

System IT Board Report

April 13, 2022

Military and Veteran's Benefits Application

The Military & Veteran Students Offices in the colleges help military-related students with their educational benefits and provide guidance and support for these students throughout their educational journey. Across the system, there are approximately 8,100 active students who are classified as active duty members, veterans, or dependents of the service member or veteran.

House Bill 20-1275, which Gov. Jared Polis signed into law on March 27, 2020, allows a service member or a veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States or a dependent, to be eligible for in-state tuition status at a community college, regardless of whether the person satisfies Colorado domicile or residency status.

The Veterans Affairs College Offices utilize Ellucian Banner and other CCCS application systems. However, these systems are not designed to meet many of their specific business needs related to active duty military, veterans or dependents. For example, a college staff member who processes veterans' information enters data that require almost 100% manual data entry pulled from five to ten different reports and/or system screens in order to process certifications. Manual data entry, report pulling, and tuition and fee calculations are extremely time-consuming and result in increased errors detrimental to the student.

To help with these time consuming activities, CCCS IT partnered with the Veterans Affairs College Offices to build an in-house application, called the CCCS VA Application, to support their internal business processes that cannot be completed within Banner or other CCCS systems. The goal was to design a system that is fully integrated with Banner allowing real-time data integration and flow between multiple systems. One of the main requirements for this system is to give the colleges the ability to control and configure their own parameters, such as certification codes, available certification terms, facility codes, benefit types, certification questionnaires, user permissions, and more. The main functionalities and features implemented in the first phase are:

- An aggregated form that combines data from multiple Banner Forms (around 7 different forms) into a single page to save time and effort during the GI Bill certification process.
- Tools that allow the processor to update some of Banner data without having to log in to Banner.
- Advanced search tools to help the processors quickly find students based on their military affiliation, benefits eligibility, registration status, certification criteria, and more.
- College Portal tools that allow students to submit certification requests, receive status updates, and get VA notifications and alerts.
- Tools to streamline the certification updates and identify students who might be missing their eligible benefits.
- Tools to keep track of student registration changes and automate the corresponding tasks based on those changes that are required for active military, veterans and dependents.
- Academic success tools that make it much easier for processors to identify student progress and any potential academic performance issues.

The second phase focused primarily on integrating the VA Application with Banner Document Management System (BDM) to allow students to upload their VA documents via the College Portal. This feature saves both students the processors a lot of time and effort and provides enhanced security

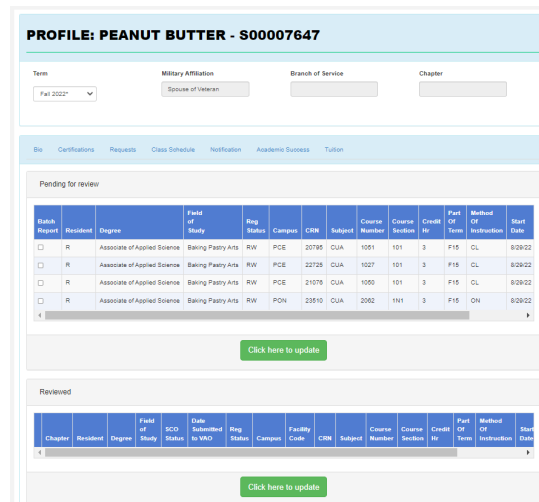
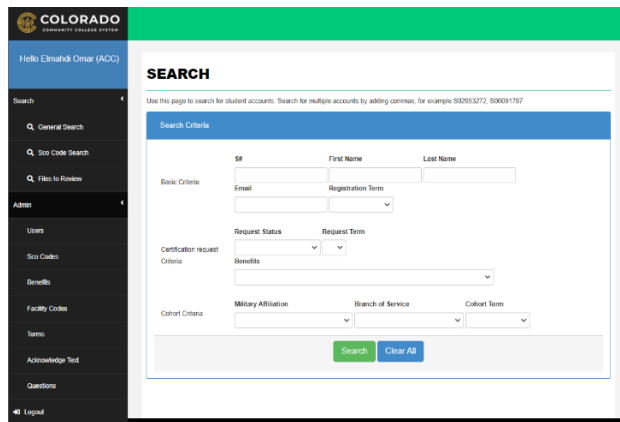
practices. This feature is currently being piloted with the VA Application and soon will be rolled out to other functional groups, such as the Financial Aid, HR, Finance, and others.

The last phase focuses primarily on the tuition calculations, which are extremely time-consuming and can result in errors that are detrimental to the student. The VA Application includes tools that automatically calculate and assign the appropriate tuition and fees for all students receiving VA Education Benefits each semester improving overall operational efficiency in the Military & Veterans Programs and Bursars' offices. These tools address the need for a standardized process for tuition and fee calculations for individual students and ensure proper charges are submitted to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The first phase of the project was completed in early 2021 and many of the colleges have adopted this application as their primary application for their VA certification processes and workflows. The second phase will be fully deployed to the production environment in April 2022. We are currently working on phase three and expecting completion by the end of 2022.

Although System IT is not staffed to build and maintain a number of large custom applications, the importance of this project and the community it serves motivated everyone within and outside System IT to come together and build platform to improve student success and organizational efficiency on behalf of active military, veteran and dependent students. The benefit and value of this project have been echoed by the colleges and their staff who support active military, veterans and dependents. Our colleges have been leaders in their support and education of military associated students and System IT was happy to be partner in improving the ability of the colleges to help improve the support and success of students who are active military, veterans or dependents.

Some Screenshots of the VA Application





Military & Veterans

Certification Request

Request Submitted for : Fall 2022

Submitted Certification Request

Term	Educational Benefit	Status	Comment
Fall 2022	-Choose your chapter-	Pending	

Use this section to submit a certification request

Term

Summer 2022

Educational Benefit

-Choose your chapter-

Acknowledgment

Documents

Notifications

Notifications from the office of Military and Veterans Services

Note	Action
Acknowledged Note	Date