



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 submit to <http://veterans.auburn.edu/required-documents/>.

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.** The Student Reference Guide for VA Educational Benefits can be easily accessed anytime at veterans.auburn.edu.

For **enrollment certification** for VA, I understand that:

- AU School Certifying Official (SCO) must have all appropriate and updated documents regarding 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 and 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. I will notify the VRC when I wish to restart using my benefits.

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 1-888-823-2378 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.

For **CH31 or Veteran Readiness & Employment (VR&E)**, I understand that:

- My VR&E counselor must send Tungsten Authorization to the school 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 both my BAH and 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.
- I understand that my benefit is a stipend only paid directly to me and I am responsible for tuition & fees.

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 1-877-823-2378 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: _____

Print: _____



Reference Guide for Federal VA Education Benefits

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 (VRC) is a liaison between me and the VA, that the VRC works for Auburn University and is not the VA itself. **WE DO NOT GUARENTEE 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 VRC. 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 VRC.

Contact Information:

I understand that should I experience any issues with my GI Bill® benefits, I will contact the VRC office first. If the VRC 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 <https://ask.va.gov/> under to “Ask a Question”.

Checklist / Required Documents:

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. Lapses in enrollment and transferring to other benefits require all updated paperwork from the checklist.

Residency:

I understand that I must contact the Residency office to determine whether 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. I understand it is my responsibility to notify the VRC if I register for courses outside of my assigned “time-ticket” and failure to do so may delay my certifications during that term.

Academic Advisor (AA) Approved 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 Plan of Study.

Enrollment Changes

I understand that **I must report any of the following changes immediately to the VRC** and failure to do so may result in the reduction of benefits, 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 an overpayment.
2. Resignation or Withdrawal from school.
3. Drop one or more classes.
4. Add one or more classes.
5. Register for classes each term
6. Substituted courses & required remedial/prerequisite courses.
7. Changes in Address

Minors:

VA WILL NOT PAY FOR A MINOR. I understand that unless a minor is explicitly mandated in my curriculum for my chosen degree that 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 VRC to understand any financial obligation I may have in such a pursuit.

Double and Concurrent 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, lead to a certain career field or employment specialty, and the two degrees are approved by the Alabama State Approving Agency (SAA). I understand additional paperwork will be required and advanced notice will need to be given to VRC to ensure the degree combination meets both 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 am required** to notify the VRC and provide an updated Academic Advisor letter, approved schedule and Program Curriculum reflecting the major change. It is best to change your major in a future term as mid-semester changes may affect current enrollment certifications. Failure to complete the required VA forms and paperwork will suspend or terminate your VA education benefits.

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 VRC 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 am **required** to provide the VRC a copy of a Departmental and Registrar-approved Transient Letter.

Auburn Study Abroad:

I understand that I am required to contact the VRC 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.

Avoiding VA Payment Dependence:

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 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 VA Regional 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. To get updated status on payment, contact the National Call Center located at the VA Regional Office in Muskogee, Oklahoma 1-888-442-455.

Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) Rates:

Effective 1 AUG 2018, in accordance with Public Law 115-48 (Colmery Act), BAH will be based on location of the majority of classes being taken by the student. Distance Learning students will receive national BAH average for distance students. All BAH rates are based off the current DoD rates for the Auburn, AL area (zip 36849) at the E5 with dependents rate. Current DoD BAH rates can be found at <https://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/bahCalc.cfm>.

Undergraduate Course Loads: Full Time \geq 12 hours

Total Hours	12	11	10	9	8	7	6
BAH Rate	100%	90%	80%	75% Round up to 80%	70%	60%	0%

Graduate Course Loads: Full Time \geq 9 hours

Total Hours	9	8	7	6	5	4
BAH Rate	100%	90%	80%	60%	60%	0%

**Full time will be determined by the Graduate School or Department for special programs such as Executive MBA & Physician's MBA. 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 AU. I will only receive BAH for the days school was in session. Any days outside of the semester that I am enrolled will not be covered. Example: August is the beginning of Fall term and is only 2 weeks long, therefore, I will receive only 2 weeks of BAH.

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: 15th class day for Fall & Spring terms and 5th class day for Summer terms. However, enrollments with \$0.00 Tuition and Fees will be submitted to the VA before the start of the semester. This allows my enrollment to be placed in the pipeline for processing of BAH and book stipends.

Monthly Verification:

Section 1010 of Public Law 116-315 requires GI Bill® beneficiaries to verify their continued enrollment status to continue to receive a monthly housing allowance (MHA) and/or kickers. There are three options for verifying listed below. The preferred and most efficient method is listed first.

1. Through Text messaging. When you opt-in, we'll send you a text message each month asking if you continue to be enrolled. To opt-in to receive text messages, please contact us by either method listed below. Currently, this option is not available for foreign and U.S. territory-based phone numbers.
2. Call the Education Call Center at 1-888-GI-Bill-1
3. You can also use As VA online at: ask.va.gov. Please select GI Bill® as the category for your question.

Scholarships:

I understand that all scholarships I receive **must be reported to the VRC**. The VRC must have a copy of the scholarship rules or instruction letter stating 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.) then the funds will be deducted from the amount of tuition and fees requested from VA.

University and/or Outside Waivers, Grants or Fellowships:

I understand that any waivers, grants or fellowships I receive **must be reported to VRC**. I understand that any tuition/fee specific designated waiver, grant or fellowship will be deducted from the amount of tuition and fees requested from the VA. **Note*: Title IV aid (Pell grant, student loans, etc.) does not affect GI Bill®.*

University Bursar Bill:

I understand that AU will post a Penny Memo of \$0.01 on my bill for the semester's estimated tuition and fees that will be covered by the VA under my GI Bill® benefits. This penny memo is contingent 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 by AU 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 VRC expects to receive for your CH 33: Post 9/11 GI Bill® payment.*

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.)**

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. AU's established refund policies will be followed, and the student is responsible to both AU 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.

Kicker previously used under the Montgomery GI Bill®:

Individuals eligible for a Kicker under other benefits may receive the Kicker under CH 33. The monthly amount will be prorated based on the individual's rate of pursuit. Payments of Kicker 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.*

Book Stipend:

The VA will provide a book stipend at the rate of \$41.67 per hour not to exceed \$1,000 per year. This money is sent directly to me and not to the school. Example: I am enrolled in 12 hours for the fall semester. $12 \times \$41.67 = \500 . The VA will send me a \$500 payment for books for the fall semester.

CH 30 (MGIB), CH 35 (DEA), CH 1606 (MGIB-SR) Recipients Only:

Monthly Stipend (BAH):

I understand that under these Chapters of the GI Bill® I will receive only monthly stipend from the VA based on (prorated on) the number of hours taken during a given semester. These benefits do not pay my tuition and the monthly stipend is sent directly to me not the school. I will receive these payments 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.

The monthly stipend maximum is reached when taking hours equivalent to full time student status or greater as deemed by the VA.

Breaks between terms & break pay:

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 AU. I will only receive BAH for the days school was in session. Any days outside of the semester that I am enrolled will not be covered. Example: August is the beginning of Fall term and is only 2 weeks long, therefore, I will receive only 2 weeks of BAH.

Monthly Verification:

I understand that if I am a CH 30 (veteran or active duty) or CH 1606 recipient I am required to 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 Veteran Readiness & Employment (VR&E) Recipients Only:**Case Manager and VRC:**

I understand that I need to stay in contact with both my VR&E case manager and the VRC to discuss with them any and all changes concerning coursework and major changes.

Breaks between terms & break pay:

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 AU. I will only receive BAH for the days school was in session. Any days outside of the semester that I am enrolled will not be covered. Example: August is the beginning of Fall term and is only 2 weeks long, therefore, I will receive only 2 weeks of BAH.

Additional Resources for All Benefits:

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

22-1990	Service Member/Veteran Application for Chapters 30, 33, 1606
22-1995	Change of Program or Place of Training (Chapters 30, 33, 1606)
22-1999e	Dependent Application for Chapter 33: Post 9/11 Transferred Benefits
22-5490	Dependent Application for Chapter 35- Survivors and Dependents
22-5495	Change of Program or Place of Training for Chapter 35 recipients

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

VRC Contact Info:

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