Enabling a Pathway To Success
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National Challenge Facing Student Veterans

DID YOU know?

- only 54 percent of student veterans on the GI Bill complete their bachelor’s degrees
- those who do complete their degrees often take up to two years longer than their peers to do so

Profile of UGA’s Student Veterans

UGA’s student veterans represent one of the most diverse and globally experienced populations on the University of Georgia campus.

Over the last few years, our student veterans were almost equally divided between those pursuing graduate and undergraduate studies. More specifically, our undergraduates are enrolled in 16 schools and colleges, carry a 12-14 credit hour course load, and perform on par with the larger UGA student body (GPA 3.25).

In the aggregate, our veterans are ten years older than their peers, often work a part-time job, support one or more family members, and do so while striving to integrate into the university and the surrounding community.

We want you to know that there is a wealth of resources on-campus to help you succeed, but it requires action on your part.

DON’T BE A statistic!

UGA far surpasses the national averages for student veteran-related performance, persistence and graduation rates. This is not by accident. Research suggests the more connections a student makes on campus, the more likely he/she will persist and succeed. If you need help navigating your pathway to success, the Student Veterans Resource Center and our campus/community partners stand ready to assist.

Note:
Our most successful student veterans work to get plugged into the wealth of networks available at UGA, including social, financial, health, recreational, career and developmental services.
Path to UGA

More than 95 percent of our undergraduates come to UGA as transfer students. The majority of these students are first-generation college students who are trying to balance a number of competing priorities, including school, work, and family, while navigating the complexities of a tier-one research university.

TOPICS of Study

- **BUSINESS**: 27%
- **ARTS AND SCIENCES**: 16%
- **ENGINEERING**: 5%
- **EDUCATION**: 12%
- **AGRICULTURE**: 5%
- **PHARMACY**: 2%
- **ALL OTHERS**: 23%
- **PUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**: 10%
Student Veterans Resource Center

Mission To position students for success, the SVRC serves as the go-to location for sensemaking, wayfinding, and entry into an array of services provided by the University and community, while offering wide-ranging support and advocacy.

SVRC Provides:

- A convenient point of contact
- A service desk staffed by student veterans
- A connection to other student veterans and the Student Veterans Association
- An enterprise-wise persistent coaching program that broadly supports veterans from matriculation to graduation.
- An evolving network of partnerships working to improve campus services and programs
- A range of diverse opportunities to meaningfully engage with the University and the community
- A dedicated veterans lounge with a 72-inch television and adjacent conference room, study kiosks, computers, printers, a microwave oven, and a refrigerator
**Three Goals: Endless Opportunities**

**Veteran Orientation**
Prepares incoming students for the often unexpected rigors of a tier-1 university.

**Meet and Greet**
A reception hosted by the Student Veterans Association (SVA) during fall and spring semesters provides the opportunity for students to meet peers from similar backgrounds.

**First Data Student Veterans Lounge**
A study lounge with sofas, chairs, and a large screen TV, open Monday-Friday from 8am-midnight.

**Student Veterans Association**
A nationally recognized veteran-led student organization focused on engagement, service, and advocacy.

**Academic Coaching**
Dedicated coach who engages with the student to develop strategies that anticipate academic challenges before they occur.

**Transition Coaching**
Pairing of first-term student veterans with a senior staff or faculty member with similar academic, career, and/or personal interests.

**VA Certification of Benefits**
Based in the Registrar’s Office, the School Certifying Official is responsible for receiving and processing all VA-administered educational benefits.

**Academic Advising**
Student veterans have priority registration, but must meet with an academic adviser prior to each registration period.

**Awards and Scholarships**
During this year alone, SVRC has provided over $35,000 to UGA’s student veterans.
Three Goals: Endless Opportunities

2 - ENABLING
Access to Services

SVRC Team and Service Desk
An information desk staffed by student veterans from 8am-4pm weekdays with open access from 8am-10pm to a study room, computer kiosks, printing, refrigerator, and microwave

Liaison Network
Faculty, staff, community, non-profit, and corporate professionals who liaise with the SVRC in support of our student veterans

Outreach and Communications
A newsletter and inputs to social media that aim to keep student veterans connected with ongoing opportunities, resources, and events

3 - FACILITATING
Career Readiness

Readiness Coaching
A multi-semester SVRC-facilitated effort focused on career preparation through timely goal-setting, resume preparation, mentoring, networking, and branding

Mentoring, Networking, and Branding
Connecting student veterans to well-placed professionals, faculty, and peers to enhance their educational experience and widen their professional networks

Corporate Connect
Employment opportunities for student veterans through corporate partners across the country
The research is clear, the more connections a student makes on campus the more likely he or she will persist and succeed.
School Certifying Official (SCO):

All degree programs and majors at UGA have been approved by the VA as eligible for educational benefits. The SCO is responsible for monitoring each student veteran’s enrollment status and academic progress.

To do so, student veterans submit initial certifications of enrollment to the SCO prior to the beginning of each term. You should report changes in your enrollment status that affect your VA educational benefits as they occur. The number of enrolled credit hours determines the level of benefit the student may receive. The University notifies the Department of Veterans Affairs through the electronic submission of VA Form 22-1999.

You must be either a degree-seeking student or a transient student seeking a degree at another institution to qualify for educational benefits at UGA. In addition to enrollment certifications, the SCO can help with a large number of veteran related issues including:

- Certifying the use of VA funded academic tutors
- Maintaining student records for recipients of VA benefits
- Completing transient letters
- Assisting with Georgia residency-related issues
- Providing support regarding schedule changes/withdrawal
- Processing fee waivers and readmission

You must recertify through the Registrar’s Office each year.

Here are the general steps:

1) Apply for benefits online at www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/apply.asp
2) When the VA approves your application, you will receive a VA Certificate of Eligibility (COE)
3) Once approved, you must provide a copy of the COE to the Registrar’s Office your first semester

WHEN: After you register and no later than the Monday after drop/add

HOW: You will need to complete a UGA certification authorization form on your first semester

- Your certification will automatically be renewed each semester while in continual attendance at UGA (Fall & Spring).
- You must contact the Registrar’s office if you wish to not use your benefits for any given term.
- If your attendance during a regular term changes, you will need to contact the Registrar’s office to restart your benefits.

Veterans Education Benefit Services

CONTACT:
Office of the Registrar
Room 106, Holmes/Hunter Academic Building
706-542-1842/9362
reg.uga.edu/veterans
va@uga.edu
Transition Coaching

During orientation, you will be offered the opportunity to participate in the SVRC’s Transition Coaching Program (TCP); an opportunity the average student doesn’t receive. The TCP’s purpose is to ease the transition of our transferring undergraduate student veterans by pairing each of them with an experienced faculty or staff member. As a transfer student, you will meet with your coaches from one to three times during the first semester. This informal program facilitates relationship-building and sense-making; attributes that are critical to student success.

Approximately 98 percent of our transitioning student veterans sign up to participate in this program, which also serves as a springboard into the SVRC’s Readiness Program.

Academic Coaching

Every transitioning student veteran is assigned an academic coach in their first semester. The purpose of the coach is to engage with the student to develop strategies that anticipate academic challenges before they occur.

The coach, a retired professor emeritus assigned to the Division of Academic Enhancement, will work with you to review your schedule and to proactively identify resources/networks that can help you navigate your most challenging courses.

CONTACT:
Ted Barco
svrc@uga.edu

Research suggests the more connections a student makes on campus, the more likely he/she will persist and succeed.

- Tinto 2006
**Academic Advising:**

Academic Advisors are assigned to each of UGA's schools and colleges. Before registering for classes each semester, undergraduate students are required to meet with their academic advisor. The academic advisors assist in course selection, clarify understanding of major requirements and associated timelines to degree.

Advisors vary based on your major. Contact your school/college to determine how to schedule an advising appointment. When working with an advisor, consider identifying yourself as a veteran and inform him/her of:

- Significant changes in your field of study or major
- Changes in schedule, withdrawals, additions and/or drops
- Any trouble you have enrolling in your key classes
- Intended graduation date
- Post-graduate aspirations
- Your benefits timeline

**NOTE:** It’s critical that you work with your advisor to align your educational plan with your aspirations and VA benefits. If gaps are identified, you can change degrees, advisors, and/or pursue scholarships, Federal Grants, and Loans (Contact UGA Financial Aid).
A Service Desk, a Robust Network of Liaisons, Newsletter, and Website:

The Student Veterans Resource Center (SVRC) serves as the go-to location for wayfinding and entry into an array of services provided by UGA and our community partners. The Center’s strength lies in its established relationships with almost every office at UGA and with many service organizations across the region. There are three ways to actively engage with the SVRC:

- Drop by the SVRC in room 481 of the Tate Student Center
- Call 706-542-7872
- Email svrc@uga.edu

The SVRC will also work to engage with you through:

- Walk-in hours with campus/community service providers
- Newsletters delivered via email roughly every 10 days
- Personal emails tied to opportunities in your specific area of study
- Periodic postings on the SVRC Facebook profile and Twitter feed
- Engagements with the Student Veterans Association

A full list of resources is provided on our website and a complete list of common phone numbers is available for your use at the back of this booklet.
UGA Health Center:

The University of Georgia Health Center offers a wide variety of services, including four primary care clinics, plus:

- Women's Clinic
- Dental Clinic
- Vision Clinic
- Physical Therapy
- Massage Therapy
- Sports Medicine
- Allergy/Travel Medicine
- Urgent Care Clinic for after-hours care
- Counseling and Psychiatric services (CAPS)
- Supporting Services:
  - Pharmacy
  - Laboratory
  - Health promotions
  - Radiology departments

Students who are enrolled full time may pay a health fee, generally funded by the post 9-11 benefit, which covers primary care clinic visits. For combat veterans and reservists, this fee may be waived (see the school certifying official for more information). There is an extra charge for lab tests, x-rays, and in-office procedures. The specialty clinics (e.g. vision, dental, and physical therapy) are fee-for-service and are not covered by the 9-11 benefit.

CONTACT: 706-542-1162
LOCATION: 55 Carlton Street
WEBSITE: uhs.uga.edu

UGA Disability Resource Center (DRC):

The Disability Resource Center offers a wide range of personalized academic accommodations and support services to include note takers, alternative texts, computer labs, tutorial referrals, low-stress test environment, access to scholarships, door-to-door transportation, and much more at no cost.

If you have a condition that potentially limits one of your major life activities (e.g. moving, speaking, hearing, seeing, focusing, learning, engaging with others), visit the center to explore the accommodations available.

CONTACT: 706-542-8719
LOCATION: 825 Lumpkin Street, Clark Howell Hall
WEBSITE: drc.uga.edu

Athens VA Outpatient Clinic:

The Athens Outpatient Clinic is open Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The services provided by the Athens VA Outpatient Clinic include: Primary Care; Mental Health; Routine Labs and Immunizations; Patient and Pharmacy Education; Women's Health Clinic; Social Work; Audiology

CONTACT: 706-227-4534
LOCATION: 9249 Highway 29, Athens, Ga 30601
WEBSITE: augusta.va.gov/locations/athens.asp

Healthy Vet Program

In 2015, the University Health Center established a Healthy Vet Program to encourage student veterans to more broadly use the UHC services. As an incentive for veterans to use UHC’s clinics, the Healthy Vet Program offers deeply discounted fees for many of the specialty clinics. These specialty clinics generally provide services that student veterans cannot easily access through the VA.
Academic Tutoring

The Division of Academic Enhancement (DAE) offers tutoring in several locations for student convenience, including Milledge Hall, Miller Learning Center, Aderhold Hall, Boyd Science Library, Brumby Hall, Creswell Hall, and Russell Academic Center.

- **Department Help:** Most departments sponsor special tutoring or office hours to assist students. Check with your department for more information.

- **Private Tutoring:** This is facilitated through the DAE, but can be funded through the VA. Work with DAE or your academic coach to find the specialized help you need to succeed.

- **Peer Tutoring:** Tutors are available by appointment for drop-in labs, test reviews, and online consultation. Tutors may be accessed up to twice per week per class.

- **Academic Specialists:** Graduate students and professional staff assist students with academic planning, time management, college literacy, learning to learn, and life skills.

- **Academic Counselors (Faculty):** Professional counselors help students with test anxiety, motivation, learning styles, career exploration, and other issues that hinder academic performance

Student Care and Outreach

Student Care and Outreach provides individualized assistance to students experiencing hardship circumstances, support to faculty and staff working with students in distress and guidance to parents/spouses seeking help and information. If as a student veteran you encounter any hardship (e.g., deployment, illness, injury, death in the family), Student Care and Outreach has the experience to help you navigate through the issue.

Lesson Learned: If you sense a situation is developing that may lead to a hardship, see Student Care and Outreach sooner rather than later.

**CONTACT:** 706-542-7774  
**LOCATION:** 325 Tate Student Center  
**WEBSITE:** sco.uga.edu

Equal Opportunity Office (EOO)

The Equal Opportunity Office (EOO) is responsible for ensuring that UGA complies with all applicable laws and policies regarding discrimination on the basis of race, sex (including sexual harassment and pregnancy), gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity or national origin, religion, age, genetic information, disability or veteran status. As part of EOO’s mission, EOO administers and enforces the UGA Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy, which prohibits harassment and discrimination based on civil rights categories including veteran status.

**CONTACT:** 706-542-7912 or ugaeoo@uga.edu  
**LOCATION:** 119 Holmes-Hunter Academic Building  
**WEBSITE:** eoo.uga.edu
Experiential Learning

Learning through experience gives students hands-on opportunities to connect their academic foundations to the world beyond the faculty-mentored classroom through creative endeavors, study abroad, internships, research, and service learning.

Internships
In today’s competitive job market, internships represent the “secret sauce” to success. Why? Because they allow you to gain valuable hands-on experience in your new field of study while offering the employer a unique chance to give you a test drive before making a formal commitment to hire you.

Whether you’re interested in corporate, government, non-profit, or research opportunities, internships give you the edge needed to compete and win.

Study Abroad
In addition to the experiential opportunities offered throughout the CONUS, the UGA Education Abroad office offers OCONUS academic opportunities in more than 60 countries. Programs range from two weeks to 52 weeks and are designed to accommodate a student’s program of study.

Study abroad can be financially challenging. However, scholarships are available. To ensure your study abroad will be funded, please coordinate your travel plans with your advisor and the certifying official to confirm alignment with your degree and benefits.

All UGA students are required to engage in at least one experiential learning activity that enhances learning and positions them for success after graduation.

SOUND ADVICE

Recruiters, whether aligned with companies or graduate schools, are always looking for students that have had hands-on experience that postures them for success after graduation. Many student veterans believe their time in the Service checks that box; unfortunately, for most, it does not.

This year nearly 2,000,000 students will graduate with a bachelor’s degree and thousands of those students may be pursuing a degree track similar to yours. While at UGA, work to differentiate yourself from your peers by complementing your military experience with a timely internship, a work-study position, a study abroad opportunity and/or membership in a professional organization that aligns with your academic plan, adds currency to your resume, expands your network, and reinforces your brand.
Financial Aid and Scholarships:

The University of Georgia provides a variety of financial aid options to students. Federal Pell Grants, Federal Work Study, Federal Direct Student Loans and scholarships are offered. In order to receive financial aid, a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) must be completed.

In addition, the SVRC hosts a growing number of scholarships each year. Visit the SVRC site for additional scholarship information.

CONTACT: 706-542-2033
LOCATION: 220 Holmes/Hunter Academic Building
WEBSITE: osfa.uga.edu

NOTE: There are many non-profit organizations (i.e. SVA, VFM, ARC, American Legion, MOPH) and state services (GDVS, VLC) available to assist veterans. For more information, visit the SVRC or see our website.

Career Center

UGA’s Career Center consultants assist students with choosing majors, planning job searches, editing resumes, and preparing for interviews. The Career Center’s consultants, who are assigned to each college, offer walk-in hours and periodic workshops, and they host at least two major career fairs each year. Students pursuing career opportunities can search for internships or jobs using HANDSHAKE, the center’s online employment application.

CONTACT: 706-542-3375
LOCATION: Clark Howell Hall
WEBSITE: career.uga.edu

Research suggests that internships double your chances of employment.
Persistent Coaching: A Framework of Continuous Learning Opportunities

Persistent Coaching is our signature program that harmonizes orientation with three building block coaching programs:

1. **Academic Coaching:** The coach engages with the student to develop strategies that anticipate academic challenges before they occur.

2. **Transition Coaching:** First-term student veterans are paired with senior faculty/staff with similar academic, career, or personal interests.

3. **Readiness Coaching:** The coach facilitates early discussion on brand development to improve one’s ability to compete for jobs or graduate school.

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**When undergraduates have a coach or mentor, they are twice as likely to thrive after college. Yet only 1 in 5 have had such relationships.**

- Gallup-Perdue Index Dec 2016
As you move from the first to the second semester, you will be invited to work with a readiness coach. Together, you will build a tailored development plan (DP). The DP is a road map to your individual success. It highlights your career or graduate school interests, identifies geographic locations where you would like to work/study, and spotlights companies or graduate schools you are interested in pursuing.

Building off this approach, you and your readiness coach will work together with other campus and community resources to develop your resume. Once your resume is complete, the next step is networking and branding.

This step focuses on finding, building, and leveraging a network within your field of study. Networking is critical as you shape connections around your career interests. These connections will help you navigate the job search and, when the time comes, provide meaningful references to hiring and/or graduate school admissions managers. As you build a network, you will recognize the need to rebrand.

Branding is an essential part of your professional development as you pivot from the military to a new career. Your brand is made up of many facets, including your resume, social media, everyday interactions, and dress. The SVRC can leverage its partners to help you build your brand.

Our nationally recognized persistent coaching program complements your curriculum and is an important addition to your new tool bag; take advantage of it!

Contact:
svrc@uga.edu
REFERENCE PHONE NUMBERS

TRANSITION-RELATED SERVICES
Admissions ................................................ 706-542-2112
Registrar .................................................... 706-542-4040
School Certifying Official .................................. 706-542-1842
Residency Issues ........................................ 706-542-4748
Tuition Assistance ......................................... 706-542-6773
Transfer Credit ............................................. 706-542-2112
Financial Aid ............................................... 706-542-6147
Parking ...................................................... 706-542-7275
Housing ..................................................... 706-542-1421
Family Housing ........................................... 706-542-1473
Meal Plan/Food Services ................................. 706-542-1256
My ID & Oasis Assistance ................................. 706-542-3106

ON-CAMPUS HEALTH AND WELLNESS SERVICES
University Health Center .................................. 706-542-1162
Counseling/Psychiatric Services ....................... 706-542-2273
Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention .......... 706-542-7233
Pharmacy ................................................... 706-542-4589
Learning Disorders ........................................ 706-542-8719
Disability Resource Center ............................... 706-542-8719
Aspire Clinic (Holistic Counseling) ............... 706-542-4486
Child Care .................................................. 706-227-5316
Ramsey Recreational Sports ............................ 706-542-5060
Intramural Sports .......................................... 706-542-8648

MITIGATION SERVICES
Student Ombudsperson .................................. 706-542-7774
Equal Opportunity Office .................................. 706-542-7912
Student Care and Outreach
(_deployments/withdrawals) ........................... 706-542-7774
UGA Veterans Legal Clinic ............................... 706-542-5191

WORK AND CAREER SERVICES
Federal Work Study ....................................... 706-542-6147
Part-time Work ............................................. 706-583-5475
Career Center ............................................. 706-542-3375
Volunteer UGA ........................................... 706-583-8030

CO-CURRICULAR RESOURCES AND SERVICES
Student Veterans Association .......................... 706-542-7872
Student Organizations ................................ 706-542-8584
Academic Advising ...................................... Contact school or college
Tutoring .................................................... 706-542-7575
Library Access Services .................................. 706-542-3256
Religious Life ............................................. 706-542-3564
Center for Leadership & Service .................... 706-583-0830
Greek Life ................................................ 706-542-4612
LGBT Resource Center .................................. 706-542-4077
Women’s Resource Center ............................. 706-542-2846
Multicultural Services and Programs ............... 706-542-5773
University Union Student Programming Board 706-542-6396

SAFETY AND SECURITY
Police/Fire/Ambulance .................................... 911
Cottage Sexual Assault Center .......................... 706-353-1912
UGA Non-Emergency Police ............................ 706-542-2200
Piedmont Athens Regional Hospital .................. 706-475-7000
St. Mary’s Hospital ...................................... 706-389-3000
UGA Parking Services ................................... 706-542-7275

VA-RELATED CONTACTS
VA Education Benefits .................................... 1-888-442-4551
GA Department of Veterans Services ............... 706-369-5630
VA Outpatient Clinic .................................... 706-227-4534
VA Readjustment Center ................................. 404-728-4195
VA Crisis Line ........................................... 800-273-8255
VA Hospital Augusta .................................... 706-733-0188
VA Hospital Atlanta ..................................... 404-321-6111