

the **veteran** advocate

an initiative of the Consortium of Michigan Veteran Educators

A Resource Guide on Translating Military Competencies into Academic Credit

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Both student veterans and higher education administrators often face frustration and confusion over the process of articulating transfer credit for military education and experiences. Michigan's participation with the Midwestern Higher Education Compact's [Multi-State Collaborative on Military Credit](#) (MCMC) along with CMVE's [MI-litary Equivalency Project](#) seek to support institutions in awarding more direct transfer credit for military experience. In tandem with these initiatives, this document is offered to share resources and tools aimed at helping institutions more effectively articulate academic credit for military experiences.

Explore Military Occupational Crosswalks

Understanding military occupations and how they relate to civilian occupations can help educators advise veterans seeking education needed to reintegrate into the civilian labor market and also begin to see which academic programs are most relevant to building consistent transfer articulations for related military experiences. The resources below are recommended to better understand military occupations and their crosswalk with the civilian labor market.

- ✦ The [U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Outlook Handbook for Military Careers](#) offers an overview of military careers, including data on military personnel across the armed forces and competencies gained at various military ranks. See Appendix A for a helpful chart of enlisted personnel by broad occupational group and military branch in 2015.
- ✦ [Solutions for Information Design, LLC](#) (SOLID) Resources:
 - This consulting group created the Department of Defense (DoD) Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) websites to match military occupations with civilian careers. These sites are useful to veterans in their civilian career exploration and can also help educators better understanding alignment between military occupations and similar academic programs. There are COOL sites for all military branches except the Coast Guard – [Air Force COOL](#), [Army COOL](#), [Marine Corps COOL](#), [Navy COOL](#).¹
 - In 2016, MCMC contracted with SOLID to identify military specialties, expressed as the best corresponding [O*NET Codes](#), that appear frequently in recently separated service members in MCMC states. These data sets are complicated but offer additional insight on aligning military occupations and particular academic programs. To learn more about these data files, the following resources are recommended:
 - [Civilian Jobs Related to Military Occupational Codes](#) - This Servicemember Opportunity Colleges (SOC) resource page on the data files includes a brief [tutorial video](#) on how to navigate the datasets.
 - SOLID's [in-depth presentation](#) on the dataset during this recorded MCMC webinar gives more insight on the findings of this data analysis.
 - Analysis shows the top 10 O*NET Job Family Codes projected for veterans reintegrating into Michigan in the 2015 calendar year as: *military specific; installation, maintenance, and repair; office and administrative support; not occupational qualified; transportation and material moving; construction and extraction; protective service; healthcare practitioners and technical; arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media; food preparation and serving related.*
 - The raw data files can be accessed directly at:
 - [All MOCs to O-NETS](#) – This file includes information about all military specialties
 - [Healthcare MOCs to O-NETS](#) – This file includes information specifically about healthcare specialties.

¹ DoD websites require advanced security settings. If you receive what looks like an error in navigating to these pages, click "advanced," and then select "proceed to the page" to get to the site. Although it will indicate it is an unsafe website, it is, indeed, safe to navigate these and other DoD sites.

Embrace the JST and ACE Tools for Awarding Credit

The Joint Services Transcript (JST) has been issued to service members from all service branches except the Air Force² since 2014, documenting their military training and education and recommended academic credit awards from the American Council on Education (ACE). ACE has been analyzing DoD training materials under secure contract and publishing recommended credit awards intended to align with college and university catalogs since 1945. The basic credit recommendations are included in summary form on the JST and more details about the recommendations can be found on ACE's online Military Guide. The resources below can help educators better understand the JST and ACE tools for awarding credit for military experience:

- ✦ Become familiar with the [JST website](#), particularly [JST FAQs](#).
- ✦ Review ACE's [online Military Guide](#), particularly [How to Use the Military Guide](#) and [Military Guide FAQs](#) for more in-depth information on how to use this tool.
- ✦ [Military Transcripts, Tools, and Resources](#) – Click the title to review this 60-minute archived ACE webinar that shares more details about the JST. The webcast features reviews of sample JSTs, suggestions for how to maximize use of the online military guide, and updates for future enhancements to JST.

Review Higher Education Crosswalks to Begin Building Your Own

Whenever possible, institutions are encouraged to identify ACE recommendations that occur commonly on JSTs at their institution to build consistent, direct transfer equivalencies for these ACE recommendations. This streamlines workflows at the institution and makes it easier to showcase these developed equivalencies on a public-facing website, offering transparency for the student veteran. See these resources for more direction on mapping ACE credit recommendations to individual catalogs:

- ✦ Institutional Examples – Review to see what type of credit awards other institutions are making for military training.
 - Ivy Tech Community College (IN) [Military Training and Certification Crosswalk](#)
 - Fayetteville Technical Community College – See their [military credit database](#) or review their Associate in General Education degree plans connected to military specialties.
 - Minnesota State Colleges & Universities [Veterans Education Transfer System](#) (VETs)
- ✦ Healthcare Degree Mapping
 - [Technical Data Package for Awarding Experiential Credit for Military Service, Volume I: Military Medics, Corpsmen, Aeromedical Technicians, and independent Duty Corpsman](#), published by the Department of Defense, July 2014.
 - [Exploring Healthcare Bridge Programs for Veterans](#), featuring Lansing Community College, April 19, 2016. Click the title to watch the webcast on how LCC built their accelerated medic-to-paramedic program for veterans.

Recognize Accreditors Guidance on Credit for Prior Learning

Accreditation is an often-cited concern in awarding credit for prior learning. Educators are encouraged to review [HLC's assumed practices](#) around Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support for more insight on this topic. For a more in-depth understanding, also consider reviewing:

- ✦ [Prior Learning Assessment: An Overview of Relevant Criteria and Assumed Practices](#), presented by *Karen Solomon, Vice President for Accreditation Relations and Director, Standard Pathway, Higher Learning Commission*. Review this December 2015 webcast to be sure there is accurate understanding of HLC regulations related to PLA practices.
- ✦ [Holding Tight or at Arm's Length: How Higher Education Regional Accrediting Bodies Address PLA](#) – This 2014 article published by the Council on Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) offers a review of PLA from all regional accreditors.

²The Air Force continues to use their own regionally accredited Community College of the Air Force transcripts for air men and women.



Appendix A

Table 1. Active duty enlisted personnel by broad occupational group and branch of military, and Coast Guard, May 2015

Enlisted Occupational group	Army	Air Force	Coast Guard	Marine Corps	Navy	Total enlisted
Administrative	6,140	14,046	1,507	12,018	18,635	52,346
Combat Specialty	109,625	677	649	39,350	8,388	158,689
Construction	15,313	5,195	—	6,252	3,987	30,747
Electronic and Electrical Equipment Repair	31,051	29,310	4,341	16,822	48,236	129,760
Engineering, Science, and Technical	43,567	49,162	1,256	26,917	39,611	160,513
Healthcare	29,986	15,441	707	—	25,345	71,479
Human Resource Development	16,558	7,720	1	2,214	3,941	30,434
Machine Operator and Production	4,107	6,063	1,688	2,539	8,542	22,939
Media and Public Affairs	6,646	7,095	136	2,439	3,859	20,175
Protective Service	21,802	32,573	2,720	6,096	12,011	75,202
Support Service	9,901	4,981	1,145	2,263	8,129	26,419
Transportation and Material Handling	48,096	27,840	9,879	23,213	37,709	146,737
Vehicle and Machinery Mechanic	45,344	41,555	5,532	21,511	47,353	161,295
Non-occupation or unspecified coded personnel	2,984	5,038	1,439	1,161	2,555	13,177
Total enlisted personnel for each military branch and Coast Guard	391,120	246,696	31,000	162,795	268,301	1,099,912

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Manpower Data Center