Serving Those Who Serve:  
Higher Education and the Military

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American Council on Education

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Overview

• ACE’s Military Initiative

• Research findings

• Summary
ACE’s Military Initiative

- Walmart grants
- Web portal
- Institutional survey and report
- Student demographic report
“I am taking classes. I don't see myself ever stopping. There is so much to learn out there. I want to go as far as I can.”

– Currently Enlisted Respondent
“In my case it was kind of a watching people around you get promoted ahead of you, you know, leap-frogging you. Essentially the only reason they may have got picked for a promotion ahead of you was because of their education and that's kind of a slap in the face. In my case I watched that enough times and that's when I got serious about education.”

– Veteran
“What happens sometimes in the military that I noticed is that the military sometimes teaches you specific ways to live, and people after they get out they can't go back to the life they had before. So, it's really hard for them to adjust to the civilian life again. So, I think that's some of the reasons some people don't go to school or don't do anything after the military, just home and all that.”

– Currently Enlisted Respondent
“Sometimes you can't do it. You are in the field, twice, two weeks every six months, or it doesn't fall right on time, the right time frame for you to go to school. There is no time. Can't do it.”

-Currently Enlisted Respondent,
Well, I don’t think college is set up for the military. I mean they have night classes, but it is not really functional for the military. It is kind of difficult.

-Currently enlisted respondent
I had a couple of soldiers try to go [institution] and they got such a hard time from their professors about not being able to make it to a class or something that they just dropped out and had to pay the Army their money back.

-Currently enlisted respondent
Military Student Demographic Findings
### Percentage Distribution of Undergraduates by Military Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Veterans</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Service Members</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active duty</td>
<td>0.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserves</td>
<td>0.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduates who are not veterans or military service members</td>
<td>95.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Radford and Wun (2009). Based on NPSAS:08 data.
### Students by Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Military Students</th>
<th>Nonmilitary Nontraditional students</th>
<th>Nonmilitary Traditional Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 or younger</td>
<td>.05%</td>
<td>.09%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-23</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-29</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 or older</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Radford and Wun (2009). Based on NPSAS:08 data.
### Students by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Military Students</th>
<th>Nonmilitary Nontraditional students</th>
<th>Nonmilitary Traditional Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Radford and Wun (2009). Based on NPSAS:08 data.
## Students by Race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Military Students</th>
<th>Nonmilitary Nontraditional students</th>
<th>Nonmilitary Traditional Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Radford and Wun (2009). Based on NPSAS:08 data.
Percentage Distribution of military Undergraduates by Dependency and marital Status

- Dependent 3%
- Married parents 33%
- Unmarried no dependents 35%
- Married no dependents 15%
- Single parent 14%

Source: Radford and Wun (2009). Based on NPSAS:08 data.
Percentage Distribution of Undergraduates by Student Type and Type of Institution

Source: Radford and Wun (2009). Based on NPSAS:08 data.
Percentage of Undergraduates Attending For-Profit Institutions

Percentage Distribution of Undergraduates by Student Type and Degree Program

Source: Radford and Wun (2009). Based on NPSAS:08 data.
## Reason for Attending Current Institution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Attending</th>
<th>Military Students</th>
<th>Nonmilitary Nontraditional students</th>
<th>Nonmilitary Traditional Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program/coursework</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/family</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Radford and Wun (2009). Based on NPSAS:08 data.
Findings From Institutional Survey
Percentage of Institutions That Have Taken Various Actions Since 9/11

- Increased counseling services: 52.4%
- Increased staff in existing programs: 37%
- Established marketing and outreach strategies: 69.1%
- Established new programs and services: 68.1%
- Appointed committee to develop action plan: 47.9%

Source: Cook and Kim (2009)
Percentage of Institutions With Various Campus Services for Military Students

- VA education benefits: 81.6
- Counseling: 22.1
- Transition assistance: 57.2
- Financial/aid tuition assistance counseling: 48.9
- Academic support/tutoring: 33.2
- Career planning/career services: 31.2
- Employment assistance: 35.4
- Campus social and/or cultural events: 47.7
- Academic advising: 81.6
- Academic advising: 47.7

Source: Cook and Kim (2009)
Three Most Prominent Student Issues Identified by Institutions

- **Health care (PTSD, traumatic brain injury, etc.)**
  - 2-yr public: 43%
  - 4-yr public: 49%
  - 4-yr private: 47%
  - Total: 49%

- **Degree retention/completion**
  - 2-yr public: 77%
  - 4-yr public: 73%
  - 4-yr private: 67%
  - Total: 73%

- **Financial Aid**
  - 2-yr public: 85%
  - 4-yr public: 81%
  - 4-yr private: 78%
  - Total: 82%

Source: Cook and Kim (2009)
Three Most Prominent Institutional Issues Identified by Institutions

- Locating funding sources for added campus programs and services
  - 2-yr public: 42%
  - 4-yr public: 46%
  - 4-yr private: 42%
  - Total: 46%

- Faculty/staff sensitivity to issues related to this population
  - 2-yr public: 45%
  - 4-yr public: 44%
  - 4-yr private: 34%
  - Total: 51%

- Course withdrawls for military deployment or mobilization
  - 2-yr public: 49%
  - 4-yr public: 49%
  - 4-yr private: 49%
  - Total: 49%

Source: Cook and Kim (2009)
Percentage of Institutions With Programs and Services By Military Enrollment

Low veteran/military student enrollment: 39%
Moderate veteran/military student enrollment: 62%
High veteran/military student enrollment: 69%

Source: Cook and Kim (2009)
Percentage of Institutions with Military Veterans in Their Long Term Strategic Plan

- High veteran/military student enrollment
  - In strategic plan: 72%
  - Not in strategic plan: 15%
  - Don't know: 14%

- Moderate veteran/military student enrollment
  - In strategic plan: 63%
  - Not in strategic plan: 23%
  - Don't know: 15%

- Low veteran/military student enrollment
  - In strategic plan: 43%
  - Not in strategic plan: 42%
  - Don't know: 16%

Source: Cook and Kim (2009)
Percentage of Institutions That have Increased Emphasis on Service Members and Veterans Since 9/11, by Administrative Structure

- Without Exclusive Office:
  - Increased emphasis: 57%
  - No increased emphasis: 34%
  - Don't know: 10%

- With Exclusive Office:
  - Increased emphasis: 75%
  - No increased emphasis: 20%
  - Don't know: 5%

Source: Cook and Kim (2009)
Percentage of Institutions Offering Various Student Groups and Services, by Administrative Structure

- **Student organization for military students**: 41% with exclusive office, 23% without exclusive office
- **Qualified counselor to assist with brain injuries**: 27% with exclusive office, 19% without exclusive office
- **Support group or mentoring programs**: 24% with exclusive office, 13% without exclusive office
- **Staff member trained to meet the needs of vets**: 40% with exclusive office, 26% without exclusive office
- **Staff trained to assist with transition/orientation**: 69% with exclusive office, 36% without exclusive office

Source: Cook and Kim (2009)
Areas of Higher Education Success:

- Acknowledging importance of serving military students
- Offering programs and services to veterans
- Assisting military students with finding appropriate counseling services
Areas for Higher Education improvement:

- Assisting military students with transition
- Provide professional development and training on military issues for faculty and staff
- Streamline campus procedures for veterans returning from military deployments
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