

# VETERAN SERVICES

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**Veterans Service Center-** University Center, BASS Rm 132  
 7101 University Ave  
 Texarkana, TX 75503  
 Phone: 903-334-6602  
 Fax: 903.223.3140  
 Email: Veterans@tamut.edu (veterans@tamut.edu)

## Hours of Operation

Monday-Friday  
 8:00am - 5:00pm

The Veteran Services Center (VSC) at Texas A&M University-Texarkana assists United States military members (Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard), veterans, and their eligible dependents in achieving their academic goals through support and services leading to a seamless transition from military to civilian life. Information and benefits counseling are available in the VSC, BASS Rm 132, by visiting the Veteran Services (<http://www.tamut.edu/Admissions/Enrollment-Services/Veterans-Services/>) webpage or by emailing [veterans@tamut.edu](mailto:veterans@tamut.edu).

Enrollment is certified to the appropriate agency upon request of the student. Any student enrolled at A&M-Texarkana who is eligible for VA Educational Benefits or State of Texas military education benefits should visit the VSC to determine the documents to validate eligibility for benefits.

## Military Education Transcripts

In addition to civilian education transcripts, military students must have their military education transcript sent to the Texas A&M University-Texarkana Office of Admissions for evaluation. Students who served in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard (Active Duty, Reserve or National Guard) should submit a Joint Service Transcript (<https://jst.doded.mil/smart/signIn.do;jsessionid=yZyfbEfPaPpeRZdwQpMRLk8am7c9l6GXba975fPXQr3JZx2el66Z!-70956765/>) (JST). Students who served in the Air Force (Active Duty, Reserve or National Guard) should submit a Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) (<http://www.airuniversity.af.mil/Barnes/CCAF/Display/Article/803247/>) transcript. Please contact the A&M-Texarkana Veteran Services Center at 903-334-6602 or [veterans@tamut.edu](mailto:veterans@tamut.edu) (Veterans@tamut.edu) for information on requesting these transcripts.

## Priority Registration

During registration periods, registration for classes is opened to students based on classification. The first phase is opened to doctoral, graduates, and seniors, then juniors, then sophomores, and followed by freshmen. All continuing military community students will be eligible to register starting with the first phase of registration regardless of their classification. This will be achieved through an Alternate Registration pin that will be provided by the School Certifying Official. Emails will be sent to the students' ACE email account to prepare for registration prior to the registration period. All military connected students may be eligible for priority registration regardless of use of Veteran education benefits. Please contact the A&M-Texarkana Veteran Services Center at 903-334-6602 or [veterans@tamut.edu](mailto:veterans@tamut.edu) for more information on priority registration.

## Campus Locations

Classes are offered at the following locations:

- Main campus: 7101 University Avenue, Texarkana, TX 75503
- Texas A&M University-Texarkana at Northeast Texas Community College: 2886 FM 1735, Chapel Hill Rd., Mt. Pleasant, TX 75455
- Texas A&M University-Texarkana at RELIS: 3100 TX-47, Bryan, TX 77807

## Benefits Certification

Each student using VA or State of Texas education benefits is responsible for providing accurate information and eligibility documents to the Veteran Services Center (VSC). Any changes to your major/minor, academic schedule, address change, or benefits eligibility must be provided to the VSC as soon as possible so they can assist with updating the VA and State of Texas in a timely manner. Such changes have the potential of creating a balance on your student account and/or a debt with the VA so timely and accurate updates are important.

## Federal Veterans Education Benefits through the Department of Veterans Administration (VA):

Eligibility criteria and information for each chapter is available by clicking on the benefit title below. Additional information is available on the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs ([http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/education\\_programs.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/education_programs.asp)) Education and Training website. To calculate your VA benefits while attending and to research approved programs, visit the VA GI Bill (<http://department-of-veterans-affairs.github.io/gi-bill-comparison-tool/>)<sup>®</sup> Comparison Tool website.

- Chapter 30 ([http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/mgib\\_ad.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/mgib_ad.asp)) (Montgomery GI Bill<sup>®</sup>-Active Duty)
- Chapter 1606 ([http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/mgib\\_sr.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/mgib_sr.asp)) (MGIB-Selected Reserves)
- Chapter 33 ([http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/post911\\_gibill.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/post911_gibill.asp)) (Post-9/11 GI Bill<sup>®</sup>)
- Chapter 31 (<http://www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab/>) (Veterans Readiness & Employment)
- Chapter 35 (<http://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/DEA.asp>) (Survivors & Dependents Educational Assistance)

Chapter 33 military housing allowance is calculated on the Zip Code of the university (75503) at E-5 with Dependents. To obtain the current rate, use the BAH Calculator on the Defense Travel Management Office (<https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/bahCalc.cfm>) website. Chapter 33 students who are enrolled less than full-time or only in distance courses will receive a prorated amount. Additionally, it is important to note that **Chapter 33 students must be enrolled in greater than half time to receive the housing allowance.**

#### **General Forms Requirements:**

To ensure your benefits are managed efficiently and accurately with the VA, the following forms need to be provided to the VSC. This is a general list as some benefits will require special documents.

- Certificate of Eligibility: this document is obtained from the VA Education Regional Office. An updated copy is required once a year (fall term) or every term when your benefits remaining is 8 months or less.
- DD214, Certificate of Release or Discharge From Active Duty, Member 2 or higher version (not Member 1): this document is required to assess "Covered Individual" status under the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014.
- VA Form 22-1995/5495, Request for Change of Program or Place of Training: this document is required if you used your benefits at another school prior to attending Texas A&M-Texarkana or are currently attending and changing your major.
- Request for Certification: this document is **required every semester** you want to use your benefits. **Your enrollment will not automatically be submitted to the VA.**

For CH33 students to receive the book stipend prior to the start of the term, all required documents should be submitted at least 30 days prior to the first day of the term. Contact the VSC for information for specific forms required and assistance with obtaining and completing all documents.

#### **Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 214 (Choice Act):**

Texas A&M-Texarkana is compliant with all requirements of Section 702 of the Choice Act. This section requires VA to disapprove programs of education for payment of benefits under the Post-9/11 GI Bill<sup>®</sup> and Montgomery GI Bill<sup>®</sup>-Active Duty at public institutions of higher learning if the schools charge "**covered individuals**" tuition and fees in excess of the rate for resident students for the terms beginning after July 1, 2015.

A **Covered Individual** is defined in the Choice Act as:

- A Veteran who lives in the state in which the institution of higher learning is located (regardless of his/her formal state of residence) and enrolls in the school after discharge from a period of active duty service of 90 days or more.
- A spouse or child using transferred benefits who lives in the state in which the institution of higher learning is located (regardless of his/ her formal state of residence) and enrolls in the school after the transferor's discharge from a period of active duty service of 90 days or more.
- A spouse or child using benefits under the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship who lives in the state in which the institution of higher learning is located (regardless of his/her formal state of residence) and enrolls in the school within three years of the Service member's death in the line of duty following a period of active duty service of 90 days or more.

Individuals who initially meet the requirements above will maintain "covered individual" status as long as they remain continuously enrolled at the institution of higher learning. Texas A&M-Texarkana will require the student to seek Texas resident status after they have been residing in the state for one year. For more information on the Choice Act, visit the VA Education and Training website Choice Act website ([http://benefits.va.gov/gibill/post911\\_residentrequirements.asp](http://benefits.va.gov/gibill/post911_residentrequirements.asp)).

#### **Isakson and Roe Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020**

Section 1019 of this act requires that schools be financially responsible, instead of the student, for benefits paid directly to an educational institution pursuant to the Post 9-11 GI Bill<sup>®</sup> for tuition and fees or the Yellow Ribbon program, and advance payments of initial educational assistance, without consideration of whether the overpayment was the result of the willful or negligent failure of the school.

As a result of this act, any course dropped after Census, which is the 12<sup>th</sup> class day for fall/spring, will create a debt on the student's university account. The actual amount of the debt will be dependent upon the amount of money the VA will require the school to send back. This debt will have to be paid before the student will be allowed to register for the next term.

#### **Post-9/11 GI Bill<sup>®</sup> Yellow Ribbon Program**

Texas A&M University-Texarkana is a Post 9-11 Yellow Ribbon Program participant. If you are classified as a nonresident student and are not a "covered individual" per the Choice Act 2104, you may be eligible to participate in the Yellow Ribbon Program. Texas A&M-Texarkana has agreed to accept 35 students per year, on a first come-first serve basis, in the Yellow Ribbon program. Visit the VA Education and Training Yellow Ribbon Program website ([http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/yellow\\_ribbon.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/yellow_ribbon.asp)) for eligibility criteria and additional information. Contact the VSC to sign up for the Yellow Ribbon Program.

#### **Exemptions for Texas Veterans Under the Hazlewood Act**

Under the Hazlewood Act, many Texas Military Members and Veterans may be eligible for tuition and fee exemption for up to 150 semester hours. Under certain circumstances, the Hazlewood Exemption may be transferred to the military veteran's spouse and/or children.

Eligibility criteria are available in the VSC or at the Texas Veterans Commission website (<http://www.tvc.texas.gov/Hazlewood-Act.aspx?CFID=23563376&CFTOKEN=59851060>). Applications for the exemption are available in the VSC and should be submitted as soon as possible after completing registration for classes every semester.

Per Texas Education Code §54.2001, if the student is a continuing or transfer student, they must meet the GPA requirement of the institution's satisfactory academic progress policy in a degree or certificate programs as determined by the institution's financial aid policy. For undergraduate students, satisfactory GPA is 2.0 or higher, and for graduate students, satisfactory GPA is 3.0 or higher. If the GPA falls below this level, the use of the Hazlewood Exemption may be suspended until meeting satisfactory requirements. The TAMUT Financial Aid SAP policies apply in these situations to include the option of submitting an appeal in the event of extreme mitigating circumstances resulting in the substandard progress.

### **General Forms Requirements**

There are three categories for the Hazlewood Exemption: Veteran, Dependent Spouse and Child, and Legacy. Each category will require a different set of forms but the main document to determine eligibility is the Veteran's DD214, Certificate of Release or Discharge From Active Duty, member 2 or higher copy. Contact the VSC for other specific requirements.

### **Use of VA Benefits/Hazlewood Exemption with Financial Aid**

VA education benefits and the State of Texas Hazlewood Exemption can be used concurrently with financial aid. Therefore, it is encouraged for military community students to apply for financial aid as soon as the school year FAFSA application window opens (October 1<sup>st</sup>). Facts to keep in mind:

- VA Education benefits: do not include VA education benefits in the income section of the FAFSA as this will reduce your need-based financial aid amount. Any tuition and fee amount paid directly to the school by the VA will be applied to your account prior to grants and loans being applied if you provide your documents to the Veteran Services Office early for processing.
- Hazlewood Exemption: the exemption is considered a resource and will affect your financial aid award. Because the amount cannot be projected for the year as the exemption amount is based on each semester's actual enrollment, it is important for the exemption to be applied to your account prior to your financial aid being released. Thus you should contact the Veteran Services Office as soon as possible to process your exemption to avoid being over-awarded by the financial aid office.

### **Tuition Deferment for Veterans and Family Members**

Per Texas H.B. 846, 85<sup>th</sup> Legislature, "an institution of higher education may not impose additional fees, obligations, or burdens concerning payment or registration on a student eligible for state or federal military related student financial assistance programs for military veterans or their family members that are not otherwise required by those programs to be imposed for the purpose of receiving that assistance."

If your VA or State of Texas education benefits are projected to be delayed by less than 60 days, you can elect to request a Tuition Payment Deferment through the Veteran Services Center. If approved for the deferment, you will be held in your classes for 60 days without the requirement of making a payment or initiating a payment plan while awaiting the processing of your benefits. By the end of the 60 day period, you tuition and fees are required to be paid in full. If in doubt that the matter resulting in the delay of benefits will be resolved within the 60 day period, it is recommended to initiate a payment plan at the beginning of the term as the payment plan option will no longer be available at the 60 day point of the academic calendar. If your account is not paid in full, a hold will be placed on your student account which will prevent you from registering for future classes, obtaining official transcripts, and other student administrative actions. For more information or to apply for the Tuition Payment Deferment, contact the Veteran Services Center.

***GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government Web site at <https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill>.***

### **DOD Tuition Assistance (TA)**

Texas A&M University-Texarkana complies with all requirements of the Department of Defense Voluntary Education Partnership Memorandum of Understanding. With the guidelines for use of Military TA managed by each individual military service branch, students wishing to use Military TA should contact their military unit first to determine both eligibility and availability of Military TA funds. Once approved by your unit, contact the Veteran Services Center (VSC) for assistance in submitting the proper documents to the university.

Per DOD TA requirements, Military TA must be requested and approved prior to the start date of the each term. Service members can register for classes prior to securing Military TA but they will be solely responsible for all tuition costs until approval is obtained from their military service branch and the proper documents are submitted to the university. Only courses listed in the service member's evaluated education plan will be approved for Military TA.

### **Use of Military TA with Financial Aid and VA Education Benefits:**

Military TA can be used concurrently with both financial aid and VA education benefits if eligibility exists. Per DOD rules, Military TA cannot be used with the Montgomery GI Bill®-Selected Reserve Program (CH1606). Students should submit their FAFSA to be considered for financial aid and discuss eligibility for VA education benefits with the VSC. Students who qualify for Pell Grants and/or VA education benefits will have their Military TA benefits applied to their account prior to the application of their Pell Grant funds and their VA education benefits.

### **Drops/Withdrawals While Using Military TA:**

If a student using Military TA drops a class or withdraws from all classes for a term, the university will manage refunds of TA funds as follows:

- Up to the start date for the term, return all Military TA funds to the appropriate military service when the service member does not:
  - Begin attendance at the university or
  - Start a course, regardless of whether the student starts other courses.

- If the Drop occurs prior to the term Census Date, all Military TA funds for the dropped course will be returned to the military service.
- Return any Military TA funds paid for a course that is cancelled by the university.
- For complete withdrawal from a term, the amount of Military TA that is earned is determined on a pro rata basis. For example, if you completed 30% of the period of enrollment, you earned 30% of the approved Military TA so 70% of the Military TA will be returned to the military service. Once you have completed more than 60% of the period of enrollment, all approved Military TA is earned and no refund will be made to the military service.
  - To calculate the amount of earned Military TA, the VSC will divide the number of calendar days the student attended classes by the total number of calendar days in the semester (scheduled breaks of 5 days or more will be deducted out of the equation). The resulting percentage is then multiplied by the total amount of Military TA funds that were approved by the military service prior to the beginning of the term. The result of this calculation determines the amount of Military TA earned by the student. Any amount exceeding the earned calculation amount must be returned to the military service. The VSC will notify and instruct any students who owe money because the university has returned the appropriate amount to the military service. Funds returned to the military service may result in a balance on your account, which you are then responsible for paying in accordance with the TAMUT's refund policy (<https://www.tamut.edu/business-office/>).