Guide to VA Education Benefits Procedures

This page serves as a guide to chapter benefits (Ch.33 Post-9/11 G.I. Bill, Ch.35 Dependents Educational Assistance, etc). For information on the CalVet fee waiver please see the following pages or take a look at the ‘California Veterans Fee Waiver’ handout.

1. Apply for VA benefits by going online to either www.gibill.va.gov or to www.eBenefits.va.gov. Both websites will eventually link you to the VONAPP, which is the online application for veterans educational benefits.

2. Complete the VONAPP and wait for the VA to send you a Certificate of Eligibility (COE) upon approval. The COE will tell you the benefit(s) you’re eligible for, your benefit percentage rate, the number of months and days remaining on your benefit(s), and your delimiting date (The first day after a claimant's period of eligibility expires. Benefits are not payable on or after the delimiting date).

3. Provide the UCLA Veterans Benefits Coordinator with a copy of your COE pertaining to the chapter benefit that you’d like to use, either through email (preferred), mail, fax, or in person at the Registrar’s Office located in Murphy Hall. [If you are a Veteran or a Reservist, please also submit a copy of your DD-214 or Notice of Basic Eligibility (NOBE)]

4. After submitting your COE to the Veterans Benefits Coordinator, we can begin the process of certifying your enrollment information to the VA.
VA Benefits and Dollar Amounts

Using the **Spring 2017 quarter for freshman/undergraduates** as an example, the following represents the dollar amounts of the various forms of VA benefits used at UCLA.

**Ch.33 Post 9/11 GI Bill (Veterans or Dependents)**
- In-state portion of your tuition and Fees: $5,130 (sent directly to UCLA from the VA)
- Monthly Housing Allowance (“BAH”): $2,565 (sent directly to the student from the VA)
- Yearly Book Stipend: $1,000 (sent directly to the student from the VA)
- Priority registration/priority housing (if student is a veteran)

**Ch.30 Montgomery GI Bill (Veterans)**
- Monthly stipend only: $1,857 (sent directly to the veteran from the VA)
- Priority registration/priority housing

**Ch.31 Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Veterans)**
- Tuition and Fees : $5,130 (posted to your account immediately by UCLA)
- Monthly Housing Allowance (“BAH”): $600 - $2,565 (sent directly to the student from the VA)
- Books, supplies, and parking charges are covered
- Priority registration/priority housing

**Ch. 1606/1607 Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve (Reservists)**
- Monthly stipend only: $369 (sent directly to the veteran from the VA)

**Ch. 35 Dependents Education Assistance (Dependents)**
- Monthly stipend only: $1,024 (sent directly to the student from the VA)

**California Veterans Fee Waiver (Dependents)**
- Waives the tuition charge ($3,740) and the student services fee ($358)
Chapter 30, 31, 33, 35 and 1606/1607 benefits

- A few weeks prior to the beginning of the quarter, we will check your record to see if you have reached full-time enrollment: 12 units or more for undergrads, or 8 units or more for most graduate level programs. If you have, we will proceed to the next step (and if not, your file will be placed aside until you have).

- We will then login to our online VA system and provide them with the following information for that quarter: start date, end date, # of units you are taking, and what you are being charged for tuition and fees. This is called an “enrollment certification”. You will receive an automated email from the VA letting you know that this has been done. For students using the Ch.33 Post-9/11 G.I. Bill, we will at this time place a “Ch.33 VA Fee Deferral” your account, which will prevent you from having your classes dropped or any late fees assessed to you while we are waiting for your tuition funding to arrive.

- Funding will arrive between 2-4 weeks after the enrollment certification has been submitted (see page 2 of this handout to see what you’re eligible for and where it will be sent). Stipend/BAH funding is sent directly to the student or veteran, usually by direct deposit; tuition funding is sent directly to UCLA and is posted on your BruinBill once we have received it.

- The amount of funding that will arrive – both for your tuition and for your BAH – is based on your eligibility percentage, which can be found on your Certificate of Eligibility (COE) or eBenefits statement. For example, if your eligibility percentage is 60% then you will receive 60% of the BAH amount (see page 2) and the VA will only send UCLA 60% of the amount that we bill them for your tuition and fees.

- We will automatically process enrollment certifications on your behalf for the regular quarters (Fall, Winter, Spring) unless you inform us not to; if you would like to use your benefits for a Summer session however, you have to contact the Veterans Benefits Coordinator and make the request.

- Amendments and adjustments will be made to your enrollment certification during the quarter if any financial changes occur (ex: you’re awarded a Cal Grant late, you waive out of health insurance late, etc.)

- At the end of the quarter, the Veterans Benefits Coordinator will run a report to see how many units you completed. Any course withdrawals, drops, F or NP grades that resulted
in you dipping below full-time enrollment completion will need to be reported back to the VA, which may result in you getting billed back for all or a portion of your VA funding.

- While the Veterans Benefits Coordinator can answer most questions, any questions pertaining to remaining eligibility, amount the VA may bill you back for not completing a full-time course load, or about the status of an enrollment certification that has already been submitted, you’ll want to contact the VA directly at their educational benefits line, 1-888-442-4551 or on the web via www.gibill.va.gov and clicking on the ‘Submit a Question’ tab on the right hand side of the page.

California Veterans Fee Waiver (“CalVet”)

- Upon submission of your CalVet approval letter to the Veterans Benefits Coordinator, we will post the waiver towards all quarters that fall under the approved school year on the letter. The school year at UCLA begins in the Fall and runs the end of the Summer.

- Similar to the chapter benefits on the previous page, CalVet benefits are automatically put through for the regular quarters (Fall, Winter Spring) but they are not automatically put through for a student’s optional Summer quarter; they are by request only. Please contact the Veterans Benefits Coordinator once your Summer session schedule is finalized.

- The CalVet waiver specifically “waives” your charges for tuition, the student services fee, and for grad students the professional school fee as well. It does not cover any campus based fees, student health insurance, books, rent, meals, etc.

- As UCLA charges tuition on a flat-rate basis (instead of charging by the unit) the CalVet fee waiver can be used no matter how many units you are taking, completing, dropping, withdrawing from, etc.

- Reapply every year for the CalVet fee waiver through a county veterans service office and submit a copy of your updated approval letter to the UCLA Veterans Benefits Coordinator.
FAQs

**Q: Who is the Veterans Benefits Coordinator? Who is the Veterans Resource Coordinator?**

A: Ryan Redding is the Veterans Benefits Coordinator for UCLA. He handles all areas of VA benefits specifically – document intake, setting up your benefits, making sure funding arrives on time, etc. His office is located within the Registrar’s Office at Murphy Hall. The best way to contact the Veterans Benefits Coordinator or submit documents is via email at vabenefit@registrar.ucla.edu. Please include your UCLA Student ID# on all correspondence.

Emily Ives is the Veterans Program Director. She works with our student veterans on all areas that fall outside of benefits – resources, events, outreach, counseling, and special issues. Her office is located in room B44 at the Student Activities Center.

**Q: How do my VA benefits affect my financial aid package?**

A: It is critical that you inform the UCLA Financial Aid Office as early as possible about your upcoming VA funding so that they can properly adjust your financial aid offer. Failure to do so may result in you getting billed back at the end of quarter for an over-award, and if the funding has already been spent then your file may be forwarded to collections.

**Q: What financial aid awards can I receive on top of my VA benefits? Which ones can I not?**

A: The UC system-wide rule of thumb is that financial awards that are specifically designated as being tuition-and-fee specific (Cal Grants, University Grants, UCSHIP Grants, UCSHIP waivers) will affect the amount of your VA funding, whereas financial aid awards that are general in nature and can be used for living expenses, etc. (Pell Grants, Student Loans, Outside Scholarships) do not.

**Q: Can I use more than one VA benefit at a time?**

A: You cannot use more than one *chapter* benefit a time, but you are able to use the CalVet fee waiver in conjunction with Ch.33 or Ch.35 benefits.

**Q: Do my veterans benefits cover my non-resident fee as well?**

A: No. However, the non-resident fee can be waived for eligible Veterans Choice Act students.

**Q: Will the VA reimburse me for fees incurred for national tests (LSAT, GMAT, etc.)?**

A: Yes. Please inquire with the School Certifying Official or see VA Form 22-0810 on the web.
Q: How often does my monthly housing allowance ("BAH") or stipend come?

A: BAH/stipend funds are paid out from the VA for periods in which you are enrolled in courses. (There is no VA funding for times during the year in which you are not enrolled, such as during the optional Summer quarter for example.) Funds generally arrive (via either hard-copy check or direct deposit) to you on or around the 1st of the month and pay out based on the previous month’s enrollment. For a quarter that has dates of 09/29/17 to 12/19/17 for example, your payment amounts and schedule would look like this:

10/01/17: Prorated for two days of September
11/01/17: Full payment
12/01/17: Full payment
01/01/18: Prorated for nineteen days of December

Q: Can I use my VA benefits toward a study abroad program?

A: With very few exceptions, yes you can. Please contact the Veterans Benefits Coordinator to discuss the details of your specific program to verify that it qualifies.

Q: I’m a veteran/service member. Am I eligible for priority enrollment?

A: Yes. By law, active or former members of the U.S. armed forces who have left military service (with any discharge other than dishonorable or bad conduct) are eligible for priority registration. GI Bill recipients are automatically assigned a priority enrollment. Those who do not currently receive GI Bill benefits must present proof of their military service (DD Form 214 or military ID) to the Veterans Benefits Coordinator. Only students that are veterans or active duty service members are eligible for priority housing and priority enrollments; dependents are not.

Q: Can I be reimbursed for payments I make to a tutor?

A: Yes. The VA will pay up to $100 per month for your tutorial assistance. Please inquire with the School Certifying Official or print VA Form 22-1990t from the web.

Q: I’m a veteran/service member. Am I eligible for priority housing?

A: Yes. Priority housing is a benefit provided to all of our student veterans and active duty service members. Please contact Emily Ives in the Veterans Resource Office for further information.
Q: I have a general question regarding my VA education benefit eligibility or about the status of an enrollment certification that has already been submitted. Who should I contact?

A: You can contact the VA education benefits line at 1-888-442-4551 or by visiting www.gibill.va.gov and clicking on the ‘Submit a Question’ tab on the right hand side of the page. Students looking to utilize Ch.31 Voc Rehab benefits can call (510) 637-6128.

Q: I use a chapter benefit and I’m enrolled less than full-time this quarter, how will my VA benefits be affected?

A: We normally hold off on your enrollment certification each quarter until we see that you have reached/enrolled in a full-time course load. However, if you would like to be certified at your current, less-than-full-time course load we can do that upon request. For Ch.33 benefits this won’t affect the amount that the VA sends UCLA towards your tuition and fees, but for chapters 33, 35, 30, 31, and 1606/1607 your BAH/monthly stipend amount will be reduced according to your ‘Rate of Pursuit’ that the VA calculates on their end. For example, if you’re an undergraduate student that is requesting to only be certified for 6 units, this is considered half-time enrollment, and thus you will only receive 50% of your BAH/monthly stipend. (CalVet students are not affected – see page 4.)

Q: How do I know that my Ch.33, Ch.31 or CalVet tuition funding has arrived and posted?

A: This will be reflected on your BruinBill. Ch.33 funding will display as “Chapter 33 VA payment”. Ch.31 funding will display as “Veteran’s Affairs”. CalVet waivers will appear as “Veteran’s Dependent” and will be in the exact amount of the charges that it covers – the student services fee, tuition, and, if applicable, the professional school fee (for grad students).

Q: How are my VA benefits affected if I drop classes, fail classes, or withdraw from the quarter?

A: The Veterans Benefits Coordinator runs a report at the end of each quarter and must inform the VA whenever a student doesn’t complete the amount of units that they were certified for if it drops them below full-time. The VA will then decide on their end how or if they will bill the student back for a portion of their tuition, BAH or stipend funding.

For example, a student that was originally certified for 16 units but drops down to 12 units is ok; nothing needs to be reported since they still completed a full-time course load (12 units or more for undergrads, 8 units or more for most grad students). However, if a student that was originally certified for 15 units and withdrew from one class and fails another class, resulting in the completion of only 4 units, then this would need to be reported to the VA.
UCLA Veterans and Dependents Benefits
www.veterans.ucla.edu

UCLA Campus Resources

Veterans Resource Office (VRO)
Student Activities Center, Suite B44
(310) 206-6915
www.veterans.ucla.edu
www.brc.ucla.edu

Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS)
John Wooden Center West
(310) 825-0768
www.counseling.ucla.edu

Financial Aid
A-219 Murphy Hall
(310) 206-9317
www.financialaid.ucla.edu

Career Center
Strathmore Bldg. 501
(310) 203-1025
www.career.ucla.edu

Registrar’s Office
1105 Murphy Hall
(310) 825-1091
www.registrar.ucla.edu

Ashe Student Health & Wellness Center
Arthur Ashe Center
(310) 825-7693
www.studenthealth.ucla.edu

Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)
A-255 Murphy Hall
(310) 825-1501
www.osd.ucla.edu

Academic Advancement Program (AAP)
1232 Campbell Hall
(310) 206-1568
http://aapucla.com

Point of Contacts

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