Edith Nourse Rogers STEM Scholarship
School Certifying Official (SCO) Webinar

October 2019

Jerome Golombek
Lead Education Liaison Representative (ELR)
Buffalo Regional Processing Office (RPO)
Topics Of Discussion on STEM

- Eligibility Requirements
- SCO Responsibilities
- Certifying Enrollments
- Reapplying/Priority Information
- VA-ONCE Functionality
What Is STEM

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)
Who is Eligible?

**Individuals must:**

- Be eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill or Fry Scholarship
- Pursue a degree in the STEM field or a teaching certificate, and hold a STEM undergraduate degree
- Have exhausted entitlement OR will exhaust entitlement within 180 days of application
- Have completed at least 60 semester or 90 quarter hours towards a STEM degree
- Post-secondary degree requires at least 120 semester or 180 quarter for completion in a standard, undergraduate degree
Teaching Certifications

For a STEM Teaching Certification, one:

- Must have earned a post-secondary degree in a STEM field
- Must have been accepted or enrolled in a teaching certification program
- Must have exhausted entitlement OR will exhaust entitlement within 180 days of application

**NOTE**: Graduate level programs or Graduate level teaching certificates are NOT eligible for the STEM Scholarship
Recall to Active Duty or Disenrollment:

- VA will only pay scholarship benefits while the student remains enrolled in the program for which they received the award.
- Any partial months or reductions in course load will be prorated accordingly.
- Any call up to Active Duty will be evaluated for applicable determination.
STEM Applications

Schools must provide the following information to VA:

- Program Name
- Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP Code) will be added to all development letters
- Credit hours completed toward STEM program
- Credit hours required for specified STEM program
- If the student is pursuing a teaching certificate, what undergrad degree was received
- Students undergraduate STEM degree completion for teaching certificate

**NOTE**: Please Do Not send transcripts of STEM applicants
Applications

- Application requests should be sent to STEM.VBABUF@va.gov.
- VA will notify SCOs by mail, phone, and/or email when a student at their school applies for the STEM scholarship. SCOs may reply through any of those channels. Correspondence in writing is preferred.
- **NOTE**: VA cannot process STEM claims without this critical information.

Reapplications

- All Reapplications will be accepted. VA will determine eligibility.
- The facility can certify and award STEM students the facility’s portion of Yellow Ribbon, but VA is unable to match any Yellow Ribbon payments made for students.
VA Responsibility

The Student’s STEM Certificate of Eligibility (COE) notification letter will include the following information:

- Scholarship Effective Date
- Scholarship Termination Date
- Projected date of exhaustion
- The school will also receive notification so SCO knows student is eligible for the STEM Scholarship
Certifying STEM:

- When submitting enrollment information for STEM students, the SCO must mark the "STEM Indicator” found on the BIO page within VA-ONCE. This indicator will ensure the enrollment certification is properly routed to the Buffalo Regional Processing Office (RPO) for action. Buffalo will be the only RPO processing STEM Applicants
STEM Priority

- VA began accepting applications effective August 1, 2019
- VA will rank order all eligible recipients, with priority going to those who have the most credit hours remaining in program, who have the highest Chapter 33 benefit level, and who have not transferred their eligibility
- TOE recipients can apply for the STEM scholarship however, they receive less points towards prioritization. Priority determinations are done on a case by case basis
- Funding is capped on an annual basis, so VA may not award all eligible applicants a scholarship
STEM Priority Matrix Points

- The most credit hours toward completing a STEM degree or STEM Teaching Certificate receive more points.
- The highest benefit level receive more points.
- Have a STEM degree and pursuing a STEM Teaching Certificate receive more points.
- If a beneficiary transferred their Chapter 33 benefits they will have a reduced priority value.
Transfer Students

- Transfers will be allowed only for students who remain in the same program (e.g. switching from Mechanical Engineering at School #1 to Mechanical Engineering at School #2)
- Scholarship recipients will only be able to receive support if they transfer to a new school while pursuing the same degree
- If the recipient transfers to a different degree program at the same school or at a new school, STEM benefits will terminate as soon as they stop pursuing the degree under which they originally applied for the scholarship
- For payments to be made, the new school will need to certify the enrollment of the student
- The SCO at the new school would need to submit the program information on the confirmation notification letter to confirm enrollment in a STEM program and to maintain entitlement to the STEM Scholarship
Changes made within VA-ONCE to accommodate STEM:

- Addition of a STEM Scholarship Student indicator on the Student Bio page
- If checked, an automatic remark, “STEM Scholarship Recipient”, will be added to every certification
- All certifications with STEM Scholarship Student checked will be routed to the Buffalo RPO
- A new VBS Standard Remark has been added for Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes
A checkbox has been added to the Student Bio page. If the student has applied for, or is receiving the STEM Scholarship, the checkbox should be checked.

Do **NOT** check this box if the student is in a STEM program, but **NOT** receiving the STEM Scholarship.
The chapter must be Chapter 33 or Chapter 33 Yellow in order for the STEM Scholarship box to be checked.

If another chapter is selected, a warning will appear which states, “Chapter code must be 33 or 33 Yellow for STEM Scholarship.”
Automatic Remark

Any certification that is started when the STEM Scholarship box is checked will have a “STEM Scholarship Recipient” remark inserted.
Routing

All STEM Scholarship Enrollments and Changes will be sent to the Buffalo RPO. It is important to only check the box if the scholarship has been confirmed, since the claim could go to the incorrect RPO and result in delays.

A VBA Standard Remark has been added for STEM Scholarship Recipients. When sending the first Enrollment for a STEM Scholarship student, please select the remark and input the CIP number for the program. The remark is, “STEM Scholarship – The CIP For The Program Is XXX”, where the X’s are the CIP Code.

The Remark will print as shown below:

Remarks
01/15/20-05/15/20: STEM Scholarship – The CIP for the program is 11.05
01/15/20-05/15/20: STEM Scholarship Recipient
# Program Information

## What We Need from Your School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEM Program Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEM Program CIP Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required Credit Hours for STEM Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Hours Completed Toward STEM Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Certifying Official Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Certifying Official Signature</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STEM Summary

- The requirements for eligibility of STEM benefits
- SCO responsibilities for STEM
- Certification of STEM students
- Reapplying/priority information
- VA-ONCE STEM functions
Conclusion

Please submit any of your STEM Questions within the Q&A Pod