ETSU Veterans Affairs Office
Certificate of Understanding (COU)

Guidelines
A. I understand that I must comply with ETSU and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) policies.
B. I understand it takes approximately 9-12 weeks for the DVA to process initial applications. If I have questions about the status, I should call the VA Regional Office in St. Louis at 1-888-GIBILL1 (1-888-442-4551)
C. Questions regarding the amount of entitlement should be directed to the DVA.

Admission & Payment Responsibility
A. I understand that application for VA benefits does not constitute admission to the University.
B. I understand that ETSU does not guarantee a tuition deferment plan for veterans and that I am responsible for paying all tuition and fees to the University, even if I have not received any payments from DVA.

Registration & VA Enrollment Verification
I understand that upon completion of registration, I must submit an accurate Concise Student Schedule to the ETSU Veterans Affairs Office. I will not be certified for that semester until I have submitted the schedule and any other documentation required to ensure that my courses are in accordance with DVA regulations. The ETSU Veterans Affairs Office may terminate or adjust previous certifications, even if I have successfully completed the course in order to comply with VA policy. I understand that any time I make a change to my schedule, I must update the VA Office within 5 business days.

Unsatisfactory Progress
A. I understand that courses repeated as part of the 'Fresh Start' program may not qualify for DVA benefits.
B. I understand that if placed on academic suspension, GI Bill benefits will be terminated for the duration of the suspension.

Attendance Policy
A. I understand that I must attend the courses for which I enroll or receive a Failure for Nonattendance.
B. I understand that receipt of an ‘FN’ grade requires repayment of funds to the DVA &/or ETSU.

Degree Pursuit
A. I understand that I will receive benefits only for those courses that apply to my degree and are certified by the ETSU Veterans Affairs Office. The VA Office will not certify courses that are not part of my declared program of study.
B. I understand that DVA benefits cannot be paid for repeat courses for which I have already received a passing grade. Payment for such a course results in overpayment.

Developmental Courses
A. I know that I can be certified only for developmental/remedial courses that are required by the University.
B. Per DVA regulations, remedial/developmental courses taught on-line may not be certified for DVA payment. Remedial/developmental courses must be taught as conventional resident courses (in the classroom) in order to be certified to DVA.
C. I understand that a Developmental Studies (DSP) suspension results in suspension of my DVA educational benefits.

Self-Certification
A. I understand that Chapter 30, 1607 & 1606 recipients must verify enrollment with the DVA each month.
B. I understand that any delay on my part in contacting DVA will delay payment.
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Prior Credit
A. It is my responsibility to request and have submitted to the ETSU Admissions Office official transcripts for institutions previously attended. This includes credit for college courses; test scores from CLEP, DANTES, and similar examinations; my DD-214 or DD-295/AARTS/SMART or CCAF transcript, if I am active duty. Failure to submit will result in the termination of my benefits.
B. I understand that if I have completed basic training I will not be certified for Health & PE/Recreation courses, until a transfer credit evaluation is completed.
C. I realize that once I have received a written evaluation of transfer credit from the Office of Admissions, I must meet with my advisor and complete a Prior Credit (PC) Evaluation.

Changing Curriculum
A. If I decide to change any part of my program of study (POS) and/or major/minor/concentration, I understand that it is my responsibility to notify the ETSU Veterans Affairs Office.
B. For Chapter 31 (Voc Rehab) beneficiaries only: I must seek approval from my counselor for any changes to my program of study. Voc Rehab students must be enrolled in at least ½ time training to receive monthly BAH.

Non-Punitive Grades
A. A non-punitive grade, i.e., AU(Audit), FN(Failure for Non-attendance), W(Withdrawal), is defined as any grade, which does not count toward the GPA.
B. I understand that receipt of a non-punitive grade results in overpayment.
C. Overpayments may be waived, if I submit evidence of mitigating circumstances that explain why I could not complete a course in which I receive a grade of ‘W’. The DVA Summary of Educational Benefits cites examples of acceptable mitigating circumstances.

Overpayment/Alternatives
A. I understand that if overpaid, DVA will notify me of the overpayment and acceptable appeal procedures.
B. I understand that I may be assessed interest and administrative collection cost on outstanding debts.
C. Examples of actions which may result in overpayments are:
   1. Withdrawing from a course
   2. Receiving a grade that does not count towards graduation
   3. Repeating and accepting DVA payment for a course in which you have already received a passing grade
   4. Receiving an FN grade in violation of the attendance policy
D. I understand that I am responsible for resolution of overpayments with DVA.
E. I understand that the DVA may collect an overpayment out of future educational benefit checks.

Keeping the ETSU Veterans Affairs Office Informed
I understand that I must notify the ETSU Veterans Affairs Office via goldmail only of changes in my enrollment within five (5) working days. The ETSU Veterans Affairs Office will notify the DVA, and my benefits may be adjusted or terminated. In addition to the information above, I have been informed that, in accordance with guidelines set forth by the DVA, it is my express responsibility to keep the ETSU Veterans Affairs Office informed of change(s) in my dependent/family status, address, phone number, and/or enrollment and DOP status. I understand that any failure, on my part, to observe ETSU and DVA policies could result in overpayment for which I agree to hold ETSU harmless should I be required to repay entitlements as the result of my own intentional and/or negligent actions.

NOTE: The ETSU Office of Veterans Affairs is not part of the US Department of Veterans Affairs. It is a department of East Tennessee State University (ETSU) under the direction of the Office of the Vice Provost.

NOTE: Utilizing Tuition Assistance (TA) and GI Bill benefits simultaneously for the same courses in a semester is no longer authorized by the Department of Defense for federally funded TA. Any student who enrolls for both may be subject to overpayment. Please ask Veterans Affairs personnel for additional information.
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_____________________________________________  ______________________________________
Signature  Student Number (E-Number)

_____________________________________________  ________________________________
Print Name  @goldmail.etsu.edu

_____________________________________________  ________________________________
Date  VA File Number (CH 35 only)

_____________________________________________
Print Name

How did you hear about ETSU?

NOTE: The above signature indicates that you have received a copy of ETSU’s Certificate of Understanding, and that one will remain in your VA file at ETSU’s Office of Veterans Affairs.

______________________________
ETSU VA Initials

______________________________
Date