

Agents of Change: The Journey & Future of Military Credit for Prior Learning



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*“Colleges and universities will find themselves converted into educational hobo jungles. The veterans are not going to college because they want to learn something. They are going to college because **they want a degree and are entitled to one under the law.**”*

– Robert Maynard Hutching, President of the University of Chicago, at the onset 1944 Serviceman’s Readjustment Act.



The Evolving Post-9/11 Landscape: Best Practices for Supporting Military-Affiliated Communities on Campus



- Single point of contact for benefits questions & processing; advising on strategic stacking of benefits
- Reduced or waived application fees, CPL assessment fees, etc.
- Dedicated space for veterans (Veterans Resource Centers)
- Green Zone Training for faculty and staff
- Policy that accommodates VA scheduling conflicts for veterans & caregivers

Redirecting the Conversation:

Are we working from a place of strengths or deficits?



First Impressions: Do your websites, admissions, and academic materials **lead with crisis support?**



Academically strong: Veterans hold **higher GPAs**, excel in **STEM**, and bring **maturity** to both applied sciences and liberal arts disciplines.



Veteran POV: **Diverse, global experiences** and **perspectives** that benefit our academic communities.

The Empowerment Solution: Military Credit for Prior Learning

What happens when we honor and recognize the college-level learning veterans bring to the academic community?



Veterans Feel Valued & Supported

Evaluating military learning for academic credit tells student veterans that your institution truly honors the learning they acquired in the service and keeps the main thing, the main thing:
ACADEMICS.



Shorten Time to Degree Attainment

According to CAEL's 2020 study, "The PLA Boost," adult learners experienced a 9-14 month time savings when awarded 12 or more CPL credits.



Maximize Benefits

Student veterans can maximize VA, TA, and state benefits, applying funds to additional certifications, credentials, or an advanced degree

MCPL: Myths vs. Facts

Myths			Facts
Awarding credit for military learning results in faculty layoffs.			Credit is earned , and faculty are integral to the assessment process.
Military credit for learning gives credit away and lowers academic standards.			Awarding ONLY elective credit can put the student veteran in financial and academic jeopardy.
MCPL should only be considered for lower-division or general elective courses.			Student veteran completion rates are no longer the highest among adult learners who receive CPL.



Building an Effective MCPL Framework

An approach rooted in best practice



RESEARCH

Start with **ACE credit recommendations** and the **ACE military guide**.



EDUCATE

Educate faculty on how **Joint Services Transcript (JST) credit recs** and **CCAF courses** are evaluated and articulated.



ALIGN

Follow **CAEL's 10 Standards for Assessing Prior Learning**. Your regional accrediting body will love you for it.



SUPPORT

Leverage **academic prep and advising tools** to support veterans through the academic lifecycle.

Leveraging Tools for Veteran Success



Keep the main thing the main thing: Provide veterans with academic prep tools like those curated by **Columbia's Center for Veteran Transition & Integration.**



Plan the work & work the plan: Use **DOD MilGears** to better understand credential requirements and benefits, learning and knowledge gaps, and credit awards & assessments.



Begin with the end in mind: Support student veterans with **strategic advising**, based not only on military experience but academic and career goals as well.



The Future of Military Credit for Prior Learning

- Veterans are not just students -- they are **agents of change**.
- By recognizing their learning, we **build strong institutions and communities**.
- Together, we **pave the future** of military credentialing and **academic success**.



Let's continue the conversation...



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