Statement of Understanding (SOU)

All information below is needed to process your benefits. FAILURE TO COMPLETE THIS FORM IN ITS ENTIRETY MAY RESULT IN PROCESSING DELAYS. Please return the completed form to AUVRC at veterans@auburn.edu

The VA School Certifying Official (SCO) assists veterans, reservists, guardsmen, dependents and survivors of veterans in processing their education benefits for use at Auburn University (AU). The SCO will certify enrollment to the VA for those students who are utilizing Federal VA Education Benefits.

Students must read this Statement of Understanding (SOU) and sign acknowledging receipt of the Student Reference Guide for VA Educational Benefits at AU to use VA Educational Benefits at AU. I may also download a copy of Student Reference Guide for VA Educational Benefits at AU online at veterans.auburn.edu.

For enrollment certification for VA, I understand that:

- AU School Certifying Official (SCO) must have all appropriate documents stating my educational benefits.
- Only courses required for my declared program of study at AU will be certified. Repeated courses to obtain a better passing grade will not be certified nor will additional electives not required for declared degree plan.
- I must attend all classes in which I am enrolled. Any change in enrollment will be reported to the VA.
- Class beginning and ending dates, as well as the number of credit hours registered, will affect my monthly housing allowance (BAH).
- To cancel my enrollment certification for a particular semester, I will notify the VRC via email before beginning of term at veterans@auburn.edu

For CH30 (MGIB) I understand that:

- I must verify my attendance at the end of each month while enrolled in school. I do so by calling 1-888-442-4551 or going online to www.gibill.va.gov
- I understand that my BAH is prorated due to the number of hours that I am enrolled.

For CH31 or Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E), I understand that:

- I must submit a current authorization (VA form 22-1905) in order to charge tuition, fees, books and/or supplies.
- Books and/or supplies may be charged on specific dates posted in the bookstore each semester.

For CH33 (POST 9/11), I understand that:

- The VA will send my book stipend directly to me not the school.
- I must pay any expense not covered per entitlement listed on Certificate of Eligibility (COE) letter from VA. (Examples could be 50% eligibility, out of degree plan course, etc.)
- My BAH is prorated from both the number of hours I am enrolled and my percentage of entitlement.

For CH35 (DEA), I understand that:

- My BAH is prorated from the number of hours that I am enrolled in
- I understand that my benefit does not pay my tuition up front and I am responsible for covering my tuition costs.

For CH1606 (MGIB-SR) and CH1607 (REAP), I understand that:

- I must verify my attendance at the end of each month while enrolled in school. I do so by calling 1-888-823-2378 or going online to www.gibill.va.gov
- I understand that my BAH is prorated due to the number of hours that I am enrolled.
- I understand that my GI Bill does not pay my tuition up front and I am responsible for covering my tuition costs.

I have read and understand this Statement of Understanding. Also, I have received a copy of Student Reference Guide for VA Educational Benefits at AU.

Signed: ______________________________________  Date: __________________________
All Students using GI Bill® benefits:

I understand that all GI Bill® benefits are subject to approval by the Federal Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and that I must meet all requirements determined by them in order to receive such benefits. It has also been made clear to me that the Auburn University Veterans Resource Center (AUVRC) is a liaison between me and the VA, that the AUVRC works for Auburn University and is not the VA itself. **WE DO NOT GUARANTEE PAYMENT!** Furthermore, I understand that if I have issues with approval of benefits or the amount of money allocated to me by the VA, I may seek assistance from the AUVRC. I understand that any such issues aside from the correction of hours and the amount of tuition/fees being reported to the VA are outside the control of the AUVRC.

**Contact Information:** I understand that should I experience any issues with my GI Bill® benefits, I will contact the AUVRC office first. If the AUVRC is unable to assist me with my issue, I will contact the National Call Center located at the VA Regional Office in Muskogee, Oklahoma 1-888-442-4551 or go to www.gibill.va.gov under “Ask a Question” to send them an email. For emails, **you must return to this website and log in to read your answer.**

**Checklist:** I understand that I must complete and turn in all forms required on my GI Bill® related checklist posted on veterans.auburn.edu under my applicable GI Bill® program before I can receive VA benefits.

**Residency:** I understand that I must contact the Residency office to determine whether or not I will be charged resident or non-resident tuition. Military status of any kind does **not** automatically make me eligible for in-state tuition rate while attending Auburn University.

**Coursework:** I understand my Federal VA Education Benefits will only pay for coursework **REQUIRED as part of my degree plan as core subjects or approved electives.** My degree program is my major on record with the Auburn University Office of the Registrar which is reflected in my student record. Furthermore, I realize that it is my responsibility to know what classes count toward my degree. **If I should take classes outside my degree’s curriculum it will be at my own expense.** All Graduate students must set up and follow his/her Graduate Plan of Study or temporary plan of study before courses can be approved for VA pay purposes.
Academic Advisor (AA) Approve Schedule: I understand that my schedule will be approved by my Dean’s designated Academic Advisor, who may not always be my advisor in my degree program. It is this academic advisor that is authorized to approve class schedules for VA pay purposes. **I understand that it is my responsibility to contact my Academic Advisor and to know what classes count toward my degree program and those that do not.** Graduate Students must follow their respective Graduate Plans of Study.

Minors: **VA WILL NOT PAY FOR A MINOR.** I understand that unless a minor is explicitly mandated in my curriculum for my chosen degree the VA will not finance the pursuit of a minor. However, I may obtain a minor through creative use of required electives with the help of my academic advisor. If I decide to pursue a non-required minor, I will first speak with the AUVRC to understand any financial obligation I may have in such a pursuit.

Double/Dual Majors: I understand that the VA may pay for more than one major at a time, **but only if the two degrees are in related areas and lead to a certain career field or employment specialty, and the two degrees are published in the Auburn University Bulletin.** I understand additional paperwork will be required and advanced notice will need to be given to AUVRC to ensure the degree combination meets VA and Auburn University guidelines. Failure to meet requirements will result in the suspension or denial of benefits and/or require repayment of benefits already received in one or both majors.

Change of Major: I understand that should I chose to change my major, I MUST notify the AUVRC and provide an Academic Advisor letter, approved schedule and Program Curriculum reflecting the new major change. It is usually best to change your major in a future term. **Failure to complete the required VA forms and paperwork will suspend or terminate your VA education benefits.** Graduate student’s contact the AUVRC.

Grades: I understand that I must attend my classes. I understand that if I receive a failing punitive grade, the professor will be contacted by the AUVRC to obtain the last date of attendance and my certification will be adjusted in accordance with the date provided. This could result in a debt to be repaid to the VA Regional Office.

Transient Students: I understand that should I choose to study outside AU at another school or college as a guest student I MUST provide the AUVRC a copy of a Departmental and Registrar-approved Transient Letter.

Auburn Study Abroad: I understand I MUST contact the AUVRC at the earliest time possible to coordinate use of my benefits. Approved Auburn Study Abroad paperwork (e.g. Auburn University study abroad forms, course description(s), dates, price break-out and subjects covered) are required. Courses taken during Auburn Study Abroad **MUST be an Auburn Study Abroad Program (Auburn Faculty Run) and for required degree course(s) for your major, not elective courses.** Not all study abroad programs are approved for VA pay purposes. Non-Auburn operated study abroad
programs are not authorized for use of VA benefits. See the VRC for more information and instructions.

VA Not-Dependable: I understand that I should NOT depend on my VA checks for any vital living expenses (rent, car payment, University Bursar Bills etc.). While VA checks should come on a regular basis, this is not guaranteed by the AU VRC or the VA Regional Office in Muskogee, OK.

Pay Check-Possible Waiting Period: I understand that my benefits will be processed over a period of time by the Regional VA Office in Muskogee, OK. I also understand that it may take several weeks, after Auburn has sent my enrollment certification, before I will begin to receive any VA money.

I understand that I MUST REPORT ANY OF THE FOLLOWING CHANGES IMMEDIATELY! TO THE AU VRC: Failure to do so may result in the reduction of benefits or suspension/denial of future benefits and/or require repayment of VA benefits already received:

1. **Any type of Withdrawal** “W” from class for any reason may cause as overpayment. Notify the AU VRC immediately if you plan to withdraw or have withdrawn from one or more classes. A date of last attendance will determine the overpayment amount.
2. **Resignation or Withdrawal** from school.
3. **Drop** one or more classes.
4. **Add** one or more classes.
5. **Register for classes** each term (an email to the AU VRC at veterans@auburn.edu will suffice.)
6. **Substituted courses & required remedial/prerequisite courses.** This MUST be verified by your Academic Advisor’s signature on your schedule. You must bring the approved schedule to our office and the paperwork will be placed in your VA file.
7. **Changes in Address** must be reported to VARPO Muskogee, OK and the AU VRC.
CH33: Post 9/11 Recipients Only:

**Tuition and fees will not be requested** from the VA until **AFTER** the semester’s schedule adjustment period has ended. Example: 6th class day for Fall & Spring terms and 5th class day for Summer terms.

**Scholarships:** I understand that any and all scholarships I receive **MUST BE REPORTED TO THE AUVRC.** The AUVRC must have a copy of the award letter(s) that states the stipulations regarding said funds. If the stipulations state the scholarship must be **allocated directly for tuition and fees (only for tuition and fees, solely for tuition and fees, the equivalent of tuition and fees, etc.)** the funds will be taken into consideration when determining the amount of tuition and fees to request from VA. The scholarship will be deducted from the VA eligible tuition and fees and we will request the remaining balance from the VA.

**University and/or Outside Waivers, Grants or Fellowships:** I understand that any waivers, grants or fellowships I receive **MUST BE REPORTED TO AUVRC.** Any tuition/fee waivers or funds that are designated for tuition/fees will be considered when determining the amount of tuition and fees that can be requested from the VA. I understand that any tuition/fee designated waiver, grant or fellowship will be deducted from the VA eligible tuition and fees and the remaining balance will be requested from VA. **Note:** Title IV aid (Pell grant, Stafford loans, etc.) does not affect GI Bill®.

**University Bursar Bill:** I understand that AU will post a Bursar Memo of $0.01 on my bill for all estimated tuition and fees that will be covered by the VA under my GI Bill® benefits on the condition that I am approved to receive benefits from the VA and that I register for classes during my assigned time-ticket. Once the tuition/fees payment has been received from the VA, the funds will be applied towards the charges on your bill and any remaining funds will be issued to you as a credit balance via direct deposit. Should I acquire any other financial aid (e.g. scholarships, loans, grants) I understand that these funds will be applied towards my charges, regardless of the amount the AUVRC expects to receive for your CH 33: Post 9/11 GI Bill® payment.

**Federal Tuition Assistance (TA) and CH 33:** Active Duty and National Guard/Reserves students cannot receive TA & CH 33 at the same time for the same courses. Ex: If TA has paid for tuition/fees then there is no tuition/fees payment to request for CH 33 and vice versa. There must be tuition and fees bill for the student to have either of these programs to pay tuition and fees. **If there is an unpaid portion of the bill not covered by TA, VA will pay “Top-Up” to cover the unpaid portion of the bill.**
OVERPAYMENT of Benefits: The veteran or dependent is responsible for any overpayment incurred as a result of not completing courses or courses for that are not degree-applicable. Auburn University’s established refund policies will be followed and the student is responsible to both Auburn and the VA for any overpayment made to the student or indebtedness incurred by the student. BOTTOM LINE: Tuition and fee payments are paid by the VA to the school on behalf of the student, overpayments of tuition and fees will be charged to the student.

KICKERS previously used under MGIB and MGIB-SR: Individuals eligible for KICKER under other benefits may receive the KICKER under CH 33. The monthly kicker amount will be prorated based on the individual’s rate of pursuit. Payments of KICKERS will be issued in a lump sum directly to the student each term the student is eligible for benefits and the student is entitled to a monthly housing allowance, BAH. NOTE: the $600 Buy-Up is not payable under CH33 Post 9/11.

Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) Rates: All BAH rates are based off the current DoD rates for the Auburn area (zip 36849) at the E5 with dependent rate. Current DoD BAH rates can be found at https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/bahCalc.cfm. Effective 1 AUG 2018, in accordance with Public Law 115-48 (Colmery Act), the AUVRC must notify the VA of each course’s location by zip code so that the VA may correctly process BAH based on location of the majority of classes being taken by the student.

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<th>Undergraduate Course Loads: FULL TIME ≥ 12 hours</th>
<th>Total Hours</th>
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<th>9</th>
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<td>80%</td>
<td>75% Round up to 80%</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BAH Rate</td>
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<td>80%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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**Full time will be determined by the Graduate School or Department for special programs such as Executive MBA & Physician’s MBA.**

**Distance Learning students will receive national BAH average and will not be identified by their specific address of residence or Auburn University’s address.**

**Distance Learning Graduate Students who attend classes on campus for 2 or more days per term will receive BAH as an in-state resident student attending on campus classes.**

Breaks between Terms and Monthly Prorated BAH: I understand that all breaks between academic semesters are periods in which the VA WILL NOT PAY BAH. I acknowledge that the beginning period of each semester will be the first day of class and the last day of the semester will be the last day of exams at the University. The months beginning and ending the semester are months in which I will only receive BAH for the days school was in session. Any days outside of that will not be covered. BAH payments are prorated on the number of days of school for that term in any given month. Ex. August is the beginning of Fall term and is only 2 weeks long, therefore, I will receive only 2 weeks of BAH.
CH33 Books and Supplies Rate: $41.67 per hour not to exceed $1,000 per year.
CH33 does NOT cover:

- Admissions Deposits
- Meal Plan
- Parking Permit
- Parking Fines
- Library Fines
- Football Tickets
- OIT Fees
- Other fees determined by VA policy
- ID Cards
- Dorm Charges & Fees
- Fees not identified on University Bursar Bill (i.e. 1st day of class fee for golf, scuba, sailing, etc.)
CH 30 (MGIB), CH 35 (DEA), CH 1606 (MGIB-SR) & CH 1607 (REAP) Recipients Only:

**Monthly Allotments:** I understand that under these Chapters of the GI Bill® I will receive only monthly allotments from the VA based on (prorated on) the number of hours taken during a given semester at the end of every month. These payments are also prorated on the number of days of school for that term in any given month. Ex: During Fall term, we are only enrolled in 2 weeks during August, therefore, I will receive 2 weeks of VA benefits for the month of August. The maximum authorized allotment is reached when taking hours equivalent to full time student status or greater as deemed by the VA. I also realize that all allotments are paid directly to me and that Auburn will not authorize delayed payment of bills due to late receipt of payments from the VA.

**Breaks & Break Pay:** I understand that all breaks between academic semesters are periods in which the VA Will NOT Pay MONTHLY allotments. I acknowledge that the beginning period of each semester will be the first day of class and the last day of the semester will be the last day of exams at Auburn University. The months beginning and ending the semester are months in which I will only receive my allotment for the days school was in session and any days outside of that will not be covered for VA pay purposes.

**CH 30, CH 1606 & CH 1607 Only:** I am required to complete monthly verification of attendance on the last day of each month that I am enrolled in school. I understand that if I am a CH 30 (veteran or active duty), CH 1606 or CH 1607 recipient I MUST contact the VA to verify my hours of enrollment each month. Upon proper verification of hours to the VA, the VA will issue payment of monthly educational benefits to me. I understand that I can verify my hours in two ways: WAVES, Web Automated Verification of Enrollment at www.gibill.va.gov or by calling 1-877-823-2378.

**CH 31 Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E) Recipients Only:**

**Case Manager and AU VRC:** I understand that I need to stay in contact with my case manager and the AU VRC to discuss with them any and all changes concerning coursework and major changes.

**Breaks & Break Pay:** I understand that all breaks between academic semesters are periods in which the VA Will NOT Pay MONTHLY allotments. I acknowledge that the beginning period of each semester will be the first day of class and the last day of the semester will be the last day of exams at Auburn University. The months beginning and ending the semester are months in which I will only receive my allotment for the days school was in session and any days outside of that will not be covered for VA pay purposes.
Additional References:

VA Forms can be found online at www.gibill.va.gov

22-1990 Application for VA Education Benefits (Chapters 30, 33, 1606, 1607)
22-1995 Change of Program or Place of Training (Chapters 30, 33, 1606, 1607)
22-1999e Dependent Application for Post 9/11 transferred benefits
22-5490 Application for Survivors and Dependents (Chapter 35)
22-5495 Change of Program or Place of Training (Chapter 35)

Important Phone Numbers:
888-442-4551 VA Education Call Center
800-827-0648 VA Debt Management Center
877-823-2378 Web Automated Verification of Enrollment

AUVRC Contact Info:
217 Foy Hall
Auburn Univ., AL 36849
Phone: (334) 844-8167
Email: veterans@auburn.edu