Frequently Asked Questions

I am a veteran student or a dependent of a veteran. How do I apply for education benefits?

You may apply for chapter benefits through the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. If you have been found eligible and have received your Certificate of Eligibility (COE) letter from the VA, please submit the COE to UC Merced's Veteran Certifying Official. You must also complete and submit the Veteran Enrollment Card to UC Merced's Veteran Certifying Official each term you wish to receive benefits.

Is there a deadline for submitting my VA forms?

You cannot receive payment for chapter benefits until we have received your Certificate of Eligibility (COE) and Veteran Enrollment Card. You must submit a Veteran Enrollment Card every semester.

What is the process to certify my enrollment to the VA?

Once we have received your Veteran Enrollment Card, the School Certifying Official will report a student's dates of attendance, degree program, number of registered units, and tuition and fees (if applicable) to the VA. The VA will not pay any student without receiving this information. Certifications are usually processed within 3 business days, with the exception of course enrollment issues that may cause delays.

How do I receive payment for my chapter benefits?

Chapter 33 payments for tuition and fees will be paid directly to the school by the VA. All other benefit payments will be paid directly to the student. If you have not received your monthly benefit payment, you may contact the Veterans Administration Educational Office at 1-888-442-4551.

My schedule changed after I submitted my Veteran Enrollment Card. What should I do?

All changes to the veteran/dependents schedule (major/minor, adds, drops, class cancellations, and/or withdrawals) must be reported to UC Merced's Veteran Certifying Official. Please keep in mind, the VA will only pay for approved classes that fulfill your graduation requirements.

What is the monthly enrollment verification requirement for students using Post-9/11 GI Bill® benefits?

Enrollment verification is a new requirement for Post-9/11 GI Bill® (Chapter 33) students to verify that they are still enrolled in the same courses the school certified to the VA. Students using their Post-9/11 GI Bill® benefits will be required to verify their enrollment at the end of each month. Failure to verify for two consecutive months will impact your Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) and/or kicker payments. More information is available here.

Can I use my veteran benefits to study abroad?

Students wishing to study abroad through UCEAP may receive VA chapter benefits for their studies. Please contact the Veteran School Certifying Official to discuss details of your specific program to verify that it qualifies.

What is the California Veteran Fee Waiver and how do I apply?

The Cal Vet Fee Waiver as its commonly referred to is a benefit offered through the state of California for veteran dependents. Students apply through their local county Veteran Affairs Office. Once eligibility is determined, an approval letter is sent to the student from their local county Veteran Affairs office. A copy of the approval letter needs to be provided to UC Merced's Veteran Certifying Official. The Cal Vet Fee Waiver will waive tuition and student services fees to California resident students. The waiver covers summers as well and students must reapply every academic year they wish to use the waiver. Applicants must meet California residency requirements as stated by the Registrar's Office. For more information, please click here.

Can I receive both the California Veteran Fee Waiver and the Cal Grant?

No. The Cal Vet Fee Waiver and the Cal Grant are both considered fee-paying resources and they both cover the same thing, therefore, students are only eligible to receive one during a period of enrollment. It is the practice of our Financial Aid Office to give precedence to the non-waiver award. If you have any questions you may contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships at 209-228-7178 or online at https://studentsfirst.ucmerced.edu/contact-us-0.