University of Portland Veteran Benefits Handbook

School Certifying Officials: Miranda Robertson & Cecilia Guerra veterans@up.edu

To receive Veteran Benefits on a continuing basis, students are required to maintain satisfactory academic progress as defined by the Office of Financial Aid. For more information on the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy, review the <u>Financial Aid Handbook</u> or stop by the Office of Financial Aid in Waldschmidt Hall to request a printed copy of the policy.

GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government website.

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Post-9/11 - Chapter 33

Tuition Coverage

Students receive tuition coverage up to a certain percentage of their tuition and fees as determined by the VA. The percentage of eligibility that a student is receiving is also capped by the VA's Maximum Tuition & Fees Payable to Private Colleges. The cap set for the 2025/2026 academic year is \$29,920.95.

Percentage of Eligibility	Maximum Tuition and Fee Coverage for the Year
100%	\$29,920.95
90%	\$26,928.86
80%	\$23,936.76
70%	\$20,944.67
60%	\$17,952.57
50%	\$14,960.48

Unlike federal financial aid, VA payments are *not* split evenly between terms. The funds will pay as much as possible upfront until they are exhausted. Certifications to the VA for tuition and fees will be less any institutional aid or outside scholarships offered with the intention of specifically offsetting tuition and fees.

Example

Student A is receiving 100% Post-9/11 and is attending a school that operates on a two-semester academic year (fall and spring). Their fall semester tuition and fees come out to be \$28,400 and they have an \$15,000 merit scholarship; student A will be certified for \$13,400 in the fall semester. This will leave them with \$15,537 of Post-9/11 remaining to pay towards the spring semester. If student A's spring semester is also \$28,400, then they will be certified for \$13,400 (taking into account the merit scholarship). Student A will have \$2,137 of Post-9/11 benefits remaining.

Students that are unsure of how their benefits will be broken up and utilized during the academic year and/or summer term are encouraged to contact veterans@up.edu.

Student Accounts and Receiving VA Payments

VA tuition benefits are not added to a student's account until the funds are received. This can take time and will result in students having a balance after the semester begins. Students and

families are not expected to pre-pay the anticipated tuition coverage. As a part of an automated process, students may receive late notices or account holds. Students needing University services that are blocked by a Student Accounts hold must contact the Office of Student Accounts either in person or by email with their up.edu email address to get the account hold temporarily lifted. If there are charges not covered by anticipated VA funds (i.e., room and board), the lift may be denied.

Coursework Not Covered by VA Benefits

Courses that do not apply to your degree or classes being repeated despite having received a passing grade cannot be certified with the VA. If a student takes a course that cannot be certified with the VA, the student will be responsible for the charges associated with that course. There is one exception to this called <u>rounding out</u> that is covered in another section of this handbook.

Tuition Deposit Waiver

First year and transfer students that qualify for Chapter 33 benefits will have their tuition deposit waived by the Office of Student Accounts. Once we receive a Certificate of Eligibility from the student, we will notify the Office of Admissions who will communicate to the Office of Student Accounts to have the tuition deposit waived. Students living on campus will still need to pay their housing deposit.

Monthly Housing Allowance

Students will receive a Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) from the VA. The amount of this allowance is based on E-5 for the zip code of the school. A student will receive the percentage of MHA that matches their tuition benefit (i.e., 80% tuition coverage, 80% MHA). MHA is also prorated during months where classes are in session for part of the month. Students will receive prorated amounts for August, December, January, and April or May depending on the academic calendar. MHA will also be prorated based on enrollment level if a student is not enrolled full-time. For the 2025/2026 academic year the MHA amount is \$2,337/month.

Percentage of Eligibility	Maximum MHA Per Month
100%	\$2,337.00
90%	\$2,103.30
80%	\$1,869.60
70%	\$1,635.90
60%	\$1,402.20
50%	\$1,168.50

^{**}Student living on campus are required to pay room and board charges at the <u>regular due</u> <u>date</u>. You will need to prepay these costs and use the MHA to reimburse yourself.**

Book Stipend

Students receive a book stipend of up to \$1,000 depending on their percentage of eligibility. The book stipend is paid on a per credit basis, so there is a strong chance that you will receive most of your book stipend in the fall semester.

Percentage of Eligibility	Maximum Book Stipend for the Year	Per Credit Rate
100%	\$1,000.00	\$41.67
90%	\$ 900.00	\$37.50
80%	\$ 800.00	\$33.33
70%	\$ 700.00	\$29.17
60%	\$ 600.00	\$25.00
50%	\$ 500.00	\$20.83
40%	\$ 400.00	\$16.67

^{**}Students will not receive more than the remaining cap in the spring semester. **

Study Abroad

VA funding for study abroad is only available to students whose courses (while studying abroad) apply to their degree program. The student will need to provide confirmation that the semester abroad fulfills their degree requirements prior to certification. Additionally, study abroad programs must be hosted by an institution eligible to receive VA benefits. IES programs are not eligible.

University of Portland programs often charge tuition and fees that include housing and books. The University must deduct the housing and book amounts when reporting tuition and fees to the VA. Please contact veterans@up.edu if you want to know the covered portion of the tuition and fee charges.

If a student would like to study abroad at their own expense, their institutional aid may be restored for the semester they study abroad during fall or spring. While institutional aid is not available for summer programs, they are usually less expensive.

Offsite Practical Training

These policies are applicable to students participating in student teaching, nursing clinical hours, and other similar experiences.

If your offsite training starts or ends outside of the normal class schedule, we may be able to certify you for the time you are offsite which would increase the MHA you receive. Contact veterans@up.edu if this applies to you and you are interested.

Online Classes

Students taking exclusively online classes will receive an MHA rate of \$1,119 that will be prorated based on your percentage of eligibility and enrollment.

Percentage of Eligibility	Maximum MHA Per Month
100%	\$ 1,119.00
90%	\$ 1,007.10
80%	\$ 895.20
70%	\$ 783.30
60%	\$ 671.40
50%	\$ 559.50

Withdrawing from Class/School

Any course changes prior to the end of add/drop are not considered withdrawals. Certifications are sent to the VA starting the first business day after add/drop. Any dropped courses after this point will be considered withdrawals. These must be reported to the VA along with any tuition and fees associated with the drop courses. Students may be responsible for all or part of the costs of the dropped course(s). For undergraduate students that remain at full-time even after dropping a course, the amount owed will be any course fees or professional tuition associated with the dropped course(s).

Post 9/11 GI Bill® Enrollment Verification

Enrollment verification is required for Post-9/11 GI Bill students to verify they have remained enrolled in the same courses or training every month. Students who receive MHA/kicker payments will have their payments withheld if they fail to verify or report that they are no longer enrolled in their courses or training. To streamline the process, student may opt to verify enrollment easily and securely via text message.

Yellow Ribbon

Eligibility

Students who are eligible for 100% tuition coverage under Post-9/11 (Chapter 33) may qualify for the Yellow Ribbon Program. Active duty service members and their spouse are ineligible for Yellow Ribbon. However, dependents of active duty service members are eligible.

Applying for Yellow Ribbon

University of Portland has 65 Yellow Ribbon spots for undergraduate students and 25 spots for graduate students. Per VA regulation, these spots are assigned on a first come, first serve basis within the application process determined by the school.

Admitted students can submit an <u>application for Yellow Ribbon</u>. Those who have not yet confirmed their enrollment will be informed if there is a spot available. If a spot is available, it will be held for 14 days or until the student confirms their enrollment with Admissions. An extension to the 14 days can be requested *by the student* by sending an email to <u>veterans@up.edu</u>. An extension will last for a maximum of an additional 14 days and an extension can only be requested and permitted once. This request must come from the student's email. If the student does not deposit or request an extension within the allotted time, their Yellow Ribbon sport will be forfeited, and they will need to reapply for a spot.

Current students and admitted students who have already deposited will be informed if a spot is available and automatically enrolled in the Yellow Ribbon program. Again, Yellow Ribbon spots are given on a first come, first serve basis, so students will be pulled for the waitlist in the order. Current students and admitted students who have deposited will remain on the waitlist until a spot becomes available or they otherwise inform that they are no longer interested.

Students that have not been admitted will not have a spot held for them but can contact veterans@up.edu to inquire about available Yellow Ribbon spots.

Tuition Coverage

Students that are receiving Yellow Ribbon benefit will not see any coverage from this program until their Post-9/11 (Chapter 33) benefits are exhausted for the academic year. Yellow Ribbon makes additional funds available for students without an additional charge to their GI Bill® eligibility. Most undergraduate students will see little or no Yellow Ribbon in the fall semester. Once the Post-9/11 cap is reached, the student will begin to see Yellow Ribbon disbursements. Most graduate student will not see any Yellow Ribbon disbursements until the spring semester.

Undergraduate students will receive an additional \$27,500 of tuition and fee coverage.

Graduate students will receive an additional \$11,000 of tuition and fee coverage.

Example (Undergraduate)

If student A is attending a school that operates on a two-semester academic year (fall and spring) and their fall semester tuition and fees come out to be \$29,000 and they have an \$10,000 merit scholarship, student A will have \$9,937 of Post-9/11 benefit remaining to pay towards the spring semester. If student A's spring semester is also \$29,000 with an \$10,000 institutional scholarship, then they will use their remaining Post-9/11 benefits for the year. Yellow Ribbon will kick in at this point. Student A will still have \$18,437 of Yellow Ribbon eligibility that could be used during the summer semester if the student decides to attend during that time.

Remember: Neither Post-9/11 or Yellow Ribbon will pay room and board directly. Those charges will be the student's responsibility. The payment for those charges is due by the <u>regular</u> <u>due date.</u>

Example (Graduate)

If student B is attending a school that operates on a two-semester academic year (fall and spring) and their fall semester tuition and fees come out to be \$19,000, student B will have \$9,937 of Post-9/11 benefit remaining to pay towards the spring semester. If student B's spring semester is \$14,000, then their remaining balance will be \$4,063. At this point, Yellow Ribbon will take over the remaining balance. Student B will still have \$6,937 of Yellow Ribbon eligibility that could be used during the summer semester if the student decides to attend during that time.

Remember: Neither Post-9/11 or Yellow Ribbon will pay room and board directly. Those charges will be the student's responsibility. The payment for those charges is due by the <u>regular</u> due date.

Veteran Readiness and Employment – Ch 31

Tuition Coverage

VR&E pays full tuition and fees. University of Portland will work with the student's cases worker to process payment.

Tuition Deposit Waiver

First year and transfer students that qualify for Chapter 31 benefits will have their tuition deposit waived by the Office of Student Accounts. Once we receive notification that a student qualifies for Chapter 31 benefits, we will notify the Office of Admissions who will communicate to the Office of Student Accounts to have the tuition deposit waived. Students living on campus will still need to pay their housing deposit.

Housing Payments

If you are receiving the Post-9/11 (Chapter 33) amount instead of the subsistence allowance, review the Monthly Housing Allowance subsection of this handbook for Post-9/11 recipients.

Books and Supplies

Students receiving Veteran Readiness and Employment (Chapter 31) benefits can purchase required books and supplies at University of Portland's bookstore. The VA authorizes all purchases and the Office of Student Accounts provides the names of all eligible students to the bookstore. A course syllabus or documentation from the course instructor/department head is typically needed to determine what items are required and when.

Offsite Practical Training

Students taking exclusively online classes will receive an MHA rate of \$724 that will be prorated based on your percentage of eligibility and enrollment.

Parking Permits

University of Portland is unable to bill directly for parking permits. Students will need to pay for a parking permit out of pocket and work with their case manager at the VA to be reimbursed.

Withdrawing from Class/School

Any course changes prior to the end of add/drop are not considered withdrawals. Certifications are sent to the VA starting the first business day after add/drop. Any dropped courses after this point will be considered withdrawals. These must be reported to the VA along with any tuition and fees associated with the drop courses. Students may be responsible for all or part of the costs of the dropped course(s). For undergraduate students that remain at full-time even after

dropping a course, the amount owed will be any course fees or professional tuition associated with the dropped course(s).

Montgomery GI Bill® – Chapter 30, 35, 1606

Monthly Rate

Chapter 30 – Enlistment of Three Years or More

Enrollment	Monthly Rate
Full Time	\$2,438.00
¾ Time	\$1,829.00
½ Time	\$1,219.00
Less Than ½ Time, Greater Than ¼ Time	\$1,219.00*
¼ Time or Less	\$610.00*

^{*}Tuition and fees only. Payment cannot exceed the listed amount.

Chapter 30 – Enlistment of Less Than Three Years

Enrollment	Monthly Rate
Full Time	\$1,978.00
¾ Time	\$1,484.00
½ Time	\$989.00
Less Than ½ Time, Greater Than ¼ Time	\$989.00*
¼ Time or Less	\$495.00*

^{*}Tuition and fees *only*. Payment cannot exceed the listed amount.

Chapter 35

Enrollment	Monthly Rate
Full Time	\$1,536.00
¾ Time	\$1,214.00
½ Time	\$890.00
Less Than ½ Time, Greater Than ¼ Time	\$890.00*
¼ Time or Less	\$384.00*

^{*}Tuition and fees *only*. Payment cannot exceed the listed amount.

Chapter 1606

Enrollment	Monthly Rate
Full Time	\$493.00
¾ Time	\$369.75
½ Time	\$246.50
Less Than ½ Time	\$123.25

More information about pay rates can be found here.

Students are only certified for courses that are required for their degree program and that are not repeated courses previously taken and passed.

Study Abroad

If the classes being taken apply to the student's degree, we can certify a student studying abroad at a program approved for VA funding. IES programs are not approved for VA funding, but all University of Portland programs are approved.

Offsite Practical Training

These policies are applicable to students participating in student teaching, nursing clinical hours, and other similar experiences.

If your offsite training starts or ends outside of the normal class schedule, we may be able to certify you for the time you are offsite which would increase the MHA you receive. Contact veterans@up.edu if this applies to you and you are interested.

Withdrawing from Class/School

Student's monthly stipend is based on enrollment level (full time, ¾ time, ½ time, etc.). If a student remains enrolled within their level, there should be no change to their benefit. If their enrollment level changes, students may be responsible for all or part of the difference. Failure to complete a course, including the final exam, is considered a withdrawal by the VA.

The VA does not require us to report when non-attendance in a single class results in an F. However, a student who receives all F grades will have a last date of attendance determined per Financial Aid policy. We will report this as a withdrawal to the VA effective the determined date.

The Certification Process

Certificate of Eligibility

Students are required to submit a copy of their Certificate of Eligibility (COE) to confirm their eligibility type and length to the School Certifying Official.

Obtaining Your COE

If you have an eBenefits Level II account, you can:

- Logon to <u>eBenefits</u>
- One the welcome page, select "Manage Your Benefits"
- Select "Status Tracking"
- Under the education block, you should see a link for the benefit you are eligible to receive
- Select the "Enrollment Status" link
- Print the page titled "Education Enrollment Status"

Online:

- Go to the GI Bill website
- Select "Submit a Question"
- If you have an account, login. If you do not have an account, select "Sign Up"
- Once logged in, choose "Ask a Question"
 - Subject line, "GI Bill" Certificate of Eligibility"
 - For the question, "I am requesting a duplicate copy of my GI Bill" Certificate of Eligibility to be mailed to me."
 - You do not need to choose a category; however, you can choose the category that relates to your benefit type.
 - Submit

By phone:

- Call 1-888-GI-BILL-1 (1-888-442-4551)
 - o Monday Friday 8:00 AM 7:00 PM ET

In-Person

- Go to a VA regional benefits office
 - VA Locations

Certification at UP

To receive your benefits, you must be certified each semester. Your course load, tuition, and fees will be reported to the VA by the School Certifying Official. For the certification process to occur, students wishing to use their veteran benefits **must complete a certification request form** *each semester*. Certification request forms will come available for the upcoming semester once invoices are run by the Office of Student Accounts. Once available, certification request forms can be found on the Financial Aid page of <u>PilotsUP</u>. If a student fails to complete the certification request form, they will not be certified for that semester until it is completed. An email asking to be certified <u>will not be accepted</u>. If you do not want to be certified for an upcoming semester, you do not need to complete the certification request form; however, you will still receive reminders to do so. You can complete the certification request form and mark that you do not want to be certified if you want to stop receiving reminders about the form.

You will be asked four questions when completing the certification request form.

- Do you want to use your VA benefits for the semester?
- Are you taking any classes that do not apply to your degree?
 - Any classes you are taking for your major, core curriculum, or to meet minimum hours qualify as being for your degree. Classes that do not fit one of the above criteria, including additional electives within the major, need to be listed. Please use the catalog listing number and not the course registration number or course title.
- Do any of your classes meet outside the regular semester schedule?
 - Sometimes offsite training begins before the semester starts or ends after. Similarly, an on-campus class may occasionally meet early or have a field trip after regular classes end. If you have a class where this is the case, you may qualify for additional housing payments. On the form, this question simply serves as a reminder to contact veterans@up.edu if you select 'yes'.

Forms submitted to the Certifying Official will be reviewed within one week.

Once a student is certified, they will receive an email to the up.edu email address from the VA stating that they were certified. A student's initial certification will be for enrollment only. This initial certification will be for the minimum number of full-time credits. This is so any non-tuition payments are made promptly. After add/drop we will certify tuition and fees. You will receive a letter from the VA stating that the school did not submit tuition and fees. This is intentional on our part and not a cause for concern.

Deadline

Forms must be received by the tuition bill deadline to avoid a late fee. If you are anticipating changes to your schedule during the add/drop timeframe, submit the form by the tuition bill deadline regardless to ensure that no late fees are charged to your account.

If a student needs to be certified prior to receiving their invoice, or if they want to change their decision, they should contact <u>veterans@up.edu</u>.

Health Insurance

Waiving Health Insurance

Students may waive the health insurance offered through University of Portland if their health insurance coverage is comparable and adequate. You can find a link to the health insurance waiver and more information on the health insurance offered through the school here. VA health coverage may not be listed as an option, but students can choose "other" if this is how they are covered.

Cost Coverage

If a student is unable to waive the health insurance and they have Post-9/11 (Chapter 33) benefits, the cost can be reported as a required fee to the VA. This means that students with Yellow Ribbon will have the insurance covered.

Students on Chapter 35 who qualify for CHAMP VA health insurance may need an enrollment verification. The Office of the Registrar handles these verifications. You may need to specify that CHAMP VA is the health insurance when contacting the Registrar so that you are not referred back to Veteran's Services in the Office of Financial Aid.

VA Benefits & Financial Aid

Institutional Aid

Students receiving Chapter 33 tuition coverage from the VA will <u>not</u> have their institutional scholarships and/or grants re-evaluated. Students will receive the institutional aid as scheduled and their VA certification will reflect the difference between their tuition and fees and institutional aid.

FAFSA

The Office of Financial Aid recommends that all students file a FAFSA every year, even though it is not required to receive VA benefits. By filing a FAFSA, students may qualify for additional grant money, specifically the Pell Grant, which can be utilized in addition to VA benefits.

Filing a FAFSA also prepares a student should they no longer qualify for VA benefits. If this is to happen, having a FAFSA already filed means a quicker turnaround time for getting non-VA financial aid offer notice and processing federal student loans.

Tutorial Assistance

In addition to the tutoring resources available on campus, the VA will pay for regular 1:1 tutoring for students who meet certain criteria.

To qualify for VA tutorial assistance, students need to be in danger of failing the course. This can be documented by a failing grade on an assignment, mid-semester grades, or a signed statement form the instructor or professor. If a student can pass comfortably but wants a higher grade, they will need to use the resources available to all students.

If you think you qualify for the tutorial assistance benefit, please contact veterans@up.edu. The Certifying Official will work with the Shepard Academic Resource Center and the student to find a suitable tutor for the course in which they are struggling. VA Tutorial Assistance is not an optional for subjects in which the Shepard Academic Resource Center regularly staffs tutors.

Rounding Out

Only during a student's final semester, a student that needs less than a full-time course load to graduate may take additional courses to qualify as a full-time student. This would allow a student to still receive full housing benefits during their final semester. Beginning on Aug. 1, 2021, students can "round out" in their last term only if they are taking classes that are approved for their program of education. Classes approved for a program of education means those that can be used to satisfy the graduation requirements of the program as specified in the curriculum. Classes that have been previously completed cannot be used to round out the student's course load. Students that round out will still be able to utilize the full amount of their institutional scholarship so long as they are otherwise eligible.

A student may only use the rounding out rule once per school. So, if a student is planning on pursuing a second degree at University of Portland, they will need to determine if they want to use the round out or wait to use it during their next degree program.

Students that round out will still be able to utilize the full amount of their institutional scholarship so long as they are otherwise eligible. Federal financial aid operates differently from the VA. A student considering rounding out who is also receiving other aid should contact veterans@up.edu and ask for an overview of their financial aid offer during the potential rounding out semester.

VA Work-Study

Students using their VA benefits who are enrolled at least ¾ time are eligible for VA work-study. Most available jobs are located at the <u>VA Medical Center</u>. However, you may also find work at other state or federal VA facilities or in an office that assists veterans at any institution of higher education.

University of Portland has one VA work-study position. Students will be notified if the position becomes available.

Students Using VA Education Benefits Checklist

Post-9/11 – Chapter 33

If applicable, transfer benefits to student: milConnect
Apply to use education benefits (for dependents of veterans, this must be done in addition
to the transfer of benefits): <u>VA.gov</u>
Setup direct deposit with the VA: <u>eBenefits</u>
Submit a copy of your Certificate of Eligibility to veterans@up.edu
Submit your monthly enrollment verification directly to the VA when prompted via text
message
Read this handbook thoroughly. Students are responsible to know the information within
this handbook.
Submit <u>certification request</u> each semester for which you wish to receive your education
benefits.
Veteran Readiness and Employment – Chapter 31
VA case worker contacts University of Portland
Setup direct deposit with the VA: <u>eBenefits</u>
Read this handbook thoroughly. Students are responsible to know the information within
this handbook.
Submit <u>certification request</u> each semester for which you wish to receive your education
benefits.
Montgomery GI Bill® - Chapter 30, 35, 1606
Apply to use education benefits: <u>VA.gov</u>
Setup direct deposit with the VA: <u>eBenefits</u>
Submit a copy of your Certificate of Eligibility to veterans@up.edu
Read this handbook thoroughly. Students are responsible to know the information within
this handbook.
Submit <u>certification request</u> each semester for which you wish to receive your education
benefits.

Resources

Veterans Certifying Officials – Miranda Robertson & Cecilia Guerra
OfficeWaldschmidt Hall 120
Phone503-943-7311
Email <u>veterans@up.edu</u>
Office of Financial Aid
OfficeWaldschmidt Hall 120
Phone503-943-7311
Email <u>finaid@up.edu</u>
Office of Student Accounts
OfficeWaldschmidt Hall 130
Phone503-943-7347
Email <u>stu-acct@up.edu</u>
Office of the Registrar
OfficeWaldschmidt Hall 100
Phone503-943-7321
Email <u>registrar@up.edu</u>
Health and Counseling Center
OfficeOrrico Hall Upper Level
Phone503-943-7134
Email <u>hcc@up.edu</u>
Residence Life
OfficeTyson Hall 123
Phone503-943-7205
Email <u>reslife@up.edu</u>
Campus Ministry
OfficeSt. Mary's Student Center
Phone503-943-7131
Email <u>ministry@up.edu</u>
Shepard Academic Resource Center
OfficeBuckley Center 101
Phone
Email <u>sarc@up.edu</u>

Portland Regional Benefit Office	
Office	100 SW Main St, Floor 2, Portland
Phone	800-827-1000
Web	<u>www.benefits.va.gov/portland</u>
Portland VA Medical Center	
Office	3710 SW US Veterans Hospital Rd, Portland
Phone – Main	503-721-1498
Phone – Mental Health	503-273-5187
Web	www.portland.va.gov
Portland Veteran Readiness and Employment and Employment Office	
Office	100 SW Main St, Floor 2, Portland
Phone	503-412-4577
Portland Vet Center	
Office	1505 NE 122 nd Ave, Portland
Phone	503-688-5361
Web	<u>www.vetcenter.va.gov</u>
Portland VA Clinic	
Office	308 SW 1 st Ave, Lawrence Building, Ste 155, Portland
Phone	503-808-1256
Web	www.portland.va.gov/locations/crrc.asp
Veteran's Crisis Line	
Phone	
Text	
Web <u>www.ment</u>	alhealth.va.gov/suicide prevention/veterans-crisis-line.asp
Education and Career Counseling	
Web	www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab/edu voc counseling.asp
Licensing and Certification	
Web	www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/licensing certification.asp