

2009-2011 VETERAN ADMINISTRATION (VA) ASSOCIATE DEGREE PROGRAM EDUCATION BENEFITS POLICIS AND PROCEDURES

The Delaware College of Art and Design (DCAD) participates in certifying Veterans' Administration benefits for eligible or active veterans, their dependents and reserve candidates. Student procedures and the college's financial aid office's VA education benefit processing policies are as follows:

Step 1: All potential VA benefit recipients must **apply and be accepted to the college, declare a major (Course of Study) and file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the appropriate award year at www.fafsa.ed.gov**. DCAD's financial aid award year includes three semesters: Fall, Spring and Summer.

Step 2a: The prospective **VA eligible student** should contact a VA Education Counselor at (888) 442-5441 and complete an *Application for VA Educational Benefits online* at www.gibill.va.gov. VA education benefit candidates will need copies of any applicable military and academic transcripts. Veterans need a certified copy of their DD-214.

Step 2b: Transfer students who have used VA benefits at another school, must turn in a *Change of Program Form* (VA Form 22-1995 for Veterans, or VA Form 22-5495 Survivors/Dependents).

Step 3: The student receives a **Veteran Administration Certificate of Eligibility or Letter of VA Eligibility** from the VA that either confirms or denies their request for benefits. If granted benefits, the letter will state the student's award amount and length of benefits. Students should keep file copies of all VA Eligibility documents.

Step 4: The VA benefit eligible **student must provide the Financial Aid Office (FAO) with a completed DCAD VA Benefit Certification Request Form and copy of their Veterans Administration Certificate of Eligibility or VA Eligibility Confirmation Letter** which specifies what benefits the student is eligible to receive and for what time period the student may receive VA Education Benefits, as soon as received and within 45 days prior to initially enrolling at the college.

Step 5: Each student must complete and submit an **updated VA Education Benefit Certification Request Form to the DCAD FAO no later than 30 days prior to the end of each semester** to request VA education benefit certification for the following semester.

Step 6: New students may request advance pay. To be considered for advance pay, new student must sign Advance Pay Option on Section II of her/his initial *VA Education Benefit Request Form*. Continuing students are not eligible for advance pay option. Advance pay will pay the first two months of the semester; you will not receive another VA education check until the end of the third month.

Advance pay must be requested at least 45 days prior to the beginning of the first semester. The VA will not approve advance pay request received less than 30 days before the beginning of the first semester.

Step 7: Upon receipt of the student's VA Eligibility notice, the **DCAD FAO checks each VA eligible student's DCAD enrollment, transcript and course of study. The DCAD FAO also checks Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)** for students who have completed a semester.

Students must maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP) including cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or above in order to continue receiving VA education benefits.

Step 8: The DCAD FAO contacts each VA eligible student for clarification and/or answers to any questions regarding each student's VA eligibility.

Step 9: Within 30 days of receiving student's VA eligibility confirmation, the DCAD FAO completes the **VA Enrollment Certification Form 22-1999**, faxes, enters online and/or mails to Veterans Administration for processing. Students may request a copy of your Enrollment Certification by submitting a request in writing to the DCAD FAO.

Step 10: The VA notifies the DCAD FAO that the student will be receiving VA Benefits for the school year and generally sends a portion of benefits to DCAD Bursar Office to be credited to the student's college account. The other portion, the student's monthly stipend, of VA Benefits is usually mailed to each student on a monthly basis while the student is enrolled at the college.

Step 11: Each VA benefit recipient must notify the college's Financial Aid Office of any enrollment changes (i.e. dropping or adding classes or withdrawing from the college) immediately before and/or after any enrollment changes are made. Once certified, any changes that the student makes to her/his schedule could result in an overpayment with the VA. The student is responsible for any overpayments with the VA caused by the failure to report changes in enrollment.

Repeat Courses: The VA will only pay for repeated courses if student previously:

- received a grade lower than that required to progress to the next level.
- received a grade lower than the grade required for your DCAD degree

The VA will **not** pay for an unnecessary repeat if:

- course(s) are being taken to replace an acceptable grade.
- course(s) being taken for credit have been earned in prior training that are applicable to your degree or certificate at DCAD.

Step 12: VA benefit recipients must verify their attendance with the VA at the end of every month by calling 1.877.823.2378, or online at www.gibill.va.gov/wave/default.cfm. The student will not receive monthly payments until they have verified that they have been attending all of their classes as certified each semester per VA regulations.

Access the GI Bill Website at www.gibill.va.gov or contact the Buffalo Regional Processing Center at (888) 442-4551 for information regarding:

- The status of your application for benefits.
- The dollar amount of your monthly stipend.
- The number of months of entitlement you have remaining.
- The date your education benefits entitlement ends.

To verify attendance: call (877) 823-2378 or visit www.gibill.va.gov/wave/default.cfm. Note: Chapter 31 applicants must call (800) 827-1000 for information regarding the application process.