A Guide for Graduate Student Veterans
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Historically, our programs and services were resourced to focus on the needs of our nation’s most at-risk student veterans; the undergraduates. Though that will always be our focus, as our undergraduate programs mature we are beginning to offer incrementally tailored support to our full-time enrolled military-affiliated students (active, guard, reserve and veterans) at all levels of study (professional, graduate, and undergraduate) attending most every physical campus and, where possible, online. This guide will describe those programs and resources.

NOTE: To be eligible for any military affiliated program/service, you must first contact the UGA School Certifying Official and formally self-identify as a military-affiliated student – bring your Military ID Card or DD-214. For those using VA benefits, this is part of the certification process. For those not using VA benefits you will need to contact the SCO at 706-542-9362 to set up an appointment.

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.
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.

A Service Desk, a Robust Network of Liaisons, Newsletter, and Website
The Student Veterans Resource Center (SVRC) serves as the go-to location for 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 706-542-7872/9629
- Email svrc@uga.edu

Additional SVRC services include:
- A service desk staffed by student veterans
- A dedicated Student Veterans Lounge
- Conference room, study kiosks, computers, printers, a microwave oven, and a refrigerator
- Responsive referral network
- Career readiness program
- Access to awards, scholarships, and grants
- Annual Honor Cord Reception for graduating veterans
- Annual Veterans Day Reception and recognition at a UGA home football game
While some of our programs are specifically designed to support our transitioning undergraduates, full-time graduate students can, and should, take advantage of our office’s services. We may be able to help you with:

- Awards, Scholarships, and Emergency Funds*
- Quick access to all UGA service providers
- Readiness Coaching and Peer2Peer Connections
- Networking connections for internships/post-grad placements
- Opportunities to share/preserve your unique Oral History
- Two yearly receptions (Veterans Week and Spring Honor Cord)
- Showcasing your picture on the Sanford Stadium Jumbotron during the Veterans Week Military Appreciation Game
- Veterans Week Football Tickets

*NOTE: To be eligible for a scholarship (averaging ~ $600 each), applicants must be full-time students and agree to come to a reception on the main campus to meet the donors who made those awards possible.

Information about all these opportunities and more can be found in our twice monthly newsletter, which is automatically distributed to all self-identified student veterans.

Profile of graduate student veterans

95% Graduate student veterans who did not attend UGA as undergraduates

TOPICS of Study

37% BUSINESS

8% EDUCATION

7% ENGINEERING

4% AGRICULTURE

37% ARTS AND SCIENCES

7% VETERINARY MEDICINE

10% PUBLIC AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

4% PHARMACY
Why is Engagement Critical?

Engagement matters, whether you are working as a paid graduate assistant, resident assistant, teaching assistant, or volunteer SVRC peer-to-peer coach.

Research suggests only 10 percent of student veterans pursue studies that are very similar to the profession they held in the military. Translated, this means the other 90 percent of veterans will arguably need to build a new body of knowledge supported by emerging relationships and networks tied to their academic field of study. Ultimately, this suggests students must purposefully engage to integrate and rebrand.

Rebranding can be challenging particularly for those veterans who enter UGA with a very strong sense of self-reliance or worse “hubris.” The SVRC can help you rebrand through at least two programs we’ll discuss shortly; Peer2Peer Networking and Readiness Coaching.

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

- Tinto 2006

As a graduate student veteran, you may also want to use your prior experience to help smooth an undergraduate student veteran’s transition to UGA or from UGA into the work force.

If you’d like to learn more about volunteer opportunities, email svrc@uga.edu.
Three Goals: Endless Opportunities

**SVRC Kiosks & Conference Room**
Three computer kiosks with free printing and conference room that can be reserved.

**Fiserv Student Veterans Lounge**
A relaxing lounge, in Tate 484, with sofas, chairs, and large-screen TV.

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

**Financial Assistance**
SVRC is positioned to provide emergency funds, awards, and scholarships. A current FAFSA is required and applications open in early fall and spring.

**VETConnect**
A program that systematically connects SVRC staff with our military-affiliated students.

**Peer2Peer (P2P)**
To enhance relationship-building and networking, military-affiliated students have the opportunity to connect through the SVRC to one or more volunteer graduate student veterans.

**Oral History**
The SVRC leads higher education in facilitating student veteran oral histories collected for research and stored in UGA’s Special Collection Libraries. Grants up to $100 may be available to participants.
Three Goals: Endless Opportunities

2 ENABLE
Access to Services

SVRC Service Desk
An information desk staffed by student veterans from 8am-4pm weekdays with open access from 8am-9pm to a study room, computers, printing, refrigerator, and microwave

SVRC Referral Network
The SVRC’s network of 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 FACILITATE
Career Readiness

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

Corporate Connect
SVRC-facilitated meetings exclusively between student veterans and employers. These complement similar UGA-wide opportunities through your college, school or Career Center.
Readiness Coaching

As you move from the first to the second semester, you have the opportunity 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.

RESUME BUILDING: 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.

NETWORKING: This step focuses on finding, building, and leveraging a mentor 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: 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. In support of your college/school, the SVRC can leverage its partners to help you build your brand.

INTERNSHIP: An internship is the next critical step in your career development. Through internships you can determine if you are on the right career path, highlight new relevant experiences, expand your network, and build a bridge to your new profession. In the Readiness Coaching Program, you are encouraged to participate in multiple internships during your time at UGA.

Contact: svrc@uga.edu

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

The University of Georgia provides a variety of financial aid options to students. Federal Work Study, Federal Direct Student Loans, and scholarships are offered through individual colleges and schools, Financial Aid Office, and the SVRC. In order to receive financial aid, a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) must be completed.

For emergency situations, many UGA departments administer student funds, including the Graduate School, the Office of Financial Aid, Student Affairs, and the SVRC.

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

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

Parking

You must find a lot and reserve it as early as possible.

**How do I register for a permit?**  
Log into the UGA Parking Services website, follow the prompts, and save the information. Please review the priority system before choosing lots to ensure you receive an assignment. An assignment will be sent to your UGAMail when a permit is available to buy.

**What is the cost of a permit?**  
Depending on the lot, the cost is $20, $30, or $40 per month. Permits are sold for nine- or twelve-month periods.

**CONTACT:** 706-542-7275  
**LOCATION:** 80 Carlton Street, Joe Frank Harris Commons  
**WEBSITE:** tps.uga.edu/parking

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
**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.

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

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
- Assisting with Georgia residency-related issues
- Providing support regarding schedule changes/withdrawal
- Processing fee waivers and readmission

Military-affiliated students must self-identify through the SCO to access SVRC programs and services. This only need to be done once and can be accomplished by presenting to the SCO either a current Military ID (Active Duty, Guard, Reserve) or DD-214 (veterans).

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**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](http://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.

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**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
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

University 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

Healthy Veteran Program
In 2015, the University Health Center established the Healthy Veteran Program to encourage student veterans to more broadly use the UHC services. As an incentive for veterans to use UHC’s clinics, the Healthy Veteran 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.
GENERAL INFORMATION

In-State Residency
Most student veterans pay in-state tuition. If you are considering paying out-of-state rates, contact UGA’s Residency POC at 706-542-4748 and ask if you qualify for a waiver based on your situation.

Georgia Driver’s License
If you need to transfer an out of state license to Georgia or obtain a new license, Georgia Department of Driver Services (DDS) maintains a “New to Georgia” website that lists instructions on requirements for obtaining a Georgia driver’s license. The Athens Customer Service Center is located at 505 Highway 29 North. Their phone number is 706-542-9928.

Where to Live
Though most graduate students live off-campus, UGA Family & Graduate Housing maintains nearly 600 unfurnished apartment units available for rent. If you would prefer to live off campus or if you’re unable to secure an apartment through them, consider using online classifieds, such as the Athens Banner-Herald or Flagpole Magazine, to identify potential properties or property management companies.

What to Eat
For those who don’t want to cook, UGA offers a variety of meal plans including three different commuter meal plans. Commuter meal plans allow you to have a number of set meals per semester at UGA’s dining halls and retail restaurants. The plans range from approximately $900 per semester to nearly $1400.

Assistantships
Assistantships require a graduate student to work on campus from 13-20 hours per week, depending on semester and type of assignment. Applications for assistantships are made to your graduate coordinator’s office. Assistantships carry a tuition waiver, reducing tuition to $25/semester. However, all activity fees and health insurance must be paid by students. Assistantships also provide a monthly stipend.

Assistantships vary by department, assignment, type of work, and award. For more information, consult your academic department or the Graduate School Financial Assistance page (grad.uga.edu).

Off-Campus Employment
HANDSHAKE (career.uga.edu/handshake) is the University of Georgia Career Center’s online job/internship posting and campus recruiting system. It contains listings posted by prospective employers both on campus and in the community. A student employment fair is held every semester at the Tate Student Center for students seeking part-time jobs both on and off campus.
RECOMMENDED MILESTONES

- Complete your FAFSA – it opens up opportunities for potential awards, scholarships, and aid
- Attend the UGA Graduate Orientation and, if offered, the SVRC Veterans Orientation
- Visit the SVRC table at the Graduate Student Resource Fair
- Self-Identify through the Office of the Registrar’s School Certifying Official
- Stay connected through the SVRC Newsletter and the VETConnect program
- If you sense you need assistance, contact the SVRC at the first sign (SVRC@uga.edu)
- Identify 2-3 UGA faculty and/or staff to join your professional network
- As needed, engage with the SVRC Readiness Coach
- Establish membership in a group tied to your future profession
- Complement your wardrobe by applying for a UGA Suit-Up Award
- Network with a mentor within your profession (your department has many options, the SVRC has a few uniquely associated with student veterans; consider both)

The research is clear, the more connections a student makes on campus the more likely he or she will persist and succeed.

– Harris, 2006 and Tinto, 2004
REFERENCE PHONE NUMBERS

TRANSITION-RELATED SERVICES
Graduate Admissions .................................. 706-542-6300
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 & Athena 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
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 ......................... 404-728-4195
VA Readjustment Center ...................... 404-728-4195
VA Crisis Line ........................................... 800-273-8255
VA Hospital Augusta ......................... 706-733-0188
VA Hospital Atlanta ......................... 404-321-6111
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