Certification Process
Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL)
Facilities

EDUCATION SERVICE
GI BILL PROGRAMS

May 2023

Introduction

Training Specialist

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National Training Team Schools

Overview

Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) A college, university, technical or business school offering instruction at the postsecondary level that leads to an associate or higher degree. The institution must be empowered by the appropriate state education authority (under state law) or accredited by a recognized accrediting agency to grant such degrees. This designation also includes hospitals offering medical-dental internships or residencies without regard to whether the hospital grants a postsecondary degree.
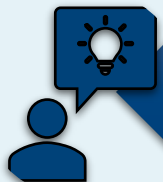
Learning Objectives

Describe the methods for applying VA course measurements to certifications

Recall student enrollment processes requiring SCO reporting action during an enrollment period

Identify program curriculum distinctions to certify appropriate coursework

Recollect procedures taken when a term has ended

What to Certify

What to Certify

❑ Program Approval

❑ Course Applicability

Program Approval

SAA of jurisdiction must verify the program meets the necessary approval requirements

Previously approved programs will be reviewed by the SAA of jurisdiction during routine catalog reviews

SAAs are required to re-evaluate schools, facilities, and programs every 24 months at a minimum

SAA of jurisdiction will communicate what documents are required from the school/SCO for new and routine approval reviews

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Course Applicability

Course Applicability

Only courses that satisfy requirements outlined by the curriculum guide or graduation evaluation form can be certified for VA purposes. A curriculum guide or graduation evaluation form should be kept in the student's file and courses certified should be checked. If a student takes a course that does not fulfill a program requirement, it cannot be certified for VA purposes.

Audited Courses

An audited course is any credited course a student attends as a listener, not for credit towards graduation. Audited courses cannot be certified. If the school's grading policy allows a student who registers for credit to later change to audit, report the change from credit to audit as a withdrawal, effective the day the student changed from credit to audit.

Repeating Courses

Classes that are successfully completed may not be certified again for VA purposes if they are repeated. However, if a student fails a class, or if a program requires a higher grade than the one achieved in a particular class for successful completion, that class may be repeated and certified to VA again.

Electives

Excessive free electives, for example, cannot be certified.

Course Applicability

Unofficial Transcript (Partial Image)

Term: SPRING 23   01/09/2023   05/19/2023

Course Code	Course Description	Credits Attempted	Credits Earned	Grade
ELEC 1717	Electrical Engineering	4	4	A
ELEC 1717L	Electrical Engineering Lab	1	1	A
MEDL 1012	Medical Terminology	3	3	A
ENGL 1711	Composition I	3	3	A
MATH 2749	Calculus I	4	4	A
		15	15	

Term: FALL 23   09/05/2023   12/22/2023

Course Code	Course Description	Credits Attempt	Credits Earned	Grade
SPAN 1101	Spanish I	4		
POLS 1110	American Politics	3		
PHY ED 1109	Volleyball	1		
SPCH 1110	Interpersonal Communication	3		
PHY ED 1110	Step Aerobics	1		
		12		

Degree Audit/Program Requirements

Engineering, Electrical AS

	Needs (Credits)	Taken (Credits)
Electrical	12	12
Communication	8	8
Natural Sciences	8	8
Mathematical	8	8
History/Social Sciences	8	8
Humanities	8	4
Global Perspectives	3	
Ethic & Civic Responsibility	3	
Physical Education	2	
	60	49

Knowledge Check

Before you may submit a certification for a student, the program MUST be approved by the State Approving Agency.

TRUE

FALSE

Knowledge Check

Before you may submit a certification for a student, the program MUST be approved by the State Approving Agency.

TRUE

Pursuit
&
Payment

'When's of Certifying

❑ Timeliness

❑ Rate of Pursuit (RoP)

❑ Graduate-Level Training

❑ Training Time

Timeliness

Chapters 30, 32, 35, and 1606

01 — **Can be submitted 120 days before the term begins**

02 — **Submit on or after the first day of class, with tuition and fees if:**

- **Training time less than ½ time**
- **Student on Active Duty**
- **Accelerated Payment requested**

Chapter 33

01 — **Submit certifications as early as possible**

02 — **Must be submitted within 30 days of the beginning of the term**
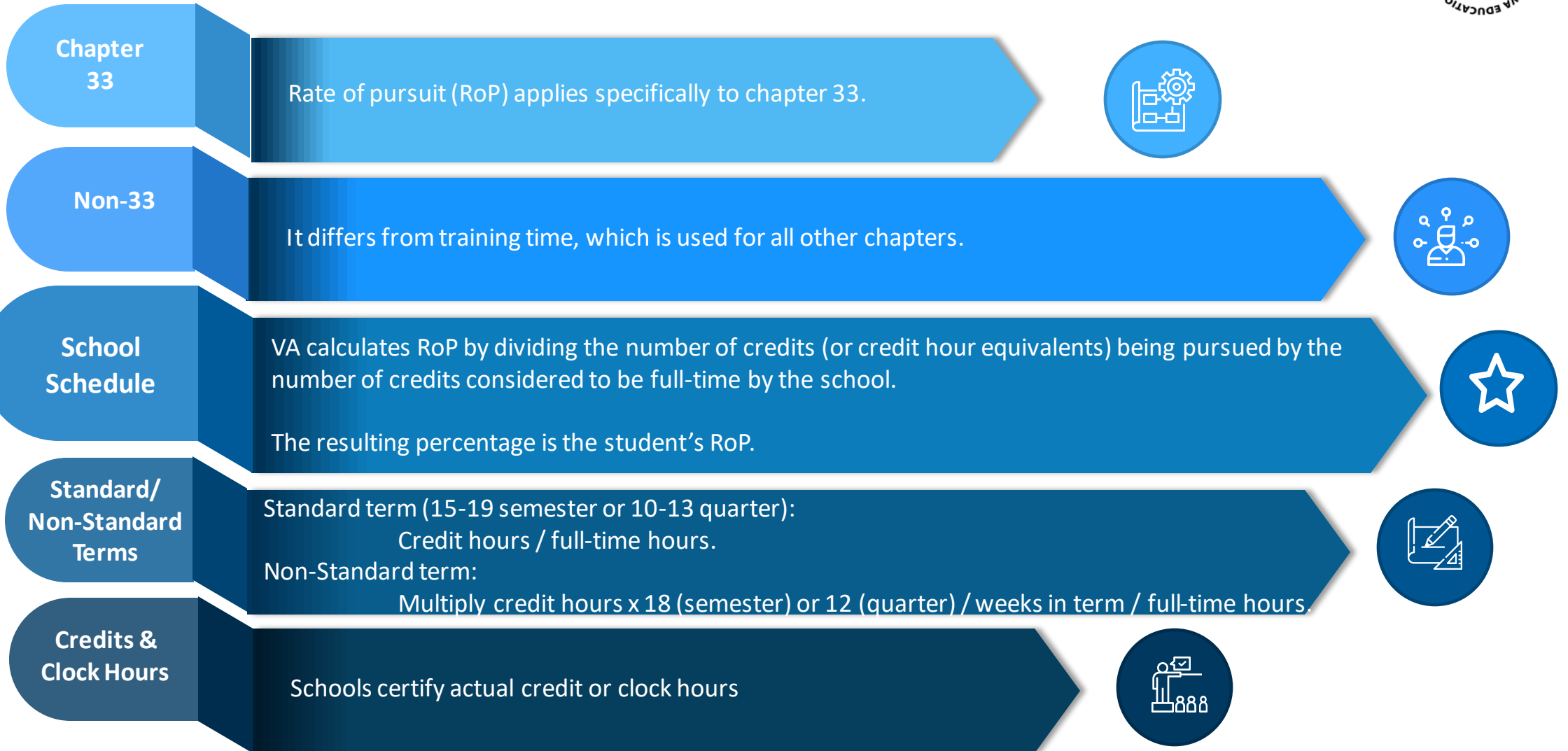
Rate of Pursuit (Ch 33)

"Help Me, SCO...! Here's my schedule. Will I get my housing?"

Course	Credits	Term Dates	Location
Biology 100	3	1/9/20-5/4/20	SW Hall Rm 100
Phy Ed 100	3	1/9/20-5/4/20	Gym
Biology 100L	3	3/6/20-5/4/20	Science Cr Rm 5
Marketing 100	3	1/9/20-5/4/20	Business Rm 3
Total	**12**		

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Chapter 33: Rate of Pursuit (RoP)

Chapter 33
Rate of pursuit (RoP) applies specifically to chapter 33.

Non-33
It differs from training time, which is used for all other chapters.

School Schedule
VA calculates RoP by dividing the number of credits (or credit hour equivalents) being pursued by the number of credits considered to be full-time by the school.

The resulting percentage is the student's RoP.

Standard/Non-Standard Terms
Standard term (15-19 semester or 10-13 quarter):
  Credit hours / full-time hours.
Non-Standard term:
  Multiply credit hours x 18 (semester) or 12 (quarter) / weeks in term / full-time hours.

Credits & Clock Hours
Schools certify actual credit or clock hours

Rate of Pursuit (RoP) & Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA)

Examples: If full-time is 12 credits, then::

6 credits (or credit equivalents) is 50%

(6 / 12 = 50%)

Note: HOUSING NOT PAID

7 credits (or credit equivalents) is 58%
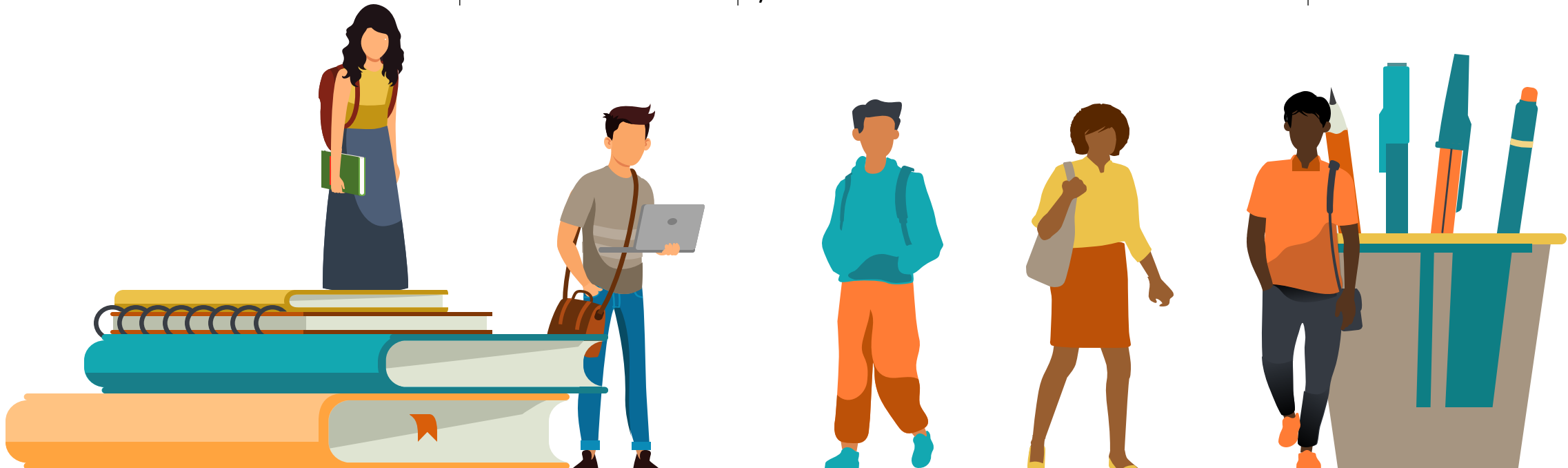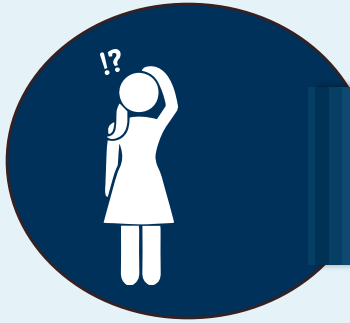
(7 / 12 = 58%)

Housing is 60%, rounded up

(7 / 12 = .58333) rounded to 5th decimal place

Full-time at school **&** VA Rate of pursuit

SCHOOL SCHEDULE:

Course	Credits	Term Dates	Location
Biology 100	3	1/9/20-5/4/20	SW Hall Rm 100
Phy Ed 100	3	1/9/20-5/4/20	Gym
Biology 100L	3	1/9/20-5/4/20	Science Cr Rm 5
Marketing 100	3	1/9/20-5/4/20	Business Rm 3
Total	12	Full-time measurement:	12
Rate of Pursuit:	12	/ 12	100%

"Help Me, SCO...! Here's my schedule. Will I get my housing?"

Course	Credits	Term Dates		Location
Biology 100	3	1/9/20-5/4/20	✓	SW Hall Rm 100
Phy Ed 100	3	1/9/20-5/4/20	✓	Gym
Biology 100L	3	3/6/20-5/4/20		Science Cr Rm 5
Marketing 100	3	1/9/20-5/4/20	✓	Business Rm 3

Total **12**

Full-time at school & VA Rate of pursuit

SCHOOL SCHEDULE:

Course	Credits	Term Dates	Location
Biology 100	3	1/9/20-5/4/20	SW Hall Rm 100
Phy Ed 100	3	1/9/20-5/4/20	Gym
Biology 100L	3	3/6/20-5/4/20	Science Cr Rm 5
Marketing 100	3	1/9/20-5/4/20	Business Rm 3
Total	12		

VA CERTIFICATION AND RATE OF PURSUIT

TERM DATES	CREDITS	ROP
1/9/20-5/4/20	9	
FULL-TIME PER SCHOOL	12	
RATE OF PURSUIT	0.75	3/4 TIME

TERM DATES	CREDITS	ROP
3/6/20-5/4/20	3	
ADD THE OVERLAPPING TERM ABOVE	9	
FULL-TIME PER SCHOOL	12	
RATE OF PURSUIT	1.000	FULL-TIME

SUMMER TERMS AND NON-STANDARD ENROLLMENT PERIODS

P1 Standard quarters are 10 to 13 weeks in length and standard semesters are 15 to 19 weeks in length.

P2 Standard quarters and semesters adhere to the school's academic calendar.

P3 When a session or course doesn't follow this standard format, certify the actual begin date, end date, and credit for the session or course.

P4 Courses taken during a defined session – an eight-week summer session, for example – should be certified from the beginning date to the ending date of the session if the courses start the first week and end the last week of the session.
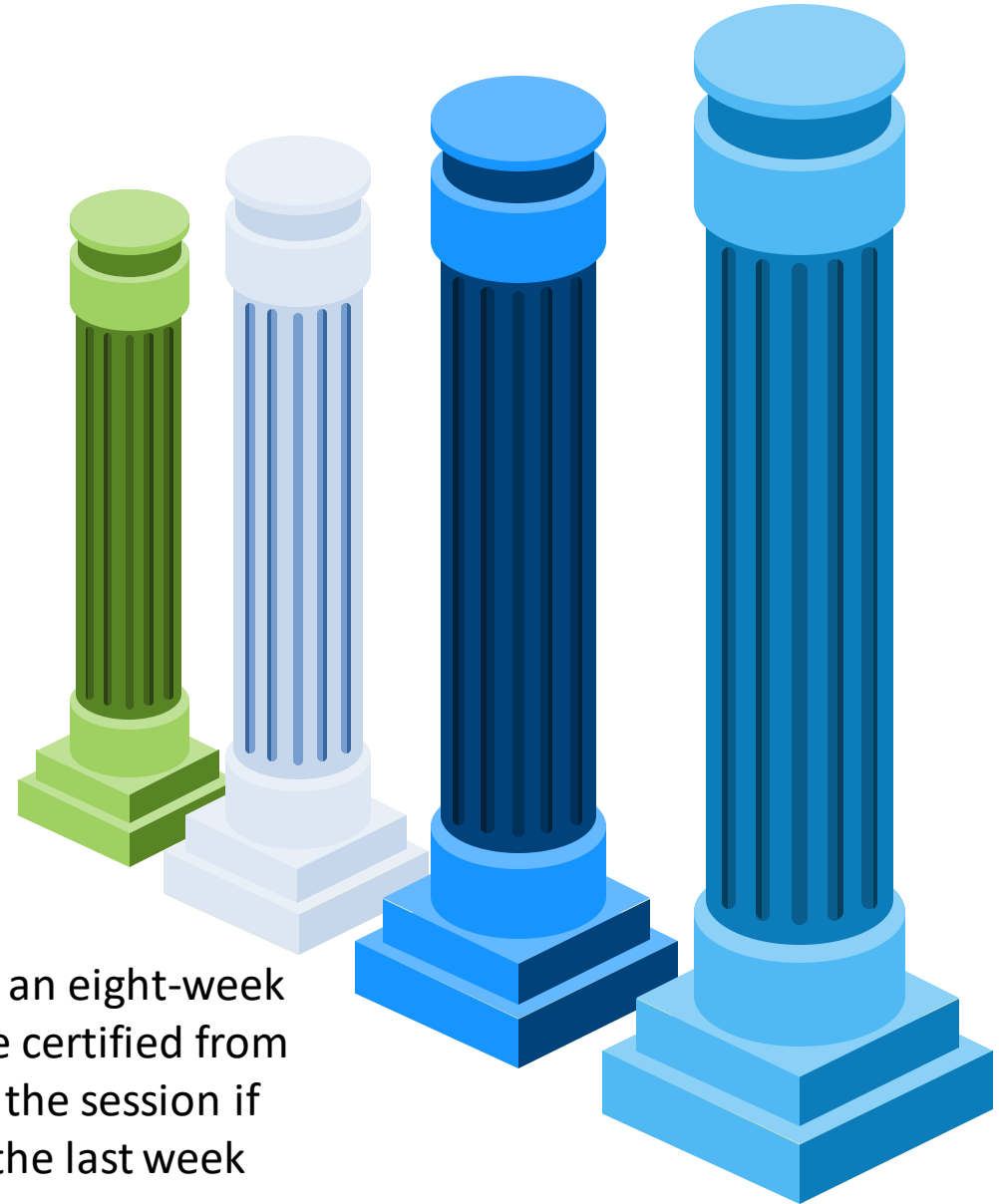
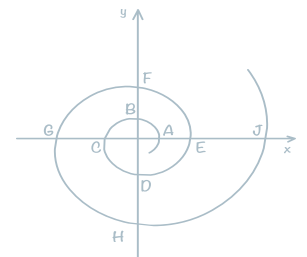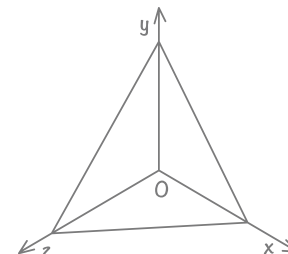# Rate of Pursuit (Chapter 33): NON-standard terms- UNDERGRADUATE (1 of 2)

Number of <u>Quarter</u> credits taken, multiplied by 12, then divide by the number of weeks.

| Non-standard Quarter			ROP	
	Quarter Credits Taken		3	
	Multiply by 12 for Quarter		12	36
6/1/20xx				
7/27/20xx	Divide term length in weeks** to get Equiv Cr Hr (ECH):		8	4.5
	Calculate Rate of Pursuit: ECH/<u>12</u> (normal full-time measurement at a school)	4.5/12		0.375
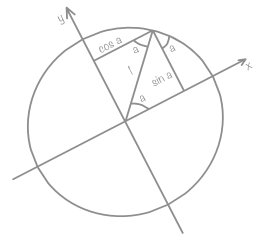
38%

*NO MONTHLY HOUSING IS PAID

# Rate of Pursuit (Chapter 33): NON-standard terms- UNDERGRADUATE (2 of 2)

Number of <u>Semester</u> credits taken, multiplied by 18, then divide by the number of weeks.

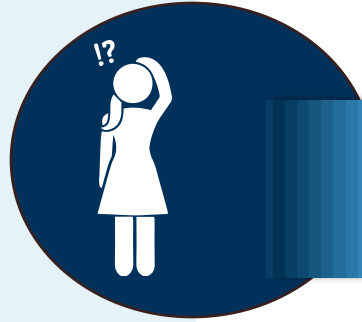| Non-standard Semester			ROP
	SEMESTER Credits Taken	3	
	Multiply by 18 for semester	18	54
6/1-7/27/20xx	Divide term length in weeks** to get Equiv Cr Hr (ECH):	8	6.75
	Calculate Rate of Pursuit: ECH/12 (normal full-time measurement at a school)	6.75/12	0.5625
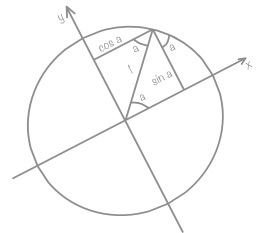
56%

*MONTHLY HOUSING IS PAID AT THE 60% LEVEL
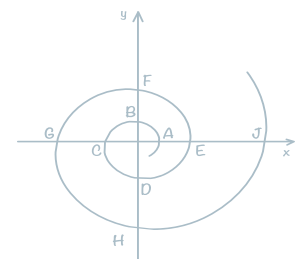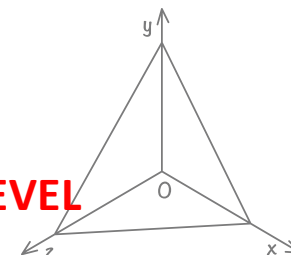
Summer-Internships

"Help Me, SCO…! Here's my schedule. Will I get my housing?"

Your student, Becky (CH 33-100%), is doing her practical training in Dental Hygiene at 20 hours per week.

Is Becky getting full-time monthly housing allowance?

Your school is on a semester term

Term	Credits
6/1/2023- 7/27/2023	3

Practical Training

Documentation:
- **Published curriculum requirements**
- **Signed contract of training with stated weekly hours**

Hours certified:
- **Must follow school calendar term.**
- **May not certify dates of training that fall outside the school term.**

Graduate-level Training

Graduate

Standard Terms:

In addition to certifying the number of credit hours the student takes which apply to his or her program, also report the number of credit hours considered full-time for either the standard semester/quarter, or for the nonstandard semester/quarter if individually defined, by your academic regulations.
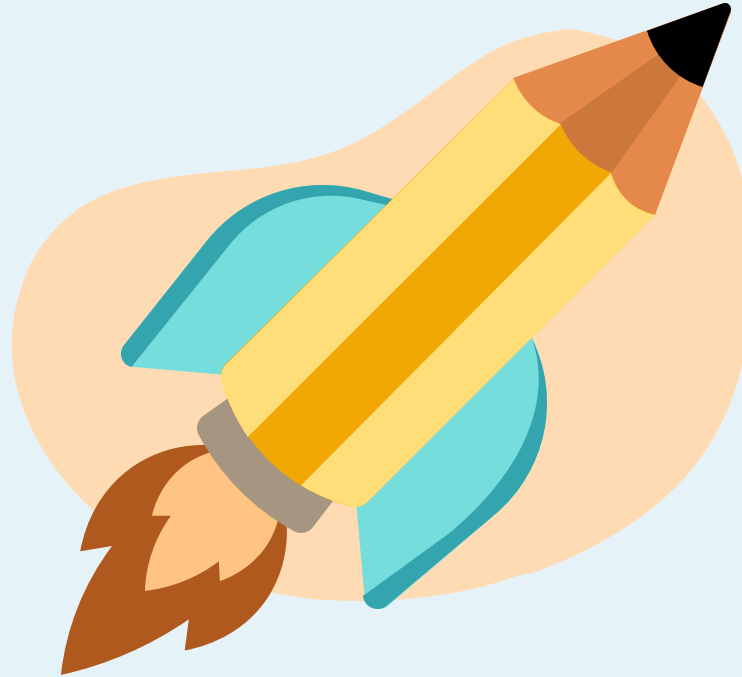
Nonstandard Terms:

When the term is shorter or longer in length than a standard term (semester shorter than 15 weeks/longer than 19 weeks *or* quarter shorter than 10 weeks/longer than 13 weeks), there are two potential reporting paths. Determining the correct path is dependent on whether the term in question has an **individually defined full-time modifier (IDM).**
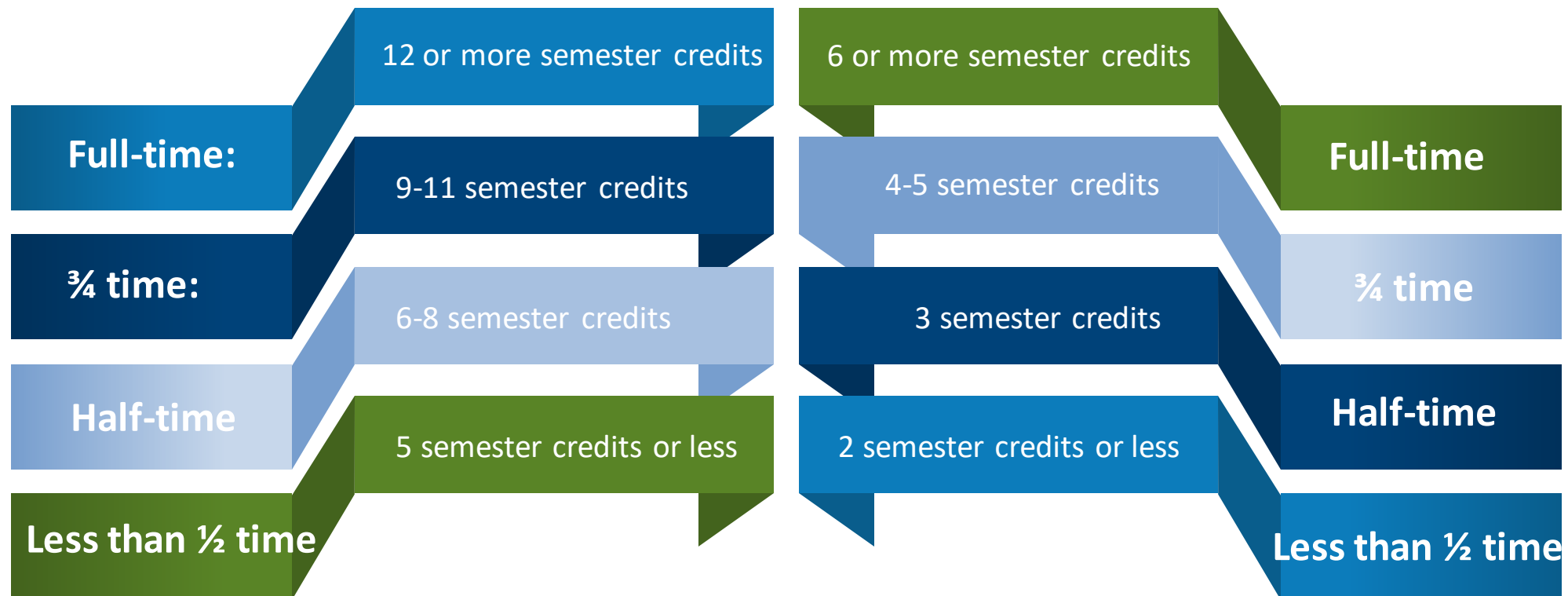
Example *without* Individually Defined Full-time Modifier

"The following enrollment levels are defined for federal and state financial aid programs. Please keep in mind that the following enrollment levels apply to financial aid as defined by federal and state financial aid regulations. These enrollment levels may be different from academic enrollment levels as defined by the University".
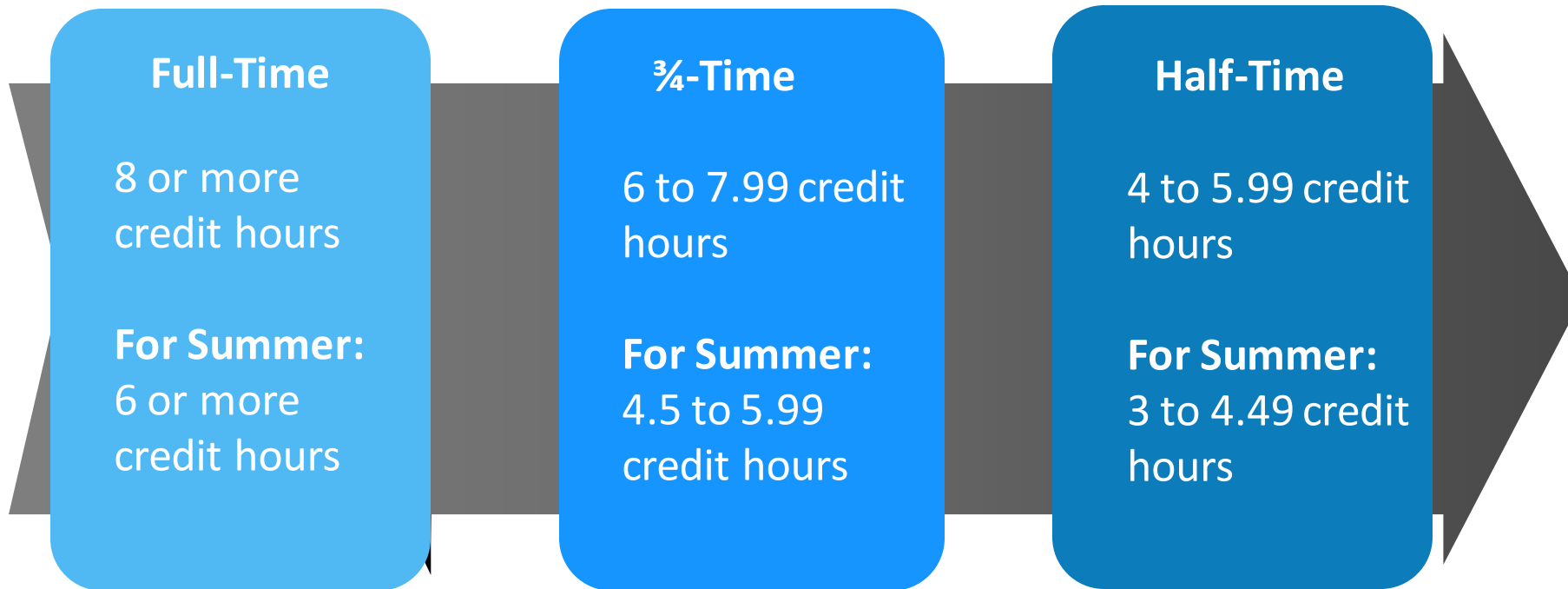
UNDERGRADUATE   **GRADUATE**

Full-time:	12 or more semester credits	6 or more semester credits	**Full-time**
¾ time:	9-11 semester credits	4-5 semester credits	**¾ time**
Half-time	6-8 semester credits	3 semester credits	**Half-time**
Less than ½ time	5 semester credits or less	2 semester credits or less	**Less than ½ time**

Example *with* Individually Defined (Full-Time) Modifier (IDMs)

Graduate Academic Status as Defined by Academic Load:

Full-Time

8 or more credit hours

For Summer:
6 or more credit hours

¾-Time

6 to 7.99 credit hours

For Summer:
4.5 to 5.99 credit hours

Half-Time

4 to 5.99 credit hours

For Summer:
3 to 4.49 credit hours

Graduate Nonstandard Term Paths

Path 1 - Nonstandard Term *with* IDM:

- Enter the minimum number of credit hours that your academic regulations require to be considered a full-time student for the individual enrollment period being certified.

- The number of credit hours considered full-time can vary by program or enrollment period.

- VA will divide the number of credit hours certified by the number of credit hours required to be full-time to determine rate of pursuit.

- Enrollments submitted on or after August 1, 2021, no longer require an additional remark on the enrollment certification.

Path 2 - Nonstandard Term *without* IDM:

- When the training type is graduate, the entry from the TT/FT field as used as the denominator in the RoP calculation.

- All non-standard terms for graduate training submitted on or after August 1, 2021 will be impacted, including retroactive terms.

- These nonstandard terms require determination of an adjusted FT modifier prior to reporting chapter 33 graduate training.

- Once the adjusted FT modifier is determined for a particular non-standard term, that adjusted FT modifier can be reported for all graduate students enrolled in any non-standard term of the same length.

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Determining the Adjusted Full Time Modifier

1. Calculate number of weeks to be certified.

   a) Timeanddate.com: 6 weeks, 4 days

   b) 4 days or more, Round up to 7

   c) If there is a vacation period of 7 consecutive days or more during the term, deduct it from the total days calculated before dividing by 7 when determining the term length.

2. Use the chart in the SCO Handbook to determine the full-time modifier.

TERM	Start	End	Standard Full-time Modifier
Fall A	8/24/21	10/8/21	6

Start Date

Month: 8 / Day: 24 / Year: 2021 Date: [calendar]

Today

☑ Include end date in calculation (1 day is added)

Add time fields
Add time zone conversion

[Calculate Duration]

End Date

Month: 10 / Day: 8 / Year: 2021 Date: [calendar]

Today

Count only workdays

SEMESTER HOURS

FT Modifier	3	6	8	9	10	12
Weeks						
1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	1	1	1	1	1	1
3	1	1	1	1	1	2
4	1	1	1	2	2	2
5	1	1	2	2	2	3
6	1	2	2	3	3	4
7	1	2	3	3	3	4
8	1	2	3	4	4	5
9	1	3	4	4	5	6

Determining the Adjusted Full Time Modifier (FTM)

3. Report this Adjusted Full-Time Modifier in the Full-Time modifier field in Enrollment Manager (or on VA Form 22-1999) when reporting grad training for all graduate students enrolled in this term.

- VA will determine the rate of pursuit based on the enrolled credits and the Adjusted Full-Time modifier reported in the for each nonstandard term.

NOTE: Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) is only payable when a student is training at greater than half-time.

Credits and tuition

Resident credits

6

Online credits

Clock hours

Full-Time modifier (*Required)

2

Tuition & Fees amount (*Required)
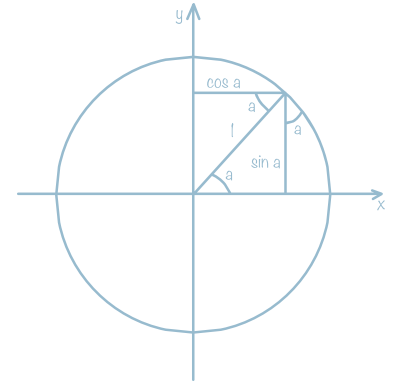
☑ Yellow Ribbon

Training Time

Training Time (non-chapter 33)

VA benefits are paid based on training time certified by the school. In standard quarter or semester, VA measures training as follows:

- 12 credits or more are full time
- 9-11 credits are ¾ time
- 6-8 credits are ½ time
- 4-5 credits are less than ½ time(<½-time)
- 1-3 credits are ¼ time or less(<¼-time)

Tuition & Fees amount (*Required)

☐ Advanced pay requested by student ⓘ

Training time (*Required)

Valid Training time is required.

☐ Accelerated pay requested by student ⓘ

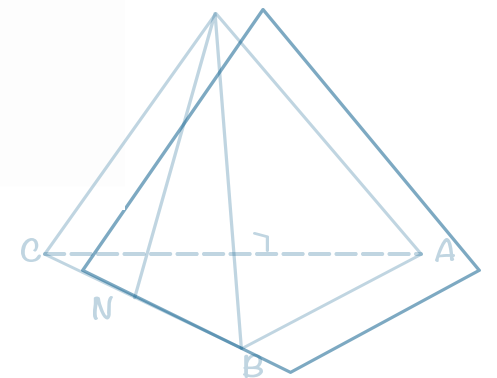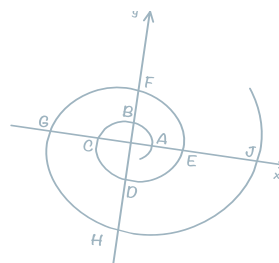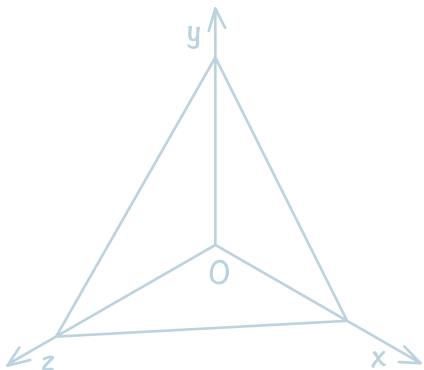☐ Advanced pay requested by student ⓘ

Training time (*Required)

Select
Full time
3/4 time
1/2 time
Less than 1/2 time but more than 1/4 time
1/4 time or less

vacation periods

How to Certify-Changes

During Term

❑ Public Law 116-315, Section 1010

❑ Tuition & Fees

❑ Tuition and Fees for Chapter 33

❑ Changes in Enrollment

Public Law 116-315, Section 1010

VA has defined the last day a student can withdraw from the course or program of education "without penalty" as the last day of the school's drop-add period. (100% add/drop)

Dual Certifications	Enrollment Changes	Unchanged	Retroactive	Paper
Initial enrollment certification with $0.00 in the tuition and fees fields. After the drop-add period, the tuition and fees are certified by amending the term	Reporting student enrollment during the drop-add period or within the first 30 days of the term	A second enrollment certification is still mandated, even if there are no changes to the student's enrollment period	2nd certification must be received no later than 30 days after school's drop-add period or 60 days from the first day of enrollment	If a school is unable to certify enrollments using Enrollment Manager (EM), the SCO must submit two enrollment certifications (VA Form 22-1999).

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Section 1010- SCO Discussion

Examples:

Who uses $0.00 as initial?

Who certifies it all upfront?(typically private schools?)
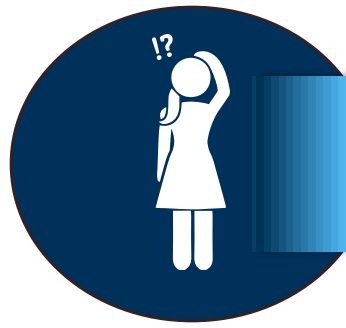
"I'm New. What do I do?"

Pros/Cons	0.00	Certify tuition & fees upfront
How big is your school/how many students do you certify?		
Is tuition plateaued or flat rate?		
Do many courses have course fees?		
Does your student population change their minds or schedules often?		

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Certifying Tuition and Fees

Chapter 33

SCOs must certify the Tuition and Fees charged to a student after deducting any tuition-only specific waivers, scholarships, aid, and assistance.

Chapter 33 Tuition and Fees

Tuition is the actual established charges for tuition the student is required to pay. Fees are mandatory charges applied by the school for pursuit of an approved program of education.

Chapters 30, 32, 1606

Tuition and Fees must be reported for enrollment periods when training time is less than ½ time, when the student is on active duty, and when accelerated payment is requested.

Changes in Enrollment

When a student makes a change to an enrollment period after the initial certification has been submitted, the change should be reported as an Amendment within 30 days of the official action.

This is one of the most common errors found on compliance surveys.

Amend and Terminate

01 Reductions & Withdrawals (CH 33)

02 Reductions & Withdrawals (non-33)

03 Amendments On or Before the First Day of Term (CH 33)

04 Termination On or Before the First Day of Term

05 Amendments During Drop Period

06 Amendments After Drop Period

07 Punitive Grades

08 Non-Punitive Grades

09 Last Date of Attendance/Effective Dates

10 Mitigating Circumstances

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42

After the Term

❑ **Graduation**

❑ **Receiving Tuition & Fees from VA after Term ends**

Graduation

Schools are required to report graduation or program completion information to VA.

Once a student graduates from a degree program "Graduation" should be selected as the termination reason. The last date of the term selected will be pre-populated as the date of termination.

Graduation should only be reported for students who graduated while using benefits.

Receiving Tuition & Fees from VA Long after Term ends

SCO:

"Dear ELR,   June 2022

We just received two payments for a student for **2013-2014**. One payment is for $975.14 and the other is for $944.70. Do you know if these are correct?"

ELR:

"Good morning, SCO,

Yes. Service periods were changed. The student was 50% when attending and is 60% now. If the student's payments are up-to-date and accounted for, please follow your school's refund policy to the student."

§ 21.9640 Rates of payment of educational assistance

(b) Maximum amounts payable for training at more than one-half time. An individual, other than one on active duty, who is pursuing a program of education at more than one-half time (at a rate of pursuit greater than 50 percent) and who—

(1) Is enrolled at an institution of higher learning located in the United States, or at a branch of such institution that is located outside the United States, may receive—

(i) A lump sum amount for established charges paid directly to the institution of higher learning for the entire quarter, semester, or term, as applicable.
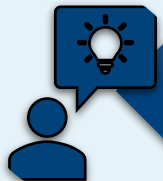
Summary

Describe the methods for applying VA course measurements to certifications

Recall student enrollment processes requiring SCO reporting action during an enrollment period
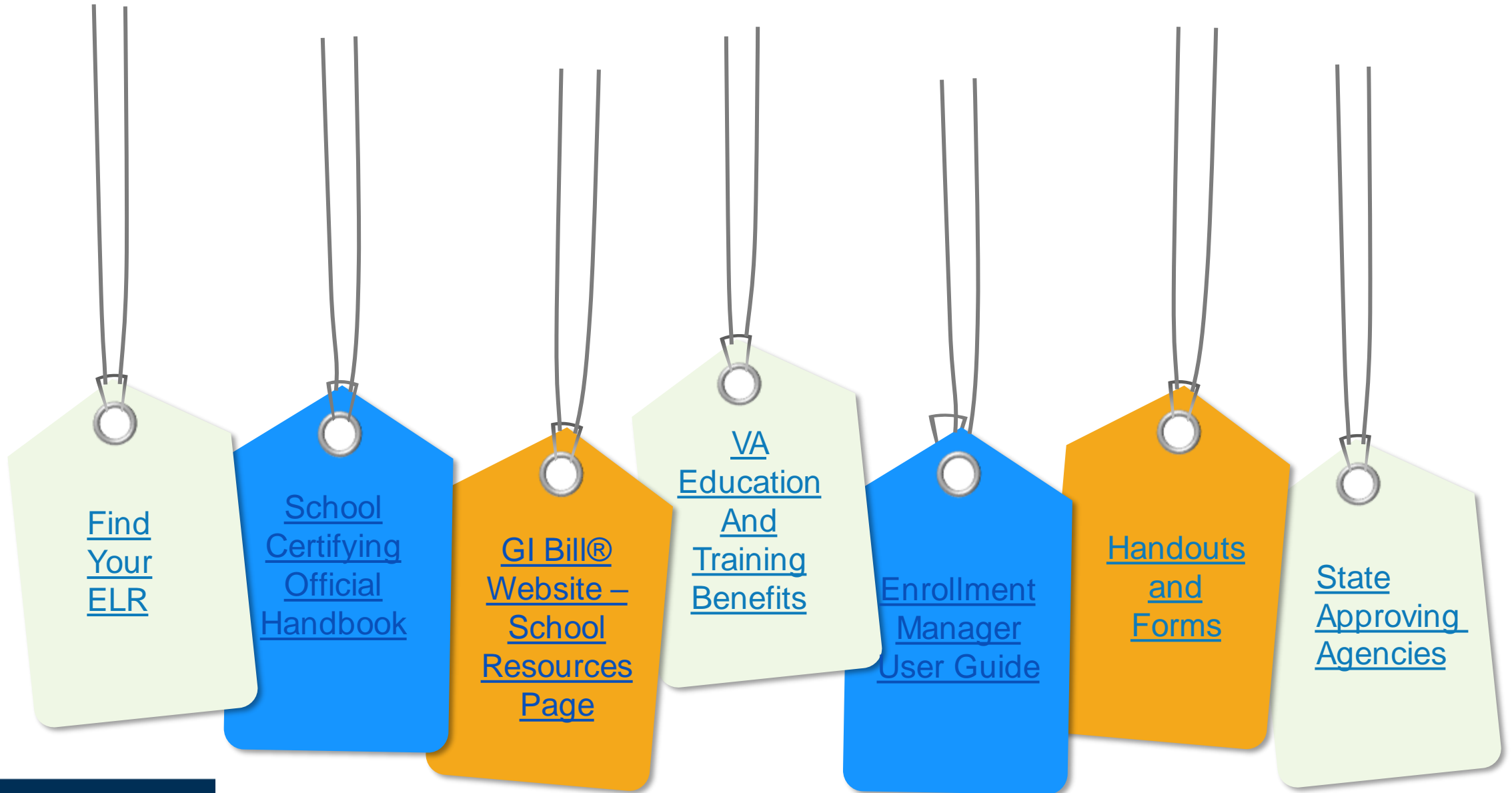
Identify program curriculum distinctions to certify appropriate coursework

Recollect procedures taken when a term has ended

CERTIFYING OFFICIAL RESOURCE LINKS

Find Your ELR

School Certifying Official Handbook

GI Bill® Website – School Resources Page

VA Education And Training Benefits

Enrollment Manager User Guide

Handouts and Forms

State Approving Agencies

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs