

An Innovative Approach to Accelerate Awarding Credit To Service Members and Veterans

Background

What if we could maintain academic integrity and faculty participation in the process to award academic credit for military occupations and in addition, reduce the work of the process by 93% through additional automation? This process has been implemented at 18 colleges and universities in the Minnesota State system. The 18 colleges and universities that participated thus far identified 605 academic courses to 60,618 credit recommendations from the American Council on Education (ACE) which were associated with 26,178 occupations from the Army, Marine Corp, Navy and Coast Guard.

Enrollment of Service Members and Veterans at Minnesota State has increased by 53.3% in the last eight years; and more at 2-year colleges with an increase of 58.8%. The Veterans Education Transfer System (VETS) was created to expedite the process of awarding credits for military training and experience. The VETS program is now running and provides Service Members and Veterans with information on credit possibilities while providing staff and faculty with information that they use to award credit for similar programs at their college.

Military Evaluations Overview

The traditional approach to awarding career and technical credit for military training, which is very time intensive, uses the ACE recommendations to analyze individual military transcripts. Military transcripts were formerly called Army/American Council on Education Registry Transcript System (AARTS) and Sailor/Marine American Council on Education Registry Transcript (SMART). In February 2013 the Joint Services Transcript (JST) was introduced that combined the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard onto one transcript. Instead of beginning with a military occupation from the JST, the accelerated approach starts with the ACE recommendations and correlates those recommendations with specific college courses offered by the institution. This allows for a substantial reduction in the time required while maintaining the institutional, faculty and staff roles along with academic integrity and rigor.

Process

Faculty attend a 40-50 minute presentation (outlined below) with a question and answer period. Directions are given on how to search occupations using the ACE Military Guide Online. The faculty are then given one or more worksheets that reflect the courses in their specific discipline. Using the ACE recommendations and their curriculum, they determine comparability between the ACE recommendations and their career and technical courses, and they document those decisions on the

worksheet (see sample below). In this process, faculty are not required to look up every occupation on the ACE Military Guide Online. Faculty use the ACE Military Guide Online to spot check the information so they can feel comfortable with the ACE credit recommendations. ACE faculty evaluators have done the work and the faculty members know they can trust the ACE process.

The task to complete the worksheets normally takes less than 45 minutes; however, faculty have the ability to take additional time for their decisions. The final step in the process is downloading the data into the college's DARS database which is handled in the system office. At that point the information is accessible and visible through VETS website located on the Minnesota State website.

Presentation Format

Colleges have requested this information to be presented in a variety of formats. The presentation includes online demonstrations, best practice discussions and experiences and feedback from the 18 colleges and universities that have already participated. Participants are involved in the discussion and determine if they want to take part in the accelerated process. The agenda includes:

1. Military Basics and Terminology
2. Military Transcripts
3. State of Minnesota Statute and Minnesota State Procedure
4. Veterans Education Transfer System Demonstration
5. ACE Occupation Review Process
6. Presentation of the Accelerated Innovation
7. Accelerated Process Results
8. Discussion on Implementation

Learning Outcomes

1. Faculty will learn and be able to describe the ACE process involving faculty subject matter experts to recommend college credit for military training and experience.
2. Faculty will understand how the accelerated process has been successfully implemented at other Minnesota State colleges and universities and what have been the results.
3. Faculty will understand and describe rationale as to why their college should award credit to Service Members and Veterans for their military training and experience.
4. Faculty will review and evaluate the credit recommendations from ACE faculty evaluators and analyze if the recommendations align to courses taught at their college.

Sample Worksheet

RECORD	Credit Description	Credit	COURSE	LIMHRS	ACE ID	MIL OCCUP TITLE	Skill Lvl	RANK
1	basic management information systems	3			NEC-9513-001	Manpower Analyst	NEC	***
2	compensation and benefits procedures	3			NER-PS-001	Personnel Specialist	PS2	E5
3	compensation and benefits procedures	3			NER-PS-001	Personnel Specialist	PS1	E6
4	compensation and benefits procedures	3			NER-PS-001	Personnel Specialist	PSC	E7
5	compensation and benefits procedures	3			NER-PS-001	Personnel Specialist	PSCS	E8
6	compensation and benefits procedures	3			NER-PS-001	Personnel Specialist	PSCM	E9
7	field experience in office management	3			CGW-PERS-002	Personnel Administration	CGW	W1
8	field experience in office management	3			CGW-PERS-002	Personnel Administration	CGW	W2
9	field experience in office management	3			CGW-PERS-002	Personnel Administration	CGW	W3
10	field experience in office management	3			CGW-PERS-002	Personnel Administration	CGW	W4
11	field experience in office management	3			CGW-PERS-002	Personnel Administration	CGW	W5
12	field experience in organizational management	6			LDO-649X-002	Security	649X	O4
13	field experience in organizational management	6			LDO-649X-002	Security	649X	O5
14	field experience in personnel management	6			NER-NC-003	Navy Counselor	NCCS	E8
15	field experience in personnel management	6			NER-NC-003	Navy Counselor	NCCM	E9
16	human resource management	1			MCE-0619-002	Wire Chief	GYSGT	E7
17	human resource management	1			MCE-0629-002	Radio Chief	SSGT	E6
18	human resource management	1			MCE-0629-002	Radio Chief	GYSGT	E7
19	human resource management	1			MCE-0659-002	Data Chief	SSGT	E6
20	human resource management	1			MCE-0659-002	Data Chief	GYSGT	E7
21	human resource management	1			MCE-6842-001	Meteorology and Oceanography Analyst Forecaster	MSGT	E8
22	human resource management	1			MCE-6842-001	Meteorology and Oceanography Analyst Forecaster	MGYSGT	E9
23	human resource management	2			MCE-0699-002	Communications Chief	MSGT	E8
24	human resource management	2			MCE-0699-002	Communications Chief	WGYSGT	E9
25	human resource management	3			MCE-0193-001	Personnel/Administrative Chief	SSGT	E6
26	human resource management	3			MCE-0193-001	Personnel/Administrative Chief	GYSGT	E7
27	human resource management	3			MCE-0193-001	Personnel/Administrative Chief	MSGT	E8
28	human resource management	3			MCE-5517-001	Bandmaster	MSGT	E8
29	human resource management	3			MCE-5517-001	Bandmaster	WGYSGT	E9
30	human resource management	3			MCE-7291-001	Senior Air Traffic Controller	MSGT	E8
31	human resource management	3			NER-AZ-004	Aviation Maintenance Administration	AZCS	E8
32	human resource management	3			NER-AZ-004	Aviation Maintenance Administration	AZCM	E9
33	human resource management	3			NER-BU-003	Builder	BUCS	E8
34	human resource management	3			NER-BU-004	Builder	BUCS	E8
35	human resource management	3			NER-CE-004	Construction Electrician	PSCS	E8

The column labeled “Credit Description” will be used to identify possible curricular matches. Faculty are asked to write in their course in the “Course” field and number of credits of their course in the “LIMHRS” field.