

Student Responsibilities

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It is the responsibility of each student to notify the West Valley College Veterans Office of changes in unit status, courses, grades, academic objective, and number of dependents to be claimed, and address. In order to receive benefits on time or avoid the possibility of an overpayment, notify the office promptly of any adjustments. If you are a continuing student, it is necessary to request certification of enrollment every semester through the Veterans Office at the time of registration.

Students are also required to maintain satisfactory academic progress as outlined in the West Valley College Catalog.

Transcripts - Evaluation of Prior Credit

All students requesting Veterans' Benefits are required to submit official academic transcripts from all schools attended before, during or after military service-whether or not benefits were received or units completed. Transcripts should be addressed to West Valley College Financial Aid/VA Office or Counseling. Enrollment will only be certified for one semester pending evaluation of prior credit. These transcripts will be used when determining prior credit for courses that satisfy major requirements when completing the Veterans Counseling Statement and Educational Plan.

All veterans must make an appointment with a **VA Counselor** in the counseling office during their first semester in attendance, in order to complete a **Veterans Educational Plan of course requirements for current objective**. VA counseling appointments cannot be done on a drop-in basis. The VA Education Plan is required prior to certification of a student's second semester, and if and when a student changes to a new major a new Educational Plan must be completed prior to further certification. Only courses indicated on the Education Plan will be certified for payment by the V.A., as these are the courses that are needed to complete graduation or transfer requirements.

A student who has received Veterans Benefits prior to attending West Valley College must complete a 1995 Form Change in Program/Place of Training and submit DD214 and all academic transcripts for evaluation prior to meeting with a VA Counselor to complete a VA Educational Plan. Once VA Educational Plan is complete the student can be certified for payment.

Declaring an Academic Objective

VA requires that a student declare an academic objective (i.e., AA/AS Degree – or Transfer Major such as; Business Administration) in order to certify for benefits. All students must have an

academic objective (major), and only courses that meet requirements for that academic objective (major) may be certified.

The VA will award benefits for only one program or major at a time. A second or subsequent change of program will require completion of a new 1995 for (chapter 30, 1606, and 1607(REAP) or 5495 form (Chapter 35)

Withdrawing from Classes

The law requires that students notify the West Valley College, Veterans' Office of any withdrawals from courses. The VA will adjust or terminate benefits retroactive to the beginning date of the term. If the change of enrollment is due to reasons beyond the student's control, which VA accepts as mitigating circumstances, benefits are adjusted on the effective date of their reduction.

Mitigating Circumstances

Mitigating circumstances are those which directly hinder a student's pursuit of a course(s) and which are judged to be beyond the student's control. Following are some general categories of mitigating circumstances: serious illness of the student, serious illness or death of an immediate family member, immediate family or financial obligations, discontinuance of a course by the school.

Punitive Grades

A punitive grade is a grade that doesn't count as earned credit, but is used in determining a student's progress toward graduation requirements. The common punitive grade is "F".

West Valley College as well as other California community colleges that specifically calculate "W", "NC" and "I" grades into academic progress standards, these grades can result in probation and dismissal. These grades are punitive, not non-punitive, at California community colleges.

Repeating a Course

Students who repeat courses which were previously completed with grades of A, B, C, D, or CR are ineligible for benefits. Certain courses are repeatable as specified by the West Valley College Catalog, if required for the student's academic objective.