The El Paso County Community College District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

ACCREDITATION

The El Paso County Community College District is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) to award associate degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033 or call (404) 679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of El Paso County Community College District.

The Commission is only to be contacted if there is evidence that appears to support El Paso County Community College District’s significant non-compliance with requirement or standard. Other inquiries should be directed to El Paso County Community College District at P.O. Box 20500, El Paso, Texas 79998 or (915) 831-2000.

WELCOME TO THE EL PASO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Whether you are training for a specific vocational/technical objective or are preparing for transfer to a four-year college or university, El Paso Community College (EPCC) offers several programs and services developed to help you attain your educational goals. Our staff is dedicated to assisting you by providing information regarding admissions, career guidance, job placement, financial aid, veterans’ affairs, tutoring, handicapped services and many others. We encourage you to use the services provided.

The mission of the El Paso Community College Veterans' Affairs Office (VAO) is to assist you in applying for and receiving Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) Educational benefits. Our role is that of liaison between the veteran student and the Department of Veterans Affairs. This handbook is intended to provide you important information regarding your claim for VA educational benefits, not to act as a substitute for the college catalog. Please keep this handbook as a permanent general reference. Read and understand the information it contains. If you have questions beyond the scope of this handbook, feel free to contact any EPCC VAO for further assistance. We hope that your EPCC experience is rewarding and positive in achieving your career or educational goals.
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TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Veteran students may contact a Veterans Affairs Office at the Valle Verde Campus, (831-2242) and Transmountain Campus (831-5142).

For information on other El Paso Community College Services, please call the appropriate numbers below:

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CONTACTS

(Educational benefit Information)  (Benefit Information other than educational)

Department of Veterans Affairs
Regional Office
P. O. Box 8888
Muskogee OK 74402-8888
Phone - 1-888-442-4551
E-Mail - muskrpo@vba.va.gov
Internet - www.vamuskogee.net/edu.htm
Or
www.gibill.va.gov
Enrollment Verification - 1-877-823-2378
Direct Deposit - 1-877-838-2778
SECTION I: CERTIFICATION FOR VA EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

In order to receive payment for benefits, students must come by the EPCC VA Office and pick-up a checklist for documents required by the VA for certification. Certification is the formal process of confirming a student's enrollment to the VA Regional Office so that benefits can be paid. Certification requires completion of a Certification Request Form by the student. This form is used by the EPCC VA Office to record a student's request for VA educational benefits each semester.

STEPS TO CERTIFICATION:

1. Complete Admissions Application online at https://www.applytexas.org/adappc/gen/c_start.WBX
2. Request military transcripts and academic transcripts from all prior institutions. (See Prior Training section below for websites)
3. Attend New Student Orientation.
4. Take placement test(s) as required.
5. See counselor to review test scores, obtain degree plan and get pre-advised for recommended courses registration.
6. Obtain VA documents checklist at VA Office.
7. Apply for VA benefits online at http://www.gibill.va.gov/apply-for-benefits/application/
8. Return VA completed documents along with degree plan to VA Office after registering for courses.

TYPES OF CERTIFICATION

ADVANCE PAYMENT
Students may request Advance Payment from the VA by completing the certification process in time for the VA Regional Office to receive the paperwork 30 days prior to the payment deadline. These payments are mailed to the school for release to students at the Valle Verde Campus. You are paid a check equal to the first partial month and the following full month of benefits which is intended to assist you in paying tuition and fees. You also have the option to apply for an installment loan online or an emergency loan through your nearest Financial Aid Office. You are not entitled to another VA benefits check until you complete the third full month of enrollment. EXAMPLE: Student requests advance pay for Fall. The check covers the days attended in August and the full month of September. Your next check is not due until November for the month of October.

Students who have not attended EPCC previously or who have had a break in training of at least 30 days or more during which VA benefits have not been received may request advance pay. An enrollment of at least half-time (6 or more hours during Fall or Spring semester; 4 or more hours during the 10-week courses; 3 or more hours during the 8-week courses; 2 or more hours during the 5-week courses) is required.

NOTE: AN ADVANCE PAY REQUEST DOES NOT GUARANTEE AN ADVANCE PAYMENT WILL BE RECEIVED BEFORE PAYMENT DEADLINE AND THE STUDENT MUST BE PREPARED TO PAY TUITION USING OPTIONS LISTED ABOVE.

120 DAY CERTIFICATION OPTION/MONTHLY VERIFICATION
A VA student has the option to be certified up to 120 days prior to beginning of the semester. Payment to students under Chapters 30, 1606, 1607, and VRAP will be made after the first monthly verification of attendance is initiated. Payment should be expected approximately 10 to 15 days after monthly verification of attendance was processed by Muskogee, faster if you have direct deposit. All other chapters will receive payment by the tenth working day following the completion of the first month of attendance. You can now
submit your monthly verification forms by touch-tone telephone at 1-877-823-2378 (toll free) OR connect to the VA internet site at https://www.gibill.va.gov/wave/index.do. If your enrollment has changed during the month, you must verify this change of enrollment through the WAVE program.

**CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT**
The VA Office will continuously certify VA students who are registered for the current and following semester. If a student wishes to not be certified he must contact his nearest VA Office to request to be inactivated. If a student wishes to be reactivated, the student must also contact the VA to request this action and update his/her information.

**SECTION II: VA DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS**
These are some of the documents required, check with the VA Office for any other required documents.

- **VA Form 1990**
  Print out of Application for VA Education Benefits VA Form 1990 (Chapter 33, 30, 1606, 1607, VRAP) from VONAPP or Certificate of Eligibility listing EPCC and current major.

- **DD Form-214**
  Veteran students are required to submit copies of DD-214(s) to the VA if they will be receiving benefits. If copies have been submitted previously for education benefits, additional submissions are not necessary.

- **Print out of VA Form 5490 (Chapter 35) from VONAPP or Certificate of Eligibility listing EPCC and current major.**
  Application for Survivors and Dependents Educational Assistance

- **Certificate of eligibility**
  This document is issued by the VA to an applicant via mail to inform them of the approval to pursue a stated educational, professional, or vocational objective at a particular institution, the remaining entitlement of the student (in months), and the ending date of the student's eligibility. **NOTE:** The EPCC VA office will not determine your eligibility. The VA has this responsibility. We may require you to request a "certificate of eligibility" prior to certifying you for VA Educational benefits.

**SECTION III: ADMISSIONS AND ACADEMIC INFORMATION**
New students to EPCC must complete all admissions requirements before registering for classes. It is recommended that students begin this process before applying for their VA Educational benefits as well. The process begins online at https://www.applytexas.org/adappc/gen/e_start.WBX. Refer to the college catalog at http://viewer.zmags.com/publication/200930e2#/200930e2/1 for more detailed information concerning admissions requirements. The college catalog may be accessed online only for viewing or printing if needed.

**SPECIAL PROGRAMS ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**
In addition to fulfilling the general requirements for admission to the College, individuals seeking admission to some programs must also fulfill certain specialized admissions requirements. Typically, these requirements are to be fulfilled by individuals seeking admission to many of the various Allied Health/Nursing programs although specialized requirements may also be associated with other program areas. At the time the Admissions Application is received by the Admissions/ Records Office, individuals will be advised of any specialized requirements related to their anticipated program of study.
PRIOR TRAINING
Prior training is any previous educational or occupational experience for which college credit has been earned and which may be transferable to EPCC. The process to evaluate prior training requires submission of official transcripts to the EPCC Evaluations Department. It is extremely important that you request transcripts from all colleges or universities attended. **Failure to do so may delay your future VA benefit payments. VA regulations stipulate that all prior training must be reported.** *Veterans must request their military experience to be evaluated using the appropriate websites below:*

- **Army (AARTS Transcript):**
  
  *Step 1.* [http://aartstranscript.army.mil](http://aartstranscript.army.mil)  
  *Step 2.* Click on Official Transcript.  
  *Step 3.* Fill out the information requested to access Transcript  
  *Step 4.* Pick the school were the transcripts will be sent.

- **Navy and Marine Corps (SMART Transcript):**
  
  *Step 2.* Click on OK  
  *Step 3.* Go to “How to request and official transcript”  
  *Step 4.* Fill out and Print the form  
  *Step 5.* Fax or Mail it.

- **Air Force (CCAF Transcript):**
  
  *Step 2.* Click on “Order Transcripts Online”  
  *Step 3.* Fill out the information requested to access Transcript.

- **Coast Guard (CGI Transcript):**
  
  *Step 1.* [http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cgi/forms/CG_Form_1561.pdf](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cgi/forms/CG_Form_1561.pdf)  
  *Step 2.* Fill out and Print the form  
  *Step 3.* Fax, Mail, or e-mail it.

*The VA office at EPCC will not certify a student for more than two (2) semesters pending evaluation of transcripts. The VA will not pay for a repeated course for which passing credit has already been received.*

DEGREE PLANS
A degree plan, as outlined in the catalog, is a listing of courses required for a specific degree. Completed grades and transfer credits should be posted on the degree plan by an Academic Counselor. A degree plan is not a guarantee that the institution will not change the degree requirements. If course requirements have been changed, a student should discuss possible substitutions with an Academic Counselor. Completion of the certification process for VA benefits requires that every student receiving VA benefits have a degree plan on file with the EPCC Veterans Affairs Office. A degree plan may be obtained from a College Counselor. **NOTE:**  

VA CAN ONLY CERTIFY A STUDENT FOR COURSES REQUIRED TOWARDS THE COMPLETION OF YOUR CURRENT DEGREE PLAN ON FILE.

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION
Some of these programs may not be eligible for VA educational benefits. Check with the VA office to see what certificate programs are approved for benefits.

SERVICE MEMBERS OPPORTUNITY COLLEGE (SOC)
Refer to EPCC catalog.

SERVICE MEMBERS OPPORTUNITY COLLEGE ASSOCIATE DEGREE (SOCAD)
Refer to EPCC catalog.

COURSE SEQUENCE
Classes are generally offered as outlined in the catalog for each degree plan. First semester indicates "Fall" and Second semester refers to "Spring". Core classes specific to each degree plan generally are offered in a Fall/Spring sequence. Often times they are only offered once per year. Discuss with your College Counselor the sequence of courses within your degree plan and how this might affect your semester registration.
ELECTIVE COURSES
Many plans allow for elective courses. These courses are generally limited to the listing at the bottom of the particular degree plan. Check with your Academic Counselor if you are uncertain as to what elective courses, if any, are needed for your degree. This can be verified through the EPCC catalog course descriptions. Remedial courses may not be used as elective courses.

STUDENT PETITION
A request for approval for any deviation from standard academic policies or requirements. Examples are: to substitute one course for another, request an overload, request removal from probation or suspension, request waiver of a course, request admittance to the institution or a particular program. A student petition is initiated by the student through an academic Counselor. The student petition should be written out by the student stating reasons or nature of the petition. An approved petition should contain 3 signatures: that of the student, the College Counselor, and the appropriate Division Dean. The "Approved Block" must be checked on the Student Petition form by the Division Dean. When requesting a course substitution, the request must be in line with the student's degree plan and academic objectives. Petitions not worded correctly or requesting an unusual change may not be approved. Student petitions should explicitly state what is wanted so there will be no room for interpretations later on.

REMEDIAL COURSES
A remedial course is not required in a student's degree plan, but is eligible for VA Educational payment if testing shows a need for the course. A remedial course is taken to improve an individual's reading, writing, language or math skills. Remedial training can be in such areas as Reading, Basic Academic Skill Development (BASK), English as a Second Language (ESOL) and Mathematics.

Reading courses are taken by the student to improve the skills of comprehension, vocabulary, word attack, study skills, critical reading, and reading rate. There are also some ESOL reading courses that are designed for persons who wish to learn English as a Second Language. These courses develop skill in listening, pronunciation, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and interpretation.

English as a Second Language Courses (ESOL) are those courses taken by students who are limited in the English language proficiency in the areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing. You may not repeat an ESOL course that has been successfully completed and receive benefits for it. Please refer to your college catalog for additional information on Reading and ESOL courses.

PREREQUISITE COURSE
A course taken prior to enrolling in a related or more advanced course. Generally, each degree plan offered by EPCC contains at least one course that has prerequisite requirements. That is, students must complete the prerequisite, or less advanced course, before enrolling in the advance course required by the degree plan. Sometimes the prerequisite course is included as part of the degree plan and every student who pursues that degree plan must take it. In this situation, students receive their VA Educational Benefits for the prerequisite automatically. It is also possible for students to receive benefits for prerequisite courses that they need, but which are not included as part of the degree plan. To receive payment, however, each student must generally document his or her need for the prerequisite course. This is accomplished through assessment testing or by course description found at the end of our school’s catalog.

COREQUISITE COURSE
A course to be taken in conjunction with another course, i.e. a lab course. Students receive VA Educational Benefits for the Corequisite automatically.

SCHOLASTIC STANDARDS
Good Academic Standing is based upon maintaining a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 (C average) for all combined course work completed at EPCC and for each individual semester. Failure to maintain the required
GPA will result in academic probation. When placed on probation twice, the student will be suspended from the college, and the VA Educational Benefits will be terminated until the student is counseled to re-establish benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

SECTION IV: BENEFIT PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS, ELIGIBILITY AND ENTITLEMENT INFORMATION

MONTGOMERY GI BILL (CHAPTER 30)
Enlisted into Active Duty with the Armed Forces after June 30, 1985 and contributed $1,200. You must have served at least:
  a) 2 years of honorable continuous active duty if your first obligated period of service was less than 3 years or if you are now on active duty; or
  b) 3 years of honorable continuous active duty if your initial obligated period of service was 3 years or more; or
  c) 2 years of honorable continuous active duty service followed by 4 years of continuous active duty in the Selected Reserve with satisfactory participation in training.
  d) Have a high school diploma or GED.

RESERVE GI BILL (CHAPTER 1606)
Any person who enlists, reenlists, or extends an enlistment, in the Selective Reserve for not less than 6 years in addition to any other period of obligation after June 30, 1985 and has completed high school or GED, IADT, 180 days of service in the selective, reserve and is satisfactorily participating in required training in the selective reserve.

RESERVE GI BILL (CHAPTER 1607)
A member of a reserve component who serves on active duty on or after September 11, 2001 under title 10 U.S. Code for a contingency operation and who serves at least 90 consecutive days or more is eligible for chapter 1607. National Guard members also are eligible if their active duty is under section 502(f), title 32 U.S.C and they serve for 90 days consecutive days when authorized by the President of Secretary of Defense for a national emergency and is supported by federal funds. Individuals are eligible as soon as they reach the 90-day point whether or not they are currently on active duty. DoD will fully identify contingency 11 operations that qualify for benefits under chapter 1607. The Secretaries of each military service, Department of Defense, and Department of Homeland Security (Coast Guard) will determine eligibility.

DEPENDENTS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM - (CHAPTER 35)
The portion of 38 U.S.C. which authorizes educational benefits to dependents and survivors of certain veterans who have serious disabilities as the result of their service, (100% disabled), or who have died of a service-connected cause, a prisoner of war, or missing in action. Direct Deposit is now available for this Chapter.

VETERANS RETRAINING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (VRAP) - (CHAPTER 36)
- Unemployed
- At least 35 but no more than 60 years old
- Have an “other than dishonorable” discharge
- Not eligible for any other VA education benefit programs (e.g., the Post-9/11 GI Bill, Montgomery GI Bill, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment)
- Not in receipt of VA compensation due to Individual Unemployability (IU)
- Not enrolled in a federal or state job training program
Participants must attend full-time in order to receive up to 12 months of assistance equal to the monthly full-time payment rate under the Montgomery GI Bill–Active Duty program ($1,564 effective October 1, 2012). More information can be found at http://benefits.va.gov/vow/

**VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION - (CHAPTER 31)**
Contact your local Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Office for eligibility at:
7500 Viscount Suite C-50
El Paso, TX 79925
Main Office Line (915) 772-2195 or visit http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/vre/
Contact your nearest VA Office once you have been found eligible for this benefit and a VA Form 28-1905 has been sent to EPCC VA.

**Hazelwood Act (Texas Veterans Only)**
The Hazelwood Act provides a tuition exemption for Texas veterans at Texas State supported schools. For information visit http://www.collegefortexans.com/apps/financialaid/tofa2.cfm?ID=579

**CURRENT VA PAY RATES CAN BE FOUND BELOW**
http://www.gibill.va.gov/resources/benefits_resources/rate_tables.html

**ACTIVE DUTY PERSONNEL RECEIVING ENTITLEMENT UNDER CHAPTER 30 WILL BE REIMBURSED THE COST OF TUITION AND FEES ONLY WHILE ATTENDING EPCC. PLEASE REFER TO THE TRAINING TIME EQUIVALENCY TABLE TO DETERMINE TRAINING TIME.**
### Training Time Equivalency Table

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SECTION V: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

SUPPLEMENTAL ENROLLMENT
VA students may enroll for courses at one school while pursuing a degree from another school. There are two situations when this can occur. Attendance at EPCC and another institution at the same time is called concurrent enrollment. Attendance at EPCC only while pursuing a degree from another school is called transient enrollment. In both situations the school from which a VA student plans to get his/her degree is called the parent institution. All other schools are secondary schools.

CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT
An approval letter from the parent school must be provided by the student to the secondary school. The letter must specifically state the courses taken at the secondary school meet the requirements for the degree at the parent school. The courses must be listed on the letter. You must also complete a Certification Request Form at EPCC VA. EPCC will not agree to be your parent school unless you have applied for admissions and declared a major.

TRANSIENT ENROLLMENT
An approval letter from the parent school must be provided by the student to the secondary school. The letter must specifically state the courses taken at the secondary school meet the requirements for the degree at the parent school. The courses must be listed on the letter. You must also complete a Certification Request Form at EPCC.

GRADUATING SEMESTER (Round-Off)
Students who are completing all degree requirements may take additional hours to supplement their income during the final semester. If only one class is required for graduation, additional hours may be taken to increase the training time rate. The only restriction is that the courses cannot be remedial courses. This "Round-Off" process may be completed only once for each degree plan completed. (If course(s) required for graduation are not successfully completed, this process may not be repeated while pursuing the same degree plan.) However, required courses not successfully completed may be repeated to fulfill graduation requirements.

DROPPING COURSES
The VA will not pay benefits for course in which you withdraw or drop (A "W" grade). If you drop a course, any benefits paid to you for that course will have to be repaid to the VA. Some exceptions may apply.
Six-Hour Exclusion Rule- Effective June 1, 1989, first time withdrawal students will not be charged an overpayment for any money received before the effective date of the drop. This is a one-time, one-use exclusion for up to six hours. If you drop only three hours you cannot save the other three hours for use later.

DELIMITING DATE
A date ten years after separation from active duty service that indicates the last day VA educational benefits must be used for Chapters 30 and 1607. Chapter 33 delimiting date is fifteen years from last discharge or separation. Fourteen years from the date eligibility is established as per the DD Form 2384 for chapter 1606. Generally age 26 for dependent children and ten years from eligibility date for spouses under Chapter 35. Some exceptions may apply.
TUTORIAL ASSISTANCE
Tutorial assistance for Chapters 30, 1606, 1607, 33 and 35 is available to help with the cost of a private tutor. A veteran student attending school half-time or more may receive up to $100 per calendar month for tutorial assistance. This additional money is paid without any charges against VA Educational Benefits for Chapters 35. However, Chapter 30 will be charged against their entitlement when they go over $600 in tutorial assistance. The tutor must be qualified according to EPCC’s policy and cannot be a close relative (brother, sister, spouse, parent, or in-law) to the individual being tutored. The maximum any VA student can receive is $1200 of tutoring assistance. For the forms and applications, plus additional information come by any VA Office.

VA WORK-STUDY PROGRAM
You must be enrolled at least 3/4 time and you must be receiving VA Educational Benefits. The VA will pay the current minimum wage for up to 25 hours per week times the number of weeks in the semester. Applications are available at any EPCC VA Office and may be submitted to the EPCC VAO's, the VA Healthcare Center, the Fort Bliss National Cemetery, the Texas Employment Commission and American GI Forum. Contact the VA office for additional sites.

CHANGE OF PROGRAM
The VA has determined that a loss of 12 or more semester hours from one degree program to another constitutes a change of program, unless you are enrolling in a new program after the successful completion of another. We strongly urge you to take advantage of our Career Center to explore the many avenues available in selecting your initial degree program at EPCC.

Steps to take:
1. Contact a VA Advisor to discuss your intention to change programs and to obtain the change of Program Supplemental Guide. You will be referred to the Counseling Office for your new degree plan.
2. Obtain a signed copy of your new degree plan from your college counselor. Ensure that all prior training is posted.
3. Submit your new degree plan along with the completed documents listed on the supplemental guide to the EPCC VA Office.
4. THE VA WILL MAKE THE FINAL DECISION (Muskogee, OK).
SECTION IV: PAY PROBLEMS

A pay problem occurs when VA Educational Benefits are not received by the veteran student or if the student as an overpayment to the VA. It takes from six to eight weeks, once certification is received by the VA, to initiate an educational check. If 30 days pass and no VA correspondence have been received, initiate an inquiry to VA Regional Office. If correspondence has been received but no VA check has been issued by the VA within 6 to 8 weeks, initiate an inquiry to VA Regional Office to determine the cause for delay in payment.

Some of the causes could be:

1. Missing DD 214.
2. Returning after suspension from school due to unsatisfactory progress. This could have occurred at EPCC or last school individual attended.
3. Character of discharge.
4. Pending verification of eligibility (Chapter 35).
5. Failure to verify attendance -Chapters 30, 1606, 1607, VRAP.
6. Delinquent overpayment toward the VA.
7. Delimiting date has passed.
8. VA never received application.
9. Individual not responding to VA letters requesting additional information.
10. VA still has information that DOD (Department of Defense) is still showing reservist as not eligible.
11. Pending evaluation of transcripts or evaluation of prior training.

Some of the solutions to the causes mentioned could be:

1. Make sure that you bring in all your DD 214’s.
2. If you are re-entering school after suspension due to unsatisfactory progress, changing programs or schools, let the VA Office know. If you re-enroll at the same school and in the same program after termination for unsatisfactory progress the school must approve your re-enrollment and certify it to VA. This process is normally accomplished with a Student Petition.
3. An overpayment to the VA may delay any payments due.
4. Once you have reached your delimiting date your VA Educational Benefits will terminate. There is currently no provision for extending a delimiting date other than medical reasons or having reenter into active duty. Requesting an extension based on medical reasons will be reviewed by the VA and that office will make the final decision whether or not the extension will be granted.
5. Bring any letters you receive from the VA that you do not understand or that request additional information to the VA Office for assistance as soon as possible. Benefits may be terminated by the VA pending your response.

These are only a few of the causes and possible solutions to avoid a delay in receiving your VA educational benefits. Any other number of things could cause a delay in your payment. The VA Office will either explain the delay or will submit an inquiry to the VA Office for an explanation of the delay. Once the reason is known, steps can be taken to solve the problem. Please keep in mind that sometimes a solution will be entirely up to the VA. There is no statute of limitations for the VA, if you have an overpayment you will be indebted to the U.S. government until it is paid.

OVERPAYMENT

An overpayment is a charge of indebtedness to the U.S. Government. An overpayment is a serious matter and must be repaid. Failure to comply with overpayment letters from the VA could result in legal proceedings...
brought against an individual by the U.S. Government. An individual with an overpayment has the right to request a waiver or repayment of debt in monthly installments. In both cases the VA will make the final decision. See a representative from the Veterans Affairs Office for the procedure of this type of request. Please keep in mind that you will be charged interest and possible administrative fees on any overpayment with the VA. Delinquent debts may also include fees assessed by a collection agency.

If an overpayment becomes delinquent the following could happen:

1. Holding back VA disability payments.
2. Holding back any refund, if due, from your income taxes.

Any funds due to an individual will be held back and credited to the overpayment account until paid in full including additional fees and/or interest charges. Listed below are some possible causes of overpayment, their solution or possible ways to avoid them. There could be more causes for overpayment than those listed. If you are charged with an overpayment and have no idea why, contact your VA Office immediately for assistance. You have the right to request an audit and even a waiver from the VA if you are in disagreement with the overpayment.

- **Cause:** Enrolling for courses not required on your degree plan.
- **Solution:** Always review your degree plan prior to enrolling for courses, make sure they are required.

- **Cause:** Enrolling for courses for which credit was previously granted from prior colleges/universities attended or military experience.
- **Solution:** If you have the slightest feeling that a course you are planning to enroll was taken somewhere else or you may receive credit from your military experience (if applicable), DO NOT ENROLL FOR THE COURSE. Verification of credits transferring from prior institutions or military experience will be known once official evaluations are completed.

- **Cause:** Withdrawing from a course or courses during a semester.
- **Solution:** If at all possible, try to avoid this. It is recommended that a statement be submitted to the VA identifying your reasons for the withdrawal. If your reasons are accepted by the VA, it will reduce the amount of overpayment.

- **Cause:** Certified for the coming semester, did not enroll.
- **Solution:** Notify the VA Office immediately, if you will not be attending the coming semester, preferably before the current semester is over.
IMPORTANT NOTES

- The EPCC VA Office is in no way affiliated with the DVA. We are regulated by the DVA and act as liaison between the student and the DVA.

- You will be certified for only 2 semesters if you are pending transcripts. If ALL transcripts are not received by EPCC by the end of this semester, you will not be certified again until they are received.

- "F" grades are payable under VA and can be repeated if the course is required for graduation. Caution: "F" grades will, however, lower your grade point average and after the third repeat you will create an over payment.

- Always keep an updated degree plan of your current program. Bring it with you when you see a VA advisor or academic counselor for course enrollment information.

- Individuals receiving VA educational benefits are allowed additional funds ($100.00 per month) for tutorial services.

- Make sure all transcripts to include Military transcripts are received and evaluated by EPCC prior to the end of the second semester you are enrolled.

- Try to keep from withdrawing or being dropped from courses after the use of the 6 hour exclusion, you will create an overpayment which may include all monies paid to you by the VA from the beginning of the semester!

- Do not repeat courses for which you have received a grade of D or better or you have received credit from another school or MOS, etc. Remedial courses such as Math and English sequence need a C or better to go to the next level.

- Never enroll in fewer hours than certified.

- Maintain a 2.0 GPA for all semesters attended.

- Verify attendance monthly to the VA for Chapter 30, 1606, 1607, and VERAP.
THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

1. The six hour exclusion is allowable for students who are withdrawing from courses up to 6 credit hours for the first time with a grade of "W". This is only a one time, one semester opportunity.

2. Advance Pay - You are paid a check equal to the first full month and partial month of benefits which is intended to assist you in paying tuition and fees. You are not entitled to another VA benefits check until you complete the next full month of enrollment. EXAMPLE: Received advance pay for Fall 2012. Check covers 4 days in August and the full month of September. Your next check is not due until November for the month of October.

3. If at any time you enroll in fewer hours than certified or drop courses you may have an overpayment which will be deducted from future checks. Always submit a statement explaining why you have dropped classes or enrolled in fewer hours than certified in order to establish mitigating circumstances. Your statement may excuse you from part of the overpayment.

4. If you receive an Emergency Loan you are responsible for repaying that loan. Neither the Department of Veteran Affairs nor the VA office will pay the loan for you. If you do not pay the Emergency Loan, you will be dropped from all classes and will receive an overpayment with Department of Veteran Affairs. You will not be allowed to re-enroll at EPCC until your emergency loan is paid in full.

5. Remember, the VA Office of EPCC does not pay for your classes; you pay for them out of the VA checks you will receive each month. It is up to you to pay for your classes. Chapter 33 is not a guarantee that payment will be received by tuition deadline.

6. The signature of the Veterans Affairs Coordinator of your Parent Institution is required on the concurrent or transient enrollment forms before submission to EPCC's VA Office.

7. Name changes and address changes must be reported to the Department of Veteran Affairs, Admissions office and the VA office or you will not receive your VA check.

8. If you call the Department of Veteran Affairs, please record the person's name with whom you speak and take notes on the conversation.

9. All remedial and prerequisite courses will require a placement test.

10. You may also apply for and be eligible for Financial Aid at the same time that you are receiving VA educational benefits. See the Student Financial Services Office for information on applying for financial aid.

11. Scholarship information is posted online at the Student Financial Services Office website.

12. Petitions for course substitutions should be received by the VA Office prior to the beginning of the semester that the petition will be in effect.

13. Students should see their academic and VA Advisors before registering for classes.

14. Do not enroll for any class that you feel you might have received credit for from a prior institution or through your military training.
15. Chapter 35 (Dependents Son/ Daughter) educational benefits DO NOT TERMINATE should you marry. You are entitled to these benefits until you reach your 26th birthday.
GLOSSARY

ACADEMIC PROBATION
A semester in which a student is warned that he or she does not have cumulative and/or semester GPA of 2.0 (C average).

ACADEMIC SUSPENSION
A semester in which a student is not allowed to attend school or to receive VA Educational Benefits because he or she did not meet the satisfactory progress requirements of a cumulative and/or semester GPA of 2.0 (C average).

ADD/DROP PERIOD
The time when students may change their course registration.

AUDITED COURSE
A course in which a student enrolls for instruction without credit. This type of course is not allowed for payment of benefits.

CATALOG
The publication issued by the College annually which provides important information about College policies, course programs, course descriptions, and faculty.

CATALOG AID YEAR
The academic year for which the College catalog is in effect. Students must know and follow their degree plan requirements from the appropriate catalog year.

CERTIFYING OFFICIAL
The Director of Veterans’ Affairs and Manager VA Programs at EPCC.

CLASS SCHEDULE
A publication made available each semester by the college offering the courses that will be available for registration during that semester.

CONTINUED ACADEMIC PROBATION
A semester following academic probation where a student does not have a cumulative and/or semester GPA of 2.0 (C average).

COURSE
A specific course of instruction (e.g. English 1301.)

FILE NUMBER (Also claim number)
A seven, eight, or nine-digit number assigned by the VA to identify a claimant's records. Most veterans who first filed a claim for VA benefits after July, 1973, have their Social Security number assigned as their VA file number. The dependents or survivors of veterans (who are eligible) are assigned a letter suffix (e.g., A, B, W) to the file number of the veteran.24

GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)/CUMULATIVE GPA
A calculation of grades in credit hour courses completed at EPCC. Grade Point Average is a calculation of all semester credit hours completed during the semester/term.
MATRICULATED STUDENT
A college or university student who has satisfied all required prerequisites for formal admission and recognition as a degree-seeking student. For undergraduate students, the VA does not consider acceptance into a specific major curricular field of study a prerequisite for classifying the student as "matriculated".

MINI-MESTER
8-week courses usually taught at the Fort Bliss Center.

MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES
Unanticipated and unavoidable events beyond a student's control which are responsible for the student's inability to complete a course or courses or which result in the student's receipt of a non-punitive grade from a course that the student did complete.

NON-COLLEGE DEGREE (NCD)
A course or program which does not lead to a standard college degree, (i.e. EPCC Certificate Programs).

NON-PUNITIVE GRADE
A grade which is not used when computing graduation requirements. Examples of grades that are generally non-punitive are W (withdrawals), NC (no credit) and I (incomplete).

OBJECTIVE
The final educational, professional, or vocational goal of a student, (e.g., degree, diploma, certificate, occupation).

PUNITIVE GRADE
A failing grade "F" or similar grade which is unacceptable by EPCC for credit toward graduation.

REINSTATEMENT
An institutional and/or instructor action that will officials place the student back into a class he/she was initially dropped.

REPEAT COURSES
Enrolling for the same course more than once. No repeated course may be certified for VA benefits if the student previously received a satisfactory grade for the course of "D" or better. Remedial Courses such as Math and English must be passed with a C or better to advance to the next level.

RETURNING PROBATION
A period of time following an academic suspension period. The student's GPA will be recalculated once twelve semester hours have been completed.

SEMESTER
A standard semester is a period of instruction usually 15-19 weeks in length

SUMMER SESSION
A shortened period of instruction which last from 5 to 10 weeks (e.g., Summer Session I and II at EPCC).

TERMINATION
A process of notifying the VA Regional Office that a veteran student has terminated their enrollment.
TV COURSES/ INTERNET COURSE
Courses offered by television/ Internet for college credit.

VETERAN
A person who performed active duty in one of the Armed Forces and was released or discharged from such duty under conditions other than dishonorable.