
Special Programs Military Services

Military Program

Department of Defense Voluntary Education Partnership Memorandum of Understanding

West Hills College Coalinga actively supports the philosophy and concepts of this designation as established by the American Association of Community Colleges. West Hills College acts in accordance with the DOD principles and criteria. Our dedication ensures the following:

- Reducing barriers to access and completion such as minimum residency requirements
- Considering American Council on Education (ACE) recommended military training evaluations for award of course credits
- Providing each matriculating Service member with a Student Education Plan that specifies which transfer courses and prior learning credits have been awarded and which courses will be needed to complete a selected degree.
- Residency requirements are 12 units of completed coursework.
- Service members, spouses and their dependents share in the educational opportunities, programs and services available to the general public.
- Service members, spouses and their dependents can continue their education through the online program.
- Service members, spouses and their dependents may transfer credits from another accredited college.

Credit for Military Schools

A student who is currently Active Duty or a Veteran that has been honorably discharged may petition and be awarded credit. In all cases, the American Council on Education (ACE) 'Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Forces' will be followed:

West Hills College Coalinga will award equivalent college course credit for Military Service Schools as recommended by the ACE Directory.

- A maximum of twenty seven (27) semester units of elective degree credit may be awarded for those service schools that the ACE Directory recommends for specific lower division credit, but for which West Hills College Coalinga does not offer a specific equivalent.
- In addition, of three (3) semester units for Health Education 035 will be awarded. A petition for HE 035 and twelve (12) semester units of residency must be completed.
- Students must submit an official Request for Evaluation of Military Record and provide official military transcript.
- All units granted by West Hills College Coalinga will be placed officially on the current transcript of the student.
- An evaluation of all the student's prior credits (military, transfer, exams) in relation to the students declared major should be applied for before or completion of two semesters.

See *Board Policy and Administrative Policy 4235*.

Special Note: Units from the official military transcript are non-transferrable.

Veterans Resource Services

Our Military Services team understand the unique challenges veterans face, and we arm students with the support and resources needed to meet their personal and academic goals. We are privileged to welcome veterans, reservists, military personnel and their families to our College community. We value your service, and we are here to help ease your transition from the military to college life. West Hills College is approved for training of veterans, dependents of deceased and disabled veterans under applicable federal and state laws administered by the Veterans' Administration and the State Department of Veterans' Affairs. Find more information on services here: <https://westhillscollege.com/coalinga/resources/student-support/veterans/>

Veteran Education and Vocational Programs

West Hills College Coalinga provides assistance to Veterans and dependents for the following benefit programs

- Chapter 30- Active Duty Educational Assistance Program, Montgomery GI Bill®
GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
- Chapter 31- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Chapter 33- Post-9/11 GI Bill®
- Chapter 35- Survivors and Dependents Educational Assistance Program
- Chapter 1606- Selected reserve Educational Assistance Program
- Chapter 1607- Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP)

Tuition and Fees for Veterans

Fees are due at the time of registration. If fees are not paid in full, withdrawal from all classes for non-payment may take place.

A student using Tuition Assistance (TA) will be allowed to enroll in, attend courses, and access facilities while the college awaits payment from the proper Military branch. West Hills College Coalinga will not impose any penalty, charge late fees, or require an eligible student to borrow additional funds to cover the tuition of fees. If you fail to secure appropriate TA funding, you are bound to adhere to the payment and refund guidelines which apply to all students at West Hills College Coalinga.

To demonstrate current eligibility and intent to use TA benefits, a student must provide one of the following document/s:

- Authorized Tuition Assistance Voucher per registered courses and term
- All additional information requested by the School Certifying Official (SCO) to properly certify enrollment to the VA.
- Residency Reclassification: if you are classified as an out of state student, please submit the residency reclassification request with the military documents pertinent to your situation as active duty, veteran, or dependent.
- Student Education Plan: complete an education plan by meeting with your counselor.
- Prior College Transcripts: Official transcripts may be sent to coalingatranscripts@whccd.edu or mailed to the Admissions Office.
- Joint Service Transcript (JST): Official transcripts may be sent to coalingatranscripts@whccd.edu or mailed to the Admissions Office.
- Transcript Evaluation Request: Complete the transcript evaluation request form in the portal for any prior college or JST transcripts.

Keep in mind that TA per DOD MOU will not fund your college courses, and you will have to reimburse any funds already paid if any of the following situations occur:

- Leaving the service before the course ends
- Quitting the course for reasons other than personal illness, military transfer, or mission requirements
- Failing the course

Changes to Enrollment and Non-Payable Classes

Non-payable courses include physical education (except for dependents and P.E. majors); health education (except for dependents and H.E. Majors); NP (no pass reported as a drop at the end of the semester); and “D” or “F” grades even if the grade is the result of non-attendance; or general work experience classes.

- You will be required to reimburse the U.S. Treasury the full amount of your TA funded if you receive a failing grade or a non-passing (N) grade or if you fail to clear an incomplete (I) grade within 6 months of the original course completion date.

Any changes in enrolled credit must be notified to the West Hills College Registrar. They are mandated to report any changes and grades to the Federal Government issuing the TA monies.

- If you must withdraw from the course soon after you’ve just enrolled:
- If you are still within the school’s add/drop period, follow the school’s procedure to officially cancel the course with the school. Ask the Registrar to return the TA voucher you provided to them for full or partial payment.
- Service-Members must contact the Voluntary Education Center of their Military Branch and request that they cancel the TA funding for your course. If you do not cancel the course with the VEC, you will receive

letters asking for grades and reimbursement for the TA. It is important to communicate any changes with the Registrar.

- If you do not follow the correct withdrawal procedure, the amount of your TA can be withdrawn from your pay, even though you did not take the course.

If you must withdraw involuntarily due to military duties, transfer, emergency, or hospitalization:

- Notify the school and follow the school's procedure to officially withdraw from the course. Make sure you will be receiving a "W" or "MW" grade.
- Contact your installation Education Service Officer who will make the determination if a justification for a waiver is warranted.
- It is important to communicate any changes with the Registrar.

If you withdraw from the course due to personal reasons:

- You will be required to reimburse the U.S. Treasury the full amount of your TA funded. The Voluntary Education Center of their Military Branch requires you to reimburse for all W grades received for personal reasons.

West Hills College Coalinga will comply with DoD and Service-appropriate regulations and will follow all policies for the return of TA funds.

Special Note: This policy serves to fully inform students receiving Military Tuition Assistance (TA) of the required actions the college must take to comply with the DOD Memorandum of Understanding Return Policy for Military Tuition Assistance (TA) funds rules and align with the return of unearned student aid rules applicable to the Federal Student Aid as required under section 484B of the Department of Education Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

Refund Policy for Military Service Members

West Hills College Coalinga returns unearned military tuition assistance funds on a proportional basis through at least the 60% portion of the term for which they were provided regardless of the reason for withdrawal (service-related or otherwise). Any unearned TA funds will be returned directly to the military service, not to the service member.

West Hills College Coalinga will work with service members that stop attending due to a military service obligation in identifying solutions that will not result in a student debt for the returned portion. Military tuition assistance is awarded based on students completing the entire term it was awarded. When a student withdraws, they may no longer be eligible for the full amount.

Tuition Assistance eligibility will be recalculated for students who officially withdraw from a course prior to completing 60% of the enrollment period. The official last date of attendance is used to determine the number of days completed. Recalculation of eligibility is based on the percentage of TA benefits earned.

The Department of Defense requires that the college return any unearned TA applied to institutional charges. The student will then owe the college the amount that was returned.

Residency for Veterans

A qualified veteran and/or dependent who reside in California and are attending a California school within 3 years of discharge can receive in state tuition rates. To request a residency reclassification, please complete the online form or visit the Admissions and Records Office. Contact West Hills College Coalinga Admissions and Records Office at admissionscoalinga@whccd.edu or 559-934-2300 for assistance.

Financial Aid for Veterans

Other financial assistance may be available by completing a [FAFSA application \(Free Application for Federal Student Aid\)](#).

- The school code for the West Hills College Coalinga is 001176
 - For questions contact a financial aid staff member at FinancialAidCoalinga@whccd.edu or call 559-934-2310 or 559-934-2961
 - Additional information can be found on the #West Hills College Coalinga Financial Aid website: <https://westhillscollge.com/coalinga/admissions/financial-aid/>
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Registration for Veterans

Veterans may be eligible for priority registration for 15 years following their discharge from active duty. In order to be eligible, veterans must take a copy of their DD 214 discharge papers to the West Hills College Coalinga, Certifying Official.

Attendance Standards for Veterans Using Educational Benefits

The last date of attendance for each course is reported to the VA when a student officially withdraws, is withdrawn by faculty or stops attending without officially withdrawing. For VA education benefits a “W” grade is considered punitive and the last date of attendance must be reported to the VA.

All changes in credit must be reported to the West Hills College Coalinga Certifying Official. **If changes are not reported in a timely manner it can cause an overpayment of VA education benefits. Causing a student bill owed to the VA.**

Reporting “F” Grades for Veterans Using Educational Benefits

Each semester the academic progress of VA students will be monitored for “F” grades. If a failing (“F”) grade is received in a course, the VA will only be notified if the failing grade is due to a lack of class attendance or lack of completing assignments or the final. If a student received an “F” grade, an email will be sent to the instructor. The instructor is required to state whether the student completed the class and received the “F” on the basis of work completed, or if the student received the failing grade based on lack of class attendance or participation. In the latter case, the instructor must indicate the month and the day they last attended and/or stopped participating.

No further action will be necessary for those who received a “F” grade based on work completed in the class. If the “F” grade is a result of non-attendance, the VA will be notified of the last date of attendance or assignment/final reported by the instructor. Due to the reported information a possible overpayment of VA education benefits can be generated.

Special Note: Online attendance is based on assignments, tests, quizzes, discussion boards etc. Logging into an online class does not count as attendance.

Prior Credit for Veterans

All prior credit must be reviewed and credit granted as appropriate to an approved program that has been selected by the veteran student. Individuals may apply for military credit at West Hills College based on recommendations by the ACE Guide. A petition for Health Education 035 must be completed. An evaluation of all the student’s prior credits (military transcripts, prior colleges) in relation to the student’s declared major should be applied for before or upon completion of two semesters.

Academic Counseling for Veterans

The new student advisement is especially important for veterans because the veteran is required to select an approved program and can only receive benefits for taking courses that are required to complete the approved program.

Non payable courses include physical education (except for dependents and P.E. majors); health education (except for dependents and H.E. Majors); NP (no pass reported as a drop at the end of the semester); and “F” grade as the result of non-attendance; or general work experience classes.

Students enrolled in short-term classes should be aware they will only be paid for those units during the time of actual class time. The VA will only pay for classes that have been completed. If a student must drop a class due to “Mitigating circumstances”, the student will have to provide documentation to VA if an overpayment is in result.

The student is required to repay all benefits received for a withdrawn class from the day the class was dropped. This applies when there is no “Mitigating circumstances”.

Students are required to report any changes in classes, units, address, phone number or program to West Hills College Coalinga Veteran’s Services staff or by contacting the VA Certifying official at [559-934-2324](tel:559-934-2324).

Probation and Disqualification for Veterans

The law requires that educational assistance benefits to veterans and other eligible persons be discontinued when the student ceases to make satisfactory progress toward completion of his or her training objective. The VA will allow two

semesters of academic probation (grades below 2.0). Students will not receive benefits for the third consecutive semester of academic probation. (Students are recommended to make an appointment with the VA counselor for student options).

Veterans Upward Bound (VUB)

The West Hills College Coalinga partners with West Hills College Lemoore's Veterans Upward Bound program. This is a FREE program that helps prepare Veterans to enter, be successful, and to graduate from college.

Services

- Individualized career assessment and planning
- Application assistance
- Financial aid and GI Bill® information
- Help obtaining military and other transcripts
- Advisement and assistance with college admission and enrollment steps
- Academic Counseling
- College preparation instruction and tutoring for Math and English skills improvement
- Preparation and testing for academic placement exams
- Access to other resources: study areas, campus library, computer labs, and student union
- Referrals to additional college and community resources

Eligibility

- Meet military service requirements
 - Received other than a dishonorable discharge
 - Completed a minimum of 180 days of active service; or was a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces called to active duty for more than 30 days; or was a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces who served on active duty on or after September 11, 2001
 - U.S. Citizen, resident or applying for residency
 - Low-income and/or first-generation
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