

# Western Illinois University Resource Guide for Veterans and Service Members



WESTERN  
ILLINOIS  
UNIVERSITY

## **Veterans and Service Members**

Western Illinois University has earned the distinction as a "Best for Vets College" by Military Times EDGE magazine and ranks in the top 20 percent of all colleges, universities and trade schools serving their veterans and service members. Our designation as a Military Friendly School is clearly evidenced by one of the first dedicated resource centers in the State of Illinois specifically designed to meet the needs of our service men and women.

The Veterans Resource Center is committed to assisting those who have served or are currently serving in the U.S. military, and their family members. In collaboration with an array of University departments and community organizations, the center provides coordinated services and resources in a one-stop location to ensure that all veterans and service members are afforded the greatest opportunities for success.

Our service men and women receive individualized assistance in completing request forms such as educational and military transcripts; and applications for the G.I. Bill, Illinois Veterans Grant, Illinois National Guard Grant, State of Illinois MIA/POW Scholarship, Tuition Assistance, and Federal Student Aid programs. Additional services may include help with periods of military activation and deployment; obtaining appropriate housing accommodations; requesting military records; and acquiring community living information, outreach services and health benefits.

The Veterans Resource Center serves distance learning students and students attending both the Macomb and Quad Cities campuses. Additional contact information is listed below.

### **Macomb Campus**

Ronald Pettigrew  
Veterans Resource Center  
1 University Circle  
Macomb, IL 61455  
Phone: (309) 298-3505  
Fax: (309) 298-3509  
VeteransResources@wiu.edu

### **Quad Cities Campus**

Curtis Williams  
Associate Director of Academic  
Advising & Student Services  
3300 River Drive  
Moline, IL 61265  
Phone: (309) 762-3999, ext. 62236  
Fax: (309) 762-8980  
CM-Williams11@wiu.edu

## **Admission Policy for Veterans and Service Members**

Veterans returning from at least one year of active military service who have received an honorable discharge will be admitted to Western Illinois University without regard to previous academic performance provided Western is the first school the veteran attends after leaving the service. Applicants in this category are required to have graduated from a recognized high school or to have earned a High

School Equivalency Certificate. Applicants who have earned 0-23 credit hours at the college level must submit official high school transcripts and college transcripts (if applicable). Applicants who have earned 24 or more credit hours at the college level must submit official copies of college transcripts. Veterans must also submit a Member 4 copy of the DD Form 214 to the Office of Admissions.

## **Admission Procedures for Concurrent Admissions Program (ConAP)**

ConAP is a program for students who are planning to enlist directly into military service after high school or community college. Sponsored by the U.S. Army Recruiting Command and the Service Members Opportunity Colleges, this program allows individuals to seek admission to a college or university at the same time they enlist in the Army or Army Reserve. Enrollment is deferred until completion of active military service. The student must meet admission and degree requirements of the catalog in effect at the time of enrollment in classes at Western. In addition, veterans must submit a Member 4 copy of the DD Form 214 to the Office of Admissions. Enrollment of a ConAP student who has attempted college coursework elsewhere is subject to academic performance standards stated in the catalog. A ConAP student receiving less than an honorable discharge must meet regular freshman and/or transfer admission requirements. For additional information, contact the Office of Admissions.

## **Credit for Military Training**

Veterans who have served in the National Guard or Reserves with less than one year of continuous active service may be awarded 4 semester credit hours toward their degree. The 4 semester credit hours include 1 semester credit hour Military Science elective, 2 semester credit hours Personal Health Promotion (HE 120), and 1 semester credit hour Kinesiology elective. A Member 4 copy of the DD Form 214 must be submitted to the Office of Admissions.

Veterans who have served one full calendar year (or more) full-time active duty and received an honorable discharge may be awarded 8 semester credit hours toward their degree. The 8 semester credit hours include 2 semester credit hours Personal Health Promotion (HE 120), 4 semester credit hours Military Science elective, and 2 semester credit hours Kinesiology elective. Veterans who may be eligible to receive 8 semester credit hours must present a Member 4 copy of their DD Form 214 to the Office of Admissions.

## **Credit for Specialized Military Training**

Veterans or reservists may be eligible to receive additional transfer credit for specialized military training. One of the following applicable documents must be submitted to the Office of Admissions to receive this credit. Unofficial copies or transcripts printed from the Internet cannot be accepted. Information describing

how to obtain an official JST (formerly AARTS or SMART), CCAF, or Coast Guard transcript is listed below.

**JST (formerly AARTS or SMART) - Marine Corps, Navy, Coast Guard, Army, National Guard, and Army Reserve**

An official copy of the Joint Services Transcript may be requested online at <https://jst.doded.mil/smart/dodMandatoryBanner.do>.

**Veterans Education Benefits - GI Bill**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) makes all determinations of a student's eligibility for education benefits. Individuals applying for GI Bill benefits should allow a minimum of 6-8 weeks after submitting application for benefits and all supporting documents to the DVA before receiving notification of eligibility.

**First Time Applicants for Education Benefits (Chapters 30, 33, and 1606)**

1. Complete and submit VA Form 22-1990, Application for Educational Benefits online at <https://www.vets.gov/education/apply-for-education-benefits/application/1990/introduction>.
2. Complete B/R GI Bill Information page (located on STARS) every semester benefits are to be received.
3. Students receiving Chapter 30 (Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty) and Chapter 1606 (Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserve Program) benefits must verify their enrollment the last day of each month (or after) with the DVA by calling (877) 823-2378 or online at [www.gibill.va.gov/wave/index.do](http://www.gibill.va.gov/wave/index.do).

**Previous Recipients of Education Benefits (Chapters 30, 33 and 1606)**

1. Complete B/R GI Bill Information page (located on STARS) every semester benefits are to be received.
2. Students receiving Chapter 30 (Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty) and Chapter 1606 (Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserve Program) benefits must verify their enrollment the last day of each month (or after) with the DVA by calling (877)823-2378 or online at [www.gibill.va.gov/wave/index.do](http://www.gibill.va.gov/wave/index.do).

**Previous Recipients Transferring to or Re-entering Western (Chapters 30, 33 and 1606)**

1. Complete and submit VA Form 22-1995, Change of Program/Change in Training online at <https://www.vets.gov/education/apply-for-education-benefits/application/1995/introduction>.

2. Complete B/R GI Bill Information page (located on STARS) every semester benefits are to be received.
3. Students receiving Chapter 30 (Montgomery GI Bill Active Duty), Chapter 1606 (Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserve Program), and Chapter 1607 (Reserve Educational Assistance) benefits must verify their enrollment the last day of each month (or after) with the DVA by calling (877) 823-2378 or online at [www.gibill.va.gov/wave/index.do](http://www.gibill.va.gov/wave/index.do).

### **Chapter 30 Montgomery GI Bill (Active Duty)**

Educational assistance is available to individuals who have an honorable discharge and meet additional eligibility criteria as determined by the DVA. This program provides up to 36 months of educational benefits. Generally, benefit entitlement ends 10 years following the release from active duty. Effective October 1, 2018, the basic monthly rates for institutional training (for those completing an enlistment of three years or more) are as follows:

Full time	\$ 1,994.00
$\frac{3}{4}$ time	\$ 1,495.00
$\frac{1}{2}$ time	\$ 997.00
$\frac{1}{4}$ time or less	\$ 498.50*

*\* Tuition and fees only - payment cannot exceed this amount.*

### **Chapter 1606 Educational Assistance (Selected Reserve Program)**

Educational assistance is available to individuals who are members of the Selected Reserve, which includes the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. This educational assistance is also available to members of the Army National Guard and Air National Guard.

Reservists may be entitled to receive up to 36 months of educational benefits. Generally, benefit entitlement ends 14 years from the date of eligibility for the program. Effective October 1, 2018, the basic monthly rates for institutional training are as follows:

Full time	\$ 384.00
$\frac{3}{4}$ time	\$ 287.00
$\frac{1}{2}$ time	\$ 191.00
Less than $\frac{1}{2}$ time	\$ 96.00

### **Chapter 33 Post-9/11 GI Bill**

Education benefits may be available to eligible individuals to assist with tuition/fees, books/supplies and housing. To be eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill, Chapter 33 program, applicants must have at least 90 days of aggregate service on or after September 11, 2001, or must have been discharged with a service-connected disability after 30 days.

Individuals who may qualify for more than one education program may or may not want to enroll in the Post-9/11 GI Bill, Chapter 33 program until exhausting other program benefits. Prior to applying for Post-9/11 GI Bill education benefits, each potential applicant is encouraged to complete a thorough benefit comparison of eligibility through each program because the decision to apply for the Post-9/11 GI Bill is irrevocable.

Review additional information at [www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/post911\\_gibill.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/post911_gibill.asp). Department of Veterans Affairs representatives may be consulted to discuss benefit eligibility by telephoning (888) GI-BILL-1 or (888) 442-4551.

To apply for the program for the first time, individuals must complete and submit VA Form 22-1990, Application for Educational Benefits online at <https://www.vets.gov/education/apply-for-education-benefits/application/1990/introduction>.

### **Chapter 35 Survivors and Dependents Educational Assistance (DEA)**

Educational assistance is available to eligible dependents of certain veterans. This program provides up to 36 months of educational benefits. Eligible dependents must complete the online Application for Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance, VA Form 22-5490, which is available at <https://www.vets.gov/education/apply-for-education-benefits/application/5490/introduction>. The basic monthly rate varies depending on the types of training.

Effective October 1, 2018, the basic monthly rates for institutional training are as follows:

Full time	\$1,224.00
¾ time	\$ 967.00
½ time	\$ 710.00
¼ time	\$ 306.00

### **Chapter 31 Vocational Rehabilitation**

Veterans with a service-connected disability may be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services through the DVA. The online application, VA Form 28-1900 is available at <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/homepage>. Register for an account if needed. Otherwise click log in, check the box under eBenefits Consent to Monitor, underneath the DS Logon, click More DS Logon Options, and select Upgrade My DS Logon. Check the box under eBenefits Consent to Monitor, enter username and password, under Apply select Education and Training, to the right select Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Benefits, look over Personal and Contact information, then click Apply. Applicants must contact their Veterans Benefits Administration's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Counselor, who will notify the Billings and Receivables Office of each applicant's eligibility. eBenefits Help Line 1-800-983-0937 8am-8pm Mon-Fri ET

## **Academic Reporting**

In addition to certifying the class schedule, the Billings and Receivables Office is required to report changes, such as when a student drops below full-time, three-quarter time, half-time, or one-quarter time, receives an unsatisfactory non punitive grade, is academically dismissed, or is suspended.

## **Concurrent Enrollment**

If a student is obtaining his or her degree at Western and is completing a course at another institution, he or she may be eligible for GI Bill Education Benefits. Consult with the Veterans Resource Center or Billing and Receivables Office to complete the specific procedures for eligibility determination. Completion of a new Application for VA Education Benefits or a Change of Program/Change in Program may cause a delay in receipt of DVA payments.

The Billings and Receivables Office is responsible for submitting class certifications for the GI Bill Education Benefits programs to the Department of Veteran Affairs.

Western Illinois University does not make any eligibility determinations as to the receipt or dollar amounts of any funds received by the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, or the U.S. Department of Education.

## **Additional Financial Assistance Programs**

### **Illinois Veterans Grant (IVG)**

Veterans who have served at least one year of federal active duty service in the Armed Forces of the United States; or served on federal active duty service in a foreign country during a time of hostilities in that country and were honorably discharged after each period of federal active duty service; and/or are honorably serving may be eligible for the IVG Program.

Any member of the Illinois National Guard or a Reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States who meets the eligibility requirements is considered a qualified applicant for the IVG Program. Qualified applicants are encouraged to submit an Illinois Veterans Grant Program Application if they anticipate attending college at any time in the future. While program eligibility can be confirmed for qualified applicants at any time, funds will be disbursed only for terms in which eligible participants are enrolled at an Illinois public college or community college. Applicants are responsible for meeting all deadlines as specified by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission. The IVG Program pays eligible tuition and mandatory fees.

For additional eligibility criteria, or to apply for the Illinois Veteran Grant go to <https://www.isac.org/students/during-college/types-of-financial-aid/grants/ivg-program.html>. This program is coordinated by the Financial Aid Office.

## **Illinois National Guard Grant (ING)**

Members of the Illinois National Guard may be eligible to receive the Illinois National Guard (ING) Grant. This grant may pay for eligible tuition costs and certain fees for undergraduate or graduate study. The ING grant can be used for a maximum of the equivalent of four academic years of full-time enrollment. For additional eligibility criteria, or to apply for the Illinois Veteran Grant go to <https://www.isac.org/students/during-college/types-of-financial-aid/grants/ivg-program.html>. This program is coordinated by the Financial Aid Office.

## **Tuition Assistance**

Members of the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Coast Guard may be eligible for Tuition Assistance. Each branch of the military establishes its respective criteria. Military members must initiate the Tuition Assistance application process. Contact your Education Officer for specific details.

Application guidelines are available at <https://www.military.com/education/money-for-school/tuition-assistance-ta-program-overview.html>. Approved Tuition Assistance authorizations must be submitted for processing to the Billing and Receivables Office.

## **MIA/POW Scholarship**

A dependent of a person who was an Illinois resident at the time he/she entered active duty and has been declared to be a prisoner of war, missing in action, dead as a result of a service-connected disability, or disabled with a 100 percent disability as the result of a service-connected cause as recognized by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or the U.S. Department of Defense, may be eligible to receive the MIA/POW Scholarship. This scholarship may be used at public colleges in Illinois, and is administered by the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs. This program is coordinated by the Financial Aid Office. An application form may be obtained at: <https://www2.illinois.gov/veterans/Documents/MIA-POW-scholarship-application.pdf#search=MIA%2FPOW%20Scholarship>.

## **Scholarships**

Additional scholarships are available through the WIU Foundation Office and private sources. Please visit the Scholarships tab on our website: [http://www.wiu.edu/student\\_services/veterans/](http://www.wiu.edu/student_services/veterans/).



## Federal Student Financial Aid

There are various federal financial aid programs available through the U.S. Department of Education including the Pell Grant, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, College Work-Study, and Stafford Student Loans. All veterans and service members are encouraged to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid at <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa>. These federal student aid programs are administered and coordinated by the Financial Aid Office.

## Military Service Activation

A student, or the spouse of a student with a dependent child, who during the course of an academic term, is called into active military service, including National Guard and Reserve, and is not in attendance at the end of the term, will be considered to be a case of extreme hardship.

A copy of active duty papers must be filed in the Office of the Registrar within 30 days of the end of the academic term. The spouse or domestic partner of a student with a dependent child must also provide a marriage certificate or other appropriate documentation, and the dependent's birth certificate within 30 days of the end of the academic term. Students will receive course and refund credits as follows:

1. **Withdrawal:** At any point in the term, a student called to active duty may withdraw from school by filing a Military Activation form in the Office of the Registrar. The student will receive a full credit of tuition and mandatory fees. The Office of the Registrar will process the withdrawal and arrange for appropriate adjustments to the account. The student's guaranteed tuition plan will be extended to the maximum allowable.
2. **Selective Drops:** A student may drop one or more courses and elect to complete remaining course work according to option *C.* or *D.* below. A full credit of tuition/fees for dropped courses will be honored.
3. **Incompletes:** Students who have successfully completed the majority of work for a course can be awarded a grade of 'I' at the discretion of their instructor. Students may be granted extensions on the incompletes because they may be away an extended period of time.
4. **Final Grades:** A final grade option becomes available if the following requirements are met: 1) the instructor determines that a sufficient amount of the course has been completed, and 2) sufficient information about a student's performance in the course has been obtained. Students must consult with their instructor to determine whether these two requirements have been met in order for a final grade to be awarded.

For additional information visit: <http://www.wiu.edu/vpas/policies/military.php>.

## **Disability Resource Center**

Western Illinois University is committed to justice, equity, and diversity. Providing equal opportunities for students with disabilities is a campus-wide responsibility and commitment in which the Disability Resource Center (DRC) plays a primary role. The DRC collaborates with faculty and staff to facilitate student inclusion and ensure accessibility to University programs for students with disabilities. Additional contact information is noted below.

Macomb Campus  
Disability Resource Center  
143 Memorial Hall • Phone: (309) 298-2512 • Email: [Disability@wiu.edu](mailto:Disability@wiu.edu)

Quad Cities Campus  
Audrey Adamson, WIU QC Student Services  
Quad Cities Complex 1416, Building B • Phone: (309) 762-3999, ext. 62573  
Email: [ANW-Adamson@wiu.edu](mailto:ANW-Adamson@wiu.edu)

## **Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs**

The Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs has a Veteran Service Office located in the National Guard Armory at 135 W. Grant Street in Macomb. The office hours are 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM each weekday. Veteran Service Officers assist veterans with any VA concern including, but not limited to, VA medical care applications and applications for service-connected disability compensation. The telephone numbers are (309) 837-5838 or (309) 836-2243.

## **Veterans Assistance Commission of McDonough County**

The Veterans Assistance program is an emergency and interim financial assistance program. Upon qualification assistance is given with utilities, rent payments, and transportation to VA medical facilities. For details visit <http://mcg.mcdonough.il.us/VeteransAssistance.html> and/or reach out to Ric Smart, [ricsmart01@gmail.com](mailto:ricsmart01@gmail.com), Phone: (309)833-3275.

## **Equal Opportunity and Access**

The Equal Opportunity & Access Office is responsible for administering and monitoring Western Illinois University's Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action policies and procedures. Inquiries about or complaints alleging violation of the policies should be directed to the Director of Equal Opportunity & Access, 309/298-1977. The Director also serves as the Coordinator for Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and its implementing regulations, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).



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