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National Challenge Facing Student Veterans

• 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.

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.

DON’T BE A statistic!

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.

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.
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.
**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 a wide range of 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.

**VETconnect**
Incoming student veterans are given the opportunity to engage with other undergraduate student veterans leading up to or during their first semester.

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

**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.

**Academic Advising**
Self-identified 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 $135,000 to UGA’s student veterans.

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**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, and active duty service members. In doing so, the SVA strives to improve campus and community awareness through engagement, advocacy, and service. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month.

**Contact:** ugasva@uga.edu
Three Goals: Endless Opportunities

SVRC Team and 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

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

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

Resume Development
Our readiness coaches use one-on-one feedback supported by an algorithmic-based assessment tool to ensure that you have a competitive resume and the judgment to improve/adapt it to your evolving needs.

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.

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

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

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.

NOTE: Ask about discounted Georgia driver’s license fees for veterans.

Where to Live

Though most 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.
VETconnect

In addition to transition coaching, the SVRC is also offering our incoming undergraduate student veterans the opportunity to engage in our VETconnect program.

VETconnect complements our transition coaching program (faculty/staff) by encouraging current students who have completed at least one semester at UGA to engage directly with veterans who are new to our campus community.

If you are a transfer student veteran and wish to participate in the initiative, please send us an email at SVRC@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 two 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.

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.

NOTE: For technical courses/degrees, bring your syllabi from earlier classes to determine the best sequence of UGA courses. A 3000-level course at a feeder school may equate to a 2000-level UGA course.

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.
ENABLE ACCESS

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 Support and Tutoring**

The Division of Academic Enhancement will work one-on-one with you to advance strategies that enable you to better anticipate and respond to academic challenges. Your assigned counselor will proactively review your schedule, identify relevant study strategies, and cultivate the networks and resources needed to support your development. Your point of contact may also work with professionals across campus to facilitate subject-specific assistance to include:

- Department help
- Private tutoring
- Peer tutoring
- Academic specialists
- Academic counselors

**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

All UGA students are required to engage in at least one experiential learning activity that enhances learning and positions them for success after graduation. Learning through experience gives students hands-on opportunities to connect their academics through 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.

**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.

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.
Parking

You must research parking, 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. 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.

NOTE: Review the priority system before choosing lots to ensure you receive an assignment. Questions? Call 706-542-7275

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 be eligible to receive financial aid, a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) must be completed. Last year, nearly half of all student veterans received a scholarship or award from the SVRC. In many cases, those who didn’t fail to have a current FAFSA.

The SVRC hosts a growing number of scholarships each year. There are also many non-profit organizations and state services available to assist veterans.

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.

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 four building block coaching programs:

1. **Orientation:** An orientation session tailored for student veterans reduces transfer shock by helping prepare them for the rigors of a Tier 1 research university.

2. **VETconnect:** Transferring student veterans are given the opportunity to engage with other undergraduate student veterans leading up to or during their first semester.

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

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

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

- Gallup-Perdue Index Dec 2016
Readiness Coaching

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. In support of your college/school, the SVRC can leverage its partners to help you build your brand.

Contact: svrc@uga.edu

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

LOCKHEED MARTIN

Lockheed Martin provides a generous grant to recognize those student veterans who actively participate in this program each year.
# 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: 706-542-9979
- 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: 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
The SVRC is grateful to the UGA Office of Emergency Preparedness for funding the printing of this guide.