



THE UNDER SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR BENEFITS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20420

APR 03 2015

Dear Higher Education Executive:

On April 27, 2012, the President signed Executive Order 13607 – establishing “Principles of Excellence” for educational institutions serving Servicemembers, Veterans, and their eligible family members. These principles were developed to strengthen consumer protection for these beneficiaries, as well as ensure they have access to the information needed to make informed decisions about the use of their educational benefits.

In accordance with the executive order, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) collaborated with the Department of Education (ED) and the Department of Defense to develop educational program outcome measures and make that information publically available online via VA's GI Bill Comparison Tool and ED's College Navigator. The joint outcome measures are as follows:

- Retention and Persistence Rate
- Transfer-out Rate
- Graduation/Program Completion Rate
- Degree/Certificate Completion Rate
- Number of Years to Complete Degree/Certificate
- Number of Institutions Attended to Complete Degree

In June 2011, VA asked educational institutions to voluntarily report graduation/program completion information for all recipients of Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits using VA-ONCE. VA provided individual school outcome measure data to all educational institutions through their school certifying officials (SCOs) in December 2014. We asked SCOs to validate the data received and update records via VA-ONCE, if necessary. For some institutions, validation of this data may have required additional support from VA's education liaison representatives or their institutional research departments. Institutions were requested to submit their updates no later than March 1, 2015.

To ensure our beneficiaries have access to the most accurate information, VA requests your continued support in reporting graduation/program completion data for all Post-9/11 GI Bill recipients at your institution. Without the graduation/program completion data from your institution, we won't be able to fulfill our obligation to our Servicemembers, Veterans, and their families. VA recognizes and appreciates the vital contributions of your SCOs in helping to ensure those who have served our Nation are able to take full advantage of their well-earned education benefits.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Allison A. Hickey", is written over the typed name. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Allison A. Hickey