

OWENS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
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Assistance and Support to Veterans and Service Members

**Board Policy No.:
3358:11-3-65**

- (1) Definitions.
 - a. A service member is a person who is serving in the armed forces of the United States, as defined in Ohio Revised Code 3345.42, and includes members of the National Guard or Reserve components.
 - b. A veteran is any person who has completed service in the armed forces, including the national guard of any state or a reserve component of the armed forces, and who has been discharged under honorable conditions from the armed forces or who has been transferred to the reserve with evidence of satisfactory service, as defined in Ohio Revised Code 3345.42.
 - c. A spouse is a person who is/was the spouse of a service member or veteran, including at the time of the veteran's death.
 - d. A dependent is a person who is pursuing a course of instruction and who is a child of a service member or veteran.
- (2) Designated Staff. In accordance with Ohio Revised Code 3345.421, the College employs two separate individuals for the segregation of duties, as follows:
 - a. A designated staff member who assists and advises eligible veterans and service members on issues related to earning college credit for military training, experience and coursework.
 - b. A school certifying official who certifies enrollment and completes the reporting requirements to the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.
- (3) Student Services. The Veterans Services staff and the Student Services Division will support the veterans and service members student population, including, but not limited to:
 - a. The promotion of benefits through the Department of Veterans Affairs when pursuing a degree or a certificate;
 - b. The referral of other services or assistance that support the student during their enrollment at the College.
 - c. The priority of course registration. Eligible students must complete a verification form with the Office of Veterans Services.

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- d. The allowance for the establishment of a student-led group for veterans and service members.
 - e. The conduct of a survey of the veterans and service members' student population to identify their needs and challenges; and, to share the results with faculty and staff for the purpose of improving processes and services.
 - f. The recognition of students' honorable military service during the Commencement Ceremony.
 - g. The integration of career services to link veteran and services member students with prospective employers; and the promotion of internship and co-op experiences with employers.
 - h. The collaboration and liaison with local, state and federal agencies and organizations to increase opportunities and resources for veterans and services members to transition and succeed in higher education or in the workforce.
 - i. The collaboration and liaison with regional primary, secondary schools and public and independent colleges and universities that are designated by the state as purple star schools to develop partnerships, share resources and increase opportunities, such as student mentorship programs, within existing local school districts' guidelines.
- (4) Please refer to the policies and procedures of 3358:11-2-60 Prior Learning Assessment, as related to the assessment of military credit.
- (5) Evaluation Fees. In accordance with Ohio Revised Code 3345.424, the College will not charge a student who is a veteran or a service member any fee for the evaluation of, transcription of, or application for college credit for military experience.
- a. The College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) administration fee is waived for veterans, their spouses and dependents of veterans.
- (6) Section 103 of the Veterans Benefits and Transition Act of 2018.
- a. Definition. A covered individual is any individual who is entitled to educational assistance under chapter 31, Vocational Rehabilitation, or chapter 33, Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits, of title 38, United States Code, and who is using such assistance to pursue a program of education at the College.
 - b. In accordance with federal legislation, the College permits any covered individual to attend or to participate in the course of education during the period beginning on the date on which the individual provides to the

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College, a certificate of eligibility for entitlement to educational assistance under chapter 31 or chapter 33 and ending on the earlier of the following dates:

- i. The date on which payment from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is made to the College.
 - ii. The date that is ninety days after the date on which the College certified tuition and fees following the receipt of the certificate of eligibility from the student.
 - c. The College will not impose any penalty, including the assessment of late fees, the denial of access to classes, libraries or other institutional facilities, or the requirement that a covered individual borrow additional funds, on any covered individual because of the individual's inability to meet his or her financial obligations to the College due to the delayed disbursement of funding from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs under chapter 31 or chapter 33.
 - d. In a case in which a covered individual's disbursement of funding amount is less than anticipated or does not fully meet the financial obligation, it is allowable for the College to require an additional payment or to impose a fee for the balance due amount that is the difference between the amount of the financial obligation and the amount of the disbursement from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs under chapter 31 or chapter 33.
- (7) Military Leave of Absence. In accordance with Ohio Revised Code 3345.53, the College shall grant a student a military leave of absence from the institution while the student is called to serve or volunteers for active duty service, and for one year after the conclusion of that service. Please also refer to the language of the Revised Code. The student should coordinate the course withdrawal process with the College's Office of Veterans Services.
- a. Eligibility. When called to active duty; deployed; activated for state or federal military service; participate in extended military training or duty requirements that interfere with academic participation; or, unable to continue coursework due to military obligations.
 - b. Notification and Documentation. The student should notify the Office of Veterans Services as soon as reasonably possible after receiving military orders or notification of service obligations. The student should submit the following documents to the Office of Veterans Services:
 - i. A completed Military Leave of Absence Request Form;
 - a. Link to form: [Student Military Leave – Fill out form](#)

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- ii. A copy of military orders, official memorandum, or verification from a commanding officer; and,
- iii. Any additional documentation requested to support academic or financial processing.

When official documentation is unavailable at the time of the request, College staff may provisionally process the leave pending receipt of documentation. The absence of official military orders at the time of the request shall not delay reasonable accommodations when other satisfactory documentation or verbal verification is available.

- c. **Coordination Process.** The Office of Veterans Services shall serve as the primary point of contact for students requesting a Military Leave of Absence and will coordinate communication with appropriate campus offices, including, Academic Advising, Disability Resources (if applicable), Enrollment Services, Faculty members, Financial Aid, Registrar's Office, Student Accounts/Bursar.

The Office of Veterans Services will provide the student with guidance regarding their military education benefits, and assistance with the implementation of these procedures.

- d. **Student Academic Options.** Depending on the timing of the military obligation and course progress, the student may elect one or more of the following options, when feasible and academically appropriate:
 - i. **Withdrawal from courses.** The students can officially withdraw from some or all courses without academic penalty due to military service obligations.
 - ii. **Incomplete grades.** Whenever possible, faculty are encouraged to assign a final grade based on the coursework completed at the time a student departs for military training, active-duty service, or deployment. If additional coursework is completed following the student's return, the instructor may submit a grade change for up to two academic terms after the student's departure.

An Incomplete grade should be assigned only when a final grade cannot reasonably be determined, and the student has substantially completed course requirements. In such cases, the student may be granted up to two academic terms following their return from military service to complete the remaining coursework.

Whether a final grade with a future grade change option or an Incomplete grade is assigned, a written completion plan outlining

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the remaining requirements, deadlines, and grading expectations must be maintained by the appropriate academic office to ensure continuity should the original instructor be unavailable.

- iii. Alternative course completion. When appropriate and approved by faculty, students may complete coursework remotely or through alternative arrangements prior to deployment.
 - iv. Temporary military absence. Students whose military obligations require a short-term absence that does not prevent successful course completion may be granted reasonable academic accommodations. Such accommodations may include excused absences, make-up examinations, modified assignment deadlines, alternative assignments, or other arrangements deemed appropriate by the instructor. Students are encouraged to notify their instructors as soon as reasonably possible and provide documentation of military obligations when available. Faculty members should make reasonable efforts to accommodate military-related absences while maintaining the academic integrity and learning outcomes of the course.
 - v. Military Leave of Absence. A student can request a formal Military Leave of Absence for the duration of their military service. Students returning from military service shall be eligible for readmission in accordance with applicable federal and state law, including the timelines established under 34 CFR § 668.18.
- e. Tuition and Fee Considerations. A student granted a military leave of absence may be eligible for:
- i. A tuition adjustment or a refund, consistent with federal and state law;
 - ii. A reversal of applicable institutional fees;
 - iii. Protection from academic penalties related to withdrawal due to military service;
 - iv. Assistance with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs educational benefit processing;

It is the College's intent to work collaboratively with the student to minimize financial hardship whenever possible.

- f. Potential Impact to Financial Aid and VA Educational Benefits. A student who receives federal financial aid or veteran's educational benefits should

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consult with: Office of Financial Aid and the School Certifying Official in the Office of Veterans Services. These meetings are to provide the student with an understanding of how course withdrawal, incomplete grades or enrollment changes may affect their GI Bill benefits, tuition assistance, federal Pell grant, student loans or their satisfactory academic progress (SAP) and other institutional or external aid programs.

- (8) Re-enrollment following a Military Leave. A student returning to Owens Community College from military service shall be permitted to re-enroll following the conclusion of service within the timeframes established under applicable federal law and under the same academic status held prior to the military leave of absence. Readmitted students shall not be charged tuition, fees, or other institutional charges that would not have been assessed had the student remained continuously enrolled, except as otherwise permitted by applicable federal law. Re-enrollment is subject to the following:
- a. A student must provide a notice of intent to return to the Office of Veterans Services, unless precluded by military necessity or circumstances beyond the student's control. The student should provide documentation of military service, as required by applicable federal regulations.
 - b. The College will make reasonable efforts to assist the student in re-establishing enrollment, academic advising, and benefit certification.
 - c. A returning student shall not be required to reapply for admission unless absent beyond the allowable reinstatement period.
 - d. The College will make reasonable efforts to accommodate a student whose academic programs or course offerings changed during their military leave of absence.
 - e. An eligible student will be readmitted with the same academic status they held when the military leave began. Academic status includes, but is not limited to, the student's program of study, enrollment status, credit hours earned, and academic standing.
 - f. Guidelines for a Selective Admission Academic Program. A student enrolled in selective admission, cohort-based, or limited-enrollment programs at the time of their military leave will be readmitted to the same program whenever possible. If placement in the same program is not possible, the College will make reasonable efforts to place the student in a comparable program that most closely matches the educational path the student was pursuing prior to military service. The College will not deny readmission or otherwise disadvantage a student because of their service in the uniformed services.

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- g. Priority Registration and Support Services. A student returning from military leave shall maintain eligibility for priority registration and access to veteran support services offered by the College. The Office of Veterans Services may also assist returning students with: academic reintegration; disability accommodation referral; mental health and wellness referral; career services; and, community veteran resources.
- (9) Student grievance and appeal process. A student who believes that an extenuating circumstance warrants an exception to a military leave of absence process or reenrollment following a military leave process, may follow the College's Student Grievance procedures, as follows:
 - a. Link: [Student Grievance Process: Grievance-Process-Students.pdf](#)
 - b. Link: [Student Grievance Form: Grievance Form](#)
 - c. A student is strongly encouraged to provide any supporting documentation that may assist in the review of the student grievance.

Effective Date 9-28-2026