

VETERAN STUDENT HANDBOOK



Odessa College



“Here to serve those who served!”

**Odessa College
201 W. University
Odessa, Texas 79764**

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WELCOME TO ODESSA COLLEGE!

I would to thank you for choosing Odessa College to pursue your education goals. It's a real honor to serve those who served. I hope to assist you with any problems or situations that may arise.

Office Hours

Fall/Spring 8:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Monday - Thursday

8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Friday

Summer 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday

Closed Friday

Phone: (432) 335 - 6833 Fax: (432) 335 - 6553

Email: grangel@odessa.edu

To ensure I will be available to assist you, please make an appointment.

Muskogee - VA Regional Office

1-888-442-4551 (8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Mon.-Fri)

Mailing Address:

PO Box 888

Muskogee, OK 74402-8888

Keep in mind that I also use the same 800 number to find the status of your benefits. Please call them first.

“Like” us out on Facebook “OC Veteran Outreach Office”



To change direct deposit information call 1-877-838-2778 or go online to the WAVE link located on the Gibill website.

www.gibill.va.gov

ADMITTANCE INTO ODESSA COLLEGE

1. Apply for admissions at www.odessa.edu or visit the Admissions Office on campus. They are located on the 2nd Floor of the Student Union Building. If you have questions, contact them at (432) 335-6432.
2. Mail all official transcripts from any college you have ever attended to :
Odessa College
Attn: Admissions Office
201 W. University
Odessa, Texas 79764
3. Apply for financial aid at www.fafsa.ed.gov (optional-highly recommended). Our school code is 003956. You will use your tax information that you filed for the previous year. *TIP: Apply for financial aid 2—3 weeks after filing your taxes.* If you have any questions, contact the financial aid office at (432) 335-6429.
4. Students are highly encouraged to take the COMPASS test for placement purposes. Veteran students are exempt from taking the test with eligibility by turning in your DD-214 to the Admissions Office. Dependents cannot be exempt from testing. Developmental courses will not be paid by the VA without test scores on file. For testing times please call the Testing Center at (432) 335-6620.
5. Have your student ID (Wrangler Card) and parking permit made at the Cashier's Office or in the Wrangler Express. This card can be used at the library to checkout out books or at the Sports Center to gain entrance. The Wrangler Card is also a debit card, where refunds from Odessa College are deposited to.



For after hours assistance (admissions, financial aid, registration, etc.) , visit the Wrangler Express located on the first floor of the Student Union Building. They are open late and on weekends. Visit www.odessa.edu for times or call (432) 335-6849.

TYPES OF VA EDUCATION BENEFITS

- **Ch 30 Montgomery GI Bill:** Member of full time active duty Armed Forces
- **Ch 31 Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Program:** Member of Armed Forces who is receiving disability from VA at 30% or higher
- **Ch 33 Post 9/11 GI Bill:** Member of Armed Forces serving active duty time post 9/11 *Dependents of eligible service members
- **Ch 35 Dependents' Educational Assistance:** Dependent of 100% disabled or deceased veteran
- **Ch 1606 Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve:** Actively a member of Reserves or National Guard
- **Ch 1607 Reserve Educational Assistance Program:** Actively a member of Reserves or National Guard with deployment.

It is possible to be eligible for more than one benefit. Be sure to research each benefit carefully before making a decision. Sometimes decisions are irreversible, especially concerning Chapter 33. Some veterans are eligible for Chapter 30 and 33, a student may choose Chapter 30 for the entitlement of 36 months. Once it is exhausted the student may apply for Chapter 33 benefits and receive an additional 12 months of that benefit. If a student chooses Chapter 33 before exhausting Chapter 30, the student will only receive what time is left on Chapter 30 for Chapter 33 (no additional 12 months will be added).

Apply for benefits at www.ebenefits.va.gov, using the VONAAP or pick up a paper application from the Odessa College Veteran Outreach Office.

Dependents

*Eligibility of service members to transfer their benefits must first be determined by the VA through the online application found at www.dmdc.osd.mil/TEB. Following approval of the transfer being granted, dependents must fill out the modified VA Form 1990E. Additional information is available online at www.gibill.va.gov/GI_Bill_Info/CH33/Transfer.htm.

Chapter 31

Apply for Ch 31 benefits at <https://www.ebenefits.va.gov>. If you have any questions about Vocational Rehabilitation contact Melvin Rand.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Attn: Melvin Rand, Rehabilitation Counselor
400 Oak Street, Suite 103
Abilene, TX 79602

Melvin, Rand (325) 677-1766

Fax (325) 676-0122

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS FOR VETERAN FOLDER

The following items must be turned in before certification of enrollment at Odessa College can be done. Please turn in all items within 90 days of the first enrollment semester. Failure to turn in all documents will by the deadline will be destroyed for security purposes.

____ - Certificate of Eligibility (COE). Mailed to you after you applied for benefits. If you do not receive it after 2-3 weeks, you may call the Muskogee Office and have them fax it to me.

____ - Degree Plan. Obtain this from your program department chair. General Studies degree plan can be drawn up in the OC Veteran Outreach Office. If you want to receive a degree from another institution, please tell the OC Veteran Outreach Specialist.

____ - OC Veteran Student Information Form (found in this handbook).

____ - OC Veteran Agreement (found in this handbook).

____ - Authorization to Disclose Information on Veteran benefits (found in this handbook).

____ - VA Form DD-214 Discharge Paper (these items are not needed for dependents)
OR VA Form 2384 NOBE-Notice of Basic Eligibility (If you are on the new GI Reservist Bill, please go to the Education Office at your reserve unity to obtain this form)
OR VA Form 22-5490 Application for Survivors' & Dependents' Educational Assistance

____ - Military Transcript (these items are not need for dependents)
Army (AARTS Transcript) <http://aarts.army.mil/>
Navy & Marine Corps (SMART Transcript) <https://smart.navy.mil/smart/welcome.do>
Air Force (CCAF Transcript) <http://www.au.af.mil/au/ccaf/transcripts.asp>

If you have used your benefits an another institution, you will need to complete the following:

____ - VA Form 22-1995 Request for Change of Program or Place of Training **OR** VA Form 22-5495 Dependents' Request for Change of Program for Place of Training



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Veteran students will receive a monthly benefit check in the mail or through direct deposit once the application paperwork has been processed. The VA Educational Benefits are paid in a reimbursement method except for Chapter 33.

Housing (BAH) -Chapter 33

To receive BAH (housing stipend), the student must be enrolled in 7 credit hours or more during a long semester (Fall/Spring). During the summer semesters 4 credit hours or more. Self paced and video classes are determined as face-to face classes.

Effective August 1, 2011 the housing allowance will be prorated according to the student's rate of pursuit (rounded to the nearest tenth). View the Enrollment Table below for rate of pursuit.

For example: if a student is enrolled for 75% (9-11 credit hours during the Fall semester, the student will receive 80% of the BAH rate.

Also, effective October 1, 2011. BAH can be paid to students who are enrolled solely in distance education. Payment is 1/2 the national average BAH for an E-5 with dependents. The rate for a full-time individual with 100% eligibility tier would be \$673.50.

Book Stipend - Chapter 33

Students using Chapter 33 benefits are entitled to a book stipend. Book stipends are paid out the earlier a student is certified (early registration is key). The rate is \$41.67 per credit hour certified, up to 24 credits for the academic year (08/01/YY-07/31/YY)

Overpayments

If you are receiving a refund check from Odessa College, please check with the Cashier's Office to determine where the money is coming from. Chapter 33 students should not be receiving additional monies from tuition and fees. If this happens and it is not reported to the OC Veterans Outreach Office as soon as possible, you may be liable to pay the VA.

Hazlewood

If you are wanting to use your VA benefits along with Hazlewood, please contact the Financial Aid Office at 432-335-6429. Notify the Odessa College Veterans Outreach Office before using this exemption.

Enrollment Level Table

	Fall/Spring	Summer I	Summer II	Midwinter	Maymester
1 hr	1/4 Time	1/4 Time	1/4 Time	1/2 Time	1/2 Time
2 hr	1/4 Time	1/4 Time	1/4 Time	Full Time	Full Time
3 hr	1/4 Time	1/2 Time	1/2 Time	Full Time	Full Time
4 hr	1/4 Time	1/2 Time	1/2 Time	OC will not allow a student to be enrolled in more than 1 class during the Midwinter & Maymester semesters.	
5 hr	1/4 Time	3/4 Time	3/4 Time		
6 hr	1/2 Time	Full Time	Full Time		
7 hr	1/2 Time	OC will not allow a student to be enrolled in more than 2 classes during each Summer semester.			
8 hr	1/2 Time				
9 hr	3/4 Time				
10 hr	3/4 Time				
11 hr	3/4 Time				
12 hr +	Full Time				

Full Time = 100% Rate of Pursuit
 3/4 Time = 75 % Rate of Pursuit (80% of BAH)
 1/2 Time = 50% Rate of Pursuit
 1/4 Time = 25% Rate of Pursuit

Ineligible Classes and Fees

VA does not cover Physical Education classes due to an exemption processed with the registrar's office. Except for those dependents of veterans and those who will be taking PHED 1100 for the nursing program, or those pursuing Physical Education as a major.

- Developmental courses taken without test scores on file. Developmental courses taken online.
- Returned check fees.
- Third attempt fees for retaking a course a third time.
- Late registration fees or add/drop fees.

Attendance

Attendance is very important when it comes to being a successful student here at Odessa College. Be sure to read the attendance policy stated in your syllabus for each class. If there is not a policy, ask the instructor for more information.

Veteran students who are receiving Chapters 30, 1606, or 1607 are required to report monthly attendance by phone or on the WAVES site. Failure to verify will cause your monthly benefits to stop.

Changes and Updates

Please notify the Odessa College Veterans Outreach Office if the following changes have occurred:

- Adds/Drops/Withdraws
- Cancelled Classes
- Non-Attendance
- Repeated Courses
- Complete Withdraws
- Degree Changes
- Address/Phone/Email Changes

Failure to notify the OC Veterans Outreach Office of changes of updates could result in delays in your benefits from the VA.

Grades

An "F" that is earned for a class will be investigated. If it is due to attendance and the instructor can provide a last day of attendance or login to blackboard, I will report this to the VA. Any benefits that you continue to receive after you stopped attending will create a debt to the VA.

Probation/Suspension

Veteran students who are placed on academic probation (receiving below a 2.0 GPA) will be required to spend a minimum of 2 hours a week in the Student Success Center for the whole semester. The student must meet with a tutor, study in a group, or do assigned homework/reports/projects. Students who fail to do this or improve their GPA will not be certified for the following semester.

Veteran students who are placed on academic suspension (receiving below a 2.0 GPA for the next semester of enrollment) will be required to spend a minimum of 4 hours a week in the Student Success Center. The student must meet with a tutor, study in a group, or do assigned homework/reports/projects. Students who fail to do this or improve their GPA will not be certified for the following 2 semesters.

WHAT SHOULD I DO EVERY SEMESTER?

Student Veteran Advisement

In order for a student to know they are on track, I require a student to meet with me prior to registering for classes. This is to verify the classes that a student wants to take match their degree plan on file. This meeting also is to talk over any issues or concerns a student may have about their benefits or classes. Please schedule an appointment as early as possible during registration.

Newsletters

Newsletters are mailed every month to all veteran students of Odessa College. These are very informative and contain dates and deadlines. If you are not receiving newsletters, please make sure the OC Veterans Outreach Office has a correct mailing address.

Register for Classes

Register for classes at the time specified in the schedule. Keep in mind that only classes listed on your degree plan will be certified to receive VA Education Benefits. Early registration is highly recommended in order to receive benefits and guarantee the schedule that you wish to have. Especially for Chapter 33 benefits to receive your book stipend before classes begin.

It is the student's responsibility to notify the OC Veterans Outreach Office that they registered for classes, otherwise benefits will not be awarded.

Tuition & Fees

VA benefits are not awarded immediately. Therefore, payment for tuition and fees are due at the time of registration. Failure to take care of tuition and fees up front may result in classes being voided out of the system and you will no longer be registered for classes. It is up to the student to reregister for classes that they have been dropped from and set-up a payment plan. The only exception are students who receive 100% of Chapter 33 benefits.

Parent Letter

Students wishing to attend classes here at Odessa College that will be applied to a degree at another institution must provide a Parent School Letter stating that the courses will be accepted at the parent institution (school where the student will be receiving the degree). The letter must be turned in to our office before the classes can be certified. Contact the Veterans Specialist at the parent school to receive this letter.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS MONTHLY RATES

Chapter 30-Montgomery GI Bill						
Starting	3 years or more service			Less than 3 years services		
	Full-Time	3/4-Time	1/2-Time	Full-Time	3/4-Time	1/2-Time
10/01/10	\$1,426.00	\$1,069.50	\$713.00	\$1,158.00	\$868.50	\$579.00
10/01/09	\$1,368.00	\$1,026.00	\$684.00	\$1,111.00	\$833.25	\$555.50

Less than 1/2-time: Reimburse tuition and fees, not to exceed 1/2-time rate.

Quarter-time or less: Reimburse tuition and fees, not to exceed 1/4 of the full-time rate.

Chapter 33-Post 9/11 GI Bill																	
<p>Monthly housing allowance is prorated by the length of service percentage. Paid when rate of pursuit is more than 50%. Active duty personnel are not eligible for the housing allowance. Amount paid equals the Basic Allowance for Housing for an "E-5 with dependents" and the zip code of the school. BAH rates can be found at www.defensetravel.dod/mil/erdiem/bah.html. As of January 15, 2011 the housing allowance for Odessa College (79764) is \$1,149.00.</p> <p>Ch. 33 students will have tuition, fees, book stipend, and housing allowance based on a percentage. This is determined by the length of a student's aggregate active duty service after 09/10/2001.</p> <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 20px;">At least 36 months</td> <td style="text-align: right;">100%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>At least 30 continues day son active duty (must be discharged due to service-connected disability)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">100%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">At least 30 months, but less than 36 months</td> <td style="text-align: right;">90%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">At least 24 months, but less than 30 months</td> <td style="text-align: right;">80%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">At least 18 months, but less than 34 months</td> <td style="text-align: right;">70%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">At least 12 months, but less than 18 months</td> <td style="text-align: right;">60%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">At least 06 months, but less than 12 months</td> <td style="text-align: right;">50%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">At least 90 days, but less than 06 months</td> <td style="text-align: right;">40%</td> </tr> </table> <p>The books and supplies stipend pays \$41.67 per credit certified, up to 24 credits for the academic year (08/01/YY - 07/31/YY). The start date of an enrollment period determines the academic year the enrollment period belongs to. The maximum stipend is \$1,000 per academic year.</p>		At least 36 months	100%	At least 30 continues day son active duty (must be discharged due to service-connected disability)	100%	At least 30 months, but less than 36 months	90%	At least 24 months, but less than 30 months	80%	At least 18 months, but less than 34 months	70%	At least 12 months, but less than 18 months	60%	At least 06 months, but less than 12 months	50%	At least 90 days, but less than 06 months	40%
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At least 24 months, but less than 30 months	80%																
At least 18 months, but less than 34 months	70%																
At least 12 months, but less than 18 months	60%																
At least 06 months, but less than 12 months	50%																
At least 90 days, but less than 06 months	40%																

Chapter 35-DEA (Dependents Education Assistance)					
Starting	Full-Time	3/4-Time	1/2-Time	less than 1/2	1/4 or less
10/01/10	\$936.00	\$702.00	\$466.00	\$466.00	\$234.00
10/01/09	\$925.00	\$694.00	\$461.00	\$461.00	\$231.25

Less than 1/2-time: Reimburse tuition and fees, not to exceed 1/2-time rate.

Quarter-time or less: Reimburse tuition and fees, not to exceed 1/4 of the full-time rate.

Chapter 1606				
Starting	Full-Time	3/4-Time	1/2-Time	less than 1/2
10/01/10	\$337.00	\$252.00	\$167.00	\$84.25
10/01/09	\$333.00	\$249.00	\$165.00	\$83.25

Chapter 1607-REAP						
Service	Starting 10/01/11			Starting 10/01/10		
	Full-Time	3/4-Time	1/2-Time	Full-Time	3/4-Time	1/2-Time
90+days	\$570.40	\$427.80	\$285.20	\$547.20	\$410.40	\$273.60
1 year +	\$855.60	\$641.70	\$427.80	\$820.80	\$615.60	\$410.40
2 years +	\$1,140.80	\$855.60	\$570.40	\$1,094.40	\$820.80	\$547.20

Less than 1/2-time: Reimburse tuition and fees, not to exceed 1/2-time rate.

Quarter-time or less: Reimburse tuition and fees, not to exceed 1/4 of the full-time rate.



Veteran Student Information Form

Directions: All students requesting VA educational assistance through the OC VA Outreach Office will fill out this form. When a question does not apply, do not skip; place either "N/A" or "NO" in the space. Failure to complete and return this form to the OC VA Outreach Office will result in the student not being certified.

Please check one of the following:

- I am a new student and have never used my VA education benefits.
- I am a continuing student who received benefits at this school in the past.
- I am a continuing student who has never used benefits at this school.
- I am a transfer student who used benefits at another school.
- I am a guest student who is receiving a degree and being certified at another school.
- I am updating my personal information.

Today's Date: _____ Social Security #: _____

Student ID #: _____ VA File #: _____

(Dependents, please use your sponsors social security #.)

Name (First, Middle, Last): _____

Mailing Address (Street, City, State, Zip): _____

Phone: _____ Alternate Phone: _____

E-Mail Address (if none is provided, your official OC e-mail address will be used):

Degree/Major: _____

Semester & Year to Attend: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Veterans Benefit Programs

_____ Ch. 30 - GI Bill _____ Ch. 1607 - 9/11 Reservist

_____ Ch. 31 - Voc. Rehab _____ Ch. 35 - Dependent Educational Assistance (circle one) Spouse/Child

_____ Ch. 32 - VEAP _____ Ch. 33 - Post 9/11 _____ % Dependent (circle one) Spouse/Child

_____ Ch. 1606 - Reservist

Branch

- | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| _____ Air Force | _____ Navy | _____ Army Reserve |
| _____ Army | _____ Air Force Reserve | _____ Coast Guard Reserve |
| _____ Coast Guard | _____ Air National Guard | _____ Marine Corps Reserve |
| _____ Marines | _____ Army National Guard | _____ Navy Reserve |

(continued on back)

Will you be applying for the Hazlewood Act Exemption? Yes No
Are you interested in the Hazlewood Act Exemption? Yes No

****If you are considering using the Hazlewood Act Exemption, please notify me right away. Failure to do so can create an overpayment and you will be held responsible.****

What are your goals here at Odessa College?

- Seek an associates degree at Odessa College.
- Complete general education credits and transfer to another school.
- Seek an associates degree at Odessa College and then transfer to another school.
- Other. Explain: _____

List all educational facilities you have attended since high school.

Name of Institution	Semester/Year Attended
_____	-
_____	-
_____	-
_____	-
_____	-

AFFIRMATION OF CORRECTNESS

I understand that this document will be placed in my file in the OC Veterans Outreach Office for review by the Veterans Administration when they audit, or otherwise request to view my file. I do hereby affirm that the information given on this form is correct and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Student's Signature

Date Signed

Gloria Rangel - Veterans Outreach Specialist
201 W University
204J-Student Union Building
grangel@odessa.edu
(432) 335-6833



Odessa College Veterans Outreach Office
Authorization to Disclose information

This authorization is administered for the purpose of complying with the U.S. Department of Education regulation found at 34 CFR Part 99. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Sec.99.30 of the regulation addresses prior consent required to disclose information.

Student Authorization:

I authorize the representative of the Veterans Outreach Office at Odessa College to disclose my VA benefits, personal information, or grades related to education with the designated party or class of parties as specified below. If you do not wish to allow anyone to disclose your information, please place "No one" in the first line.

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Certification:

By signing and dating this document, I acknowledge that the representative of Veterans Affairs has the right to disclose my VA benefits or any other information to the party or class of parties I have designated:

Student Signature: _____

Print Name: _____ Date: _____

Social Security or Student ID #.: _____

****Spouses that are not listed here will not be have information released to them.****



OC Veterans Agreement

I, the undersigned, do accept the responsibility of providing the Veterans Administration with all necessary documents to complete, and update, my claim benefits, and I will do so through the OC Veterans Outreach Office. It is my responsibility to attend class on a regular basis and my responsibility to inform the OC Veterans Outreach Office and VA Office in Muskogee, Oklahoma of ANY CHANGES in my schedules (ANY CLASSES ADDED OR DROPPED), major changes, address changes, and/or phone number changes. I will inform the OC Veterans Outreach Office within five (5) working days of schedule changes.

I also understand that I will be FINANCIALLY LIABLE for any OVERPAYMENT caused by not attending class(es) regularly or for taking courses not listed on my degree plan. I know the rate of benefits that I should receive for the number of eligible hours for which I am enrolled and certified. I will contact the Veterans Administration (1-888-442-4551) prior to cashing ANY check or accepting any monies for an amount in excess of that rate.

I agree to the Probation/Suspension Policy that has been set in place by the Veterans Outreach office.

I acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the steps that are stated in the Odessa College Veterans Outreach Office Student Handbook. My benefits cannot be processed unless I have submitted a completed application and folder documents.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Student Name: _____