Veteran and Service Member Education Benefit Data Flow Re-Engineering Project Update

Creating a major short-term win for the veteran and military education benefit ecosystem by allowing higher education, SVA, NAVPA, and National Student Clearinghouse to streamline the data submission process into VA-ONCE and VACERT.

SACRAO Conference – Feb 14, 2017
Today’s Conversation Topics

- Overview of the proposal
- Discussion of benefits
- Current status, getting involved and next steps
Leaders in the project development

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Validating the opportunity

Over the past two years numerous conversations....summarizing:

• AACRAO 2015 Baltimore Meeting: 24 registrars and SVA leadership meet to review and discuss the challenge/opportunity

• SVA leadership and members: validating veteran benefits

• NAVPA leadership and SCO’s across 100’s of institutions: validating the issues and the benefits

• Presentation to NAVPA membership at annual meeting concurrent (at same event) meeting with Mr. Robert Worley, VBA head

• Joint presentation made to joint staff meeting of VBA, Dec. 2015.

We started by taking a look at the current process...
Veteran Education Benefit data reporting eco-system

WOW
And determined that there was indeed the potential for a better process
Veteran’s education benefits enrollment reporting via National Student Clearinghouse

**Institution**

1. **Start**
   - Student makes contact with VA
   - Certifying official requesting benefits for a specific semester/quarter

2. Institutions mark their system as veteran dependent and chapter under which当之
   - Claiming benefits

3. Institutions send weekly feed to NSC – Data elements as needed to populate VA/ANCE (Excel or tab delimited file) – uploaded data

**National Student Clearinghouse**

4. Receive data from Institutions

5. Format data to upload to VA

6. Receive enrollment data by facility, data in format that is downloadable by institutions

7. Receive subsequent enrollment reports from institutions

8. Compare data submitted from previous submission to current submission

9. Identify any changes as required by the VA

10. Receive transcript data

**Department of Veteran’s Affairs**

11. Receive enrollment/unsatisfactory attendance/graduation information including veteran or dependent status and chapter

12. Receive enrollment unsatisfactory attendance/graduation data

**End of semester**

13. Prepare transcript in NSC acceptable format, also include dates of drop, withdrawal, effective date of changes, academic probation, dismissed etc. If only degree applicable hours are reported, institutions may need to identify these courses on the transcript and upload

14. Send degree data for students at the end of the semester (Regular submission for institutions that already partial data in enrollment and degree reporting). Include veteran status, indicator and veteran chapter (when fields)

15. Identify students who received VA benefits who have graduated

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*Option A and B can also be used simultaneously in order to deliver required information to the VA.

2/15/2017

SACRAO 2017 Conference
Proposal Overview
Major proposal asks of the VA: Allow systems to accept data from NSC

• **Step 1:** The VA allows NSC to work with their technology team to **develop a batch file update** that allows **VA-ONCE** and **VACERT** to accept data from NSC for **completions**

• **Step 2:** The VA allows NSC to work with their technology team to **develop a direct input interface** that allows **VA-ONCE** or **VACERT** to accept data from NSC for **completions, bio-data and terminations**

• **Step 3:** The VA allows NSC to work with their technology teams to **develop the eligibility and certification interfaces** between **NSC and VA-ONCE or VACERT** covering **certification and re-certification**

There is NO monetary ask!
Completion Data Reporting

Opportunities

• Improved efficiency
• Increased service to veterans
• Better data analysis and information

COLLEGE DEGREE INFORMATION
School Code (header)
Branch Code (header)
Official School Name (header)
Standard Repair Flag (header)
Transmission Date (header)
Degree Period (header)
Degree Level Indicator
Degree, Certificate, or Credential Title
School/College/Division Awarding Degree
Joint Institution/College/School/Division Name
Date Degree, Credential, or Certificate Awarded
Major Course of Study 1 (Repeat up to 4)
Minor Course of Study 1 (Repeat up to 4)
Major: Option 1
Major: Option 2
Major Concentration 1 (Repeat up to 3)
NCES CIP Code for Major 1 (Repeat up to 4)
NCES CIP Code for Minor 1 (Repeat up to 4)
Academic Honors
Honors Program
Other Honors
Name of Institution Granting Degree

VA File number
Suffix in addition to veteran/dependent
Chapter
Comparisons on completions will be driven off of different factors; NSC’s provides the clearest view

| Site                                           | Cohorts Included                                                                 | Graduation Rates Reported                              | Source Data                                      |
|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------
| IPEDS College Navigator                        | First-time in any college, Full-time only                                         | 4-year, 5-year, 6-year grad rates                      | IPEDS                                            |
| Dept. of Ed College Scorecard                  | First-time in any college, Full-time only                                         | 4-year grad rate for two-year schools and 6-year grad rate for four-year schools | IPEDS                                            |
| Student Achievement Measure                    | Bachelor’s Model (4 cohorts): First time in any college, full-time and part-time  | Bachelor’s Model: 4-year, 5-year, 6-year rates for full-time 6-year, 8-year, 10-year rates for part-time | NSC and reporting institution data               |
|                                                | First-time at reporting institution, Full-time                                  |                                                        |                                                  |
|                                                | First-time at reporting institution, Part-time (pt cohorts are optional for bachelor’s model) |                                                        |                                                  |
|                                                | Associate/certificate Model (2 cohorts): First-time at reporting institution, Full-time First-time at reporting institution, Part-time (includes transfer-ins) |                                                        |                                                  |
| Gi Bill Comparison Tool                        | First-time in any college, Full-time only                                         | 4-year grad rate for two-year schools and 6-year grad rate for four-year schools | IPEDS / VA data?                                 |
| Complete College America (State-level Data)    | First-time in any college, Full-time First-time in any college, Part-time Transfer-ins | 150% of normal time to completion; 200% of normal time | States and public institutions                   |
| Voluntary Framework for Accountability         | “Main” (all first-time students at reporting institution) Credential-Seeking (12 credits by end of year 2) First-time in any college | 6-year rate only (but nine different outcomes reported at end of 6 years) | Institution data and/or NSC data on transfer-outs |
Bio-Data (combined)

Opportunities

- Improved efficiency
- Increased service to veterans
- Better data analysis and information
Major work streams and high level timeline

Stage 1: Batch Data
- NSC: Send Bio Data to VA
- NSC: Send Completion Data to VA

Stage 2: Real-Time Interface
- NSC/VA: Interface for Certification / Re-Certification
- NSC/VA: Interface for Completion, Bio, Termination Data

Stage 3: Measurement Platform
- NSC/VA: Student Enhanced Benefit View Tool (Debt and Aid)
- NSC/VA: Student Educational Pathway View Tool
- NSC Student Portal: Transfer Transition Logistics

Now → 12 Months → Longer Term
Major benefits accrued to veterans (Over 1.2mln currently enrolled)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Benefit</th>
<th>Student: Minimizing bureaucracy/stress, maximizing opportunity to be better served by the institution</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **Efficiency:** Improving speed and timeliness | • Speed / timeliness of getting to eligibility determination  
• Increased levels of PSED support service personnel  
• Minimize overpayments and debt; preservation of benefit due to gaps in timeliness of information sharing  
• Deeper education-Pathway understanding  
• One stop data shop for sourcing PLA |
| **Accuracy:** Reducing errors | • Speed/timeliness of accurate benefit recognition |
| **Efficacy:** Measuring program efficacy real time. | • Better data informed counseling enabled |
## Major benefits accrued to Veteran Program Administrators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder\Benefit</th>
<th>Upscaling the skill and competencies required to be the School Certifying Official to better serve non-clerical issues</th>
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</table>
| **Efficiency:** Improving speed and timeliness | • SCO: Move from blocking and tackling to higher order work (improving outcomes)  
• Fin Aid: better real-time data to support aid questions (improving outcomes) |
| **Accuracy:** Reducing errors | • Ease of correcting major mistakes (prior to submission to VA system; similar to USED error alerts from NSC on files)  
• Improving business continuity in times of turnover  
• Common definitions used by all institutions reporting via NSC |
| **Efficacy:** Measuring program efficacy real time. | • Upskilling to run measurement reports and queries enabling consultation with a military focus |
Major benefits accrued to VA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Benefit</th>
<th>VA: Enablement / Enhancement of mission to serve veterans / Large public win, short term win for VA</th>
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| **Efficiency**: Improving speed and timeliness | • Aligns and enables LTS (Long Term Solution) goals  
• Ease of implementing policy changes  
• Placement of greater focus to improving outcomes |
| **Accuracy**: Reducing errors | • Faster response times due to fewer common errors  
• **Accurate completion data from one, common source** |
| **Efficacy**: Measuring program efficacy real time. | • Can establish report schedules/updates etc.  
• Ability to compare veterans to other populations  
• Real time understanding of Veteran Education benefit ROI |

Additionally... Big institutional benefit in having accurate representation of completion rates for veterans
2016/2017 Progress, Current Status and Next steps
2016 Developments
Lots of discussion but no commitment to action

- Feb 5, 2016: technical meeting to discuss completion data reporting proposal:
  - 4 technical managers from NSC
  - 9 technical managers/staff from VA
  - 5 higher education representatives

- Feb 29, 2016: follow-up meeting canceled by VA
  - Cited internal conversations regarding policy, cost, capacity to staff project

- March 20, 2016: Pre-conference session at AACRAO annual meeting
  - 50+ higher education institutions in attendance
  - 20+ signed up as pilot beta testers

VACERT project completion cited as top priority for VBA and reason to delay further dialogue until then
2016/17 Developments
Comparison Tool Opportunity

- Jun 2016: NSC makes offer to VBA to lighten work burden on completion data while allowing VA to have more accurate completion data for Comparison Tool
  - Schools would opt in to a Student Achievement Measures like feature
  - NSC would receive file formats to allow beta schools to work with NSC on file submission prototypes for degree files

- Aug 16: NSC re submits offer to VBA
- Sept 16: Still no response; VBA backs off of emphasis comparison tool and VA CERT work becomes less certain

- Jan 17: SVA National Conference: VBA and NSC co-present NVEST results: question from audience inquires as to the status of working with NSC (official results co-presented (NSC/VA on Feb 7).

- Worley commits to explore
Current status

- VACERT: no line of sight to completion date

- SVA, NAVPA:
  - Continuing conversations with VA and the HILL
  - Continuing conversations & status updates with membership

- NSC: Bringing awareness of the opportunity to House and Senate reps.

- FEB: Midwest Higher Education Compact and US Senator wrote letters of support for the NSC project to VA leadership

- Feb 7 NSC and VA co-present NVEST findings. Mr Worley of VBA directly addresses concerns around being able to meet new statutory requirements to NSC representatives
New VA legislated statutes are adding to burdens & provide opportunities to partner with institutions and VA

- Section 411 provides that VA generally must conduct an annual compliance survey of educational institutions and training establishments offering approved courses if at least 20 veterans or other VA beneficiaries are enrolled in its courses; VA must design the compliance survey to ensure that institutions or establishments and approved courses are in compliance with all applicable provisions of chapters 30 through 36 of title 38; VA must survey each institution or establishment not less than once during every 2-year period.

- Section 404 would require educational institutions to submit an annual report to VA not later than one year after enactment on the academic progress of students for whom it receives payments under the Post-9/11 GI Bill. The Secretary of Veterans Affairs would be required to include this information in the annual report to Congress on the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

- Section 407 would modify section 3684 of title 38 so that an “educational institution” for purposes of reporting to VA enrollments in education programs would include a group, district, or consortium of separately accredited educational institutions located in the same state that are organized in a manner that facilitates the centralized reporting of enrollments in the group, district, or consortium of institutions.
In summary: Short-term Opportunity

Creating a short term win for institutions and VA

New statutes implementation

Completion Data Proposal:

• Address VA Comparison Tool completion rate issues
  • Provide Institutional “opt-in” to Student Achievement Measures like feature
• Streamline completion data submission process to VA
  • VA provides NSC to file formats for VA-ONCE and VA-CERT
  • NSC to add three data elements to degree file
    • VA File Number
    • Suffix
    • Chapter
  • NSC to obtain authority from SCO’s to report to VA
  • NSC to create an extract file and deliver to VA via secure pipes
60 day go forward

- NSC, NAVPA, VBA: Meeting set for March 15 in DC

- Participants: Confirmed. More maybe added
  - VBA:
    - Robert Worley – Director of Education Services
    - Patrick Dworakowski – Assistant Director, Oversight & Outreach U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs VBA, Education Service
  - National Association of Veteran Program Administrators
    - Marc Barker – CSU
  - NSC: Rick Torres, Doug Falk – CIO; Doug Shapiro – Exec Dir of Research

- **Agenda to include**: The goal is a reboot to the discussions and address low hanging fruit
  - Completion data:
    - Comparison tool: Show Student achievement measures
    - File formats
  - Certification / re-certification: Phased conversation
  - New legislation implementation
How to get involved and Stay Informed...

1. Join our listserv:
   https://utlists.utexas.edu/sympa/subscribe/aauveteran

2. How to get involved and Stay Informed…

3. Information, presentations, and sign up to express your support or in becoming a beta school:
   https://studentclearinghouse.info/studentvets
Other steps you can take today...

- Registrars can **submit enrollment data with the veteran flag indicator enabled**. This will allow you to:
  - Use the StudentTracker® College and University application to track progression, retention and completion including transfers.
  - Have a more accurate count of veterans who complete (vs the VA scorecard)

- Join other state schools who have been speaking with their Hill representatives about improvements to the existing process.

- Consider discussing with SREB
On behalf of 250 employees of National Student Clearinghouse