify the VA. The VA will terminate eligibility effective the last day of the student's prior enrollment at AUM. Overpayments may result. Once transcripts are received, certification of enrollment can be resumed. The VA will determine if education benefits will be restored.

## **Chapter 30:**

Referred to as the Montgomery GI Bill—Veterans who have served on Active Duty for three years after June 30, 1985 and who contributed \$1200 (non-refundable) to their Chapter 30 benefits are eligible to apply for Chapter 30 education benefits. Veterans who served 2 years on Active Duty and served 4 years in the Selected Reserve are also eligible under Category I. Veterans with 2 years active service are eligible under Category IA.

Military retirees who entered the service before 1/17/1977 and who were eligible to receive Ch. 34 benefits are eligible under Category II.

Some Veterans may be eligible with less than two years active duty service if they were voluntarily or involuntarily separated from the service because of a reduction in personnel (Category III), or if they were unable to convert their benefits from Ch. 32 to Ch. 30 as Category IV.

**Payment Rates are variable based on category and whether additional contributions were made. Kickers or other incentives may also affect the payment rates. The VA will provide additional pay rate information upon request.**

## **Chapter 31: Vocational Rehabilitation Benefits**

A Veteran may be eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation benefits (Ch. 31) if he or she:

- Received, or will receive, a discharge under “other than dishonorable” conditions; and
- Incurred or aggravated a service-connected disability which entitles him or her to VA Disability compensation; and
- Is in need of vocational rehabilitation because his or her disability creates an employment handicap.

Vocational Rehabilitation may be provided for up to 48 months. An eligible person generally has 12 years from the date he or she is notified of entitlement to VA disability compensation to use his or her Ch. 31 benefits.

## **Chapter 35: Dependents Educational Assistance**

Educational Assistance benefits are provided to eligible dependents of Veterans, provided the Veteran is permanently and totally disabled or died in service, or died of a service-connected disability, or who died while being evaluated as having a service-connected disability, or who is listed as a POW or MIA.

Persons who may be eligible are:

- A child between the ages of 18 and 26
- The surviving spouse of the disabled or deceased veteran-provided the spouse is not currently remarried.

## **Chapter 1606: Montgomery GI Bill---Selected Reserves**

Chapter 1606 is the benefit program for members of the selected reserves. Selective Reserve components of the Ready Reserve include the Army Reserve, Naval Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Coast Guard Reserve, Army National Guard, and the Air National Guard.

Eligibility for 1606 benefits is determined by the Department of Defense or Coast Guard, not the VA.

Basic eligibility requires a 6-year obligation to serve in the Selected Reserve and satisfactory participation in required Selected Reserve training. Reservists are eligible for 36 months of education benefits.

## **Chapter 1607:**

Chapter 1607 is a new benefit program for members of the Selected Reserves who were called to active duty following the 9-11 attack. Reservists who served for at least 90 days on active duty are eligible for additional benefits to supplement their Chapter 1606 benefits. Chapter 1607 benefits are available only as long as the Reservist remains in the Selected Reserves.

Members of the Ready Reserve should contact the AUM VA Counselor to discuss possible eligibility for Chapter 1607 benefits.

## **Alabama Veterans Programs**

### **Alabama National Guard Education Assistance Program (ANGEAP)**

ANGEAP is a program established by the legislature of the state of Alabama to provide financial assistance to Alabama National Guard members who are residents of the State of Alabama and are enrolled in degree programs at accredited post secondary institutions of higher learning located within the State of Alabama.

**Benefits:** ANGEAP benefits, up to \$1,000.00 per year for book supplies, fees, not to exceed \$500.00 are available each semester. Minimum award is \$25.00 per semester and cannot exceed 100% of the total costs. Limited funds are available and are allotted on a first-come, first-serve basis. ANGEAP must be used in conjunction with a primary source of Federal assistance (GI Bill, ACES).

ANGEAP **can be used** for the pursuit of an associate, baccalaureate, or master's degree at AUM.

**Eligibility:** The Guard member must be a state resident, attend an accredited school in the state of Alabama, participate satisfactorily in the AL ARNG, complete IADT, and maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress toward a degree at AUM.

Application procedure: obtain an ANGEAP form from your guard unit. Complete section 1 and submit the ANGEAP form to the veterans' affairs office at aum. We will forward it to the Alabama commission on higher education (ache). Ache will send the payment to the school's financial aid /VA officer.

### **Alabama GI Dependents' Scholarship Program**

If you are the child, spouse, or widow(er) of a service-related disabled or deceased Alabama veteran, you may qualify for free tuition, instructional fees and required books when you attend any state supported college located in Alabama.

**The Alabama GI Scholarship program is not administered by the AUM Financial Aid Office or AUM's Veterans Office.**

The Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs maintains an office in each county of the State staffed by a Veteran's Services Officer. They can furnish information and assist in filing application for educational benefits. You may also receive additional information Veterans Affairs, P.O. Box 1509, Montgomery, AL, 36102-1509 or phone (334) 242-5126.

**Note: AUM's Tuition and Fees must be paid before the beginning of classes.**

Early registration will allow scheduling of needed courses but payment **Must** be made by the payment deadline, usually 10 days prior to the first day of classes. Students who do not pay or make payment arrangements with the Student Services Center by the deadline will have all courses cancelled.

Re-registration will be permitted only if payment or payment arrangements are made at the time of registration.

Financial aid awards made and accepted by the deadline will be paid toward tuition and fees. Awards must pay at least 50% of the AUM charges to prevent class cancellation. Unpaid balances remaining after aid has been paid **Must** be paid or payment arrangements with the Student Services Center will be required to prevent cancellation of courses.

**Note: Veteran's Benefits**, including Alabama GI Dependent's Scholarships, **are not considered financial aid** for this payment policy so students are encouraged to make payment or payment arrangements to prevent course cancellation.