

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Education Service Office Hours STEM and Colmery Updates



Target Audience: SCOs
August 2020



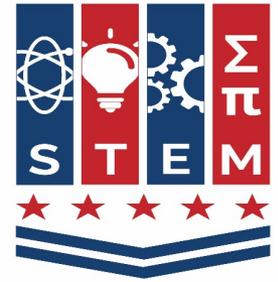
Agenda

1 **STEM PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

2 **STEM APPLICATION AND VA-ONCE**

3 **OTHER COLMERY REMINDERS**

4 **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**



Remember: Please Open an Extra Web Browser or Smartphone to [Menti.com](https://www.menti.com)

STEM Program Overview

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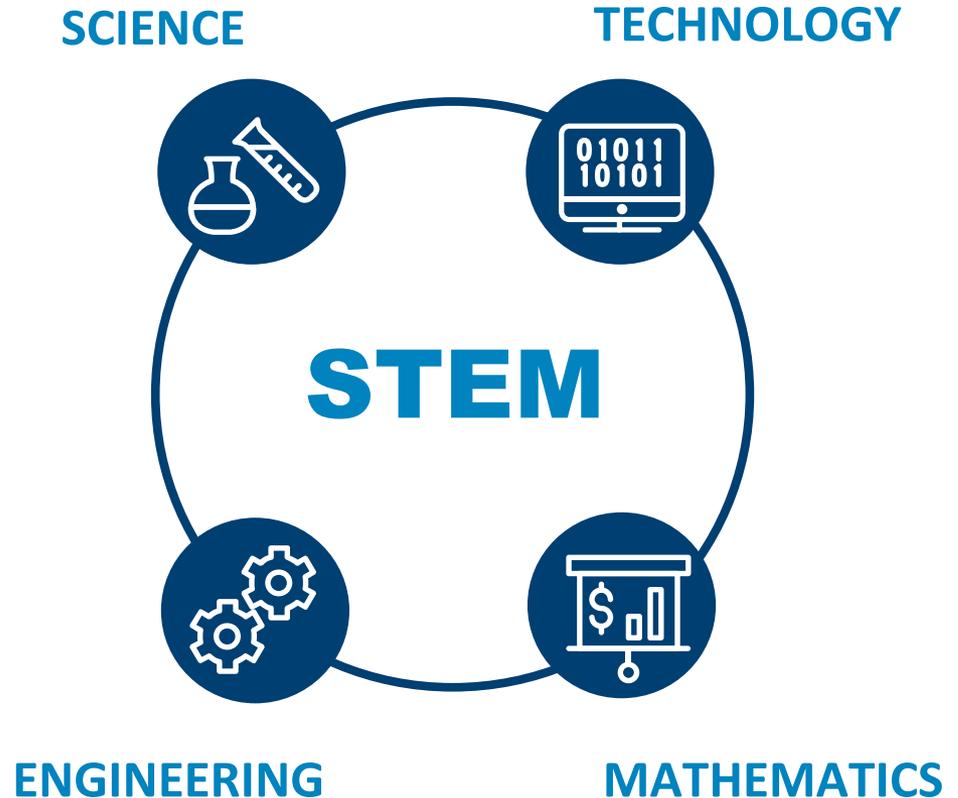
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STEM Program Overview

The Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship is a provision of the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2017 (Forever GI Bill ®)

This provision provides up to nine months of additional Post-9/11 GI Bill ® benefits (not to exceed \$30,000) to eligible students training in the high-demand fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)





STEM Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for the STEM Scholarship, individuals must:

- Be eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill ® or Fry Scholarship
- Be enrolled in an undergraduate STEM degree program requiring at least 120 semester (or 180 quarter) credit hours for completion
- Have or will exhaust your Post-9/11 GI Bill ® entitlement within six months of application date
- Have completed at least 60 semester or 90 quarter hours towards a STEM degree

For a STEM Teaching Certification, individuals must:

- Have earned a post-secondary degree in a STEM field
- Be accepted or enrolled in a teaching certification program
- Have or will exhaust your Post-9/11 GI Bill ® entitlement within six months of application date

NOTE: Graduate level degree programs are NOT eligible for the STEM Scholarship.

Learn more about STEM at VA.gov!



What do SCOs need to do?

School Certifying Official's Responsibilities:



Understand **requirements** to guide students



Complete the **SCO portion of the STEM application**



Select the STEM Scholarship Recipient indicator on the student's Enrollment Certification once the SCO has received the Selection Letter confirming the student's selection

STEM Application and VA-ONCE

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New! - STEM Application Process

As VA works to improve the experience for beneficiaries and SCOs with the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship, a new email notification for SCOs has been implemented.



- When a student [applies on VA.gov](https://www.va.gov) to use the STEM scholarship in a program at your institution **VA will send an email to the SCOs listed in WEAMS.**



- The email **will notify you that a student has applied** to use the STEM scholarship and that a **few pieces of information will be needed from you** to complete the student's application.



- Please complete the portion of the application assigned to you and **submit it within 14 days.**

If we don't receive a response, we won't be able to process the student's application for the Rogers STEM Scholarship, and we may follow up for the required information.



New! - STEM Application Process – SCO Email

SCOs will be asked for the following information pertaining to the applicant:

If the applicant is an undergraduate:

Is the student pursuing a bachelor's degree in an approved STEM program

Name of STEM program student is enrolled in

6-digit CIP (Classification of Instructional Programs) Code for the program

Credit hours completed toward STEM program (specify semester or quarter):

Required credit hours for STEM program (specify semester or quarter):

If the applicant is a teaching certificate candidate:

Has the student earned a bachelor's degree in an approved STEM program

Name of STEM program of degree conferred

6-digit CIP (Classification of Instructional Programs) Code of degree conferred

Is the student currently enrolled in a program leading to a teaching certification?



Please submit replies within 14 days to STEM.VBABUF@va.gov.



Existing STEM Enrollment Process in VA-ONCE

STEM Scholarship Indicator in VA-ONCE:

- If a student is approved to receive the **STEM Scholarship**, select the “**STEM Scholarship Recipient**” checkbox on the Bio page.
- The chapter must be **Chapter 33** or **Chapter 33 Yellow** in order for the STEM Scholarship box to be checked.

Note: It is important to only check the box **if the scholarship has been confirmed**. Do NOT check this box if the student is in a STEM program, but **NOT** receiving the STEM Scholarship.

The screenshot shows the VA-ONCE Bio Data page for student BARBARINO, VINNY. The page includes fields for personal information, contact details, and program information. The 'STEM Scholarship Recipient' checkbox is checked and highlighted with a red box. A message box is overlaid on the form, stating: "Chapter Code must be 33 or 33 YELLOW for STEM Scholarship." The message box has an "OK" button.

The “**STEM Scholarship Recipient**” remark is automatically inserted, and the certification will be routed to the **Buffalo RPO** when the STEM Scholarship box is checked.

- When submitting the **first enrollment certification** for a STEM Scholarship student, please add the STEM Scholarship CIP remark and input the CIP number for the program. For example, “STEM Scholarship – The CIP For The Program Is XXX”, where the X’s are the CIP Code.

The screenshot shows the "New Remark" form in VA-ONCE. The "VBA Standard Remarks" dropdown is set to "STEM Scholarship - The CIP For The Program Is". The "CIP Code" field contains "11.05". The "Other Remarks" field is empty, and the character count is 125.



STEM Filter in VA-ONCE

A checkbox has been added in the Filter area of the Select Student page so that students receiving the STEM Scholarship can be identified.

The screenshot shows the 'Select Student' interface. At the top, there are tabs for 'Student' and 'School Detail', and a 'Print' button. The main heading is 'Select Student'. Below this, there is a search section with 'Search by' (Last Name), 'Search Type' (Last Name), 'Search Range' (Starts With), and 'Search Text' (input field). There are 'Search' and 'Clear' buttons. Below the search section, there are several filter options: 'Status and' (All Active), 'Facility Code and' (All), 'Chapter and' (All), 'Training Type and' (All), 'Program and' (All), 'PT Evaluated' (All), and 'STEM Ind' (checked). The 'STEM Ind' checkbox is highlighted with a red box. At the bottom, there are 'Date Range or' (input fields), 'Days until Cert End or Training Time' (ALL), 'Prior Credit' (All), and 'Active Duty' (ALL). There are 'Filter' and 'Reset' buttons.

If the STEM Indicator is checked when running a query, any student with the “STEM Scholarship Recipient” box selected on the Bio page will appear in the results.

Other Colmery Reminders

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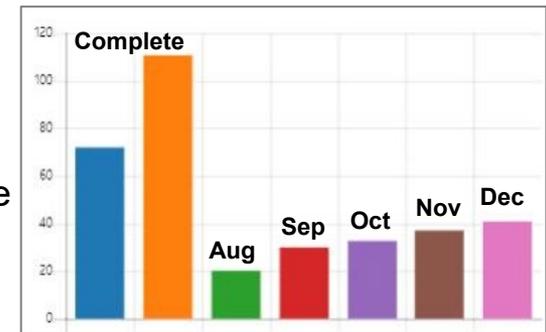
Section 107 Recertification

Due to Section 107 of the Colmery Act, Schools with students that attended an extension campus between August 1, 2018 and December 1, 2019 that certified these students at the main or branch campus before the extension campuses were made available in VA-ONCE need to recertify impacted enrollments.



Section 107 Recertification Survey Results:

- 410 total responses, **336 schools with extension campuses**
- When asked if school's with extension campuses consider themselves to be on track to complete recertifications by December 31, 2020, **91.6% of Schools said yes and 52% are already complete.**
- If you have extension campuses and **did not** fill out the survey, [we need your input!](#)





Section 305 Reminder

For Covered Institutions Only:

Please complete Section 305 training in order to avoid losing access in VA-ONCE including ability to certify to VA.

- ✓ The SCO Annual Training Cycle was extended for 30 days due to the COVID-19 Pandemic
- ✓ Additional self-paced training modules was added to SCO Online Training portal to help SCOs achieve annual training requirement.
- ✓ Key dates listed below:





Other Important Colmery Reminders

Consolidation of Post-9/11 GI Bill ® Benefit Levels

Effective August 1, 2020, the 40% Benefit level is eliminated, and the 60% Benefit level is expanded for the Post- 9/11 GI Bill ® Program.

Consolidation of Post-9/11 GI Bill® Benefit Levels

Are you eligible for increased benefits under the Post-9/11 GI Bill? Changes to benefit levels effective August 1, 2020 increase the amount VA will cover for those with fewer months of service.

VA pays Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits at different rates (known as benefit levels) based on length of service. Effective August 1, 2020, the 40% benefit level is eliminated, and the 60% benefit level is expanded for the Post-9/11 GI Bill program.

60% benefit level if:
At least six months but less than 18 months of active-duty service (excluding those previously eligible at the 40% benefit level).

APPLY

DID YOU KNOW?
As this change goes into effect on August 1, 2020, eligible Veterans can use the **GI Bill Comparison Tool** to determine the entitlement they can receive for their education, training, and housing.

APPLY for the Post-9/11 GI Bill on VA.gov.
If you have questions please call 1-888-GI-BILL-1 (1-888-442-4551) (inside the U.S.) or 001-918-781-5678 (outside the U.S.).

Member Serves	Percentage of Maximum Benefit Payable
At least 36 months	100%
At least 30 continuous days on active duty and must be discharged due to service-connected disability or received a Purple Heart	100%
At least 30 months, but less than 36 months	90%
At least 24 months, but less than 30 months	80%
At least 18 months, but less than 24 months	70%
At least 6 months, but less than 18 months	60%
At least 90 days, but less than 6 months	50%

Member Serves	Percentage of Maximum Benefit Payable
At least 36 months	100%
At least 30 continuous days on active duty and must be discharged due to service-connected disability or received a Purple Heart	100%
At least 30 months, but less than 36 months	90%
At least 24 months, but less than 30 months	80%
At least 18 months, but less than 24 months	70%
At least 6 months, but less than 18 months	60%
At least 90 days, but less than 6 months	50%

Link to postcard can be found [here!](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

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Frequently Asked Questions - Overview



COVID-19



STEM



Section 107 Recertification



COVID-19 FAQs

Note: Applicable for “covered period” March 1, 2020 – December 21, 2020

Q: Post 9/11 GI Bill ® Beneficiary – Monthly Housing Payments: What happens when a modality changes for enrollment terms due to COVID-19?

- Based on the new law, Post 9/11 GI Bill ® students who pursue resident courses converted to an online modality solely due to COVID-19 will continue to receive the MHA rate for resident training. **The law only authorizes this special authority from March 1, 2020, to December 21, 2020.**
- **Note:** Other types of changes to the student’s enrollment status may affect payments. Non-COVID-19 related changes must still be reported per normal requirements.

Q: Educational Institutions – Post 9/11 GI Bill ® Tuition and Fee Payments: Will there be any impact on tuition and fee payments when only the modality changes within a term due to COVID-19?

- Tuition and Fees reporting requirements will not change due to COVID-19 national emergency. **Examples:** SCOs should review change in fees associated to online modality, prorated building fees, etc.
- **Note:** Regulations apply for same cost of program for non-Veteran students. (all students).



COVID-19 FAQs

Q: Should IHL's report enrollment changes when they temporarily change from a standard grade scale (A, B, C...) to a Pass/Fail or other grading system due to the COVID-19 national emergency?

- No, there is no need to report a conversion from a standard grading scale to a Pass/Fail or similar grading systems but there are other implications in doing so. Depending on the IHL's grading policy, classes taken Pass/Fail may result in a nonpunitive grade if the student fails the class. Rules about nonpunitive grades have not changed.
- Although VA does not typically make payments for classes resulting in nonpunitive grades, if COVID-19 is reported as mitigating circumstances for the student's receipt of a nonpunitive grade (i.e., Fail in a Pass/Fail class) VA will pay for the class.
- Refer to the SCO handbook for more information about reporting nonpunitive grades and mitigating circumstances.

Q: Reporting enrollment changes timely: Will there be acceptable circumstances due to COVID-19 that an IHL school certifying official may not meet the thirty day requirement to report an enrollment change?

- Late reporting (30 days from reporting event) is always a concern of the VA. During this COVID-19 period the VA understands that institutions face additional challenges with timely enrollment amendment or adjustment certifications. The VA asks that the institution make every attempt to complete the changes within a reasonable amount of time. VA will consider your mitigating circumstances for the aforementioned compliance survey.



COVID-19 FAQs

Q: Our school is once again offering on-site classes and/or hybrid training in addition to continuing to offer the “converted” online program due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. If students choose to pursue the program via the “converted” online modality because of the pandemic, how do we certify? Will the students receive the higher or lower Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) for attendance through distance learning?

- Students enrolled in the converted courses should continue to be certified in accordance with the procedures previously issued for Public law 116-128. Those students will continue to receive the higher MHA rate associated with training in-residence.
- **Note:** PL 116-128 only authorizes this special authority from March 1, 2020, to December 21, 2020.

Please find the full list of [COVID-19 FAQs here](#).



STEM FAQs

Q: How does VA decide who gets the scholarship?

- VA will collect applications and will rank order all eligible recipients, with priority going to those who have who have the highest benefit level, the most credit hours remaining, and then ranked based on date of application. Priority determinations are done on a case by case basis. Funding is capped on an annual basis, so VA cannot guarantee that all eligible applicants will receive a scholarship.

Q: Can I use STEM scholarship benefits and CH31 benefits?

- No. If you qualify for VA education payments under the Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship and the Veteran Readiness and Employment program, you can enroll in only one program at a time. If you want to continue your VR&E program, you should discuss your options with your VR&E case manager.

Q: Are the delimiting date rules the same from STEM recipients as they are for other Post-9/11 GI Bill ® claimants?

- No, STEM has different delimiting date rules. Once you have been selected for STEM, the delimiting date for the scholarship will be two years from the date you were selected as a STEM scholarship recipient.



Section 107 Recertification FAQs

Q: How do I submit a replacement for a 107 termination when I receive an error that states “No new Colmery certifications can be opened until all other unsubmitted certifications are deleted or submitted”?

- For unsubmitted certifications pending under your own facility code(s) that are preventing a 107 replacement, review the certification to determine if it is a valid certification which needs submitted, or a certification which needs deleted. After completing the appropriate action, you will be able to complete the replacement for a 107 termination.
- For unsubmitted certifications pending under another school’s facility code preventing a 107 replacement, please document the students you cannot submit a replacement for and contact your ELR to resolve the open recertification from another school. Your ELR will inform you when the open certifications are resolved so you can submit any replacements for 107 terminations which could not be completed.

Q: How do I recertify an enrollment with an amendment or an adjustment?

If the enrollment has an:	Then you must:	
 Amendment	(1) Terminate and replace the latest amendment	
 Adjustment	(1) Terminate and replace the latest enrollment or amendment	(2) Submit the adjustment on the replacement to make the end state match the original

Please find full list of Section 107 FAQs in the [Colmery Act Section 107 Recertification FAQs](#)

Wrap-Up

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Department of Veterans Affairs



Knowledge Check

Please go to www.Menti.com and use the code listed in the **Info Pod** to participate!

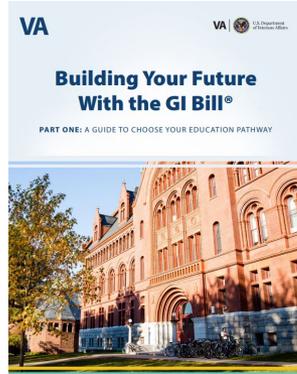




Student Resources

Upcoming Q&A with Education Service Executive Director Charmain Bogue

Q&A video that allows VA to engage with GI Bill® beneficiaries, reaching them where they are and increasing stakeholder engagement to build a sense of community.



Building Your Future With the GI Bill®

This series assist GI Bill® students in navigating their education pathways, using benefits and finding employment:

- [Part One: A Guide to Choose Your Education Pathway](#)
- [Part Two: A Guide to Understanding Your Benefits](#)
- [Coming Soon! Part Three: A Guide to Furthering Your Career](#)

Postcard Series



[Yellow Ribbon Postcard](#)



[VET TEC Postcard](#)



[STEM Postcard](#)



Website

www.benefits.va.gov/gibill



Ask a Question

<https://gibill.custhelp.va.gov>



Education Call Center

1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442-4551).
For students outside the U.S., call
001-918-781-5678



GI Bill® Feedback System

<https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/Feedback.asp>

Note: All resources listed on this slide are clickable to their appropriate page.



School Administrator Resources

MHA Communications Tools

- [Campus Definition Reference Guide](#)
- [MHA Communications Toolkit](#)
- [MHA Rate Change infographic](#)
- [NEW MHA Rate Adjustments Infographic](#)



Stay up to date on GI Bill® Benefits



@GIBillEducation



@VAVetBenefits



forevergibill.vbavaco
@VA.gov



[NEW School Resources Page](#)



[SCO Training Portal](#)



[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Recently updated!



[School Certifying Official's \(SCO\) Handbook](#)

Note: All resources listed on this slide are clickable to their appropriate page.



Additional Updates

COVID-19 Website Updates



[Main GI Bill® Benefits Site](#)



[COVID-19 Student Frequently Ask Questions](#)



[COVID-19 School Certifying Officials Frequently Ask Questions](#)



[COVID-19 Paperless Guidance](#)

Dedicated Phone Line for Survivors



As of May 11, 2020, a child or surviving spouse can contact the Education Call Center at 1-888-442-4551 and select Option 5. A highly trained agent with specialized training in survivor benefits will be ready to assist the caller with their education benefits or survivor-related resources.

Agents will be available Monday-Friday from 7am-5pm CST

SCO Ratio



Received direct feedback from constituents and created a ratio recommendation of one full-time School Certifying Official (SCO) to every 200 GI Bill® student

Website Update



[Yellow Ribbon Search Tool](#) to determine if a school participates in the program



Section 107 Recertification Resources

VA has developed a series of tools and resources to explain the 107 Recertification process and GI Bill ® benefit updates

Resource	Link
Colmery Act Section 107 Recertification Presentation	https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/docs/presentations/Colmery_107_Recertification_SCO_Training.pdf
VA-ONCE Recertification Demo Videos	https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resource/s/school_certifying_officials/presentations.asp
Recertification VA-ONCE Quick Reference Guide	https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBILL/docs/presentations/107_Recertification_VAONCE_QuickRefGuide.pdf
Facility Extension Campus Report	https://benefits.va.gov/gibill/docs/fgib/recertificationwaivers_extensioncampusreport.xlsx
VA Education and Training Benefits Frequently Asked Questions	https://gibill.custhelp.va.gov/app/answers/list
GI Bill ® Comparison Tool	https://www.va.gov/gi-bill-comparison-tool/
Forever GI Bill ® : Monthly Housing Allowance Guide (For Students)	https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBill/docs/FGIB/MHA_student_guide.pdf
Monthly Housing Allowance Rate Change Infographic	https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBill/docs/FGIB/MHA_rate_change.pdf
Monthly Housing Allowance Letters Infographic	https://www.benefits.va.gov/GIBill/docs/FGIB/MHA_change_letters.pdf
MHA Rate Adjustments Infographic	https://benefits.va.gov/gibill/docs/fgib/MHA_adjustment_letters_infographic.pdf