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BOARD OF REGENTS

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21 October 2021

The Honorable John Bel Edwards
Governor, State of Louisiana
State Capitol, 4th Floor
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Dear Governor Edwards:

Pursuant to R.S. 17:3138.5 (Act 232 of the 2015 Legislative Session) regarding the Governor's Military and Veteran Friendly Campus (GMVFC, or Friendly Campus) designation, the Board of Regents has reviewed annual reports and determined that, for the second consecutive year, all 28 public institutions are eligible for continued designation as Friendly Campuses:

Continued Designation:

- *Baton Rouge CC*
- *Bossier Parish CC*
- *Central Louisiana TCC*
- *Delgado CC*
- *Fletcher TCC*
- *Louisiana Delta CC*
- *Northshore TCC*
- *Northwest Louisiana TCC*
- *Nunez CC*
- *River Parishes CC*
- *South Louisiana CC*
- *SOWELA TCC*
- *LSU A&M*
- *LSU Alexandria*
- *LSU Eunice*
- *LSU Shreveport*
- *Southern University A&M*
- *Southern University, New Orleans*
- *Southern University, Shreveport*
- *Grambling State University*
- *Louisiana Tech University*
- *McNeese State University*
- *Nicholls State University*
- *Northwestern State University*
- *Southeastern Louisiana University*
- *University of Louisiana, Lafayette*
- *University of Louisiana, Monroe*
- *University of New Orleans*

In accordance with the law, the Friendly Campus designation provides formal recognition of state public postsecondary institutions that create and maintain a supportive environment for military service people by offering veterans waivers of application fees, special orientation sessions, priority class scheduling, deployment readmission policies, and transfer and articulation support. Friendly Campuses also provide free tutoring, offer specifically designed courses each semester; hold career workshops; and/or host ROTC programs. Additionally, many campuses now offer special recognition ceremonies for their Veteran and Military graduates.

Act 429 of the 2021 Legislative session (R.S.:31385) amended Act 232 to extend participation in the Friendly Campus Program to *nonpublic* education institutions as well as provide additional metrics on completion rates for veterans and their spouses/dependents. This will become effective with the 2021-2022 academic reporting year.

Each campus understands that it must identify, and report transfer and articulation data for both veterans and their spouses/dependents. Collectively, public postsecondary institutions identified 6,795 veteran transfer students bringing 51,133 transfer credits, and 9,040 spouses/dependents transferring 50,920 credits in 2020-2021.

Please address questions or requests for additional information to myself or to Associate Commissioner Dr. Susannah Craig (susannah.craig@laregents.edu).

Sincerely,



Kim Hunter Reed, Ph.D.
Commissioner of Higher Education

Attachment

c: Yolanda Dixon, Secretary of the Senate, dixonv@legis.la.gov

Michelle Fontenot, Clerk of the House of Representatives, fontenom@legis.la.gov

Poynter Library, DRPLibrary@legis.la.gov

State Library, docs@state.lib.la.us

Designation as a "Governor's Military & Veteran Friendly Campus"

Background Information

[Act 232](#) of the 2015 Legislative Session enacted RS 17:3138.5 to address the need for comprehensive, statewide support to aid military veterans transitioning from military service to enrollment in postsecondary education. Targeting the need for faculty and staff awareness of "veterans' culture" and for orientation and mentoring programs designed specifically for veterans, the law required the Board of Regents (BoR) to establish a process for designating an institution as a *Governor's Military and Veteran Friendly Campus* (GMVFC, or Friendly Campus), beginning in Fall 2015. It specifies nine criteria for the designation—five mandatory and at least three of four additional required criteria.

With advice from the Statewide Articulation and Transfer Council and Faculty General Education Committee (SATC-GE), the BoR developed an application process for institutions interested in receiving the designation. In Fall 2015, 28 of the 29 public colleges and universities were submitted to the Governor for initial designation. The law specifies that the designation is to be renewed on an annual basis, with an institution's renewal application to include a report containing a series of prescribed data elements from the previous year pertaining to veterans' participation in campus offerings. The due date for new or renewal applications is July 15 of each year, starting in 2016. Any institution that fails to maintain Friendly Campus status must complete the application for initial designation if or when the campus chooses to seek it again.

For the second consecutive year, all 28 campuses were approved for continued *Friendly Campus* designation for AY 2020-21. This represents 100% participation in this program by public postsecondary institutions in the state.

Act 429 of the 2021 Legislative session (R.S.:31385) amended Act 232 to extend participation in the Governor's Military Friendly Campus Program to *nonpublic* education institutions, including the colleges and universities that are members of the Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges & Universities (LAICU). This mandate also includes reporting completion rates of veterans, their spouses, and their children and becomes effective with the 2021-2022 academic reporting year.

This summer, the LaVetCorps¹ and the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs (LDVA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with each public postsecondary institution to expand the presence of the LaVetCorps on their campuses. In conjunction with the LDVA, LaVetCorps, postsecondary institutions, and the BoR, a Uniform Policy on *the Governor's Military & Veteran Friendly Campus* is before the Board for consideration at this October meeting.

STAFF SUMMARY

BoR staff reviewed each application to determine whether the institution met the requirements for initial or continued designation as a Friendly Campus, with a particular focus on the specific data required by law:

- (1) the number of veterans granted application fee waivers;
- (2) the number who attended the specialized orientation program;
- (3) the number who participated in the priority class registration; and
- (4) the number of students (veterans and dependents) who benefitted from the articulation & transfer process, including the number of credits accepted and a list of the courses credited.

¹LaVetCorps is a cooperative program between the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs and AmeriCorps. The mission of LaVetCorps is to empower veteran's families and campus communities to help veterans returning from active military service to transition home to college and their local community successfully.

Most institutions have adjusted their student record systems and established business processes to identify veterans (and spouses/dependents of veterans) and provided all the data required for the 2020-2021 year. As with previous reporting cycles, the most common concern involved transfer/articulation data (Requirement #4). This is the only provision that includes identification of the veteran's spouse, a student classification that is singularly unique, which continues to be a challenge for institutions to flag, and that also requires a listing of transfer courses that runs into the thousands for some institutions.

It should be noted that AY 2020-2021 reporting for the Governor's Friendly Campus designation was again impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, campus engagement with their veteran and military populations exceeded numbers from last year. The Board of Regents extended the deadline for submission of renewal applications to August 16, 2021.

Mandatory Criteria for Continued Designation as a GMVFC:

1. Waive Application Fees for Veterans. Among the participating institutions, 1,220 application fee waivers were reported. As the LCTCS Board had voted in 2015 to no longer charge an application fee at any of its member institutions, application fees were waived for all LCTCS students, regardless of whether they were identified as veterans.

2. Veterans' Orientation. Several campuses have developed online orientation programs for veterans, usually in addition to the regular orientation session for entering students. Online orientations were particularly helpful to students during the pandemic. Institutions reported 3,420 students participating in the special sessions in AY 2020-21.

3. Priority Class Scheduling. Institutions reported that 4,836 students participated in priority scheduling for the fall, winter, spring, or summer semesters/terms of AY2020-21.

4. Military Articulation & Transfer Process. Outside of the specific attention to the recognition of military education, training, or experience, the requirements for the military articulation and transfer process mirror the services sought for every transfer student (e.g., to assist students in pursuing their educational goals by providing expedited transcript analysis, prior learning assessment, advising and testing). In AY 2020-21, these numbers increased across the board, 6,795 veterans were identified as transferring 51,133 credit hours, and their 9,040 spouses/dependents transferred 50,920 credits (refer to charts below). Friendly Campuses reported serving 15,835 veteran or dependent transfer students who transferred 102,053 course credits in AY 2020-21.

The 2020-21 System breakdown (along with the 2019-2020 for comparison) of total transfer and articulation reported for veterans and their spouses/dependents is shown below:

| 2020-21 | Veterans | Transfer Credits | Spouse/Dep | Transfer Credits |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| LCTCS | 4,583 | 18,541 | 7,515 | 24,161 |
| LSU | 642 | 13,841 | 971 | 14,091 |
| SUS | 287 | 1,073 | 41 | 533 |
| ULS | 1,283 | 17,678 | 513 | 12,135 |
| TOTALS | 6,795 | 51,133 | 9,040 | 50,920 |

| 2019-20 | Veterans | Transfer Credits | Spouse/Dep | Transfer Credits |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| LCTCS | 1,815 | 14,993 | 2,311 | 16,898 |
| LSU | 68 | 13,841 | 382 | 3,060 |
| SUS | 29 | 853 | 24 | 530 |
| ULS | 1,554 | 17,987 | 789 | 21,113 |
| TOTALS | 3,466 | 39,231 | 3,506 | 41,601 |

STAFF ANALYSIS

Over the past six years, the bulk of the workload demands on campuses seeking the GMVFC designation has involved revising student record systems and devising means to count and track the many elements needed to meet the annual reporting requirements. Though every campus has a Veterans Affairs function to assist eligible students with enrollment verification and related support for benefits such as Title 29, the G.I. Bill or survivors' benefits, few were initially set up to flag all veterans throughout the system, and nonidentified and flagged spouses/dependents – a requirement for *Friendly Campus* status. This continues to be a significant challenge for campuses. In the past six years since the passage of the law, campuses have continued to report issues with identifying this population.

With the addition of the LaVetCorps program, the area of Veterans' services has expanded statewide, now going beyond the scope of the initial requirements of the law. The past six years have shown significant gains by the institutions in the number, quality, and variety of program offerings targeting Veteran students and their families. The Office of Veterans Affairs' LaVetCorps program now posts representatives on all campuses statewide to help advise and provide additional resources for these students.

Due to the pandemic, almost all campuses reported having to pivot to online programming to support their military and veteran students this past year. The military student community is very engaged and prefers in-person participation on campus; with the pandemic, most campuses reported a reduction in participation numbers. However, campuses continue to provide innovative and high-quality programming for their veteran and military students.

Institutions are performing exceptional work with our veteran and military students; below are some highlights:

- BRCC has a robust Prior Learning Assessment Policy (PLA) to award credit to military students gained through certification processes.
- BPCC has developed a new initiative of encouragement and accomplishment in the Veterans Resource Center called *Operation Graduation/Mission Complete*, recognizing that the veteran student's mission to graduation has been completed. Dog tags with their name, branch of service, completed program, and graduation date are embossed and displayed at the Veteran Resource Center for current and future veterans to see.
- CLTCC provides a service that offers to send resumes to up to 100 companies on behalf of veterans.
- GSU's LAVetCorps Center served 184 veteran students, 134 family members, and one active military member during AY 2020-2021.
- LSU is working with the American Council on Education (ACE) to implement a new system for how they evaluate joint service transcripts (JST).
- LA TECH and BPCC partnered to open a veteran's resource center in the Shreveport/Bossier area, a military dense area that not only supports TECH and BPCC but also the TECH/Barksdale Instructional Site.
- Nicholls provides all incoming servicemen and women of the US Armed Forces access to free math tutoring.
- SLCC has implemented a Veteran Appreciation Week and developed Pre-Priority Registration, allowing military students to register for courses before any student population.
- SUBR, and the SUBR LaVetCorps Navigator sponsored several on campus events including a special Veterans Day Program for campus and community veterans with invited dignitaries from Washington D.C.

Based upon the applications received, staff have determined that the 28 institutions listed below meet the requirements specified in RS 17:3138.5 for designation as a "*Governor's Military and Veteran Friendly Campus*" for the 2020-21 academic year. This represents 100% participation by statewide institutions in this program for the 2020-21 academic year for the second consecutive year.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

1. Senior Staff recommends approval to forward the following 28 institutions to the Governor with an endorsement as having met requirements for continued designation as Governor's Military & Veteran Friendly Campus:

Louisiana Community and Technical College System

- Baton Rouge CC
- Bossier Parish CC
- Central Louisiana TCC
- Delgado CC
- Fletcher Technical CC
- Louisiana Delta CC
- Northshore TCC
- Northwest Louisiana Technical CC
- Nunez CC
- River Parishes CC
- South Louisiana CC
- SOWELA

Louisiana State University System

- LSU A&M
- LSU Alexandria
- LSU Eunice
- LSU Shreveport

Southern University System

- Southern University, Baton Rouge
- Southern University, New Orleans
- Southern University, Shreveport

University of Louisiana System

- Grambling State University
- Louisiana Tech University
- McNeese State University
- Nicholls State University
- Northwestern State University
- Southeastern Louisiana University
- University of Louisiana, Lafayette
- University of Louisiana, Monroe
- University of New Orleans

2. Senior Staff recommends approval of the Board of Regents Uniform Policy on Governor's Military and Veteran Friendly campus.

Attachment – GMVFC Requirements & Checklist

Louisiana Board of Regents
APPLICATION for INITIAL/ReNEWING DESIGNATION as a
GOVERNOR'S MILITARY & VETERAN FRIENDLY CAMPUS
**** Due: August 16 2021 ****

| | |
|---|-------|
| Institution: | Date: |
| Primary Contact Person (& Contact Info) for this application: | |

INITIAL/RENEWAL Designation as a *Governor's Military & Veteran Friendly Campus*

To be designated as a *Governor's Military & Veteran Friendly Campus*, an applicant institution must be able to demonstrate or affirm that it currently meets the 5 Mandatory criteria listed below, at least 3 of the required Additional criteria.

**** Institutions that fail to renew the designation each year
 must reapply for the designation, addressing all required criteria below. ****

CRITERIA [ACT 232, 2015 Legislative Session]

-- **ALL** of the following Mandatory Criteria:

1. Adopt and fully implement a process to:
 - a. Recognize & align military education/training/experience with appropriate coursework.
 - b. Provide for transfer of academic credit hours, earned by veterans and their spouses from regionally accredited institution, that are aligned w/ receiving institution's course & program requirements.
2. Offer waivers of application fees for veterans.
3. Offer special veterans orientation programs providing detailed information on available programs, services, and accommodations.
4. Maintain deployment readmission policies that provide for the prompt readmission of veterans with the same academic status that they had when last attending or admitted.
5. Offer priority class scheduling to veterans:
 - a. at least as early as honors college, athletes, disabled &/or spring invitational students, or
 - b. at least a day prior to general undergraduate class registration, if the campus does not offer other priority scheduling to any of the groups listed above.

-- **AT LEAST 3** of the following Additional Criteria:

6. Offer at least one course each semester (Fall, Spring) in History, Political Science, English, or Mathematics or a Credit Course introducing the college experience, covering transition, leveraging benefits, & disability issues – either course to be **specifically designed for and exclusively available to veterans**.
7. Offer free tutoring to veterans
8. Host a workshop at least twice/year to provide instruction on career opportunities, interviewing skills, resume writing, and networking.
9. Host an ROTC program affiliated with any branch of the armed services.

RS 13:5364 defines "veteran" for purposes of this law as a *former or current member of the U.S. Armed Forces or organized militia of the several states and territories, including but not limited to a member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, National Guard, Air National Guard, Reserves, State Guard, or a commissioned officer of the Public Health Service, Environmental Science Services Administration, or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or its predecessor, the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey.*

Institutions must have a method in place to identify and verify military members/ veterans and their spouses (or dependents, which would include the spouse) in the student record system.

MVFC Checklist

| | |
|---|--|
| Institution: | |
| MANDATORY. [Must have ALL IN PLACE (implemented).] | |
| STATUS | CRITERIA |
| In Place | |
| | 1- Waive Application Fees for veterans. Process in place to verify veteran status and waive or refund admission application fee. Be able to track numbers of waivers granted. |
| | 2- Veterans' Orientation. Offer special orientation program or session to provide detailed information on available programs, services, and accommodations for veterans. It could be an online program, but campus must be able to track number of veterans attending. |
| | 3- Priority Class Scheduling. Offer priority scheduling for veterans that is either (a) at least a day prior to general undergraduate class registration, or (b) at least as early as athletes, disability services, honors college, and spring invitational (early freshman orientation) students. Be able to track veterans using the priority access. |
| | 4- Military Articulation & Transfer Process. Adopt and fully implement process to recognize & align military education, training and experience with appropriate coursework. Be able to track number and rubric/subject of courses transferred or credited. |
| | 5- Deployment/Readmission Policy. Campus policy and process providing for prompt readmission of veterans whose enrollment was interrupted by mobilization or active duty. |
| Must Have At Least 3 of the Following in Place. | |
| | A- Course Designed For & Exclusively Available to Veterans. Offer at least one <u>credit-bearing</u> course/section <u>each semester</u> that is <i>specifically designed for and exclusively available to veterans</i> . The course must be in History, Political Science, English, Mathematics, or an introduction to the college experience, including transition, leveraging benefits, and disability issues. Describe the course. |
| | B- Free Tutoring for Veterans. Describe free tutoring services offered and made available to veterans, including how they know about it, and what measures of participation are in place. |
| | C- Veterans' Career Placement Workshop. Host workshop for veterans at least twice a year to provide instruction regarding career opportunities, interviewing skills, resume writing, and networking. Need not be exclusive to veterans, but invitations and content must clearly target veteran participation. |
| | D- Host an ROTC Program. Describe the campus- hosted ROTC program(s), e.g., branch; office space; class offerings; enrollment in the last three semesters/terms; number of students on contract; name/contact of detachment commander(s). |

Louisiana Board of Regents

Military & Veteran Friendly Campus Designation – **Application Detail**

Referencing the checklist description, summarize the process *in place*, and report participation. All required criteria must be in place.

Application for New/Initial designation is due **August 16**. Submit to LA Board of Regents: lupe.lamadrid@laregents.edu

**** Mandatory (1-4 for Renewing Applicants Only): ****

1. Waive Application Fees for veterans.

Fee Waivers per 2020-2021 Semester/Term.

Veterans Granted Admission Application Fee Waivers.

Check here if your institution does not charge an application fee:

| | Semester/Term | Total # of Veterans receiving waivers |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2020 | Fall | |
| | Winter | |
| 2021 | Spring | |
| | Summer | |
| TOTAL, AY20-21 | | |

NARRATIVE: In the space below, briefly describe how the application fee waiver process works.

2. Veterans' Orientation

Attendance per 2020-2021 Semester/Term.

| | Semester/Term | Total # of Attendees |
|-----------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 2020 | Fall | |
| | Winter | |
| 2021 | Spring | |
| | Summer | |
| TOTAL, AY20-21 | | |

NARRATIVE: In the space below, describe orientation activities and programs.

3. Priority Class Scheduling

Veterans Using Priority Registration per AY20-21 Semester/Term.

| | Semester/Term | Total # of Veterans |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| 2020 | Fall | |
| | Winter | |
| 2021 | Spring | |
| | Summer | |
| TOTAL, AY20-21 | | |

NARRATIVE: In the space below, describe how veterans are informed of priority registration and whether the process is programmatic or manual.

4. Military Articulation & Transfer Process

ENTER # Transfers (Students) & sum of Credit Hours in the chart below.

Courses Accepted in Transfer – for Veterans and for Spouses

| | Semester/Term | Veterans/Sum of Credit Hours | Spouse &/or Dependents/Sum of Credit Hours |
|-----------------------|---------------|------------------------------|--|
| 2020 | Fall | | |
| | Winter | | |
| 2021 | Spring | | |
| | Summer | | |
| TOTAL, AY20-21 | | | |

NARRATIVE: In the space below, explain and observe the effectiveness of Veteran services on your campus.

Initial Classification Applicants ONLY- Complete this page.

5. Deployment/Readmission Policy

AcaF 2.21 or System/Campus policy

Attach copy, or provide web reference.

**** Must have *at least 3* of the following Additional Criteria: ****

A. Course Designed For & Exclusively Available to Veterans

Course Rubric, # & Title; Schedule of Offerings for 2020-2021 Semester/Term

Veterans enrolling in special course offering.

| | Course | Veterans Enrolled | Total Enrolled |
|-------------|--------|-------------------|----------------|
| Fall 2020 | | | |
| Spring 2021 | | | |

NARRATIVE: Course description, student response (enrollments, completions).

B. Free Tutoring for Veterans.

Veterans Using Free Tutoring per 2020-2021 Semester/Term.

| | Semester/Term | # of Veterans |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| 2020 | Fall | |
| | Winter | |
| 2021 | Spring | |
| | Summer | |
| TOTAL, AY20-21 | | |

NARRATIVE/Notes: In the space below, provide other measures of participation.

C. Veterans' Career Placement Workshop.

of Veterans Attending Workshops, and Dates Offered in 2020-21.

| | Semester/Term | Veterans |
|----------------|---------------|----------|
| 2020 | Fall | |
| | Winter | |
| 2021 | Spring | |
| | Summer | |
| TOTAL, AY20-21 | | |

NARRATIVE: In the space below, include description of how invitations & content target Veterans.

D. Host an ROTC Program.

| BRANCH | Headcount → | Total Students Enrolled | Contract Students | Commissioned |
|--------|-------------|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| | Fall 2020 | | | |
| | Winter 2020 | | | |
| | Spring 2021 | | | |
| | Summer 2021 | | | |

NARRATIVE/Notes:

*Attachment – GMVFC
Requirements & Checklist*

CERTIFICATIONS:

Provost/Chief Academic Officer

Date

Management Board/System Office

Date