Board of Regents, State of Iowa

Overview of Today’s Military Students at the Regent Universities

June 8, 2011
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overview of presentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Today’s military students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student life issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emerging best practices recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services provided at the Regent universities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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
EXEMPLARY 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”ppport 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