

# Boots to Books

{ Serving those who served



# Military Demographics

- Active Service: 1.4 million
- Reserve: 850,000
- Less than 1/3 identify as racial/ethnic minority
  - 23.0% of officers and 31.7% of enlisted members in 2011
- In 2005 more than 40% came from rural households, many at or below federal poverty line (Washington Post 11/3/05)
- Estimated number of living Veterans in 2008 – 23,440,000
- 2008 college enrollment was reported by census as 18.6 million students enrolled

# Why do people join the Military?

- Family tradition
- To become a woman/man
- Benefits (college, medical, etc.)
- Get out of poverty
- Do something noble or significant with one's life
- Give life (and death) a purpose
- Serve others
- Serve one's country
- Be part of a team/ something bigger than oneself
- Friend did it

# How students might be connected to the military

- Veteran
- Serving Active Duty or National Guard or the Reserves
- ROTC
- Family member or loved one in the active military/deployed
- Have a family member or loved one who has served
- International student from a country with a strong US military presence

# Who we serve

- Veterans (5 branches)
- Guardsmen
- Reservists
- Dependents of Veterans

# Who we serve

- 417 currently enrolled Veterans, Guardsmen and Reservists
- 391 currently receiving VA Education Benefits
- Typically between 2%-3% of the student population

	Enrolled	Receiving benefits
Fall 2013	417	391
Spring 2013	403	377
Fall 2012	385	373

# Who we serve

- Veterans
  - May be slightly non-traditional age
  - May or may not have strong academic interest
  - May or may not have strong study skills



# Who we serve

- All who are eligible for education benefits from US Department of Veterans Affairs
- VA Programs
  - Chapter 30 - MGIB Prior Active Duty
  - Chapter 1606 - MGIB Selected Reserves
  - Chapter 1607 - MGIB REAP
  - Chapter 31 - Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment
  - Chapter 33 - Post 9/11
  - Chapter 35 - Survivors' & Dependents' Educational Assistance



# How we help

- Certification of enrollment to the US Department of Veterans Affairs
- Provide information related to military grants and scholarships
- Provide information related to Tuition Assistance offered by military branches
- Referral for services on-campus and in local community

# How we help

## ➤ Veterans Resource Website

- Policies and procedures relating to veterans
- Important information about campus offices
- Contact information for other offices
- Linked from the ISU homepage

<http://veterans.illinoisstate.edu>

# How we help

## Specific University programs and policies

- Admission application fee is waived for veterans
- Veterans' Special Admission Program
  - Illinois resident at time of entrance to service
  - Served 1 year active duty
  - Discharge other than dishonorable
  - First admittance to college/university is Illinois State

# How we help

## ➤ Revised Residency Policy

- Applies for admission to the University within 18 months of the person on active military duty being reassigned, or
- Beginning with the 2013-2014 academic year, a person utilizing benefits under the federal post-9/11 veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 or any subsequent variation of that Act.

## ➤ Priority Registration

# How we help

## ➤ Military Service Leave of Absence

When completing military service for a specified period of time, the student is afforded the right to be excused or reschedule coursework and examinations administered during absence.

The faculty or administrative officials shall provide an equivalent opportunity to make up assignments and examinations missed because of military service. Failure to accommodate is a civil rights violation under the Illinois Human Rights Act.

# How we help

If unable to attend the university for a period of 7 days or more due to military service, the student may request military withdrawal.

## ➤ Military Service Withdrawal Policy

- Called to active duty prior to 12<sup>th</sup> week of class
  - Courses dropped- no penalty
  - Full refund
- Called after 12<sup>th</sup> week of class
  - Full credit is awarded
  - Instructors issue grades based on work completed to date of withdrawal

# How we help



## ➤ First Year Learning in Communities (LinC): Veteran's Seminar IDS 122.02

- 16-week one-credit course designed to assist student veterans in their transition to the University community, Bloomington-Normal area, and civilian life.
- Student veterans will gain an understanding of how to maximize the resources provided at Illinois State University as well as those offered by the surrounding community.
- The seminar helps students develop the academic skills necessary for success in college in a small seminar-style environment.
- Focus on three major themes:
  - ❖ Successful transitions within the University;
  - ❖ Major/minor and career exploration
  - ❖ Campus/community involvement



# Veterans Study Center



- Located in 110 Moulton Hall
- For use by student veterans, those currently serving on active duty and students in the Military Science/ROTC program. Since June 2013 4,958 individuals have used the center.
- Provides a place for students to gather and study and is a venue for programs designed to assist student veterans.
- The creation of the center was a combined effort by University College, Division of Student Affairs, Dean of Students Office, Student Counseling Services, Milner Library, Dr. Jo Ann Rayfield Archives, University Galleries, Alumni Relations, Military Science/ROTC, Veterans Services and the Office of the University Registrar.

# Veterans at Illinois State

Providing Support for Veterans, current service members and their families

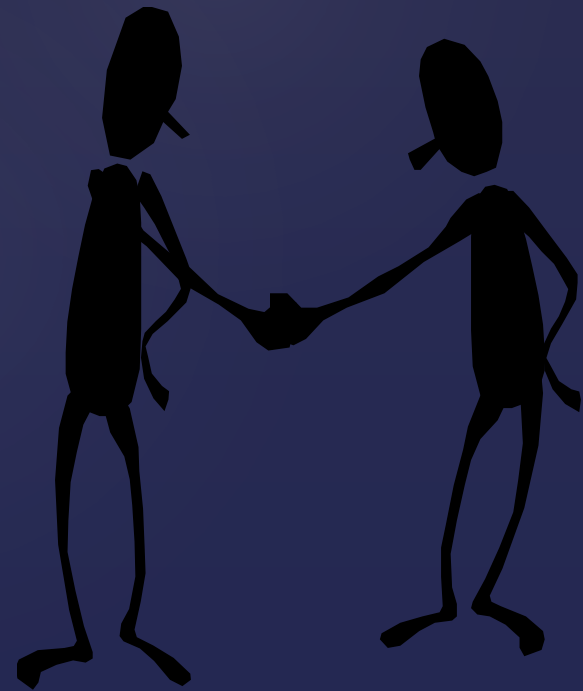


Registered Student Organization

- A chapter of Student Veterans of America
- Create and promote camaraderie among veterans,
- Generate awareness of veterans on campus
- Connect members with on-campus resources needed for college success
- Serve as a voice for student service members, veterans, and their families on campus
- University Registrar is the staff advisor

# University Partners

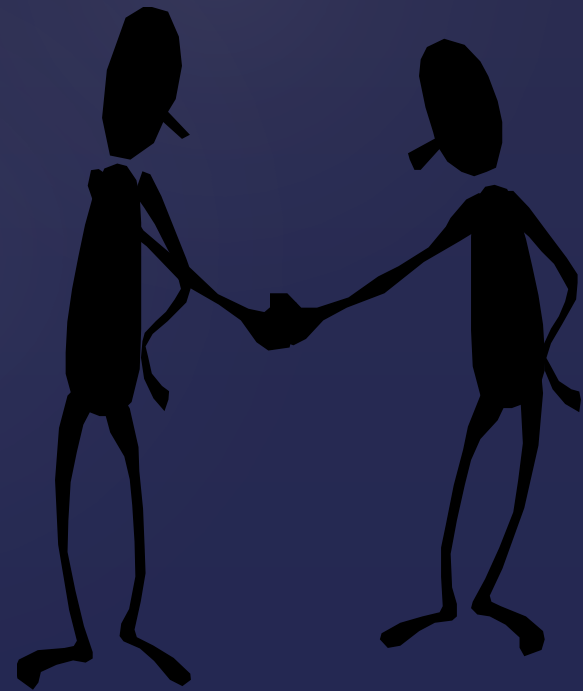
- Admissions
  - Heartland CC Partnership
- Veterans & Military Services
- University College
  - Academic Advising
  - Testing Services
  - First Year LinC: Veteran's Seminar





# University Partners

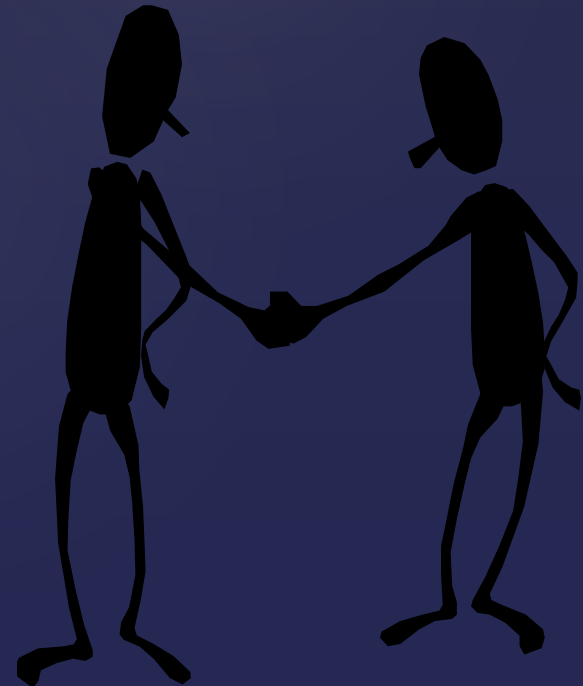
- Financial Aid Office
  - The Scholarship Resource Office
- Student Accounts
- Military Science/ROTC
  - Veteran's Day Ceremony



# University Partners

## ➤ Division of Student Affairs

- Dean of Students Office
- Career Center
- Student Counseling Services
- Office of Disability Concerns
- Student Health Service



# Need to Know



## ➤ Strengths of Student Veterans

- Disciplined
- Goal-oriented
- Follow procedures
- Ask for clarification if procedures are unclear
- More mature by virtue of age and experience
- Often have a broader cultural view
- Punctual
- Cooperative
  - Marine Corps: Semper Paratus

# Need to Know



## ➤ Typical Student Challenges

- Dealing with Traditional Students
- Desire for Structure Vs. New Responsibilities
- Civilian Lack of Understanding of Prior Military Accomplishments
- Insensitivity by Civilians
- Deployment Issues (for those still serving)
- VA Appointments



# Need to Know



- Unique Student Challenges (Not everyone has these issues!)
  - Service Animals
  - Academic underperformance
  - Dealing with Sexual Assault Issues
  - Violence towards self (Suicide)/Violence towards others
  - Drug and Alcohol Abuse
  - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder/ PTSD
  - Traumatic Brain Injury/TBI
  - Survivor Guilt/Spiritual Challenges

# How Do I Help?



## ➤ In the Classroom

- Assess behavior without taking it personally (e.g. sleeping in class)
- Know that veterans may exhibit strong political viewpoints
- Realize that veterans may get argumentative & loud but this is NOT a precursor for violence
- Discourage insensitive student questions (e.g. Did you kill anyone?)
- If they disclose veteran status it is ok to thank them for their service
- Some veterans have an interest in classes in political science, history and the social sciences
- Veterans do not see themselves as “victims of war”
- Allow them to sit in the back of the class and leave when they need to
- Give the same respect you would to any other minority/under represented group (e.g. having a member of “X “group speak for all “X”).
- Avoid red laser pointers.
- Be understanding when it comes to VA appointments or deployments

# How Do I Help?



## ➤ At the University

- Treat veterans like other identified populations and consider targeted outreach
- Normalize tutoring as non-weakness
- Let veterans know it is ok to ask for help and it is not malingering
- Encourage participation in student organizations
- Suggest fraternities/sororities or athletics as a way to regain the feeling of esprit de corps
- Consider a veteran section for courses. Warning. In writing courses they could cover write about some heavy stuff.
- Help new veteran students understand the new “chain of command” and help orient them to “base ISU”
- Try not to send veteran students on the “run-around”
- Help them just like you would any student

# Points of Pride

- Awarded Military-Friendly School
- Veterans Study Center
- Veterans at Illinois State (RSO)
- Veterans Day Ceremony
- Veterans Memorial Garden



# Military-Friendly School Designation

Since the designations were created in 2009, Illinois State University has been named a military-friendly school by both GI Jobs and Military Advance Education magazines.





Monday- Friday: 9:00-12:00 and 1:00-4:00

Moulton Hall 112

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<http://veterans.illinoisstate.edu/>

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