



Advanced School Certifying Official (SCO) Training



Date

Introduction



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Training Specialist



Overview

As an SCO, you wear many “hats” and take on a variety of tasks to assist your students and the VA in helping our Veterans and their beneficiaries achieve their educational goals. This training is a continuation of the information introduced in the New SCO training. This presentation will go further into depth on the pertinent information you will need to know in order to be successful in your role as an SCO.

Learning Objectives



01

Describe the approval requirements for various programs of education

02

Identify miscellaneous payment programs

03

Explain school fiscal issues, student payment concerns, and debt collection

State Approving Agency (SAA)

The approval process for GI Bill® programs generally begins with the State Approving Agency (SAA) of jurisdiction.

SAA's are responsible for the approval of education and training programs in their respective states. They are the pathway into VA for a program's recognition and identification as being eligible for the payment of VA education benefits.

Colleges, university, and other training establishments seeking to provide VA eligible training programs should begin by contacting their SAA.



Approval Requirements





Approval Type Requirements

- Accredited Courses
- Non-Accredited Courses
- Additional Approval Requirements



Accredited Courses



Accredited courses must meet the requirements of United States Codes (USC):

38 USC §3675 and 38 CFR §21.4253.

For courses to be considered accredited for VA purposes, the course must be recognized by an Accrediting Agency which the U.S. Secretary of Education determines to be a reliable authority as to the quality of training offered by an educational institution.

“Candidate for accreditation” status is not a basis for approval of a course as accredited.



College-Level Courses



Accredited

The college or university is accredited by a nationally recognized regional accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary of Education (SoE), or is accredited at the college level by a specialized accrediting agency or association recognized by the SoE; and

Entrance

The course has entrance requirements of not less than the Requirement applicable to the college level program of the school;
and

Terms

Credit for the course is awarded in terms of standard semester or quarter hours or by recognition at completion by the granting of a standard college degree.

Accredited Courses: Catalog Requirements



A facility wishing to enroll Veterans or eligible persons in accredited course must submit an application for approval of such courses to the SAA.

The facility must submit copies of its catalog or bulletin which are certified as true and correct in content and policy by an authorized representative to the SAA as part of their application.

Accredited Catalog Requirements:



State with specificity the facility's graduation requirements;

Include any attendance standards of the institution if the institution has and enforces such standards.

Include institution policy and regulations relating to student conduct and conditions for dismissal for unsatisfactory conduct; and

Include institution policy and regulations relative to standards of progress required of the student by the institution. The policy will define the grading system of the institution, the minimum grades considered satisfactory, conditions for interruption for unsatisfactory grades or progress, a description of the probationary period, if any, allowed by the institution, conditions of reentrance for those students dismissed for unsatisfactory progress, and a statement regarding progress records kept by the institution and furnished the student;



Accredited Required Criteria (1 of 3)



Adequate Records

Adequate records are kept by the school to show the progress of each Veteran or eligible person. The records must be sufficient to show continued pursuit at the rate for which enrolled, and the progress being made. They must include final grade in each subject for each term, quarter, or semester; record of withdrawal from any subject to include the last date of attendance for a resident course; and record of reenrollment in subjects from which there was a withdrawal; and may include such records as attendance for resident courses, periodic grades and examination results.



Prior Credit

The school maintains a written record of previous education and training of the Veteran or eligible person which clearly indicates that appropriate credit has been given by the school for previous education and training, with the training period shortened proportionately.

The record must be cumulative in that the results of each enrollment period (quarter or semester) must be included so that it shows each subject undertaken and the final result.



Accredited Required Criteria (2 of 3)



Standards

The school enforces a policy relative to standards of conduct and progress required of the student. The school policy relative to standards of progress must be specific enough to determine the point in time when educational benefits should be discontinued, pursuant to 38 U.S.C. 3474 when the Veteran or eligible person ceases to make satisfactory progress. The policy must include the grade or grade point average that will be maintained if the student is to graduate.



Attendance

If the school has a standard of attendance, it maintains records of attendance for Veterans and eligible persons enrolled in resident courses which are adequate to show the student meets the school's standard of attendance.

Curriculum

The accredited courses, the curriculum of which they form a part, and the instruction connected with those courses are consistent in quality, content, and length with similar courses in public educational institutions and other private educational institutions in the State with recognized accepted standards.

Accredited Required Criteria (3 of 3)



Adequacy

There is in the educational institution offering the course adequate space, equipment, instructional material, and instructor personnel to provide training of good quality.

Qualifications

The educational and experience qualifications of directors, and administrators of the educational institution offering the courses, and instructors teaching the courses for which approval is sought, are adequate.



Non-College Degree Courses



Any course not leading to a standard college degree in a school approved by the SAA will be accepted as an accredited when:

Accredited School

The course or the school offering such course is accredited by the appropriate accrediting agency; and

Accredited Level

The course offers training in the field for which the accrediting agency is recognized and at a level for which it is recognized; and

Objective

The course leads to a high school diploma or a vocational objective.

Non-Accredited Courses

Non-Accredited courses must meet the requirements of United States Codes (USC):

38 USC §3676 and 38 CFR §21.4254.

Non-accredited programs are those which are not approved as accredited courses by a Department of Education recognized accrediting agency and which are offered by a public or private, profit or nonprofit, educational institution. Since these courses are not approved as accredited, they have to meet more requirements than accredited courses for the SAA to approve them.



Non-Accredited Catalog Requirements (1 of 4)



Any school desiring to enroll Veterans or eligible persons in nonaccredited courses will submit an application to the SAA. The application will include not less than two copies of the current catalog or bulletin which is certified true and correct in content and policy by an authorized owner or official of the school and will include the following:

1

Identifying data, such as volume number, and date of publication;

2

Names of the school and its governing body, officials, and faculty;

3

A calendar of the school showing legal holidays, beginning and ending date of each quarter, term, or semester, and other important dates;



Non- Accredited Catalog Requirements (2 of 4)



4

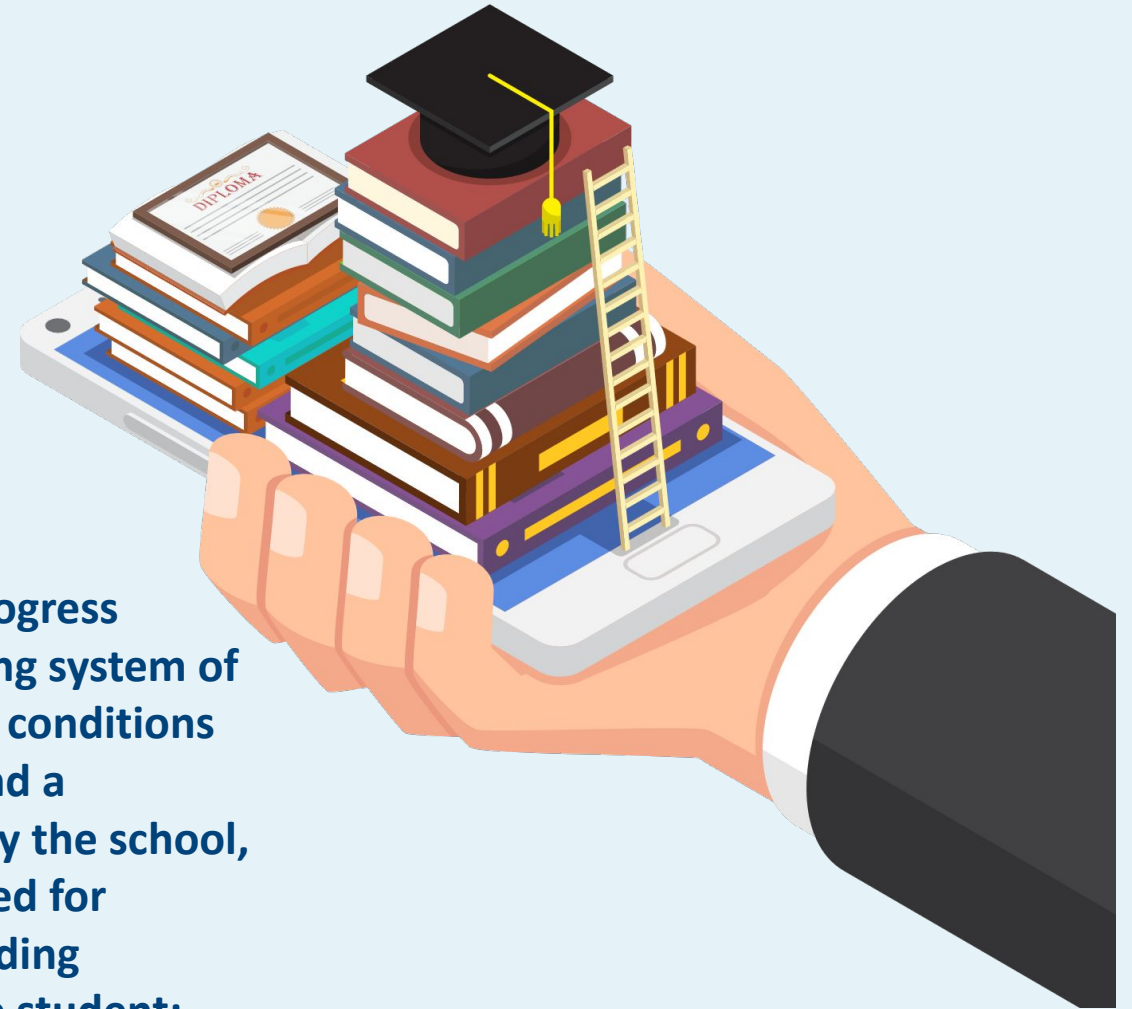
School policy and regulations on enrollment with respect to enrollment dates and specific entrance requirements for each course;

5

School policy and regulations relative to leave, absences, class cuts, makeup work, tardiness, and interruptions for unsatisfactory attendance;

6

School policy and regulations relative to standards of progress required of the student. This policy will define the grading system of the school, the minimum grades considered satisfactory conditions for interruption for unsatisfactory grades or progress, and a description of the probationary period, if any, allowed by the school, and conditions of reentrance for those students dismissed for unsatisfactory progress. A statement will be made regarding progress records kept by the school and furnished to the student;



Non- Accredited Catalog Requirements (3 of 4)



7

School policy and regulations relating to student conduct and conditions for dismissal for unsatisfactory conduct;

8

Detailed schedule of fees, charges for tuition, books, supplies, tools, student activities, laboratory fees, service charges, rentals, deposits, and all other charges;

9

Policy and regulations relative to the refund of the unused portion of tuition, fees, and other charges in the event the student does not enter the course, or withdraws, or is discontinued therefrom;



Non- Accredited Catalog Requirements (4 of 4)



10 A description of the available space, facilities, and equipment;

11 A course outline for each course for which approval is requested, showing subjects or units in the course, type of work, or skill to be learned, and approximate time and clock hours to be spent on each subject or unit; and

12 Policy and regulations relative to granting credit for previous education and training.



Non-Accredited Required Criteria (1 of 4)



Consistency

The courses, curriculum, and instruction are consistent in quality, content, and length with similar recognized accepted standard.

Adequacy

There is in the school adequate space, equipment, instructional material, and instructor personnel to provide training of good quality.

Qualifications

Educational and experience qualifications of directors, administrators, and instructors are adequate.



Non-Accredited Required Criteria (2 of 4)



Prior Credit

The school maintains a written record of the previous education and training of the Veteran or eligible person and clearly indicates that appropriate credit has been given for previous education and training, with the training period shortened proportionately, and the Veteran or eligible person and the Department of Veterans Affairs are notified.



Students' Program Information

A copy of the course outline, schedule of tuition, fees, and other charges, regulations pertaining to absences, grading policy, and rules of operation and conduct will be furnished to the Veteran or eligible person upon enrollment.

Completion

Upon completion of training, the Veteran or eligible person is given a certificate by the school indicating the approved course and indicating that training was satisfactorily completed.



Non-Accredited Required Criteria (3 of 4)



Records

Adequate records as prescribed by the SAA are kept showing attendance and progress or grades, and satisfactory standards relating to attendance, progress, and conduct are enforced.

Local Compliance

The school complies with all local, city, county, municipal, State, and Federal regulations, such as fire codes, building, and sanitation codes.

School Financials

The school is financially sound and capable of fulfilling its commitments for training.

Advertising

The school does not utilize advertising of any type which is erroneous or misleading, either by actual statement, omission, or intimation.



Non-Accredited Required Criteria (4 of 4)



Enrollment Limitations

The school does not exceed its enrollment limitations as established by the SAA.

Reputation

The school administrators, directors, owners, and instructors are of good reputation and character.

Pro Rata Refund

The school either: (i) Has and maintains a policy for the pro rata refund of the unused portion of tuition, fees and charges if the Veteran or eligible person fails to enter the course or withdraws or is discontinued from it before completion or has obtained a waiver of this requirement. See [38 CFR § 21.4255](#).

Additional Criteria

Such additional reasonable criteria as may be deemed necessary by the SAA.

NOTE: Independent study may only be approved for accredited courses and must comply with the requirements provided in [38 CFR §21.4267](#). [38 CFR §21.4267](#) states: “VA may not pay educational assistance for a nonaccredited course which is offered in whole or in part by independent study”.

Additional Approval Requirements: Accredited & Non-Accredited

01

Compliance with 2 year period of operation law: 38 CFR §21.4251 & 38 U.S. Code §3680A

03

Disapproval of Enrollment in Certain Courses
38 U.S. Code § 3680A

05

Cooperative Training
38 CFR §21.4257

07

Off-campus sites
(not including practical training sites)
38 CFR §21.4266

Disapproval of Courses
38 U.S. Code §3679

02

Third Parties must also be approved
38 CFR §21.4233(e) and 38 CFR §21.4252(m)

04

Practical Training
38 CFR §21.4265

06

Advertising
38 CFR §21.4252

08



Miscellaneous Payment Programs



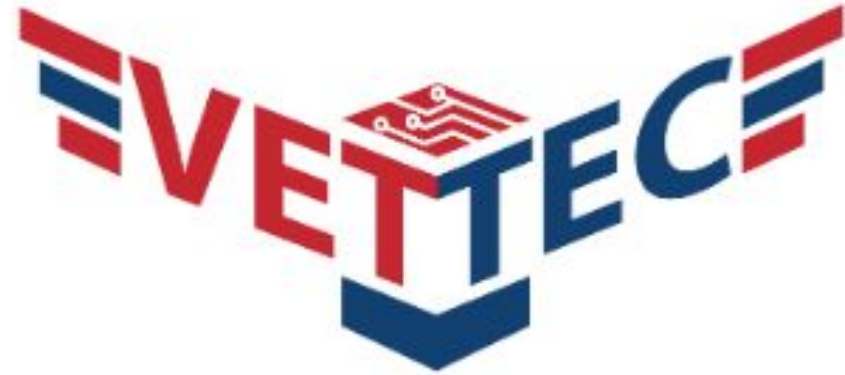
Miscellaneous Payment Programs

- VET TEC
- Accelerated Payment
- Cooperative Training
- Program Objectives
- Incarcerated Claimants
- Study Abroad



VET TEC

Five-Year Pilot Program
whose goal is to give
Veterans the high-tech
skills sought by today's
top employers



- Separate approval requirements & procedures
- May be dual approved as NCD-only facility & VET TEC
- IHL facilities are not eligible

VET TEC



APPLICANT



PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

VA signs Participation Agreement with Training Provider



ACCEPTANCE

Training Provider accepts veteran into program. Veteran provides approved VET TEC COE



TRAINING



VETERAN COURSE COMPLETION 25%

Training Provider certifies Veteran's course completion to VA to receive initial 25% payment



VETERAN ENROLLMENT 25%

Training Provider certifies Veteran's enrollment to VA to receive initial 25% payment



JOB PLACEMENT

Training Provider assists Veteran with Job Placement



VETERAN COURSE COMPLETION 50%

Training Provider and Veteran certify meaningful employment to VA to receive remaining 50% payment



ANNUAL RENEWAL

VA annually reviews Training Provider's Participation

VET TEC Contact Information & Resources



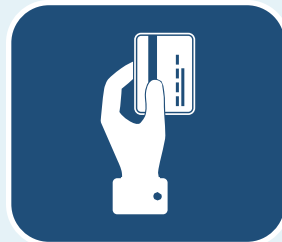
- For any questions, contact VA's Federal and State Approvals by email at ELR-VETTEC.VBABUF@va.gov.
- Visit the [VET TEC homepage](#)
- [VET TEC Certifying Official Handbook](#)

Accelerated Payments



Meaning

Lump sum payments of a maximum of 60% of the established tuition and fees for an individual's enrollment in certain high-cost, high-tech programs. Replaces the monthly benefit otherwise received through GI Bill.



Entitlement

If there is not enough entitlement for 60% of tuition and fees, VA pays based on actual remaining entitlement.



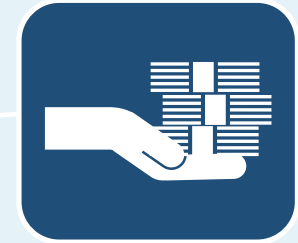
Terms

Paid one semester, quarter or term at a time. If program is not term-, semester-, or quarter based, Accelerated Payment is paid for entire program.



High-Technology High-Tech

programs/industries listed on VA website. Student must enroll in listed program and certify their intent to seek employment in High-Tech industry.



High-Cost

High-cost means tuition and fees must be more than double the benefit the student would otherwise receive.

Accelerated Payment: MGIB-AD Eligibility



Active-Duty claimants must meet all of the following requirements:

Accelerated Payment is not available under Post-9/11 (CH 33), Dependents' Education Assistance (CH 35) or the Veterans' Educational Assistance Program (VEAP).



Must be eligible for the Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty (MGIB-AD) (CH 30) program, and



Must be enrolled in a qualifying high-tech degree or non degree program, and



Tuition and fees must cost more than 200% of the monthly amount of educational assistance the claimant would otherwise qualify to get during the certified enrollment period.

Accelerated Payment: MGIB-SR Eligibility



Selected Reserve claimants must meet all of the following requirements:

Accelerated Payment is not available under Post-9/11 (CH 33), Dependents' Education Assistance (CH 35) or the Veterans' Educational Assistance Program (VEAP).



Must be eligible for the Montgomery GI Bill- Selected Reserve(MGIB-SR) (CH 1606) program, and

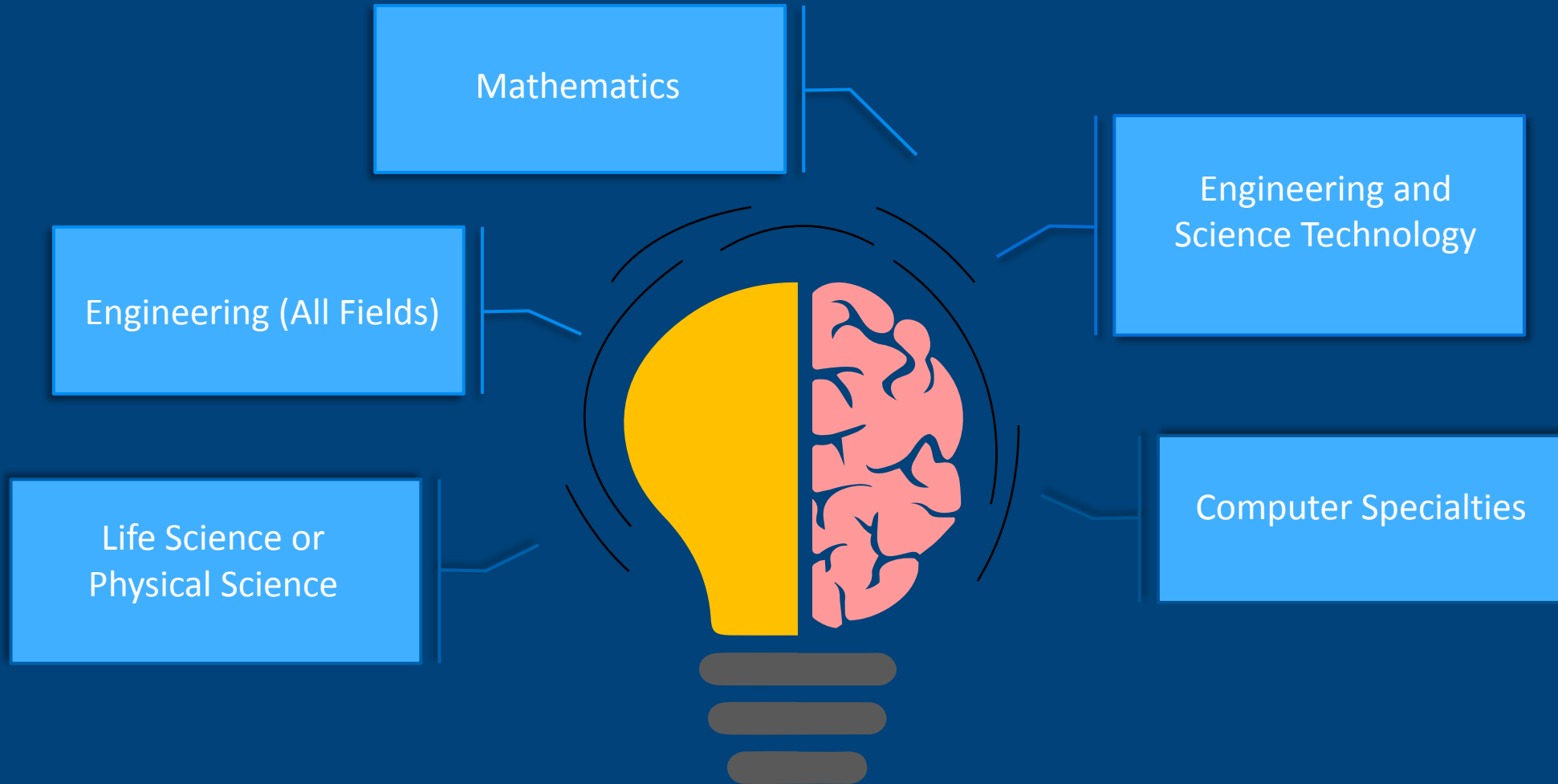


Must be enrolled in a qualifying high-tech degree or non degree Program that lasts for 2 years or less, and

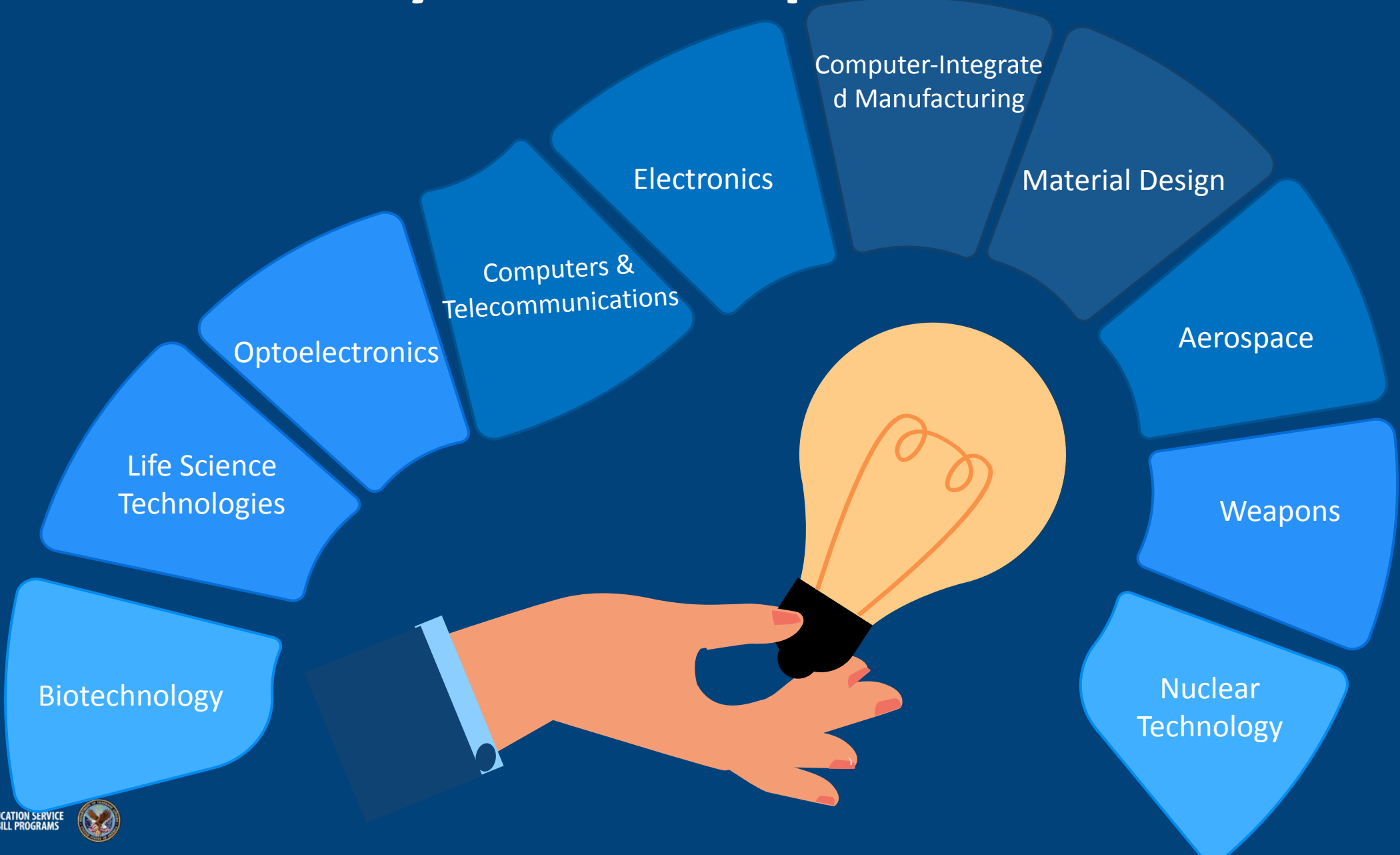


Tuition and fees must cost more than 200% of the monthly amount of educational assistance the claimant would otherwise qualify to get during the certified enrollment period.

Accelerated Payments: Education Categories



Accelerated Payments: Employment Industries



Accelerated Payments: Certification



Certify Term as normal, except:

Obtain Written Request from Student

The student's first written request for accelerated payment must contain the following: "I certify that I intend to seek employment in a high technology industry as defined by VA. I have read VA's approved list of high technology industries."

Subsequent written requests can be as simple as, "I request accelerated payment", followed by the student's signature and the date.

Confirm Certification

Accelerated payment certifications must be confirmed;

They can't be signed, dated, and submitted until on or after the beginning date of the enrollment period.

Certify Term

Certify one term at a time and include the total charges. Students must request accelerated payment separately for each term.

Enrollment Manager

Check the "Accelerated Pay" Box

Enrollment Manager



Credits and tuition

- Graduation/End of Term or Course
- Termination

Resident credits

3

Online credits

0

Clock hours

Tuition & Fees amount

0

Training time for CH1606 (*Required)

1/2 time

- Advanced pay requested by student ⓘ
- Accelerated pay requested by student ⓘ

Tuition & Fees amount (*Required)

0

Training time for CH1606 (*Required)

1/2 time

Advanced pay requested by student ⓘ

Accelerated pay requested by student ⓘ

If your student has requested accelerated payment, please ensure that you have a signed and dated Acceleration Certification request from the student in your records.

Tuition & Fees amount (*Required)

0

Training time for CH1606 (*Required)

1/2 time

Advanced pay requested by student ⓘ

Accelerated pay requested by student ⓘ

Cooperative Training



Colleges and universities are increasingly offering work experience or work internship programs. VA uses the term cooperative training(co-op) to denote school-sponsored programs that consist of school instruction and on-the-job (OJT) training.

For example, a community college may offer an A.A.S. Automotive Technology degree with course work at the college and OJT at a car dealership. Like all programs, co-op programs must be specifically approved.

Cooperative training can be certified by credit or by clock hours, whichever is to the student's advantage. Cooperative training is paid at the same rate as full-time institutional training. If a student is enrolled in a cooperative program at less than full-time, no benefits may be paid.

Co-op training may occur in two formats: alternating co-op or parallel co-op.

Cooperative Training: Alternative Co-op

Attendance

The student alternates full-time school attendance with full-time OJT training.

For example, a student may alternate one term of full-time school attendance with one term of full-time OJT, or a student may take a term of classroom instruction phase and then finish a program with a one term OJT phase (internship or externship). The school and the OJT phases must be full-time.

Phases

The school and OJT phases may alternate on a weekly, monthly, or term basis.

However, they alternate, the school phase must be at least as long as the OJT phase.

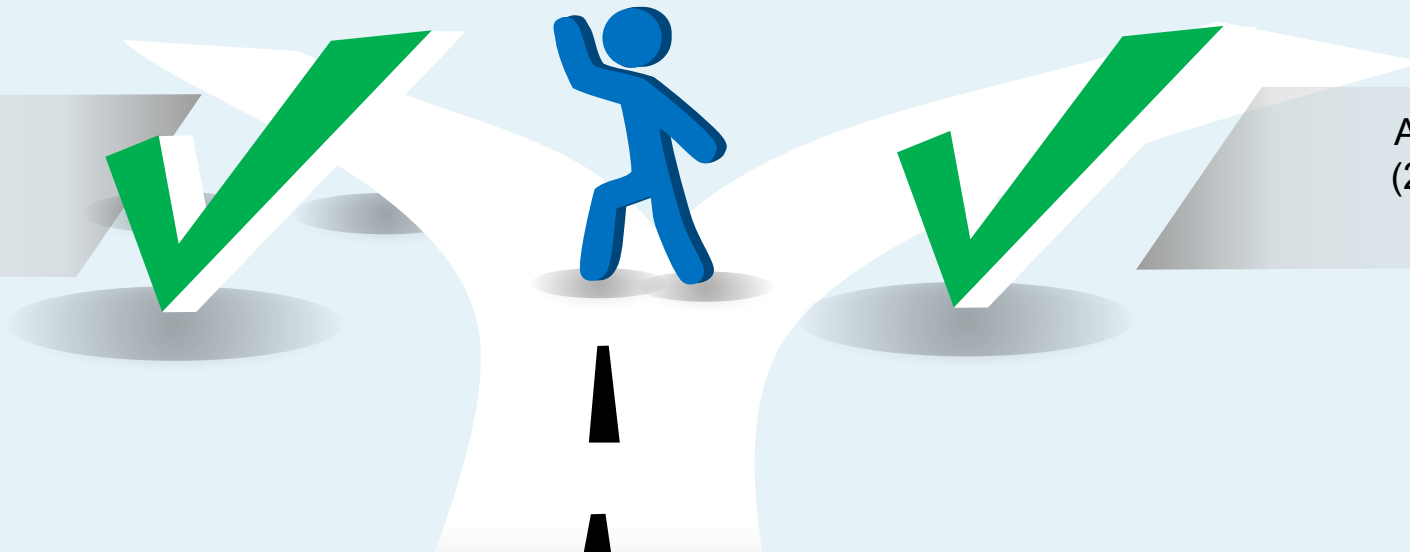
If a school phase is certified for one month, then the subsequent OJT phase cannot be more than one month. A school phase can be longer than an OJT phase, but an OJT phase can never be longer than the school phase.

Cooperative Training: Parallel Co-op



The student attends school half-time and works (OJT) half-time.

A student takes 6 classroom credits in the morning



And 3 OJT credits (20 clock hours) in the afternoon

School Phase

The school phase of training must be at least as long as the OJT phase of training. The student must be attending school at least half.

Attendance

The student must be attending school at least half-time each day the student works OJT, but the student can't work more than 4 hours per day.

Note

A student could be attending school three-quarter time each day and working half-time or less, but not the other way around.

Cooperative Training: Rules



Cooperative Training programs must adhere to a set of rules:

01

Must be a full-time program

04

OJT phase must be supervised by school instructors

02

The school phase and the OJT phase together constitute one co-op cycle

05

The school must arrange OJT phases with employers

03

OJT phase must be an integral part of the school's approved program

06

The school must arrange for the placement of individual students in OJT

07

The school must grant credit for OJT

Program Objectives:



Dual Majors:

Dual majors pursued under an academic policy that defines the dual major's requirements can be certified if both majors are approved. Only courses required to complete the dual major can be certified.

During VA site visits, or during compliance surveys, VA will ensure students are not enrolled in courses outside either major and that the courses are approved.



Minors:

A minor pursued as part of an approved major can be certified, even if the minor will require additional credit to graduate.

Only courses required to complete the degree, including the minor, can be certified.

Program Objectives:



ROTC:

A student in a Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program is commissioned as an officer if he or she receives a degree.

Students in a ROTC program can be certified for courses required for their degree (including electives) and for courses required for the ROTC program.



Dual Objectives:

A student may want to pursue a dual objective. For example, a student may want to concurrently pursue two different degrees or pursue a degree and a certificate. A program of education may lead to more than one objective if all objectives pursued are generally recognized as being reasonably related to a single career field. The objectives do not necessarily have to be on the same professional or technical level.

Specific approval procedures vary among institution types and states.

Check with your SAA about dual objective approvals. A combination of two approved degree programs at the same school does not need additional approval.

Incarcerated Claimants



An incarcerated claimant is any Veteran, Servicemember, or Eligible Person incarcerated in Federal, State, or local prison, jail or other penal institution for a felony.

VA can authorize only the costs of tuition, fees, necessary books, equipment, and supplies for a claimant incarcerated under a felony conviction up to the statutory limits for these payments specific to a particular education benefit program. VA cannot make payments for tuition, fees, books, equipment, or supplies if another Federal State or local program pays these costs in full.

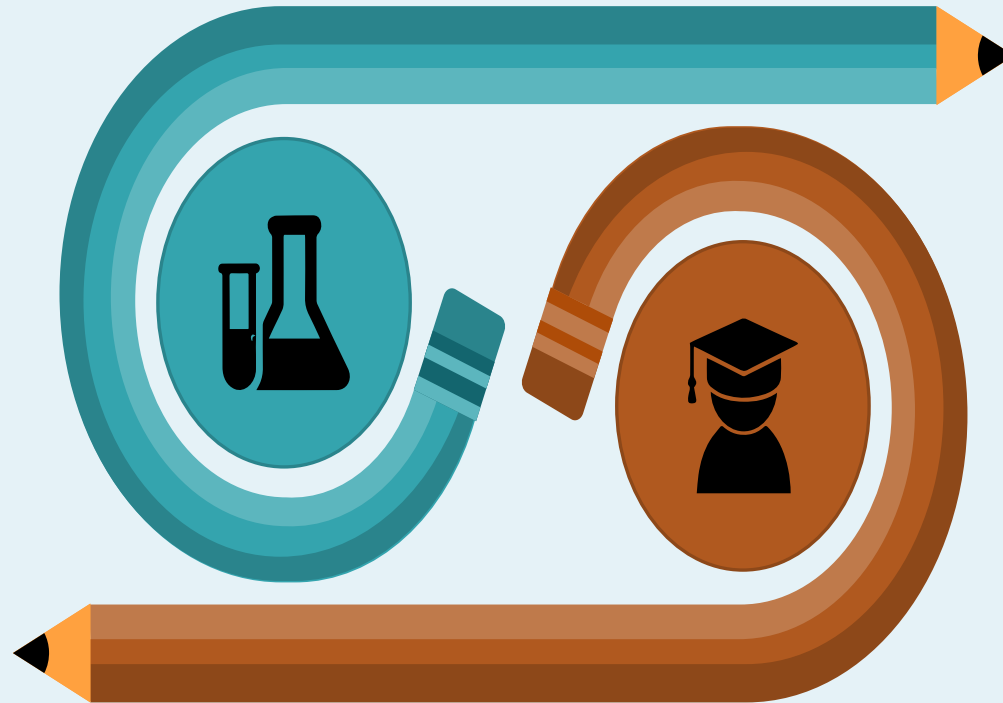
Convicted felons residing in halfway houses (also known as "residential re entry centers") or participating in work release programs can receive full benefits.



Incarcerated Claimants: Certification



Report “net charges” for
chapter 33
Claims.

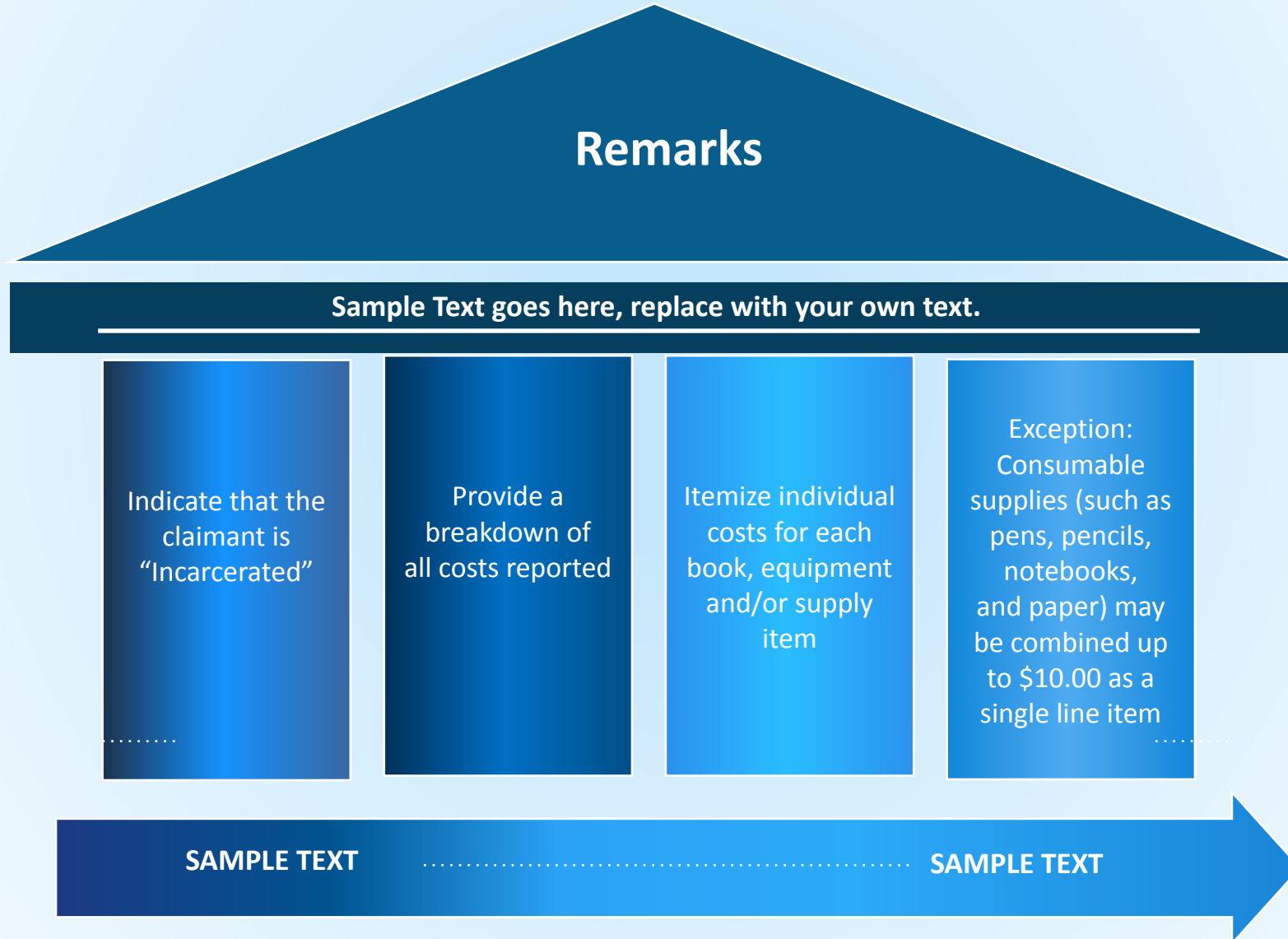


Report “actual costs” for
non-33 claims.

Incarcerated Claimants: Certification



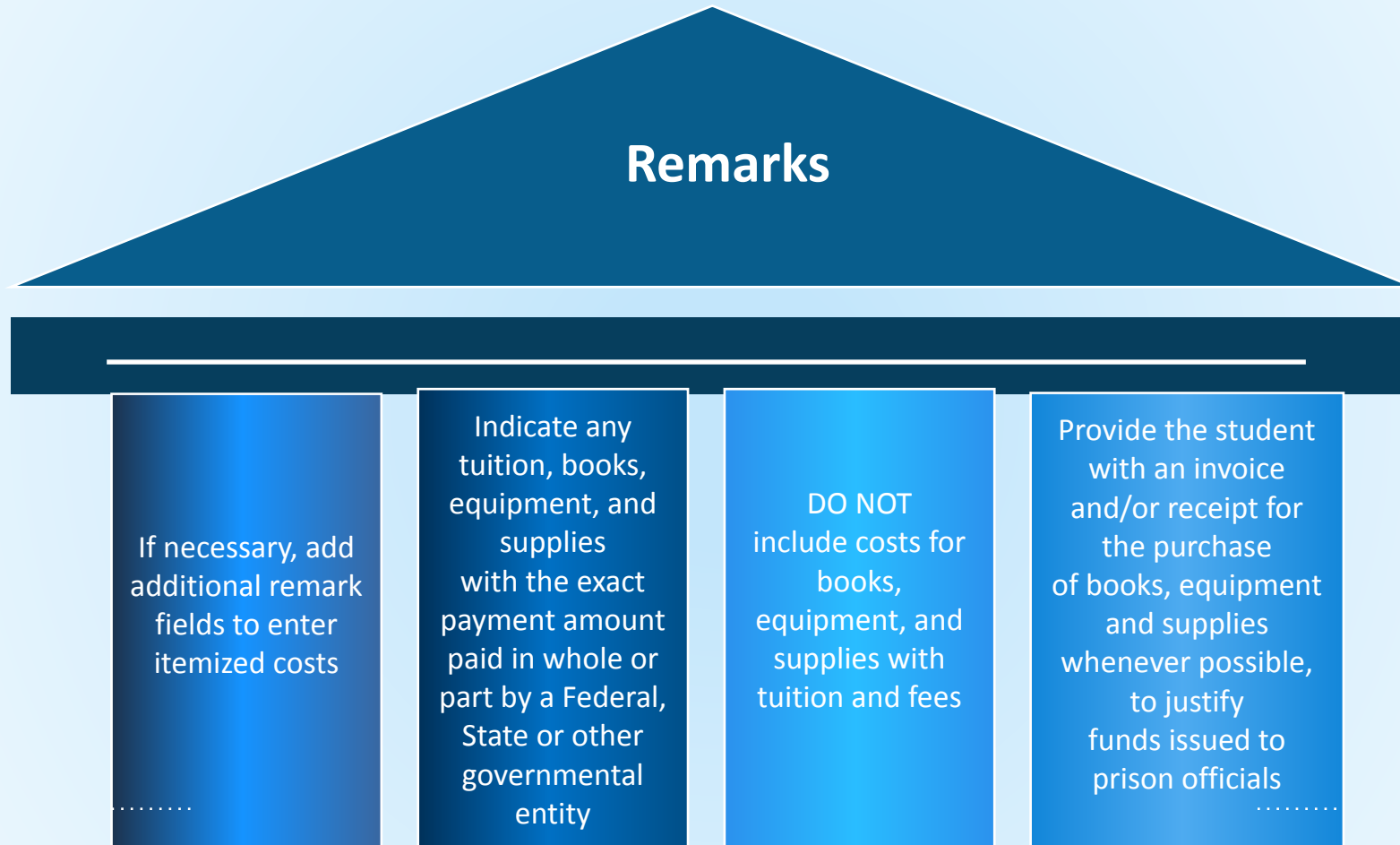
The certification process for Incarcerated Claimants applies to all benefit chapters.



Incarcerated Claimants: Certification



The certification process for Incarcerated Claimants applies to all benefit chapters.



NOTE: The Prison Official must notify VA of incarcerated claimants (felony incarceration) receiving education benefits by providing a VA Form 21 4193, Notice to Department to Veterans Affairs of Veteran or Beneficiary incarcerated in Penal Institution.

Study Abroad



VA will pay fees specific to a Study Abroad program only when Study Abroad is required as part of the student's approved program.

Students must be enrolled in courses that apply to their program. The courses must be at an institution of higher learning leading to a standard college degree or the equivalent.

The program at the "host" school in the foreign country school must be approved.



Study Abroad: Chapters 33



A beneficiary may study abroad with the Post-9/11 GI Bill in the following ways:

□ Foreign University Direct Enrollment:

- The student enrolls directly into a foreign university approved for GI Bill funding.

□ Foreign Campus U.S. based School Enrollment:

- The student enrolls in a U.S. based school but attends a branch or extension campus in a foreign location.

□ Study Abroad Options Program

- The student maintains enrollment/matriculated in a U.S. based school degree program and attends majority of their classes in a foreign country or at a foreign university. The student's credits must transfer back to the U.S. based home institution.



Study Abroad: Chapters 33 (Cont.)



So long as the Study Abroad program is required for graduation and meets all approval requirements:



VA will pay:

- Home school's tuition and fees
- Books and supplies
- Monthly housing allowance based on the home school's address



VA will not pay:

- Costs related to travel and room and board (airfare, lodging, and meals)
- Third party charges
- Exchange Student Programs
- Other Amenities (any extra fees charged by the U.S. based university will also not be covered such as amenity fees, vaccination fees, and trip merchandise fees)



VA Fiscal Issues



Overpayments

- School Overpayments
- Student Payment Concerns



Chapter 33 Fiscal Issues



Generally, overpayments of VA benefits are the responsibility of the student. However, there are instances under the Post 9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33) when an overpayment is created on a school and funds need to be refunded to VA.

Effective January 5, 2021, section 1019 of Public Law 116-315 made schools financially liable, instead of the student, for payments directly paid to a school. Effective the date of enactment, tuition and fees or Yellow Ribbon overpayments must be established and collected as school debts.

Student overpayments will no longer be established for any tuition and fees, or Yellow Ribbon payments made to schools.

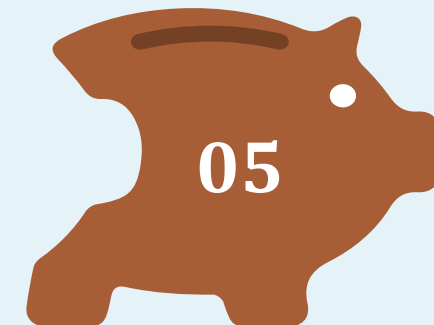
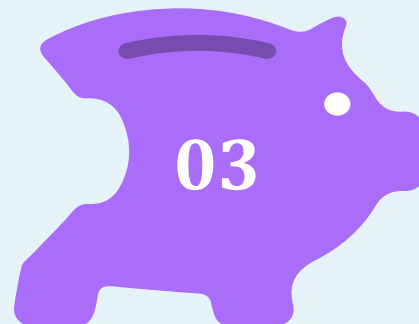
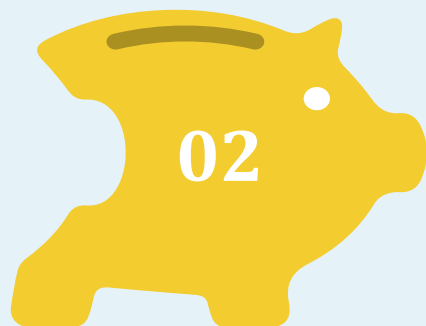
School Overpayments



When a school debt is created, the RPO of jurisdiction sends a letter notifying the school of the overpayment with details regarding the associated student, debt amount, and the reason for the creation of the debt.

If the school doesn't contact DMC, a second NOI will be issued providing an additional 30 days for the school to respond, and it also informs the school of VA's obligation to report delinquent debts to the Treasury Offset Program (TOP) for further collection.

If no response is received within 60 days, the debt will automatically be referred to TOP for further collection.



The debt is electronically submitted to VA's Debt Management Center (DMC). Within 3 days of receipt of the debt, DMC will issue the first Notice of Indebtedness (NOI) which provides 30 days to repay or dispute the debt.

If the school still does not contact DMC, a third NOI will be sent informing the school of VA's intent to refer the debt to TOP if no response is received within 60 days.

School Overpayments: Treasury Offset Program (TOP)



Once debts are referred to TOP, VA is no longer collecting the debt and control of the collection is managed by Department of Treasury.

The TOP process will capture funds payable to the school issued by other government entities. When an offset occurs Treasury will also assess a \$17.00 administrative fee. Once funds are captured, they are forwarded to DMC who is responsible for applying the funds to the school debt.

Additional information on TOP, and contact information, can be found here: [Treasury Offset Program](#)



School Overpayments: Debt Disputes



Schools must contact DMC to dispute a debt. The best way to submit a debt dispute is to email DMC at dmcedu.vbaspl@va.gov.



Schools may also call DMC's toll free number and speak to a customer service representative or mail a written dispute to DMC.



DMC's contact information can be found here: [Manage Your VA Debt](#)



DMC will automatically suspend collection of a school debt if a dispute is received prior to referral to TOP. The school will be notified of VA's decision regarding the dispute, and DMC will continue the collection action if appropriate.



Student Payment Issues- Overpayment

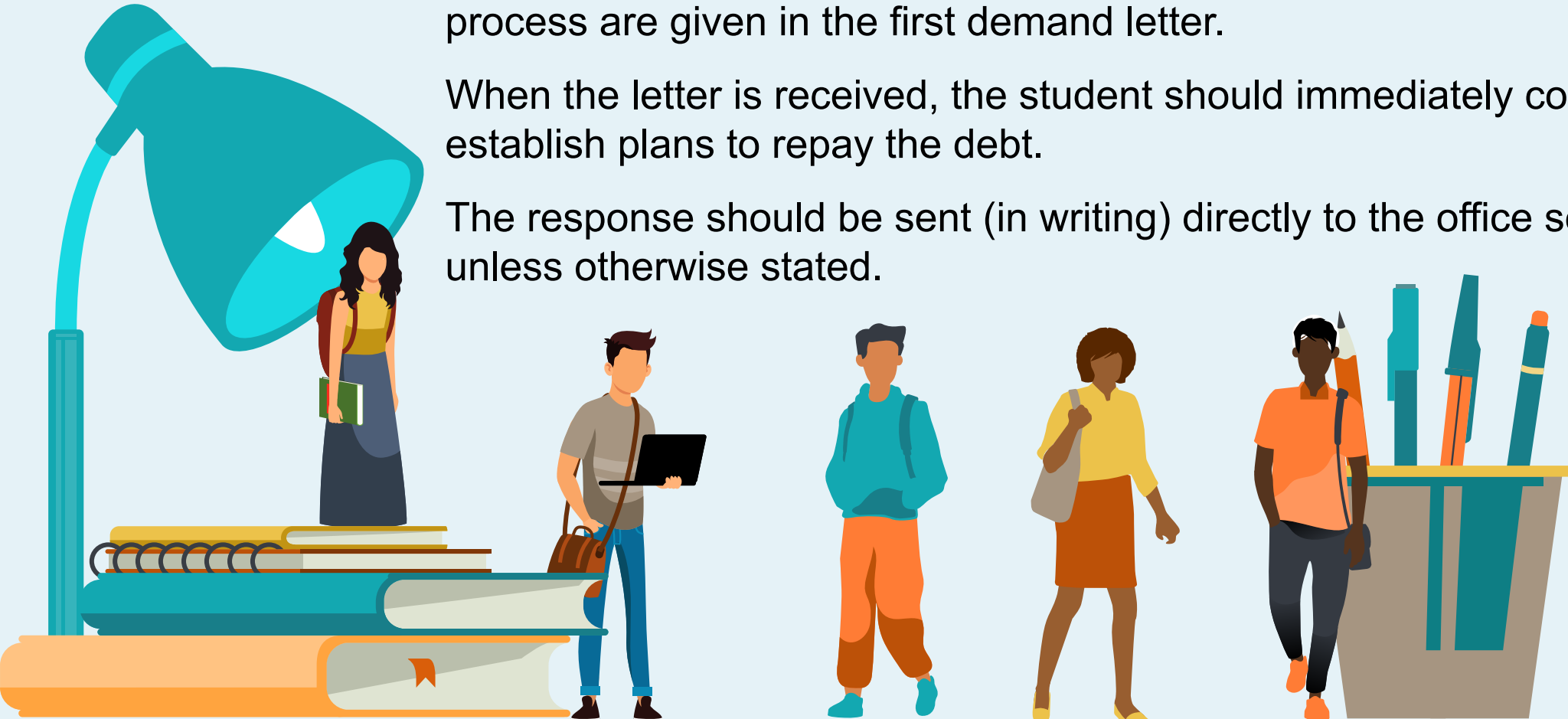


When an overpayment is created, a first demand letter is sent notifying the student of the overpayment.

Due process (rights to appeal or waiver) and time limits for each step in the process are given in the first demand letter.

When the letter is received, the student should immediately contact VA to establish plans to repay the debt.

The response should be sent (in writing) directly to the office sending the letter, unless otherwise stated.



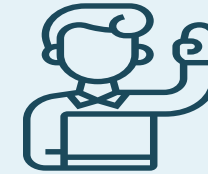


Student Payment Issues- Lost Checks



If a student does not receive a VA education check or EFT deposit that he/she believes was issued, the VA should be called immediately on our toll-free number:

1 888 442 4551



- Education Case Managers can check the date and amount of any VA education check issued to a student and whether it has been returned.
- If a check or EFT payment was issued, but not received within three business days from the date of the check, VA can initiate tracer action with the U.S. Treasury Department.
- Once Treasury has completed its review, the following action will be taken, as appropriate:
 - If the check is not cashed, a courtesy disbursement check will be issued to the student.
 - If Treasury finds the check to have been negotiated (cashed), the student will be sent a photocopy (front and back), a claim form and instructions on how to complete the form.

Summary



1

Describe the approval requirements for various programs of education

2

Identify miscellaneous payment programs

3

Explain school fiscal issues, student payment concerns, and debt collection

Resources



[Education Liaison
Representatives](#)



[State Approving
Agencies](#)



[About GI Bill Benefits |
Veterans Affairs
\(va.gov\)](#)



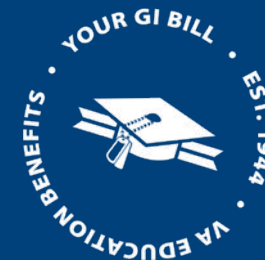
[School Certifying
Official Handbook
\(On-line\) \(va.gov\)](#)



[Resources For Schools
| Veterans Affairs
\(va.gov\)](#)



Questions?



Thank You!





Certification Process Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) Facilities



May 2023

Introduction



Sharon Seidl

Training Specialist



Overview

Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) A college, university, technical or business school offering instruction at the postsecondary level that leads to an associate or higher degree. The institution must be empowered by the appropriate state education authority (under state law) or accredited by a recognized accrediting agency to grant such degrees. This designation also includes hospitals offering medical-dental internships or residencies without regard to whether the hospital grants a postsecondary degree.



Learning Objectives



Describe the methods for applying VA course measurements to certifications



Recall student enrollment processes requiring SCO reporting action during an enrollment period



Identify program curriculum distinctions to certify appropriate coursework



Recollect procedures taken when a term has ended

What to Certify





What to Certify

q Program Approval

q Course Applicability



Program Approval

SAA of jurisdiction must verify the program meets the necessary approval requirements

Previously approved programs will be reviewed by the SAA of jurisdiction during routine catalog reviews

SAs are required to re-evaluate schools, facilities, and programs every 24 months at a minimum

SAA of jurisdiction will communicate what documents are required from the school/SCO for new and routine approval reviews



Course Applicability



Course Applicability

Only courses that satisfy requirements outlined by the curriculum guide or graduation evaluation form can be certified for VA purposes. A curriculum guide or graduation evaluation form should be kept in the student's file and courses certified should be checked. If a student takes a course that does not fulfill a program requirement, it cannot be certified for VA purposes.



Audited Courses

An audited course is any credited course a student attends as a listener, not for credit towards graduation. Audited courses cannot be certified. If the school's grading policy allows a student who registers for credit to later change to audit, report the change from credit to audit as a withdrawal, effective the day the student changed from credit to audit.



Repeating Courses

Classes that are successfully completed may not be certified again for VA purposes if they are repeated. However, if a student fails a class, or if a program requires a higher grade than the one achieved in a particular class for successful completion, that class may be repeated and certified to VA again.



Electives

Excessive free electives, for example, cannot be certified.



Course Applicability



Unofficial Transcript (Partial Image)

Term: SPRING 23		01/09/2023	05/19/2023	
Course Code	Course Description	Credits Attempted	Credits Earned	Grade
ELEC 1717	Electrical Engineering	4	4	A
ELEC 1717L	Electrical Engineering Lab	1	1	A
MEDL 1012	Medical Terminology	3	3	A
ENGL 1711	Composition I	3	3	A
MATH 2749	Calculus I	4	4	A
		15	15	
Term: FALL 23		09/05/2023	12/22/2023	
Course Code	Course Description	Credits Attempt	Credits Earned	Grade
SPAN 1101	Spanish I	4		
POLS 1110	American Politics	3		
PHY ED 1109	Volleyball	1		
SPCH 1110	Interpersonal Communication	3		
PHY ED 1110	Step Aerobics	1		
		12		

Degree Audit/Program Requirements

Engineering, Electrical AS

	<u>Needs</u> (Credits)	<u>Taken</u> (Credits)
Electrical	12	12
Communication	8	8
Natural Sciences	8	8
Mathematical	8	8
History/Social Sciences	8	8
Humanities	8	4
Global Perspectives	3	
Ethic & Civic Responsibility	3	
Physical Education	2	
	<hr/> 60	<hr/> 49

Knowledge Check

Before you may submit a certification for a student, the program **MUST be approved by the State Approving Agency.**



TRUE



FALSE

Knowledge Check

Before you may submit a certification for a student, the program **MUST** be approved by the State Approving Agency.



TRUE

Pursuit & Payment





'When's of Certifying

- q Timeliness
- q Rate of Pursuit (RoP)
- q Graduate-Level Training
- q Training Time



Timeliness

Chapters 30, 32, 35, and 1606

Can be submitted 120 days before the term begins

Submit on or after the first day of class, with tuition and fees if:

- Training time less than ½ time
- Student on Active Duty
- Accelerated Payment requested

01

02

Chapter 33

Submit certifications as early as possible

Must be submitted within 30 days of the beginning of the term

01

02

Rate of Pursuit (Ch 33)





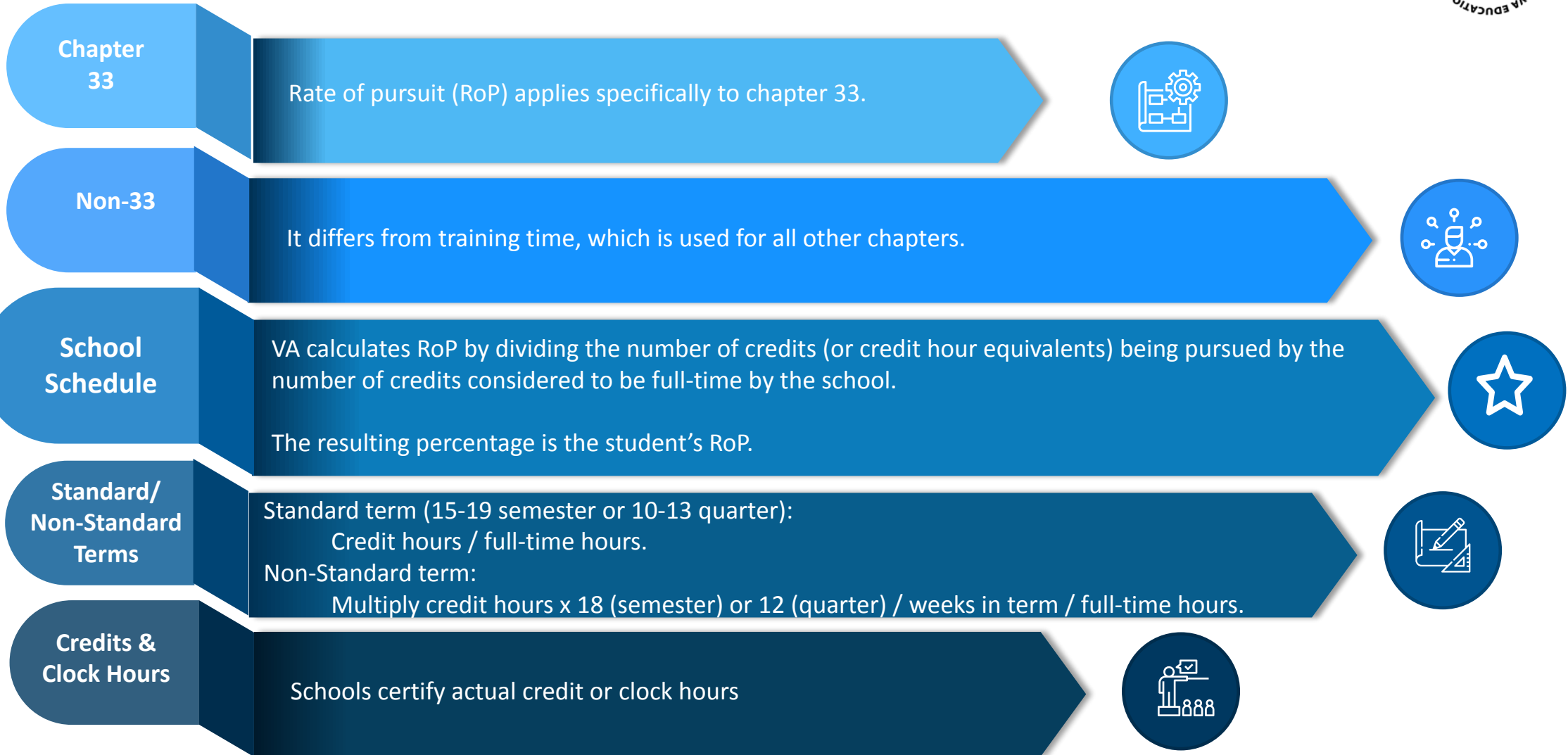
“Help Me, SCO...! Here’s my schedule. Will I get my housing?”

Course	Credits	Term Dates	Location
Biology 100	3	1/9/20-5/4/20	SW Hall Rm 100
Phy Ed 100	3	1/9/20-5/4/20	Gym
Biology 100L	3	3/6/20-5/4/20	Science Cr Rm 5
Marketing 100	3	1/9/20-5/4/20	Business Rm 3

Total **12**



Chapter 33: Rate of Pursuit (RoP)



Rate of Pursuit (RoP) & Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA)



Examples: If full-time is 12 credits, then::

6 credits (or credit equivalents) is
50%

$$(6 / 12 = 50\%)$$

Note: HOUSING NOT PAID

7 credits (or credit equivalents) is
58%

$$(7 / 12 = 58\%)$$

Housing is 60%, rounded up

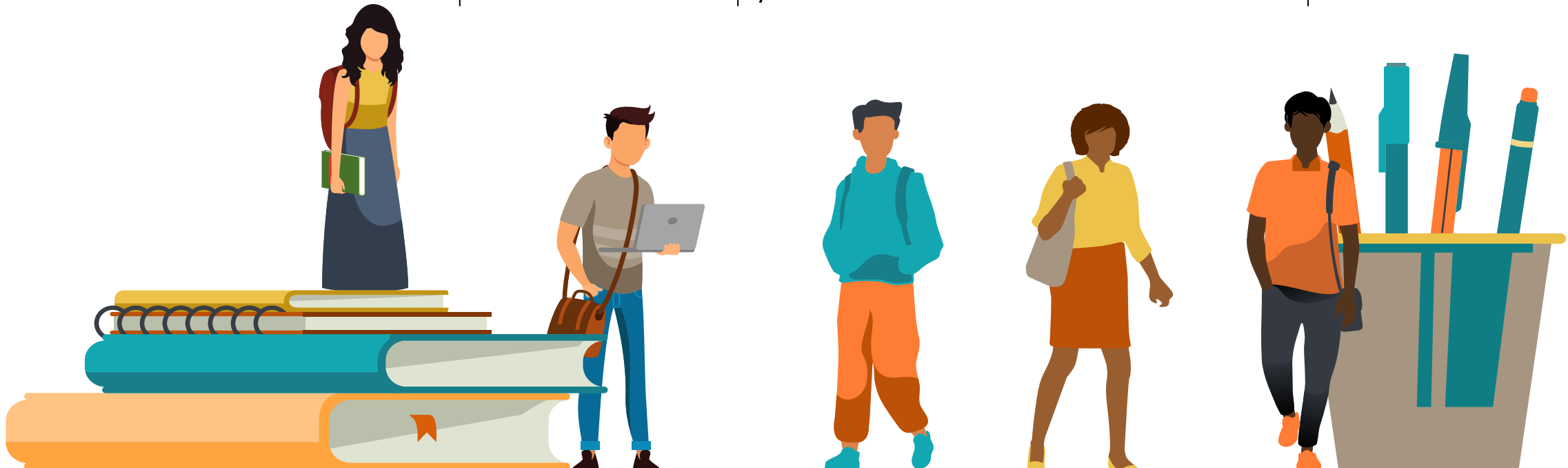
(7 / 12 = .58333) rounded to 5th
decimal place



Full-time at school & VA Rate of pursuit



SCHOOL SCHEDULE:			
Course	Credits	Term Dates	Location
Biology 100		31/9/20-5/4/20	SW Hall Rm 100
Phy Ed 100		31/9/20-5/4/20	Gym
Biology 100L		31/9/20-5/4/20	Science Cr Rm 5
Marketing 100		31/9/20-5/4/20	Business Rm 3
Total		12 Full-time measurement:	12
Rate of Pursuit:		12 / 12	100%





“Help Me, SCO...! Here’s my schedule. Will I get my housing?”

Course	Credits	Term Dates		Location
Biology 100	3	1/9/20-5/4/20	✓	SW Hall Rm 100
Phy Ed 100	3	1/9/20-5/4/20	✓	Gym
Biology 100L	3	3/6/20-5/4/20		Science Cr Rm 5
Marketing 100	3	1/9/20-5/4/20	✓	Business Rm 3

Total **12**



Full-time at school & VA Rate of pursuit

SCHOOL SCHEDULE:

Course	Credits	Term Dates	Location
Biology 100		3 1/9/20-5/4/20	SW Hall Rm 100
Phy Ed 100		3 1/9/20-5/4/20	Gym
Biology 100L		3 3/6/20-5/4/20	Science Cr Rm 5
Marketing 100		3 1/9/20-5/4/20	Business Rm 3

Total 12

VA CERTIFICATION AND RATE OF PURSUIT

TERM DATES	CREDITS	ROP
1/9/20-5/4/20		9
FULL-TIME PER SCHOOL		12
RATE OF PURSUIT	0.75	3/4 TIME



TERM DATES	CREDITS	ROP
3/6/20-5/4/20		3
ADD THE OVERLAPPING TERM ABOVE		9
FULL-TIME PER SCHOOL		12
RATE OF PURSUIT	1.000	FULL-TIME



SUMMER TERMS AND NON-STANDARD ENROLLMENT PERIODS



P1

Standard quarters are 10 to 13 weeks in length and standard semesters are 15 to 19 weeks in length.

P2

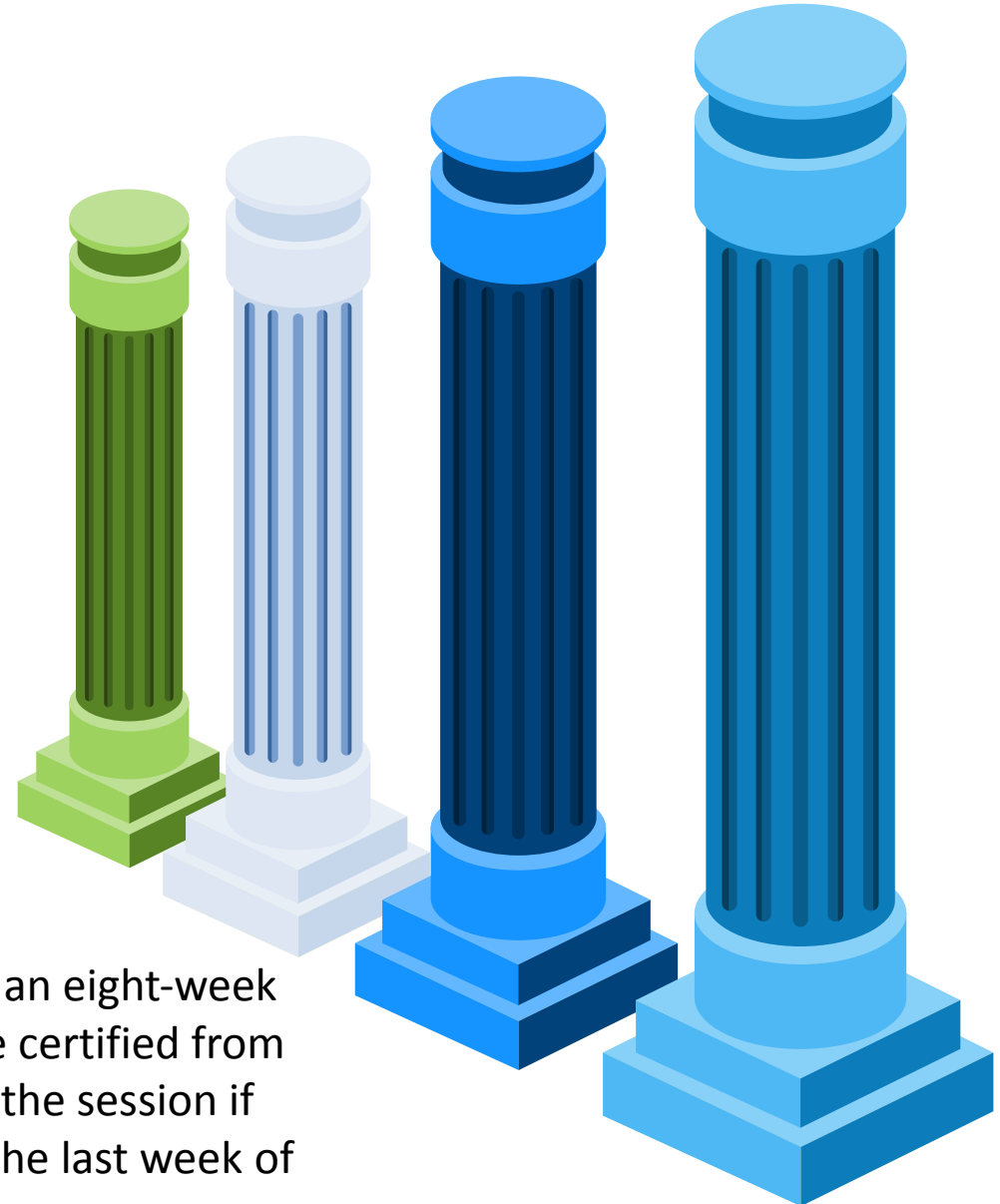
Standard quarters and semesters adhere to the school's academic calendar.

P3

When a session or course doesn't follow this standard format, certify the actual begin date, end date, and credit for the session or course.

P4

Courses taken during a defined session – an eight-week summer session, for example – should be certified from the beginning date to the ending date of the session if the courses start the first week and end the last week of the session.

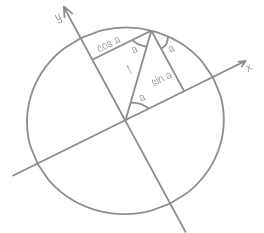


Rate of Pursuit (Chapter 33): NON-standard terms- UNDERGRADUATE (1 of 2)

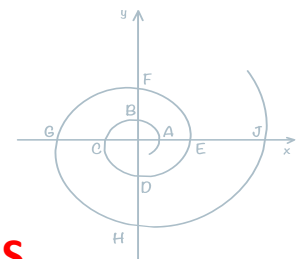
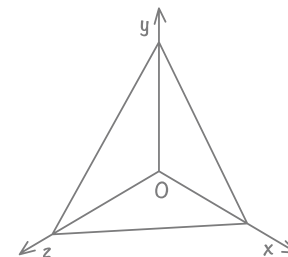


Number of Quarter credits taken, multiplied by 12, then divide by the number of weeks.

Non-standard Quarter		ROP	
	Quarter Credits Taken	3	
	Multiply by 12 for Quarter	12	36
6/1/20-xx 7/27/20 _{xx}	Divide term length in weeks** to get Equiv Cr Hr (ECH):	8	4.5
	Calculate Rate of Pursuit: ECH/ <u>12</u> (normal full-time measurement at a school)	4.5/12	0.375



38%



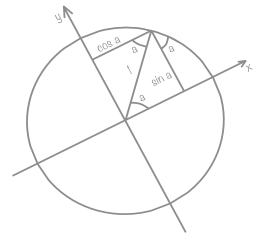
***NO MONTHLY HOUSING IS**

Rate of Pursuit (Chapter 33): NON-standard terms- UNDERGRADUATE (2 of 2)



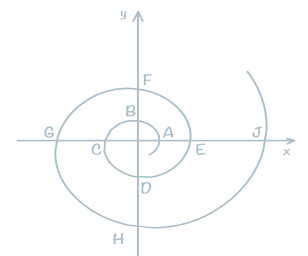
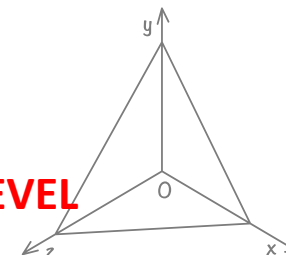
Number of Semester credits taken, multiplied by 18, then divide by the number of weeks.

Non-standard Semester		ROP	
	SEMESTER Credits Taken	3	
	Multiply by 18 for semester	18	54
6/1-7/27/20 _{xx}	Divide term length in weeks** to get Equiv Cr Hr (ECH):	8	6.75
	Calculate Rate of Pursuit: $ECH/12$ (normal full-time measurement at a school)	$6.75/12$	0.5625

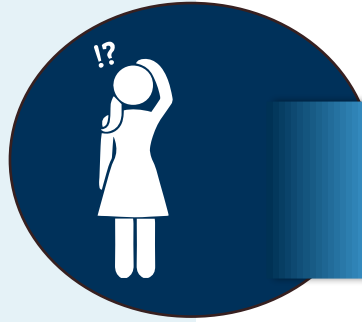


56%

***MONTHLY HOUSING IS PAID AT THE 60% LEVEL**



Summer-Internships



“Help Me, SCO...! Here’s my schedule. Will I get my housing?”

Your student, Becky (CH 33-100%), is doing her practical training in Dental Hygiene at 20 hours per week.

Is Becky getting full-time monthly housing allowance?

Your school is on a semester term

Term	Credits
6/1/2023- 7/27/2023	3



Practical Training



Documentation:

- Published curriculum requirements
- Signed contract of training with stated weekly hours

Hours certified:

- Must follow school calendar term.
- May not certify dates of training that fall outside the school term.

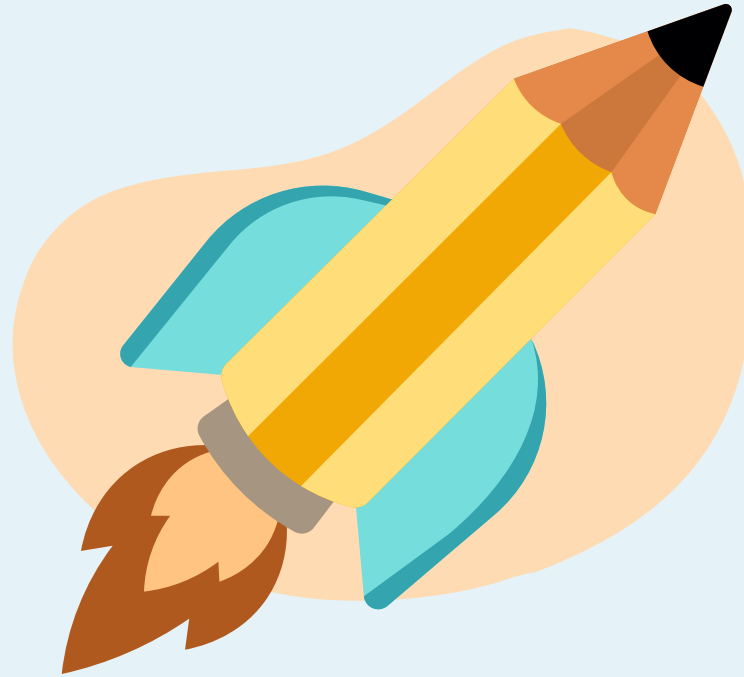
Graduate-level Training



Graduate

Standard Terms:

In addition to certifying the number of credit hours the student takes which apply to his or her program, also report the number of credit hours considered full-time for either the standard semester/quarter, or for the nonstandard semester/quarter if individually defined, by your academic regulations.



Nonstandard Terms:

When the term is shorter or longer in length than a standard term (semester shorter than 15 weeks/longer than 19 weeks or quarter shorter than 10 weeks/longer than 13 weeks), there are two potential reporting paths. Determining the correct path is dependent on whether the term in question has an **individually defined full-time modifier (IDM)**.



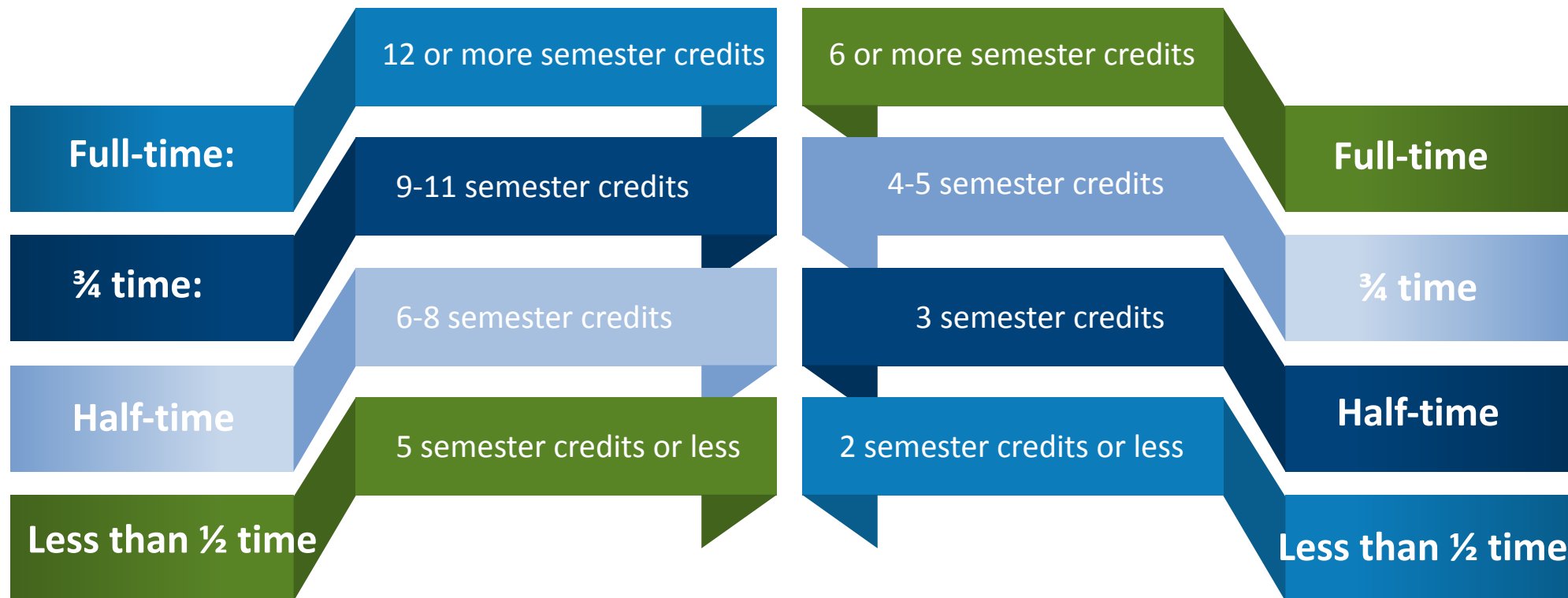
Example *without* Individually Defined Full-time Modifier



“The following enrollment levels are defined for federal and state financial aid programs. Please keep in mind that the following enrollment levels apply to financial aid as defined by federal and state financial aid regulations. These enrollment levels may be different from academic enrollment levels as defined by the University”.

UNDERGRADUATE

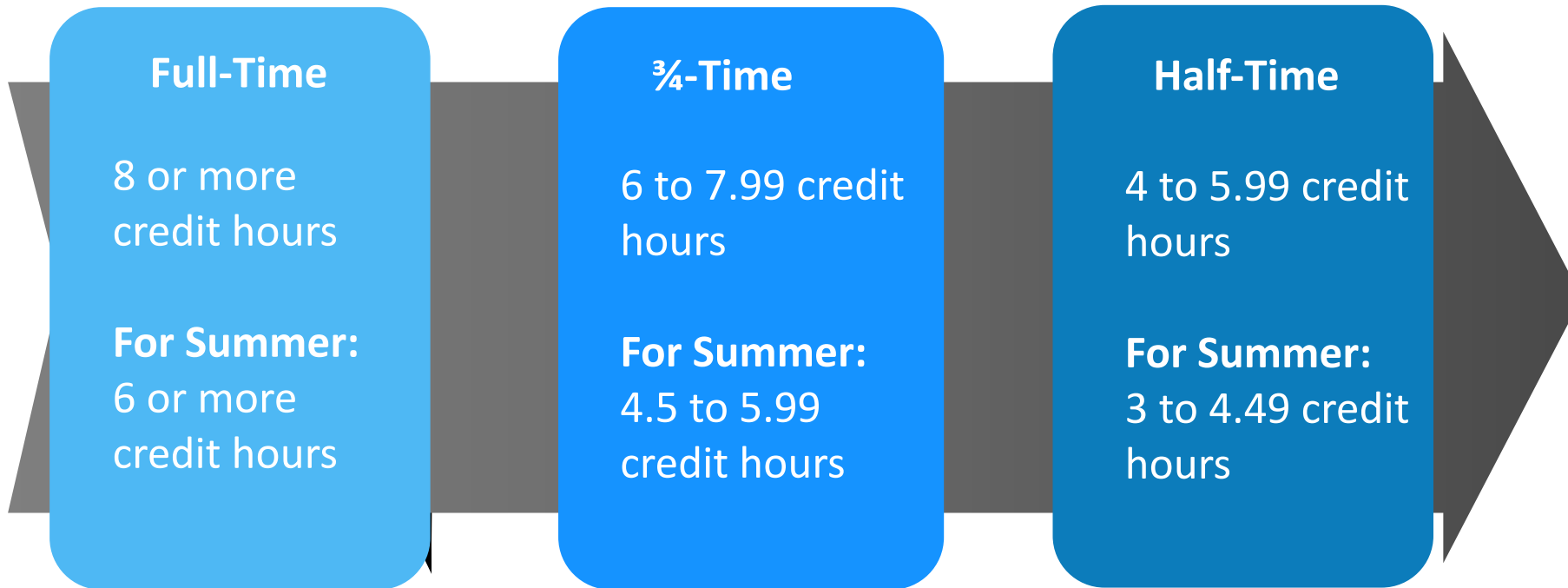
GRADUATE



Example *with* Individually Defined (Full-Time) Modifier (IDMs)



Graduate Academic Status as Defined by Academic Load:

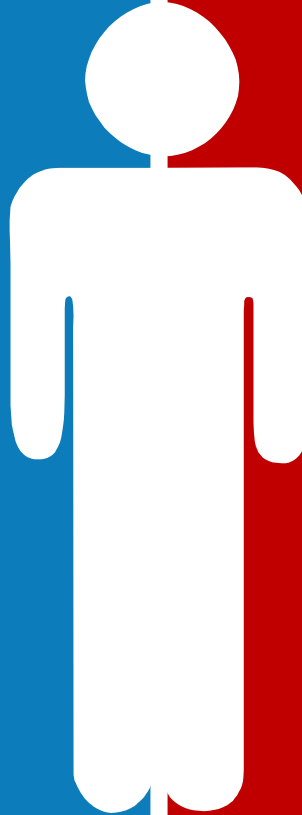


Graduate Nonstandard Term Paths



Path 1 - Nonstandard Term *with* IDM:

- Enter the minimum number of credit hours that your academic regulations require to be considered a full-time student for the individual enrollment period being certified.
- The number of credit hours considered full-time can vary by program or enrollment period.
- VA will divide the number of credit hours certified by the number of credit hours required to be full-time to determine rate of pursuit.
- Enrollments submitted on or after August 1, 2021, no longer require an additional remark on the enrollment certification.



Path 2 - Nonstandard Term *without* IDM:

- When the training type is graduate, the entry from the TT/FT field as used as the denominator in the RoP calculation.
 - All non-standard terms for graduate training submitted on or after August 1, 2021 will be impacted, including retroactive terms.
- These nonstandard terms require determination of an adjusted FT modifier prior to reporting chapter 33 graduate training.
- Once the adjusted FT modifier is determined for a particular non-standard term, that adjusted FT modifier can be reported for all graduate students enrolled in any non-standard term of the same length.

Determining the Adjusted Full Time Modifier



1. Calculate number of weeks to be certified.
 - a) Timeanddate.com: 6 weeks, 4 days
 - b) 4 days or more, Round up to 7
 - c) If there is a vacation period of 7 consecutive days or more during the term, deduct it from the total days calculated before dividing by 7 when determining the term length.

TERM	Start	End	Standard Full-time Modifier
Fall A	8/24/21	10/8/21	6

Start Date

Month: Day: Year: Date:

8 / 24 / 2021

Today

End Date

Month: Day: Year: Date:

10 / 8 / 2021

Today

Include end date in calculation (1 day is added)

[Add time fields](#) [Add time zone conversion](#) [Count only workdays](#)

Calculate Duration

2. Use the chart in the SCO Handbook to determine the full-time modifier.

SEMESTER HOURS						
FT Modifier	3	6	8	9	10	12
Weeks						
1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	1	1	1	1	1	1
3	1	1	1	1	1	2
4	1	1	1	2	2	2
5	1	1	2	2	2	3
6	1	2	2	3	3	4
7	1	2	3	3	3	4
8	1	2	3	4	4	5
9	1	3	4	4	5	6

Determining the Adjusted Full Time Modifier (FTM)



3. Report this Adjusted Full-Time Modifier in the Full-Time modifier field in Enrollment Manager (or on VA Form 22-1999) when reporting grad training for all graduate students enrolled in this term.

- VA will determine the rate of pursuit based on the enrolled credits and the Adjusted Full-Time modifier reported in the for each nonstandard term.

NOTE: Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) is only payable when a student is training at greater than half-time.

Credits and tuition

Resident credits

6

Online credits

Clock hours

Full-Time modifier (*Required)

2

Tuition & Fees amount (*Required)

Yellow Ribbon

Training Time

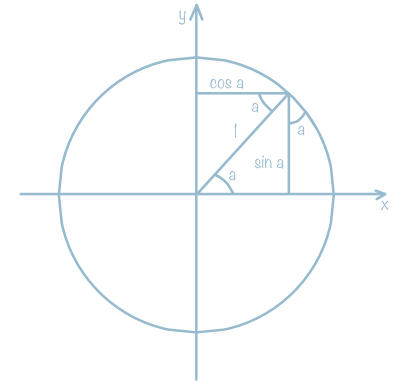


Training Time (non-chapter 33)



VA benefits are paid based on training time certified by the school. In standard quarter or semester, VA measures training as follows:

- 12 credits or more are full time
- 9-11 credits are $\frac{3}{4}$ time
- 6-8 credits are $\frac{1}{2}$ time
- 4-5 credits are less than $\frac{1}{2}$ time (< $\frac{1}{2}$ -time)
- 1-3 credits are $\frac{1}{4}$ time or less (< $\frac{1}{4}$ -time)



Tuition & Fees amount (*Required)

Advanced pay requested by student ⓘ

Training time (*Required)

Valid Training time is required.

Accelerated pay requested by student ⓘ

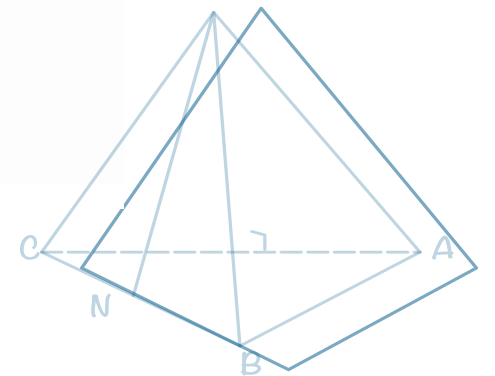
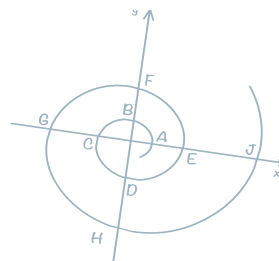
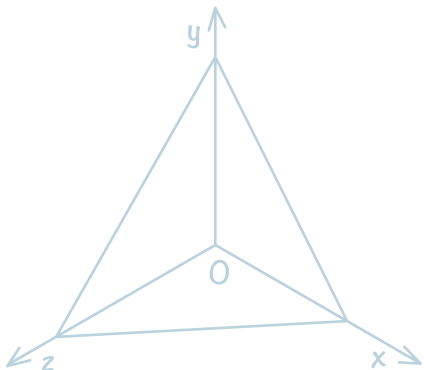
Advanced pay requested by student ⓘ

Training time (*Required)

Select

- Full time
- 3/4 time
- 1/2 time
- Less than 1/2 time but more than 1/4 time
- 1/4 time or less

vacation periods



How to Certify- Changes





During Term

- Public Law 116-315, Section 1010
- Tuition & Fees
- Tuition and Fees for Chapter 33
- Changes in Enrollment



Public Law 116-315, Section 1010



VA has defined the last day a student can withdraw from the course or program of education “without penalty” as the last day of the school’s drop-add period. (100% add/drop)

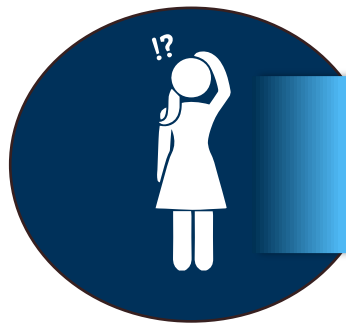
Dual Certifications	Enrollment Changes	Unchanged	Retroactive	Paper
Initial enrollment certification with \$0.00 in the tuition and fees fields. After the drop-add period, the tuition and fees are certified by amending the term	Reporting student enrollment during the drop-add period or within the first 30 days of the term	A second enrollment certification is still mandated, even if there are no changes to the student’s enrollment period	2 nd certification must be received no later than 30 days after school’s drop-add period or 60 days from the first day of enrollment	If a school is unable to certify enrollments using Enrollment Manager (EM), the SCO must submit two enrollment certifications (VA Form 22-1999).

Section 1010- SCO Discussion

Examples:

Who uses \$0.00 as initial?

Who certifies it all upfront?(typically private schools?)



“I’m New. What do I do?”



Pros/Cons	0.00	Certify tuition & fees upfront
How big is your school/how many students do you certify?		
Is tuition plateaued or flat rate?		
Do many courses have course fees?		
Does your student population change their minds or schedules often?		

Certifying Tuition and Fees



Chapter 33

SCOs must certify the Tuition and Fees charged to a student after deducting any tuition-only specific waivers, scholarships, aid, and assistance.



Chapter 33 Tuition and Fees

Tuition is the actual established charges for tuition the student is required to pay. Fees are mandatory charges applied by the school for pursuit of an approved program of education.



Chapters 30, 32, 1606

Tuition and Fees must be reported for enrollment periods when training time is less than $\frac{1}{2}$ time, when the student is on active duty, and when accelerated payment is requested.

Changes in Enrollment



When a student makes a change to an enrollment period after the initial certification has been submitted, the change should be reported as an Amendment within 30 days of the official action.

This is one of the most common errors found on compliance surveys.

Amend and Terminate

01	Reductions & Withdrawals (CH 33)	Reductions & Withdrawals (non-33)	02
03	Amendments On or Before the First Day of Term (CH 33)	Termination On or Before the First Day of Term	04
05	Amendments During Drop Period	Amendments After Drop Period	06
07	Punitive Grades	Non-Punitive Grades	08
09	Last Date of Attendance/Effective Dates	Mitigating Circumstances	10



After the Term

- ❑ Graduation
- ❑ Receiving Tuition & Fees from VA after Term ends



Graduation



Schools are required to report graduation or program completion information to VA.



Once a student graduates from a degree program "Graduation" should be selected as the termination reason. The last date of the term selected will be pre-populated as the date of termination.



Graduation should only be reported for students who graduated while using benefits.

Receiving Tuition & Fees from VA Long after Term ends



SCO:

"Dear ELR,

June 2022

We just received two payments for a student for **2013-2014**. One payment is for \$975.14 and the other is for \$944.70. Do you know if these are correct?"

ELR:

"Good morning, SCO,

Yes. Service periods were changed. The student was 50% when attending and is 60% now. If the student's payments are up-to-date and accounted for, please follow your school's refund policy to the student."



§ 21.9640 Rates of payment of educational assistance



(b) Maximum amounts payable for training at more than one-half time. An individual, other than one on active duty, who is pursuing a program of education at more than one-half time (at a rate of pursuit greater than 50 percent) and who—

- (1) Is enrolled at an institution of higher learning located in the United States, or at a branch of such institution that is located outside the United States, may receive—
 - (i) A lump sum amount for established charges paid directly to the institution of higher learning for the entire quarter, semester, or term, as applicable.



Summary



Describe the methods for applying VA course measurements to certifications



Recall student enrollment processes requiring SCO reporting action during an enrollment period



Identify program curriculum distinctions to certify appropriate coursework



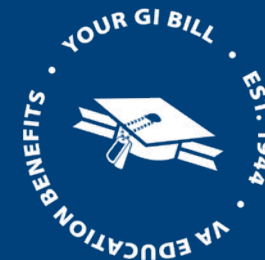
Recollect procedures taken when a term has ended

CERTIFYING OFFICIAL RESOURCE LINKS



Questions?





Thank You!

