

Questions & Answers

ATTENDANCE:

If you do not attend class....you are not entitled to benefits.

If you stop attending a class, you must drop officially through the Rio Hondo College Admission Office and report the drop to the Veterans Services Office. This is one of your responsibilities. Federal law requires that students' report any change in enrollment status, which might affect VA educational benefits to the school and the VA.

Failure to drop a class can result in overpayment of benefits.

When there is an overpayment, the VA will withhold future payments, or ask for repayment of the overpaid benefits. Depending on the situation, they can take you to court, charge interest, as well as withhold future tax refunds, attach wages, put a lien on property or deny home loans.

Although the Veterans Services Office monitors student attendance, it is imperative that you report any changes to your enrollment to the Veterans Services Office IMMEDIATELY.

CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT:

When receiving VA Educational Benefits, you may be concurrently enrolled at more than one school during the same semester. The school where you are receiving a degree will be your Parent School. The other is the Supplemental School. The courses you enroll in at the Supplemental School must be approved by your Parent School in order for you to receive benefits.

You must complete a "Parent School" form at your school's VA Office. The form indicates that the Parent School will grant credit toward the current major for the course(s) taken at the Supplemental School. You are responsible for informing the Supplemental School's, Veterans Services Office where your Parent School is located and requesting that they certify you for the classes you are in enrolled in at their institution. The Supplemental School will inform the VA Administration about your enrollment at their institution.

DIRECT DEPOSIT:

Students receiving Chapter 30, 31, 1606 or 1607 benefits have the option to have VA payments deposited directly into a checking/savings account of their choice. Call 1-877-838-2778 to set up an account or to update current direct deposit account information.

F, W, INC, NC GRADES:

Since the VA will not pay benefits for the period after a student has ceased attending class, RHC is required to check on student attendance for all classes in which a student received an "F", "W", "INC", "NC" grades. If you receive such a grade, you will be sent a letter asking that you document the reason for the grade. You will be required to state if you completed the classes and received the "F", "W", "INC", "NC" grade on the basis of the work completed for the class; or if you ceased attending the classes, in which case you must indicate the date you last attended.

The reason for the "F", "W", "INC", "NC" grade will be noted in your file. If the "F", "W", "INC", "NC" grade is a result of non-attendance, the VA will be notified of the last date of attendance reported by you and the VA will reduce your units and pay rate effective the date you indicated as the last date of attendance.

MONTHLY VERIFICATION

Veteran students who will receive benefits under the Montgomery G. I. Bill (CH. 30 & 1606) have to verify monthly enrollment. You have the option of calling in their monthly verification or using the internet to verify. The toll-free number is 1-877-823-2378. The website is www.gibill.va.gov/wave. Allow two weeks for payment. *Federal holidays may delay receipt of the Student Verification of Enrollment and/or your check.*

OFFICE HOURS:

The Financial Aid Veterans Assistant, Arely Rodarte, can be reached at (562) 692-0921 ext. 3133 or by e-mail at arodarte@riohondo.edu.

Her office hours are:

Monday & Thursday	8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Tuesday & Wednesday	10:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Friday	8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

PAYMENT:

VA Benefit checks are sent directly to the address the student indicated on the VA application. Payment is based on the dates the required class meets. The VA will automatically pay students for all payable breaks between regular semesters unless the veteran student states in writing that they do not want break pay. Payment of benefits usually occurs between the 1st and the 15th of each month and is paid for the previous month. The VA does not consider checks as late until after the 10th of the month. Inquiries may be made through the Veterans Services Office or directly with the VA at their toll free number 1-888-442-4551.

PAY STATUS:

VA monthly benefits are paid to the student based on enrolled units or the number of units that apply to the degree objective/goal currently on file. Enrollment categories are as follows:

Full-Time	12 or more units	Half-Time	6 – 8 units
Three-fourth Time	9 – 11 units	Less Than Half-Time*	1 – 5 units

**Students enrolled less than half-time will receive benefits for Tuition and Fees only.*

PROCESSING TIME:

The Veterans Services Office usually processes and submits certification to the VA Administration, on-line, within one week; **during peak periods** the process may be at least two weeks. Multiple schedule changes or out of date Program Evaluation forms on file WILL cause a delay in processing.

Processing of the VA application takes appropriately 8 to 12 weeks at the Veterans Administration; subsequent paperwork (enrollment certifications, etc.) usually takes 6 to 8 weeks.

PROGRAM EVALUATION:

A **Program Evaluation** and **Prior Credit Evaluation form** must be completed by a RHC counselor and submitted to the Veterans Services Office before enrollment can be certified to the VA Administration. New **Program Evaluation** and **Prior Credit Evaluation forms** must be completed each time you change your major or degree objective.

Revised Program Evaluation and Prior Credit Evaluation can only be completed by a counselor.

You can only be paid for classes that apply toward completion of your degree objective. For example, if you enroll in 12 unit but only 9 units satisfy your degree objective, you will be paid for 9 units only.

You will receive a copy of the Program Evaluation form completed on your behalf. It is imperative that you follow the evaluation and enroll only in courses required for your stated degree objective.

REPEATED COURSES:

The VA WILL NOT pay for repeat courses that were successfully completed. Letter grades of "A", "B", "C" or "D" are considered to be successfully completed for VA purposes. Students WILL NOT be paid to repeat a course successfully completed due to academic renewal purposes. *Exception:* Some courses require a specific minimum grade for successful completion or transfer.

RETROACTIVE BENEFITS

VA Benefits can be paid for enrollment up to one year prior to the date VA receives a student's application. The RHC Veterans Services Office does not recommend late applications however and strongly encourage you to submit your application the semester you first enroll at RHC.

TUTORIAL ASSISTANCE

You may receive assistance from the VA for individual tutoring. To qualify, you must have a deficiency in a subject you are currently enrolled in.

If you receive benefits under the Montgomery G. I. Bill (CH. 30, 1606 or 1607), VEAP (CH.32), or the Dependents Educational Assistance Program (CH. 35) you may receive up to \$1200 with the first \$600 paid by the VA and the last \$600 being deducted from your remaining educational benefits. You may only receive a maximum of \$100 per month until you run out of educational benefits.

To apply for tutorial assistance, pick up the appropriate form from the Veterans Services Office.

VA WORK STUDY PROGRAM

This is a tax free employment program through the VA. The rate of pay is \$6.75 an hour. You must be enrolled in and receiving educational benefits in at least a $\frac{3}{4}$ time (9 or more credit hours) rate.

For Off-campus jobs, contact:

VA Regional Office 1-800-827-1000

For on-campus jobs, contact:

RHC Veterans Services Office (562) 908-3411 x3133

Chapter 1606's:

National Guard and Reservists, contact your unit office or education officers for work-study employment.

Student Responsibilities at RHC

All students receiving Veterans Educational Benefits are required to comply with all applicable Federal Regulations and all Institutional Policies and Procedures.

CERTIFICATION:

It is the student's responsibility to request certification every semester. Certification is not automatic. All enrollment changes such as Add/Drop or Withdrawals, Switching Courses, etc. **MUST** be reported to the Veterans Services Office immediately. The Veterans Services Office will review enrollment every three weeks to insure it meets the requirements set forth by the VA Administration.

CHANGE OF MAJOR/GOAL:

To change a major/goal, the student must meet with a RHC counselor to develop a new program evaluation. Changes to a student's major/goal will delay certification and payment. **Coursework for the new major will not be certified until the new program evaluation is completed and on file at the Veterans Services Office.** It is the student's responsibility to meet with a counselor as early as possible to avoid delay in payment. The Federal VA will make the final approval on all educational goal changes.

DUAL MAJOR/GOAL:

Dual majors or a major and minor are not allowed by the VA in any degree AA/AS, BA/BS transfer, or certificate programs. The VA will only certify for one major and for one degree at a time.

COMPLIANCE:

In the event that a final grade of "F", "W", "INC", "NC" is issued for any semester, a notice will be sent to the student from the Veterans Services Office. It is mandatory that a response to the notice be received by the Office within two weeks from the date on the notice. Any failure to respond will result in a reduction of units that must be reported to the Veterans Administration.

MATRICULATION:

All students must complete the matriculation process, which includes placement testing for assessment in Reading, Math and English.

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS:

All official transcripts must be requested and sent from all schools previously attended before a program evaluation can be completed. **Educational Benefits will not be authorized until all official transcripts have been submitted and a program evaluation has been completed by a counselor.**

PROGRAM EVALUATION:

Coursework will not be certified for educational benefits until such time that a program evaluation is completed and on file at the Veterans Services Office.

All veteran students must have on file a program evaluation completed by a RHC counselor. A program evaluation will list all courses required to complete the stated educational goal at RHC. Courses will be certified only if they appear as required on the program evaluation. **NOTE:** Many program requirements do not leave room for elective units. In these cases, elective units cannot be certified for payment.

PROBATION:

Veterans educational benefits are subject to termination if the student has been on academic probation for more than two consecutive semesters.