



Presented By:  
Maryland State Approving Agency & Department of Veterans Affairs

Trish Gordon-McCown  
State Approving Agency Director

Selica Cherry-Alexander  
ELR – Department of Veterans Affairs

Olayta L. Rigsby  
State Approving Agency Analyst

Everette Jackson  
State Approving Agency Analyst

Hunter Schwartz  
Administrative Aide



# SCO Training- VA Education Benefits

---

1

<b>8:30 am – 9:00 am</b>	<b>Networking and Refreshment</b>	
9:00 am – 9:10 am	Welcome	Trish
9:10 am – 9:15 am	History of the GI Bill® and State Approving Agencies	Everette
9:15 am – 9:20 am	School Certifying Official Responsibilities	Everette
9:20 am – 9:45 am	GI Bill® Updates	Olayta
9:45 am – 10:15 am	IHL Program Approval Process	Trish
10:15 am – 10:30 am	Break	
10:30 am – 11:00 am	Compliance Survey	Olayta
11:00 am – 11:30 am	Debt Management	Selica
11:30 am – 12:00 pm	VA-ONCE Training & Certification Process	Selica
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Open Session – Questions & Answer (Optional)	

# SCO Training Agenda

2





# **History of the GI Bill® and State Approving Agencies**

**3**

1944

- President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signs the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, a.k.a. "The GI Bill®" into law.

1945

- 79<sup>th</sup> Congress passed Public Law 268 requiring individual state Governors to appoint a State Crediting Agency.

1956

- First GI Bill® Comes to a close after benefiting 7.8 million participants but SAA work continues.

1966

- President Lyndon B Johnson signs the Veterans Readjustment Benefits Act.

1984

- Congress passes Montgomery GI Bill®.

2008

- The Post 9/11 GI Bill® revamps veterans' educational benefits.

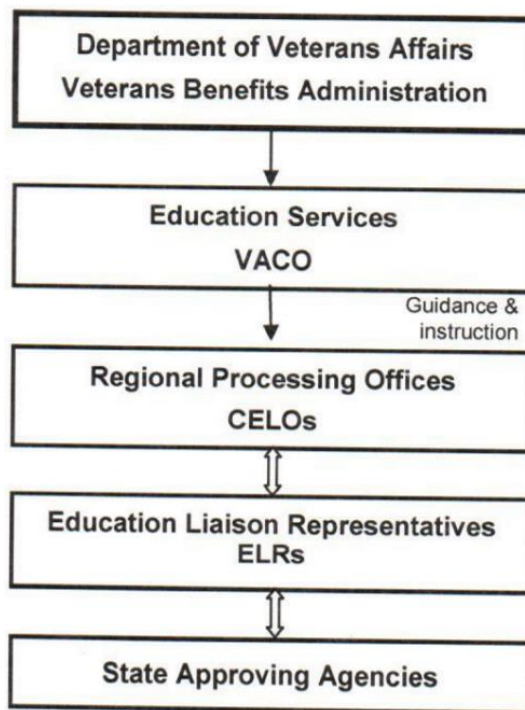
2011

- Public Law 111-377 expands the Post 9/11 GI Bill® to include dependents and spouses as well as new types of training programs.

# History of the GI Bill®



- State Approving Agencies (SAAs) were created in the late 1940's.
- These agencies are overseen by the governor, but funded by the VA.
- The mission of SAA's is to help make the GI Bill® work by ensuring that students know about and have access to well managed, efficiently run, educationally-sound programs that they can trust to help them succeed in meeting their vocational goals.
- SAA's collaborate with the VA and Institutions/SCO's in order to fulfill this mission.



# State Approving Agencies 5



# School Certifying Officials (SCO)

6

A School Certifying Official (SCO), sometimes referred to as a Veterans Certifying Official (VCO), is:

- A person at an educational institution or training facility whom VA has delegated the authority to sign enrollment certifications, other certification documents and reports relating to VA Education Benefits.
- There may be more than one SCO for each institution.

# What is a School Certifying Official?

7

- Keep VA informed of the enrollment status of veterans and other eligible persons.
- Keep SAA or VA (as appropriate) informed of new programs, changes in programs, institutional changes, etc.
- Apprise supervisors of any internal problems which may affect service to VA students.
- Keep up to date on current VA rules and benefits.
- Assist VA students in applying for education benefits.
- Maintain records of VA students and make available for inspection.

# SCO Basic Responsibilities

8



# GI Bill® Updates

9

---

- The VA is developing a new VA processing system which merges WEAMS (Web Enabled Approval Management System) with VA-ONCE to be launched in March of 2017
- SCOs were directed to update their WEAMS profiles to add new programs or delete outdated programs by 1 August 2016
- VA-ONCE users will not be able to enter new programs in their institutions' program inventories; programs not in WEAMS will not be certifiable

# “Project Merge”

10

- **Verify institutional program inventory listed on the Web Enabled Approval Management System (WEAMS) Public**

**<http://inquiry.vba.va.gov/weamspub/buildSearchInstitutionCriteria.do>**

- **Verify institutional program inventory with Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC)**

**[http://www.mhec.state.md.us/higherEd/colleges\\_universities/index.asp](http://www.mhec.state.md.us/higherEd/colleges_universities/index.asp)**

- **Proposals for new programs or modification should be submitted as instructed:**

**<http://www.mhec.state.md.us/higherEd/acadAff/AcadProgInstitApprovals/AcademicProgramsInstitutionalApprovals.asp>**

# Program Inventory

11

- Tuition-and-Fees payable for 100%-eligible Chapter 33 beneficiaries attending private institutions will be capped at **\$21,970.46** for the VA Academic year (August 1 – July 31)
- Stipends for books and supplies are capped at **\$1000** per academic year. No Change.
  - *Payments are made directly to the student's personal bank account via direct deposit.*

# Chapter 33 Post 9/11 GI Bill® Updates

12

- BAH will be pro-rated based on rate of pursuit
- Students taking all on-line will be paid distance BAH pro-rated based on rate of pursuit (effective 10/1/11)
- Full Time Distance BAH, in accordance with 38 CFR 21.9505
  - **2016-2017 - \$805.50**
- Attending classes at ½ time or less – not payable
- Active Duty Trainee (or spouse of service member) – not payable
- The monthly housing allowance is paid at the E5 with dependents
- Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) rate based on the school's zip code
- Payments for August, December, January, and May are pro-rated
- For more information: <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/bahCalc.cfm>
- **NOTE: Payment is made directly to the student's personal bank account at the beginning of each month for the previous month.**

# Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH)

13

- Tuition and Fees Charged
- Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH)
- Stipend for Books and Supplies
- College Fund and Kickers
- Licensing and Certifications Tests
- Work Study
- Tutorial Assistance

# Benefits Payment

14

- Schools should report the amount of tuition and fees initially charged to the student after deducting any amounts paid with **Federal Funds** (excluding Title IV Funds).
- Examples of Federal Funds are:
  - Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC)
  - Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts (MyCAA)
  - Health Professionals Scholarship Program (HPSP)
  - Government Employees' Training Act (GETA)

**Note: The above list is not all-inclusive**

# Tuition and Fees Charged 15

- The net cost in final tuition and fees reported to the VA should be reduced by scholarship amounts that are specifically administered for the purpose of defraying tuition and fees.
- If the language in the scholarship's literature does not specifically state that the funds be used for tuition and fees, this requirement is waived.
  - *Determination of offsetting is based on whether the payment is towards tuition and fees.*
  - *Payments from Employers need to be offset.*

# Scholarships

16

- Any mandatory charges for pursuit of an approved program of education.
- Fees include but are not limited to:
  - Health premiums
  - Freshman fees
  - Graduation fees
  - Laboratory fees
  - Special course fees

Does not include application fees or study abroad course(s) unless the course(s) is a mandatory requirement for completion of the approval program of education.

# Fees

17



# Approval Process

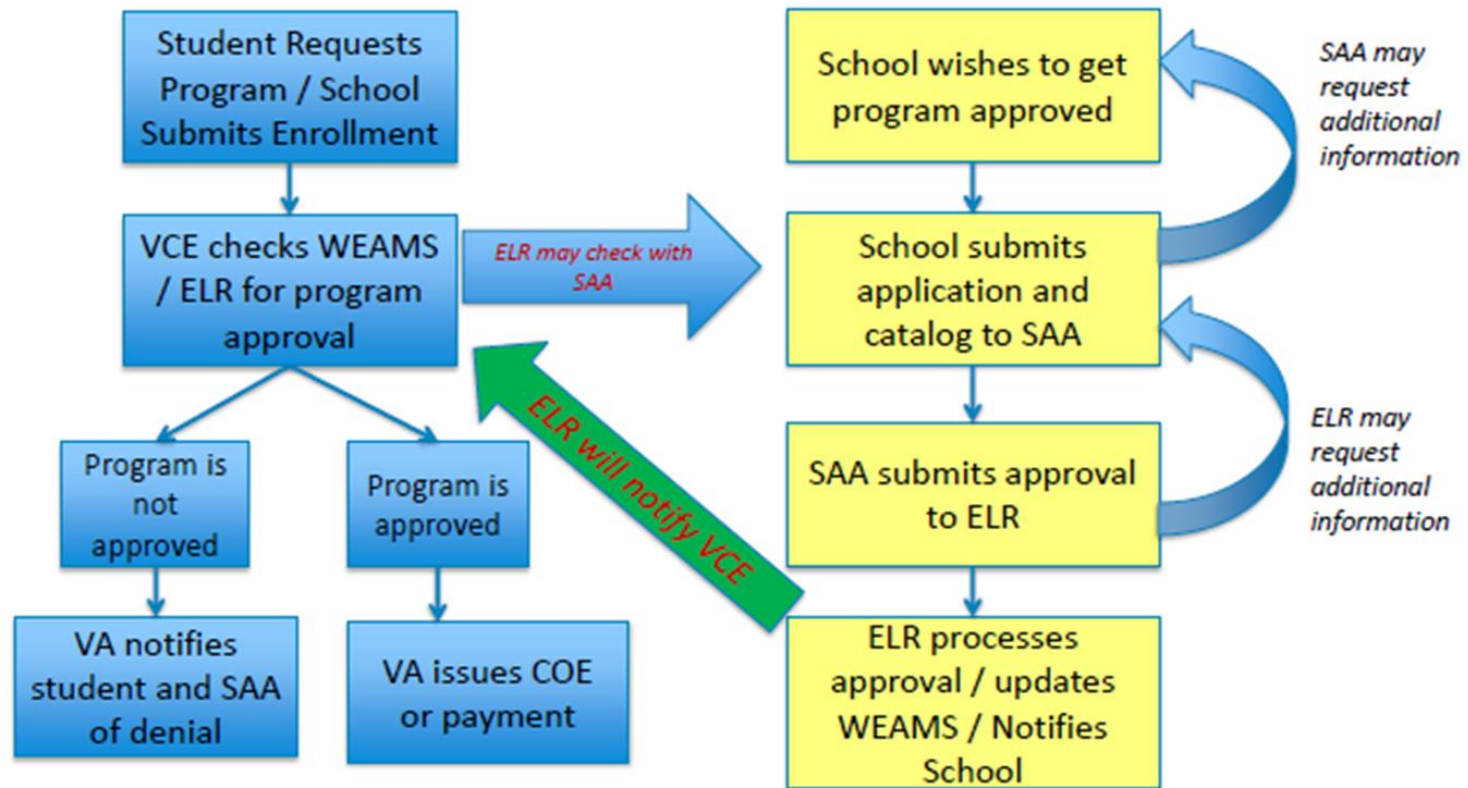
18

---



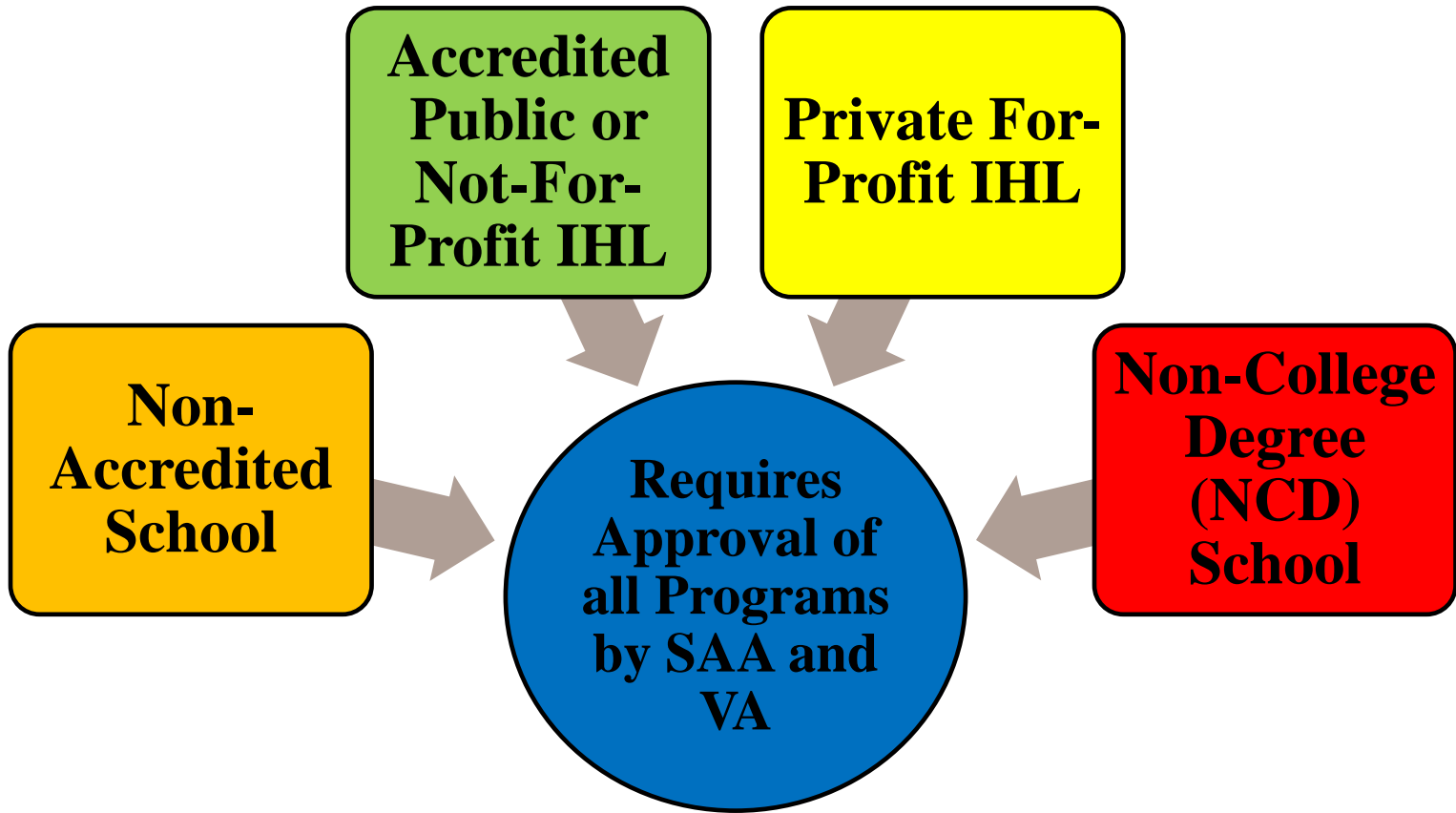
**MHEC**  
Creating a state of achievement





# Submitting A Program Approval

19



# Submitting A Program Approval

20

- **CATALOG SUBMISSIONS**
- **Certified catalogs submission with Standard Certification**  
**“True and correct as to content and policy”**  
**with Certifying Official’s signature**  
**\*\* One copy to SAA and One copy to ELR (must be hard copy) \*\***
- **Submit IHL Catalog Review Form**
- **(CD or DVD versions are strongly encouraged to SAA only! No links, pdf version required)**
- **Additional publications – Student Handbook**

# **Requirements to Maintain SAA/VA Approval**

**21**

- Students must be enrolled in courses that will apply to their program
- The programs at the “host” school in the foreign country must be approved
- VA does not pay fees specific to studying abroad unless the student is required to study abroad as part of their program
- Must provide an itemized list of all tuition & fees
- VA cannot pay airfare

# Study Abroad

22

**New/yearly schedules must be submitted to the Maryland SAA**

- **Institution of Higher Learning (IHL) and Continuing Education (NCD, if applicable)**
- **Training Academies** – Must submit each training schedule including total number of hours for classroom & field training. Copy of third party agreement (if applicable)
- Via Email or Letter

# **Class Schedules Start & End Dates**

**23**



# Compliance Surveys

24

---

- Objectives of Compliance Surveys
- Purpose and Authority
- Access to Institutional Records
- Educational Claims Processing Jurisdiction
- VA Fiscal Year Schedules of Compliance Survey
- PL 111-377 (SAA and VA Conduct Compliance Surveys
- Preparation, Scheduling, Conducting and Post Survey
- Survey Data
- Questions

# Compliance Surveys

25

- Routine reviews of selected students' records to verify that payments of GI Bill® benefits were properly made to your VA students in order to:
  - Assist School Certifying Officials in better understanding their responsibilities and the procedural requirements of VA
  - Ensure schools and training establishments--along with their approved courses and programs--are in compliance
  - Monitor and assure continued acceptability of approval at previously approved facilities

# What Are They and What is the Purpose?

26

- The VA determines which institutions will be surveyed on a yearly and quarterly basis
- Larger schools with total VA student enrollments above 500 will be reviewed annually!
- The number of files reviewed depends on the size of your active VA student population; no fewer than 10 files will be reviewed (unless you have less than 10 current enrolled VA students)

# Who, When and How Many?

27

- Institutional Records Needed for Student Records
- Unofficial transcript
- Advertising Materials
- 85/15 Compliance information
- Yellow Ribbon Program (IHL only)
- Copy of Student Account Ledger - Detailed Records of Tuition and Fees ; for Chapter 33 students – this will include all payments/credits to the student's account: from VA, institutional, private, federal and other payors.
  - Must be detailed enough to determine the source of all debits and credits, including how charges were determined and payments were credited.
  - The term in which any charges/payments/credits occur should be clearly identified and linked to the appropriate dollar amount.
  - VA payments and refunds should be clearly labeled as such
- Copy of Student term registration schedules
  - Identifying start date, end date
  - Verification of prior credit evaluations
  - Progress /standards (GPA)
  - Obtaining LDA or last activity to confirm withdraw of subjects for student records

# What Records and Accounts Are Needed for the Survey?

28

*Every approved school is required to have and enforce a policy with regard to transfer courses, credits, and previous experience.*

- Schools must evaluate prior credit
- Grant credit as appropriate
- Notify the student of the evaluation
- Shorten the program certified accordingly
- The Prior Training Credit box in VA-ONCE is now NA (Not Applicable) by default and is locked (grayed out).

# Prior Credit

29

- Applicable to schools that have a satisfactory progress policy that includes academic and/or attendance probation prior to termination for Unsatisfactory Progress
- **Notify VA promptly** when a student receiving VA education benefits is placed on academic or attendance probation.
- Notifications should be sent using VA's *Internet Inquiry System*
- Include the **Student's Name** and **Claim Number** along with the statement "Student placed on academic or attendance probation"

# Academic Probation

30

- Students actively using Chapter 33 benefits should be terminated in VA-ONCE upon completion of or graduation from their program; select “graduation” as reason for termination.

# Graduation

31

- In the event that an institution determines that they owe funds to the VA, payments should NOT be sent to the VA until the institution receives a debt letter from VA's Debt Management Center
- Treasury Offset Program (TOP) – if the institution fails to respond to multiples debt management letters, the TOP will capture funds payable to the school by other government agencies (i.e., Title IV Funds)
- Debt management number is 1-800-827-0648, for international callers 1-612-713-6415.

# Debt Management

32

## CHAPTER 33 FISCAL ISSUES

Generally overpayments of VA benefits are the responsibility of the student. However, there are instances under the Post-9/11 GIBILL when an over payment is created on a school and funds need to be refunded to VA.

### **Debts and Over-Payments**

**A debt is established on a school when:**

- The student never attended any classes for which he/she was certified regardless of the reason for non-attendance
- The student completely withdraws on or before the first day of the term.
- The school received payment for the wrong student
- The school received a duplicate payment
- The school submitted an amended enrollment certification and reported reduced tuition and fee charges, reduced Yellow Ribbon amount, or reduced both. (Reductions based on student's action should be reported on a 1999B with the changes in the enrollment and will result in a debt to the student.)
- The student died during the term, or before start of the term
- VA issued payment above the amount certified on the enrollment certification that was used to process the payment (VA data entry error)

**A debt is established on the student for tuition/fees/Yellow Ribbon when:**

- The student withdrew after the first day of the term (FDOT)
- The student reduced hours whether the reduction occurred before or during the term
- If the student attended more than one day of any of the classes certified and a payment has been issued, any debt created by the withdrawal should be charged to the student
- The school submitted a change in enrollment (1999b) and reported a reduction in tuition, fees, and/or Yellow Ribbon due to student action reducing or terminating training.
- If a student drops a course and adds a course so that there is no net change in training time, any change to tuition, fees, and/or Yellow Ribbon is a student debt

Schools must refund tuition and fee payments to students in accordance with their established refund policies, so that the students can resolve over-payments.

If a school debt has been established and your school believes that it is not appropriate, please notify VA through the [Internet Inquiry System](#) or by letter to the [RPO](#) (not the Agent Cashier).

## SCHOOL OVERPAYMENTS

When a school debt is created, the RPO of jurisdiction sends a letter notifying the school of the overpayment with details regarding the associated student, debt amount, and the reason for the creation of the debt. The debt is electronically submitted to VA's Debt Management Center (DMC). Within 3 days of receipt of the debt, DMC will issue the first Notice of Indebtedness (NOI) which provides 30 days to repay or dispute the debt. If the school doesn't contact DMC, a second NOI will be issued providing an additional 30 days for the school to respond, and it also informs the school of VA's obligation to report delinquent debts to the Treasury Offset Program (TOP) for further collection. If the school still does not contact DMC, a third NOI will be sent informing the school of VA's intent to refer the debt to TOP if no response is received within 60 days. If no response is received within 60 days, the debt will automatically be referred to TOP for further collection.

**Note:** NOI's are mailed to the School Certifying Official address located in WEAMS.

### **How does Treasury Offset Program (TOP) work for school debts?**

Once debts are referred to TOP, VA is no longer collecting the debt and control of the collection is managed by Department of Treasury. The TOP process will capture funds payable to the school issued by other government entities. When an offset occurs Treasury will also assess a \$17.00 administrative fee. Once funds are captured, they are forwarded to DMC who is responsible for applying the funds to the school debt. Additional information on TOP, and contact information, can be found at the following website  
[http://fiscal.treasury.gov/fsservices/gov/debtColl/dms/top/debt\\_top.htm](http://fiscal.treasury.gov/fsservices/gov/debtColl/dms/top/debt_top.htm)

### **How can a school dispute a debt?**

Schools must contact DMC to dispute a debt. The best way to submit a dispute is to email DMC at [dmcedu.vbaspl@va.gov](mailto:dmcedu.vbaspl@va.gov). Schools may also call DMC's toll free number and speak to a customer service representative or mail a written dispute to DMC. DMC's contact information can be found at: <http://www.va.gov/debtman/>

DMC will automatically suspend collection of a school debt if a dispute is received prior to referral to TOP. The school will be notified of VA's decision regarding the dispute, and DMC will continue the collection action if appropriate.



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
ATLANTA REGIONAL OFFICE  
P.O. BOX 100022  
DECATUR GA 30031-7022

## Letter 1

MARCH 5, 2013

ALTERED STATE UNIVERSITY  
ATTN: SCHOOL CERTIFYING OFFICIAL  
101 NORTH MAIN ST  
ANYTOWN, ST 12345

316/22  
GIJOE  
XXX-XX-6789

Dear School Certifying Official:

We are writing to notify you about an overpayment of Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits for Gerald I. Joe. Please ensure your Bursar's Office (or Financial Business Office) receives a copy of this letter.

Our records show VA released payment(s) to your school as follows:

Certified Enrollment Period	Tuition and Fees	Yellow Ribbon
January 9, 2013 - May 1, 2013	\$ 2,682.50	\$ 6,338.75

ALTERED STATE UNIVERSITY must return the payment(s) for enrollment beginning January 9, 2013 for the reason(s) below:

- The school submitted an amended 1999 showing a reduction in tuition and fee charges or a reduction in Yellow Ribbon amount, or both.

### How Much Is Owed

Total overpayment of **\$537.50** for ALTERED STATE UNIVERSITY during the term that began on **January 9, 2013** was determined as follows:

- Yellow Ribbon Program:** We paid \$6,338.75 for the enrollment; however, ALTERED STATE UNIVERSITY is only due \$5,801.25. The Yellow Ribbon Program overpayment is \$537.50.

### Returning Funds

Our Debt Management Center will send you additional information about the amount of the debt and how to repay it.

GIJOE  
XXX-XX-6789

### Questions

- If you returned the funds to VA before receipt of this letter and wish to confirm the debt has been resolved, please call our VA Education Call Center at 1-888-GI Bill-1 (1-888-442-4551).
- If you have questions about the reason for this debt, please call our VA Education Call Center at 1-888-GI-Bill-1 (1-888-442-4551). If you use the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD), the Federal number is 711.
- If you have questions about how to repay this debt, please call our Debt Management Center toll-free at 1-800-827-0648.

Sincerely,

Education Officer

cc: Gerald I. Joe



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
Debt Management Center  
Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building  
P.O. Box 11930  
St. Paul, MN 55111-0930

1<sup>st</sup> Collection Letter School  
Effective March 1, 2013

## Letter 2

File Number:  
Payee Number:  
Person Entitled:  
Deduction Code:  
E-Mail Address: [dmcedu.vbaspl@va.gov](mailto:dmcedu.vbaspl@va.gov)  
(Please provide the information above  
on any e-mail correspondence)

The Department of Veterans Affairs recently notified you that the education benefits for were adjusted. As a result, a debt was created for \$ due to non-entitlement. Since the funds for this enrollment were sent directly to the school, we ask that you return these funds.

### WHAT ARE YOUR OPTIONS?

- You can pay the debt in full by check or money order. Make your check or money order payable to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and mail in the enclosed envelope with the remittance slip from the bottom of this letter. Please include the student's name and VA file number or Social Security number on your check or money order to ensure proper credit.
- You can pay using a major credit card, debit card or electronic funds transfer from your savings or checking account. You can do this on-line by visiting our website, [www.pay.va.gov](http://www.pay.va.gov), or by calling our toll-free number 1-800-827-0648.
- You may send us a payment from any nearby Western Union Agent location, or by visiting [www.westernunion.com](http://www.westernunion.com). The Western Union Agent or the website will require a host city code, which is "VADMC". You will need the code to complete the transaction.

### WHERE DO YOU CALL IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS?

If you have questions regarding payment of the debt, you should contact the VA Debt Management Center at 1-800-827-0648. Our office hours are 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM Central Time. Please note that we experience our highest call volumes on Mondays and throughout the first week of each month. By avoiding these peak times, you will minimize your wait time. Your call may be monitored to ensure quality information. You can also contact us via e-mail at [dmcedu.vbaspl@va.gov](mailto:dmcedu.vbaspl@va.gov). If you have questions regarding specific Veterans or payments, please submit a separate inquiry for each.

FOR PROPER CREDIT TO YOUR ACCOUNT, PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN WITH YOUR PAYMENT

Department of Veterans Affairs	PAYMENT REMITTANCE
--------------------------------	--------------------

* FILE NO.	AMOUNT ENCLOSED	ENTER YOUR CURRENT ADDRESS BELOW ONLY IF THE ONE ABOVE IS INCORRECT. PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR ZIP CODE.
PAYEE NO.	\$	
PERSON ENTITLED	YOUR TELEPHONE NO. (Include Area Code)	
DEDUCTION CODE		

\* Please include this number on your check or money order.

FL 4-589, FEB 2013

36



**MHEC**  
Creating a state of achievement





DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
Debt Management Center  
Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building  
P.O. Box 11930  
St. Paul, MN 55111-0930

2<sup>nd</sup> Collection Letter School  
Effective March 1, 2013

Letter 3

File Number:  
Payee Number:  
Person Entitled:  
Deduction Code:  
E-Mail Address: [dmc.edu.vbaspl@va.gov](mailto:dmc.edu.vbaspl@va.gov)  
(Please provide the information above  
on any e-mail correspondence)

You were previously notified that education benefits for were adjusted resulting in the creation of a debt. The balance on that account is now \$ . The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) notified schools in April 2009 and again in January 2011 of circumstances where schools would be held responsible for refunding tuition, fees and Yellow Ribbon payments to the VA. Those circumstances are summarized on the back of this letter. If you already sent funds to the VA for payment of this account, please advise this office where you sent the payment, and provide the amount and the date of the payment. If you have a copy of the cancelled check, please provide this office with a copy of the front and back of the check. If you have not returned the funds to the VA and sent the funds to the Veteran in error, you are responsible for the debt. Refunding money to the Veteran does not automatically transfer your liability of the debt to the Veteran unless you specifically followed the instructions on the back of this letter. If you dispute the debt, you should explain why you refunded monies to the Veteran and did not return them to the VA. Your payment options are listed on the back of this letter.

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF YOU IGNORE THIS LETTER?**

We may refer your account to the Department of the Treasury for further collection, which will include offset of any federal payment to which you are entitled. In addition, the Department of the Treasury may refer your account to private collection agencies, which will result in additional fees, interest and penalties being added to the balance.

**WHERE DO YOU CALL IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS LETTER?**

If you have questions regarding payment of the debt, you should contact the VA Debt Management Center at 1-800-827-0648. Our office hours are 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM Central Time. Please note that we experience our highest call volumes on Mondays and throughout the first week of each month. By avoiding these peak times, you will minimize your wait time. Your call may be monitored to ensure quality information. You can also contact us via e-mail at [dmc.edu.vbaspl@va.gov](mailto:dmc.edu.vbaspl@va.gov). If you have questions regarding specific Veterans or payments, please submit a separate inquiry for each.

Chief, Operations Division

FOR PROPER CREDIT TO YOUR ACCOUNT, PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN WITH YOUR PAYMENT



Department of Veterans Affairs

PAYMENT REMITTANCE

* FILE NO.		AMOUNT ENCLOSED	ENTER YOUR CURRENT ADDRESS BELOW ONLY IF THE ONE ABOVE IS INCORRECT. PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR ZIP CODE.
PAYEE NO.		\$	
PERSON ENTITLED		YOUR TELEPHONE NO. (Include Area Code)	
DEDUCTION CODE			

\* Please include this number on your check or money order.

PL 4-573, FEB 2013

37



MHEC  
Creating a state of achievement





DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
Debt Management Center  
Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building  
P.O. Box 11930  
St. Paul, MN 55111-0930

3<sup>rd</sup> Collection Letter School  
Effective March 1, 2013

Letter 4

File Number:  
Payee Number:  
Person Entitled:  
Deduction Code:  
E-Mail Address: [dmcedu.vbaspl@va.gov](mailto:dmcedu.vbaspl@va.gov)  
(Please provide the information above  
on any e-mail correspondence)

**You have a delinquent student tuition debt for** with the Department of Veterans Affairs. The balance is \$ . We have tried to contact you on numerous occasions to satisfy this debt. If you do not pay the balance in full or establish a satisfactory payment agreement within 60 days, we will refer your debt to the Department of the Treasury for offset under the Treasury Offset Program (TOP).

Under TOP, the Department of the Treasury will collect this debt by reducing or withholding Federal and State payment(s), not protected by law, to which you are entitled. This offset process is authorized by the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996. (VA benefits on behalf of a student are typically protected by law.)

Before we refer your debt to TOP, we are required to tell you that you have the right to inspect and copy records related to the debt. If you have questions about the repayment process, please call our office on the toll-free number shown below.

You must pay the debt in full or establish a satisfactory payment plan with our office within 60 days of the date of this letter to avoid referral to TOP. Please include the remittance stub at the bottom of this letter with any payment you send to our office. If you have any questions regarding the debt or actions you need to take to prevent referral, please call us toll-free at 1-800-827-0648 or email us at [dmcedu.vbaspl@va.gov](mailto:dmcedu.vbaspl@va.gov). Our normal business hours are Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 12:15 pm and 12:45 pm to 6:00 pm Central Time. We experience our highest call volumes on Mondays and through out the first week of the month. By avoiding these peak times, you will minimize your wait time. Your call may be monitored to ensure quality information.

Chief, Operations Division

FOR PROPER CREDIT TO YOUR ACCOUNT, PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN WITH YOUR PAYMENT

Department of Veterans Affairs	PAYMENT REMITTANCE
--------------------------------	--------------------

* FILE NO.	▶	AMOUNT ENCLOSED	ENTER YOUR CURRENT ADDRESS BELOW ONLY IF THE ONE ABOVE IS INCORRECT. PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR ZIP CODE.
PAYEE NO.	▶	\$	
PERSON ENTITLED	▶	YOUR TELEPHONE NO. (Include Area Code)	
DEDUCTION CODE	▶		
* Please include this number on your check or money order.			

PL 4-572, SEP 2012

38



MHEC  
Creating a state of achievement



### **Returning Funds to VA**

Schools should wait to refund payments to VA until a collection notice from the VA Debt Management Center (DMC) is received. In those instances where schools are responsible for making a remittance to VA for excess Tuition, Fees, or Yellow Ribbon payments, schools may make a refund to VA in one of five options.

**Note:** If making a payment directly to VA (see options 1, 2, & 3 below).

1. Schools may send a check, payable to the **US Department of Veterans Affairs**, to the VA Debt Management Center. It is essential that schools include the student's name and VA file number when making a payment to VA. If you have received a collection notice from DMC, VA requests the tear off sheet from the collection notice be included with the payment. The address to the VA Debt Management Center is:

**VA Debt Management Center  
Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building  
P.O. Box 11930  
St Paul, MN 55111-0930**

2. Schools may make a payment using a major credit card, debit card, or by electronic funds transfer from a checking or savings account. You may do this on-line by visiting the DMC website [www.pay.va.gov](http://www.pay.va.gov), or by calling the DMC toll free number at 1-800-827-0648. Schools paying on-line or by phone will be required to provide details from the DMC collection notice.
3. Schools may also send a payment to VA from any Western Union Agent location, or by visiting [www.westernunion.com](http://www.westernunion.com). The Western Union Agent or the website will require a host city code, which is "VADMC". You will need the code to complete the transaction.
4. Should the school receive payment in the form of a paper check, the school may return the **uncashed Treasury check** to:

**U.S. Department of the Treasury  
Financial Management Service  
P.O. Box 51318  
Philadelphia, PA 19115-6316**

5. Should the school receive payment via Electronic Funds Transfer, schools may refund VA electronically via Automated Clearing House (ACH). To do so, schools shall request their banks return the full payment amount using an R31 ACH return code. Each bank has its own procedures and time constraints for returning direct deposit payments. Please speak with your bank's representative to obtain specific instructions on this process.
6. For additional information about school debt, you can contact DMC via email at [dmcedu.vbaspl@va.gov](mailto:dmcedu.vbaspl@va.gov), by telephone at 800-827-0648, or by fax at 612-970-5782.

Refunds to VA not submitted in one of the approved methodologies may result in delays in debt processing. These delays may result in erroneous collection notices to students and/or schools and possibly referral of the debt to private collection agencies and the credit reporting bureaus.



# VA-ONCE TRAINING

40

---

## Initial Setup – Log On

Log in using your VA provided user ID and temporary Password. **NOTE:** Your browser must allow “Pop-Ups” to view this page.

The screenshot shows the VA-ONCE Student Login Page. The browser title bar reads "VA-ONCE STUDENT LOGIN PAGE (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs) - Windows Internet Explorer". The page header features the "UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS" logo and a search bar. A navigation menu includes links for Home, Veteran Services, Business, About VA, Media Room, Locations, Contact Us, and GI Bill Links. The main content area has a purple banner with the "VA-ONCE" logo and a photo of four people. Below the banner, there is a login section with the text "Please type in your Login Name and Password". It contains two input fields: "Login Name:" and "Password:", both highlighted with a green border. A "LOGIN" button is positioned below the password field. To the left of the login section, there is a list of links for frequently asked questions, such as "How do I sign up for VA-ONCE?", "What is my login name?", "How long does the password have to be?", "What if I do not remember my password?", "Why doesn't the password I was sent work?", "What web browser should I use?", "When was the latest update?", and "What changes were made in the last version update?". Below the login section, there is a "News Flash" dated February 24, 2015, which mentions the Veterans Choice Act going into effect on July 1. At the bottom of the page, there are links for Manuals & Regulations, Reports, If You Owe VA Money, GovBenefits.gov, USA Services, Español, VA Forms, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), and Web Policies & Important Links. The footer indicates "VA-ONCE Version P039 Database Date: (11/30/2014)" and the URL "http://www.va.gov/".

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Search All VA Web Pages  
SEARCH  
+ Open Advanced Search

Home Veteran Services Business About VA Media Room Locations Contact Us GI Bill Links

VA-ONCE

Please type in your Login Name and Password

Login Name:

Password:

LOGIN

[E-mail me my password?](#)  
[Show me my password hint?](#)

News Flash  
February 24, 2015

The Veterans Choice Act goes into effect July 1. To allow time for states to make their legislative/policy changes, School Certifying Officials at **public institutions of higher learning** in states/territories other than those in compliance (currently Texas and Georgia) need to follow these procedures when certifying enrollment for term.

[Manuals & Regulations](#) | [Reports](#) | [If You Owe VA Money](#) | [GovBenefits.gov](#) | [USA Services](#)  
[Español](#) | [VA Forms](#) | [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) | [Web Policies & Important Links](#)

VA-ONCE Version P039 Database Date: (11/30/2014)

http://www.va.gov/

41

## Initial Setup - Changing your password

Completed “New Password”, “Confirm Password”, and “Password Hint”. Click “Change Password”.

VA-ONCE Change Password - Microsoft Internet Explorer

**Change Password**

\*\*\* Enter new password and password hint \*\*\*

Login Name: bobahles

New Password:

Confirm Password:

Password Hint:

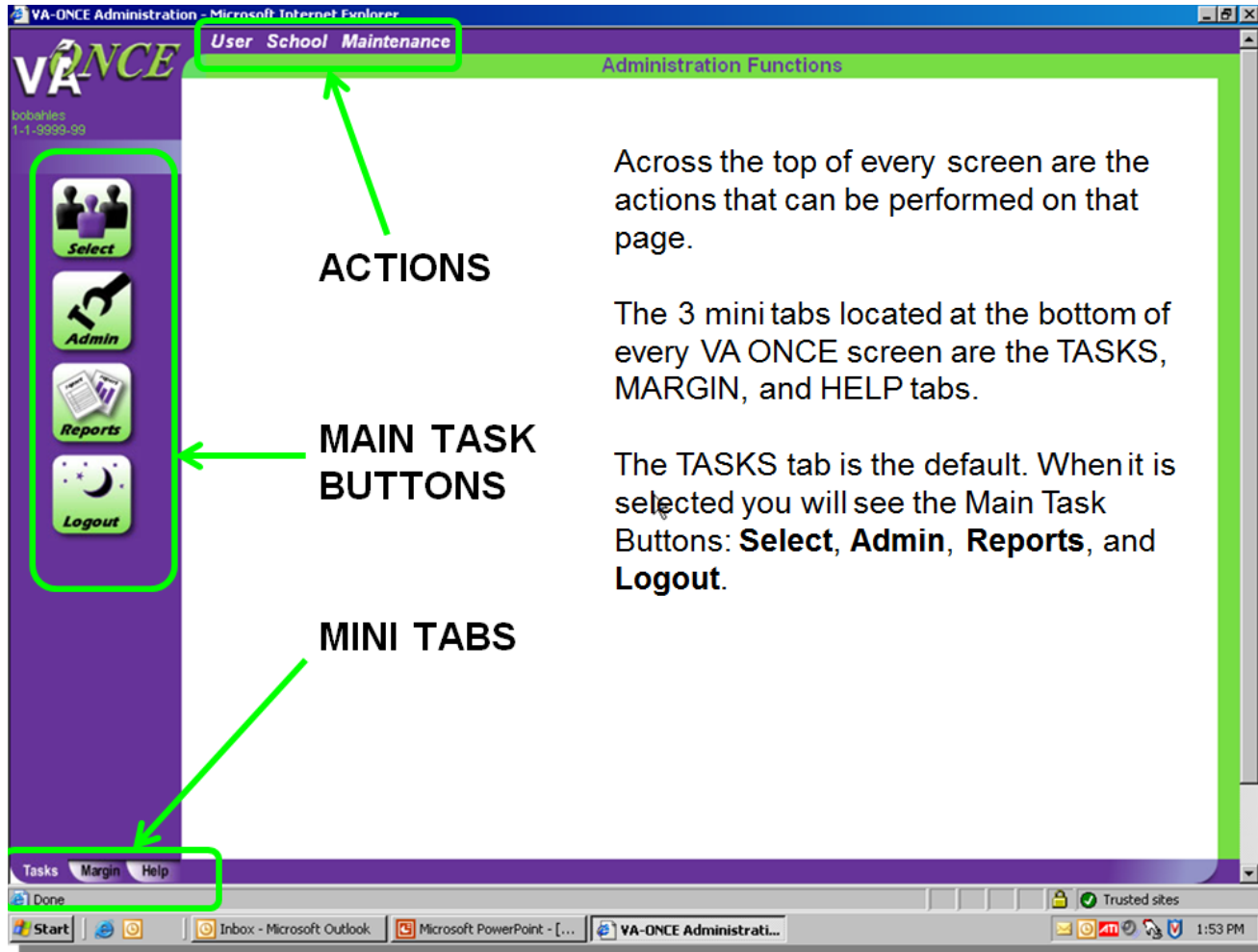
Change Password

Passwords must consist of 3 of the 4 following categories:  
Uppercase; Lowercase; Numeric; Special Characters.

**NOTE:** You will be prompted to change your password every 90 days. If you do not log in, your account will be deleted after 120 days of inactivity.

Tasks Margin Help

Start | Inbox - Microsoft Outlook | Microsoft PowerPoint ... | VA-ONCE Change Passw... | Trusted sites | 1:49 PM



# VA-Once Overview

43

## Helpful definitions for modifying enrollments:

- **Adjustment-** Adjusting the enrollment certificate allows you to report a decrease or increase in hours for the term.
- **Amend-** Amending the enrollment certificate allows you to edit the beginning date, ending date, or tuition and fees. For non- chapter 33 cases you can also add an advance pay or accelerated pay request. This feature should be used if you are correcting something, other than hours, on the original enrollment certification.
- **Terminate-** Terminating the enrollment allows you to report when a student is no longer attending the term (dropped to zero credits).

# Modifying Enrollments 44

## Correcting a Social Security Number

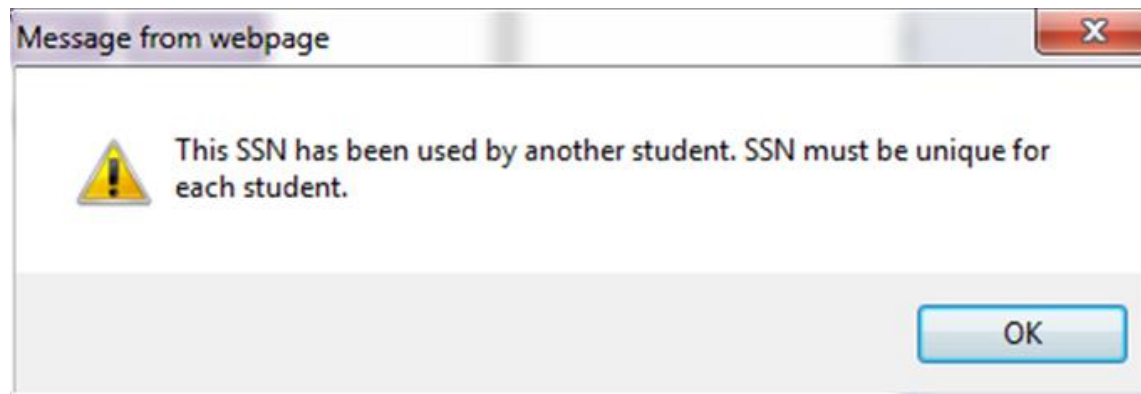
- (1) Highlight the student whose SSN needs to be changed.
- (2) On the Student menu select “Change SSN”.
- (3) A pop-up will appear with the Current SSN and a field for the new SSN. Enter the correct SSN in the New SSN field.
- (4) Click “OK”. The SSN will be changed. Be sure to change the file number, if appropriate.

The screenshot displays the VA-ONCE Student Select application interface. On the left, a vertical menu titled 'Student School Detail' includes options: Add, Access, Delete, Undelete, Activate, Deactivate, and Change SSN. The 'Change SSN' option is highlighted with a green box. The main area shows a 'Select Student' form with search filters and a table of student records. A pop-up window titled 'VA-ONCE Change SSN - Window' is open, showing the 'Current SSN' as 000-00-0000 and a field for the 'New SSN'. The 'OK' button is highlighted with a green box. The table below shows student records with columns for SSN, File #, Pay #, Last Name, First Name, Chapt, Program, Last Cert, and Facility Code.

SSN	File #	Pay #	Last Name	First Name	Chapt	Program	Last Cert	Facility Code
5M		00			30	BA BIBL	12/1/2014 11:19 AM	22222222
3		00			36	GUEST STUDENT	7/23/2012 2:46 PM	22222222
2		00			35	AS NURSI NG	4/16/2012 6:48 AM	22222222
2	0000004902	00	BAILEY	BILL	33	BS BIOLO GY	12/7/2014 10:23 AM	31313131
2								31313131
2								22222222
2								22222222
2								22222222

## Social Security Number Exists

In some instances, the Social Security Number exists elsewhere in the system. You will not be able to change the SSN, and will receive a message that the SSN must be unique.



If this occurs, add the student using the correct SSN. Deactivate the incorrect SSN.

You will not be able to see any of the certifications submitted under the incorrect SSN unless you view the deactivated student. If you need the records merged, contact your ELR. **NOTE:** The process of merging the records can take a lengthy amount of time. Only contact the ELR if you need to see past certifications under the correct SSN.

46

State Approving Agency	Position Title	Phone	E-mail
Trish Gordon-McCown	Associate Director, Veterans Affairs	410-767-3098	<a href="mailto:trish.mccown@maryland.gov">trish.mccown@maryland.gov</a>
Olayta Rigsby	Veterans Affairs Analyst	410-767-3067	<a href="mailto:olayta.rigsby@maryland.gov">olayta.rigsby@maryland.gov</a>
Everette Jackson	Veterans Affairs Analyst	410-767-3091	<a href="mailto:everette.jacksonjr@maryland.gov">everette.jacksonjr@maryland.gov</a>
Selica Cherry-Alexander	DVA-Baltimore Education Liaison Representative	410-230-4545	<a href="mailto:selica.cherry-alexander2@va.gov">selica.cherry-alexander2@va.gov</a>

**Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday 8:30 am to 4:30 pm**

**FOR GENERAL INQUIRIES:**

**[VAEDUCATIONBENEFITS.MHEC@MARYLAND.GOV](mailto:VAEDUCATIONBENEFITS.MHEC@MARYLAND.GOV)**

**MHEC Switchboard Operator: Phone 410-767-3301 or 800-974-0203 – Fax 410-332-0270**

**47**

## VA Toll-Free Numbers:

- SCO Only Hotline: 1-855-225-1159 (Only for SCOs)
- Education Center: 1-888-442-4551 (for Students)
- General VA Info: 1-800-827-1000

**VA Debt Management: 1-800-827-0648**

# Available Resources

48



# Buffalo Regional Processing Office

49

## **GI Bill® Information:**

<http://www.gibill.va.gov>

## **Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) – MD State Approving Agency for Veterans Educational Benefits:**

<http://www.mhec.state.md.us/higherEd/acadAff/VeteransBenefits/index.asp>

## **Training Resources:**

<http://www.gibill.va.gov/school-certifying-officials/>

## **SCO Handbook (updated September 18, 2015):**

<http://www.gibill.va.gov/school-certifying-officials/sco-training-resources/handbook.html>

[http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/school\\_resources.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/school_resources.asp)

# **Save Under Your Favorites 50**

## Study Abroad

[http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/docs/factsheets/post\\_911\\_study\\_abroad\\_fact\\_sheet.pdf](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/docs/factsheets/post_911_study_abroad_fact_sheet.pdf)

# Fact Sheets

51



# QUESTIONS?

52

---

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. At the very top, there is a solid red rectangular band. Below this band, the page is filled with evenly spaced horizontal grey lines, typical of notebook paper. The lines extend across the entire width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

# Notes

53



This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

# Notes