



Chapter 31 Vocational Readiness and Employment (VR&E) Informational Guide

If you are a veteran with at least a 20% disability rating with the VA you “may” qualify for this particular GI Bill. You apply through www.ebenefits.va.gov and it can take up to 6 months to be approved.

Currently, we recommend applying immediately if you have the 20% disability rating. Once approved for Ch 31, your Counselor will give you an Academic Worksheet that is to be emailed to veterans@cui.edu where the Director of the VRC (also the School Certifying Official) will fill their portion out and then submit it to your academic advisor where they will come up with the number of units required, tuition estimate, and email it back to you so you can give it to your VA Counselor. The VA earmarks a set dollar amount at the time of approval. Your counselor will then send the VRC Director a Purchase Order through the Tungsten-Network that states the program that will be covered as well as a beginning and end date of when you have to complete it by. The school can only certify to the VA what is written in the Purchase Order. If the program is longer than one year, you will need to coordinate with your VA Counselor to have a new Purchase Order sent through Tungsten-Network.

Once the school has the Purchase Order, we can then let the BURSAR know that you are fully covered. This allows you to add classes. Once you are enrolled, the VRC Director then certifies your attendance to the VA through VA Once. This triggers an email to your VA Counselor which they then are in charge of submitting paperwork to have your BAH pay out (different than Ch 33 Post 9/11 GI Bill). Please follow up with your counselor as we have seen students miss their first month BAH.

The school VRC Director will then submit an invoice through Tungsten-Network after the last day to drop classes (after that date your bill is set in stone). If you are taking multiple terms during a semester there will be multiple invoices sent to the regional VR&E office.

If you are eligible for a Pell Grant or have taken any Federal or personal loans, we cannot pay those out until the school receives the funds from the VA. With the change over to Tungsten-Network in January 2020, it takes approximately 5-10 business days for the VA to pay the invoice.

For some reason Ch 31 VA fund wires come without any personal identification information so it can take 1-2 business days upon Concordia’s receipt of the funds to put it onto your student account. The VRC Director shares an Invoice Tracker with the Bursar so that they can match payments with known invoices. Concordia only issues refunds on Fridays. It is best to set up [Direct Deposit](#) to receive the funds quicker.

Due to the Purchase Order being a contract from the government, the VRC Director will remove the Bursar Hold on your student account and place a “VA Hold” and post date it to the last day covered on your Purchase ORder with the note “Ch 31 fully covered” written in which allows you to add/drop classes within the date window on your Purchase Order.



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Staff Sergeant Matthew Thompson
Veterans Resource Center

Let's talk about what the VR&E program covers. Typically speaking, all tuition and mandatory fees can be covered. All books are typically covered too along with a stipend per semester for books and supplies (about \$55-65).

Let's talk books: You can go about this two different ways. You can purchase the books yourself and then turn the receipts into your Vocational Rehab Counselor to be reimbursed. Please speak with your counselor about this. Once I receive a Purchase Order, I also send your information and VA Counselor's contact info to the Bookstore where they will ask for a new purchase order. The manager of the bookstore will contact you with information about having your books ordered and they can even be mailed to you!

Let's talk about your monthly housing allowance: If you have one day of Ch 33 Post 9/11 GI Bill remaining you can receive a higher monthly housing rate. If you are taking only online classes then you will receive the online rate. If you are full time, and while you are full time, and one of your classes meets the residential requirement (and you are eligible for the Ch 33 BAH rate) you would receive the Ch 33 residential BAH rate.

1. Undergraduate students must be full time, at full rate of pursuit, and take one class that meets the requirements of residential to receive the full residential BAH rate.
 - a. If you are taking a 3 unit class, you need to meet face to face (F2F) in a classroom on campus for 2.5 hours once and take your midterm and final on campus. If your classes do not meet that residential requirement then it is still considered an online class and you will be paid at the lower online rate.
2. Graduate students must be full time, at full rate of pursuit, and one class needs to meet once per term to be considered residential to receive the full residential BAH rate. The VA School Certifying Official (SCO) Handbook does not dictate how long the F2F meetings have to last but the VRC works with the Program Director/Registrar to make sure that it is an academically worthwhile opportunity.

If you are an undergraduate student and you are in our online bachelors program (OBD) you can take online classes through Concordia and then a residential BAH earning F2F class at a local community college where you live to earn the higher residential BAH rate. In order to do this you will have to fill out a "[Parent Letter Request Form](#)" which has our Advising/Registrar sign off on the class at the community college stating that it will fulfill a degree requirement at Concordia. The VA will only pay for one program at a time so the Parent Letter is needed to take classes at multiple institutions. Once Advising/Registrar at Concordia approves the class, the VRC Director then emails and Cc's you the Parent Letter with your name, course, and SSN. This allows the community school to certify you as a "Guest Student" and then ties it back to Concordia which is your degree granting institution.

These are your benefits so please stay on top of communication with your Vocational Rehab Counselor, especially after Concordia submits the invoice to your VR&E Regional Office.

(Version 2, October 2020) For further questions please contact the VRC Director at veterans@cui.edu & 949-214-3129