

Meeting Summary Report

Meeting Name:	Veterans' Advisory Committee on Education (VACOE)
Meeting Date:	March 18-19, 2015
Meeting Time:	8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. - 4:45 p.m.
Meeting Location:	1331 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, State Room, Washington, DC 20004
Facilitator:	VACOE and Education Service
Purpose	The purpose of the Committee is to advise the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on the administration of education and training programs for veterans, servicepersons, reservists, and dependents of veterans under Chapters 30, 32, 33, 35, and 36 of title 38, and Chapter 1606 of title 10, United States Code.

Invitees/Attendees (✓):			
VACOE	Name		Organization
	Dr. Kathy Snead, Chair	✓	Servicemember Opportunity Colleges
	Ms. Tanya Ang	✓	American Council on Education
	Ms. Dawn Bilodeau	✓	Department of Defense
	Mr. Steve L. Gonzalez	✓	American Legion
	Ms. Lisa Lutz	✓	Solutions for Information Design
	Ms. Lynn Nelson	✓	Department of Veterans Affairs, Retired
	Ms. Joan Putnam	✓	San Diego State University
	Mr. D. Wayne Robinson	✓	Student Veterans of America
	Ms. Annie Walker	✓	Virginia State Approving Agency
	Mr. Barrett Bogue	✓	Education Service, Designated Federal Officer (DFO)
	Mr. Randy Lazaro	✓	Education Service, Deputy DFO
	Ms. Zaida Nogue		National Association of Veteran Program Administrators (NAVPA)
Guests			
	Mr. Marc Barker	✓	NAVPA President
	Dr. Jan Del Signore	✓	NAVPA member
	Mr. Patrick Campbell	✓	Consumer Financial Protection Bureau
	Ms. Cassandra Dortch	✓	Congressional Research Service
	Col. Robert Norton (Retired)	✓	Military Officers Association of America
	Mr. Dave Goldich	✓	Gallup
	Mr. Brian Thompson	✓	Department of Education
	Mr. Donald Sutton	✓	Army National Guard
	Mr. Brendon Gehrke	✓	Veterans of Foreign Wars
	Mr. Walter Ochinko	✓	Veterans Education Success
	Mr. Adrian Lucero	✓	Kognito
	Mr and Mrs. Paul Johnston	✓	Veteran/Chapter 35 Recipient
	Mr. Conwey Casillas	✓	University of Phoenix
	Mr. Christopher Butler	✓	Strayer University
	Ms. Allie Grasgreen	✓	Politico

Meeting Summary Report

Agenda Item(s)– March 18-19, 2015		Purpose	Lead	Read-Ahead Material Sent?	Time Limit
1	Open meeting, committee member introduction, reviewed agenda and meeting materials	Overview of meeting scope	Dr. Kathy Snead, Chair	Yes	45 mins
2	Tips for a Successful Committee Meeting presentation	Briefing VACOE	Mr. Barrett Y. Bogue	No	20 mins
3	Briefed members and provided updates on Education Service issues including LTS, Principle of Excellence, Chapter 33, and Pending legislation	Briefing VACOE	Mr. Robert M. Worley II	No	1.15 hrs.
4	Committee Roundtable: Identified Major Areas of Interest for Consideration and Review by Committee members	VACOE	VACOE	Yes	45 mins
5	Presentation: Student Veteran Data Collection and Program Accountability	Briefing VACOE	Mr. Christopher Sutherland	No	1.15 hrs
6	Discussion: Title 38 U.S.C. Revision to accommodate distance learning, remedial courses and individualized instruction	VACOE Formulate recommendations	Dr. Kathy Snead and Mr. Barrett Y. Bogue	No	45 mins
7	Open for Public Comment on GI Bill improvements	Per FACA	Mr. Marc Barker, Col. Bob Norton, Mr. Walter Ochinko, Mr. Dave Goldich, Mr. & Mrs. Paul Johnston, Mr. Brendon Gehrke, and Mr. Paul Johnston Jr.	Yes	1 hour
8	Wrap up and Review Action Items	VACOE	Mr. Barrett Y. Bogue	No	30 mins

Meeting Summary Report

Day 2	Reconvened	N/a	VACOE	No	20 mins
2	Committee housekeeping matters: reviewed written statements from the public and generated recommendations	Housekeeping	VACOE	Yes	1.5 hrs
3	Committee roundtable: Discussed Title 38 U.S.C. revisions to accommodate test preparation, hybrid courses, and calculating rate of pursuit	VACOE	VACOE	No	1.15 hrs
4	Briefed members about VA's Accelerated Learning Programs (ALP)	VACOE	VA's Office of Transition, Employment & Economic Impact Rep.	No	45 mins
5	Committee group photo with VA Chief of Staff	VACOE	VACOE	No	15 mins
6	VA Chief of Staff Visit and Remarks	VACOE	Honorable Jose Riojas	No	30 mins
7	Committee Roundtable: Formulate Recommendations and Establish Sub Working Groups	VACOE discussion	Dr. Kathy Snead and Mr. Barrett Y. Bogue	No	1.15 hrs
8	Committee Reflections – Next Steps. Discussed Actions items and recommendations	VACOE discussion	Dr. Kathy Snead and Mr. Barrett Y. Bogue	No	1.30 hrs
9	Adjourned	End of Meeting	N/a	N/a	N/a

Meeting Summary Report

Purpose: Discussion, Action, Decision, Approval, or Information Only
Read Ahead Material Sent? Y, N, N/A

Referenced Documents:

- Agenda: March 18 – 19, 2015
- VACOE Recommendations from the meeting on August 13-14, 2013
- VACOE letter to Secretary dated December 2013
- Education Service Director Response to VACOE dated March 2015
- Secretary Response to VACOE Oct 24, 2008
- Education Service Updates, Principles of Excellence Outcome Measures, Accelerated Learning Program
- Submitted Public Comments

Next Meeting Date:

- October 2015 (tentative)

Draft Recommendations:

- Modify Title 38 to keep pace with changes in the higher education community with respect to distance learning, hybrid programs, and competency based programs, rate of pursuit.
 - Establish a Sub Committee to review and recommend legislative and regulatory changes to Chapter 36 of Title 38.
- Based on significant public input: Restore interval/break pay to include Winter Break (Dec. – Jan.) w/ an opt-out option to preserve entitlement. Committee understands this is a sensitive issue. Recognize it is a huge financial burden/help ensure veteran success/reduces risk factor/increases likelihood of completing degree
- Tracking Student Success: Define graduation to include those who persist after they leave any education benefit program. Also, differentiate between traditional versus online.
- Improved customer service and effective outreach in accordance w/ MyVA Plan
 - Debt Management Center business practices for collection of GI Bill debts
 - Recommend SECVA (or his/her designee) send a congratulatory letter to all Veterans and Servicemembers who graduate who have used the GI Bill to graduate with a degree (based upon available data).
 - Committee members help VA promote tutoring, delimiting dates, cost of books, tutoring resources. These resources be promoted and communicated using social media and various communication efforts.
 - Recommend SECVA send formal letter to higher education presidents, chief executive officers, and School Certifying Officers thanking them and recognizing their efforts in supporting work. Letter should also encourage reinvestment of annual reporting fee in professional development activities and training of SCOs and Veterans office personnel (refer back to VACOE letter to SECVA from March 2015 meeting).
- Change the licensure and certification entitlement calculation (Sec. 3351) under the Post-9/11 GI Bill to the standard under the MGIB.

Meeting Summary Report

Certifying Signatures:

Kathy M. Sneed 4/8/15
Dr. Kathy Sneed, Chair

Barrett Y. Bogue → 04/08/15
Mr. Barrett Y. Bogue, Designated Federal Officer

--



VA

The Veterans' Advisory
Committee on Education

Putting Veterans' Education First