

GVSU

FIELD MANUAL

Your guide to a smooth transition to life at
Grand Valley State University.



**GRAND VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY®**

**PETER SECCHIA MILITARY
AND VETERANS
RESOURCE CENTER**

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WELCOME TO GVSU

At Grand Valley State University, we are committed to being a veteran inclusive campus that helps our military connected students feel supported as they transition from service to student and beyond. As a student veteran, you are no stranger to adversity. Through your service, you have acquired valuable transferable skills that set you up for success in your educational mission. These include perseverance, mental toughness, problem solving, time management, and others. Despite all of your strengths, your success will depend on your ability to effectively utilize the resources and tools at your disposal.

Teamwork is the key. There are experts around campus ready to support you both inside and outside the classroom when you find yourself facing unfamiliar challenges or obstacles you lack proficiency in navigating.

This field manual is intended to be a guide to what we believe are the most mission critical resources. We hope you reference it without hesitation and know that you are always welcome to drop by any of our resource centers to connect with another veteran.

TIMELINE

Complete step 1 and 2 before enrollment



1. Start your VA Benefits.

Visit the VA website to begin applying for VA Education benefits. Please look at the following page for information on the various education benefits to see which one you would be using.

2. Submit your Certificate of Eligibility to the Registrar

Email your Certificate of Eligibility to vetrec@gvsu.edu. DO NOT WAIT TO DO THIS! If you wait, you may not be able to use your GI Bill in time. Once they receive your letter, you will be assigned a Certifying Official.

Complete step 3 & 4 before every semester

3. Submit Class Schedule to Certifying Official

This is important for verifying your enrollment to the VA. Additionally, if you are using Post 9/11, the VA will only cover courses that are relevant to your degree path.

4. Sign Up for Advising

All first year and transfer students at GVSU are required to meet with an academic advisor before registering for classes for the upcoming academic year. Additionally, if you are using the GI Bill, you must be taking courses that are in your degree path. Academic advisors in your program can assist you.



vetrec@gvsu.edu

A - C – brunoso@gvsu.edu
D - J – penneyka@gvsu.edu
K - M – hillel@gvsu.edu
N - R – krepelsa@gvsu.edu
S - Z – ritterku@gvsu.edu

Feature	Post 9/11 GI Bill	Montgomery Gi Bill (MGIB)	Veteran's Readiness & Employment (VR&E)	MGIB Selected Reserve	Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA)	MINGSTAP
Eligibility	Served 90 days on active duty after 9/10/2001	2+ years of active duty service	Veterans with service-connected disabilities	Enlisted in the Selected Reserve	Available to active duty members, National Guard, and Reserves	National Guard
Type of Benefit	Education, Training, & Housing	Education only	Education, training, and career counseling	Education only	Education only	Education, in-state public colleges or universities
Maximum Tuition Coverage	Full in-state tuition or up to the national max	Varies, typically no tuition assistance	Full tuition and fees	Varies, typically no tuition assistance	up to \$4,500 per year	100% of tuition
Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH)	Yes, based on location of school	No housing allowance	Yes, based on location of school	No housing allowance	No housing allowance	No housing allowance
Books and Supplies Allowance	Yes, up to \$1,000/year	No	Yes, funding for books and supplies	No	No	No
Use for Graduate School	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Varies by state - Michigan does cover grad school
Time Limit	36 months of benefits	36 months of benefits	Up to 12 years for the program	36 months of benefits	No time limit	typically 8 semesters
Transferability	Yes, can transfer to dependents	No	No	No	No	No
Part-Time Enrollment Eligibility	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Additional Benefits	Yellow Ribbon Program, tutorial assistance	No additional benefits	Job placement services, vocational training	No additional benefits	Career development programs	May offer additional bonus for high GPA

INFORMATION

GVSU is a Yellow Ribbon School

The Yellow Ribbon program is a partnership between the VA and participating schools to help cover the cost of out-of-state tuition or private school tuition that exceeds the Post-9/11 GI Bill's tuition. If you are not a Michigan resident, your veteran status will allow you to have **in-state tuition**, and will cover the remaining expenses left over after your GI Bill.

Still Apply for Financial Aid, Scholarships, and Grants

This is basically free money for you, so why not? Submit your FAFSA by March 1st each year to receive the best financial aid reward. There are also multiple scholarships available through GVSU, are Michigan-based, or national.

Look into Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E)

If you have a service-connected disability, check if you qualify for VR&E. You can apply through the VA's website or by visiting a local VA office. If approved, you could use the VR&E benefits **before** your GI Bill.

STRATEGIES & TIPS

Consider Online Courses

Plan Ahead Financially

Save on Books, Pocket the Book Stipend

Decide on a Major Early

The GI Bill will covers 36 months, not an entire bachelor's degree. If you start taking courses and then decide to change your major, you should basically just flush those benefits down the toilet. Pick your major early to get the most out of your benefits.

Understand Course Applicability

Only courses that satisfy a degree requirement can be certified. Excessive free electives, for example, may not be certified. To find courses that fit into your degree program, visit mypath on your GVSU Banner account.

Plan Your Course Load Strategically

If you're going full-time, be sure to plan your course load strategically. While the GI Bill can cover full-time tuition, taking fewer courses than full-time could result in less financial aid (especially with housing allowances).

If you're able to manage a full-time course load, you'll maximize your benefits. However, if you need to reduce your course load due to other obligations (like work, family, etc.) be mindful of how it affects your benefits.

Schedule Changes

If you decide to add or drop a class, you must notify your designated SCO. Chapter 33 and 31 students must report all changes to their academic schedule. A change in your registration and/or attendance may result in payment changes. Chapter 35, 30, 1606 and 1607 students must report a drop in credit hours only when it results in a change in their enrollment status (e.g., a drop from full-time to part-time).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What must I do if I change my course load?

If you change your course load and drop below a full-time student, you must contact GVSU's certifying officials. The official will send your documentation to the VA to adjust your benefits.

What happens if I drop a course?

If you drop or withdraw from a course after GVSU has already submitted your enrollment certification to the VA, you may be required to pay money back to the VA. If you plan to drop after you have been certified, then please notify your Certifying Official to discuss how this may affect your benefit.

What happens if I fail a class or get an incomplete?

You can fail a class and the VA will not create a debt against you and will pay for you to retake the class as long as you attended the course through the end of the semester. Incomplete grades are expected to be made up the end of the following semester or they will be reported to the VA and could impact their benefit.

What if I'm an undeclared major?

If you are an undeclared major, the VA will only pay for classes that meet general education requirements. Any class that does not fulfill a general education requirement will not be covered by VA benefits. This can continue for two years only.

What classes will the VA pay for?

The VA will only pay for classes that are REQUIRED for your degree. To find out if a class is required, current students should check your MyPath Degree Planning and Evaluation in Banner.

Does the VA pay for courses I repeat?

If you failed a required course or did not receive the minimum grade considered "passing," the VA will pay for you to repeat the course. The will not pay for repeated courses in order to boost your GPA or to get a better grade.

How do I change my major?

If you are planning on changing your major, you MUST contact your Certifying Official to let them know you changed your major. Be sure to update your major online via myBanner. If you don't notify the Registrar's Office, you could be charged tuition for classes that don't qualify or aren't certified.

CONTACTS

Resource	Name	Email	Phone	Location
MVRC Staff For inquiries about benefits, resources, life at Grand Valley, SVA, etc.	_____	For general inquiries: mvrc@gvsu.edu For the MVRC GA: s_davidcai@gvsu.edu	(616) 331-4838	Kirkhof 0072
MVRC Director For more serious inquiries that the MVRC staff cannot answer.	Shane Scherer	scheresh@gvsu.edu	_____	Office of Multicultural Affairs Kirkhof Center
Veteran's Crisis Line Connects Veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified VA responders.	_____	_____	988, then press 1 Text 838255	_____
Kent County VA The VA office for residents of Kent County. Assists veterans with a variety of services.	_____	_____	616-632-5722	836 Fuller Avenue NE Grand Rapids, MI 49503
Ottawa County VA The VA office for residents of Ottawa County. Assists veterans with a variety of services.	Jason Schenkel Veterans Affairs Director	OttawaCountyDVA@miottawa.org	616-393-8387 616-393-VETS	12251 James Street Suite 300 Holland, MI 49424

Visit gvsu.edu/veterans for a list of contacts and resources.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

Financial Aid Office

Financial Aid Office is the place you go when you need help with your tuition bill, loans, grants, and scholarships.

Walk-In Hours: Monday - Friday / 8 - 5 PM
finaid@gvsu.edu / 616-331-3234

Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships
Student Services Center

Academic Advising

Academic Advising is there to help you plan your courses in your degree program. The academic advisors will help you develop educational plans that align with your interests, values, and abilities.

Visit the Academic Advising website for information on advising for your specific college.

Student Academic Success Center
200 STU, 616-331-3588

Tutoring Center

The Tutoring Center is available for those who need additional instruction or assistance in your courses. There is tutoring available for almost every major and program at Grand Valley.

Visit the tutoring center website to make an appointment with a specific department and tutor.

tutoring@gvsu.edu
Henry Hall 112

Replenish

Replenish is an on campus, GVSU food resource, developed to support students. You can pick up basic groceries, clothing, personal hygiene items, household goods, and school supplies as donated.

Weekdays 12 PM - 5 PM

Lower Level Kirkhof Center
KC 073

Student Accessibility Resources

Student Accessibility Resources (SAR) provides support and accommodations for persons with disabilities. Some commonly used accommodations include extended time for writing an exam, written materials in electronic format, sign language interpreters, captioned video, and the use of notetaking aids.

Visit the SAR website to see a list of forms and documents needed.

215 The Blue Connection
access@gvsu.edu
616-331-2490

CAMPUS RESOURCES

Knowledge Market

The Knowledge Market offers one-stop support for library research, writing, oral presentations, and digital projects. Trained consultants are available to assist you on both Valley and City campuses.

Walk-In Hours: Monday - Thursday / 10 AM - 9 PM Mary Idema Pew Library (Allendale)
Steelcase Library (Pew)

Student Academic Success Center

SASC offers one-on-one Success Coaching with an emphasis on building resiliency skills, healthy behaviors, and empowering learners to take an active role in their own educational journey.

View available resources, events, or make
an appointment with a Success Coach on
their website.

Student Academic Success Center
200 STU, 616-331-3588

University Counseling Center

The UCC offers a variety of services to suit diverse needs. Short-term individual and long-term group therapy are provided at no cost to GVSU students.

Allendale: Monday - Friday 8 AM - 5 PM
Pew: M, W, Th 8 AM - 5 PM

Allendale: 206 Student Services Center
Pew: DeVos 101B
(616) 331-3266

Center for Health and Well-Being

The Center for Health and Well-Being offers a variety of resources for GVSU students including a campus health center, victim and survivor advocacy, and free, confidential STI testing.

Clinic Hours: 8 AM - 5 PM
Walk-In Hours: 8 AM - 10 AM

Campus Health Center
(616) 331-8995
studenthealthservices@gvsu.edu

Recreation & Wellness

RecWell is the place for all things fitness and activity. RecWell houses on-campus fitness centers, intramural and club sports, eports, and wellness coaching.

Sunday: 11 AM - 10 PM
Monday - Thursday: 6 AM - 12 AM
Friday: 6 AM - 9 PM
Saturday: 8 AM - 8 PM

The Fieldhouse - Raleigh J. Finkelstein Athletic Village
(616) 331-3313

FIND YOUR COMMUNITY

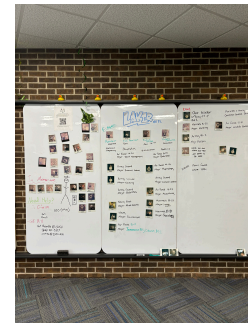
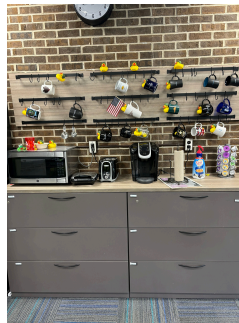
Laker Vets - Student Veterans of American at GVSU

Laker Vets at Grand Valley is one of over 1,400 Student Veteran of America chapters from around the nation. Our chapter is here to support student veterans, military, and dependents in their success on campus and in the classroom. There are monthly events and the opportunity to attend the SVA National Convention.



Military and Veteran Resource Center Lounge Spaces

We have lounges on both the Allendale and Health campuses. The spaces are available for you to relax, meet other student veterans, get connected to resources, or enjoy some free coffee and snacks!



GVSU Student Organizations

Visit LakerLink to browse the 400+ student organizations on campus!



LAKERLINK

Emotional Wellness

1. Mindfulness
2. Social Connections
3. Manage Stress
4. Appropriately Express Emotions
5. Improve Self-Awareness

Environmental Wellness

1. Make your room a place where you feel comfortable, safe, and at ease in.
2. Keep mementoes of things that are important to you.
3. Find time to explore nature.
4. Unplug from technology

Financial Wellness

1. Create a budget.
2. Save or invest for the future.
3. Know where you stand on debts and make a plan to pay them off.
4. Create an emergency fund.

Intellectual Wellness

1. Learn a new skill.
2. Journal.
3. Do a puzzle or brain teaser
4. Read a good book or listen to music you enjoy.
5. Reach out to professors and campus resources for help.

Social Wellness

1. Surround yourself with people who you can trust and you know care about you.
2. Communicate clearly when dealing with conflict.
3. Make at least one good friend you can count on.
4. Get involved with a student organization.
5. Be okay being alone.

Spiritual Wellness

1. Allow yourself time alone.
2. Practice mindfulness.
3. Pray, reflect, or meditate.
4. Get involved in your community.
5. Practice activities that allow you to slow down.

Occupational Wellness

1. Choose a major that you find interesting and meaningful.
2. Take advantage of internships, study abroad, and volunteer work opportunities.
3. Find a balance between work and relaxation.

Physical Wellness

1. To get good sleep; avoid caffeine, alcohol, and devices before bed, stick to a routine, and keep your room cool.
2. Eat when hungry, plan snacks, and seek nutrition advice from dietitians.
3. Make informed decisions about alcohol and drug use.
4. Prioritize sexual health, protect against STIs, and access free condoms on campus.
5. Physical activity boosts health - try options like the Climbing Center or UFit Plan

