

UNIVERSITY OF PORTLAND

VETERAN'S AFFAIRS BENEFITS HANDBOOK

Descriptions of VA policies and procedures within represent our best understanding of VA policy. Students are encouraged to double check this information, either at the VA Education Benefits Website or with a VA service representative.

In order to receive Veteran's 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 visit <http://www.up.edu/finaid/handbook> or stop by the Office of Financial Aid in Waldschmidt Hall to request a printed copy of the policy.

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POST-9/11 – CHAPTER 33 (W/O YELLOW RIBBON)

TUITION COVERAGE

Students receive tuition coverage up to a certain percentage of their tuition, determined by the VA. This percentage is also capped by the VA's Maximum Tuition & Fees Payable to Private Colleges. For the 18-19 academic year, that maximum is \$23,671.94. For example, a student with 80% coverage under chapter 33, the VA will pay 80% of their tuition and fees up to \$18,937.55 for the academic year. This may result in a larger balance due in the spring semester as the cap will have been met.

For most students, this will result in Fall semester tuition being mostly or completely covered, but very little tuition coverage from the VA remaining in the Spring semester. As such, it may be advantageous for families to only use the coverage for Fall semester and reserve benefit time for another sibling. We highly encourage students in this situation to e-mail veterans@up.edu to get a more specific breakdown of how coverage will work with a student's specific benefit percentage and financial aid.

Classes that do not apply to your degree or classes being repeated despite having received a passing grade (or a grade necessary to progress, if higher) cannot be certified with the VA. If a student is taking courses that cannot be certified with the VA, they will be responsible for any associated charges. In the event that it is the difference between full and part time enrollment, they will be responsible for the difference between the full time tuition and what the per-credit tuition would be without the classes. There is an exception for a student's final semester; see [Rounding Out](#) later in this handbook.

VA Tuition benefit is not added to a student's account until funds are received, after the semester has started. Students and families are not expected to pre-pay the anticipated tuition coverage, although students may receive late payment notices or a hold on their account. You may e-mail veterans@up.edu if you would like an estimate of your anticipated tuition coverage.

MONTHLY HOUSING ALLOWANCE

Students receive a Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) from the VA. The MHA is based on E-5 with dependents for the zip code of the school in most cases. For the 2018-2019 VA Academic Year, MHA is \$2,193. The student receives the percentage of that amount for which they qualify (i.e. a student with 80% coverage will receive 80% of MHA). It is also prorated during months where classes are in session for part of the month; students will receive proportionally reduced amounts for August, December, January and, possibly, April or May, depending on the academic calendar. It is also prorated based on enrollment level if less than full time.

Payments are made at the end of the month (i.e. September's payment is made around September 30) and are made as checks to the student unless the student has [set up direct deposit with the VA](#). Active duty service members and their spouses do not receive the MHA.

Students living on campus are required to pay room and board charges at the [regular due date](#). You will need to prepay the costs and use the MHA to reimburse yourself.

BOOK STIPEND

Students receive a book stipend of \$1,000, prorated by their percentage of benefit eligibility and paid out per credit based on 24 credits (or about \$41.67 per credit for the first 24 credits). For example, a student with 60% coverage will receive \$25 per credit for their first 24 credits, up to \$600 total.

Since we do an initial certification of 12 credits for full time undergraduates, students will first receive half of their stipend before the Fall semester starts and the remainder of their per-credit amount after tuition and fees are sent to the VA along with the final schedule. The following semester, students will not receive more than the remainder of the prorated \$1,000.

STUDIES ABROAD

VA funding for study abroad is only available for students whose major requires study abroad.

Study abroad programs must be hosted by an institution eligible to receive VA benefits. University of Portland programs meet this requirement. IES programs are not eligible. This means that French majors will not be eligible to use their VA benefits if they choose to do the IES Nantes program.

University of Portland programs often charge an omnibus fee that includes housing and books. The University has to deduct this amount when reporting tuition and fees to the VA. Please e-mail veterans@up.edu if you want to know the covered portion of the omnibus charge.

The housing stipend paid to Chapter 33 students studying abroad is less than what is paid for on-campus study. For 2018-2019, it will be \$1,650 per month prorated by the percentage of coverage.

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. Summer programs are also available. While institutional aid is not available for summer programs, they are usually less expensive.

More information about the VA policies for studies abroad under Chapter 33 is available at http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/docs/factsheets/post_911_study_abroad_fact_sheet.pdf.

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 only receive \$825 for the BAH (prorated based on benefit percentage and enrollment). This would include undergraduates in the RN to BSN program, but does not include graduate courses that meet on campus at least twice per semester.

WITHDRAWING FROM CLASS/SCHOOL

Withdrawals must be reported to the VA along with what tuition and fees would have been if certified without the dropped class(es) at the beginning of the semester. Students may be responsible for all or part of the difference. For undergraduates remaining above full time, the difference will be any course fees or professional tuition associated with the dropped course. If a student drops below full time, they may be responsible for the difference between a full-time course load and the part time tuition.

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.

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POST-9/11 – CHAPTER 33 W/YELLOW RIBBON

Applying for a Yellow Ribbon spot is covered in a separate section.

TUITION COVERAGE

The Yellow Ribbon program supplements the normal tuition coverage under Chapter 33 and is only available for students with 100% coverage who are not active duty or spouses of active duty service members. The maximum tuition coverage for the 2018-2019 Academic Year, including Yellow Ribbon funds, is \$51,171.94 for undergraduates and \$34,671.94 for graduate students. For undergraduate students, this usually covers Fall and Spring tuition, but students may have out of pocket tuition costs if they enroll in the Summer. For graduate students, tuition coverage is dependent on the number of credits being taken during an academic year. (For VA purposes, the academic year is Fall/Spring/Summer, even though Summer is considered the start of the academic year at the University of Portland.)

Classes that do not apply to your degree or classes being repeated despite having received a passing grade (or a grade necessary to progress, if higher) cannot be certified with the VA. If a student is taking courses that cannot be certified with the VA, they will be responsible for any associated charges. In the event that it is the difference between full and part time enrollment, they will be responsible for the difference between the full time tuition and what the per-credit tuition would be without the classes. There is an exception for a student's final semester; see [Rounding Out](#) later in this handbook.

VA Tuition benefit is not added to a student's account until funds are received, after the semester has started. Students and families are not expected to pre-pay the anticipated tuition coverage, although students may receive late payment notices or a hold on their account. You may e-mail veterans@up.edu if you would like an estimate of your anticipated tuition coverage.

MONTHLY HOUSING ALLOWANCE

Students receive a monthly housing allowance (MHA) from the VA. The housing allowance is based on category E-5 with dependents for the zip code of the school (97203) in most cases. For the 2018-2019 VA Academic Year that is \$2,193. It is prorated during months where classes are in session for part of the month; students will receive proportionally reduced amounts for August, December, January and, possibly, April or May, depending on the academic calendar. It is also prorated based on enrollment level if less than full time.

Payments are made at the end of the month (i.e. September's payment is made around September 30) and are made as checks to the student unless the student has [set up direct deposit with the VA](#).

Students living on campus are required to pay room and board charges at the [regular due date](#). You will need to prepay the costs and use the MHA to reimburse yourself.

BOOK STIPEND

Students receive a book stipend of \$1,000, paid out per credit based on 24 credits (or about \$41.67 per credit for the first 24 credits).

Since we do an initial certification of 12 credits for undergraduates, students will first receive \$500 before the Fall semester starts and the remainder of their per credit amount after tuition and fees are sent to the VA along with the final schedule. The following semester students will not receive more than the remainder of the \$1,000.

STUDIES ABROAD

VA funding for study abroad is only available for students whose major requires study abroad.

Study abroad programs must be hosted by an institution eligible to receive VA benefits. University of Portland programs meet this requirement. IES programs are not eligible. This means that French majors will not be eligible to use their VA benefits if they choose to do the IES Nantes program.

University of Portland programs often charge an omnibus fee that includes housing and books. The University has to deduct this amount when reporting tuition and fees to the VA. Please e-mail veterans@up.edu if you want to know the covered portion of the omnibus charge.

The housing stipend paid to Chapter 33 students studying abroad is less than what is paid for on-campus study. For 2018-2019, it will be \$1,650 per month.

If a student with Yellow Ribbon is ineligible to use their VA education benefit to study abroad, but chooses to study abroad through a UP approved program, their Yellow Ribbon spot will be held for them.

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

More information about the VA policies for studies abroad under Chapter 33 is available at http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/docs/factsheets/post_911_study_abroad_fact_sheet.pdf.

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 only receive \$825 for the BAH (prorated based on enrollment). This would include undergraduates in the RN to BSN program, but does not include graduate courses that meet on campus at least twice per semester.

WITHDRAWING FROM CLASS/SCHOOL

Withdrawals must be reported to the VA along with what tuition and fees would have been if certified without the dropped class(es) at the beginning of the semester. Students may be responsible for all or part of the difference. For undergraduates remaining above full time, the difference will be any course fees or professional tuition associated with the dropped course(s). If a student drops below full time, they may be responsible for the difference between a full-time course load and the part time tuition.

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.

CHAPTER 31 – VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

TUITION

Vocational Rehab pays full tuition and fees. The University of Portland will work with the student's case worker to process payment.

HOUSING PAYMENTS

If you are receiving the Chapter 33 amount instead of the subsistence allowance, please review the subsection on [Monthly Housing Allowance](#) of the Chapter 33 with Yellow Ribbon section.

BOOKS & SUPPLIES

Students attending under the Chapter 31 – Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program are allowed to purchase required books and supplies at the University's Bookstore. The VA authorizes all purchases and a course syllabus or documentation from the course instructor/head of the department is normally needed to determine what items are required and when.

Chapter 31 students may acquire a voucher to purchase books and supplies through the Office of Student Accounts beginning the Thursday before the start of each term. They will present this voucher to the bookstore to purchase approved books and supplies. The VA also has a list of additional authorized supplies considered acceptable for purchase from the bookstore once each term.

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 who qualify for the Chapter 33 Housing Allowance will only receive \$825 for the BAH (prorated based on benefit percentage and enrollment). This would include undergraduates in the RN to BSN program, but does not include graduate courses that meet on campus at least twice per semester.

PARKING PERMITS

The University of Portland is unable to direct bill for parking permits. As such, students will need to pay for the parking permit out of pocket and work with their case manager at the VA to be reimbursed.

WITHDRAWING FROM CLASS/SCHOOL

Withdrawals must be reported to the VA along with what tuition and fees would have been if certified without the dropped class(es) at the beginning of the semester. Students may be responsible for all or part of the difference. For undergraduates remaining above full time, the difference will be any course fees or professional tuition associated with the dropped course(s). If a student drops below full time, they may be responsible for the difference between a full-time course load and the part time tuition.

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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.

MONTGOMERY GI BILL® – CHAPTERS 30, 35, 1606

MONTHLY STIPENDS

Students receive monthly stipends, which are sent directly to the student. The current rates can be found at http://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/resources/benefits_resources/rate_tables.asp. Direct deposit can be set up at <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/manage/contact>. We can only certify classes that are required for the student's degree and that are not repeats of classes taken and passed (or taken and passed with a grade required for progression if higher).

STUDIES ABROAD

So long as 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.

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, $\frac{3}{4}$ time, half time, $\frac{1}{4}$ time, less than $\frac{1}{4}$ time). So long as students remain 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.

APPLYING FOR YELLOW RIBBON BENEFIT

Only students who are eligible for 100% tuition coverage under Chapter 33 (post 9/11 VA education benefits) may qualify for the Yellow Ribbon Program. Active duty service members and their spouses are ineligible for Yellow Ribbon, however dependents of active duty service members are still eligible.

The University of Portland has 55 Yellow Ribbon spots for undergraduates and 10 spots for graduates. Per VA regulations, these spots must be assigned on a first-come-first-served basis within the application process determined by the school.

Once admitted, students can apply for a Yellow Ribbon spot using the form linked at <https://www.up.edu/finaid/other-aid/veterans.html>. Admitted students who have not yet confirmed their enrollment will be informed if there is a spot available. This spot will be held for 14 days during which time a student must confirm their enrollment via admissions. Students can request an extension of their hold by sending an e-mail to veterans@up.edu. We require this e-mail to come from the student's e-mail account. If the student fails to deposit or request an extension before their hold lapses, they will have waived their spot and will have to submit a new application. Spots will only be held for a total of 28 days (two 14 day holds), after which time a student will have to deposit first and then submit an application.

Current students and admitted students who have already deposited will be informed if a spot is available and automatically enrolled in the program if so.

If a spot is not available students will be placed on a waitlist for the next available spot. If a spot becomes available, students will be notified via e-mail. Current students and admitted students who have already deposited will be automatically enrolled in the Yellow Ribbon program. Admitted students who have not yet deposited will have fourteen days from when the e-mail is sent to deposit or they will waive their enrollment and the available spot will go to the next person on the waitlist.

Students who are not yet admitted will not have spots held for them, but are free to ask if there are spots available.

THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Each semester, the University of Portland is required to submit to the VA the credit load, tuition and fees for all students wishing to use their benefit. This is known as certification. Once invoices are run, certification request forms will be available at pilots.up.edu/group/financial-aid/home. **We will not certify you without a certification request.** If you do not want to be certified you do not need to fill out the certification request form, however you will receive reminders to do so.

You will be asked up to four questions when filling out your certification request:

- 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 that 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 title.
- Are any of your classes offsite practical training classes?
 - If yes, you need to provide the zip code of your site. Please see the subsection about offsite practical training for your benefit to see how this might impact you.
- 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.

It is understood that students may change their schedule through add/drop, although we ask that you wait until your schedule is mostly settled to submit this form. Forms must be received by the tuition bill deadline to avoid a late fee. Submit the form by the deadline even if you are still anticipating changes.

Forms will be reviewed within a week. Students will receive e-mails from the VA when they are certified.

If a student needs to be certified prior to receiving their invoice, or if they want to change their decision after e-mailing, they should contact the Certifying Official.

Your initial certification will be for enrollment only and, if you are full time, 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.

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 from the professor. If a student is able to 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 the [Certifying Official](#). The Certifying Official will work with the Shepard Academic Resource Center and the student to find a suitable tutor for the class in which they are struggling. VA Tutorial Assistance is not an option for subjects in which the Shepard Academic Resource Center regularly staffs tutors.

ROUNDING OUT

During a student's final semester only, a student needing less than a full time course load to graduate may take additional courses to qualify as a full time student in order to maintain full housing benefit. The term that the VA uses for this is "rounding out".

Students can only do this once per school, so if a student is planning on using VA benefits towards a second degree at the University of Portland they may wish to determine whether or not waiting to round out is better.

Federal financial aid and UP institutional aid operate differently. A student considering rounding out who is also using other aid should e-mail veterans@up.edu and ask for an overview of their financial aid package.

VA WORK-STUDY

Students using the benefits above who are enrolled at least $\frac{3}{4}$ time are eligible for VA Work-Study. Most available jobs are located at the VA Medical Center (www.portland.va.gov/Education/WorkStudy.asp), but 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. The University of Portland only has one VA Work-Study position and students will be notified if it comes open.

VA BENEFITS & FINANCIAL AID

Students receiving tuition coverage from the VA will have their institutional scholarships and/or grants re-evaluated.

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 claimed in addition to VA benefits.

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

HEALTH INSURANCE

Students may waive the health insurance offered through the University of Portland if their health care coverage is comparable and adequate. Find the waiver link at www.up.edu/studentaccounts. VA health coverage may not be listed as an option, but students can choose “other” if this is how they are covered. Questions about the health insurance available through the University of Portland should be directed to student accounts (stu-acct@up.edu).

If a student is unable to waive the health insurance and they have Chapter 33 benefits, the University can report the insurance cost as a required fee. 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 Registrar’s Office handles these verifications. You may need to specify that CHAMP VA is health insurance when contacting them so you are not referred back to Veteran’s Services in the Office of Financial Aid.

INFORMATION FOR VETERANS

VETERAN'S LIFE ON CAMPUS

Currently there is no Student Veterans Group on Campus. Our office is willing to facilitate connections for prospective and current veteran students. People looking to make such connections should e-mail veterans@up.edu with questions. This e-mail is checked by the Certifying Official and a current veteran student.

VETERAN'S EMAIL LISTS

There are two e-mail lists for students who are veterans at the University of Portland.

VETERANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

All students who are veterans are added to this list automatically and only the Certifying Official can post to the list. The Certifying Official will use this list to disseminate information of specific interest to veterans.

VETERANS OPEN LIST

Veterans can opt in to this list by e-mailing veterans@up.edu. This list is an unmoderated space for veterans to communicate with one another for support, social planning, etc. The Certifying Official can read all communication but do not necessarily check it regularly or read it thoroughly. Students on the list are expected to adhere to community standards.

RESOURCES

UNIVERSITY OF PORTLAND RESOURCES

Resource	Email	Phone/Location
Certifying Official, Daniel Herman	veterans@up.edu	503.943.7311 Waldschmidt Hall, 1 st Floor
Office of Financial Aid	finaid@up.edu	503.943.7311 Waldschmidt Hall, 1 st Floor
Office of Student Accounts	stu-acct@up.edu	503.943.7347 Waldschmidt Hall, 1 st Floor
Health & Counseling Center	health@up.edu	503.943.7134 Orrico Hall
Residence Life	reslife@up.edu	503.943.7205 Tyson Hall 123
Campus Ministry	ministry@up.edu	503.943.7131 Chapel of Christ the Teacher

VA RESOURCES

Resource	Phone/Location
Portland VA Regional Office	800.827.1000 1 st & Main, Downtown Portland
VA Community Resource & Referral Center	503.808.1256 1 st & Oak, Downtown Portland
Portland VA Medical Center	503.220.8262 3710 SW U.S. Veterans Hospital Rd
Veteran's Crisis Line	800.273.8225 (Press 1)
VA Educational-Vocational Counseling Services	
Licensing & Certification Reimbursement	

VA CHECKLIST

(For the University of Portland only. There may be other steps required with the VA.)

CHAPTER 33 – POST-9/11 GI BILL®

- If you qualify, apply for [Yellow Ribbon](#).
- Transfer Veteran’s benefit to student, if applicable: milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect
- Student applies to use education benefit (must be done in addition to transfer of entitlement): www.vets.gov/education/apply
- Set up direct deposit with the VA: www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/manage/contact
- Submit a copy of the student’s Certificate of Eligibility to veterans@up.edu.
- Read this handbook thoroughly (not just this page). Students are responsible to know the information listed within.
- [Certify](#) each semester.

CHAPTER 31 – VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

- VA Case Worker contacts the University of Portland.
- Set up direct deposit with the VA: www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/manage/contact
- Read this handbook thoroughly (not just this page). Students are responsible to know the information listed within.
- [Certify](#) each semester.

CHAPTER 30/35/1606 – MONTGOMERY GI BILL®

- Student applies to use education benefit: www.vets.gov/education/apply
- Set up direct deposit with the VA: www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/manage/contact
- Submit a copy of the student’s Certificate of Eligibility to veterans@up.edu.
- Read this handbook thoroughly (not just this page). Students are responsible to know the information listed within.
- [Certify](#) each semester.