

# Board of Regents, State of Iowa

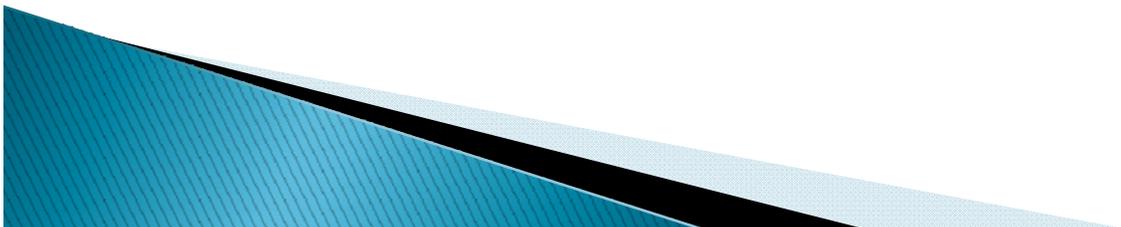
## Overview of Today's Military Students at the Regent Universities

June 8, 2011



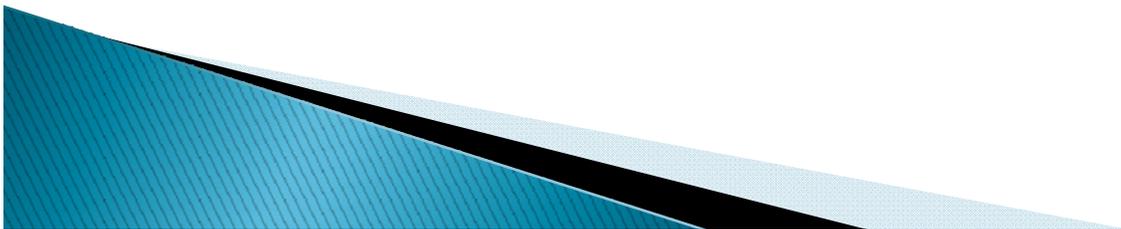
# Overview of presentation

- ▶ Today's military students
- ▶ Education benefits
- ▶ Academic issues
- ▶ Student life issues
- ▶ Personal stories
- ▶ Future issues
- ▶ Emerging best practices recommendations
- ▶ Services provided at the Regent universities



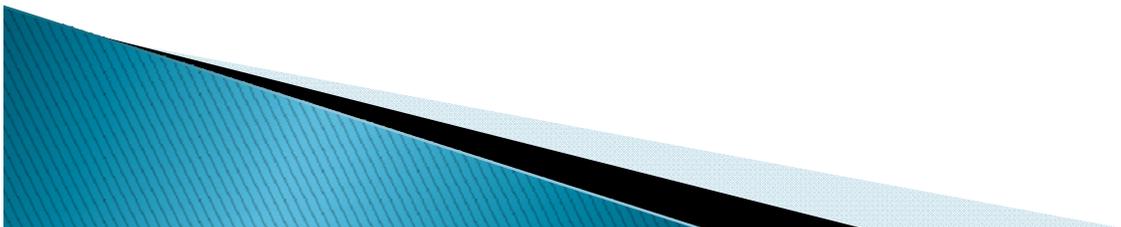
# Today's military students

- ▶ Nation at war since 9/11/2001
- ▶ Largest number of war-time veterans since WWII
- ▶ Iowa National Guard participating in the largest deployment since WWII
- ▶ Service characterized by unprecedented multiple deployments
- ▶ Visible and invisible wounds of war



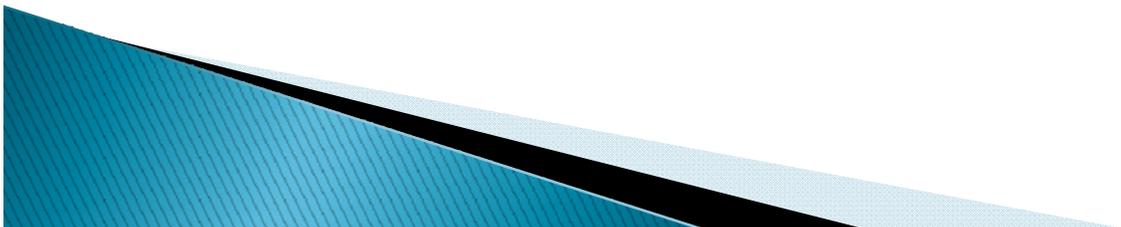
# Military students “by the numbers”

- ▶ Iowa State University
  - ROTC: 240
  - VA educational benefits: 422
  - Currently deployed: 38
- ▶ University of Iowa
  - ROTC: 210
  - VA educational benefits: 381
  - Currently deployed: 38
- ▶ University of Northern Iowa
  - ROTC: 39
  - VA educational benefits: 231
  - Currently deployed: Unknown
- ▶ Who are we missing?
  - Those who have exhausted benefits
  - Guard and reserve members who have not qualified for benefits yet
  - Those who haven't filed for benefits yet due to “bureaucracy fatigue”



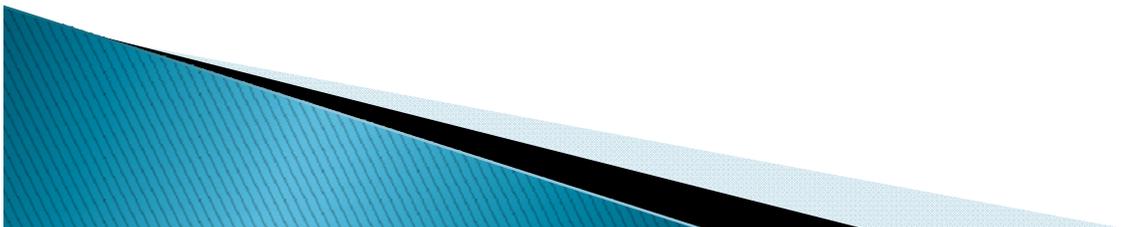
# More information...

- ▶ Women receiving VA Educational Benefits = 28% (Iowa); 27% (UNI); 23% (ISU)
- ▶ Students bringing in transfer credit: ~58%
- ▶ Iowa residency status can be obtained for in-state tuition
- ▶ 4,000 Iowa Army National Guard currently deployed in Afghanistan
- ▶ Many will start or return in August 2011 and January 2012
- ▶ Iowa has a large number of National Guard/Reservists called to active duty (50%) compared to other states
- ▶ All 3 Regent universities have been listed by GI Jobs Magazine as “military-friendly”



# Categories of benefits

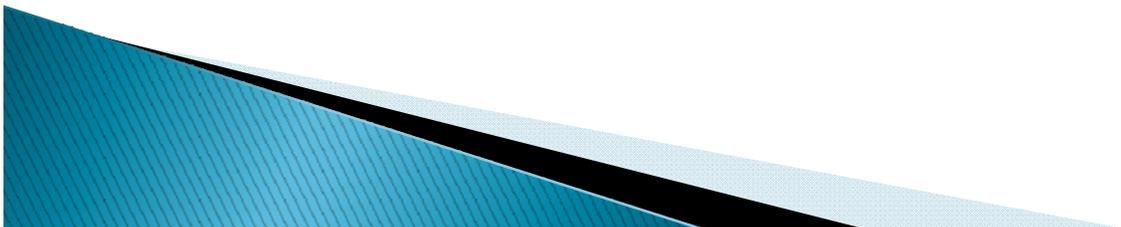
- ▶ Chapter 1606—National Guard/Reservist
- ▶ Chapter 1607—National Guard/Reservist Deployed
- ▶ Chapter 30—Montgomery GI Active Duty
- ▶ Chapter 35—Spouse or dependent of disabled or deceased veteran
- ▶ Veterans Vocational Rehabilitation
- ▶ Chapter 32 (former VEAP program)
- ▶ New: Chapter 33—Post 9/11



# Financial benefits

## New GI Bill (Chapter 33) – Post 9/11

- Ensures that our troops have 40% to 100% of their tuition paid, plus:
  - \$1000 for books per academic year
  - \$1068 per month housing—Iowa City
  - \$1017 per month housing—Ames
  - \$903 per month housing—Cedar Falls
- In addition, veterans are eligible to receive Pell grants of up to \$5,550 a year and/or state and other federal grants
- Benefits can be transferred to dependents



# Academic issues

## Strengths:

- Motivated, committed students
- Add to campus diversity with interesting background, life-experiences

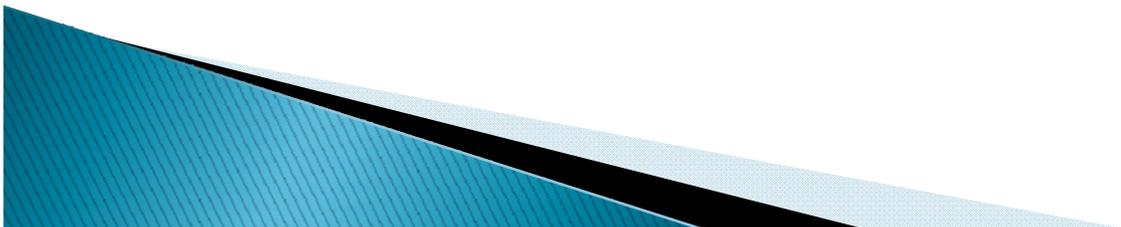
## Challenges:

- Students may feel distracted in class
- Faculty, staff and other students unaware of unique needs
- Isolation—feeling a lack of community
- Misunderstanding of transfer credits
  - All 3 campuses follow ACE guidelines for accepting transfer credits
- Propensity to “stop out”
  - Deployment, personal reasons, financial reasons, or work-related reasons



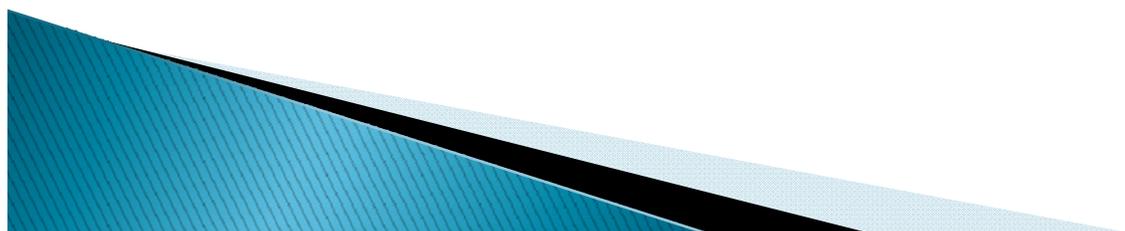
# Student life issues

- ▶ Older than the general population
- ▶ Accustomed to a structured environment
- ▶ Disassociated from established relationships and teammates
- ▶ Different world experiences than 18–19 year-olds who have not been out of the state
- ▶ May have dependents—must balance responsibilities
- ▶ May find themselves with insufficient funds
- ▶ May have emotional as well as physical scars



# Issues faced by disabled Veterans

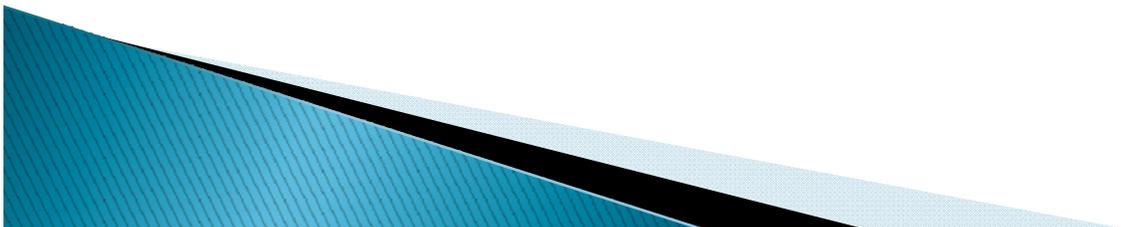
- Physical and emotional issues that may affect them longer
- Hidden disabilities such as TBI and PTSD impacting educational experience
- Longer timeframe to acclimate to studies
- Require more support
- Not ready to enter the educational system if severely disabled



# Personal Stories –

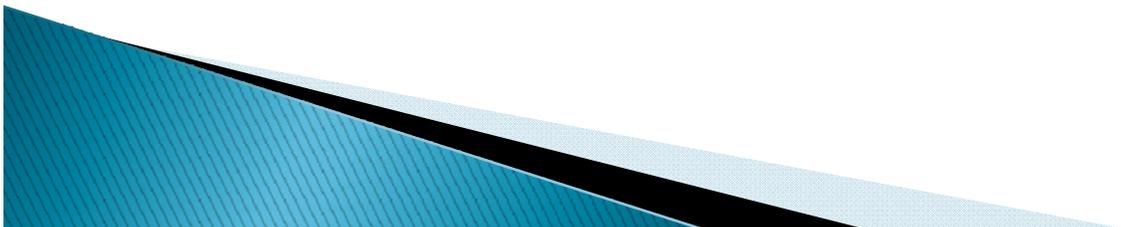
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YcKmmFmU0U0>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6pSj4Vuk1YQ>



# Future Challenges

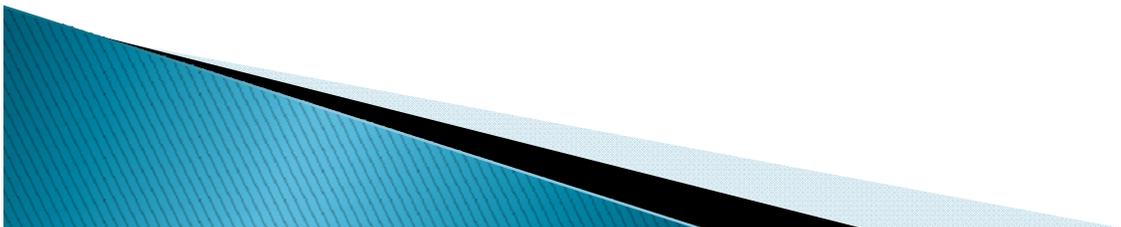
- ▶ Improve retention & graduation rates of veterans
- ▶ Prepare for increase in number of veteran students reintegrating
  - 20,000 National Guard and Reservists in Iowa are eligible for the new GI Bill.
  - 85,000 veterans are eligible as resident students of Iowa who live in the bordering states.
  - The number of veteran students at the Regent universities is expected to double by 2013.



# Emerging best practices recommendations

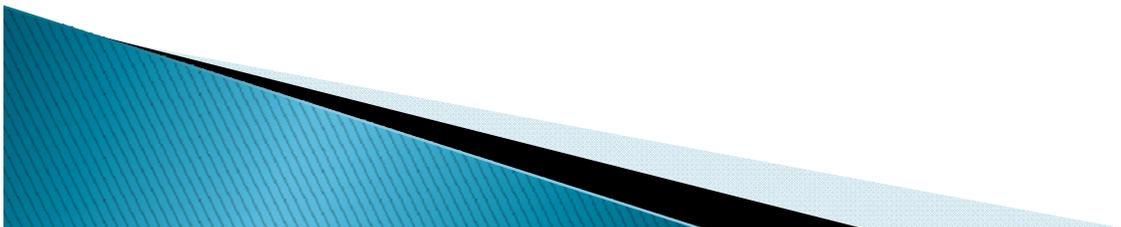
adapted from 2008 American Council on Education (ACE) report

- ▶ Listen to military students
- ▶ Assess institutional strengths and weaknesses serving this population
- ▶ Start (or support) military student groups
- ▶ Offer a military student gathering space
- ▶ Establish a point of contact
  - Consider one-stop shop approach, including consolidated website for military student services



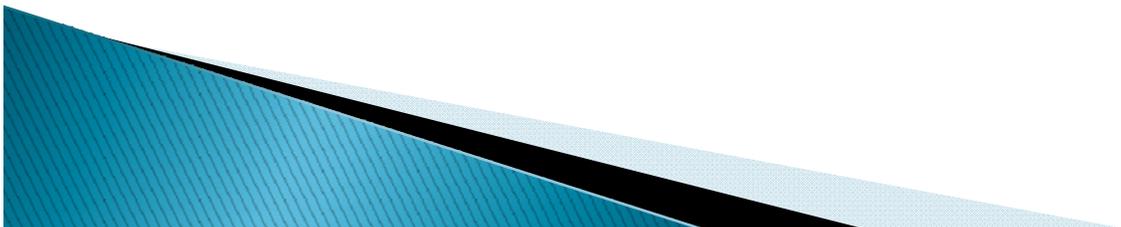
# Emerging best practices recommendations continued...

- ▶ Address military student needs during campus orientation
- ▶ Raise awareness among faculty, staff and students
- ▶ Partner with other organizations (Veterans Affairs, state organizations, etc.)
- ▶ Engage the community, alumni, and military student families



# EXAMPLES OF SERVICES AT SUI

- ▶ Dedicated veterans advisor
- ▶ \$1,000 Iowa Undergraduate Veterans Grant
- ▶ Returning adult student forgiveness policy
- ▶ Improved transfer of military credit
- ▶ New course called “Life After War: Post-Deployment Issues”



# EXAMPLES OF SERVICES AT ISU

- ▶ Military Student web site
- ▶ Active chapter of Student Veterans of America
- ▶ New group called “Cy”pport for family members, partners, spouses, and others
- ▶ Military Student Services Task Force to identify ISU’s strengths and gaps in meeting the needs of military students



# EXAMPLES OF SERVICES AT UNI

- ▶ Campus-wide survey to determine needs of veterans on campus
- ▶ Veterans' student organization
- ▶ New Veterans Student Services Coordinator
- ▶ New, one-stop web site to connect users to all UNI resources supporting military students

