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 to do so

DID YOU know?

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.

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. They are enrolled in all 17 schools and colleges, they carry a 12-14 credit hour course load and they perform on par with the larger UGA student body (GPA 3.21).

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.

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 from schools and colleges within Georgia. 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

- 28% Business
- 21% Arts and Sciences
- 8% Engineering
- 7% Public and International Affairs
- 5% Agriculture
- 4% Pharmacy
- 19% All Others
- 8% Education
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
- A dedicated veterans lounge with a 72-inch television and adjacent conference room, study kiosks, computers, printers, a microwave oven, and a refrigerator
- 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
- An enterprise-wise persistent coaching program that broadly supports veterans from matriculation to graduation.
Three Goals: Endless Opportunities

**Veteran Orientation**
A brief awareness program featuring the SVRC director, SVA president, and faculty/staff

**Meet and Greet**
A catered reception hosted during fall and spring semesters, providing 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

**Transition Coaching**
Pairing of matriculating student veterans with a staff or faculty member during their first semester

**VA Certification of Benefits**
Based in the Registrar’s Office, a 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. Each college has an academic advisor who liaises with the SVRC.

**Awards and Scholarships**
During this year alone, SVRC has provided over $20,000 to UGA’s student veterans.
Three Goals: Endless Opportunities

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 have relationships with the SVRC focused on supporting 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

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 semester.

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 each semester

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

HOW: A UGA enrollment verification form will be emailed to you from the Registrar during registration; a second reminder will be sent five days before the semester starts.

• Fill the form out completely and return along with a screen shot of your COE to va@uga.edu.
• These two pieces of information verify that you wish to use your benefits, how many benefits you have remaining and how many credits you plan to pursue.

• The Registrar’s Office will submit your certification to the VA

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Veterans Education Benefit Services

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

During orientation, you will be offered the opportunity to participate in the SVRC’s Transition Coaching Program (TCP). 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 90 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.

CONTACT:
Ted Barco
tbarco@uga.edu

Student Veterans Association

The UGA chapter of Student Veterans of America (SVA) was formed to establish a social and educational network for enrolled student veterans, reservists, Guard, active duty service members, and their families. In doing so, the SVA strives to improve campus and community awareness through engagement, advocacy, and service. Monthly meetings, held on the first Wednesday of each month, inform members of upcoming events, scholarships, and ways to more fully participate in the college experience.

Membership in SVA offers the following opportunities:

• Serve in one of ten SVA leadership positions
• Register and attend the national Student Veterans of America conference
• Network with local, regional, and national SVA chapters
• Make a difference in the lives of our students

Contact: ugasva@uga.edu
**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 VA benefits. If gaps are identified, you can pursue scholarships (see SVRC website) and/or 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

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, 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: 706-542-1162  
LOCATION: 55 Carlton Street  
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 if needed. Work with DAE 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:** dos.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
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

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.

Research suggests that internships double your chances of employment.

CONTACT: 706-542-3375
LOCATION: 210 River Road (Temporary Location)
WEBSITE: career.uga.edu
Persistent Coaching

In your first semester, a transition coach will help you to acclimate to the rigors of UGA, but this is only the first step in your academic and career preparation.

In most cases, your school/college will prescribe your academic path, which will become your primary focus at the University. However, it is important to realize that some of your time spent on campus will need to focus on career preparation. Facilitating readiness is a core function, a pillar, of the SVRC.

Following your first semester, your transition coach will offer you the opportunity to connect to an SVRC readiness coach.
Readiness Coaching

Working with a readiness coach, 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 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 new career interests. These connections will help you navigate the job search and, when the time comes, provide meaningful references to hiring and/or graduate admissions managers. As you build a network, you will often 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.

Contact: svrc@uga.edu
1. **BENEFITS:**
   Stay on top of your educational benefits and resubmit them every semester to the certifying official (va@uga.edu).

2. **COACHES / MENTORS:**
   Seek out connections to professionals in your field. The knowledge you can gain will significantly impact your experience at the University and throughout your life.

3. **ENGAGEMENT:**
   The more you put into it, the more you’ll get out of your college experience. Try to make time for some of the extracurricular activities on campus. With more than 800 clubs and organizations, there is literally something for everyone. You’re never going to get opportunities like this again – go join a debate team, learn to sail, further your knowledge in your field of study, support a cause, do something...

4. **NETWORKING:**
   Veterans at UGA are high performing individuals. So are the majority of the other students. If you’re not networking with everybody around you, you’re doing yourself a disservice; they may be the future movers and shakers of the world, so network with them!

5. **INTERNSHIPS:**
   Be as proactive as possible in securing internships and training for future employment. Try to secure these even before you think you’re “ready”, or before they are required.

6. **TIMING:**
   Employers typically recruit the majority of their interns and full-time employees for summer during fall semester of the previous year. Go to the career fairs and actively seek out opportunities. The time involved with this process is practically an additional class, so structure your schedule accordingly.

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**EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING**

Recruiters, whether aligned with companies or graduate schools, are always looking for students that have had relevant 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 and helps to establish your future network.
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
VA Education Benefit ................................. 888-442-4551
Tuition Assistance ....................................... 706-542-6773
Transfer Credit .......................................... 706-542-2112
Financial Aid ............................................. 706-542-6147
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 .................................................. 706-542-9979
Learning Disorders .................................... 706-542-4589
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

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
VA Crisis Line ........................................ 800-273-8255
Cottage Sexual Assault Center ............... 706-353-1912
UGA Non-emergency Police .................... 706-542-2200
Athens Regional Medical Center ............ 706-475-7000
St. Mary’s Hospital ................................. 706-389-3000
VA Clinic (Athens) ................................. 706-227-4534
VA Center (Lawrenceville) ...................... 404-728-4195
VA Hospital (Atlanta) ............................. 404-321-6111
VA Hospital (Augusta) .......................... 706-733-0188
UGA Parking Services ......................... 706-542-7275