

Articulation Coordinating Committee
Policy Regarding the Evaluation and Awarding of Credit
for Prior Military Training

Background

House Bill 171 (2020) was signed by Governor DeSantis on June 23, 2020. This bill amends section (s.) 1004.096, Florida Statutes (F.S.), and requires the Board of Governors and the State Board of Education, in consultation with the Department of Veterans' Affairs, to create a process for the uniform award of postsecondary credit or career education clock hours to certain service members and veterans of the United States Armed Forces. The Articulation Coordinating Committee was assigned with the convening of a workgroup to develop the process and implement the legislation.

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Section 1.0: INTRODUCTION

Developed by members of the Articulation Coordinating Committee subcommittee for Military Credit for the purpose of adoption by the State University System Florida Board of Governors (Board of Governors) and Florida State Board of Education, this policy regarding the awarding of credit for military training in Florida is in accordance with s. 1004.096, Florida Statutes. Composed of state statute and the rules and regulations of the two higher education governing boards, it establishes statewide guidelines developed for use by college, university and career center administrators. "Institution of higher education (IHE)" refers to any charter technical career center as defined in s. [1002.34](#), career center operated by a school district as defined in s. [1001.44](#), Florida College System institution as defined in s. [1000.21\(3\)](#), or state university as defined in s. [1000.21\(6\)](#). The guidelines included in this policy are intended for use and appropriate implementation by all institutions of higher education as provided in the above referenced statutes. Where institutional policy or practice is not in alignment with the stated statute and policies, the institution shall use these guidelines as provided.

1.1 S. 1004.096, F.S., Postsecondary Credit for Military Training and Education Courses

(1) In consultation with the Department of Veterans' Affairs, the Board of Governors shall adopt regulations and the State Board of Education shall adopt rules that create a process that enables eligible service members or veterans of the United States Armed Forces to earn uniform postsecondary credit across all Florida public postsecondary educational institutions for college-level training and education acquired in the military. The regulations and rules shall include procedures for credential evaluation and the uniform award of postsecondary credit or career education clock hours, including, but not limited to, equivalency and alignment of military coursework with appropriate postsecondary courses and course descriptions.

(2) The Articulation Coordinating Committee shall convene a workgroup by July 15, 2020, which is responsible for developing a process for determining postsecondary course equivalencies and the minimum postsecondary credit or career education clock hours that must be awarded for courses taken and occupations held by individuals during their service in the military.

(a) The workgroup shall be composed of the following 13 members:

- 1.The chair of the Articulation Coordinating Committee, or his or her designee, who shall serve as chair.
- 2.Four members representing academic affairs administrators and faculty from state universities, appointed by the chair of the Board of Governors.
- 3.Four members representing academic affairs administrators and faculty from Florida College System institutions, appointed by the chair of the State Board of Education.
- 4.Two members representing faculty from career centers, appointed by the State Board of Education.
- 5.Two members representing veterans, appointed by the executive director of the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

(b) The Office of K-20 Articulation shall provide administrative support for the workgroup.

(c) The workgroup shall establish a process for prioritizing and determining postsecondary course equivalencies and the minimum postsecondary credit or career education clock hours that must be awarded for courses taken and occupations held by individuals during their service in the military. The workgroup shall provide recommendations to the Board of Governors and the State Board of Education by December 1, 2020, for approval at the next meeting of each board to allow for adequate public notice.

(d) Upon approval of the workgroup's recommendations by the Board of Governors and the State Board of Education, the Articulation Coordinating Committee shall facilitate the review of courses taken and occupations held by individuals during their service in the military for postsecondary course equivalencies and the minimum postsecondary credit or career education clock hours that must be awarded in accordance with the approved process.

(e) Within 1 year after approval of the workgroup's recommendations by the Board of Governors and the State Board of Education pursuant to paragraph (c), the Articulation Coordinating Committee shall approve a prioritized list of postsecondary course equivalencies and the minimum postsecondary credit or career education clock hours that must be awarded for courses taken and occupations held by individuals during their service in the military. The list must be updated annually. The Board of Governors and the State Board of Education shall timely adopt the list approved by the Articulation Coordinating Committee at the next meeting of each board to allow for adequate public notice. For the purpose of statewide application, postsecondary course equivalencies and the minimum postsecondary credit or career education clock hours that must be awarded for courses taken and occupations held by individuals during their service in the military shall be delineated by the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors in the statewide articulation agreement required by s. 1007.23(1).

(f) State universities, Florida College System institutions, and career centers must award postsecondary credit or career education clock hours for courses taken and occupations held by individuals during their service in the military based on the list adopted by the Board of Governors and the State Board of Education pursuant to paragraph (e) if the credit or career education clock hours are applicable toward the student's degree or certificate. Institutions may award additional postsecondary credit or career education clock hours if appropriate. Credit or career education clock hours awarded in accordance with minimum postsecondary credit and clock hour requirements, respectively, are guaranteed to transfer to other state universities, Florida College System institutions, and career centers.

1.2 Rules and Regulations

[F.A.C. Rule 6A-14.0302- Credit for Military Service](#)

[Board of Governors Regulation 6.013-Military Veterans and Active Duty](#)

[Board of Governors Regulation 6.006- Acceleration Mechanisms](#)

[S. 1009.26, Florida Statutes- Fee Waivers](#)

1.3 Articulation Coordinating Committee Policy (feedback Needed)

Develop overall policy statement regarding the award of credit for military training.

1.4 Statewide Guidelines for Credit for Military Training

The guidelines included herein are intended to assist postsecondary institutions in the evaluation of military training for the award of either career clock hour or college credit in the absence of specific statewide credit awards as provided in the *Credit for Military Training Equivalency List* published by the Office of Articulation and approved by the Board of Governors and State Board of Education beginning in late 2021.

Statewide subject area discipline committees will also utilize Section 4.0: Procedures for the Establishment of Statewide Subject Area Discipline Committees and Course Identification for the Development of the Credit for Military Training Equivalency List in their evaluations for the awarding of uniform credit as it will appear in the *Credit for Military Training Equivalency List* to be published by the Office of Articulation and approved by the Board of Governors and State Board of Education annually.

Figure 1 contains a decision tree that institutions should follow when evaluating courses or training for career clock hours or college credit for military experience,

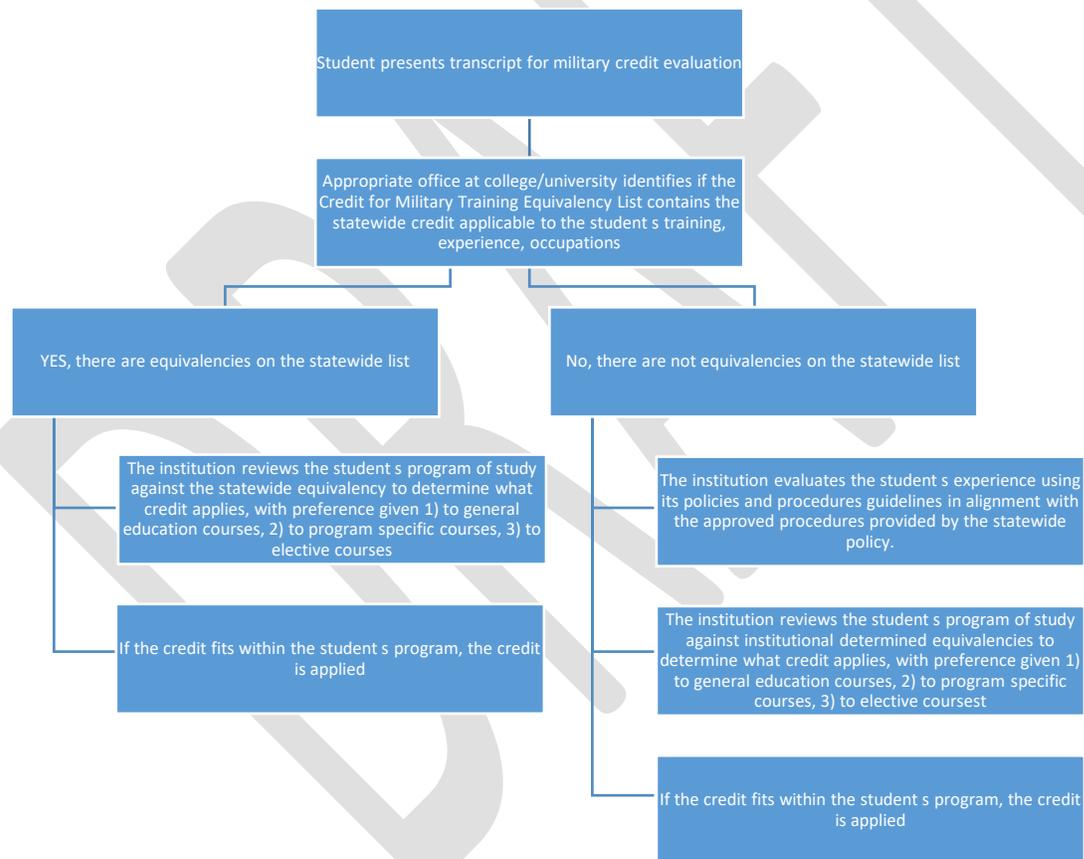


Figure 1: Decision Tree for Evaluating Military Credit

1.5 Institutional Policy

- Each college and university board of trustees shall adopt a written policy that enables students who are or were eligible members of the United States Armed Forces to earn appropriate academic clock hour or college credit, where applicable, for prior learning through military training, experience and coursework. Institutions will ensure that policies developed shall be in

accordance with the statewide policies and guidelines established by the ACC Postsecondary Credit for Military Training Subcommittee. These policies shall recognize that military experience should be evaluated and awarded based on the *Credit for Military Training Equivalency List*.

- Recognizing the equivalency list may not be exhaustive, institutions should also establish local policies for the granting of credit that include:
 - Specification that college credit will be granted to students with military training, coursework or experience that is recognized by the American Council on Education (ACE). The process is subject to the same treatment as any other transfer credit evaluated.
 - Utilization of the ACE Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services in order to determine equivalency and alignment of the military training, coursework or experience with the appropriate postsecondary credit.
 - Specification that if the course in which the military training, coursework or experience is equivalent fulfills a general education or major course or degree program requirement at the institution, the credit should count towards graduation and meet a degree program requirement accordingly. Otherwise, appropriate course credit, including free elective credit, will be granted.
 - Credit that was previously evaluated and awarded by a college degree-granting institution and that is appropriate to the transfer student's major at the institution should be accepted, subject to institution limit on the amount and level of transfer credit allowed for a given degree.
 - An appeals process for any student regarding the specific award of credit on their transcript. The appeals process must be published and available for student access. The person or group making the final appeal decision must not be directly involved in the initial award determination.
- Additional expectations for institutions regarding the evaluation for credit and clock hours is available in Section 3.0 of this document.

Section 2.0: BASIC PROVISIONS

2.1 Eligible Military Service Training

Training for military service members is highly structured. Formal training begins with initial entry into the armed forces (basic training) and continues to more advanced training opportunities specific to the job functions the service member performs. While some training opportunities may be available to members of different military branches, training is primarily conducted by the branch in which the member serves. Types of training eligible for college credit include basic or initial, occupational, leadership and professional development.

2.2 Eligible Service Members

Section 1004.096, F.S. provides for the awarding of credit to any military student regardless of their current military status.

2.3 Satisfactory Academic Progress

34 Code of Federal Regulations § 668.34 requires that postsecondary institutions “must establish a reasonable satisfactory academic progress policy for determining whether an otherwise eligible student is making satisfactory academic progress in his or her educational program and may receive assistance under the title IV, HEA program.” For the purposes of credit awarded for military experience and training as defined in s. 1004.096, F.S., and satisfactory academic progress calculations, any credit awarded to the student should not be included in a student’s Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) calculation for financial aid purposes.

2.4 Excess Credit Hours

In accordance with s. 1009.286(4), F.S., credits awarded for military experience and training, as defined in s. 1004.096, F.S., and identified by the Articulation Coordinating Committee, will not be calculated as hours required to complete a baccalaureate degree for the purposes of excess credit hour calculations at state universities.

2.5 Maximum Credit

While s. 1004.096, F.S., does not provide a maximum number of credit or clock hours that may be awarded to a military student for their training and occupation, accrediting agencies may impose limits related to granting credit or clock hours. Colleges and universities are restricted in the award of credit, as there is a maximum number of credits that must be obtained at a degree-awarding institution. The accrediting body for career centers, however, does not limit the number of clock hours a student must complete at the institution. Postsecondary institutions should adhere to credit awarding limitations as required by any of their accrediting agencies. For students that use a combination of credit-by-

examination under s. 1007.27, F.S., and credit under s. 1004.096, F.S., the maximum credit awarded for exams shall not exceed the statutory limitations.

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Section 3.0: PROCEDURES FOR CREDIT EVALUATIONS

3.1 Course Hours to College Credit Calculations

In the determination of credit to be awarded one (1) credit hour is based on the learning outcomes equivalent to thirty (30) hours of instruction.

3.2 Application of Credit

Institutions shall award postsecondary credit based on what is beneficial to a military student's academic pathway as follows:

1. award credit or clock hours toward general education requirements, or
2. award credit or clock hours toward the student's chosen major, program of study, meta-major, or
3. award credit or clock hours toward elective credit that benefits the student, as offered by the institution.

Students may elect to deny the acceptance of credit, as applicable; institutions may establish procedures related to a student's denial of credit.

3.3 Documentary Evidence

An official copy of a student's Joint Services Transcript (JST) shall be considered official for the purposes of awarding credit for military training and occupations. Scores for examinations recognized by s. 1007.27, F.S., that are provided on the JST shall also be considered official for the purposes of awarding credit under state law.

At the time of admission, students should be encouraged to provide their JST and any related documents, transcripts or test scores as soon as possible, but no later than the second semester of enrollment for college credit programs, and prior to the completion of 150 hours for career and technical programs that are equal or greater than 450 hours. Institutions should make every effort possible, with consideration to institutional procedures and staff availability, to evaluate and award appropriate credit in a timely manner.

3.4 Guidelines for Institutional Evaluation Procedures

The following guidelines are provided to assist institutions with establishing evaluation procedures for the award of military credit.

- Institutional policies described in section 1.5 align with the statewide policies provided by the ACC Postsecondary Credit for Military Training subcommittee.
- Appropriate academic programs must be involved in the evaluation process. The assessment of prior learning is the responsibility of credentialed faculty in the academic discipline of the course(s) or academic award.

- As appropriate, credit for military training and occupations may be assigned as lower, upper or graduate/professional level credit, as published in the Statewide Course Numbering System. Institutions are encouraged to review the trainings and occupations based on the level of information and skill requirements provided during the training. While most credit will likely be awarded at the lower level, certain training and occupations may merit upper or graduate level awards. Graduate level awards should be done with the military student's specific program requirements in mind due to the nature of graduate and professional level program requirements and lack of credit transferability.
- Institutions may not arbitrarily restrict the award of credit based on the date of the training received by the military student. However, relevance to the student's chosen area of study may be considered based on the date of the training. In those cases where courses and trainings may no longer be relevant to a specific field, credit may not be applicable.
- A lead office or staff member should be available to assist students in understanding institutional policies and procedures. For institutions that rely on programs or departments to evaluate military training, lead contacts within those units should be identified. Veterans and active duty members should be informed of this support.
- Award of credit should allow for partial credit in clock hour programs allowing for advanced standing in the program and accelerating student attainment of occupational completion points.
- Policies should include a provision for the demonstration of prior learning through portfolio or skills evaluation.

Section 4.0: PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF STATEWIDE SUBJECT AREA DISCIPLNE COMMITTEES AND COURSE IDENTIFICATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CREDIT FOR MILITARY TRAINING EQUIVALENCY LIST

4.1

Phase One: Prioritizing Courses on the Credit for Military Training Equivalency List	
Step 1 – Identify commonly awarded courses	The Articulation Coordinating Committee will survey all public postsecondary institutions to identify the most common courses by which students receive credit through military training. This survey should include course numbers and associated military training.
Step 2 – Form discipline committees	<p>Based on the results from Step 1, the ACC will establish statewide discipline committees through nominations for representatives from institutions of higher education as determined by their governing bodies based on the disciplines identified. Membership preference will be given to faculty members who were involved in equivalency determinations for their discipline.</p> <p>Each Subject Area Discipline Committee shall be made up of 13 representatives: 4 from the State University System 4 from the Florida College System 4 from School District Career Centers 1 from Florida Department of Education</p> <p>Optional adviser from a military branch as identified by the Florida Department of Veteran’s Affairs.</p>
Step 3 – Establish equivalencies	<p>Each discipline committee will identify the college course equivalencies that align with military training. This process must include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Utilization of the ACE Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services to determine equivalency and alignment of the military training, coursework or experience with the appropriate postsecondary credit. 2. Review of institutional assignment of course numbers per each ACE reviewed course. 3. Examination of the SCNS to identify possible course numbers. This would include identifying related prefixes, statewide courses and matching the statewide learning outcomes with the learning outcomes articulated by ACE. 4. Identification of the number of postsecondary institutions offering specific courses to ensure wide availability to students. 5. Identification of appropriate SCNS statewide courses and the corresponding credit hours to be awarded on the statewide <i>Equivalency List</i>.

	The recommended equivalencies would be presented to the ACC for consideration. Upon ACC approval the list will be presented to the Board of Governors and State Board of Education for adoption.
Step 4 – Publish <i>the Credit for Military Training Equivalency List</i>	The <i>Credit for Military Training Equivalency List</i> will be published for institutional and student use pursuant to s. 1004.096(2)(e).

4.2

Phase Two: Updates to <i>the Credit for Military Training Equivalency List</i>	
Step 1 – Identification of training for priority evaluation	In conjunction with the Florida Department of Veteran’s Affairs, the ACC will identify the most frequently completed trainings and common Military Occupation Specialties for military students in Florida. Using course numbers, they will calculate which courses should receive priority of credit.
Step 2 – Form discipline committees	Based on the results from Step 1, the ACC will establish statewide subject area discipline committees through nominations for representatives from institutions of higher education as determined by their governing bodies based on the disciplines identified. Membership preference will be given to faculty members who were involved in equivalency determinations for their discipline. Each Subject Area Discipline Committee shall be made up of 13 representatives: 4 from the State University System 4 from the Florida College System 4 from School District Career Centers 1 Member from the Florida Department of Education Optional adviser from a military branch as identified by the Florida Department of Veteran’s Affairs.
Step 3 – Establish equivalencies	Each discipline committee will identify the college course equivalencies that align with military training. This process must include: 1. Utilization of the ACE Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services in order to determine equivalency and alignment of the military training, coursework or experience with the appropriate postsecondary credit. 2. Examination of the SCNS to identify possible course numbers. This would include identifying related prefixes and matching the statewide learning outcomes with the learning outcomes articulated by ACE. 3. Identification of the number of postsecondary institutions offering specific courses to ensure wide availability to students. 4. Identifying appropriate SCNS statewide courses and the corresponding credit hours to be awarded on the statewide <i>Equivalency List</i> .

	The recommended equivalencies will be presented to the ACC for consideration. Upon ACC approval the list will be presented to the Board of Governors and State Board of Education for adoption.
Step 4 – Update <i>the Credit for Military Training Equivalency List</i>	The <i>Credit for Military Training Equivalency List</i> will be updated annually for institutional and student use.

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Section 5.0: ARTICULATION OF CREDIT

5.1 Credit Classification for Transcript Purposes

Credit awarded for military training and coursework shall be noted on the student's transcript as provided in the institutional policy.

5.2 Transfer of Credit

College credit or career education clock hours awarded in accordance with the minimum postsecondary credit and clock requirements, as provided in this policy, are guaranteed to transfer to other state universities, Florida College System institutions and career centers. Credit that was previously evaluated and awarded by a Florida public postsecondary institution that is appropriate to the transfer student's program of study at the receiving institution must be accepted, subject to institution limits on the amount and level of transfer credit allowed for a given degree. Application of the credit awarded to general education, prerequisite and degree programs may vary at the receiving institution. For clock hour credits, the receiving institution should evaluate the previous credit for equivalency in a program provided by their institution. Receiving postsecondary institutions may evaluate any graduate level course on a case-by-case basis for acceptance of transfer hours or degree requirements.

Appendix A

Definitions

Active duty: A person who is in the military full-time. They work for the military full-time, may live on a military base and can be deployed at any time.

Air University (AU): A major component of Air Education and Training Command (AETC) and the lead agent for Air Force education. AU provides the full spectrum of Air Force education, encompassing pre-commissioning programs for new officers; graduate programs in specialized military disciplines; progressive, career-long professional military development for officer, enlisted and civilian Airmen; and specialized programs for United States cabinet appointees, senior executive service (SES) civilians and general officers.

American Council on Education (ACE): A membership organization intended to assist the higher education community in shaping effective public policy. ACE currently works under a contract from the Department of Defense (DoD) to review military training courses and occupations and provide guidance for the awarding of college credit.

American Council on Education Identification Number (ACE ID): The number used to identify a particular occupation. It provides additional data about an occupation, such as related competencies and learning outcomes. All occupational exhibits have ACE ID numbers beginning with three-letter codes that identify the service.

Basic Training: Training that establishes a baseline of military skills. Topics include, but are not limited to land navigation, marksmanship, physical fitness and understanding military discipline. Also referred to as initial entry training. This training is completed by all new military service members.

Career Education Clock Hour: A clock hour is the unit assigned to a course or course equivalent learning that is part of an organized and specified program leading to an Applied Technology Diploma (ATD) or a Career Certificate. It applies to postsecondary career education courses as defined in section 1004.02(25), F.S.

College Credit Hour: Credit leading to an associate in arts degree, an associate in applied science degree, an associate in science degree, a baccalaureate degree or an Applied Technology Diploma (ATD) as authorized pursuant to s. 1007.33, F.S.

Community College of the Air Force (CCAF): The only degree-granting institution of higher learning in the world dedicated exclusively to enlisted personnel. It offers enlisted Airmen the opportunity to earn a two-year Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree that pertains to an Air Force career. The CCAF is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools/Commission on Colleges.

Course Hours: Refers to the number of instructional hours as provided in the ACE Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Forces.

Inactive Reserves: Also known as an Individual Ready Reserve (IRR), this role is intended to keep service members available for duty should they be needed but without the requirement to do monthly drill weekends, annual training, etc.

Institution of Higher Education (IHE): Refers to any charter technical career center as defined in s. 1002.34, career center operated by a school district as defined in s. 1001.44, Florida College System institution as defined in s. 1000.21(3), or state university as defined in s. 1000.21(6).

Joint Services Transcript (JST): Provides documented evidence to colleges and universities of professional military education, training and occupation experiences achieved by service members and veterans. These transcripts are evaluated by ACE. Because CCAF and AU are both SACS/COC accredited, they conduct their own transcript evaluation and are therefore not listed on the JST. Names that may be used interchangeably are Army/American Council on Education Registry Transcript System (AARTS) and Sailor/Marine/American Council on Education Registry Transcript (SMART).

Joint Special Operations University (JSOU): Institution of higher education established in 2000 by USSOCOM commander, Army General Peter Schoomaker. Provides leadership education at operational and strategic levels. Instruction includes formal mobile education team (MET), distance learning (DL), and professional military education (PME). JSOU is open to members of all of the armed forces branches. JSOU does participate in the Statewide Course Numbering System (SCNS) on a limited basis.

Leadership Training (Professional Development): Military branches require training that builds leadership skills as members progress through their military careers. The skills developed during these trainings assist members in the military occupations and may be utilized in civilian careers as well. Members receive instruction in topics including leadership, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, professionalism and managerial practices.

Military Connected Person: Any person who is affiliated with any of the branches of the armed services by their own service or the service member's dependent(s).

Military Occupation Specialty (MOS): The occupation held by a service member in the Army and Marine Corps during their period of duty.

Military Student: Any student who has served as a veteran, active duty, reservist or inactive reserve member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps or Coast Guard.

National Guard: The National Guard consists of the Army National Guard and the Air Force's Air National Guard. Persons in the National Guard are not full-time active duty military personnel, although they can be deployed at any time should the need arise.

Occupation: The service member's job during their period of duty.

Occupational: Referred to as Advanced Individual Training (AIT), this training provides service members with the technical skills relevant to their Military Occupational Specialty (MOS). The skills learned during this training are pertinent to specific jobs held by the member in the branch in which they serve. Members of the various branches may hold similar job titles; however, the occupational training they receive will be related to the functions of the position as it relates to a particular branch.

Official transcript: Transcript that is issued directly from the JST Operations Center to the college or university.

Rating: The occupation held by a service member in the Navy and Coast Guard during their period of duty.

Reserves: Unit of the military that provides additional support and manpower to the active-duty forces in times of need, either stateside or overseas. Persons in the Reserve are not full-time active duty military personnel, although they can be deployed at any time should the need arise. Each branch of the military has a Reserve component, and the Reserves are under the command of their respective military branch (e.g., Army Reserve are under the command of the Army).

Reservist: A person who is a member of a military reserve unit. This person is usually a former active-duty member of the armed forces, and they remain a reservist either voluntarily or by obligation. They are otherwise civilians and, in peacetime, have careers outside the military. Reservists usually participate in training on an annual basis to refresh their skills.

Service Member: Any person who is currently serving in the armed services (Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, Marines or Navy) and anyone currently serving as active duty in the National Guard or Reserve component.

Student Veteran: Any person currently attending a postsecondary institution that has military experience, either currently serving or discharged.

Subject Area Discipline Committee: A group of appropriately credentialed instructors within a specific academic or career subject area tasked with the review of trainings for appropriate assignment of credit.

Unofficial transcript: Transcript that is not issued directly from the JST Operations Center to the college or university (i.e. printed by the student for their reference).

Veteran: A person who served in the active military, naval, air service or reserves and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable.